

Augustine and Manichaean Christianity

*Selected Papers from the First South African
Conference on Augustine of Hippo, University
of Pretoria, 24-26 April 2012*

Edited by
Johannes van Oort

Augustine and Manichaean Christianity

Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies

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PREFACE

AUGUSTINE AND MANICHAEAN CHRISTIANITY: A TESTIMONY TO A PARADIGM SHIFT IN AUGUSTINIAN STUDIES?

A few decades ago, the prevailing opinion in Augustinian scholarship was that the field could yield nothing new. For centuries the whole *corpus Augustinianum* had been studied thoroughly, one could even say exhaustively; new studies would, in actual fact, only be updated versions of old findings. Everything had been collected in tomes such as those of the famous seventeenth century scholar Louis-Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont,¹ or had been supremely described, more recently, by Peter Brown² for the English and exhaustively documented by André Mandouze³ for the French speaking world. However, this picture changed with the discovery of a number of new letters by Augustine in ancient manuscripts in France some years before 1981.⁴ These finds were followed by two other significant discoveries: a number of previously unknown sermons in a manuscript in the Mainz city library in 1990⁵ and, most recently, six new sermons in a codex in

¹ Volume 13 of his famous *Mémoires ecclésiastiques*, finished in 1695, was entitled 'La vie de saint Augustin' and contains all relevant information available at the time from Augustine's own works and other relevant sources. See now the conveniently accessible English translation (with annotation and introduction by Frederick Van Fleteren a.o.): Louis Sébastien, Le Nain de Tillemont, *The Life of Augustine of Hippo*. Part One: *Childhood to Episcopal Consecration (354–396)*, New York etc.: Peter Lang 2010; Part Two: *The Donatist Controversy (396–411)*, New York etc.: Peter Lang 2012; Part Three: *The Pelagian Controversy (412–430)* (forthcoming).

² Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo. A Biography*, London: Faber & Faber 1968 (New edition, with an Epilogue: Berkeley: University of California Press 2000).

³ André Mandouze, *Saint Augustine. L'aventure de la raison et de la grâce*, Paris: Études Augustiniennes 1968.

⁴ *Sancti Aureli Augustini Opera. Epistulae ex duobus codicibus nuper in lucem prolatae*, rec. Johannes Divjak, Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky 1981 (Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 88); *Les lettres de saint Augustin découvertes par Johannes Divjak. Communications présentées au colloque des 20 et 21 Septembre 1982*, Paris: Études Augustiniennes 1983; *Cœuvres de saint Augustin 46 B, Lettres 1*–29*. Nouvelle édition du texte critique et introduction par Johannes Divjak. Traduction et commentaire par divers auteurs* (Bibliothèque Augustinienne 46B), Paris: Études Augustiniennes 1987.

⁵ Augustin d'Hippone, *Vingt-six sermons au peuple d'Afrique. Retrouvés à Mayence, édités par François Dolbeau*, Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes 1996; *Augustin prédicateur*

Erfurt.⁶ These circumstances provided an essential *impetus* towards a renewed investigation of a number of important issues in Augustinian scholarship.

In the field of Manichaean studies an equally momentous discovery provided a very important stimulus for new research: the discovery of the *Cologne Mani Codex* in Egypt. This major find, first published in preliminary form in 1970,⁷ revealed unequivocally that Mani was raised in a Jewish-Christian Baptist community. Not Iranian dualism in some Zoroastrian form, but Jewish-Christian ideas defined nascent Manichaeism. This insight revolutionized Manichaean studies. The new perspectives that emerged illustrated the accuracy of the church fathers' judgment of Manichaeism, namely as—in essence—a Christian heretical movement. An overview of Greek-Christian anti-Manichaean writings provided the elementary evidence in case of the Greek speaking church fathers;⁸ for the Latin world there had been, for many centuries, the compelling testimony of Augustine who considered his former co-religionists members of a Christian *secta*.⁹ The fact is that, whether characterized as a *secta* or typified as a *haeresis*,¹⁰ Manichaeism for Augustine was always a form of Christianity.

It took a long time for specialists in Manichaean and Augustinian studies alike to assess the new evidence. I will not extensively reference this because more often than not it is shocking to see how scholars persisted in

(395–411). *Actes du Colloque International de Chantilly (5–7 septembre 1996) édités par Goulven Madec*, Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes 1998; Augustin d'Hippone, *Vingt-six sermons au peuple d'Afrique. Mise à jour bibliographique par François Dolbeau*, Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes 2001; François Dolbeau, *Augustin et la prédication en Afrique. Recherches sur divers sermons authentiques, apocryphes ou anonymes*, Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes 2005.

⁶ Isabella Schiller, Dorothea Weber, Clemens Weidmann, 'Sechs neue Augustinuspredigten. Teil 1 mit Edition dreier Sermones', *Wiener Studien* 121 (2008) 227–284; Isabella Schiller, Dorothea Weber, Clemens Weidmann, 'Sechs neue Augustinuspredigten. Teil 2 mit Edition dreier Sermones zum Thema Almosen', *Wiener Studien* 122 (2009) 171–213.

⁷ Albert Henrichs & Ludwig Koenen, 'Ein griechischer Mani-Codex (P. Colon. inv. nr. 4780)', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 5 (1970) 97–216. An overview of subsequent editions and, above all, of the real flood of subsequent studies I tried to survey in J. van Oort, 'The Study of the Cologne Mani Codex, 1969–1994', *Manichaean Studies Newsletter* 13 (1996) 22–30.

⁸ Wolfgang Wassilios Klein, *Die Argumentation in den griechisch-christlichen Antimanchaica*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz 1991. For Titus of Bostra, see the comprehensive study by Nils Arne Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof in Defence of God: A Study of Titus of Bostra's Contra Manichaeos—The Work's Sources, Aims and Relation to its Contemporary Theology* (NHMS 56), Leiden-Boston 2004.

⁹ E.g. *mor.* 1,80; 2,14; *conf.* 3,21; 5,11; *c. Faust.* 1,1; *haer.* 46,10.

¹⁰ E.g. *util. cred.* 1; *conf.* 3,21; 5,19; *c. Faust.* 11,2; 13,4; *haer.* 46.

upholding old positions. Even today professional books and articles appear in which Manichaeism is described as an eccentric Persian religion with no or only a very transient influence upon Augustine. However, over the past few years specialists studying the North-African church father have begun to emphasize that, at all times and during his whole career, he describes the Manichaeans as (heretical, of course, but nevertheless as) Christians,¹¹ and even explicitly depicts their religious organization as a Church.¹² This is the way in which the Manichaean movement was already conceived in the *Cologne Mani Codex* in the words of Mani himself.¹³ To Augustine and many a Catholic contemporary the deviant Church was, like the Donatist one and later the Pelagian movement, a real and persisting Christian threat. It can be said that the awareness of this fact and its implications has caused a noticeable paradigm shift in Augustinian studies, the results of which are becoming increasingly apparent and are gradually gaining acceptance.

The present book may testify to this paradigm shift. Its deliberately thought-provoking title intends to give full due to the connecting theme of its often revealing essays. One can read that Augustine, having left Manichaeism and being in the process of joining a Catholic Christianity imbued with Platonism, saw himself as continuing his adherence to Christ as an authority. In other words, already as a Manichaean he had regarded himself as fully committed to Christ. The grand and still understudied debate with Faustus was, like the disputes with Manichaeans such as Fortunatus, Felix and Secundinus, nothing other than a debate among Christians in which, time and again, the interpretation of Scripture constituted the central issue. Another study unexpectedly shows that, in the highly philosophical dialogue *De ordine*, the setting is strongly reminiscent of stock motifs of Manichaean mythology. *De vera religione*, a further early work of Augustine's—and once more dealing with the origin of evil, a question which so engaged him as an adolescent that it drove him to the Manichaeans¹⁴—turns

¹¹ E.g. *util. cred.* 30 ff.; *Gn. litt.* 7,17; *c. ep. Man.* 9; *c. Faust.* 12,24; these and other testimonies in context in J. van Oort, 'Manichaean Christians in Augustine's Life and Work', *Church History and Religious Culture* 90 (2010) 505–546.

¹² Most clearly in *haer.* 46,5 [and 16].

¹³ The Greek word *ekklēsia* explicitly in *CMC* 35,13; 36,14; 111,15 and 116,14. Other Manichaean texts such as the Coptic Manichaean *Psalm-Book*, *Kephalaia* and *Homilies* and also the new texts from Kellis frequently speak of the Manichaean *ekklēsia*; in like manner the Latin version of Mani's *Epistula Fundamenti* (apud Evodius of Uzalis) and the *Fragmenta Tabestina* use the word *ecclesia* to indicate the own religious community (cf. e.g. Sarah Clackson, Erica Hunter, Samuel N.C. Lieu and Mark Vermes, *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts*, Vol. I, *Texts from the Roman Empire*, Turnhout: Brepols 1998, s.v.).

¹⁴ *Lib. arb.* 1,4: "Eam quaestionem [sc. unde malum?] moves, quae me admodum adoles-

out to be full of Manichaeian reminiscences as well. Other studies indicate the same for the *Confessiones*, the celebrated and, seemingly, ‘well-known’ writing in which even essential elements of Augustine’s famous doctrine of memory and equally famed description of God as Beauty reveal striking parallels to Manichaeian texts. And so it continues: the following overview of the essence of each of the book’s contribution, in alphabetical order, may provide a first impression.

Jason BeDuhn proposes that Manichaeism not only offered Augustine an alternative Christian tradition, but played an instrumental role in drawing him back to Christianity and even back to religion when he was intent on a life in philosophy and had left the Catholic Christian upbringing of his youth largely behind. His famous conversion, therefore, marked a shift of allegiance between two Christianities, one he was eager to have his Manichaeian friends emulate. BeDuhn sees Augustine working intently thereafter on the issues in contention between Catholic and Manichaeian Christianity, at times defending Catholic positions, at other times allowing distinctive Manichaeian emphases to lead him back to elements of the Christian tradition previously neglected in Catholic discourse.

Jacob Albert van den Berg deals with the use of Scripture in the Manichaeian bishop Faustus’ *Capitula*, a work that was quoted and discussed by Augustine in his *Contra Faustum*. Augustine knew the African Manichaeian bishop Faustus (*flor.* c. 380 CE) from his Manichaeian years. The examination of the many quotations from Scripture (with focus on the Old Testament) demonstrates that Faustus mainly used Biblical texts already quoted by his forerunner Adimantus (*flor.* c. 270 CE), one of Mani’s first disciples and main apostolic missionary to the West. This makes it likely that the *Capitula*’s essential contents were known to Augustine since his Manichaeian years and probably even influenced his own use of Scripture from the outset.

Majella Franzmann takes as her starting point three texts from Augustine dealing with almsgiving of food and drink by Manichaeians. She investigates both Manichaeian texts and practices relating to this activity and looks at a wider context for the practice within Manichaeism’s cosmic myth. She utilizes sociological ideas about groups and their boundaries, as reinforced by practices with food, and proposes that Manichaeism may be classified as both a universalizing and exclusive type of religion.

centem vehementer exercuit, et fatigatum in haereticos impulit atque deiecit.” Cf., e.g., *conf.* 3,12.

Therese Fuhrer deals with the discussion of theodicy in Augustine's early dialogue *De ordine*. She argues that its dramatic setting is strongly reminiscent of the stock motifs of the Manichaean mythological system. The dialogue's setting becomes a semiotic system in which even the ontologically deficient forms of phenomenon (Augustine's ill health, night and darkness, dirt and ugliness) refer to something at the highest level, namely the omnipotent divine Creator. The dialogue's scenic design turns out to be an extension of the Manichaean system of codes and hence an ingeniously devised message addressed to Manichaean readers.

Iain Gardner deals with the question of the 'vision of God'. In their daily prayers the Manichaeans directed themselves towards the sun and the moon, the cosmic dwelling-places of the gods during the history of the conflict between light and darkness. Meanwhile God the Father himself was 'hidden' in the transcendental kingdom. Since the young Augustine must have partaken in this basic ritual, the question arises about the influence of these ideas and practices on the great Christian bishop, well known for his own teachings on the question as to whether and how we might see God.

Andreas Hoffmann's focus is on the motif of the few wise (who gain knowledge of truth) and the many (who do not have these mental and ethical capacities) in Augustine's intellectual biography. The philosophical axiom already underlies Cicero's *Hortensius* and is adapted by the young Augustine. It also plays an important role in his decision to join the Manichaean Church. Led by the 'pauci electi', they appear to him as a small Christian community meeting higher intellectual and ethical demands while the *Catholica* is the Church of the masses. Returned to the *Catholica*, Augustine restates his conviction of the 'few wise': only few attain maximum insight, but with their *auctoritas* they guide the many towards the very truth, i.e. (the orthodox) faith in Christ. Hence the Catholic Church's big success is her major argument, while the *paucitas* of the Manichaeans proves the absurdity of their doctrine.

The article by Annemaré Kotzé, 'A Protreptic to a Liminal Manichaean at the Centre of Augustine's *Confessions* 4', focuses on the extent to which book 4 of the *Confessions* is almost exclusively about Manichaeism and designed to speak to Manichaean readers. Arguments about the structure and coherence of book 4 are used as a basis to postulate that six paragraphs at the centre of this book (4.14–19) form the core of its meaning. These six paragraphs constitute a protreptic exhortation that makes a strong appeal to a Manichaean reader already positively inclined towards Augustine and Catholicism, a 'liminal Manichaean'.

Augustine's *De vera religione* has long been considered an introductory work on the Catholic faith, heavily influenced by Neoplatonism, and, to a lesser extent, as an anti-Manichaean work. But little has been made so far of the many traces of Manichaean teaching in it. The aim of Josef Lössl's essay is to take some initial steps to address this aspect. Three areas are being investigated, 1) Augustine's assertion that Manichaeism teaches a doctrine of two souls; 2) the significance of the addressee, Romanianus, who according to Augustine was still a Manichaean when *vera rel.* was written; and 3) the key concepts of 'way' (*via*) and 'religion' (*religio*), which are reminiscent of Manichaean uses of these words.

Johannes van Oort provides a 'Manichaean' analysis of *conf.* 10, 1–38. He starts by analyzing the typical (anti-)Manichaean elements in the first part of Book 10. After that he focuses on Augustine's search for God in memory. As in Manichaeism, the five senses are considered as a means of acquiring knowledge of God. Augustine's subsequent exposition of memory (in which God may be found) displays striking parallels with the Coptic Manichaean *Kephalaion* 56. Moreover, the apex of Augustine's account of his search for God, his depiction of God as Beauty, has striking parallels in Manichaean texts.

Nils Arne Pedersen deals with Manichaean self-designations in the Western tradition. He takes the approach that the Manichaeans may have designated themselves with different names internally and when addressing outsiders. Most of the Manichaean texts in Latin, preserved in Augustine's works, are addressing outsiders: they make it probable that the Manichaeans only occasionally called themselves 'Manichaean' when explaining themselves to outsiders. The self-designation 'Christian' is used much more frequently, and even though it is used in addressing outsiders, it is so fundamental to Faustus' argument that it cannot be interpreted as an insincere concession to outsiders. The Coptic texts, written for internal uses, evidence a number of self-designations, but only seldom 'Manichaean' and 'Christian'. The fragmentary evidence may indicate that some Manichaeans called themselves Christians (or rather 'Chrestians'), while others tried to surpass this self-designation and (also) mentioned themselves after Mani.

Finally, the research overview by Gijs Martijn van Gaans deals with the more than one hundred years of specific scholarship on the Manichaean bishop Faustus of Milevis. Van Gaans provides an introduction into the rather divergent and even contradictory scholarly debates on the fourth-century Manichaean polemicist. His main focus is on Faustus' so-called *Capitula*, its meaning and significance for our knowledge of Manichaean thought and polemic in the age of Augustine. He also critically analyses

the positions taken in current debates and provides suggestions for future research.

It is hoped that the present book's richly variegated though strictly theme-centered contributions may profitably contribute to the paradigm shift spoken of above. To a certain extent they are a follow-up to an earlier enterprise, a symposium on 'Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West', the results of which were published in 2001 and reprinted recently.¹⁵ The present essays are the final outcome of the conference which could opportunely take place on African soil and also constituted the first scientific congress on Augustine in South Africa. It is a great pleasure to thank Prof. Johan Buitendag, the Dean of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Pretoria, for his constant support; the (then) Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Theology, Prof. Julian Müller, for his opening address; Prof. Graham Duncan, the Head of UP's Department of Church History, and many other colleagues from UP and other universities in South Africa who attended and made their valuable contributions, also by presiding over the subsequent sessions and leading the discussions; last but not least the conference lecturers who travelled from four continents (and, at the conference's conclusion, cheerfully joined a tour to spot—at least ...—four of Africa's Big Five). Very special thanks are due to Ms Yolande Steenkamp MA, my Pretoria research assistant, who did perfect work in the organization of the congress and the compilation of the Index.

Johannes van Oort

¹⁵ Johannes van Oort, Otto Wermelinger & Gregor Wurst (eds.), *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West. Proceedings of the Fribourg –Utrecht International Symposium of the IAMS (Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies XLIX)*, Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill 2001 (paperback repr. Leiden-Boston: Brill 2012).

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“NOT TO DEPART FROM CHRIST”:
AUGUSTINE BETWEEN “MANICHAEAN”
AND “CATHOLIC” CHRISTIANITY

Jason David BeDuhn

In the case of Augustine of Hippo, we possess a unique opportunity to trace at least part of the development of a religious identity as it found expression in an extensive body of writings whose relative chronology can be determined with some accuracy. Development implies passage from a prior set of characterizing elements to a subsequent set, and in Augustine's case a crude reduction of these two sets would identify them as “Manichaean” and “Catholic.” It can be said that Augustine passed between Manichaean and Catholic Christianity in his apostasy from the first and conversion to the second, and that in this transition over a few years in the 380s CE he occupied a liminal state between full membership in and commitment to either community. Yet Augustine continued to occupy a fairly unique position between Manichaean and Catholic Christianity in his first decade and a half as a “Catholic,” motivated both by personal ties to individual Manichaeans and the demands of his Catholic associates to repeatedly address the issues that distinguished one community from another. Both situations provided a certain kind of dialectic within which Augustine defined himself, in which Manichaeism served as far more than merely a negative pole, but in a more positive way provided a framing mechanism giving a certain slant and set of emphases to Augustine's particular “Catholic” identity. Through Augustine's case, therefore, we have the opportunity to bring into focus the relationship between “Manichaean” and “Catholic” Christianity, and deepen our understanding of what was at stake between these two alternative visions of the Christian tradition.

In order to grasp the manner in which Manichaeism first shaped Augustine's religious sensibilities, and then continued to elicit responses from him that kept him out of the Catholic mainstream, we need to leave behind hagiographical attitudes towards Augustine, whether they be theologically motivated, or the product of secular appreciations of his intellectual or rhetorical brilliance. With rare exceptions, Augustine was not writing for the ages, but for immediate effect on the people around him in North Africa. His concern with Manichaeans after he had left their company arose first

from his ongoing personal involvement with individuals who remained a part of that community, and only secondarily did it entail grappling with Manichaeism as a system of belief and practice, either as an extension of that personal involvement, or in the course of doing his polemical duty within the Catholic Church. We should not treat the Manichaean and Catholic communities with which Augustine involved himself as two abstract -isms. Nor should we assume that Augustine had familiarity with the full set of attributes we assign to each of these religions from our study of all witnesses to them.¹ Augustine made his allegiances in a specific, regional environment, and in relation to specific individuals or small, immediate circles of people, both as a “Manichaean” and as a “Catholic.” We need to conceive of his time as a Manichaean in association with close friends such as Alypius, Honoratus, Nebridius, Romanianus, the unnamed friend who died in Thagaste, as well as in contact with the various anonymous Electi to which he refers including, at a critical juncture, the imposing figure of Faustus. Similarly, he found his way to Nicene Christianity in the specific and in some ways peculiar conditions of Milan, in relation to individuals such as Ambrose, Simplician, and the several socially well-connected individuals mentioned in his early literary compositions and correspondence.² His commitment had to survive his departure from this unique environment in Milan and return to Africa, where he found it impossible to escape the associations of his Manichaean past.

1. AUGUSTINE’S DEBT TO MANICHAISM

As a Manichaean Augustine had already professed a commitment to the one supreme God, to Christ the divine revealer and savior, to Paul the true apostle, to the (qualified) authority of New Testament writings, to an ascetic ethic, and to a conception of the self as an exiled soul longing for a return to God. The presence of any of these elements in the writings he composed immediately after converting to Nicene Christianity proves nothing in itself about the rapidity and depth of his indoctrination into his new faith. Instead, we witness a gradual adaptation of these prior *symboli* imparted to him by a Manichaean Christianity to their meaning within

¹ See Richard Lim, “Unity and Diversity Among Western Manichaeans: A Reconsideration of Mani’s *sancta ecclesia*,” *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 35 (1989) 231–250.

² See Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*, rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000) 69–107.

a new ideological system, the Nicene-Catholic one. So when he said in *The Academics* that his new commitment to Platonism would not alter his resolve “not to depart from Christ” as an authority (*Acad.* 3.20.43), Augustine signaled a self-understanding by which he had already been committed to Christ as a *Manichaeian*—just as was the case with such Manichaeian spokesmen as Faustus (*C. Faust.* 20.2), Fortunatus (*C. Fort.* 3), or Felix (*C. Fel.* 1.20), all of whom claimed for themselves the identity of *christianus*.

Faustus himself had been attracted to Manichaeism from paganism, he reports, “solely by the fame, and the virtues, and the wisdom of our liberator, Jesus Christ” (*C. Faust.* 13.1). He understood himself, then, to be joining a branch of the larger Christian movement sweeping across the Roman world in the fourth century. We must remember how loosely defined this movement was, despite the various successive efforts to formulate an “orthodoxy” supplanting each other throughout the century. For Faustus, as later for Augustine, the Manichaeans remained a viable option for being a “Christian” at the time that they respectively made their choices; and both in turn ran up against the forces that sought to eliminate that option in the 380s CE. Neither would have seen themselves as choosing a non-Christian religious identity. The Manichaeans of North Africa maintained an understanding of Mani as “the apostle of Jesus Christ,” as the uniquely qualified interpreter of Christ, but not as a replacement for Christ or savior in his own right.

From all of the evidence available to us, Augustine first “came to Christ,” if we may use that expression, through Manichaeism. He had left the faith of his mother so far behind that his teacher in Madauros assumed him to be a fellow pagan (*Ep.* 16). This perception simply reflects the fact that his interests were more intellectual than religious, and that he immersed himself in the nominally pagan classics of the Roman literary and intellectual tradition. He chose a secular professional career centered on this tradition, as a rhetor and teacher, and remained a layperson both as a Manichaeian and as a Catholic, until forced against his will into the priesthood. He had an interest in astronomy and astrology (*Conf.* 4.3.5–6), in Cicero (*Conf.* 3.4.7) and Aristotle (*Conf.* 4.16.28)—but after a decade as a Manichaeian, he had resolved “not to depart from Christ.”

Fired by a desire to adopt a “life in philosophy,” the young Augustine could find no actual philosophical community to join in Carthage. The intellectual environment reflected in Cicero was across the sea and four hundred years in the past. Apparently, the only group on the Carthaginian scene that seemed to Augustine to even remotely approximated such a philosophical focus was the Manichaeian cell operating there. We can understand this

choice if we remember what was meant by a “life in philosophy.”³ Augustine understood philosophy to be a lifestyle, a self-disciplined existence that would subjugate the body and its passions and prepare the mind for perception of higher realities. The Manichaeans had practices of self-cultivation that seemed to carry through what he expected in such a life in philosophy from his reading. But by joining them, he necessarily accepted, alongside of what he regarded as philosophical elements, the sort of discourse and practices that we think of as “religious.”

Exactly where Augustine would have drawn a distinction between philosophy and religion at that time remains uncertain. Before we dismiss the question as anachronistic, we need to consider that Cicero himself recognized such a distinction, and could conceive of philosophers belonging to very different intellectual outlooks, yet sharing a commitment to conventional religious discourse and practice. Besides such classical sources, however, Augustine also had familiarity with some aspects of late antique philosophy, which complicated and in some respects blurred the distinction. He seems to have read quite a bit of Pythagorean literature,⁴ reflecting a model of the life in philosophy in which confession, prayers, hymn-singing, and fasting might all find a place as methods of self-cultivation.

Nor was there anything strange in the members of a “philosophical” group reading and analyzing religious myths, as Augustine would have almost immediately discovered the Manichaeans doing. He would have brought to this experience the intellectual expectation of his culture that a “myth,” by definition, cloaked rational doctrines under symbolic language.⁵ He patiently awaited further initiation into these philosophical truths concealed beneath the Manichaean myth, but they never came (*Conf.* 5.3.3; *beat. vit.* 1.4–5; *util. cred.* 8.20). They did not come, not because such an allegorical decoding was reserved for the Elect, to whose ranks he did not succeed in advancing.⁶ Rather, they did not come because there was no such philosophical decoding of myth in the Manichaean tradition. Whatever we think

³ See Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995).

⁴ See Carl Andresen, “Gedanken zum philosophischen Bildungshorizont Augustins vor und in Cassiciacum: Contra academ. II 6, 14.f.; III 17–19, 37–42,” *Augustinus* 13 (1968) 77–98; Aimé Solignac, “Doxographies et manuels dans la formation philosophique de saint Augustin,” *Recherches Augustiniennes* 1 (1958) 113–148; Takeshi Kato, “Melodia interior. Sur le traité *De pulchro et apto*,” *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 11 (1965) 229–239.

⁵ See Luc Brisson, *How Philosophers Saved Myths: Allegorical Interpretation and Classical Mythology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

⁶ *Pace* François Decret, *L’Afrique manichéenne (IVe–Ve siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1978), 244 ff.

Mani might have intended by his storytelling, the Manichaean tradition after him had dogmatized his discourse in a strictly literal sense, seeing him as the “Hermeneut” (*Hom.* 61.16) who decoded prior religious discourse, but whose own words were meant in a perfectly plain and literal sense without need of further interpretation. Based on Augustine’s later fondness for allegorical interpretations of sacred texts, in line with the broader hermeneutical assumptions of his culture, the Manichaean attitude quite probably suggested to him that they were not as “philosophical” as he had initially thought.

We lack the sources to tell us how Augustine’s impression of Manichaeism evolved over the decade of his close association with its adherents. Just how quickly and how well did he become familiar with its full “religious” content? This question has been a subject of recent debate.⁷ We have no substantiated reason to think Augustine was deprived of the basic texts of Manichaeism just because he was a layperson.⁸ Nor was Augustine a typical layperson. He was a highly literate person and avid reader; and he refers specifically to reading Manichaean works as a Manichaean, as Johannes van Oort has demonstrated definitively.⁹ So access to information was not a problem.

Yet we must remember that Augustine brought a classical education to his reading, and was bound to understand—or misunderstand, as the case

⁷ On the question of Augustine’s knowledge/engagement with Manichaeism, Joseph Ratzinger (in his review of A. Adam, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte in Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 10 [1967] 217–222), takes the position that Augustine was not a very engaged Manichaean, while J. Kevin Coyle (“What Did Augustine Know about Manichaeism When He Wrote His Two Treatises *De Moribus?*” in J. van Oort et al., eds., *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West: Proceedings of the Fribourg-Utrecht Symposium of the International Association of Manichaean Studies* [Leiden: Brill, 2001], 43–56), has gone so far as to suggest that Augustine actually read very little Manichaean literature. The opposite view has been taken above all by Johannes van Oort, with the latter going so far as to credit Augustine with a comprehensive understanding of Manichaeism (“Augustinus und der Manichäismus,” in A. Van Tongerloo and J. van Oort, eds., *The Manichaean NOÏΣ. Proceedings of the International Symposium, 31st of July to 3rd of August 1991* [Louvain: IAMS-CHR, 1995], 289–307). Coyle op. cit., 45, rightly notes that van Oort’s appraisal of Augustine’s knowledge of Manichaeism was based on the latter’s work as a whole, and did not distinguish between what he had learned as a Manichaean, and what he learned later in his polemical engagement. Subsequently, van Oort has attempted to meet this objection in “The Young Augustine’s Knowledge of Manichaeism: An Analysis of the *Confessiones* and Some Other Relevant Texts,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 62 (2008) 441–466.

⁸ Pace Coyle op. cit.

⁹ See van Oort op. cit., as well as *idem*, “Heeding and Hiding their Particular Knowledge? An Analysis of Augustine’s Dispute with Fortunatus,” in T. Fuhrer, ed., *Die christlich-philosophischen Diskurse der Spätantike: Texte, Personen, Institutionen* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2008), 113–121.

may be—certain aspects of Manichaean doctrine against that background, especially in cases where he might easily conflate a Manichaean concept with a classical one to which it bore a superficial resemblance. At the same time, he had his own peculiar interests, which means, for example, that while he was aware of Manichaean *criticism* of the Bible, he apparently paid less attention to how Manichaeans used the Bible in more positive expositions of their faith. I think this sort of partial and selective attention and understanding best explains why Augustine, as a Catholic, could be taken by surprise by aspects of Manichaeism he had not fully appreciated when he had adhered to the system, and why we can see him learning more about Manichaeism as he continued to study its texts for polemical purposes.¹⁰ In this qualified way, then, we might embrace the late J. Kevin Coyle's assertion that "Augustine as a Catholic presbyter and bishop came to learn aspects of Manichaeism which had been beyond the reach of Augustine the Manichaean Hearer."¹¹ That is, he was re-exposed to certain Manichaean tenets that he had neglected in his own time as a Manichaean; he heard things differently in the words of Fortunatus, Felix, Secundinus, even Faustus, than he had heard them before, and perhaps in this way was driven to take up again Manichaean texts he had already read as a Hearer, with fresh perspective on what he was reading.

The question of Augustine's access to information as a Manichaean, therefore, must be distinguished from the issue of his accurate intellectual grasp of that information. The most telling indication that he at times went far astray in his understanding is his report of his own attitude of self-exoneration from sin and lack of enthusiasm for confession (*Conf.* 5.10.18), when we know how central this practice was for Manichaeism, and how one Manichaean text after another stresses responsibility, compunction, and craving for forgiveness. Due to misconstruals such as this, we should no more exaggerate his expertise than we should his ignorance. Yet even on this point, it is possible that Augustine came to grasp the full import of

¹⁰ To a certain extent, then, I take a position close to that of Ratzinger. "Im übrigen sollte man doch auch bedenken, daß Augustin als Manichäer Laie, nicht Theologe war, und daß die geistige Arbeit seiner manichäischen Zeit den Problemen der rhetorischen Kultur der Spätantike galt, wie die Titel seiner verlorenen Veröffentlichungen aus dieser Periode zeigen. Allem nach hat er sich in der Zeit vor der religiösen Krise, die zur Bekehrung führte, mit religiöser Literatur nicht wesentlich mehr befaßt, als ein gebildeter Akademiker es auch heute tut, und so dürfte seine literarische Kenntnis des Manichäismus verhältnismäßig gering geblieben sein; erst in der Zeit der Auseinandersetzung hat er sich etwas mehr damit beschäftigt. Insofern ist der vorchristliche Augustin eher durch die Namen Cicero und Vergil als durch den Namen Mani zu erfassen" (Ratzinger *op. cit.*, 222).

¹¹ Coyle *op. cit.*, 56.

Manichaean confessional practices *as a Catholic*, and incorporated that new understanding into an appeal to them woven into his *Confessions*—a subject to which we will return.

The tension between Augustine's interest in a life in philosophy, and the non-philosophical character of certain Manichaean teachings and practices, came to a head in his time with the Manichaean bishop Faustus. Faustus in some way shocked and disappointed Augustine's assumptions about what he was doing as a Manichaean. That much is clear. But recovering the character of that shock, and its possible consequences for Augustine, is complicated. I have made an attempt to sort out the evidence in two previous publications, where I have drawn parallels between the stances taken by Faustus and the principles of Academic Scepticism, and suggested how his philosophically-motivated disinterest in defending core Manichaean doctrines delivered the shock to Augustine's expectations that ultimately led him out of the Manichaean community.¹² Others are not convinced that Faustus's manner of handling questions about Manichaean dogma had its inspiration and motivation in an informed philosophical scepticism.¹³ Be that as it may, there is sufficient consistency between the stance he takes in his public discourses, the *Capitula*, and what Augustine reports of his private attitudes among fellow Manichaeans in *Confessions* to understand Faustus as adamantly committed to a program of winning assent by reason alone, without resort to authority. This was the Manichaean program to which Augustine had been won over.

I fell among these people for no other reason than that they declared that they would put aside all overawing authority, and by pure and simple reason would bring to God those who were willing to listen to them, and so deliver them from all error.¹⁴ (*util. cred.* 1.2)

For Faustus, this delivery from error and bringing to God required only demonstration of the dualistic premise of the Manichaean world view, accompanied by those teachings directly related to practice, and to the formation of moral selves. Thus, he neither pursued the program of reason alone

¹² Jason BeDuhn, "A Religion of Deeds: Scepticism in the Doctrinally Liberal Manichaeism of Faustus and Augustine," in J. BeDuhn, ed., *New Light on Manichaeism: Papers from the Sixth International Congress on Manichaeism* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 1–28; *idem*, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma, 1: Conversion and Apostasy, 373–388 C.E.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 106–134.

¹³ Johannes van Oort, "Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma in Context," *Vigiliae Christianae* 65 (2011) 543–567.

¹⁴ Quoted from J.H.S. Burleigh, *Augustine: Earlier Writings* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953), 292.

in defense of every detail of the Manichaean system, nor resorted to authority to substantiate parts of the system not amenable to rational proofs, but displayed a pragmatic focus which coincides with the distinctive character of Academic Scepticism among the philosophical schools represented in the literature of the time. He expressly ridiculed dogmatic obsession with trivial questions, and refrained himself from insisting upon the certainty of Manichaean teaching in several areas (e.g., the nature of Christ's incarnation, *Faust.* 5.2–3; the interpolation of particular passages into the Bible, *Faust.* 11.1, 18.3, 19.1, 33.1–3; even the visionary basis of Mani's teachings, *Faust.* 32.20). Evidently, he included Manichaean astronomical and astrological teachings in this category of inessentials, and declined to engage Augustine on the subject. For Augustine's own passion for astrology and astronomy at the time, of course, these were the most interesting and "most difficult" questions.¹⁵

When I raised these points for consideration and discussion he refused courteously enough ... for he knew that he did not know about these matters, and was not ashamed to admit it ... This attitude endeared him to me all the more, for the restraint of a mind that admits its limitations is more beautiful than the beautiful things about which I desired to learn. I found him consistent in this approach to all the more difficult and subtle questions.¹⁶ (*Conf.* 5.7.12)

Augustine, for his own strategic narrative reasons, was content to identify Faustus's motives with a Socratean *modestus* and *cautus* about what he did not know, without spoon-feeding his readers the obvious association of Socrates with the Academy, which identified him as the ideal sceptic.

In no way do I wish to suggest that Faustus was a *philosopher*, that he had particular expertise in the Fourth Academy beyond the derivative references to it in the writings of someone like Cicero, or that he was an adherent of skepticism masquerading as a Manichaean. Instead, just as we may say that Ambrose and Augustine were Catholics with Platonist tendencies, or even "Platonist Catholics," so we may say that Faustus was a Manichaean with tendencies toward Academic Scepticism, or one who used the Academic Sceptical tradition as a resource in service of his adherence to Manichaeism. Moreover, just as in the case of the two renowned Catholic leaders, so with Faustus, we cannot speak of a pure, unmixed, or strict application

¹⁵ Thomas O'Laughlin, "The *Libri Philosophorum* and Augustine's Conversions," in T. Finan and V. Twomey, eds., *The Relationship between Neoplatonism and Christianity* (Dublin: Four Courts, 1992), 101–125.

¹⁶ Translation from Maria Boulding, *The Confessions* (Hyde Park: New City Press, 1997), 121.

of philosophical principles from a single school, but only of a dominant philosophical conversation partner within a very loose field of popular philosophical discourse typical of late antiquity.

Augustine's own serious dalliance with Academic Scepticism seems to have occurred only at the end of his time as a Manichaeon, that is, in the immediate aftermath of the time he spent in religious and secular study with Faustus. Traditionally, it has been taken as an intellectual reaction to the disappointment of Faustus; but this characterization arises from the mistake of considering Augustine's scepticism as an alternative to, and departure from, Manichaeism. In other words, the attribution to Augustine of a distinct "sceptical period" *after* his "Manichaean period," and constituting a reaction to, rather than influence of, Faustus, depends on an erroneous understanding of Augustine's status vis-à-vis Manichaeism in the years immediately following his time with Faustus (as well as a misapprehension of his reasons for leaving Africa). It has since come to be recognized that Augustine identifies himself as an adherent of Academic Scepticism *at the same time* he continued to be a Manichaeon, in Rome and initially in Milan. He had left Africa not in order to abandon Manichaeism, but precisely in order to be able to maintain his commitment to it at a time of persecution.¹⁷ Augustine continued to observe Manichaean practices, and persisted in viewing Manichaean doctrines as plausible, i.e., not demonstrably false (*Conf.* 5.14.25).

Augustine emerged from a decade as a Manichaeon, then, as a man who, despite frustrations and disappointment with Manichaeism, had learned to value a certain kind of religious life, and was determined "not to depart from Christ" as an authority figure. Not that he aspired to be anything but a layperson and philosopher. He intended to "betake myself to philosophy" (*ord.* 1.2.5; cf. *Acad.* 1.1.3; *beat. vit.* 1.4); it was *philosophia* who he imagined beckoning to him in a womanly form at the crisis of his so-called conversion (*Acad.* 2.2.6; cf. *beat. vit.* 1.4; *Sol.* 1.13.22)—an image he would re-identify as *continentia* only in hindsight (*Conf.* 8.11.27). He happily continued in his secular career, he wrote philosophical treatises on metaphysics, epistemology, and psychology, and planned a program of self-cultivation not through religious disciplines, but through an ascending education in the liberal arts (*ord.* 2.14.34 ff.; *Sol.* 2.34–35).¹⁸ All the same, more than a decade as a Manichaeon

¹⁷ See Jason BeDuhn, "Augustine Accused: Megalios, Manichaeism, and the Inception of the *Confessions*," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17 (2009) 85–124.

¹⁸ See H.-I. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (Paris: Boccard, 1958), 161–327.

apparently had instilled certain religious reflexes and habits in him, such that, when he left the Manichaeans, he adopted not just an alternative philosophy—Platonism—but also, as complement to it, an alternative religious system—the Catholic one. In other words, he was able to take up the life of a religious man because he had warmed to religion as a Manichaean, and found in the Catholic Church of Milan a similarly elevated level of intellectual engagement.

But who was this “Christ” to whom he maintained his allegiance? He tells us himself, in the works written around the time of his conversion, and also in hindsight in *Confessions*, where he retrospectively criticizes the inadequacy of his understanding of Christ at that time. We note, first, that Christ stands in good company, surrounded by other sages who excelled in immediate perception of truth: Pythagoras, Plato, and Plotinus. Western Manichaeans likewise regarded Pythagoras and Plato, along with Hermes Trismegistus, as authentic sages of truth.¹⁹ In one sense, Augustine regarded Jesus as simply the most accomplished of these figures, the one who had most perfectly and directly served as a conduit of truth to humanity (*Conf.* 7.19.25). Yet there was also the Christ who stood for this truth itself, as the “Power and Wisdom of God.” The characterization, derived from 1 Cor 1:24, was a favorite among the Manichaeans, referring to Christ in his transcendental aspect as *nous* and *dynamis*; and it likewise was Augustine’s favorite way of referring to Christ throughout his early post-conversion writings (e.g., *Acad.* 2.1.1–2; *beat. vit.* 4.34; *quant. an.* 33.76; *mor.* 1.13.22, 16.28). In either respect, Augustine understood Christ in the Manichaean sense as a revealer, as a being who even in his death and resurrection simply communicated certain insights and lessons for others to learn. Totally missing from the early “Catholic” Augustine was any sense of Christ’s death as a redemptive work.

Augustine did not simply shed all traces of his conditioning and thinking as a Manichaean when he received baptism and became a member of the Catholic Church. He took the latter step with only limited exposure to Nicene doctrine and Catholic practice. He appears to suggest that he was hearing an exposition of the concept of the incarnation of Christ for the first time during his Lenten preparation for baptism in the spring of 387 CE (*ord.* 2.9.27). This no doubt posed an intellectual challenge to him, for whom the Platonic distinction between the intelligible and material

¹⁹ See Ephrem Syrus, *Against Mani* 208.22–24 (C.W. Mitchell, *S. Ephraim’s Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion, and Bardaisan*, London: Williams and Norgate, 1912–1921), xcvi–xcix; cf. *Faust* 13.1.

held such importance. In *Confessions* he transposed this issue into an imagined pre-conversion intellectual progress (*Conf.* 7.9.13–14); but his early post-conversion writings show that his struggle to understand the incarnation was still in its early stages at the time they were composed.²⁰ Augustine struggled similarly with the idea of a physical resurrection of the dead, preferring the Manichaean-Platonic image of a disembodied soul returning to its original home (*quant. an.* 33.76; cf. *ord.* 1.8.23–24; *Sol.* 1.2.4, 1.6.12–7.14, 1.13.23), just as he clung to the idea of an eternal immaterial realm over the Nicene tenet of a future Kingdom of God (*ord.* 1.11.32; cf. *Retr.* 1.3.2). We fail to see him put his primary effort into mastering these primary creedal concepts that distinguished the Nicene position from the Manichaean one. He had greater interest in the ramifications of Platonic immaterialism. Only the distinctive Nicene answer to the problem of evil attracted his interest (*ord.* 2.17.46; *lib. arb. passim*).

Augustine could not simply carry on his philosophical pursuits in peace, however. A further step in his progress between Manichaean and Catholic Christianity came with his obligations as a convert to employ his rhetorical skills in the production of “apostate literature” targeting the Manichaeans. This work had the dual effect of furthering his own Catholic indoctrination through repetition of key Nicene *symboli*, while at the same time constantly engaging his past, negated self as reflected in his still unconverted Manichaean friends. Augustine produced several such works alongside of his more philosophical compositions, including *De moribus*, *De vera religione*, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*. We cannot really be sure if he would have produced many more of such works alongside his more serious philosophical pursuits, just as we cannot assume that his forays into scriptural interpretation in them necessarily represented the leading edge of an envisioned exegetical effort on the massive scale of his later career. Augustine might have had his life all planned out at this point, but we cannot assume that the plan corresponded with what subsequently occurred.

The final stage in Augustine’s shift in circumstances, then, came with his forced ordination, and change of profession. His life in philosophy was now largely at an end, and he had obligations to recite and expound upon biblical language on a regular basis. At the time of his ordination, he protested his completely inadequate preparation for such a task (*Ep.* 21). He was forced to learn on the job, and gradually familiarized himself with the Bible, while avidly pursuing any exegetical work he could find to guide him in

²⁰ See, e.g., *QA* 33.76, and the discussion in William Mallard, “The Incarnation in Augustine’s Conversion,” *Recherches Augustiniennes* 15 (1980) 80–98.

applying the allegorical method to translate biblical content into maxims and lessons for living, as well as deeper philosophical propositions about the ultimate meaning of life. This second wave of “Catholicization”—following his initial conversion—did not, however, spell the end of his engagement with Manichaeism, and he found that his liminal status *between* the two forms of Christianity had become something like a permanent part of his identity.

2. AUGUSTINE’S MEDIATING POSITION BETWEEN MANICHAEAN AND CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

Augustine had two reasons for remaining, despite the risks, between Manichaeism and Catholic Christianity in his literary persona as a leader of the Catholic community. In the first place, he had friends among the Manichaeans, for whose conversion he labored to a remarkable extent. His efforts in this regard were neither perfunctory gestures nor performances for his Catholic peers. He went out of his way to invoke the bonds of friendship and past shared experience,²¹ as well as to sympathize with certain appealing features of Manichaean teaching.²² None of this would have endeared him to the more conservative leaders of the African Catholic Church, just as they would have been displeased by Augustine’s hints in various places that he continued to converse with these “heretics” in private, and not just in public debate. The latter more public engagement belongs to the second reason Augustine took his stand between Manichaean and Catholic Christians: as an informed apostate, he possessed a unique vantage from which to challenge and resist Manichaeans on the contested ground of “Christianity,” over which his past and present communities competed. Manichaeism occupies a part of Augustine’s rhetorical *oeuvre* comparable to that devoted to the Donatists and Pelagians, and well eclipsing that devoted to paganism or Judaism, because it represents a rival option of *Christian* faith—a distinct and parallel trajectory of Christian development which itself was critical of the “semi-Christianity” of the Catholics.

To understand how Manichaeism positioned itself as an alternative, and indeed “true,” Christianity, we should think in terms of initially distinct “eastern” and “western” trajectories of the Christian movement. These two rival forms of Christianity were separated at birth, acculturated in different

²¹ See, e.g., *Conf.* 4.1.1, 4.8.13; *duab. an.* 11.

²² See, e.g., *util. cred.* 1.2.

environments, each in their own way shaped by and adapted to local conditions. In the west, the Christian movement entered into a Hellenistic milieu that played a large role in defining its modes of expression, the context of assumptions within which it would possess meaning, its terminology and practices. In the east, the Christian movement developed on the basis of different cultural traditions and assumptions, producing something quite distinct, which we call Manichaeism. Each developed selected features of the shared root tradition, then collided in their differences, and proceeded to define themselves over against each other.

For this reason, Augustine could not just treat Manichaeism as a rejected “other,” a non-Christian heathenism. He had to deal with Manichaeans referencing Christian authorities (Jesus, Paul), and Christian themes (evil, world as prison, enslavement to sin, soul’s desire for “return” to “another world”). The Nicene tradition, in defining itself over against “heresies” such as Manichaeism, had made certain contrasting choices. It had downplayed or set aside features of the earlier Christian movement that had become too closely associated with its rivals, just as those rivals likewise represented developments of selected Christian themes. In the initial period following his conversion, Augustine could still emphasize what these distinct systems shared in their basic concepts and goals for human fulfillment (*mor.* 1,4.6–7.12). The North African environment proved far less cosmopolitan and tolerant, and Augustine had to contend with an intense three-way battle over the right to speak for Christianity among Donatist, Catholic, and Manichaean Christians.

From about 388 to 392 CE, Augustine dutifully repeated, explored, and expounded the established Nicene positions he had been taught as a convert, in all their obvious contrast to Manichaean views he had abandoned. The lingering common ground with his former religion eroded away, and he invoked Manichaean concepts only as a point of contrast to “true religion.” Then, for motives that he does not expressly identify, Augustine began to reverse himself, gradually appropriating certain elements of the Christian tradition that Manichaeism uniquely emphasized, and that had been neglected in the Nicene-Catholic tradition. While his motives remain uncertain, the context of his shift is clear: his ongoing struggle with the Manichaeans of North Africa, and his effort to convert them. This continuing encounter with Manichaeans brought to Augustine’s attention aspects of the Christian tradition that Nicene Christians had previously downplayed; among these, Paul’s witness to the debility of the will, previously discounted among Nicene Christians in favor of a free will position, stimulated Augustine to rethink the entire economy of salvation.

Such changes in Augustine's thinking in the 390s CE have been attributed to his personal psychology, a darkening of his view of himself and of humanity in general. Alternatively, they have been ascribed to a kind of inexorable logic gradually working itself out in his thought in isolation from anything going on around him. But such psychological or philosophical accounts are largely speculative, and will not take us very far towards historical conclusions. As a historian, I can fairly be accused of fixating on the surface of things, namely a historical context in which individuals such as Augustine do what they do. And when we look for such a context to Augustine's shift of positions in the 390s, we find nothing in the Catholic community (or the Donatist community that represented the other rival Christian community) that could have prompted the direction he took. Nor, I think, can we justify giving the credit to the words of Paul himself. Augustine had read Paul a number of times, and had always found in him precisely what he wanted to. Additionally, as a Catholic, he had joined an interpretive tradition that had effectively nullified the deterministic elements in Paul. The only ones reading Paul the way Augustine came to do in the 390s were the Manichaeans.

Undoubtedly, Augustine had been exposed as a Manichaean auditor to some version of this reading of Paul, and the related issues of the subjected human will and its dependence on grace for liberation. But what he reports of his personal understanding as a Manichaean suggests that his grasp of these points was somewhat confused. His recollection of thinking that "it is not we who sin, but some other nature within us that sins" (*Conf.* 5.10.18) comes straight out of a Manichaean reading of Romans 7:17–23. Yet he failed to take seriously the confessional self-scrutiny the Manichaeans associated with this psychological dualism, and his comprehension of the equally Paul-based Manichaean concept of grace remains unclear. This is one of those areas where he learned more about Manichaeism as a Catholic than he had understood while a Manichaean himself. Consequently, we find ourselves in the enviable position of being able to actually overhear the exchange in which Augustine received fresh instruction in just how Manichaeans read Paul on the subject of human will and divine grace.

At the end of August 392 CE, Fortunatus practically bludgeoned Augustine over the head with Paul, quoting a key set of verses that included Romans 7, Galatians 5, and Ephesians 2.²³ Augustine's vain attempt to force a free

²³ See Jason BeDuhn, "Did Augustine Win His Debate with Fortunatus?" in J.A. van den Berg, et al., eds., *In Search of Truth. Augustine, Manichaeism & other Gnosticism: Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty* (Leiden-Boston: Brill 2011), 463–479; M.E. Alflatt, "The Development of the Idea of Involuntary Sin in St. Augustine," *Recherches des Études Augustini-*

will reading on the latter passage tells us all we need to know about where Augustine stood at the time as a loyal son of the Catholic Church, defending its free will position. Yet the way Fortunatus read Paul that day is largely how Augustine read Paul five years later, albeit set within a radically different metaphysical and theological framework. In fact, Augustine yielded some ground to Fortunatus's reading of Paul in the immediate aftermath of their debate, but only to find a stronger position from which to resist Manichaeism. Drawing on sources within his own Nicene-Catholic tradition, as well as on a few suggestions of the Donatist writer Tyconius, he formulated a rather stable, well-reasoned conception that explained Paul's expression of disability as due to the power of self-created habit, while at the same time anchoring a qualified free will position around the idea of being saved by faith—that is, freely willing to throw oneself on the mercy of God to free one's good will from powerlessness amid mortality and engrained habit. He built into this construct an anti-Manichaean defense of the value of the Old Testament law as the instrument through which God exposes human incapacity to act rightly, and which thus drives those who want to be good to reliance on faith (e.g., *div. quaest. LXXXIII* 66.1).²⁴

This set of ideas, developed circa 392–396 CE, was a perfectly good answer to Fortunatus and the Manichaeans, sufficiently consistent with the established orthodox discourse on these subjects; and there was absolutely no reason for Augustine to abandon it. But abandon it he did almost immediately. In his response to questions on Romans posed by Simplician, Ambrose's successor as bishop of Milan, we see Augustine rapidly undercut the role of the Old Testament as he develops the idea of the congruent call, operating both externally in signs and internally in mental admonition, so closely resembling the operations of the Manichaean Light Nous. We see him disassemble his careful construct of salvation by faith, by giving this call an absolute power to elect to salvation regardless of the presence or absence of any predisposition to good will. We see him constructing, largely with reference to the same Pauline passages cited by Fortunatus, a very similar concept of salvation by grace, by some sort of predetermining election quite similar to what Fortunatus and Faustus argued Paul meant in speaking of the

ennes 20 (1974) 113–134; *idem*, “The Responsibility for Involuntary Sin in Saint Augustine,” *Recherches Augustiniennes* 10 (1975) 171–186; Elke Rutenhöfer, “Contra Fortunatum Disputatio: Die Debatte mit Fortunatus,” *Augustiniana* 42 (1992): 5–72; Paula Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defense of Jews and Judaism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 142–154.

²⁴ See Fredriksen, *op. cit.*, 155–189.

birth of the New Man, out of a mixed mass of good and bad elements in the Old Man that is not really a conscious and responsible human being at all. If today Christian theologians find in Paul the apostle of grace, it is due to the powerful influence of Augustine, the doctor of grace. And even though there are distinctive qualities to Augustine's doctrine of grace that have nothing to do with Manichaeism, the degree to which he found in Paul a source of such an idea derives from his unique position between Manichaean and Nicene-Catholic theology. So we can confirm the words of J. Kevin Coyle, "Without Manichaeism, there would still have been Augustine, perhaps even Augustine the great theologian; but it would have been a different Augustine, with a different theology."²⁵

At the risk of appearing to be something of a Hegelian, I suggest that Augustine in certain respects fashioned a historical synthesis out of the two conflicting traditions that had successively claimed his allegiance. Few shy away from saying as much about his blending of Platonism with Nicene Christianity, perhaps because they buy into Augustine's claim that Plato was himself a kind of anticipatory Christian. But to say as much of his use of Manichaean concepts stirs controversy because of the "heretical" or even "non-Christian" character of that tradition. I find little use for such predetermining boundary drawing. Everyone who came after Jesus within the Christian tradition could be fairly characterized as a "heretic" of one kind or another, because they introduced interpretations that cannot be shown to be inherent in the teachings of Jesus himself—Ambrose, Athanasius, Origen, Paul himself, are all Christian "heretics" in this regard. The question of what may or may not be "Christian" comes to more or less the same thing. If we are to avoid theologically normative assessments of what counts as Christian, we must accept a community's self-definition on whether or not they belong to a particular religious tradition.

We can definitively leave behind the portrayal of Mani in the polemical *Acta Archelai*, as someone who added to his teachings a veneer of Christian content as a last-minute marketing ploy.²⁶ A Christian impetus can be found in Mani's religion from its inception. But it is a Christian impetus received by Mani in a distinctive, Asiatic context—and that made all the difference. Just as Augustine found concordance between Christ and Plato, so Mani found key alignments between Christ and Zoroaster and the Buddha, among other spiritual forebears. Neither Augustine nor Mani considered themselves any

²⁵ J. Kevin Coyle, "Saint Augustine's Manichaean Legacy," *Augustinian Studies* 34 (2003) 1–22, at 22.

²⁶ See *Acta Archelai* 65,2–6.

less followers of Christ for doing so. Just as Augustine did not intend to depart from Christ in leaving Manichaeism and becoming a Platonist and Catholic, so Mani did not intend to depart from Christ in discerning a universal religious message equally revealed by prophets across the globe long before Jesus walked—or appeared to walk—upon the earth.

I would submit that Augustine, at least through the time when he composed *Confessions*, remained convinced of the earnestness of Manichaean aspirations to a spiritual, Christian life, however much he had concluded that Manichaeism itself did not possess the resources to properly nurture such aspirations. As mentioned before, one of the things Augustine appears to have gotten wrong in his own practice of Manichaean Christianity was his failure to internalize its confessional ethos. As a Catholic Christian, he often asserted that Manichaean belief in the inherent divinity of the soul necessarily precluded any sense of personal sinfulness. He reports this same deficiency in his own case in the narrative of *Confessions* (*Conf.* 5.10.18). And yet, he seems to have come to realize that Manichaeans at least aspired to a confessional attitude, however much their ideology counter-acted it. This realization provides the context for book 9 of *Confessions* where, as Annemaré Kotzé has convincingly demonstrated, he prescribes the biblical Psalms as the antidote to Manichaean self-exaltation.²⁷ If only they could see the effect the Psalms had on him, who once shared—as he saw it—their failure to truly confess. His rhetorical argument only works if he assumed they genuinely aspired to such a confessional orientation to God, if he could offer his “Catholic” method as a fulfillment of their “Manichaean” goals.

But even if he prescribed the words of the Old Testament as the humbling antidote that would make Manichaeans into Catholics, Augustine goes on in *Confessions* to radically qualify even the Bible’s authority in relation to what he seems to imagine Manichaeans and Catholics share in their common quest in search of truth. The Bible is, for Augustine, only a temporary instrument of this search, necessitated by the fall into matter and the obscurity of language (*Conf.* 13.20.28). Language itself is a consequence of fallenness and loss of that transparency of self that souls enjoy apart from the lying garment of the body (*Conf.* 13.23.34). If acceptance of the Old Testament constitutes one of the chief distinctions separating Manichaeans from what Faustus describes as the “semi-Christianity” of the Catholics, Augustine works to grind down this hurdle in order for the Manichaeans to clear it. So, in books 11–13 of *Confessions*, he first demonstrates how allegorical interpretation

²⁷ Annemaré Kotzé, “Reading Psalm 4 to the Manichaeans,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 55 (2001) 119–136.

takes away the features of the biblical text that offended the Manichaeans. That is, he does not defend the literal meaning of the text to which they objected, and insist they must withdraw those objections. Rather, implicitly treating their objections as valid, he points them to another level of meaning—a level that is *necessary* in acknowledgment of the validity of the problems with the literal level of meaning. Then, towards the end of book 13, Augustine pointedly identifies the Bible with the “firmament” God created in the Genesis story, which at one and the same time stabilizes human reality in this world while separating human beings from direct communion with God (*Conf.* 13.15.16–18). That is why, Augustine stresses, God will “roll up” both the firmament of the sky and the firmament of the Bible, when he welcomes among his elect those he has secretly selected, “before the firmament was made” (*Conf.* 13.23.33), both inside and outside the Catholic Church. These saved souls—chosen, called, enabled by God in a strikingly Manichaean conception of grace, belong to an ultimate reality that transcends the authority of the Bible and of the Church. Therefore, Augustine appears to imply, to temporarily accept the authority of the Catholic Church and its full Scripture amounts to a trifle, a mere “change of a few words and sentiments,” that his Manichaean friends just might be willing to do for both their immediate and ultimate good.²⁸

Augustine signals through the composition of *Confessions* that he saw himself as uniquely and providentially positioned between Manichaean and Catholic Christianity for just this purpose. He would carry on in his efforts for only a few more years, however. His hoped-for resolution of the division between Manichaean and Catholics—perhaps *too* creative, abstract, and mystical—failed to materialize in practical terms, and many of those he hoped to convert remained resolutely within the Manichaean camp. The tone of his anti-Manichaean writings became increasingly harsh, his new arguments more defensive than inviting. Ultimately, he sanctioned coercive measures to bring them into the Catholic Church, with only the consolation that, as fellow Christians, forced conversion would not require them to “depart from Christ.”

²⁸ For a full development of this interpretation of *Confessions* book 13, see Jason BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma, 2: Making a "Catholic" Self, 389–401 C.E.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

BIBLICAL QUOTATIONS IN FAUSTUS' *CAPITULA*

Jacob Albert van den Berg

1. INTRODUCTION

Faustus is an important witness to Manichaean beliefs in North-Africa in the time of Augustine for two reasons. Firstly, he was an important person: he ranked highly in Mani's Church, being one of its seventy-two bishops.¹ From Augustine's *Confessiones* we may also conclude that Faustus had a considerable reputation among the Manichaeans: he was considered to be the most important authority on questions about their teachings.² Secondly, Faustus was the author of the *Capitula*, which is the most extensive still extant Manichaean work originally written in Latin.³

Thanks to Augustine, the *Capitula* were preserved for posterity, because in his *Contra Faustum* Augustine first quoted Faustus' words *in extenso*, after which he commented on them.⁴ In this way, Augustine discussed every chapter of the *Capitula*, dealing with one separate *capitulum* in each of the books of his *Contra Faustum*.⁵

The most important subject in the *Capitula* concerns which parts of Scripture bear relevance to the real Christian.⁶ The *Capitula* contain many Biblical quotes both from the Old and the New Testament. Therefore, the work provides much important insight into the Manichaeans' use and appreciation of Scripture.

Faustus' *Capitula* also give us an opportunity to learn more about the young Augustine, because Faustus and the young Augustine knew each

¹ See *conf.* 5,7,3 (*CCL* 27: 58, 3; 2 ff.): *Iam uenerat Carthaginem quidam manichaeorum episcopus, Faustus nomine ...*

² See van den Berg 2010: ch. III, n. 34.

³ Cf. Wurst 2001/2012:307.

⁴ See *c. Faust.* 1,1 (*CSEL* 25,1: 251, 19 ff.): *Commodum autem arbitror sub eius nomine uerba eius ponere et sub meo responsionem meam.*

⁵ See Augustine's conclusion in *c. Faust.* 33,9 (*CSEL* 25,1: 796, 14 f.): *Quapropter post omnes Fausti calumnias refutatas dumtaxat horum eius capitulorum ...* Cf. van den Berg 2010:181–184.

⁶ Faustus called Catholic Christians 'semichristiani' (*c. Faust.* 1,2).

other quite well. In his introduction to *c. Faust.*, Augustine explicitly refers to the story of his encounter with the Manichaean bishop, as well his disappointment with Faustus, which Augustine describes as an important development on his way to baptism.⁷ Besides, Augustine sometimes uses his specific knowledge about Faustus in *c. Faust.*, not only to introduce him, but also to refute his arguments.⁸ These biographical issues are indicative of the fact that Faustus' words bring us close to the young Augustine and will possibly give important insights into the still somewhat hidden years of Augustine. The opinions and beliefs of the young Augustine, especially those regarding his Scriptural knowledge and his opinions about the contents of the Bible, may well be reflected in Faustus' words, because Faustus' work is meant to instruct Manichaeans for their debates with Catholic Christians.⁹ In his younger years, Augustine was involved in such discussions.¹⁰ It is quite possible that Augustine was by no means surprised by the contents of the *Capitula* when he received the volume, because he already knew its discussions, as well as the Biblical texts involved.

All this is important, because scholars still opine that Augustine first started to read and discuss the Bible when he had become a Catholic Christian, or even after his appointment as a Catholic priest.¹¹ The many Biblical quotes in *c. Faust.* may well suggest that scholars should rethink this opinion.

Of course, we need to be cautious on this point. Since Augustine says in his introduction to *c. Faust.* that he received a copy of the book and that he wrote about its author in the *Confessiones*,¹² it should be concluded that he did not read Faustus' book before 400.¹³ This is at least 13 years after

⁷ *C. Faust.* 1,1 (6f.): noueram ipse hominem, quemadmodum eum commemoravi in libris Confessionum mearum. See *Conf.* 5.

⁸ This is the case in *c. Faust.* 5. In this book Faustus claims to be a real Christian because he obeys the rule of Jesus, for example, about not carrying money in purses, and because in his life one can observe the blessings of the gospel, as he is poor, meek, a peacemaker, pure in heart, and so on. In 5,5 Augustine reminds his readers that the Manichaeans did not have money in purses, but that they have money in boxes and bags. The following words are aimed directly at Faustus: sleeping in a down-filled bed with blankets of goatskins, which is more luxurious than the bed his poor father used to sleep in.

⁹ *C. Faust.* 1,2: 4–7.

¹⁰ See van den Berg 2010:58.

¹¹ For example, Houghton (2008:44 ff.) minimizes possible Manichaean influence on Augustine's knowledge of Scripture.

¹² *C. Faust.* 1,1 (CSEL 25,1; 251, 8–12): hic quoddam uolumen edidit ... quod cum uenisset in manus nostras ...

¹³ Although this appears rather obvious, one cannot be completely certain about this

his baptism and some 16 years after their last meeting. It is quite possible that Faustus composed his book after Augustine's conversion to Catholic Christianity, and that Faustus' opinions had changed over the years, or that meantime his knowledge of Scripture had increased.

We may suppose that the analysis of Faustus' Biblical quotations will provide us with some clues about Augustine's knowledge of Scripture during his Manichaeian years.

2. CONTEXT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT QUOTES

Because of the quantity of the work itself and the large number of Biblical quotations, the focus here is on the Old Testament. This is still a rather large field, and to come to grips with it, it is useful to have an idea of the context of the quotations.

Whereas Adimantus' *Disputationes*, another important Manichaeian work that was dedicated to Scriptural issues, seem to have been intended for a more offensive purpose,¹⁴ the *Capitula* are written for a more defensive task, as explicitly stated by Faustus himself:

Although sufficiently and even more than that, the errors of the Jewish superstition have been brought to light, and likewise the deception of the semi-Christians has abundantly been detected by the most learned Adimantus—the only person whom we have to study after our blissful father Manichaeus—it seems not unhelpful, dear brethren, to write for you these short and polished answers on account of the crafty and cunning statements from the conferences with us; by these, you yourselves should be equipped to answer them vigilantly, when they should want to surround you as well with deception by means of trifling questions, in accordance with the habit of their forefather, the serpent.¹⁵

question. In relation to Adimantus' *Disputationes*, Augustine also said in *Retractationes* I,22,1 that the work fell into his hands (uenerunt in manus meas ...). There is, however, sound reason to suppose that Augustine knew the work from his Manichaeian years; see van den Berg 2010:59.

¹⁴ See van den Berg 2010:167 f.

¹⁵ *C. Faust.* 1, 2 (*CSEL* 25,1: 251, 22–252, 7): Satis superque in lucem iam traductis erroribus ac Iudaicae superstitionis simul et semichristianorum abunde detecta fallacia a doctissimo scilicet et solo nobis post beatum patrem nostrum Manichaeum studendo Adimanto non ab re uisum est, fratres carissimi, haec quoque breuia uobis et concinna responsa propter callidas et astutas conferentium nobiscum propositiones scribere, quo cum idem uos ex more parentis sui serpentis captiosius circumuenire questiunculis uoluerint, et ipsi ad respondendum uigilanter eis sitis instructi.

The Catholic Christians' posing of questions determines the strategy of Faustus and, furthermore, there is something of an educational purpose to the book.¹⁶

My earlier impression of the *Capitula*—a view shared by others—was that it lacks any structure.¹⁷ Rather recently, a specialist such as François Decret wrote that the *Capitula* lacks any coherence and that we cannot be sure whether Faustus or Augustine is responsible for the order in the book.¹⁸ Paul Monceaux, however, even tried to make a more or less systematic reconstruction of the *Capitula*.¹⁹

To my surprise, indeed some sort of arrangement can be identified in the questions that are related to the Old Testament. Firstly, there are five *Capitula* that discuss the basic question: 'Why do you not accept the Old Testament?' It concerns:

- *c. Faust.* 4: here, Faustus' answer is that he does not inherit anything from that testament, nor accepts that poor inheritance.
- *c. Faust.* 6: in this case, he says (in summary): I do not keep its precepts, nor do you.
- *c. Faust.* 8: at this occasion, Faustus quotes the word of Jesus not to put new with old,²⁰ to defend the position that the Old Testament should be left aside.
- *c. Faust.* 9: in this disputation the writings of the apostles are used as authorities to defend the position that the Old Testament should not be accepted.
- *c. Faust.* 10: here, Faustus argues that both the Old and the New Testament teach us not to covet what belongs to another.

The answers are at first straightforward (4 and 6) and then Faustus introduces arguments from the New Testament to deal with the same question: 'Why do you not accept the Old Testament?'

¹⁶ The introduction to the *Capitula* possibly indicates that the work was written during Faustus' time in exile. The defensive position of the book, as well as Faustus' aim to instruct other Manichaeans in how to answer difficult questions, could well indicate this.

¹⁷ See van den Berg 2010:183.

¹⁸ Decret 1996–2002:1246.

¹⁹ Monceaux 1924.

²⁰ *C. Faust.* 8,1 (*CSEL* 25,1; 305, 16–18): nam pannum, inquit, nouum nemo adsuit uestimento ueteri, alioquin maior scissura fiet. To this argument, Faustus adds (*CSEL* 25,1; 305, 26–306, 3): ... quam miser et stultus et insuper ingratus ero, si me ultra addixerō seruituti? quippe Paulus inde Galatas arguit, quod in circumcisionem relabentes, ad infirma repedarēt et egena elementa, quibus denuo seruire uellent.

A second cluster of questions on not accepting the Old Testament concerns the Catholic Christian belief that the Old Testament contains prophecies regarding Christ. This represents a further development of the argument, because it implies a kind of counterargument, dealing as it does with a reason why (parts of) the Old Testament should be accepted. Faustus' answers become more complicated and imply a greater depth of theological reasoning. Faustus argues against the possibility of prophecies concerning Christ in the Old Testament in the disputations quoted by Augustine in *c. Faust.* 12–15:

- *c. Faust.* 12 sets off with the question 'Why do you not accept prophets, as they made prophecies about Christ?' Faustus gives a threefold answer. Firstly, he says, 'I searched the Old Testament for prophecies, but found none.' Further, he quotes from Matthew 3:17,²¹ John 8:16 ff. and 10:38,²² to demonstrate that the testimony of the Father was sufficient for Jesus. He presents a third argument concerning the sinful lives of the prophets, referring to writings of 'our fathers.'²³ This *capitulum* seems to be a kind of shorthand for Manichaeans, because it briefly mentions some crucial arguments.²⁴
- *c. Faust.* 13 discusses: 'How can you worship Christ if you do not accept the prophets?' Faustus says that even if there are prophecies, they do not matter to him, because he is a gentile and not a Jew.
- In *c. Faust.* 14, Faustus explains why he does not accept Moses: It is because of his curses, for example against Jesus (cf. Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13).
- *c. Faust.* 15 introduces the question: 'Why do you not accept the Old Testament?' In this case, Faustus' answer comprises a compilation of elements already found in *c. Faust.* 4, 6 and 10 with a more intensive sense, because of the use of the metaphor of adultery. Rather unexpectedly at this point, Faustus uses the example of a vessel, being

²¹ Hic est filius meus, dilectissimus, credite illi (*CSEL* 25,1; 329, 12 f.).

²² Etsi ego testifcor de me, testimonium meum uerum est, quia non sum solus. nam et in lege uestra scriptum est: duorum hominum testimonium uerum est. Ego sum qui testifcor de me, et testifcatur de me qui me misit pater (*CSEL* 25,1; 329, 17–21); si mihi non creditis, dicens, operibus credite (*CSEL* 25,1; 329, 22 f.).

²³ Alioquin nihil eos de Christo prophetasse abunde iam parentum nostrorum libris ostensum est. ego uero illud adiciam, quia si Hebraici uates Christum scientes et praedicantes tam flagitiose uixerunt (*CSEL* 25,1; 330, 10–14).

²⁴ Faustus says (*CSEL* 25,1; 330, 7–12): quapropter haec strictim interim et castigate ad interrogationem tuam responderim, quia quaeris, cur non accipiamus prophetas.

full and fulfilled. Recently I suggested that the book *Modion* provides the background for this image.²⁵

This second stage of argument could be seen as a kind of preparation for a third stage, which is concerned with two New Testament texts that seem to imply that one should accept the Old Testament. This could be regarded as the next counterargument from the Catholic Christian standpoint, because it concerns texts that imply that Christ himself said that Moses and the prophets wrote about him. In a discussion with Catholic Christians, the words of Jesus comprise the most sensitive area.²⁶ Therefore, Faustus' answers are quite long and have a personal, even emotional character:

- *c. Faust.* 16 starts with the questions: 'Why don't you accept Moses, since Christ said: Moses wrote about me, and: If you should believe Moses, you will also believe me' (John. 5:46). This *capitulum* can be regarded as an elaboration of *c. Faust.*12. There, Faustus quotes from John.²⁷ In *c. Faust.* 13,5 Augustine reacts to these texts by asking why Faustus did not take into account the text under discussion in this *capitulum*.²⁸ So the discussion in *c. Faust.* 12, Augustine's reaction to it in *c. Faust.* 13, and the *capitulum* discussed here, may well reflect a common line of argument in the debates between Catholic and Manichaeian Christians. The question itself is rather difficult for Faustus, and he uses 8 paragraphs to answer it.
- *c. Faust.*17, 18 and 19 deal with one text (Mt. 5:17): Why don't you accept the law and the prophets, because Christ says: I did not come to destroy them but to fulfill them. Again Faustus' answers are quite long, with many arguments put forward.

After this kind of climax, we find a single *capitulum* in *c. Faust.* 22 on the question: 'Why do you defame the Law and the prophets?' The answer in 22 is important because it introduces many fresh arguments about the sinful behavior of the prophets. In the remainder of the book, this argument is used quite often, and its source is probably a Manichaeian text (see *c. Faust.* 12).

²⁵ Van den Berg 2010:200–203.

²⁶ Cf. *conf.* 5,11,21.

²⁷ See n. 22.

²⁸ Augustine in *c. Faust.* 13,5 (*CSEL* 25,1; 383, 5–9): et non uultis contra uos inde proferri: scrutamini scripturas ... si crederetis Moysi, crederetis et mihi: de me enim ille scripsit.

The last cluster of arguments in which the Old Testament plays an important role concerns the teachings of the Manichaeans themselves. In each case, the Old Testament is used as a kind of weapon against the Catholic Christians:

- *c. Faust.* 25 concerns the (in)finity of God.²⁹ The Manichaeans do not conceive of an omnipresent God. The teaching about two realms, one of light and one of darkness, forbids this. In reaction to the question, Faustus says that Catholic Christians themselves also have a restricted God, because they call him the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Thus Faustus uses the Catholic Christian esteem for the Old Testament to defend himself.
- *c. Faust.* 26 discusses docetism: 'How could Jesus have died, if he had not been born?' Faustus counters this problem by asking his opponent: 'How can Elijah, Moses and Enoch have been born, when you do not believe that they died?'
- *c. Faust.* 30 and 31 treat passages from the *Letters to Timothy*, quoted to blame the Manichaeans. *c. Faust.* 30 discusses 1Tim. 4:1 ff., which speaks about people who seared their conscience with a branding iron and err by forbidding marriage and by abstaining from food.³⁰ Faustus avoids this difficult discussion by saying that the passage must be spurious, because otherwise it would also be contrary to Moses and prophets like Daniel. *c. Faust.* 31 considers 2Tim. 1:15: 'To the pure, all things are pure. But to the impure and defiled, nothing is pure.'³¹ Faustus again uses the example of Daniel to demonstrate that this text must be considered spurious by Catholic Christians as well.
- *c. Faust.* 32 refers to the question why the Manichaeans do not accept everything from the Gospel. The attitude of Catholic Christians towards the Old Testament is used by Faustus as an argument against accepting everything from the New Testament as well.

The last issue, found in *c. Faust.* 33, very fittingly discusses a subject concerned with the 'eschaton'. It deals with the question why the Manichaeans

²⁹ Faustus dixit: Deus finem habet, aut infinitus est? (*CSEL* 25,1; 725, 2).

³⁰ Faustus dixit: De uobis iam dudum Paulus scripsit, quia discedent quidam a fide intendentes spiritibus seductoriis, doctrinis daemoniorum, in hypocrisi loquentes mendacium, cauteriatam habentes conscientiam suam, prohibentes nubere, abstinentes a cibis quos deus creauit ad percipiendum cum gratiarum actione fidelibus (*CSEL* 25,1; 747, 25–748, 5).

³¹ Faustus dixit: Omnia munda mundis, immundis autem et coinquinatis nihil mundum; sed inquinata sunt eorum et mens et conscientia (*CSEL* 25,1; 756,2 ff.).

do not acknowledge the patriarchs, whereas Jesus said that many shall come from east and west, and sit with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.³²

Although the structure of the *Capitula* is not very tight, there is a kind of thematic arrangement. There is a degree of continuous building on previous sections to be identified, especially in the first half of the book. When we read the *Capitula* as a scholarly textbook, Faustus' arrangement makes some sense.

After I identified this thematic arrangement, I reread Gregor Wurst's study of the structure of the *Capitula*, in which he denies the possibility of a *thematic* order. Nevertheless, he argues on formal grounds that there is a break after *c. Faust.* 11 and after 19. His argument is based on the use of the singular in the questions in the first 10 *Capitula* and the use of the plural in the next seven. The last 15 are different in appearance from the first two groups.³³ Wurst's conclusion coincides largely with my findings.

3. THE FORM OF THE OLD TESTAMENT TEXTS

As regards the form of the Old Testament texts used in the discussion, it can be observed that many references are not quotations in a strict sense. In most cases we find short references to names (Moses, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and so on), or subjects (such as commandments) from the Old Testament. The majority of the discussion is not about a *text* (*capitulum*) from the Old Testament, but about a subject.³⁴

There are some lists of Old Testament subjects that appear quite regularly in the discussion: for example, laws;³⁵ some clusters of curses;³⁶ an overview of important blessings;³⁷ and a summary of the moral offences of

³² Faustus dixit: Scriptum est in euangelio: quia multi uenient ab oriente et occidente, et recumbent cum Abraham et Isaac et Iacob in regno caelorum. uos ergo quare non accipitis patriarchas? (*CSEL* 25,1; 784, 7 ff.).

³³ Wurst 2001/2012:318–322.

³⁴ This could be regarded as an argument in favour of Wurst's explanation of the 'title' of the *Capitula* (Wurst 2001/2012:308–313), which I accepted (van den Berg 2010:184). But cf. van Oort (2010:530 f.) who opines that *capitula* may be regarded as a *terminus technicus* for Scriptural passages.

³⁵ The list includes such areas as the Sabbath, circumcision, sacrifices, distinctions about food, unleavened bread, the new moons, and so on. The argument is used in *c. Faust.* 4, 6, 19.4–6, 22.2, 25 and 32.3.

³⁶ The curses included the one who hangs on a tree, who adores the moon, who does not raise up any seed in Israel, and so on. See *c. Faust.* 14.1, 16.5, 19.5, 32.5.

³⁷ For example, the promise of the land, enough food, long life, many children, and so on. See *c. Faust.* 4, 10 and 15.

the prophets.³⁸ Especially the inventory of laws is prevalent, seemingly used as a kind of foundation for the debates with Catholic Christians. Faustus uses it to solve all kinds of problems, among them to explain why the Old Testament's inheritance is not for Catholic Christians, and to demonstrate that Christ had taught a different truth. The order of the words and the length of the list are variable. It can be found as a simple list, as in *c. Faust* 4.³⁹ The inventory also appears in a more elaborate way, as in *c. Faust*. 16,6⁴⁰ and 18,2. One cannot say much about the text traditions that are used in these lists of subjects related to the Old Testament, because the phrases are too short, or a paraphrase. Faustus demonstrates a great ability to reformulate his material, especially in *c. Faust*. 18,2:

Is it right to be circumcised (cf. Gen. 17:9–14), that is, to mark the shame with shame and believe that God is pleased by such sacraments? Is it right to observe the Sabbath rest (cf. e.g. Num. 15:35) and entangle oneself in the fetters of the sodality of Saturnus? Is it right to satisfy the gluttony of the Jewish demon, for he is not God, with the sacrificing at one time of bulls,

³⁸ In *c. Faust*. 22,5, Faustus lists the examples of atrocities committed by renowned Jewish forefathers. He recalls the history of Abraham and Hagar; Abraham who sold his wife both to the Pharaoh and Abimelech; Lot who committed incest with his daughters; Isaac who, like his father, sold his wife to Abimelech; Jacob who had four wives; Judah and his daughter-in-law Tamar; David who, despite already having many wives, took Bathsheba as well and went on to procure the death of her husband Uriah; Solomon who had 300 wives and 700 concubines as well as many princesses; Hosea, the first prophet who had a number of children by a prostitute with the approval of God; and, last but not least, Moses, who not only committed murder, but also perpetrated a number of other cruelties. In *c. Faust*. 32,4, he mentions Judah and Tamar; Lot and his daughters; Abraham, Jacob, David and Solomon. The argument is also referenced in *c. Faust*. 12,1, 33,1 and 3.

³⁹ ... circumcisis et sacrificantibus et abstinentibus a porcina, ac reliquis carnibus, quas immundas Moyses appellat, sabbata obseruantibus et azymorum sollemnitatem ac reliqua huiusmodi, quae eius ipse testator eis obseruanda mandauit (*CSEL* 25,1; 268, 12–16).

⁴⁰ Nam Moyses quidem prae ceteris ab opere omni abstinentium docet in sabbato causamque inducit religionis huius hanc esse, quia deus cum mundum et quae in eo sunt omnia fabricaret, sex diebus indulserit operi, septima uero cessauerit—quod est sabbatum—idcircoque benedixerit, id est sanctificauerit, tamquam suae tranquillitatis portum legemque dederit insuper, ut qui idem solueret, occideretur (*CSEL* 25,1; 444, 14–20); ... item Moyses carnis peritomen in sacris et deo amabilibus numerat iubetque circumcidi masculinum omne carne praeputii ipsorum esseque hoc docet necessarium signum testamenti illius, quod deus suus disposuerit ad Abraham, adfirmatque, quod utrorum uirorum quisquis hoc non gestauerit, exterminabitur ille de tribu sua et haereditatis, quae Abrahae repromissa sit ac semini eius, non ueniet in consortium (*CSEL* 25,1; 444, 26–445,7); item Moyses carnalium ciborum sollicitam facit discretionem et inter pisces ac uolucres et quadrupedia helluonis in modum disceptator sedet iubetque alia quidem ablutiriri pro mundis, alia uero pro immundis ne contingi quidem: quorum in parte porcum taxat et leporem et si quid in piscibus caret squama aut in quadrupedibus unguam fissam non habet nec ruminat (*CSEL* 25,1; 445, 10–16).

another time of rams, or even he-goats (cf. e.g. Lev. 1–7), not to mention even humans (cf. e.g. Gen. 22:2) and now exercise the practices for which we left the idols, in a more cruel way under the prophets and the law? To conclude, is it right to judge the meat of some dead animals as clean, and to treat others as unclean and defiling (cf. Lev. 20:25), among which the flesh of the swine is the most defiling according to the law and the prophets (e.g. Dt. 14:8)?⁴¹

There is, however, one interesting word in these lists. In *c. Faust.* 19,5 one finds the following Old Testament laws:

I find sabbaths, circumcision, sacrifices, new moons, washings, unleavened bread, distinction of food, drink, clothes and other things which will take too long to discuss.⁴²

This list of Old Testament laws is one of the longest we can find in *c. Faust.* The word ‘washings’ is important. The Latin word used here, ‘baptismata’, is a translation of the Hebrew כִּבְּוּ, which is in Greek: πλύνω. The common Latin translation is ‘lavare’. Neither the Greek verb ‘baptizomai’, nor its noun—which would have been expected—is found in the LXX-text of the Pentateuch, nor its Latin equivalent in the Vulgate. The rendering ‘baptismata’ may have been influenced by Mk. 7:4: ‘And from the market, they [sc. the Pharisees] do not eat anything unless it has been washed (baptizentur).’⁴³ It is a feature rather frequently found in Manichaean literature, that OT-quotations are quoted in accordance with their New Testament form.⁴⁴ I would cautiously propose another possibility as well. In the *Capitula* the subject ‘cleaning’ and the specific word for it (‘baptismata’) is only found in this list and in the next paragraph. In this *capitulum* Faustus argues autobiographically, and he explicitly praises his teacher for preventing him from obeying these rules.⁴⁵ Quite possibly, the word ‘baptisms’ was written in one

⁴¹ Placet circumcidi, id est, pudendis insignire pudenda et deum credere sacramentis talibus delectari? placet suscipere sabbatorum otium et Saturniacis manus insertare catenis? placet ad ingluuiem Iudaeorum daemonis—neque enim dei—nunc tauros, nunc arietes, nunc etiam hircos, ut non et homines dicam, cultris sternere, ac propter quod idola sumus exosi, id nunc exercere crudelius sub prophetis ac lege? placet denique feralium ciborum quaedam existimare munda, quaedam in inmundis et contaminatis habere, ex quibus inquinatorem porcinae lex asserunt et prophetae? (*CSEL* 25,1; 491, 3–13).

⁴² ... inuenio sabbata, peritomen, sacrificia, neomenias, baptismata, azymophagias, ciborum, discretiones potuum, uestimentorum, et alia quae percurrere longum est (*CSEL* 25,1; 501, 15 ff.).

⁴³ Et a foro nisi baptizentur non comedunt ... (Vulg.).

⁴⁴ See van den Berg 2010:130.

⁴⁵ Quare indeficientes ego praeceptorum meo refero gratias, qui me similiter labantem retinuit, ut essem hodie christianus (*CSEL* 25,1; 501, 1f.).

of the Manichaean books on these issues (or even more specifically on Mt. 5) that Faustus read when he was converted to Manichaeism. If this were the case, one might wonder whether the word 'baptisms' was used because of the debates of the Manichaeans with the baptizing community from which they emerged. Possibly the baptizing community had a text tradition in which an equivalent of 'baptismata' was used.

Apart from the short references to the Old Testament, there are also some longer quotations from the Old Testament. These longer sentences from the Old Testament (most of them are found in *c. Faust.* 16 and 17) have characteristics in common with Adimantus' quotations from Scripture in his *Disputationes*.⁴⁶ Very often one can find paraphrases, or combinations of several texts. This feature has already been observed in the 'quotations' found in *c. Faust.* 16,6⁴⁷ and 18,2.⁴⁸ A further example of a paraphrase is found in *c. Faust.* 16,5 where Faustus refers to the law that a prophet who leads the people astray, should be killed.⁴⁹ A clear example of the combination of different texts from Deuteronomy is found in *c. Faust.* 17.2.⁵⁰

Sometimes Faustus' quotation of the Old Testament appears to be influenced by a New Testament rendering of an Old Testament text, as for example in *c. Faust.* 16, 4 where we find: 'His God said to Moses: I will raise up for them a prophet from your brothers, like you'.⁵¹ This appears to quote Dt.

⁴⁶ See van den Berg 2010:130.

⁴⁷ See n. 40.

⁴⁸ See n. 41.

⁴⁹ *C. Faust.* 16,5 (*CSEL* 25,1; 443, 21–23): aut illud aliud interficiendum esse prophetam siue principem populi, qui eos a Deo suo uellet auertere aliquidue infringere mandatorum. Cf: Dt 13:5 propheta autem ille aut fictor somniorum interficietur quia locutus est ut vos auerteret a Domino Deo vestro qui eduxit vos de terra Aegypti et redemit de domo seruitutis ut errare te faceret de via quam tibi praecepit Dominus Deus tuus et auferes malum de medio tui (Vulg.).

⁵⁰ *C. Faust.* 17,2 (*CSEL* 25,1; 484, 16–21): in deuteronomio dicat: haec praecepta quae mando tibi hodie, Israhel, obseruabis; et caue, ne declines ab iisdem neque in sinistram neque in dexteram, nec addas quicquam eis, nec minuas: sed in iisdem perseuerabis, ut benedicat te dominus deus tuus. This text is not found anywhere in the Deuteronomy in this form, but cf. (in Vulg.) Dt. 4:40 custodi praecepta eius atque mandata quae ego praecipio tibi ut bene sit tibi et filiis tuis post te et permanes multo tempore super terram quam Dominus Deus tuus daturus est tibi; and Dt. 5:32: custodite igitur et facite quae praecepit Dominus Deus vobis non declinabitis neque ad dextram neque ad sinistram [:33] sed per viam quam praecepit Dominus Deus vester ambulabitis ut vivatis et bene sit vobis et protelentur dies in terra possessionis vestrae; and as well Dt. 12:32 quod praecipio tibi hoc tantum facito Domino nec addas quicquam nec minuas.

⁵¹ Deus suus loquitur ad Moysen dicens: suscitabo illis prophetam de fratribus ipsorum similem tibi (*CSEL* 25,1; 442, 24 f.).

18:15.⁵² Faustus' text, however, is a bit shorter, for it lacks the phrase 'from your race' ('de gente tua'). Interestingly, this is also the case in Acts 3:22,⁵³ which may well indicate that the New Testament version influenced Faustus' quotation.

A remarkable feature is found in *c. Faust.* 16,5. There, Faustus explicitly criticizes the Catholic Christian reading of the text and Faustus' remark is certainly apposite:

Or will you bring up, what you use to employ: They will see their life hanging, and not believe? To which you add 'on the wood'; for it [*sc.* the passage] does not have these words.⁵⁴

4. SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT FAUSTUS' SOURCES

In the *Capitula*, Faustus relates that he was a pagan before he became an adherent of Mani's church.⁵⁵ So we may safely assume that much, if not all, that Faustus knows about Scripture was learned during his Manichaean years.

There are reasons to suppose that the source of his knowledge may well have been specific Manichaean as well. In the introduction, Faustus indicates that he is highly impressed by Adimantus, especially because 'he brought to light the Jewish superstition and detected the deception of the semi-Christians.'⁵⁶ Thus, there is good reason to suppose that many of the references to the Old Testament are from Adimantus. When we compare the *Capitula* with the *Disputationes* of Adminatus there are indeed many similarities.⁵⁷ Furthermore, Faustus provides some clues to Manichaean sources. He refers, for example, to writings 'of the fathers' in *c. Faust.* 12,1:

⁵² Prophetam de gente tua et de fratribus tuis sicut me suscitabit tibi Dominus Deus tuus ipsum audies (Vulg.).

⁵³ Moses quidem dixit quia prophetam vobis suscitabit Dominus Deus vester de fratribus vestris tamquam me ipsum audietis iuxta omnia quaecumque locutus fuerit vobis (Vulg.).

⁵⁴ An illud offeremus ei, quod perinde soletis inducere: uidebunt uitam suam pendentem, et non credent? cui uos quidem adicitis "in ligno;" nam non habet (CSEL 25,1; 443, 8–10). Cf. Dt. 28:66: et erit vita tua quasi pendens ante te timebis nocte et die et non credes vitae tuae (Vulg.).

⁵⁵ See e.g., *c. Faust.* 13, 1 (CSEL 25,1: 378, 1–5): unde si mihi adhuc in paterna religione moranti praedicator adueniens Christum uellet ex prophetis insinuare, hunc ego protinus dementem putarem, qui gentili mihi et longe alterius religionis homini de magis dubiis dubia conaretur astruere; 15, 1 (CSEL 25,1: 417, 24 ff.): nobis uero in hoc quid opus est uel praecepto, quibus ex gentilitate conuersis ad Christum Hebraeorum deus non mortuus debet uideri, sed nec natus?

⁵⁶ See n. 15.

⁵⁷ See van den Berg 2010, esp. 96–102.

Therefore, it is this which I reply concisely, provisionally and briefly to the question you ask: Why do you not accept the prophets? In any event, the books of our fathers have demonstrated sufficiently that they (i.e. the prophets of the Old Testament) have predicted nothing concerning Christ. I actually point to this, how could the Hebrew forefathers, if they had known and predicted Christ, have lived so offensively?⁵⁸

In *c. Faust.* 22, Faustus appears to cite from this work.⁵⁹ Another reference to a Manichaean source related to the Old Testament is found in *c. Faust.* 19, 5. In reaction to the question whether he should accept the Old Testament, Faustus says: 'For this reason I do not stop giving thanks to my teacher who prevented me from falling in the same way, so that I am now a Christian.'⁶⁰ This is further indication that the arguments used by Faustus should be regarded as Manichaean and that many texts used in this connection stem from a Manichaean source. Finally, the form and the creative reworking of the contents of the lists point to the fact that these lists were well known, which also favours a Manichaean origin.

Nevertheless, Faustus claims (in *c. Faust.* 12 and 16,3) that he has searched the prophets and Moses for prophecies concerning Jesus,⁶¹ which seems to imply that he read the Old Testament independently from a Manichaean textbook as well. It is difficult to determine how much Faustus read or which books. The *capitulum* discussed in *c. Faust.* 12 is rather short and Faustus does not elaborate on the texts that he might have read. One could even claim that he read the prophets as far as they are discussed in the books of his forefathers.⁶²

C. Faust. 16 provides more information to assist in establishing which texts Faustus read when he searched for prophecies regarding Christ. Faustus deals with the question of whether Moses had prophesied concerning Christ. In 16,4 and 16,5 Faustus discusses some of Moses' words and he refers

⁵⁸ *C. Faust.* 12, 1 (*CSEL* 25,1: 330, 7–12): quapropter haec strictim interim et castigate ad interrogationem tuam responderim, quia quaeris, cur non accipiamus prophetas; alioquin nihil eos de christo prophetasse abunde iam parentum nostrorum libris ostensum est. ego uero illud addiciam, quia si Hebraici uates Christum scientes et praedicantes tam flagitiose uixerunt.

⁵⁹ See n. 38 to gain an impression of its contents.

⁶⁰ *C. Faust.* 19, 5 (*CSEL* 25,1: 501, 1–4): Quare indeficientes ego praeceptorum meo refero gratias, qui me similiter labantem retinuit, ut essem hodie christianus.

⁶¹ *C. Faust.* 12, 1 (*CSEL* 25,1: 329, 1–3): ego quidem nulla inueni, quamuis adtentius eos et curiosissime legerim; *c. Faust.* 16, 3 (*CSEL* 25,1: 442, 4–7): Quamuis ergo et haec non parua uideantur ad confirmandam suspicionem falsi de capitulo isto, plus tamen illo teneor, quia omnem, ut dixi, Moyse scripturam scrutatus, nullas ibi de Christo prophetias inueni.

⁶² See above n. 23.

to them as favourite phrases of Catholic Christians.⁶³ This implies that, in the debates about prophecies, Catholic Christians brought some texts to the attention of Manichaeans to provide evidence that Moses indeed had spoken about Jesus. This procedure may well largely explain Faustus' statement that he searched the words of Moses for prophecies concerning Jesus Christ. Furthermore it is a sound explanation for the fact that Faustus could review the reading of the text in *c. Faust.* 16,5.⁶⁴ When the text was brought to Faustus' attention he would have read it carefully and noticed the difference between the Catholic Christian oral rendering of the words and those in the codex.

In summary, we may conclude that some of the texts containing prophecies from Moses, will have been learned by Faustus in his debates with Catholic Christians.⁶⁵

The main tendency of Faustus' argument is in agreement with Marcion's opinion of the Old Testament, as could be expected from a pupil of Adimantus (*sive* Addas).⁶⁶ Faustus works with a strong antithetical schema to explain the relationship between Old and New Testaments.

Nevertheless, there is an exception to this pattern at the climax of the discussion on the relationship between the two, namely in *c. Faust.* 19,2. The *capitulum* refuted by Augustine in *c. Faust.* 19 gives a third possible answer to the question of how to deal with Mt. 5:17, in which Jesus says that he came not to destroy but to fulfill the law and the prophets. In *c. Faust.* 17 and 18 Faustus concluded that the text should be regarded as spurious. For the sake of argument, Faustus takes the text as genuine in *c. Faust.* 19 and tries to find an explanation for these words.⁶⁷ Faustus offers the following solution:

There are, however, three kinds of laws: one of them is that of the Hebrews, which Paul calls the law of sin and death. The other is that of the gentiles, which he calls the natural law. Because, he says, the gentiles do by nature

⁶³ *C. Faust.* 16,4 (*CSEL* 25,1: 442, 23 ff.): Quid ergo ostendemus? An illud quod uos soletis, ubi deus suus loquitur ad Moysen dicens: suscitabo illis prophetam de fratribus ipsorum similem tibi?; and 16,5 (*CSEL* 25,1: 443, 8 ff.): An illud offeremus ei, quod perinde soletis inducere: uidebunt uitam suam pendentem, et non credent? cui uos quidem adicitis "in ligno," nam non habet.

⁶⁴ See above n. 54.

⁶⁵ This is so at least for the texts from Moses in *c. Faust.* 16,5 (see n. 51); and ??: (*CSEL* 25,1: 443, 21–23): ... aut illud aliud, interficiendum esse prophetam siue principem populi, qui eos a deo suo uellet auertere aliquodue infringere mandatorum.

⁶⁶ See van den Berg 2010:168–170; BeDuhn 2007.

⁶⁷ *C. Faust.* 19,1 (*CSEL* 25,1: 496, 21–23): Faustus dixit: Non ueni soluere legem et prophetas, sed adimplere. Ecce iam consentio dictum. quaerendum tamen est, cur hoc dixerit Iesus ...

what is according to the law; and thus, they who do not have a law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts. The third kind of law is that of the truth, what is indicated by the apostle, when he says: Because the law of the spirit of the life in Christ Jesus has liberated me from the law of sins and death. So there are three kinds of law.⁶⁸

In 19,3 Faustus continues with an investigation into the question of what kind of law Jesus had in mind when he said that he did not come to destroy but to fulfil it. Faustus analyses the speech of Jesus on the law in Mt. 5 and comes to the conclusion that he will have meant the law that a person shall not kill, shall not commit adultery, and shall not bear false witness. This law was, according to Faustus, promulgated by Enoch and Seth and the other just men, to whom the glorious angels had given these commands.⁶⁹ The school of Marcion cannot have inspired Faustus to develop the line of reasoning found in *c. Faust.* 19,3. This tradition considered Mt. 5:17, which says that Jesus came not to destroy but to fulfill the law and prophets, as spurious.⁷⁰ Furthermore, the concept of a threefold law does not agree with their antithetical ideas.⁷¹ In addition, the context in *c. Faust.* clearly demonstrates that the solution used in *c. Faust.* 19,3 was not Faustus' first preference.⁷²

⁶⁸ *C. Faust.* 19,2 (*CSEL* 25,1; 497, 17–28): Sunt autem legum genera tria: unum quidem Hebraeorum, quod peccati et mortis Paulus appellat; aliud uero gentium, quod naturale uocat. gentes enim, inquit, naturaliter, quae legis sunt, faciunt; et eiusmodi legem non habentes ipsi sibi sunt lex, qui ostendunt opus legis scriptum in cordibus suis. tertium uero genus legis est ueritas, quod perinde significans apostolus dicit: lex enim spiritus uitae in Christo Iesu liberauit me a lege peccati et mortis. tribus ergo existentibus legibus et Iesu adseuerante nobis, quia non uenit soluere legem, sed adimplere, non parua cura ac diligentia opus est, de qua earum dixerit intellegere.

⁶⁹ *C. Faust.* 19,3 (*CSEL* 25,1; 498, 12–25): Lege ergo tripartita, et tripartitis prophetis, de quonam eorum Iesus dixerit, non satis liquet, est tamen conicere ex consequentibus, etenim si circumcisionem statim nominaret et sabbata ac sacrificia et obseruationes Hebraicas inque eas aliquid adinpletionis gratia protulisset, dubium non erat, quin de Iudaeorum lege dixisset et prophetis, quia eos non soluere uenerit, sed adimplere. ubi uero horum quidem nihil memorat, sola uero recenset antiquiora praecepta, id est: non occides, non moechaberis, non peierabis—haec autem erant antiquitas in nationibus, ut est in promptu probare, olim promulgata per Enoch et Seth et ceteros eorum similes iustos. quibus eadem illustres tradiderint angeli temperandae in hominibus gratia feritatis—cui non uideatur hoc eum de ueritatis dixisse lege et eius prophetis?

⁷⁰ See, for example, Tertullianus, *Adversus Marcionem* IV,9,14; cf. Löhr 1996:79. For Marcion and his teachings, see Harnack 1924, May 2002 and Räisänen 2005.

⁷¹ See May 1997:197.

⁷² See *c. Faust.* 17:18; and 19,3 (*CSEL* 25,1; 499–500,2): quod si et tibi ita intellegere placet, non ab re erit et illud dixisse Iesum, quia non uenit soluere Legem, sed adimplere. Sin haec nostra tibi displicet expositio, aliam quaere: tantum ne Iesum mentitum dicere cogaris; aut te necesse sit Iudaeum fieri: ne etiam nunc Legem soluere perseveres, quam ipse non soluit. And 19,5 (*CSEL* 25,1: 501, 1–8): quare indeficientes ego praeceptorum meo refero gratias, qui me

Nevertheless it is used more than once. In *c. Faust.* 22,2, in a defence to the accusation that Faustus scoffed at the law and the prophets, we find the words: 'But the true law is, "You shall not kill, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not bear false witness."⁷³ It seems that Faustus, under pressure in this situation, might either have changed his mind, or have used another Manichaean or Gnostic viewpoint about the Law in order to avoid the difficulties that he was experiencing.⁷⁴

5. CONCLUSIONS

The form of the quotes from the Old Testament in the *Capitula*, as well as Faustus' references to Manichaean books, suggest that much of the Old Testament material used by Faustus had its origin in Manichaean sources. Especially Adimantus is an important authority. This can be concluded from Faustus' words in praise of Adimantus in the introduction to the *Capitula*. Furthermore, the general standpoint on the Old Testament and its supposed influence on the New Testament are largely in agreement with Adimantus' opinions.

As a result, it is most probable to suppose that the Old Testament texts used in the *Capitula* were known to Faustus before his encounter with Augustine. Only some prophecies about Christ that Faustus learned from Catholic opponents could stem from a later date than 384. The Faustus of the *Capitula* will not have been very different from the one Augustine came across in Carthage. Therefore, the contents of the *Capitula* will be of no surprise to Augustine.

After all, it is reasonable to suppose that most of the Old Testament quotes in the *Capitula* belonged to the standard material of the Manichaean missionaries ever since Adimantus. This material was known to Augustine as a candidate for conversion to Manichaeism, but also as a Manichaean hearer involved in debates with Catholic Christians. As a result one should

similiter labentem retinuit, ut essem hodie Christianus. Nam ego quoque, cum *capitulum* hoc imprudens legerem, quemadmodum tu, pene ieram in consilium Iudaeus fieri.

⁷³ *C. Faust.* 22,2 (*CSEL* 25,1, 591, 17–19): sed eam quae vere sit lex, id est: non occides, non moechaberis, non peiurabis, et caetera. Cf as well *c. Faust.* 32,1 (*CSEL* 25,1; 76026–761, 2): et pauca quaedam disciplinae civilis praecepta communia, ut est: non occides, non moechaberis, caetera praetermittitis ...

⁷⁴ Other Gnostic groups were less rigid than Marcion and his pupils; see May 1987/88:148 and Löhr 1996. Faustus could well have learned this less strict stance to the Old Testament from Manichaean sources, because Adimantus appears to have been much more critical to the Old Testament than Mani; see van den Berg 2010:170–173.

reckon with Manichaeism influence on Augustine's use of the Old Testament. The extent of subjects and texts found in the *Capitula* may well indicate how large that influence was.⁷⁵

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⁷⁵ *Acknowledgements*: I wish to thank the organizer of the Pretoria conference 'Augustine and Manichaean Christianity', Prof. Dr. Johannes van Oort, not only for the conference, but also for his ideas on Augustine and Manichaeism over the years. I profited much from the questions and suggestions of the participants. Prof. Majella Franzmann was so kind as to make corrections to the English version of my paper, for which I am very grateful.

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AUGUSTINE AND MANICHAEAN ALMSGIVING:
UNDERSTANDING A UNIVERSAL RELIGION
WITH EXCLUSIVIST PRACTICES

Majella Franzmann

Augustine highlights his difficulties with the exclusive almsgiving practices of Manichaeans in relation to food and drink in three texts—*De moribus manichaeorum* 2.15.36,¹ *Contra Faustum* 15.7,² and *The Confessions* 3.10.18.³ While he knows the reasoning or belief that lies beneath the Manichaean practice—giving food and drink to non-Manichaeans who do not have the facility to release the Light trapped in such matter would only serve to imprison the Light further—he finds that the practice has the potential to contravene a commandment of God. In *The Confessions* Augustine demonstrates his understanding of this Manichaean concept of condemning the food that contains the Light to remain in darkness as akin to “capital punishment”, or killing the “limb (*membrum*) of God” (the Light/World Soul). In *Contra Faustum*, he continues the theme of death but from another angle. Refusing food alms to those in need who are not Manichaeans (and thus causing their death by starvation) by following the law laid down by Mani is to break the commandment laid down by God in the Decalogue, ‘You shall not kill’ (Ex 20:13//Deut 5:17).

Augustine’s own experience as a Manichaean Hearer involved in food practices with the community is also documented in *The Confessions* 4.1.1 (and also possibly 3.6.10) as is his enjoyment of the hospitality they offered him as he recovered from his illness, no doubt also including food hospitality (5.10.18).⁴ At odds with his previous life with the Manichaeans and their

¹ Hinc est quod mendicanti homini, qui Manichaeus non sit, panem uel aliquid frugum uel aquam ipsam, quae omnibus uilis est, dare prohibetis, ne membrum dei, quod his rebus admixtum est, suis peccatis sordidatum a reditu impediatur; CSEL 90: p. 121, 18–22.

² Dum enim times, ne dei tui membrum ligetur in carne, non das esurienti panem; CSEL 25: p. 430, 10–11.

³ Et credidi miser magis esse misericordiam praestandam fructibus terrae quam hominibus, propter quos nascerentur. Si quis enim esuriens peteret, qui manichaeus non esset, quasi capitali supplicio damnanda buccella uideretur, si ei daretur; CCL 27: p. 37, 10–13.

⁴ My thanks to Jacob Albert van den Berg for his discussion with me about Augustine’s own experience in this regard and other matters in this paper.

exclusivity in practices of almsgiving with food and drink, is Augustine's new religion of inclusiveness, based around a saviour who promoted the way of inclusion demanded by the reign of God (Matt 5:43–48; Lk 6:27–28, 32–36; Matt 8:11; Lk 13:29; Matt 22:1–10; Lk 14:12–24; Mk 12:29–31; Matt 22:37–40; Lk 10:25–28; ...).

In what follows I outline from Manichaean texts the concept of almsgiving as it relates to the activity of releasing the “limb of God”, and then turn to how that worked in practice. I will also look briefly at how we might characterize or account for such exclusionary practices from this universalizing religion.

1. THE MANICHAEAN CONCEPT OF ALMSGIVING

a. *From the Texts*

Jason BeDuhn brings together the three texts cited from Augustine on almsgiving of food and drink in his work on *The Manichaean Body* within a discussion of the redemption of the light/soul. That redemption is accomplished in part by releasing the light in the activity of eating undertaken by the Elect. Giving food to non-Manichaeans amounts to re-imprisonment of the light/soul since they are incapable of releasing the light.⁵

It would seem imperative that exclusive practices with food be adhered to, given the Manichaean belief in the necessity of liberating the light. However we know also that the Manichaeans followed the canonical gospels, quoting liberally from them throughout the Western writings, and that Mani appears to have considered himself an Apostle of Jesus Christ, often quoting from sayings of Jesus as “the Saviour”.⁶ How then does one make sense of such an exclusivist practice with food in relation to the needy when there appear to be clear injunctions to do otherwise, e.g. Matt 25:31–46?

I will not rehearse here what I have written elsewhere in detail about the concepts of poverty and treasure in Manichaean texts and the related activity of almsgiving, but simply offer a summary of the Manichaean attitude to the needy.⁷ While Manichaean texts refer to the poor or the needy

⁵ J.D. BeDuhn, *The Manichaean Body in Discipline and Ritual*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, 171 and 316 n. 24.

⁶ See M. Franzmann, *Jesus in the Manichaean Writings*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark International, 2003, 15–26.

⁷ M. Franzmann, ‘The Treasure of the Manichaean Spiritual Life.’ *Augustine, Manichaeism and Gnosticism. Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*. Edited by Jacob Albert van den Berg, Annemaré Kotzé, Tobias Nicklas and Madeleine Scopello, NHMS 74, Leiden: Brill, 2011, 235–243.

more often in a spiritual than a socio-economic sense, Manichaean theology about, and the practice of almsgiving, bring together both the spiritual and the literal sense of the needy/poor. The Elect are the poor, who rely for their subsistence on the alms given by catechumens, whether that be food or clothing or some other material goods. The Elect in turn are exhorted not to take more than they need so as to remain in poverty, which is the foundation of their bliss (13941 = T II K and 14285 = T II D. 136).⁸ While almsgiving to the Elect involves depriving oneself of physical goods, catechumens are urged to gain spiritual riches by this activity (Keph 229.4–10).⁹ The food the Elect receive as alms from the catechumens (Keph 208.27–29) is consumed in order to purify it and release the light trapped in the darkness of the material world (Keph 217.11–16).

While these are injunctions in a positive sense as to where the catechumens should direct alms for the poor (i.e. the Elect), I have found no injunction, apart from the passages quoted above from Augustine, about where *not* to direct alms. I have identified in my earlier work a saying regarding unworthy eating in the Sogdian homily on the correct preparations for the sacred meal, M 139 II: “For everyone who partakes of the meal and is not worthy of it loses the fruit of his great efforts and is shut out of the Paradise of Light”.¹⁰ One could consider extrapolating from this saying to an injunction regarding food alms to those who are unworthy, however the saying is focused on the loss of personal salvation to the person who eats unworthily rather than the effect that eating unworthily has on the Light itself.

b. *In Practice*

The Coptic and Greek letters found on the Dakhleh Oasis in the 4th century CE Egyptian Roman town of Kellis provide good insight into the everyday life and concerns of a small Manichaean community.¹¹ In particular we gain a very good idea of the life of the women of the community, and the

⁸ H.-J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Texts from Central Asia*. New York, 1993, 203.

⁹ All references to the Kephalaia (Keph) are from I.M.F. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher. The edited Coptic Manichaean texts in translation with commentary*. NHMS 37, Leiden: Brill, 1995.

¹⁰ Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 151.

¹¹ I.M.F. Gardner et al (eds.), *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis, Volume 1: P. Kell. V (P. Kell. Copt. 10–52; O. Kell. Copt. 1–2)*. Dakhleh Oasis Project Monograph series 5. Oxford: Oxbow, 1999; K. Worp, *Greek Papyri from Kellis. I (P.Kell.G.)*, Nos. 1–90 edited by K.A. Worp, in *Collaboration with J.E.G. Whitehorne and R.W. Daniel*. Dakhleh Oasis Project Monograph 3/Oxbow Monograph 54. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1995.

roles they played on the oasis while the men were absent on business. They are the principal sources for our knowledge of almsgiving in that community and, interestingly in this particular situation of almsgiving, their business and spiritual lives go hand in hand. Apart from or together with what might be inherited, business is one way of acquiring resources so that alms can be given.

There is not space in this present work to deal in detail with resources gained, either through inheritance or business, by the women whose lives are set before us in the Kellis letters. Suffice it to say that there are women on the oasis who have the wherewithal to give alms, as is clear both from letter writers who ask them for alms, and from the letters of the women themselves detailing their almsgiving. While the women carry out some financial activity on behalf of their menfolk, it is also clear that they have resources in their own right. The business accounts, P. Kell. Copt. 44–50, that appear to relate to the weaving business of the woman named Tehat, are evidence of this.¹² They show that Tehat is an active and successful business woman. She pays wages, employs workers and oversees their work, negotiates business and profits with a male partner, and perhaps also runs a camel freight business. P. Kell. Copt 32 and 33 provide evidence of a similar occupation of weaving or tailoring for the female catechumen, Eirene.¹³ The same occupations are shared by other women on the oasis.

The Kellis documents indicate that women are very active in legal and financial matters in the community, owning property and goods, buying and selling goods and their own labour, and lending and borrowing money. Apart from a few cases none of the women appear to be rich, and their financial and legal activity is limited to the village or to the oasis area. Nevertheless the women are fully and actively involved. Some of these women are, like Tehat and Eirene, Manichaeans. They and other women like them are generous with the fruits of their business. As to who benefits from the generosity of the Manichaean women, there are requests and subsequent gifts to those we presume are the Elect. These gifts include both clothes and food. P. Kell. Copt. 31 is from an anonymous writer to a group

¹² For a more detailed work on Tehat, see M. Franzmann, 'Tehat the Weaver: Women's Experience in Manichaeism in 4th Century Roman Kellis', *Australian Religion Studies Review* 20/1 (2007): 17–26.

¹³ For a more detailed study of Eirene, see M. Franzmann, 'An 'Heretical' Use of the New Testament: a Manichaean Adaptation of Matt 6:19–20 in P. Kell. Copt. 32,' *The New Testament Interpreted. Essays in Honour of Bernard C. Lategan*, Eds. C. Breytenbach, J. Thom, and J. Punt, *Novum Testamentum Supplementum* 124, Leiden: Brill, 2006, 153–162.

of anonymous Manichaean women, presumably in Kellis. The letter praises their piety (they are ‘helpers, and worthy patrons, and firm unbending pillars ...’) and asks for oil. Similarly, the begging letter sent to Eirene, P. Kell. Copt. 32, praises her spiritual riches and asks for alms. Peter Brown refers to the arrangement between catechumens and Elect here as a “spiritual exchange”; that is, the gift of material support to the Elect in exchange for spiritual services that will provide for the catechumens’ salvation.¹⁴

We must include here too those women who give an *agape*: Theodora is mentioned as the giver of *agape*, a *maje* of olives and a half *maje* of grapes (P. Kell. Copt 44). From P. Kell. Copt. 47, we learn that Tehat gives an *agape* of lentils and lupin seeds. There is still some question as to the meaning of the term *agape* in this context. Anthony Alcock interprets it as a reference to the celebration of the Manichaean sacred meal, similar to the Christian *agape*.¹⁵ Peter Brown suggests the term refers to alms given for the meal offered for the souls of the dead to ensure their protection as they leave this world.¹⁶ These two possibilities are not mutually exclusive. Of course it is also entirely possible that the term denotes more simply a charitable almsgiving, but given the small number of occurrences of the term and the more general descriptions of gifts or requests for gifts, I take the usage in these texts to be rather more technical than a general reference to charitable alms.

Other gifts of alms include clothing. In P. Kell. Copt. 33, we learn that Eirene is making garments for the male Elect who writes to her; in P. Kell. Copt. 18, Horion includes tailoring instructions for a cowl as well as weaving instructions for a cowl for a double-fringed gown for a presbyter. Apart from these there is little other detail. Of course we know from other texts, as Werner Sundermann has pointed out, that the alms for the Elect covered other services such as providing shelter, constructing monasteries and so on.¹⁷

The women left behind on the oasis must have by necessity become those who held the community together in a very practical way while their

¹⁴ P. Brown, ‘Alms and the Afterlife: A Manichaean View of an Early Christian Practice’, *East & West: Papers in History Presented to Glen W. Bowersock*. Eds. T.C. Brennan and H.I. Flower. Loeb Classical Monographs 14. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008, 147–149.

¹⁵ A. Alcock ‘The Agape’, *VC* 54 (2000): 208.

¹⁶ Brown, ‘Alms and the Afterlife’, 152–155.

¹⁷ W. Sundermann, ‘A Manichaean Liturgical Instruction on the Act of Almsgiving’, *The Light and the Darkness. Studies in Manichaeism and its World*. Eds. P. Mirecki and J. BeDuhn, NHMS 50, Leiden: Brill, 2001, 206.

menfolk were away on business. Eirene and Tehat are typical of the women in this close community—good business women and firm believers.

We are concerned in this study with food alms, not all almsgiving. As to other types of almsgiving, including clothing, we also have no evidence of injunctions to give exclusively to Manichaeans. However, there are clear injunctions to catechumens who wish to be perfect in Keph 229.4–10 that their whole focus must be unfailingly on the Elect and the Manichaean community. They must withdraw all consideration from the world and set their heart on the holy church; they must place all their treasure in the Elect men and women.

The majority of cases of almsgiving documented for the Manichaean community at Kellis appear to bear out the truth of Augustine's statements that community almsgiving, at least with food and drink, was completely exclusive. However, we have one reference to a male, Tehat's son, being encouraged to give alms, and it is this text that is problematical. In P. Kell. Copt. 43, Tehat urges her son to do charitable deeds for some orphans, giving them baked loaves but also perhaps pots of something else. The recipients are simply referred to as 'orphans', and there is no way of knowing whether these orphans belong to the Manichaean community or not.

It is possible that the term 'orphans' is a kind of shorthand for giving to those in need within the community, as 'widows and orphans' seems to be a kind of shorthand in, for example, the Hebrew scriptures for those who receive almsgiving or care from God and those close to God (e.g. Ps 68:5; Is 1:17; Ex 22:22). The two categories also go together in a positive context in the Manichaean Psalm Book: 'Thou hast cared for the widow, thou hast clothed the orphans' (53.24–25); 'Thou bearest witness of my course, o blessed Light, that I have ministered to the widows, the orphans, the Righteous' (62.16–17).¹⁸

In a later passage, the writer appears to reference Matt 25:34–36:

I prayed, I sang, I gave alms.
I served all thy holy ones.
I clothed thy orphans.
I closed not my door in the face of the holy.
I fed the hungry, I gave drink to the thirsty.

(175.20–24)

¹⁸ My thanks to Prof Johannes van Oort for sharing his thoughts about the use of the term 'orphans' in relation to these passages from the Manichaean Psalm Book. All references to the Manichaean Psalm Book (PsB) are from C.R.C. Allberry, (ed.) *A Manichaean Psalm-Book: Part II, Manichaean Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Collection 2*. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1938.

The continuation of this passage however begins to cast a different light on the use of the term 'orphan', as it also casts a different light on what appears earlier in the text to be a reversal of the Manichaean exclusivity with food almsgiving:

I left father and mother and brother and sister.
 I became a stranger for thy name's sake.
 I took up my cross, I followed thee.
 I left the things of the body for the things of the Spirit.
 I despised the glory of the world
 because of thy glory that passes not away. (25-30)

Having left family and become a stranger, leaving 'the things of the body', makes the use of the term 'orphan' seem far less about the physical reality and more about a spiritual loss of family. One becomes a stranger, an orphan, by leaving kin and community in the world. A final passage in the Psalm Book makes this much clearer. In a reworking of Jn 20:11-18 in which Jesus meets Mary Magdalene after the resurrection, he exhorts her: 'Cast this sadness away from thee and do this service: be a messenger for me to these wandering orphans. Make haste rejoicing, and go unto the Eleven' (PsBk 187.11-13). The Eleven disciples are wandering orphans in need of his message, as the Gospel of John also suggests will be the case for the disciples after Jesus' death (Jn 14:18). It is entirely possible that the orphans at Kellis are orphans in a spiritual sense, part of the Manichaean community, much as PsBk 62.16-17 groups together orphans and the Righteous. Although the letters seem to be entirely matter-of-fact and down to earth such that orphans would be interpreted as physical orphans, nevertheless we also have the use of terms like 'brother' and 'sister' that appear also to be spiritual rather than blood kinship terms. If all are orphans with only the heavenly Father, or spiritual fathers and mothers among the Elect, for parents, then all Manichaean 'strangers' are brothers and sisters. Thus, while the ambiguity remains, it is possible that we have an entirely exclusive community of Manichaeans at Kellis, at least in terms of sharing food.

2. EXCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES AND FOOD EXCLUSION

Exclusivism in communities at various times of their development is not rare, even for Christian communities who purport to follow the inclusive practice and theological viewpoint of the founder. Thus in Hippolytus' (3rd century CE) Commentary on Daniel 4.38.2, we find the argument that those who have acquired the power of the spirit should not help someone in

any way who does not have this power of the spirit.¹⁹ While the passage is in reference to Daniel as the only one to receive a vision (Dan 10:7) and thus may refer to a person's ability to have visions only if they are among the saints and those who fear Christ, it may also be a general statement about any assistance from members of the community to those outside. For an example of exclusivism centred on food, however, one need look no further than Acts 6:1 with the disputes over the distribution of food to the needy (widows) in the early Jerusalem community, which differs so much from the first narrative about a community owning all things in common (Acts 4:32). Interestingly the lines of exclusivism here are drawn between two ethnic groups, the Hellenists (Greek-speaking Jews) and the Hebrews (Aramaic-speaking Jews). While not an example of absolute exclusivism, Gal 6:10 too shows a community whose preference is for doing good especially to their own.

While we might agree that there are good theological reasons for Manichaeans not providing food alms to non-Manichaeans, we should also look deeper for the basis for such a theological viewpoint within the basic Manichaean mythology. If we go back to the example of Hippolytus and consider the time in which he writes and the relatively early phase of development of Christian communities in which he was living, characterized by sporadic persecution but also a degree of social and political discrimination, we would not be surprised by a viewpoint that is somewhat akin to that found in many Gnostic texts, that the community is made of those whose homeland is above and who are gathered ghetto-like as a party of foreigners within this world.

However, even in our own time exclusivist groups do not always deny charity to others. While the Exclusive Brethren withdraw from the world so as not to be polluted by it, and do a great deal of charitable giving but only within the group, on the other hand the old order Mennonites all do philanthropy outside the group. Moreover, one cannot put down exclusive giving necessarily to a lack of resources to do more outside a group.²⁰ The Exclusive Brethren, for example, run extremely successful small-to-medium

¹⁹ G. Bardy and M. LeFèvre, *Commentaire sur Daniel: Texte établi et traduit*, Sources chrétiennes, Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1947, 204.

²⁰ See M. Bachelard, *Behind the Exclusive Brethren*, Melbourne: Scribe Publications, 2009; and D.B. Kraybill, *The Riddle of Amish Culture*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, Rev. ed., 2001. My thanks to Prof Marion Maddox (Macquarie University, Sydney), for her helpful discussion of contemporary exclusivist religious groups.

businesses and use the tax and welfare systems adroitly to maximise their incomes, so there is no lack of resource if the group wished to give more widely in the community.

Interestingly, the exclusivity both of the Exclusive Brethren and of the Manichaeans is based in a repudiation of the world; in the case of the Manichaeans, a world that entraps the light in its darkness. One entraps the light further by giving food alms to non-Manichaeans. On the other hand, one enables the release of the light by giving food alms for the agape (e.g. P. Kell. Copt. 47), ensuring salvation for the community over against the world and the darkness. How are we to understand such exclusive behavior that draws the community together against the world? As far as I can ascertain, social scientists have not yet provided us with a typology of exclusive groups, but there has been work by anthropologists that might prove helpful for us, on the features of ethnic groups and how they interact within larger social settings. The work of Fredrik Barth is particularly apposite in providing parallels with Manichaean groups:

When defined as an ascriptive and exclusive group, the nature of continuity of ethnic units is clear: it depends on the maintenance of a boundary. The cultural features that signal the boundary may change, and the cultural characteristics of the members may likewise be transformed, indeed, even the organizational form of the group may change—yet the fact of continuing dichotomization between members and outsiders allows us to specify the nature of continuity, and investigate the changing cultural form and content.²¹

Thus while cultural and social differences between Manichaean groups in varying geographical locations may influence organizational forms or certain practices, what is continuous across these groups is the foundational mythology of a world of darkness in which the community struggles to free the light entrapped here. The maintenance of a boundary between those who are central to that struggle and those who live in ignorance within the darkness is crucial. The sign and maintenance of that boundary is contained within the simplest of practices—who may eat with whom.

Of course the idea of group boundaries and related ideas about, or group practices with, food can be found in the work of the anthropologist Mary Douglas. Many years ago I used her work as the basis for a study of the New Testament Jesus and the symbols of food and body that underpinned his

²¹ F. Barth (ed.), 'Introduction', *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: the social organization of culture difference*. Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, 1968, 15.

inclusive view of the reign of God.²² It seems now that the negative side of that theory could be used to good effect when studying the Manichaean attitude to food and food alms. For Douglas, body imagery used by a particular culture, or cultural subset, reflects social order. The treatment of bodily orifices/margins in particular is of great significance since they symbolise potential vulnerability for that social order, and, I would add in the case of the Manichaeans, the spiritual order. Where political or physical boundaries are at risk from others, whatever comes from body orifices, and thus moves across the body boundary, can be the source of great risk and needs to be dealt with as a priority.²³

Interest in its (the body's) apertures depends on the preoccupation with social exits and entrances, escape routes and intrusions. If social boundaries have no meaning, I would not expect to find concern with bodily boundaries ...²⁴

Since food enters and leaves the body by way of its orifices, food imagery is thus intimately connected with body imagery, and especially imagery to do with body margins. Thus if body margins/orifices are of high importance for the structuring imagery of a society, food will be also by corollary.²⁵

Of course I am not suggesting that there are strong and exact parallels between the ancient Jewish dietary laws that were the focus of Douglas' study, and the ideas around food and exclusion in Manichaeism, but this kind of anthropological theory could be used to advance our understanding of Manichaean practices with food. Such a study would build on Jason BeDuhn's work on the Manichaean body. BeDuhn writes of the Manichaean prohibition of food alms to the poor in terms of an overwhelming concern for body margins, and the pollution experienced in transgressing those margins first and foremost through sexual intercourse:

... Manichaean food-economy is not about charity or the cultivation of commensality. Alms within the Manichaean community are literally *korban*, set aside for the altar of sacrifice and forbidden to profane consumption.

²² M. Franzmann, 'Of Food, Bodies, and the Boundless Reign of God', *Pacifica* 5 (1992): 17–31.

²³ M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger. An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Penguin, 1970, 121.

²⁴ M. Douglas, 'Social Preconditions of Enthusiasm and Heterodoxy', *Forms of Symbolic Action: Proceedings of the 1969 Annual Spring Meeting of the American Ethnological Society*. Ed. by R.F. Spencer, Seattle: American Ethnological Society, 1969, 71.

²⁵ Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 126–127.

The sins of the non-Manichaean which threaten to defile the divine substance in food include, first and foremost, sexual intercourse, which congeals the substance into a soul locked into a new body ...²⁶

One question remains to be addressed. How does such a concern for margins, mythological and social, fit a group like the Manichaeans who were such successful missionaries, evangelizing across the known world to win people to their universal religion? The two ideas and practices seem to be mutually exclusive, and yet I consider that the answer can be found in the underlying myth. The struggle between the worlds of light and darkness requires that the Manichaeans work to erect strict boundaries if they are to have any hope of salvation as a part of the victory of the world of light. The Manichaeans are basically strangers in this world of darkness, and they erect boundaries to ensure they remain strange to the darkness. While an inner conviction about being strangers in the world and repudiating the world may appear to sit uncomfortably alongside a missionary effort that offers salvation to all, the goal of that missionary effort is to teach others likewise to become strangers, living to release the light from the darkness, rather than taking on the darkness/sin of the world in order to make it whole and heal it. So in a sense there is complete resonance between the universalizing message and practice and the underlying mythology.²⁷

3. CONCLUSION

There is much that would still lend itself to fruitful enquiry in relation to the Manichaean practice with food alms. I have limited the discussion of that activity to the general setting that Augustine would have known—Manichaeans in the 3rd/4th century Roman world, rather than the full range of Manichaean communities that eventually stretched as far east as China.

Let me return finally to those 3rd/4th century Manichaean women at Kellis. What might such a practice with food alms mean to the women, and what might this demand of them within a small town setting? A small community expects and supports behaviours that are different from those in a large town, so I would suggest that the way of life of the Manichaean women at Kellis might be somewhat different from Manichaean women in Alexandria, for example. Moreover, how might the Manichaeism that came

²⁶ BeDuhn, *The Manichaean Body*, 171.

²⁷ For a detailed study of this aspect of the Manichaean mission, see M. Franzmann, 'A Stranger Twice Over: Manichaean Ideology and Mission' (forthcoming).

to Kellis have been changed in the actual lived experience there? What Barth writes of “the effects of ecology” on ethnic groups, might also be true of the Manichaeans at Kellis:

The overt cultural forms which can be itemized as traits exhibit the effects of ecology. By this I do not mean to refer to the fact that they reflect a history of adaptation to environment; in a more immediate way they also reflect the external circumstances to which actors must accommodate themselves. The same group of people, with unchanged values and ideas, would surely pursue different patterns of life and institutionalize different forms of behaviour when faced with the different opportunities offered in different environments?²⁸

In small towns, everyone is needed to keep the town going and working. Would all those at Kellis be expected to give to the needy? What might happen if Manichaeans were not seen to be doing their civic duty? If these Manichaean women were converts, and thus had not always lived as Manichaeans, would they be able to turn away from members of their former families if they were in need of food? While almost every instance of their almsgiving appears to refer to gifts to the Elect or for the sacred meal, we are still left with the case of the orphans who receive food alms. Is it conceivable that these orphans were non-Manichaean kin or friends or townsfolk in trouble who could not be ignored and to whom alms were given? What texts say, and what happens in the everyday, may not quite be the same in all cases. Perhaps Augustine was not completely right in every case.

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²⁸ Barth, ‘Introduction’, p. 12.

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RE-CODING MANICHAEAN IMAGERY:
THE DRAMATIC SETTING OF AUGUSTINE'S *DE ORDINE**

Therese Fuhrer

1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS: AUGUSTINE IN
MILAN—FROM MANICHAEAN TO 'CONVERTED'
MEMBER OF THE 'CATHOLIC' CHURCH

In his methodological reflections on the Bible interpreter's tasks, in *De Genesi ad litteram* and in *Confessions* 12, Augustine allows the possibility that the Bible text admits different kinds of interpretation, and that it is possible for different exegeses to be true.¹ A condition for this is that the interpreter keep in mind the truth as established by 'Catholic' doctrine, i.e. that the interpretation remain within the context of the *fides Catholica*. Thus it is possible that—in postmodern terms—a number of readings of the same text can be presented, which in Augustine's view—i.e., not in postmodern terms—should all ultimately serve an orthodox understanding of that text. Augustine's hermeneutics apply only to the exegesis of the divinely inspired books of the Bible.² However, I would like to make them the basis for my interpretation of one of Augustine's own works, not least because I assume that a professor of rhetoric and member of the late antique educated elite would have expected texts to be polysemic—in the process of the text's reception—while, in the process of the text's production, he would have worked with polysemy himself.

In my paper I will address Augustine's dialogue *De ordine*, which can be regarded as well studied.³ I aim to present a reading of the dialogue that is not diametrically different from what has been said so far, but is, nonetheless, 'new'. In method, my approach draws on the work of Johannes

* I thank Orla Mulholland for translating my German text.

¹ *Gen. litt.* 1.18 f.; *conf.* 12.17–43.

² Cf. Fuhrer (2008) 376–381.

³ It has been edited to modern standards, most of its parts have been interpreted and it has recently been explicated in great detail in the philological and theological commentary of Trelenberg (2009).

van Oort and Annemaré Kotzé on the *Confessions*, who repeatedly stress that that text must be understood in light of the fact that its author was for many years a member of the Manichaean religious community and so knew its thought and writings, and hence its codes, and that he had a readership in mind that was able to decode them.⁴ Most recently, Jason BeDuhn has convincingly shown that, for Augustine's early writings, too, the cultural context in which the works make sense, and thus their interpretive horizon, should not be understood as solely Platonic and Nicene Christian, but as also still strongly shaped by Manichaeism.⁵

That Augustine's 'Manichaean knowledge' should not be overlooked in the interpretation of his own work applies all the more firmly to the early dialogues; for while the *Confessions* date from more than ten years after what he calls his definitive apostasy from the Manichaean 'sect', the early dialogues were composed only two years later, in the Autumn of 386. In 384 Augustine had been in Rome, where, according to the account in the *Confessions*, he had lived in a strongly Manichaean environment,⁶ and in that year he came as rhetor to the imperial court in Milan.⁷ In the *Confessions* Augustine makes this city the setting of his engagement with Platonic philosophy and abandonment of Manichaean doctrine, a process completed when—after a full two years—he joined the Nicene Catholic church. According to the narrative in the *Confessions*, this step was prompted by, among other things, his critical evaluation of Manichaean theology and cosmology.⁸

The much discussed question of which theological and philosophical concepts led the empirical author—the historical Augustine—to his

⁴ Cf. e.g. van Oort (1994) 130; van Oort (2010) 509–514; Kotzé (2004), esp. 101ff. More sceptical: Coyle (2001/2009); Coyle (2003/2009); BeDuhn (2010) 70–74, but cf. *ibid.* 135: 'In the very period that he would later characterize as one of discontent and disaffection, Augustine had become a veritable Manichaean insider'. Cf.—*contra* Coyle—van Oort (2008).

⁵ BeDuhn (2010), esp. 165 ff.

⁶ *Conf.* 5.18–22. Cf. on this Lieu (1992) 173; BeDuhn (2010) 144 ff.; 246 f.; Fuhrer (2013b).

⁷ According to *conf.* 6.23 his Manichaean friends had got him into the selection process for this prestigious position. Cf. Lieu (1992) 171.

⁸ The protagonist of the *Confessions*—and thus the writing author—should be seen as a convert from Manichaean to 'Catholic' Christian doctrine, either to encourage a Manichaean public to take the same step (as Kotzé argues), or to dismiss the old allegations of Manichaeism against the Bishop of Hippo, addressing his opponents among the ranks of the 'Catholic church' (the position of Drecoll, see Drecoll/Kudella 2011, 192–196, and Fuhrer 2009). BeDuhn observes that Augustine may have left Carthage and later his position at the imperial court in Milan because (among other things) he wanted to avoid an accusation and a trial, respectively, which were brought against him as a Manichaean under the Theodosian laws against heresy; cf. BeDuhn (2010) 136–144; 196; 219 f. More sceptical: Lieu (1992) 174 f.

'conversion',⁹ must remain open, but the fact that Manichaean teachings played a role alongside Neoplatonic and Nicene Christian doctrine can hardly be contested.¹⁰ It is true that the 'Milan' works contain only a few explicit references to the Manichaean phase of the author's biography, and implicit jabs against the Manichaeans and their doctrine can only rarely be identified clearly.¹¹ However, like Johannes van Oort, I assume that Augustine did not first acquire his detailed knowledge of this doctrine when he composed the first anti-Manichaean works in 388—two years later—but, rather, as an *auditor* for many years before and during the Milan period, he had become familiar with its essential texts and so also with the elements of its myth, its terminology and its language of imagery.¹²

From the four works of Augustine that were composed in the Autumn of 386 or the Spring of 387 in Milan, I have selected *De ordine* for my study for two reasons. Firstly, in this dialogue Augustine dramatises a discussion of theodicy in which the Manichaean solution is clearly rejected, even though the debate ends in aporia. Secondly, the dialogue's dramatic setting at the villa in Cassiciacum, where Augustine has chosen to set the discussion, and the figures who act and speak in it, illustrate the topic of *De ordine* in a way that—I argue—is strongly reminiscent of Manichaean imagery and the stock motifs of the Manichaean mythological system. This second aspect may seem surprising, and to my knowledge no-one has read and interpreted the dialogue from these premises.

In what follows, therefore, after a short survey of the arguments made in the discussion in *De ordine* against a Manichaean solution to the theodicy question (section 2), I will try to make plausible my 'new' interpretation of the dialogue's dramatic setting (sections 3 to 7).

⁹ BeDuhn (2010) 170 talks of 'switching'; cf. n. 18 p. 339: "'Switching" is the term typically used in the study of religion for moving from one religious community to another without any deep conviction, but for various extrinsic reasons, such as marriage or career advancement'.

¹⁰ On this, van Oort (1994) 128f., against Joseph Ratzinger.

¹¹ References to his biography at *Acad.* 1.3; 2.8; *beata v.* 4. Anti-Manichaean points at *ord.* 2.46 and *solil.* 1.2. On this, see Bammel (1993) 16; cf. Trelenberg (2009) 348.

¹² Cf. van Oort (2008), esp. 465f.; van Oort (2010), esp. 513; van Oort (2012) 192 and 197–199. Like BeDuhn (2010) 165–217, in what follows I take the narrative of the 'Milan Books' of the *Confessions* as a licence to read the works that the empirical author Augustine composed in Autumn 386 as also part of a critical engagement with Manichaean doctrine; I thus understand Augustine's Milan narrative as a guide to reading the texts that arose in this context. Cf. esp. *conf.* 9.8f.; on which, van Oort (1997) 246.

2. THE DISCUSSION IN *DE ORDINE: MALUM* IN THE WORLD ORDER

Augustine presents himself in the role of the teacher with his students and his mother, who pass three days discussing the question of how 'evil' entered or was added to the world order (the *ordo mundi*).¹³ The young student Licentius argues vehemently that everything that happens is part of a meaningful and thus 'good' world order, which is directed by God (*ord.* 1.11),¹⁴ and that there is nothing that is opposed to this order, because the order encompasses everything (1.15: *nihil autem esse praeter ordinem video*). When his fellow student Trygetius asks how he can then explain that a mistake (*error*) could be possible in this system, Licentius responds with the traditional argument, that everything, and thus also the departures (the 'wandering away', *errare*) from the true, beautiful and good, has a cause, and so is not opposed to the order (1.15: *error ... non potest ordini esse contrarius*).

After this, however, Licentius notices that he has thus admitted the notion that the *malum* is also part of the *ordo*. He therefore has to say (1.16): *et bona et mala in ordine sunt*.¹⁵ He thus, as Trygetius objects, derives the *mala* from God, which must be reckoned impious (1.17: *impium*).¹⁶ He defends himself with the conventional argument that a harmonic whole can only be formed from opposites (1.18: *congruentia*) and that God's justice only becomes manifest through the distinction (*distinctio*) of good and evil.¹⁷ Therefore it is necessary that *mala* exist (*fit, ut mala etiam esse necesse sit*).

In Book 2, Augustine has his students again argue for the thesis that the *mala* are part of the divine order (2.2). However, Licentius remains unsuccessful in this, as he may not derive the existence of evils from (the omnipotent) God. The position that the *malum* has come into being outside the divine order and was added to it later (2.23) cannot be accepted either; for this would allow the conclusion that evil has come into being without any help from God.¹⁸ Licentius' insistence on the line that nothing happens

¹³ On chronology internal to the text of the three Cassiciacum dialogues, cf. Trelenberg (2009) 81 f. On Augustine's engagement with the question *unde malum*, cf. comprehensively Schäfer (2002) 217–242; Evans (1982) 93–98; on *De ordine* cf. Fuhrer (2002).

¹⁴ Cf. also *ord.* 1.14.

¹⁵ This statement represents neither the opinion of the figure 'Augustine' in the dialogue nor that of the empirical author, as BeDuhn (2010) 265 erroneously assumes.

¹⁶ *Quid enim potuit dici magis impium quam etiam mala ordine contineri?* Cf. already 1.1.

¹⁷ This is elaborated further in the next part (1.19). On the topic of 'universal justice' see Bouton-Touboulic (2004) 319–345; Trelenberg (2009) 121–123.

¹⁸ This would be the Manichaean position; cf. Lieu (1992) 187: 'In affirming that evil had an independent existence and is co-eternal with God, the Manichaeans provided a ready answer to the problem of theodicy'.

outside the order repeatedly leads to aporia and finally to the abandonment of the discussion, because no-one wants to admit either that evil has come into being within the order, or that it became part of the order later (2.23).¹⁹

The question of how the evils in the world are to be explained is thus not answered in *De ordine*. In the course of the discussion, however, it would become clear, at least to a Platonically minded readership, that the reason why the problem, and thus the aporia, remains is that Licentius grants to the *mala* a real existence.²⁰ It is only in his later works that Augustine formulates a response to the question, basing it on the Neoplatonic thesis that evil should be thought of as *privatio boni*:²¹ all manifestations of the bad in the empirical world thus participate—if only by existing to a lesser degree—in the all-encompassing divine order of being. Nonetheless, this solution is hinted in the argumentation of *De ordine* (2.9f.),²² which thus points towards a solution that the author of the *Confessions* in fact ascribes to his first-person narrator in the years before the retreat to Cassiciacum.²³

The author Augustine shows all explanations based on ontologies which grant evil an existence²⁴ as failing on account of his students' pious attitude (*pietas*), and in one passage also that of his pious mother; their reflections are based on the image of God as benign creator. Certain possible approaches, including the Manichaean dualist cosmology, are thereby excluded by Augustine from his doctrinal system, which is now oriented towards Catholic Christianity.²⁵

3. THE DRAMATIC SETTING OF *DE ORDINE*, ITS MEANING AND INTERPRETATION

In the Cassiciacum dialogues *Contra Academicos*, *De beata vita* and *De ordine*, Augustine places himself in the tradition of Ciceronian and Varronian

¹⁹ On the logical strictness of this argumentation, cf. Führer (2013a).

²⁰ ... *ut mala etiam esse necesse sit* (1.18); *sunt etiam mala* (2.2); *semper bona et mala fuerunt* (2.22); ... *ut esset ipsum malum* (2.23).

²¹ Cf. already *mor.* 2.1–8, *vera rel.* 21 and 39. On this, see Schäfer (2002) 222–225; Evans (1982) 93–98. Augustine goes further than Plotinus insofar as he also grants being to unformed matter, as it is part of divine creation. This is underlined by BeDuhn (2010) 170–186, who stresses the closeness of the Neoplatonic evaluation of matter as 'evil' to the Manichaean dualist position, and shows that Ambrose, too, removes this opposition by defining matter as created by God and hence 'good'.

²² See below, p. 67 f.

²³ *Conf.* 3.12; 7.18 f.

²⁴ On this, cf. n. 21 above.

²⁵ However, only 2.46 is clearly anti-Manichaean; on this, see Trelenberg (2009) 348.

villa dialogues, in which the rural setting is meant to highlight the spatial and also mental distance from the active life of the city. The localisation of some conversations in a meadow or in the shadow of a tree recalls the dramatic setting in Cicero's *De oratore* and *De legibus* or Plato's *Phaedrus*.²⁶ As well as these literary reminiscences, the Cassiciacum dialogues also contain a number of scenic elements that are both explicitly and implicitly assigned a certain meaning in the course of the discussions. In *Contra Academicos* it is mentioned repeatedly that the participants in the dialogue have attended to the work of the country estate, that they have been reading Vergil, and that Licentius would have preferred to compose literary works than engage in philosophy; this gives rise to the question of the significance of the 'things necessary for life' (*vitae necessaria*) as a precondition for the (successful) pursuit of truth.²⁷ In *De beata vita*, the frugal birthday meal held in Augustine's honour serves to point up the notions of (spiritual) lack (*egestas*), of moderation (*moderatio, modus*), and of the 'fullness' (*plenitudo*) that is equated with the 'happy life'.

In *De ordine* the prooemium introducing the topic of theodicy is followed by a presentation of the rural surroundings in which the philosophical discussions took place (1.5). The first-person author presents himself as suffering from stomach pains and as a 'refugee' to the *refugium* of philosophy.²⁸ His conversational partners are named as: Alypius (who was a Manichaean together with Augustine and who has now committed to the Nicene doctrine), Augustine's brother Navigius (in a non-speaking role), Licentius (his student, the son of the Manichaean Romanianus), and a student recently released from military service, Trygetius.

The location of the first discussion is the villa's sleeping quarters; it is night and the room is deep in darkness. The narrative first person 'Augustinus' lies awake, however (1.6: *cum evigilassem ... pervigil ... vigilabam*), mulling over his thoughts, something that he—'from love of truth' (*amore inveniendi veri*)—evidently does 'from habit' ... 'almost half the night' (*de more meo ... dimidiam ... fere noctis partem*) and asking why the water in the pipes beneath the bedroom is making an irregular pattern of sound (*sonus*). When Licentius is scaring off mice with a wooden stick (probably by banging it on the floor), he realises that his pupil is also awake (*seque vigilantem hoc*

²⁶ Cf. e.g. *Acad.* 2.25; on this, Fuhrer (1997a) 217.

²⁷ 1.15; 2.10; 3.7; cf. esp. 3.1–4.

²⁸ That the debates are recorded in writing plays an important role, and has, on the one hand, a commemorative function, and on the other—of importance for the sick 'Augustinus'—a disciplining function. Cf. 1.5; 1.27.

modo indicavit). Trygetius, too, is lying awake (*vigilabat*). Augustine poses the question of why the water is making this noise, and this develops into a discussion in which Licentius maintains the position that nothing happens without a cause and everything is part of an all-encompassing divine order. Augustine is pleased by this response and concludes that the noise of the water 'has drawn attention to the fact that it is saying something about itself' (1.7: *aliquid de se dicere admonebat*).

In the discussions that follow, things and events in the surroundings are repeatedly interpreted as signs that 'warn' those present of something (*admonere, commonere*),²⁹ which 'draw', 'lead', or 'command' the observers to 'search' for something (*ducere, perducere, trahere, se quaeri iubere*), express an 'invitation' (*invitatio*), or 'nod to' them (*innuere*).³⁰ Licentius, who wants to see manifestations of the divine order in all things,³¹ draws the comparison to pagan divination practices, in which even mice are given a specific function in the process of communicating information (*augurari*).³² The teacher-figure Augustine goes so far as to encourage Licentius to allegorise the psalm ('God of Strength, convert us and show your face to us')³³ that he had sung in the latrine the day before: he should understand it as the striving of man to raise himself out of the darkness and the filth and dirt of the corporeal world towards sight of the face of God.³⁴ Both the narrator and the narrated Augustine thus repeatedly encourage an interpretation of

²⁹ 1.9; 1.13; 1.20: *commonere*; 1.7; 1.26: *admonere*.

³⁰ 1.10: *perducere*; 1.26: *ducere*; 1.25: *innuere*; *trahere, se quaeri iubere*; 1.26: *invitatio*; 1.29: *indicare*.

³¹ Also those things that are 'unusual' (a *res insolita*) and occur *praeter manifestum ordinem* are not to be thought of as *praeter ordinem* (1.18).

³² 1.9; cf. 1.10: *augurium*.

³³ Ps 79 (80): 8.

³⁴ 1.22f. *Surrexerunt illi et ego inlacrimans multa oravi, cum audio Licentium succinentem illud propheticum laete atque garrule: Deus virtutum, converte nos et ostende faciem tuam, et salvi erimus. Quod pridie post cenam cum ad requisita naturae foras exisset, paulo clarius cecinit, quam ut mater nostra ferre posset, quod illo loco talia continuo repetita canerentur ... (23) Ergo mane cum regressus esset solus ... accessit ad lectulum meum: Verum mihi dic, inquit, ita fiat nobis quod vis, quid de me existimes ... —Mihi, inquam, neque hoc displicet et ad illum ordinem puto pertinere, ut etiam hinc aliquid diceremus. Nam illi cantico et locum ipsum, quo illa offensae est, et noctem congruere video. A quibus enim rebus putas nos orare ut convertamur ad deum eiusque faciem videamus, nisi a quodam ceno corporis atque sordibus et item tenebris, quibus nos error involvit? Aut quid est aliud converti nisi ab immoderatione vitiorum virtute ac temperantia in sese attonsi? Quidve aliud est dei facies quam ipsa, cui suspiramus et cui nos amatae mundos pulchrosque reddimus, veritas? On this, see Trelenberg (2009) 136–139: 'eine der Schlüsselstellen für die Legitimität eines allegorischen Verständnisses von *De ordine*' (p. 137); cf. Fuhrer (2011) 28–32.*

the scenic elements—even the latrine—as charged with meaning and so, to some extent, suggest that the surroundings be read and interpreted as a text.³⁵

Among the named elements of this ‘setting text’, it is Augustine’s ill health,³⁶ night, the sleeping quarters, being awake, sounds, and then the dawning day (1.20 and 1.22) that most clearly have the character of signs, not least because interpretations of this kind are proposed in the dialogue itself. In his allegoresis of the latrine scene, Augustine compares the *locus* with the past night (1.23: *nam illi cantico et locum ipsum ... et noctem congruere video*); the darkness of the sleeping quarters and of the latrine stands for the error from which humans want to free themselves. Those who love truth are awake and alert; their education in learned disciplines is preparing them to ‘embrace’ truth (1.24: *exhibet amatores amplectendae veritati*). The state of ignorance is compared to incapacity through illnesses (*morbi*) and rashes (*scabies*), from which *sapientia*, like a doctor, can heal those who are prepared to undergo a strenuous cure (*patientia, perpeti* 1.24). Health is equated to light (*valetudini sanorum lucique reddantur*). Anyone who chooses to remain without knowledge of God lives like settling for alms (*tamquam stipe contenti*). However, the ‘best and most beautiful bridegroom’ (*coniunx ille optimus ac pulcherrimus*) wants those souls that strive for the happy life and so are ‘worthy of the bridal chamber’ (*thalamo suo dignas*).³⁷

The sleeping quarters in Cassiacum thus become a symbol of the state of ignorance, which those who are awake and ask questions about the *divinus ordo*, i.e., souls that love truth³⁸ and strive for knowledge of God, can transcend: towards the light or into the bridal chamber to the divine bridegroom.

The interpretation of the ‘setting text’ continues the next day. Due to the miserable weather (*caelo tristi*), they decide to continue the discussion in the baths³⁹ and, on the way there, they observe two cocks fighting (1.25).

³⁵ Cf. esp. 1.7: *me cursus ille aquarum aliquid de se dicere admonebat*.

³⁶ 1.5: *stomachi dolor*; cf. 1.26; 1.29; 1.33; his inner struggle, which is made clear with the reference to his regular sleeplessness (1.6), and his prayers while weeping (1.22) can also be linked to the metaphor field of being sick and regaining health.

³⁷ The myth of Pyramus and Thisbe, which Licentius plans to recount in poetry, is interpreted allegorically: the fulfilment of their love should be understood as the union of spirits equipped with the ‘dowry’ of knowledge and the beauty of virtue (1.24).

³⁸ Cf. 1.6.

³⁹ Cf. Lieu (1992) 174, who refers to the Manichaean prohibition of bathing, with reference to Aug. *mor.* 69 and 72.

Augustine directly describes the group's gazing at this fight scene as the search of the 'eyes of lovers' (*oculi amantum*) for the 'signs' (*signa*) through which the 'beauty of reason' (*pulchritudo rationis*) draws beholders to itself and demands that they strive towards it.⁴⁰ It is stressed that both creatures, including the dishevelled, defeated cock, appear beautiful as an ensemble, and that thus the 'deformed' (*deforme*), too, contributes to the harmony and beauty of the view (*concinnum et pulchrum*). This 'spectacle' in which they take pleasure (1.26: *voluptas spectaculi*) is thereafter interpreted as an 'invitation' to the senses (*ipsorum sensuum invitatio*) to move on to deeper reflections and to perceive the rule-governed character of the visible natural world, which is the 'imitation of that truest beauty' (*imitatio verissimae illius pulchritudinis*).

Thus over the timespan of a night and the following day, a scenario is presented that 'invites' the following interpretation (cf. 1.26): those who are awake at night—including the sick teacher—attempt to liberate themselves from the state of ignorance through their love of truth, and with their sharpened sense for the ordered nature of the world they are able even at night, and all the more by day, to interpret the phenomena of their material surroundings as references to a higher beauty and truth.

The semantic fields 'night/darkness', 'dirt', 'illness', 'struggle/defeat', 'ugliness' thus not only provide images to describe and characterise ignorance, but also illustrate the significance of the not-beautiful and the negative in the divine order. They are seen strictly in their complementarity to a concept that is positively connoted: those in darkness, too, can strive for knowledge; those who are in the 'filth of the corporeal world', too, can, by singing a psalm, ask God to show them his face and can be saved; those who are sick, too, can love truth; those who are defeated and deformed in a fight can be beautiful too.

The dialogue setting thus presents an ontological scale that leads from the levels of reduced being up to the highest being, linking night or darkness to light or day, dirt to purity, sickness to health, defeat to victory, the ugly to the beautiful. With these manifestations of an all-encompassing order, the dialogue setting becomes a semiotic system in which even the ontologically deficient forms of phenomenon always also refer to something at the highest level, namely the omnipotent divine creator.

⁴⁰ Cf. 1.26: *insignire*; 1.10: *augurium*.

4. THE MANICHAEAN LANGUAGE OF MOTIFS AND IMAGES

The strikingly detailed scenic design of *De ordine* has often been interpreted in scholarship on the dialogue as a means of making visible the arguments presented in the discussion.⁴¹ Until now, however, the scenic elements have not been read in light of the reference system formed by Manichaeic motifs and images. If this is attempted, it yields results that, to my mind, are indeed illuminating for the understanding of the text.

As a basis for the 'new' interpretation of the scenic setting of the dialogue in *De ordine*, I make use of the repertoire of the Manichaeic imagery and iconic or figurative language ('Bildersprache des Manichäismus') which Victoria Arnold-Döben worked out in her 1978 Bonn doctoral dissertation. Her work includes a collection of the images and motifs through which the anthropological and cosmological doctrine of salvation and the processes of redemption from the negative situation in which people presently find themselves are presented and explained in the known Manichaeic sources.

Arnold-Döben refers in her introduction to Hans Jonas, who claimed that imagery is the 'logos of gnosis', and to Alexander Böhlig's concept of a 'language of symbols' with which the working of the 'gnostic system' is explained.⁴² Thus, alongside the concepts of the 'image' and the 'motif', a concept of the 'symbol' is introduced,⁴³ though it is used without reflection on its scope.⁴⁴

In the present discussion, 'motif'⁴⁵ will be used for elements of the Manichaeic myth—the so-called 'mythological system'. The most important element of this narrative is the struggle of the realm of light with the realm of darkness. Other elements include figures (father; mother; son; primal man; demon; the powers of darkness), certain actions (wake-up call; fleeing), props (armour; weapon; net), places (the Home of Light; foreign land), nature (sun; moon; the tree of life or of death with their roots, branches and leaves; the natural elements air, wind, light, water, fire).

⁴¹ Cf. Dyroff (1930); Casati (1967); Voss (1970) 216f.; Bennett (1988) 54; Schäfer (2001); Trelenberg (2009) 136–139; Fuhrer (1997a) 12–14; Fuhrer (2011) 28–32; Witek (2002).

⁴² Arnold-Döben (1978) 5f.

⁴³ The distinction between image and motif gets blurred, as Oerter (1981) cautions in his review of Arnold-Döben.

⁴⁴ It is also not asked what function was to be fulfilled by the visualisation of the myth in book illustrations and wall-paintings in Manichaeic religion and liturgy: the visual representations are to realise anew 'im Kult den Kampf des Lichtes gegen die Finsternis und die Läuterung des Lichtes aus der Finsternis'. On this, see Hutter (2010) 14f., quotation on p. 15; Lieu (1992) 175f.

⁴⁵ On this, see Hutter (2010) 16–19.

The term 'image' is used when a figure, an element of nature or an action is introduced—as a comparison, simile or analogy—to illustrate and explain something. From the series of examples documented by Arnold-Döben, the following can be mentioned: the image of the sea out of which the apostles, as divers, bring souls up like pearls and lead them to the safe haven, i.e. to gnosis; the image of the bridegroom, who stands for the redeemer—Jesus, an apostle, Mani or the Light-Nous, whom the soul awaits like a bride with a full oil-lamp; the image of the doctor who cures the sick Living Soul of its injuries and the pains inflicted on it by its residence in the material world; the images of sleep, blindness, madness, drunkenness, the prison, with which the state of the soul in the *hyle*-body is described.

The figures, objects and actions just mentioned can be used to explain and illuminate a narrative sequence in the Manichaean cosmological (and mythological) system. However, as, according to the Manichaean cosmology, every action and every object is involved in the struggle between the realms of light and darkness and participates in the mixing of light-elements, the objects or sources of images are more than just symbols⁴⁶: as empirical elements they are direct evidence of the events pertaining to perdition or redemption; they are part of it, and, in a certain sense, they are symptoms. In them cosmic reality becomes manifest; it is present in them. The Manichaeans were thus strictly opposed to any allegorical interpretation of the elements of their myth, and the visual representation of the Manichaean cosmogony in cult images and in illustrated books served not least as a document of these events' reality in the world and thus as testimony against any interpretation in a transferred sense.⁴⁷

A motif can be at the same time image (and vice versa), but not in the sense of metaphor or symbol: thus, for instance, the sun and light are elements of the myth and so parts of the narrative. But they are also images of the process of acquiring knowledge or of the object of knowledge or, in a certain—for example, cultic—context, the bringer of the knowledge, for the doctrine itself, or for gnosis. Night and sleep are images for the imprisonment of the light particles in matter, but they are also a real condition that is explained by the cosmological myth.

⁴⁶ On the concept of 'symbol', cf. Kurz (1997) 66 ff.

⁴⁷ Cf. Lieu (1992) 175: "Mani ... made an actual pictorial representation of his complex teaching on cosmogony both to guard against allegorical interpretation and to serve as a visual aid for the missionaries"; also BeDuhn (2010) 82 f. ('mythic literalism') and 96. Coyle (2003/2009) 5 f./311 f. is thus erroneous.

With Johannes van Oort, I assume that already the 'Milan' Augustine was familiar with the Manichaeic language of imagery and motifs.⁴⁸ This leads to the position that he also knew the communicative function and epistemological significance that was accorded in the Manichaeic religion to the image, or to the motif represented in the image, or to the practice of illustrating things through narratives of myths.

5. PLATONIC VERSUS MANICHAEAN CODING OF THE 'SETTING TEXT'

So let us now try to interpret the scenic design of the Augustinian dialogue 'On order' with the eyes of a reader schooled in Manichaeism, that is, in an interpretive horizon that we can plausibly suppose to correspond to that of the 'Milan Augustinus' in the year 386. Night and darkness, day and light, being awake, sickness and pain, healing by a 'doctor', the dirt of the body, purifying, alms, bridal chamber and bridegroom, psalm-singing, struggle, victory and defeat: this all corresponds to the repertoire of motifs and images of the Manichaeic mythological system.

However, there is an essential difference between the interpretive possibilities of the Manichaeic language of images or motifs described here and the Augustinian hermeneutics of the 'setting-' or 'object-text' of *De ordine*. The difference between these systems of images and motifs can be shown up most clearly through the example of the oppositions of light-darkness and sickness-health.⁴⁹ According to the Manichaeic cosmology, light and the stars are manifestations of the—really existing—realm of light and of God who is at work in it; darkness is the principle that brought forth the world in the struggle with the realm of light. The result is particles of light caught in matter, the wounds that the *hyle* inflicts on the soul, and the pains caused by the separation from the realm of light. Hunger, thirst, wind, frost, madness, sleep, drunkenness, captivity, and death are evidence of the state of being unredeemed.⁵⁰ At the same time, however, they are also 'images' and expressions of the cosmological and anthropological situation pertaining to

⁴⁸ Cf. e.g. van Oort (2010) 510–513; a sceptical view is taken by Drecoll/Kudella (2011) 17 f. with n. 22. Another controversial question is what significance illustrated codices or other visual representations played in North African Manichaeism. It would be of interest for the questions pursued here to know to what extent Augustine knew this tradition, but it cannot be determined and is not of direct relevance.

⁴⁹ On Augustine's use of the verbal field 'light' in the *Confessions* and its Manichaeic connotations, cf. Kotzé (2004) 105 f. citing Chidester (1986). Cf. also Vannier (2004–2010) 1066 f.

⁵⁰ Arnold-Döben (1978) 128 ff., esp. 131.

perdition or redemption. Redemption is achieved by the Manichaean *electus*, when, by an ascetic way of life, he heals the sick particles of light that are really present in his body. The *auditores* win this purging of the body by prayer—the singing of psalms is important in this—, fasting and giving alms, which are purified by the *electi* in the process of being eaten.⁵¹ The motifs and images of the Manichaean myth thus illustrate a state in the real, material world.

In the semantic system of Augustine's *De ordine* the scenic setting is also interpreted as the result of an act of creation;⁵² however, in the interpretation of its elements as signs, it is accorded a strictly referential function. The signs 'admonish', 'call for', 'invite' the beholders to question what causes them to be as they are, and so to recognise the order in them. The signs are thus not themselves what they refer to, but they lead to it: they have an anagogical function.⁵³ Beyond or above them is a further area, which Augustine in the continuation of the discussion terms the 'other world' (1.32: *alius mundus*), which can only be seen by the 'intellect', and which is equated with the 'kingdom of God'.⁵⁴ The process of allegorical interpretation of the scenic setting is based on the notion that the objects of the sensual world are to be understood as *symbola*, as references that can be grasped by the senses, referring to the intelligible world, to which these 'signs' lead whoever knows how to interpret them.⁵⁵

The scenic design of the dialogue setting of *De ordine* can thus be read as an extension of the Manichaean system of codes, and hence as a message addressed also to a Manichaean readership, something that is certainly to

⁵¹ Arnold-Döben (1978) 104f. Cf. on this also Burkert (1996) 194f. On the function of Psalm singing in ritual performance cf. BeDuhn (2010) 56–60.—The process of healing and redemption occurs, so to speak, by working on matter.

⁵² The accounts of creation in Genesis can also be understood as mythological narratives.

⁵³ Cf. Dionysius Areopagita's reflections on the methods of 'das Verstehen der konkreten Dinge'; on this, cf. Semsch (2009) 304 ('anagogische Übersetzung der sinnlichen Wahrnehmung').

⁵⁴ On this, see below, p. 66.

⁵⁵ The idea of allegorising the objects in the world (as opposed to texts) is known to Augustine perhaps from the Manichaeans themselves (cf. van Oort [1991/2013] 49 with n. 187), or perhaps from the circles of Platonising Christians in which he moved in Milan; this method is first formulated fully in the theurgy of the Neoplatonists; on this, see Miller (2009) 31–35.—It could also be asked to what extent Augustine's thought is also already shaped by the notion that the creation according to Genesis 1f. is the result of the divine 'speech' and thereafter God, as Augustine later repeatedly stresses with reference to Rom 1:20, is visible in the entire creation: created nature refers to God, it 'speaks' through him (cf. e.g. *conf.* 10.8), or God communicates the truth through the creation.

be expected in the years 386/7 in Milan.⁵⁶ Understood in this way, the text operates with the codes familiar to a Manichaean and thus inscribes itself into Manichaean discourse.

Augustine's 'play' with Manichaean imagery and its repertoire of motifs must at the same time be interpreted as non- or even anti-Manichaean, however, because he strictly interprets the same motifs and images as references to another reality that is purely intelligible. He creates a new semantics and a different function for these things, and transfers them from a mythological into an ontological system. In the *Confessions* he frequently terms the Manichaean myths as 'false visions' (*phantasmata*).⁵⁷ This term is apt when the motifs and images of the Manichaean mythological system are accorded a real existence in the world experienced by the senses.⁵⁸

This new semantics of the 'setting text' has central importance also for the question of theodicy discussed in the dialogue: The oppositions on which these complexes of images and motifs are based are not—as in the Manichaean understanding—set against each other as agonistic principles, but instead the 'negative' pole is the starting-point of a development towards a 'positive' goal. Night, darkness, dirt, sickness, ugliness are understood as a state or properties that already also contain the aspect of the positive. The nocturnal discussion on the question of 'evil' in the world, the psalm as a prayer for a turn towards God, the perception of the aesthetic of the ugly are each attempts to recognise the divine order in which everything is ordered by God and leads to God.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Not least from the fact that Licentius' father Romanianus remained a declared Manichaean.

⁵⁷ Also as *fallaciae, fictiones* etc.; cf. *conf.* 3.10; 4.9; 4.12; 5.16; 9.9; cf. *c. ep. fund.* 18 f. On this, cf. Fuhrer (in print); van Oort (1997) 241–243 and 246; van Oort (2010) 532 and 536; van Oort (2012) 191 f. who relates the concept to the Manichaean book illustrations and picture books. Cf. also Drecoll/Kudella (2011) 152–154.

⁵⁸ Augustine explicitly concludes this in *conf.* 7.2: *ego itaque incrassatus corde nec mihimet ipsi vel ipse conspicuus, quidquid non per aliquanta spatia tenderetur vel diffunderetur vel conglobaretur vel tumeret vel tale aliquid caperet aut capere posset, nihil prorsus esse arbitrabar. per quales enim formas ire solent oculi mei, per tales imagines ibat cor meum, nec videbam hanc eandem intentionem qua illas ipsas imagines formabam non esse tale aliquid, quae tamen ipsas non formaret nisi esset magnum aliquid.* On this, BeDuhn (2010) 181, who speaks of 'dualistic imagery'. Augustine opposes the materialist interpretation of the function of light in promoting knowledge in his later anti-Manichaean writings; on this, see Vannier (2004–2010) 1067 with n. 13.

⁵⁹ Even Augustine's stomach pains have a positive function, in that they impose a necessary moderation on the debate (cf. esp. 1.5; 1.26; 1.33). On this, BeDuhn (2010) 233. It should be asked what the function could be in a Manichaean interpretation of imagery of the water under the floor, the mice, the wood with which Licentius scares them away, and other elements of the setting.

With Jason BeDuhn, this position can be termed monistic, hierarchic (with reference to its ontology), and providential, in contrast to the Manichaean position, which is dualistic, agonistic and accidental.⁶⁰ The monistic-hierarchic position begins from the notion that, in the order of being, the material, sensually comprehensible world of objects can be transcended, on the one hand through the Platonic distinction between the sensual and the intelligible world, on the other through the Judaeo-Christian notion of the divine creation, according to which even unformed matter is created by God and partakes in the good, but is not itself divine, or good, or bad.⁶¹ Overall this results in an 'optimistic' interpretation of the world order⁶² which Augustine only later problematises with the theory of original and inherited sin.

6. THE 'PLACE' OF THE *MALUM* IN THE WORLD ORDER

In the subsequent course of the dialogue *De ordine*, the combination of theoretical discussion and illustrative scene-setting is continued. On the second day, Augustine invites Licentius to defend his thesis that the *malum*, too, is part of the divine order. As the two students oppose each other in a christological and trinitarian discussion, and Licentius then asks that this (unpleasant) exchange not be written down, Augustine tries to ascribe a referential function to the dispute (1.29): according to him, the situation shows that the students are stricken by 'sick madness' (*morbi dementia*), lying in 'dangers' (*periculis*) and 'sunk' in the depths (*demersos, demersis*). The physically sick Augustine, who in daily prayers asks God for healing, pleads (*obsecro*) with the two youths, to reward him for his love with a 'good deed' (*beneficium*), by making efforts towards being good (*boni estote*).⁶³

⁶⁰ BeDuhn (2010) e.g. 233: '[Augustine's] consistent attention to such signs suggests an indication to see the world as ordered in a way that the Nicene Christian stress on divine omnipotence closely matched, while Manichaeism, with its more agonistic themes, did not'; 265: 'The Manichaeans recognized that a dualistic universe would necessarily produce accidental outcomes. ... Augustine clearly chooses to leave behind this sort of fatalistic indeterminism for a more secure providential order of things. ... Since that complexity entails widely divergent degrees of goodness, its coordination is by definition hierarchical'.

⁶¹ On this, BeDuhn (2010) 187.

⁶² Thus BeDuhn (2010) 257.

⁶³ *O si videritis vel tam lippientibus oculis quam ego, in quibus periculis iaceamus, cuius morbi dementia risus iste indicet! ... Demersos quidem esse animos omnium stultorum indocorumque commune est, sed non uno atque eodem modo demersis opem sapientia et manum porrigit. ... Satis mihi sint vulnera mea, quae ut sanentur, paene cotidianis fletibus deum rogans indigniorem tamen esse me, qui tam cito saner, quam volo, saepe memet ipse convinco. Nolite,*

Augustine portrays himself in a situation of physical weakness and—despite his role as teacher—as a supplicant pleading with the immature students; he humbles himself to alert the youths to their danger, and in doing so he also asserts his love. Finally, he bursts into tears (1.30). When Trygetius proposes that the passage that exposes their ignorance be allowed to stand, as a punishment (*maneant nostra poena*) for their striving after false glory, he is supporting Augustine's attempt to turn the negative development of the discussion towards the positive, and wishes to obey Augustine's exhortation towards being good (1.30).

This series of aspects that, at least apparently, could be negatively connoted—the dispute between the students, the fragility of the teacher, his humbling of himself, the punishment for seeking glory—is continued when Augustine's mother is included in the group discussion: as a woman, she does not really belong in a philosophical dialogue, as she herself observes (1.31). Nonetheless, she too is assigned a constructive role: insofar as she is guided by the *divinae scripturae*, she directs her 'love of wisdom' not towards 'this world' but the 'other world', the kingdom of God, and so she is an instructive model even for the instructor Augustine (1.32).⁶⁴

Overstating somewhat, it can be said: the discussion group is composed of a physically and psychically weakened teacher, two immature, vain and naive students, and a pious woman. However, as they all direct their efforts towards the good and the truth, and so towards God, the group stands for the possibility of raising oneself out of this position by correctly diagnosing weakness, sickness and danger and using them as the starting-point on the way to true knowledge. According to the hermeneutic of objects, or of the world, as developed in the previous day's dialogue, these negative aspects have their specific function in the well-ordered whole; they are not symptoms of the contention of powers and, therefore, a negative and harmful situation, but the object of divine providence.⁶⁵

obsecro, si quid mihi amoris, si quid necessitudinis debetis, si intellegitis, quantum vos diligam, quanti faciam, quantum me cura exagitet morum vestrorum, ... rependite mihi beneficium, et si me magistrum libenter vocatis, reddite mihi mercedem: boni estote!

⁶⁴ *Nam ne quid, mater, ignores, hoc Graecum verbum, quo philosophia nominatur, Latine amor sapientiae dicitur. Unde etiam divinae scripturae, quas vehementer amplecteris, non omnino philosophos, sed philosophos huius mundi evitandos atque invidendos esse praecipunt. Esse autem alium mundum ab istis oculis remotissimum, quem paucorum sanorum intellectus intuetur, satis ipse Christus significat, qui non dicit: 'regnum meum non est de mundo' (with reference to Joh 18:36), sed: regnum meum non est de hoc mundo. ... Nunc vero ... egone me non libenter tibi etiam discipulum dabo? Cf. also Acad. 3.42; solil. 1.3. On this, see Fuhrer (1997b).*

⁶⁵ This is said explicitly in 2.1 and 2.11.

In the discussion in Book 2 of *De ordine*, the group attempts to support with further arguments the monist, and so anti-dualist, cosmology on which this ‘praise of weakness’ is based.⁶⁶ This discussion is set in time after the dialogue of *De beata vita*, to which there is an explicit reference in *ord.* 2.1. In that other discussion, on the occasion of Augustine’s birthday, it had been agreed that while the ‘fool’ (*stultus*) does not—like the wise man—‘have God’, nonetheless, he is ‘had by God’. This figure of thought is based on the contradictory opposition of ‘wise’—‘not wise’ (*sapiens—insipiens*), which is picked up again in *De ordine* with the example of the wise man who is ‘with God’ and the ‘fool’ who is ‘not with God’ but also ‘not without God’ (2.4 f.; 2.19 f.).⁶⁷ This is illustrated here, as in *De beata vita*, by the comparison of *stultitia* with darkness, which is not itself perceptible and consequently is not an independent substance, but which must instead be explained by the absence of light; in analogy to this, *stultitia* can be defined as lack of *sapientia* (2.9 f.).⁶⁸ Trygetius uses the comparison for his explanation that the existence of the ‘fools’ (*vita stultorum*), too, has its ‘place’ (*locus*) in the providentially ruled world order (2.11). In this way, too, the discussion moves beyond the dualistic pattern of thought.

This is developed further with a series of other examples: the divine order assigns a *locus* also to the executioners, prostitutes, pimps and ugly parts of the body (2.12), while also in language, literature, rhetoric and logic, errors have their ‘seat’ (*certis et suis sedibus*) and contribute to the harmony of the whole (2.13).⁶⁹ Finally, this system also encompasses people’s differing intellectual potentials who—proceeding by the differing paths of *auctoritas* and *ratio*, though always in a life disciplined by a set of ethical rules⁷⁰—can

⁶⁶ There can be seen in this ‘praise of weakness’ or ‘of folly’ a jab at the Manichaean claim that only the *electi* can embark on the path to gnosis.

⁶⁷ The un-wise, who, following Stoic usage, is termed *stultus*, is allowed the possibility of living neither ‘with’ nor entirely ‘without God’; the contrary opposition *cum* ↔ *sine* is replaced by the contradictory opposition *cum* ↔ *non cum*.

⁶⁸ *Ord.* 2.10: *Adducor, ut dicam neminem posse videre tenebras. Quam ob rem si menti hoc est intellegere, quod sensui videre, et licet quisque oculis apertis sanis purisque sit, videre tamen tenebras non potest, non absurde dicitur intellegi non posse stultitiam; nam nullas alias mentis tenebras nominamus.* Cf. *beata v.* 29 f.; on which, Torchia (1994). In one group of manuscripts with the text of *De ordine*, this idea is picked up one more time and formulated as a theory of privation (2.23); however, the passage is very likely to be inauthentic, because it thus anticipates the solution. On this, see Trelenberg (2009) 259.

⁶⁹ Cf. 2.14 and 2.24. This figure of thought is found in a similar argumentative context in Plot. *enn.* 3.2.17 f.; at Cic. *off.* 1.150 f. and 1.126 it is used solely to illustrate the necessity of (grammatical and physical) defects. On this, see Trelenberg (2009) 213 f. and 405 f.

⁷⁰ 2.25; 2.50; 2.52. This ethic of rules (which is Pythagorean and later developed into the Augustinian monastic rules) can be understood as a model created in opposition to Manichaean ethics (on which, see van Oort 2010, 518 f.).

reach God and 'be freed' (2.15f.).⁷¹ However, only the path of *ratio*, after passing through seven scholarly disciplines, leads to the comprehensive and highest insight into the rationality of the world order.⁷²

The goal for both the Manichaeian and the Platonic-Nicene-Christian is thus similar: the acquisition of knowledge or gnosis, which is described as the appearance of 'light' or 'illumination' according to the shared language of images or, according to the Manichaeian mythological system, equated with the purging of elements of the realm of darkness. The motifs and images are likewise comparable: sickness, strife, sinking into the depths, 'madness', folly versus wisdom, liberation from ignorance, rules for the morally good life, and perhaps also the mother figure, are all identical or similar. However there is a cardinal difference in the significance accorded to and the valuation of the state of deficit that precedes the achievement of knowledge. The object of knowledge is not the binary difference between light and dark, ugly and beautiful, weak and strong, foolish and wise, good and evil/bad; the goal is rather the ability to recognise the good in the bad, wisdom in folly, the beautiful in the ugly, strength in weakness, and light in darkness.⁷³

7. CONCLUSION

The discussion in *De ordine* on the question of 'evil' in the world had ended in aporia, and when—after Augustine's *oratio perpetua*—night falls, the discussion is broken off (2.54). However, all are happy and full of hope, and this optimistic perspective is underlined by the observation that the night-lamp is brought in (*cum iam nocturnum lumen fuisset inlatum*).

This motif is conventional: evening brings an end also to the discussions in Cicero's dialogues and in Augustine's *Contra Academicos*.⁷⁴ However, the reference to the scene in the sleeping quarters at the start of *De ordine* and the allegoresis of it proposed in the discussion itself (1.23) suggest in turn

⁷¹ 2.16: *Duplex enim est via, quam sequimur, cum rerum nos obscuritas movet, aut rationem aut certe auctoritatem. Philosophia rationem promittit et vix paucissimos liberat, quos tamen non modo non contemnere illa mysteria sed sola intellegere, ut intellegenda sunt, cogit ...*

⁷² 2.26. See, most recently, Trelenberg (2009) 274f.

⁷³ Cf. BeDuhn (2010) 259: 'Augustine is ... discerning a fundamental shift in thinking from the materialist and aesthetic premises of Manichaeian phenomenalism to the abstract formalism of Neoplatonism'.

⁷⁴ *Cic. fin.* 4.80; *nat. deor.* 3.94; *Aug. Acad.* 3.44. On this, Trelenberg (2009) 373.

a symbolic interpretation: the *nocturnum lumen*, which is not ‘caught’ in the night, but which instead illuminates it, is not documenting a struggle between *worlds of* light and darkness, but corresponds to the happy and hopeful mood of the group.

However, Augustine’s text—like every challenging literary text—leaves much open and does not create an unambiguous message. I thus return to the reflections on method with which I began, which Augustine raises in the context of his Bible hermeneutics. Naturally I do not mean that my interpretation can make a claim of the ‘truth’ which here would correspond to the intention of the author—that, according to Augustine’s hermeneutic, is how a profane text differs from the text of the Bible. Nonetheless, I hope that I was able to make a plausible case for my thesis: that the empirical author of *De ordine* expected a Manichaean readership, that he therefore coded the text in a Manichaean way, but that he gave these codes a new semantics, re-coding the language of motifs and images according to Platonic-Christian ontology and theology.

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MANI, AUGUSTINE AND THE VISION OF GOD

Iain Gardner

This paper was born of a series of happy coincidences. There were, firstly, those that led to the realisation that the text of the Manichaean daily prayers was by no means lost to modern scholars, but preserved in multiple copies from very different times and places of the community's history. Further, when this realisation was first published in the recent *Festschrift* for Johannes van Oort,¹ there were other papers in that volume that provided useful correlations to my line of thought. I think particularly, though not exclusively, of Nils Arne Pedersen's discussion of the veil that hides the face of God, the Father of Greatness.² And then, further, I find an impressive and fertile new interest in the connections between Augustine and his (once) Manichaean heritage, evidenced in the recent work of many of the scholars participating in the conference.³ I am indebted to all of the above in this paper, the theme of which is that saying of the saviour (to use Mani's preferred nomenclature): "*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*" (Mt. 5:8).

1. THE MANICHAEAN DAILY PRAYERS TO THE SUN AND THE MOON

When we look at the daily prayers we find a formal ritual punctuating the day and night at set hours, and accompanied by a specific set of actions.

¹ I. Gardner, "Manichaean Ritual Practice at Ancient Kellis: A New Understanding of the Meaning and Function of the So-Called *Prayer of the Emanations*", in J.A. van den Berg, A. Kotzé, T. Nicklas, M. Scopello, eds., *In Search of Truth. Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism: Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, (Leiden, 2011) 245–262.

² N.A. Pedersen, "The Veil and Revelation of the Father of Greatness", *ibid.* pp. 229–234. Of course, whilst reading Pedersen's paper stimulated some of the ideas discussed here by myself, he is not responsible for these.

³ See the major overview of the topic by J. van Oort, "Manichaean Christians in Augustine's Life and Work", *Church History and Religious Culture*, 90, 2010, 505–546. Amongst many other important studies, note especially J.D. BeDuhn (the first of a projected three volumes), *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma: 1. Conversion and Apostasy, 373–388 C.E.*, (Philadelphia 2010); and the extended review by J. van Oort, 'Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma in Context', *Vigiliae Christianae*, 65, 2011, 543–567.

These were a fundamental building-block for the community's practice, providing a crucial unity of endeavour and a focus that belies the fragmentation of languages and cultures that have drawn so much scholarly attention. When, in the past, it was supposed that al-Nadim's account⁴ of the prayers was the only detailed source available, there was always the concern that what he recounted was somehow an adaptation to Muslim practice in the Abbasid empire. However, whilst some questions do remain about details of the times of day and the physical actions of prostration, we now know that the (incomplete) text he provided in Arabic is fundamentally the same as that utilised in fourth century Egypt or medieval Sogdia. There is no reason to suppose that it differed from that practised in Roman North Africa, so that—if Augustine's 'Manichaeon' experience has any meaning—it must have been the same as known to and undertaken by the later Catholic bishop in his youth. This is what he tells directly, maintaining (one might observe) a studious distance in his account:⁵

In the daytime they offer their prayers towards the sun, wherever it goes in its orbit; at night, they offer them towards the moon, if it appears; if it does not, they direct them towards the north, by which the sun, when it has set, returns to the east. They stand while praying.

There were ten prayers, the first addressed to the supreme God, the Father of the Lights; and then descending down the hierarchy of being (as it were) through the emanations, Christ, the angels and finally to the community of the righteous. In conclusion, the practitioner asks for help and favour from all the ones who have been worshipped and named; in order to be freed from pain and rebirth, and at the last to attain the peace and eternal life of the realm of light.

My concern here is not to discuss the content of the text of the prayers. Rather, I want to focus on the required moral state of the subject, the one who prays; and on the object that is addressed, the sun by day or moon by night. It is specified that the practitioner must pray with 'a pure heart and

⁴ Al-Nadim's text is best known to anglophone readers in the translation of B. Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadim*, II, (New York/London, 1970) 790–791; but see now J.C. Reeves, *Prolegomena to a History of Islamicate Manichaeism*, (Sheffield, 2011) 210–211. For detailed discussion of the prayers and the sources see Gardner, "Manichaeon Ritual Practice"; and the more extended treatment in my "With a Pure Heart and a Truthful Tongue: The Recovery of the Text of the Manichaeon Daily Prayers", *Journal of Late Antiquity*, 4, 2011: 79–99. I do not intend to repeat all this material again here.

⁵ Augustine, *de Haeresibus* XLVI.18; in I. Gardner, S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeon Texts from the Roman Empire*, (Cambridge, 2004) 191.

a truthful tongue'. The phrase is (obviously) rendered slightly differently in the various languages in which we find it preserved, including both Sogdian and Arabic. But it is so characteristic that we can even recognise it in the Uighur confessional:⁶

There is a rule to direct four prayers to the God Āzrua, the God of the sun and the moon, the fivefold God and the buddhas; with complete attention and an earnest heart, daily.

I presume that the original text of the prayers was in Aramaic, and it is interesting to see how the Greek version⁷ gives two slightly different translations. At the start of the first prayer it is ἐκ καθαρᾶς ἐννοίας ἀδόλω λόγῳ ('with pure intent and honest speech'); whilst in the final ritual instructions appended to the prayers we find ἐν καθαρῇ καρδίᾳ καὶ εὐθείᾳ γλώσσῃ ('with a pure heart and forthright tongue'). It is the latter that most clearly directs us to what must be the original gospel reference: μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται. But how are we to understand the meaning of this? It is certain, as we shall see, that the practitioner did not suppose that they were gazing directly upon God the Father; because one of the crucial tenets of Manichaean theology was that the Father is hidden from time and the cosmos. But, at the same time, it is more than an anticipation of a future unveiling. One of the most characteristic themes of Mani's teaching was that truth is not something heard or believed by report, or proved by discursive reasoning. It is seen by the eyes, just as the light filling the moon is manifest in the night-sky. He promised his followers:⁸ 'Look, you have seen everything by an eye-revelation. You do not lack anything from the mysteries of the wisdom of God'.

The matter is most succinctly put by the Manichaean bishop Faustus when he insists that God dwells in the light: the Father in the *light inaccessible* (1Tim. 6:16), but the Son in the visible sun and moon.⁹ Let us turn now to those objects of prayer. In the first place the sun and the moon are 'ships' (Coptic ⲭⲁⲓ or Greek πλοῖον).¹⁰ The symbolism is ancient, of course, in that they traverse the sky. But for the Manichaean community there were layers

⁶ *X^aastvanift* X, i; quoted from H.-J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, (San Francisco, 1993) 303. J.P. Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature*, (New York, 1975) 74 translates: "... in simplicity (sincerity) and with a pure heart."

⁷ P. Kellis VI Gr. 98; in I. Gardner, *Kellis Literary Texts. Volume 2*, (Oxford 2007).

⁸ P. Kellis VI Copt. 54, 8–11.

⁹ Cf. Augustine, *c. Faust.* XX, 2.

¹⁰ See the references in the *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts. I. Texts from the Roman Empire*, (Turnhout 1998).

of very specific meaning. The light-soul that ascends, whether our very own or that refined from this 'mixed' world that is the cosmos, fills up the vessel of the moon; before it is transferred to the sun and thence to the 'new aeon' (to which we will return later). This process is visible: Not only can we see these vessels that ferry the soul, but the divine living soul is itself apparent in that it is made up of the five light-elements. Thus the moon is specifically the 'ship of living water' and the sun 'the ship of living fire'. The process of the waxing and waning of the moon was a very obvious demonstration of the supposed truth of this teaching, whilst the constant plenitude of the sun was a mystery that Mani needed to discuss.¹¹

However, the sun and moon did not only carry the ascending light, they were also dwellings (sometimes thrones or palaces) for the emanated gods at work in the cosmos, undertaking the processes involved in the redemption of the light and defeat of the darkness and its powers.¹² Various lists occur in the Manichaean (and anti-Manichaean) texts to locate the different gods according to their homes, and this is what Faustus meant when he talked about the 'Son' in the visible sun and the moon. For example, the polemical *Acts of Archelaus* not only discusses the process of ferrying the souls, and the waxing and waning of the moon (26, 6–7); but also places Jesus 'in the little ship' and so on (31, 6). Indeed, the association of Jesus (here in his aspect as the salvific god 'Jesus Splendour') and the moon was so strong, that in a wonderful fragment of Manichaean mission history preserved in Sogdian we can read:¹³

Thereupon, on the fourteenth (i.e. of the lunar month when the moon was full), Gabriab and his assistants stood in supplication and prayer. And near nightfall when Jesus rose, Gabriab stood before Jesus in prayer and spoke thus to him ...

However, one should note that there was a duality in the conception of the figure of Jesus, so that he could be associated both with the principal god of

¹¹ For a compendium of Manichaean teachings on these matters start with kephalaion 65: 'Concerning the Sun'.

¹² There is a wonderful image of the gods seated on their thrones in the 'ships of the day and the night', i.e. the sun and the moon, in the recently identified Chinese cosmogonic scroll; cf. Y. Yoshida, "Cosmogony and Church History depicted in the newly discovered Chinese Manichaean Paintings", *Yamato Bunka*, 121, 2010, 1–34 (plate 1).

¹³ Cf. W.B. Henning, "The Manichaean Fasts", *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 77, 1945, 146–164 (155). Perhaps one should also reference the very interesting quote from the *Bhavishya Purana*: '... by meditation he should worship Isa, who is standing in the disc of the sun'. Manichaean influence in this Hindu text is debated; see the discussion and references in D. Scott, "Manichaeism in Bactria: Political Patterns and East-West Paradigms", *Journal of Asian History* 41, 2007, 107–130 (this quoted at p. 119).

descent (the First Man) and with that of salvation (the Third Ambassador), both with the female Virgin of Light in the moon and with the male in the sun. In the *Kephalaia* it is explained that Jesus descended through the ship of the day (the primary abode of the Ambassador) and the ship of the night (the primary abode of the First Man) before he appeared in the world.¹⁴ Thus we can understand why Faustus placed the 'Son' in both vessels.

There is a further aspect to consider. The sun and moon were vessels and palaces, but they were also gates and portals to the transcendent realm. This is made clear in many places, but of particular importance is the citation from Mani himself preserved by al-Biruni:¹⁵

The other religious bodies blame us because we worship sun and moon, and represent them as an image. But they do not know their real natures; they do not know that the sun and moon are our path, the door whence we march forth into the world of our existence (into heaven), as this has been declared by Jesus.

The *Kephalaia* again discusses this point: The sun is the gate of life to the great aeon of light, and it is for this reason that Satan placed an exclusionary judgement on it saying that *Whoever will worship it can die* (Deut. 17:2–5).¹⁶ I think that we must understand a further visual aspect here: To look at the sun (although in truth our bodily eyes can not) is to gaze through an open space in the material heaven of this world into that other realm. One is reminded of meditation techniques where one focuses on a disk, if that is not too fanciful an analogy.

So, we can unpack various dimensions to the promise that the pure of heart shall see God. In directing one's gaze at the sun and moon one sees the visible manifestation of the purified 'living soul' in its ascent, one sees the gods in their palaces, and one can even try to look through into the transcendent world of blazing light. But God the Father remains inaccessible.

2. SOLAR AND LUNAR ECLIPSES

Before we turn to the eschatological dimension of what happens when the soul reaches that other realm (termed 'the new aeon'), it is worthwhile to

¹⁴ E.g. *kephalaion* 8: 'Concerning the Fourteen Vehicles that Jesus has boarded'.

¹⁵ Translation following E.C. Sachau, ed., *Alberuni's India*, I, (London, 1910) 169; compare Reeves, *op. cit.* [n. 4] 201: 127.

¹⁶ See *Kephf* (= H.-J. Polotsky, A. Böhlig, W.-P. Funk, eds., *Kephalaia*, [Stuttgart, 1940, 1966, 1999, 2000]) 158, 26–159, 4.

emphasise again the visual reality of Mani's vision. Here one enters the confusing realm of what is often termed 'mythology', but that is to miss the point. There is a story in the appendix to the second volume of *Kephalaia*,¹⁷ where a series of vignettes are presented from Mani's last journeys as he visits and speaks to his communities of elect and catechumens, prior to the final trials and imprisonment and death. The apostle travels when the moon ('the enlightener of the night') is in eclipse, in order to greet his disciples in a certain city. When he arrives they ask him to explain about this event. What comes next is unusual. In the texts Mani always announces that he is the one to explain such and such a matter. But not on this occasion. Rather, we read that 'he did not want to have to tell them'. Inevitably, the disciples beseech and entreat, and will not take this refusal; so at last the apostle must explain. Unfortunately, the exact details of what he says are largely lost in a badly destroyed passage; but it will have been some terrible narrative of treachery and attack by the forces of darkness against the vulnerability and suffering of the light. But what is really interesting is the word which I have glossed above as meaning an eclipse. It is a relatively rare Coptic term (εβη) which is generally used with the verb ειπε and translated something like 'to make obscure'. However, the word is certainly linked to the more common term ρηβε meaning 'grief' or 'mourning';¹⁸ and thus I think we can consider a translation for εβη as 'veil'. This is strongly suggested by this unpublished *Kephalaia* passage where it states that the 'enlightener of the night put on (φορεῖν) its veil (εβη)'.

We can take this digression a little further and reference here the valuable description of Manichaean cosmological teachings by the sixth-century Neoplatonist Simplicius.¹⁹ Apparently, eclipses are due to veils (παρὰπέτασμα) thrown up by the 'light-bringers' to shield themselves from the tumult and disorder caused by the evil rulers who are chained in the heavens. The striking thing about Simplicius' discussion—based directly (he says) on the explanation of one of 'their wise men' (σοφός)—is that the Manichaeans did not regard these teachings as myths or as having any other meaning. This is an important and pertinent remark, and true to the authentic voice of Mani.

¹⁷ This appendix (and the entire second volume) is in the process of being edited by a team made up of I. Gardner, J. BeDuhn and P. Dilley. I draw here from my first reading of the passage, which can be found in the facsimile edition published by S. Giversen, *The Manichaean Coptic Papyri in the Chester Beatty Library. I. Kephalaia*, Genève 1986: plate 310.

¹⁸ See the entries and references in W.E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*, (Oxford 1939) 52b and 655a–b.

¹⁹ Simplicius, in *Epicteti encheiridion* 27 (treatise 35). See now S.N.C. Lieu, J.S. Sheldon, "Simplicius on Manichaean Cosmogony", in *In Search of Truth*, op. cit. [n. 1] 217–228 (at p. 223).

Of course, this very issue about the cause of eclipses played an important role in the public history of the religion. In the *Confessions* (V, 3) Augustine famously recounts when the renowned Manichaean bishop Faustus came to Carthage during his twenty-ninth year. He details his growing dissatisfaction with that community through contrasting their 'lengthy fables' with the ability of those he terms philosophers to predict an eclipse, this by what we might call the empirical study of the natural world. Augustine explains how he searched the works of Mani, who in his 'voluminous folly' had written many books on such topics; but he could find nothing in them to compare with the rational theories established by a study of mathematics (the practice of calculations). As a result, he put his perplexities to Faustus (V,6,10 ff.) and was disappointed. Augustine then departed for Rome.

The story is well known,²⁰ but we should note how Augustine states that the Manichaeans 'thought themselves to be exalted amongst the stars and shining.'²¹ With use of Rom. 1:25 he can explain how they have exchanged truth for a lie, to worship the creature rather than the creator. It is possible to read in this passage a guarded allusion to the daily prayers,²² although that is not in itself necessary. We shall return to Augustine later, to the question of whether God can be seen by bodily eyes; but, first, we must ascend beyond the heavens, through the portal of the sun and into that other realm called the 'new aeon'.

3. MANICHAEAN COSMOLOGY AND ESCHATOLOGY

In the Manichaean cosmology, the demiurge (the 'Living Spirit' or 'Father of Life') fabricates the cosmos out of the bodies of those evil forces who had first attacked the Primal Man and consumed his 'five sons' (i.e. the divine 'living soul'). Thus the design of creation is good, as a machine for

²⁰ Although it has been discussed by many writers, see especially L.C. Ferrari, "Astronomy and Augustine's Break with the Manichees", *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*, 19, 1973, 263–276. For a summary on Manichaean astrology see T. Pettipiece, *Pentadic Redaction in the Manichaean Kephalaia*, (Leiden 2009) 62–68; and, further, R. Beck, "The Anabibazontes in the Manichaean *Kephalaia*", *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 69, 1987, 193–196. One wonders if this dreadful matter of eclipses might be related to the terrible celestial dragon, on which see also A. Mastrocinque, *From Jewish Magic to Gnosticism*, (Tübingen 2005) 162.

²¹ *Conf.* V, 3 (5): 'et putant se excelsos esse cum sideribus et lucidos ...'.

²² See Augustine's parallel earlier comment at *Conf.* III, 6 (10): 'et illa erant fercula, in quibus mihi esurienti te inferebatur sol et luna, pulchra opera tua, sed tamen opera tua, non tu, nec ipsa prima. priora enim spiritalia opera tua quam ista corporea quamvis lucida et caelestia'.

the purification of light out of matter, although its substance is a mixture of the divine and the demonic. We must note that the Living Spirit is the third out of a series of gods of creation, the purpose of the second emanation of divinities.²³ The first of this series is the Beloved of the Lights, whose role is as a custodian of the kingdom of light. The second is the Great Builder, and it is he who constructs the 'new aeon'. What is important about this sequence, is that we can identify three separate realms: (1) the eternal kingdom of light, without beginning and where the Father of Greatness dwells; (2) the new aeon, which we can understand as the heaven of our own existence, that is our destination after death and the ascent through the portals of the moon and sun; (3) the physical cosmos of time and space in which we live at present.

Thus, the new aeon is specifically constructed for the time of mixture. There the victorious rule, with their king the Primal Man (as the first to be delivered from the abyss of death). It is a realm that is created, which came into being at a certain point, and which will also have an end. One might ask, why does the liberated soul not simply ascend to the Father and the eternal kingdom? The answer is a fundamental feature of Manichaean doctrine; that is, that the Father must be kept separate from the realm of conflict, from time and space which are the arena in which evil will be defeated. Thus, the Father is 'a hidden one', this being one of the primary and defining characteristics of Manichaean theology.²⁴

If we turn now to eschatology and the end of all things, the logic becomes clear. First this cosmos will be destroyed in the 'great fire' and will collapse in on itself. Once all the light that can be redeemed has ascended, the remaining dregs of matter and its powers will be buried and sealed, male and female separated so that they can never again multiply and challenge the light. It is only then that, finally, the Father will reveal his image to the victorious souls in the new aeon. This future hope, and the crucial duality here between the eternal kingdom and the new aeon, is clearly described in one of the best-preserved passages available to us:²⁵

²³ The ordering of the various gods was a complicated matter for Manichaean scholasticism, and it is not necessary to undertake a detailed account here. A classic description can be found in kephalaion 7, although even that needs amplification for a full understanding. For the work of the Living Spirit start with kephalaion 32.

²⁴ E.g. P. Kellis II Gr. 92, 45 π(ατ)ερ ἀπόκρυφῆ; and see further references in I. Gardner, *Kellis Literary Texts. Volume 1*, (Oxford 1996) 140.

²⁵ From the conclusion of *The Sermon of the Great War*, at *Homs*. (= H.-J. Polotsky, eds., *Manichäische Homilien*, [Stuttgart, 1934]) 41, 11–20.

Also, after these things the aeons [... the Father of] Greatness. He can give to them what they [beseech of him]. He can give the grace to his fighters, they whom he [sent] to the contest with the darkness. The veils will be rolled back and gathered, and he unveils to them his image! The entire light will be immersed in him! They will go in to the treasury. They will also come forth from him in glory ... king, in the two kingdoms. On the one hand: the King of the aeons of the light, he is the Father, the Light King ... On the other hand: the king of the new aeon is the First Man ...

N.A. Pedersen has recently published a detailed discussion about the drawing back of the veil and revelation of the image of the father.²⁶ He begins with the telling passage from Augustine's friend Evodius of Uzala: '[God the Father] has a veil (velum) before himself to soothe his pain, so that he should not see the corruption of his own part'.²⁷ This is ascribed to the first book of Mani's *Treasure (of Life)*. What is especially interesting about Pedersen's paper is the way that he explores 'the possible religio-historical roots in Judaism of the two themes: (a) the veil that covered the Father and (b) the revelation of his image'.²⁸ As he points out, the Latin word *velum* is used as a loan word (οὔνηλον) in the Coptic texts, via the Greek οὐῆλον. He then tracks the idea back into Jewish tradition, focusing especially on 'Merkabah mysticism' and its goal to see God in the heavenly throne-room. However, Pedersen suggests that there is a clear difference between Judaism and Manichaeism, in that in the former the veil is there to protect outsiders (who will die if they see God), whilst in the latter—following Evodius' testimony here—the function is to prevent the Father from seeing the suffering of those on the other side. One should note that the same sort of motive could be supposed regarding the veil in Simplicius' description of eclipses. Finally, Pedersen turns to his second theme of the revelation of the Father's image (Greek / Coptic εἰκών) or face (Coptic ρο). He draws our attention to both Christian and Jewish tradition, noting especially Rev. 22:4 (καὶ ὄψονταὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ) and Mt. 5:8.

²⁶ N.A. Pedersen, op. cit. [n. 1], 2011. Detailed references to most of the issues discussed here will be found there. It will be apparent that I do not agree with his view that 'collective eschatology corresponds to the individual eschatology' (p. 230), i.e. that the individual soul after death will see the image of the Father. Although it is sometimes expressed like this, especially in hymnic texts, I believe that these are intended as poetic anticipation or foreshortening of what will be experienced at the (true) end. To suppose otherwise is to remove the entire rationale for the new aeon, and the processes of creation and collapse that I have described above.

²⁷ Evodius, *de Fide contra Manichaeos*, 13.

²⁸ Pedersen, *ibid.* p. 231.

To summarise the Manichaean doctrine and practice: In life the pure of heart will train their gaze upon the gods enthroned in the sun and moon. These ‘palaces’ are visible ‘ships’ bright with their cargo of redeemed light, and also (to think about it in a slightly different way) they are open ‘gates’ through which one can look—if one’s mortal eyes are able—directly into the heavenly world. But that new aeon is not itself the realm of the Father. Rather, there the Primal Man rules as first of the redeemed;²⁹ and it is not until the process of redemption is finalised, and the enemy completely overcome and rendered sterile—only then can the victorious fighters return to the Father from where they first departed.

4. AUGUSTINE’S CRITIQUE AND THE VISION OF GOD

Thus, we can say that the Manichaean teaching (in brief, and following Faustus’ pithy summary) is that God dwells in the light: The Son in the visible, but the Father in what is for now inaccessible. What of Augustine? In the famous passage from *Confessions* III he reveals his intimate knowledge of their teachings, as he attempts not just to attack but to communicate with them.³⁰ I have previously argued that in the following well-known words Augustine appears to parody the fundamental theme of the Manichaean daily prayers (‘... with a pure heart and a truthful tongue’), the phrase he will himself have recited repeatedly during his years as an *auditor*:³¹

... fell among men mad with pride, extremely carnal and talkative, in whose mouths were the snares of the devil, smeared with a sticky mixture of the syllables of your name and that of our lord Jesus Christ and of the paraclete our comforter, the holy spirit. These names never left their lips, but were no more than empty sound and the rattling of the tongue as their hearts were

²⁹ On the Jewish heritage to the Manichaean narrative about the Primal Man, culminating in his enthronement in the ‘age to come’, see E. Smagina, “The Manichaean Cosmogonical Myth as a ‘Re-Written Bible’”, in *In Search of Truth*, op. cit. [n. 1] 2011, 201–216.

³⁰ See especially the discussion by A. Kotzé, “The ‘Anti-Manichaean’ Passage in *Confessions* 3 and its ‘Manichaean Audience’”, *Vigiliae Christianae* 62, 2008, 187–200; and (as example) the discussion by G. Mikkelsen, “Augustine and his Sources: The ‘Devil’s Snares and Birdlime’ in the Mouths of Manichaeans in East and West”, in *In Search of Truth*, op. cit. [n. 1] 2011, 419–425. For a succinct summary of discussion from antiquity to the present about the question of Manichaean influences on Augustine, see J. van Oort, “Manichaean Christians in Augustine’s Life and Work”, op. cit. [n. 3] 2010, section 5 (pp. 541–545). Perhaps the most telling theme of J. BeDuhn’s recent monograph (*Augustine’s Manichaean Dilemma*, op. cit. [n. 3] 2010) is to evidence how much Augustine kept with him in his daily practice all his life.

³¹ *Conf.* III, 6 (10); see further the discussion in I. Gardner, “‘With a Pure Heart and a Truthful Tongue’”, op. cit. [n. 4] 2011.

devoid of any truth whatsoever (haec nomina non recedebant de ore eorum, sed tenuis sono et strepitu linguae; ceterum cor inane veri). They kept saying: 'Truth, truth'; and they had a lot to tell me about it, but truth was never in them.

Scholars have sometimes been misled by the extended 'culinary metaphor'³² that follows as Augustine seeks to discredit Manichaean beliefs about the divine nature of the sun and the moon. He is not talking about Manichaean food rituals, but rather the daily regimen or 'diet' of the prayers. The metaphor needs to be read in terms of the fundamental theme of the *Confessions*, our desperate hunger and thirst for God. If the sun and moon were served up on 'dishes' (*fercula*),³³ to feed repeatedly on such hallucinations is to become ever more hungry.

We can continue this 'Manichaean reading' of Augustine's great work with the renowned episode at Ostia in book IX.³⁴ It is here, carefully structured and placed within the narrative, that he illustrates what can truly be known and 'seen' of God in this life. As is very well-known, Augustine purports to recount a joint experience of his mother Monnica and himself:³⁵

Step by step we climbed beyond all corporeal objects and the heaven itself, where sun, moon, and stars shed light on the earth. We ascended even further by internal reflection and dialogue and wonder at your works, and we entered into our own minds. We moved up beyond them ...

The formal patterning of the ascent is obvious, together with its philosophical framework: bodily senses › corporeal objects › heavens › mind › eternity.

³² See the excellent analysis by A. Kotzé, "The 'Anti-Manichaean' Passage in *Confessions* 3", op. cit. [n. 30] 2008, 194–195. For reading this as a reference to food rituals, *ibid.* n. 20; also e.g. G. Mikkelsen, "Augustine and his Sources", op. cit. [n. 30] 2011, 420. However, this would make no proper sense. As an *auditor*, eating and drinking were occasions for sin and confession. The ritual meal was necessarily reserved for the elect, as it was sacred redemptive work by which the divine soul was liberated from its entanglement with matter. But, even then, this was nothing to do with the sun and the moon; except in so far as the light would afterwards ascend, fill and pass through these portals to the new aeon.

³³ This is how *ferculum* is usually translated here; but probably Augustine's sense would be better rendered as 'courses', indicating the repeated servings of such ghost-food. In any case, Augustine admits, reluctantly, that he did eat of it; which I understand to mean that he took part in the daily prayers. See also *De beata vita*, I, 4.

³⁴ Of course, these topics have been written about in great detail by many scholars. My purpose here is simply to try and integrate them with the discussion made in this paper about Manichaean teachings and practice, and obviously many relevant matters such as the influence of Neoplatonism have been left aside. My summary is indebted to J.P. Kenny, *The Mysticism of Saint Augustine. Rereading the Confessions*, (New York 2005); which study also acknowledges its debt to the classic work of P. Henry, *La vision d'Ostie*, (Paris 1938).

³⁵ *Conf.* IX, 10 (24), transl. by H. Chadwick, *Saint Augustine. Confessions*, (Oxford 1991).

The sun and moon are listed; but they are categorised with the stars (a strikingly non-Manichaean turn), and all the heavenly bodies are given a firm, neutral place in God's creation. The summit experience emphasises how limited is the soul's association with God ('... we touched it in some small degree by a moment of total concentration of the heart'). This is 'the first fruits of the spirit' (Rom. 8:23); but contemplation is inherently eschatological and can not be realised by the embodied soul, only actualised after death. What can be 'seen' of God in life is only an anticipation of what will happen when 'we shall see him as he is' (1Jn. 3:2).³⁶

Augustine returned to the topic of the 'vision of God' in many other writings. There is, for example, the lengthy discussion of the three different types of vision in *The Literal Meaning of Genesis XII*. These are 'bodily', 'spiritual' and 'intellectual'. The last is the most excellent, because it is the sort used in the contemplation of God. It is the vision of intelligible things with the 'eyes of the mind'. It is a kind of rapture and a product of grace. In an obvious way this provides a striking contrast to Mani, and evidences Augustine's Platonic turn. For Mani, as we have elaborated earlier, it is what the physical eyes can see that provides the demonstration and indeed authentication of the teaching.

Of particular interest is *Letter 147*, written ca. 413/414 CE as a reply to the noblewoman Paulina who has asked how the invisible God can be seen.³⁷ Augustine's response is almost a small book in itself, and here he explicitly discusses Mt. 5:8. Indeed, he starts from this point: We believe God can be seen because we read so in scripture, i.e. at this verse (see 147, 3). However, he then proceeds to distinguish bodily sight from the 'gaze of the mind' (147, 4). This is elaborated by a quotation from Ambrose (*Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*), to which Augustine returns repeatedly in his discussion as if to emphasise an authority other than his own in this matter (147, 18 et al.). God is not seen in a location, but by a clean heart. He is not sought by bodily eyes, nor held by touch, heard by words or perceived by his walk. Later he himself quotes 1 Tim. 6:16, that God 'dwells in inaccessible light where only the clean of heart can approach' (147, 44). The matter is perhaps best explained here (147, 54):

³⁶ Cf. *Conf.* XIII, 13 (14).

³⁷ Paulina was a Catholic laywoman in North Africa and the wife of Armentarius. I quote throughout from *The Works of St. Augustine. A Translation for the 21st Century. Letters* (vol. 2), tr. R.J. Teske, (New York 2003). The text is also known as *de videndo Deo*. In the *Revisions II*, 41 Augustine comments that he has written about the same topic in *The City of God* (book XXII). The texts should be compared, together with other relevant passages such as *Sermon 52* and *Letter 92*.

For *blessed are the clean of heart because they shall see God*, not when he will appear to them like a body at some distance in space but when he will come to them and make his dwelling with them. For in that way they will be filled with the fullness of God, not when they are fully God but when he will come to them and make his dwelling with them.

This discussion can be supplemented by reference to *Letter 92*. This had been written somewhat earlier (408 CE) to the widow Italice. God is the light of purified minds, not of these bodily eyes (92, 2). This is in the time to come, not in the present. But the impious will not see him, as they are neither blessed nor pure of heart (92, 4). The letter makes a strong attack on those who say that we will see God with our bodily eyes, whether in this life or in the resurrection body.

So, for Augustine it is clear that any vision of God is an intellectual act and entirely different to bodily sight. God is not to be located anywhere, nor seen in this life; except as a rare and fleeting anticipation of the future realm, and in that case it is an act of grace. But what is that future realm? Augustine calls it the 'heaven of heaven' (*caelum caeli*),³⁸ and it is interesting to see that it is not so dissimilar to the Manichaean new aeon (also called 'the kingdom of the household of his people').³⁹ This heaven is not within the uncreated Godhead, nor eternal with the Trinity. It is the first creation (Gen. 1:1, read with reference to Ps. 148:8).⁴⁰ Augustine discusses it at *Confessions* XII:⁴¹

... not even that created realm, the 'heaven of heaven', is coeternal with you. Its delight is exclusively in you. In an unfailing purity it satiates its thirst in you ... I do not find any better name for the Lord's 'heaven of heaven' than your House. There your delight is contemplated without any failure or wandering away to something else. The pure heart enjoys absolute concord and unity in the unshakeable peace of holy spirits, the citizens of your city in the heavens above the visible heavens.

This is the transcendent realm, the house of God or heavenly city.⁴² The *caelum caeli* is a collective realm of spirits and the homeland of the soul.

³⁸ See the discussion by J.P. Kenny, *The Mysticism of Saint Augustine*, op. cit. [n. 34] 2005, 113–115.

³⁹ *KephI* 39, 11. The reference is to the ascent of the victorious Primal Man.

⁴⁰ Thus *Conf.* XII, 15 (20).

⁴¹ *Conf.* XII, 11 (12); tr. H. Chadwick, *Confessions*, op. cit. [n. 35] 1991.

⁴² J. van Oort discusses a possible Manichaean background to Augustine's teaching about the 'two cities' in his *Jerusalem and Babylon. A Study into Augustine's City of God and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities*, (Leiden 1991; repr. 2013) 212–229. He gathers together a number of interesting references to the heavenly 'city', but unfortunately does this in the context of the 'two kingdoms' without reference to the new aeon. Elaboration of this detail would, I believe, be productive for further development of the thesis.

Although it is outside of time and space, it is nevertheless a created thing. It is here that contemplation can be unmediated and direct, 'face to face', by the pure of heart. It is true that Augustine rejected the Manichaean practice of his youth; but how successful he was in freeing himself from this heritage remains an intriguing and open question. Indeed, for myself, reading Augustine on the 'heaven of heaven' has strangely enabled a better understanding of the 'new aeon' than I ever had before!

THE FEW AND THE MANY:
A MOTIF OF AUGUSTINE'S CONTROVERSY
WITH THE MANICHAEANS*

Andreas Hoffmann

At first glance, the concept of the “few” and the “many” appears to be a very special side issue providing some interesting individual observations, but it does not seem to be of vital importance. In my point of view, this first impression needs to be revised on closer inspection. The contrast of the two groups is not only a topos of ancient philosophy in particular, but the comparison itself and its judgements play a repeated and not unimportant role in Augustine's intellectual biography.¹ It is not restricted to the function of a merely effective literary device. At the latest since the reading of Hortensius, the question of truth is at the center of the Augustinian thinking. All of his further life is influenced by the endeavour for “wisdom”. According to Cicero, this wisdom comprises in a broad sense “the knowledge of divine and human matters as well as their causal relations”.² This endeavour is, as is also shown in the Hortensius, an intellectual and practical-ethical undertaking at the same time. An insight into truth can only be gained if the search for knowledge is accompanied by a corresponding life style, thus the intellectual and the ethical aspect are interconnected.

The Hortensius therefore launches the search for truth in Augustine, which will remain a driving force throughout his entire life. The several stations of this search for truth from the reading of Hortensius to the return to the *catholica* are widely known and the internal relations have been clarified by many investigations.³ Hence, the following considerations aim

* I am grateful to Lena Clemens for her translation.

¹ For the concept in philosophy, see H.-D. Voigtländer, *Der Philosoph und die Vielen. Die Bedeutung des Gegensatzes der unphilosophischen Menge zu den Philosophen (und das Problem des argumentum e consensu omnium) im philosophischen Denken der Griechen bis auf Aristoteles*, Wiesbaden 1980. For Augustine, see A. Hoffmann, *Art. Pauci*, in: *AL* 4, 3/4 (in print).

² Cic., *Hort.* frg. 94 (Grilli) (M. Tullius Cicero, *Hortensius*, ed. Albertus Grilli, Milano 1962) = 6 (Straume-Zimmermann) (Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Hortensius. Lucullus. Academici libri*, ed. L. Straume-Zimmermann / F. Broemser / O. Gigon, München 1990): “sapientia autem est ... rerum divinarum et humanarum causarumque, quibus eae res continentur, scientia.”

³ Still essential are the studies of E. Feldmann (cf. below note 4.24); cf. also J. Trelenberg,

at completing the picture by an aspect that has been little noticed so far. The motif of the few and the many can be found in the intellectual development from the young Augustine to the mature theologian. My focus will be on the significance of the contrast in the progression of the young Augustine from the Hortensius to Manichaeism and in his anti-Manichaean struggle. The following major questions have to be considered: What is the significance of the motif of the few and the many in Augustine's intellectual development? Which influence does it have on his shift towards Manichaeism? Which role does it play in his return to the *catholica* and in his later campaign against Manichaeism?

1. HORTENSIVS

Together with the impulse to search for truth,⁴ the Hortensius leads Augustine to the conviction that this truth can only be found among the "few". "The gods have given philosophy only to a few", and this is the greatest gift they gave to the humans and the greatest gift they could have ever given.⁵ Augustine himself ascribes this statement to Cicero in *de ciuitate Dei*, unfortunately without indicating any sources. Grilli included this passage into his edition of the Hortensius as frg. 111,⁶ combining it with a statement by Cicero which was preserved by Lactantius and claims that philosophy is not "uulgaris", because only scholars can achieve it.⁷ It is however controversial whether these two fragments can really be attributed to Hortensius or not. Besides the fact that Augustine could as well have encountered them within

Augustin als Rhetor von 386, in: V.H. Drecoll (ed.), *Augustin Handbuch*, Tübingen 2007, 144–148; G. Wurst, *Augustin als "Manichäer"*, *ibid.* 148–153; V.H. Drecoll, *Die "Bekehrung" in Mailand*, *ibid.* 153–164; V.H. Drecoll / M. Kudella, *Augustin und der Manichäismus*, Tübingen 2011, 58–80.

⁴ Cf. Aug., *conf.* 3,7f.; *beata uit.* 4. Contemporary overview of the Hortensius: K. Schlapbach, *Art. Hortensius*, in: *AL* 3 (2004–2010), 425–436; cf. esp. E. Feldmann, *Der Einfluss des Hortensius und des Manichäismus auf das Denken des jungen Augustinus von 373*, Münster (masch.) 1975; L. Straume-Zimmermann, *Hortensius. Versuch einer Rekonstruktion*, in: *Marcus Tullius Cicero, Hortensius. Lucullus. Academi libri*, ed. L. Straume-Zimmermann / F. Broemser / O. Gigon, München 1990, 327–370.

⁵ Cf. Aug., *ciu.* 22,22 (CCL 48 l. 121–124): "(philosophia) quam dii quibusdam paucis, ait Tullius, ueram dederunt; nec hominibus, inquit, ab his aut datum est donum maius aut potuit ullum dari."

⁶ Cf. Cicero, *Hortensius frg. 111* (Grilli).

⁷ Cf. Cicero, *Hort.* frg. 88 (Grilli) = Lact., *inst.* 3,25,1; cf. also Cic., *Hort.* frg. 89 (Grilli) (Lact., *inst.* 3,25,12).

another context,⁸ Straume-Zimmermann refused to include frg. 111 (Grilli) in her Latin-German edition arguing that an emphasis on the difficulties connected with philosophy would not fit to the protreptic intention of the Hortensius.⁹ This argument, however, does not seem to be compelling. The Ciceronian Hortensius addresses himself to an educated audience which could potentially access the philosophical existence in consistently searching for truth and living a secluded-renouncing way of life. Belonging to the “few” who gained an insight in truth could actually be a desirable goal for this audience.

Regardless of the question whether these fragments can be ascribed to the Hortensius with certainty, there can be no doubt that the “elitist” trait of philosophy corresponds to the overall intention of the Hortensius and is also clearly expressed by Cicero. According to frg. 115, which certainly is a Hortensian utterance, the philosophical existence (*uita contemplatiua*) presents very high challenges, both intellectually and ethically. The one who “lives in philosophy”—and the fortune which all people desire can be found herein—has to be concerned with the search for truth “day and night”, sharpen one’s comprehensive capabilities and pay attention to constantly keep up these standards.¹⁰ A thorough education in the sciences is a crucial precondition for this objective¹¹ and the intellectual efforts must be linked to a life style determined by the virtues. Happiness cannot be attained if one lives how it pleases them, but only if one recognises and tries to accomplish what is morally appropriate (*quod decet / oportet*).¹² Earthly goods, such as reputation, wealth or pleasure gain are certainly not part of that, but the masses consider these worldly possessions signs of happiness and pursue them. Cicero forcefully warns against them, especially against sexual desire as the greatest “*uoluptas*”, contradicting reasonable thought and being its strongest enemy.¹³ True wealth can be acquired only in the possession of

⁸ J. Doignon, *Fragments de l’Hortensius chez Augustin à récupérer ou à invalider*, in: *Latomus* 58 (1999), 169 points out that the evaluation of philosophy as the greatest gift of the gods could have taken place in Cicero’s *Academici* which hint at Plato’s *Timaios*, cf. *Cic., Acad.* 1,2,7 as well as *Plat., Tim.* 47b. Furthermore, Grilli’s fragment 111 does not necessarily have to be a precondition for the immediately following fragment 112 which is explicitly marked as being part of the Hortensius; it might rather belong into the context of the controversy with Porphyrios considered from an anti-Pelagian perspective, cf. Doignon 169–171.

⁹ Cf. Straume-Zimmermann, *Rekonstruktion* 328.

¹⁰ Cf. *Cic., Hort.* frg. 115 (Grilli) = 102 (Straume-Zimmermann).

¹¹ Cf. Straume-Zimmermann, *Rekonstruktion* 331 with reference to frg. 14,78 (according to her own count).

¹² Cf. *Cic., Hort.* frg. 59a (Grilli) = 69 II / 70 II (Straume-Zimmermann).

¹³ Cf. *Cic., Hort.* frg. 84 (Grilli) = 84 I (Straume-Zimmermann).

virtues.¹⁴ Anyone who stays on track, i.e. who is determined by reason and the constant search for truth, does not get involved with the delusions and vice of “mankind”.¹⁵ This manifests the contrast between the few who are able to lead such a life and the broad, unphilosophical masses.

Cicero illustrates the background in the *Tusculan Disputations* which contain some passages closely related to the *Hortensius*. In his point of view, mankind is strongly influenced by bad behaviour and wrong attitudes, so that all good hereditary abilities are being debauched since their childhood. Family, teachers, poets, and basically “the people” (*populus*) convey these false attitudes. The masses (*multitudo*) all around have agreed on “vice” as a general rule; the adolescent adopts their false virtues and orientation. Only philosophy can cure from this “disease”.¹⁶ Cicero connects this consequence with the assertive reference to the *Hortensius* in which he displayed the praise of philosophy.¹⁷ As he explains later, the philosophical existence is an issue of only a few intellectually gifted and ethically superior people who distance themselves from society. Philosophy is thus “satisfied with a few being judges”, consciously avoids the masses and is accordingly looked at with suspicion.¹⁸

In this basic conviction, Cicero follows the platonic tradition. Only few can philosophise, the broad masses are unable to do so.¹⁹ The endeavour to vision the world of ideas is a lifelong process. “Die Vollendung des menschlichen Lebens lässt sich eben nicht durch einen einsemestrigen Kurs in platonischer Ideenlehre erzielen, sondern steht am Ende eines jahrzehntelangen Bildungsprozesses, in dessen Verlauf die gesamte Persönlichkeit umgeprägt werden muss.”²⁰ Also Lactantius refers to this principle and adds

¹⁴ Cf. Cic., *Hort.* frg. 72 (Grilli).

¹⁵ Cf. Cic., *Hort.* frg. 115 (Grilli) = 102 (Straume-Zimmermann): “... sic existimandum est quo magis hi fuerint semper in suo cursu, id est in ratione et in investigandi cupiditate, et quo minus se admiscuerint atque implicuerint hominum vitiis et erroribus, hoc eis faciliorem ascensum et reditum in caelum fore.”

¹⁶ Cf. Cic., *Tusc.* 3,1–3 (listed as no. 4 in Straume-Zimmermann's edition).

¹⁷ Cf. Cic., *Tusc.* 3,6.

¹⁸ Cf. Cic., *Tusc.* 2,4 (= Cic., *Hort.* frg. 3 [Straume-Zimmermann no. 3]), also referring to the *Hortensius*. For the ideal of the wise also cf. *Tusc.* 5,68: Intelligence, virtue, and an eager search for truth are the preconditions for this ideal. The triple profit of such a mind lies in recognising things, explaining nature, distinguishing between what is worth striving for and what should be avoided, i.e. the right conduct of life and, finally, logic.

¹⁹ Cf. esp. Plat., resp. 6 491ab; 494a. Cf. Th. Fuhrer, *Die Platoniker und die civitas dei* (Buch VIII–X), in: Chr. Horn (ed.), *Augustinus. De civitate dei* (Klassiker auslegen 11), Berlin 1997, 102–105.

²⁰ J. Brachtendorf, *Augustinus und der philosophische Weisheitsbegriff*, in: Th. Fuhrer

the hint that the Stoics²¹ and Epicureans promoted it as well. Although they generally assume that also women and slaves are able to philosophise, the world of philosophy effectively remains closed to them. The necessary preconditions of philosophy, namely holistic education in all knowledge domains and higher skills, can neither be met by women nor slaves as these core skills are not included in their education. Finally Lactantius concludes referring to Cicero that philosophy is inaccessible to the masses.²²

Thus, there can be no doubt concerning the “elitist” attitude of the Hortensius. This attitude furthermore corresponds with a widely accepted axiom in philosophy. Restricting true philosophy to a small circle of particularly proficient individuals in order to promote philosophy is, according to my opinion, not counterproductive from the start. Also, Cicero mentions a positive counterbalance at the end of his promotion speech: Anyone living as philosopher can hope for a more “peaceful” death, or if there is an afterlife, a facilitated “ascent and return to heaven” for their soul.²³

2. MANICHAISM

Prompted by religious memories of his childhood, which were roused by the reading of the Hortensius, Augustine started to search for truth within the realm of Christianity. His unsuccessful attempt to read the Bible indicates this. “Within a few days” he affiliates himself enthusiastically not with the catholica, but with the Manichaeans.²⁴ Apparently, the Manichaeans seem to offer the very true, higher Christianity Augustine is looking for.

(ed.), *Die christlich-philosophischen Diskurse der Spätantike. Texte, Personen, Institutionen* (Philosophie der Antike 28), Stuttgart 2008, 262 with fn. 5 (cf. Plat., resp. 7 540a).

²¹ Cf. e.g. Seneca, *de ira* 2,10,6: “Non irascetur sapiens peccantibus: quare? Quia scit neminem nasci sapientem sed fieri, scit paucissimos omni aevo sapientis evadere, quia condicionem humanae vitae perspectam habet; nemo autem naturae sanus irascitur.”

²² Cf. Lact., *inst.* 3,25,7–12 (Cic., *Hort. frg.* 89 [Grilli], cf. above): “... Ob eam causam Cicero ait abhorrere a multitudine philosophiam.”

²³ Cf. above note. 15. For Cic., *Hort. frg.* 115 and 110 (Grilli) cf. M. Testard, *Observations sur la pensée de Cic., orateur et philosophe. Consonances avec la tradition judéo-chrétienne III. L'Hortensius*, in: *Revue des Études Latines* 79 (2001) 61–69.

²⁴ Cf. Aug., *duab. an.* 1 (CSEL 25 p. 51,6 f.). For the motifs, cf. esp. Feldmann, *Einfluss*; furthermore: Id., *Der Übertritt Augustins zu den Manichäern*, in: A. Van Tongerloo / J. van Oort (eds.), *The Manichaean NOYΣ. Proceedings of the International Symposium organized in Louvain from 31 July to 3 August 1991*, Louvain 1995, 103–128; id., *Sinn-Suche in der Konkurrenz der Angebote von Philosophien und Religionen. Exemplarische Darstellung ihrer Problematik beim jungen Augustinus*, in: C. Mayer / K.H. Chelius (eds.), *Homo spiritualis. Festgabe für Luc Verheijen*, Würzburg 1987, 100–117.

They identify themselves as Christians by their reference to the Holy Scriptures of Christianity, their “Trinitarian” creed and their Christ piety. In contrast to the mainline church, however, they define themselves as a small elite demanding higher standards. While they already constitute a community of the “few” as opposed to the many other (Catholic) Christians, they also clearly separate within their community between the “ordinary” auditors and the “pauci electi”.²⁵ As illustrated by the example of Faustus, the latter are believed to have a deeper knowledge of truth and to fulfil the tough demands of radical asceticism. Both the intellectual and the ethical demands of the Manichaeans are Augustine’s central motifs to affiliate with Manichaean Christianity and both of them are tightly connected with the motif of the few and the many.

2.1. *Intellectual Demand: The Few “Enlightened”*

There is a lot of evidence for the intellectual demands of the North African Manichaeans.²⁶ The promise to provide reasonable insights into truth is based on the “gnosis”, the “scientia” which was brought by Mani. Mani is the Paraclete who has been augured by Christ and who guides “into all truth” (John 16,13). The Manichaean Felix decidedly phrases this fundamental conviction:

In his proclamation, Mani taught us (“docuit nos”) about the beginning, the middle and the end; he taught us (“docuit nos”) of the creation of the world, why (“quare”) it was created, what it was created from and which powers shaped it; he taught us (“docuit nos”) why (“quare”) there is day and night; he taught us (“docuit nos”) about the course of the sun and of the moon. As we neither find this with Paul nor in the writings of the other apostles, we are urged to believe that Mani is the Paraclete.²⁷

²⁵ Cf. Decret, *L’Afrique manichéenne (IV^e–V^e siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale* 1, Paris 1978, 188–191. But the “paucitas” should not generally be restricted to the few “electi”.

²⁶ Cf. A. Hoffmann, *Erst einsehen, dann glauben. Die nordafrikanischen Manichäer zwischen Erkenntnisanspruch, Glaubensforderung und Glaubenskritik*, in: J. van Oort / O. Wermelinger / G. Wurst (eds.), *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West. Proceedings of the Fribourg-Utrecht Symposium of the International Association of Manichaean Studies (IAMS) (NHMS 49)*, Leiden 2001, 77–85; J.D. BeDuhn, *Augustine’s Manichaean Dilemma 1. Conversion and Apostasy, 373–388 C.E.*, Philadelphia 2010, 29–33; Drecoll / Kudella, *Augustin* 63–66.

²⁷ Cf. c. Fel. 1,9 (CSEL 25 p. 81,13–18): “(et quia Manichaeus) per suam praedicationem docuit nos initium, medium et finem; docuit nos de fabrica mundi, quare facta est et unde facta est, et qui fecerunt; docuit nos quare dies et quare nox; docuit nos de cursu solis et lunae: quia hoc in Paulo non audiuimus nec in ceterorum apostolorum scripturis, hoc credimus, quia ipse est paracletus”.

In this context, “the whole truth” is understood in a very pointed manner. The teachings of Mani fill in the gaps left by the New Testament of the *catholici* (the Old Testament is to be rejected anyway); they illustrate the beginnings, explain the present along with its cosmic phenomena, and inform about the eschata. The anaphora of “docuit nos” and “quare” underlines the rational character of this message. The proceedings of the world are supposed to become comprehensible by means of the teaching of the two principles. According to Fortunatus,²⁸ the “*scientia rerum*”, the knowledge of matters, which is able to explain the natural state of the world, lies in the cognition of this dualism. This thesis is reminiscent of the Ciceronian ideal of cognition concerning the “understanding of both divine and human matters and their causal relations.”²⁹ Within the Manichaean tradition, however, cognition is based on revelation which is given by the Paraclete’s proclamation. It is—entirely in accordance with the Gnostic self-conception—redeeming knowledge.³⁰ The *Epistula fundamenti* distinctly expresses this basic conviction: Anyone who listens to the words of the Paraclete Mani, “believes” in them and observes them (in their conduct of life) will not be subject to death. They gain a liberating, “divine knowledge” which enables them to stay within the realm of eternal life.³¹ The knowledge about the first beginnings until the emergence of the first human couple is one first part of this knowledge. According to the narrator of the *Epistula*, there are many different traditions about this issue, and no one but Mani—and the one who is granted the certain knowledge by him—knows “the truth” about these questions.³² By listening to the *epistula*, the individual is initiated, achieves the previously mentioned knowledge, and thereby comes to “enlightenment.”³³ This distinguishes the disciples of Mani from “almost every people” and this

²⁸ Fortunatus in Aug., c. Fort. 14 (CSEL 25 p. 91,8–12); 20 (p. 99,21).

²⁹ Cf. above note 2.

³⁰ Cf. Feldmann, Übertritt 125.

³¹ Cf. ep. fund. frg. 2 (ed. Feldmann [Die “*Epistula fundamenti*” der nordafrikanischen Manichäer. Versuch einer Rekonstruktion, Altenberge 1987, 10f.]).

³² Ep. Fund. frg. 4a (ed. Feldmann) (= Aug., c. ep. Man. 12,14): “de eo igitur, inquit, frater dilectissime Pattici, quod mihi significasti dicens nosse te cupere, cuiusmodi sit natiuitas Adae et Euae, utrum uerbo sint idem prolati, an progeniti ex corpore, respondebitur tibi, ut congruit. namque de his a plerisque in uariis scripturis reuelationibusque dissimili modo insertum atque commemoratum est. quapropter ueritas istius rei ut sese habet, ab uniuersis fere gentibus ignoratur et ab omnibus, qui etiam de hoc diu multumque disputarunt. si enim illis super Adae et Euae generatione prouenisset manifesto cognoscere, numquam corruptioni et morti subiacerent.”

³³ Cf. Aug., c. ep. Man. 5,6 (CSEL 25 p. 197,8–10).

is the reason why the Manichaeans make for a small, exclusive group in contrast to the rest of the world.

The promise of a holistic rational understanding of the world is one decisive reason for Augustine to join the Manichaeans. “ueritas, ueritas”—with this slogan they entice the young Augustine.³⁴ The effects of this advertisement are particularly displayed in his treatise to the Manichaean Honoratus. During the time of their—apparently joint—studies in Carthage, Augustine managed to attract him for the Manichaeans against his prior resistance. Soon after his ordination as presbyter, Augustine tries to dissuade Honoratus from the Manichaeans and to lead him to the *catholica*.³⁵ Looking back on the time spent together in Carthage, Augustine summarises: The Manichaeans have been significantly more attractive for both young men due to their demands and promised rational cognition (“*magna quadam praesumptione ac pollicitatione rationum*”; they want to lead “*mera et simplici ratione*” to God); they rely on the consideration and “development” of truth (“*discussa et enodata veritate*”).³⁶ In contrast to this, the *catholica* “demands” the superiority of faith over rational cognition.³⁷ Due to the recourse on common experiences, the details are historically highly reliable. It is however interesting that in his argumentation which aims at leading its addressee to the *catholica*, Augustine generally argues where the search for truth should reasonably begin without recurring to any contents of teaching. In case of deviating doctrines he suggests to consider those teachers of wisdom who count the most disciples. By way of contrast Augustine has the discussion partner object: “But truth can only be found among the few”. He illustrates that the objection could be caused by the “nature of truth” (“*ui ueritatis*”).³⁸ Apparently and probably because of common traditions of thought, Augustine assumes that his addressee is familiar with the axiom of the few experts of truth and that it could be used against the *catholica*. That

³⁴ Aug., conf. 3,10 (CCL 27 c. 6,6).

³⁵ For personal details on Honoratus cf. A. Hoffmann, Art. Honoratus, in: AL 3 (2004–2010) 421 f.; id., Augustins Schrift *De utilitate credendi*. Eine Analyse (MBT 58), Münster 1997, 24–35.

³⁶ Cf. Aug., util. cred. 2 (FC 9 p. 82,22 f.; 80,17; 80,23–82,1). Cf. A. Hoffmann, Einleitung, in: Augustinus, *De utilitate credendi*. Über den Nutzen des Glaubens (FC 9), Freiburg 1992, 21–23; ders., Augustins Schrift, 171–177.

³⁷ Cf. Aug., util. cred. 2 (FC 9 p. 80,21–23.): “... quod nos superstitione terreri et fidem nobis ante rationem imperari dicerent.”

³⁸ Cf. Aug., util. cred. 16 (FC 9 p. 122,1–4): “At enim apud paucos quosdam est veritas.’ Scis ergo iam, quae sit, si scis, apud quos sit. Nonne dixeram paulo ante, ut quasi rudes quaereremus? Sed si ex ipsa vi veritatis paucos eam tenere coniectas, qui vero sint, nescis: quid, si ...”

is why he anticipates their ideas in order to weaken them. We will have to come back to this point later on.

2.2. *Ethical Demand: The Few “Saints”*

The claim for ethical exclusivity is even more obvious than the claim for intellectual distinctiveness. Especially Secundinus and Faustus reflect the self-conception of the Western Manichaeans. Secundinus, who is an auditor himself, regards mankind as being under the reign of the devil. Several New Testament episodes up to the crucifixion and in particular the behaviour of ordinary people confirm this. The “people” in its entirety (*populus*), the “crowd” (*multitudo*), the masses (*turba*), especially the mass of women, cannot attain virtue, virtue remains beyond their reach.³⁹ The strict demands of Manichaean ethics have to be complied in order to reach eternal life, but only the few are able to manage this. Secundinus makes use of Mt 7,13f. to support his contention: The devil tries to lead people astray from the “narrow path of the saviour” and therefore Secundinus urgently summons his former brother in faith to follow the narrow path.⁴⁰ With this argumentation he fosters the contrast between the many walking on the broad path and the few walking on the narrow path and justifies it with reference to Jesus’ sayings. The passage is often used with this intention in Manichaean literature.⁴¹

Faustus proves that the Manichaeans are a minority as opposed to the mainline church, which is mainly due to their higher ethical demands. In his manual for the discussion with “Half-Christians” and the defence of their “clever, devious theses” with their “cunning questions”,⁴² he deals with the reproach that the Manichaeans would not accept the gospel, because they do not believe in Jesus’ (physical) birth. Faustus emphasises in his counter argumentation that the “acceptance” of the gospel includes two dimensions, namely the intellectual affirmation of confessional statements and the practical realisation of ethical demands. Faustus clearly regards

³⁹ Cf. Sec., ep. 4 (AOW 22 l. 19–22): “Illa nunc addo, quae praesens accitit multitudo, a quantum virtus procul est, quantum populo clausa est. Nec enim virtus est, ad quam turba pervenit, et turba quam maxime feminarum.” Kudella AOW 22, 236 note 56 assumes one has to distinguish between *populus* = people and *multitudo/turba* = the mainline Catholic Church.

⁴⁰ Cf. Sec., ep. 1 (AOW 22 l. 14f.); 3 (l. 22f.).

⁴¹ Cf. M. Stein, *Codex Thevestinus. Text, Übersetzung, Erläuterungen* (PapyCol 27, Manichaica Latina 3,1), Paderborn 2004, 259; Kudella, AOW 22, 335.

⁴² Cf. Faustus in Aug., c. Faust. 1,2 (CSEL 25 p. 251,22–252,7). The Manichaean Augustine himself drives Catholic Christians “nonnullis quaestiunculis” into a corner, cf. conf. 3,21 (CCL 27 c. 12,10f.).

the former to be the easier part and the latter to be more difficult and more valuable. As a Manichaean he meets both aspects, even if he rejects Jesus' human nature arguing that he himself had spoken of his heavenly father.⁴³ His major focus is however on the ethical aspect. In his way of living, Faustus meets the central Christian demands as postulated in the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount, the speech on the last judgement, the missionary mandate or other biblical words of Jesus.⁴⁴ He holds against the Catholics that they would only verbally confess everything, including Jesus' human birth, but they would not meet the ethical demands. In doing so, the Catholics have chosen the easier, childishly simple way. "The masses therefore rightly turn to you and away from me, not knowing that the kingdom of God does not depend on words, but on behaviour."⁴⁵

Every Manichaean, regardless of their status within the community, can make use of Faustus' model argumentation. Within the borders of the relatively small Manichaean communities, the "pauci electi" have to be distinguished from the *auditores*, as they have to meet even higher ethical demands. As opposed to the *auditores*, they are considered the "few saints" (*pauci sancti*).⁴⁶ The Codex of Tebessa⁴⁷ addresses the topic of the "two classes" within the Manichaean communities and their mutual relations and is apparently mainly directed at the "auditors".⁴⁸ Just like the *Electi* they are disciples (*discipuli*) and belong to the same (true) church.⁴⁹ In this dichotomous church, they are still "within the world", i.e. they are in possession of goods and they are married.⁵⁰ The *Electi* are the "perfect" (*perfecti*) disciples,⁵¹ because they are strangers to the world which they renounce⁵²

⁴³ Cf. Faustus in Aug., c. Faust. 1,3 (CSEL 25 p. 274,12–20). This is the applicable confession "sine blasphemia".

⁴⁴ Cf. Faustus in Aug., c. Faust. 1,1,3.

⁴⁵ Faustus in Aug., c. Faust. 5,2 (CSEL 25 p. 273,1f.): "Nec inmerito plebs ad te confugit, a me refugit, nesciens utique, quia regnum dei non sit in uerbo, sed in uirtute".

⁴⁶ Cf. Aug., c. Adim. 15 (CSEL 25 p. 156,21–25).

⁴⁷ Cod. Thev. A 30–51 (ed. Stein). For contents and reasoning cf. Stein, Codex 132–135. The core thought for the relation between the two groups is their mutual referencing (cf. Stein, Codex 132, see this passage also for the characterisation of the two groups in the codex): The *auditores* have to support the *Electi* especially with food supply and thereby contribute to the purification of the light. Conversely, they will be saved by the *Elects'* intercessory prayer in the Last Judgement.

⁴⁸ Cf. Stein, Codex 125,132.

⁴⁹ Cf. Cod. Thev. A 34,9–17; A 47,4–9.

⁵⁰ Cf. Cod. Thev. A 31,12–14; 38,6f.

⁵¹ Cf. Cod. Thev. A 43,2; B 6,13.

⁵² Cf. Cod. Thev. A 31,8f.; A 50,2–5, also cf. Stein, Codex 281f., hinting at the parallel in Faustus, c. Faust. 5,1.

and therefore earned a heavenly treasure.⁵³ They are poor as far as worldly possessions are concerned and they are few in numbers (*pauci*). The text underlines this with several phrases and refers to three central New Testament passages:⁵⁴ Firstly the picture of the small path (Mt 7,14) that leads to life and is walked upon only by few,⁵⁵ which also Secundinus makes use of,⁵⁶ secondly Jesus' warning that only few will enter the kingdom of heaven, although many counted themselves as belonging to the Lord (Mt 7, 21), and thirdly Mt 20,16 (Vulg.) / 22,14, which deals with the "chosen few" in contrast to the many who were invited.⁵⁷ With that, the *Electi* as the few are explicitly connected to Jesus himself and the contrast to the many is implied, yet not particularly mentioned.

It is highly likely that Augustine draws on his biographical background when depicting "chaste life" in *de moribus* as one of the Manichaeans' finest enticements.⁵⁸ This enticement did obviously have a strong effect on him as he joined the Manichaeans. A note in the *confessiones* claiming that during his time as a Manichaean auditor, he granted Mani a credit of trust in unresolved doctrinal questions due to his "alleged sanctity", which gave him special authority, also proves this assertion.⁵⁹ Furthermore, Alypius is impressed by their (ostensible) chastity.⁶⁰

One can therefore proceed on the assumption that to the young Augustine the Manichaeans seemed to be the small elite, which makes both higher intellectual as well as ethical demands than the *catholica*, which again functions as venue for the "many" who are not able to grasp at higher standards. They correspond with the essence of the *Hortensius* also in this aspect. This might have additionally fostered Augustine's impression that with them he found a group conforming to the Ciceronian ideal. Belonging to this elitist group certainly had its own attractiveness.

⁵³ Cf. *Cod. Thev.* A 39,1–8; 34,5–8.

⁵⁴ Cf. *Cod. Thev.* A 43,4–16: "... sunt [eni(m)] / et opib(us) pauperes e[t] / numero pauci et p[er] / artam uiam incedun[t] / [a]ngusto tramit[e] / [non] stipati sunt [...] / [...] sunt pauc[i ...] / [...] fideles, qu[i in reg]- / [nu]m caeloru[m ingre]- / d[i]untur, sicut [dic]- / tum est: "multi qui- / dem sunt uocati, pau- / ci autem electi."

⁵⁵ Cf. *Cod. Thev.* A 43,6–9; in B 6,13–28, the narrow and tight path tread by the "perfecti" is contrasted with the broad and spacious lane which gathers the many, cf. Stein, *Codex* 310; also cf. *Cod. Thev.* B 31,24 f.

⁵⁶ Cf. above note 40.

⁵⁷ For variants of the text as well as further evidence in Manichaean literature cf. Stein, *Codex* 263–265.

⁵⁸ Cf. *Aug., mor.* 1,2 (CSEL 90 p. 4,9–13). Taking measures against this was the decisive motif to write this document, cf. *Aug., retr.* 1,7,1.

⁵⁹ Cf. *Aug., conf.* 5,9 (CCL 27 c. 5,35–37).

⁶⁰ Cf. *Aug., conf.* 6,12 (CCL 27 c. 7,49–51).

3. THE FEW AND THE MANY IN THE CONTROVERSY WITH THE MANICHAEANS

When he realises that they can neither meet their intellectual nor ethical standards, Augustine breaks with the Manichaeans. The influence of neoplatonic literature cannot be dealt with here in detail. Whatever “Platoniorum libri” Augustine has read⁶¹—Plotin and also Porphyrios readopt the platonic concept of the few who have these cognitive faculties, and they even intensify the idea, because the ability to view “the One” is restricted to even higher conditions. Augustine already realises when reading Plotin’s enneads, which he has most certainly received, that those who want to recognize the divine first need to become godlike by turning inwards and approaching the divine One with a gradual ascent. This however can only work if the individuals purify themselves by virtuous practice.⁶² It is obvious, of course, that only the few are able to master this challenge. In *de ciuitate Dei*, Augustine will ascribe a statement to Porphyrios claiming that only few were allowed to ascent to divine cognition and that absolute wisdom could not be achieved in this life. Those living according to reason would however gain whatever they miss after death.⁶³

Thus the elitist trait in Augustine’s thinking is supported by neoplatonic literature. In his early writings, which are considerably characterised by an epistemological optimism, Augustine reserves the knowledge of truth for the few with harsh judgements. Truth only reveals itself to the “very few and chosen admirers”.⁶⁴ Just the few’s ability to reason visions truth.⁶⁵ As opposed to them, the “stupid” and “simpleminded” make for an “incredibly large mass”.⁶⁶ His former biographical influences explain this baseline of August-

⁶¹ Cf. Drecoll, *Bekehrung* 156 f.; id., *Gnadenlehre* 45–48.

⁶² Cf. Plotin, *enn.* 1,6,8.9; 1,6,2; 1,6,6 f. For the philosophical doctrine of virtues and Augustine’s use cf. Chr. Horn, *Augustinus über Tugend, Moralität und das höchste Gut*, in: Th. Fuhrer / M. Erler (eds.), *Zur Rezeption der hellenistischen Philosophie in der Spätantike. Akten der 1. Tagung der Karl-und-Gertrud-Abel-Stiftung vom 22.-25. September 1997 in Trier (PhA 9)*, Stuttgart 1999, 173–190, for neoplatonism esp. 178.181 f.187 f.

⁶³ Cf. Porphyr., *frg.* 297F (ed. Smith) = Aug., *ciu.* 10,29 (CCL 47 l. 11–13); 22,22 (CCL 48 l. 121–123). Cf. V.H. Drecoll, *Neuplatonismus*, in: id. (ed.), *Augustin Handbuch*, Tübingen 2007, 83.

⁶⁴ Cf. Aug., *sol.* 1,22 (CSEL 89 p. 34,4 f.).

⁶⁵ Cf. Aug., *ord.* 1,32; cf. *ibid.* 2,30,38.

⁶⁶ Cf. Aug., *Acad.* 1,2 (CCL 29 l. 36 f.): “*stultorum hominum, quorum inmensa turba est*”; 2,1 (l. 14): “*... ut scientia raro paucisque proueniat*”; *uera rel.* 27 and other passages. Cf. Th. Fuhrer, *Augustin contra Academicos (vel de Academicis)*. Bücher 2 und 3. Einleitung und Kommentar (PTS 46), Berlin 1997, 61 f.418; J. Trelenberg, *Augustins Schrift “De ordine”*.

tinian thought. The “sapientes”, “docti”, “sani”, “iusti”, “spiritaes”, who recognize God, thoroughly understand the Scriptures and live according to God’s commandments in distance to the world, are always the “pauci”.⁶⁷ The motif is once again influenced by the controversy over the teachings of grace and the doctrine of predestination. Many are called, but only few follow this call, which is those few who have been preordained and chosen by God’s grace.⁶⁸

However, the question must arise, not least because of the Manichae-an propaganda, how Augustine justifies his affiliation with the “mainline church” of the *catholica*. Does he thereby not align himself with the “many”? How does this fit with his elitist ideal?

His controversy with the Manichaeans plainly reveals that Augustine has dealt with this tension consciously and that he has tried to resolve it with the help of several different strategies and arguments.⁶⁹ His argumentation against Honoratus, “Still-Manichae-an” and friend of his youth, shows that Augustine is aware that this topic is central at least to the educated and philosophically trained. “But truth can only be found among the few”⁷⁰—this prejudice can potentially blight every approximation to the *catholica* within the search for truth.

Considering the most important lines in Augustine’s argumentation, one observes the tendency to stick to the principle of the perfect few and to complement or soften this principle by the positive assessment of the many. The background seems to be the argument of the “consensus omnium”.⁷¹ Cicero phrases the argument in the context of the immortality of the soul and argues that the consistent judgement of all can be considered the “voice of nature” and that one should affiliate with whatever all deem right.⁷²

Einleitung, Kommentar, Ergebnisse (BHTh 144), Tübingen 2009, 171 with note 256; 228 with note 122.

⁶⁷ Cf. e.g. *uera rel.* 51 (CCL 32 c. 28,13); 27 (c. 14,6); *util. cred.* 35 (FC 9 p. 184,6); *ep.* 118,32 (CSEL 34,2 p. 696,16f.) (“per pauciores pie doctos et uere spiritaes uiros”); *c. ep. Man.* 4,5 (CSEL 25 p. 196,5f.); *c. Faust.* 22,56 (CSEL 25 p. 652,2f.); *ord.* 1,32 (CCL 29 c. 11,45f.); *duab. an.* 16 (CSEL 25 p. 72,23).

⁶⁸ Cf. *exp. prop. Rm.* 55; *ad Simpl.* 1,2,10–13; *corrept.* 13f.23; *c. Iul.* 5,14 and other passages. Cf. A. Zumkeller, *Augustinus über die Zahl der Guten bzw. Auserwählten*, in: *Augustinianum* 10 (1970), 447–455; Drecoll, *Gnadenlehre 165–168.229–232*. Cf. also below note 98.

⁶⁹ The arguments developed here are of fundamental importance to Augustine’s later controversies with other heretics, cf. J. Trelenberg, *Das Prinzip “Einheit” beim frühen Augustinus* (BHTh 125), Tübingen 2004, 151.

⁷⁰ *Aug., util. cred.* 16 (FC 9 p. 122,1).

⁷¹ Cf. K. Oehler, *Der Consensus omnium als Kriterium der Wahrheit in der antiken Philosophie und der Patristik. Eine Studie zur Geschichte des Begriffs der Allgemeinen Meinung*, in: *AA* 10 (1961), 103–129.

⁷² Cf. *Cic., Tusc.* 1,35: “Quodsi omnium consensus naturae vox est, omnesque qui ubique

Seneca points out the maxim: “We consider truth to be proven if something particular seems right to everyone.”⁷³

1. The core argument regarding the elitist-rational approach is: Actually there are only few “wise men” among the *catholica* who have come to know truth, i.e. God. These few possess a certain authority, i.e. a personal effective and persuasive power enabling them to impress the many and to guide them towards truth.⁷⁴ Although the mass is not able to “comprehend” this truth intellectually, it “believes” in it, i.e. it accepts it as truth and tries to realise it in their lives. The background to this is Augustine’s epistemological approach of the two ways of cognition, “*credere*” and “*intellegere*”. They are directly linked with the two cognitive powers “*fides*” and “*ratio*” as well as with the concept of “*auctoritas*”.⁷⁵ It is possible to reach truth by means of cognition (*intellegere*) or faith (*credere*). The former option is obviously to be valued higher and will always be the ideal, because the direct vision offers personal certainty. It is also clear that only the few manage to walk this way—and Augustine becomes more and more reserved as to judge how far people can proceed on this way during their earthly lives.⁷⁶ The latter approach is valued lower, because in this case the seeker

sunt consentiunt esse aliquid, quod ad eos pertineat qui vita descesserint, nobis quoque idem existimandum est.”

⁷³ Sen., ep. ad Luc. 117,6: “(multum dare solemus praesumptioni omnium hominum), et apud nos veritatis argumentum est aliquid omnibus uideri.”

⁷⁴ Cf. e.g. Aug., util. cred. 16 (FC 9 p. 122,3–7): “Sed si ex ipsa vi veritatis paucos eam tenere coniectas, qui vero sint, nescis: quid, si ita pauci sunt, qui verum sciunt, ut auctoritate sua multitudinem teneant, unde se in illa secreta expedire et quasi eliquare paucitas possit?” in general; 16 (p. 124,4–8): “Si enim verissimus et sincerissimus dei cultus, quamvis sit apud paucos, apud eos tamen est, quibus multitudo quamquam cupiditatibus involuta et a puritate intellegentiae remota consentit—quod fieri posse quis dubitet?—, quaero ...”; 18 (p. 130,1–5) with pointed reference to the *catholica*. For the argumentation cf. Hoffmann, Augustinus Schrift 218–225; Trelenberg, Das Prinzip “Einheit”, 146–150.

⁷⁵ For the overall concept cf. A. Hoffmann, Hermeneutische Fragen, in: V.H. Drecoll (ed.), Augustin Handbuch, Tübingen 2007, 461–466 with further literature, esp.: K.H. Lütcke, Art. Auctoritas, in: AL 1 (1986–1994), 498–510; id., “Auctoritas” bei Augustin. Mit einer Einleitung zur römischen Vorgeschichte des Begriffs (TBAW 44), Stuttgart 1968; E. TeSelle, Art. Credere, in: AL 2 (1996–2002), 119–131; id., Art. Crede ut intellegas, in: AL 2 (1996–2002), 116–119; Th. Fuhrer, Zum erkenntnistheoretischen Hintergrund von Augustinus Glaubensbegriff, in: Th. Fuhrer / M. Erler (eds.), Zur Rezeption der hellenistischen Philosophie in der Spätantike. Akten der 1. Tagung der Karl- und Gertrud-Abel-Stiftung vom 22.–25. September 1997 in Trier (PhA 9), Stuttgart 1999, 191–211.

⁷⁶ Cf. e.g. Aug., c. ep. Man. 4,5 (CSEL 25 p. 196,4–7): “... sincerissimam sapientiam, ad cuius cognitionem pauci spiritales in hac uita perueniunt, ut eam ex minima quidem parte, quia homines sunt, sed tamen sine dubitatione cognoscant ...” For the decreasing epistemologi-

depends on a mediator (teacher) and as he cannot assess the validity of the teachings, he is at risk of being misled. This risk has to be and also can be minimised if the seeker thoroughly and rationally examines the “credibility” of the teacher by means of “reasonable” criteria. Therefore, Augustine demands to follow an authority. A reliable “authority” simply impresses the individuals by its characteristic features and causes them to behave in a way that is positive to them. Having made the right choice, i.e. a decision for the *catholica*, one will be led to truth. Truth is already anticipated within the realm of faith and should be fully recognised as far as this is individually possible.⁷⁷ Augustine however remains sceptical towards the masses which he considers unable to go beyond this stage. Yet they confidently perform their “*credendi simplicitas*”—as opposed to the “*intellegendi uiuacitas*” of the “*pauci spiritalis*”.⁷⁸ Accepting a reliable authority is thus the “more salutary”, if not the only possible option for the uneducated masses.⁷⁹

This approach allows Augustine to stick to the axiom of the “*pauci*” as small intellectual elite and at the same to connect them with the large number of followers. The *catholica* is the Christian community in which the “*multitudo*” fills the churches, but only few attain maximum insight and also guide the many there.⁸⁰

Augustine supports this argument with parallels of other domains, such as rhetoric:

Nonne videmus, quam *pauci* summam eloquentiam consequantur, cum per totum orbem rhetorum scholae adulescentium *gregibus* perstreant? Numquidnam inperitorum perterriti *multitudine*, quicumque boni oratores evadere volunt, Caecilii sibi potius aut Eruci orationibus quam Tullianis navandam operam existimant? Haec adpetunt *omnes*, quae maiorum auctoritate firmata sunt, eadem inperitorum *turbae* discere moliantur, quae a *paucis* doctis discenda recepta sunt, adsequuntur autem *perpauci*, agunt *pauciores*, clarescunt *paucissimi*. Quid, si tale quiddam est vera religio? Quid, si *multitudo* inperitorum *frequentat* ecclesias? Sed nullum argumentum est ideo neminem illis mysteriis factum esse perfectum ...⁸¹

cal optimism cf. Hoffmann, Augustins Schrift 22 f. with further literature; Fuhrer, Glaubensbegriff 192; Brachtendorf, Weisheitsbegriff 261 f. 268 f. This is why Augustine revokes overly optimistic statements in the retractions, cf. e.g. retr. 1,14,2.

⁷⁷ Cf. E. TeSelle, Art. Crede ut intellegas, in: AL 2 (1996–2002), 116–119.

⁷⁸ Cf. Aug., c. ep. Man. 4,5 (CSEL 25 p. 196,7–9).

⁷⁹ Cf. Aug., ord. 2,26 (CCL 29 c. 9,6 f.); also cf. Trelenberg, de ordine 273–276; Lütcke, Auctoritas, in: AL 1 (1986–1994), 499 f.

⁸⁰ Cf. Aug., util. cred. 16 (FC 9 p. 122,17–19); also Io eu. tr. 2,2–4, cf. Brachtendorf, Weisheitsbegriff 269–271.

⁸¹ Aug., util. cred. 16 (FC 9 p. 122,7–16). The whole passage is characterised by the contrast

The Ciceronian style is an ideal, traditionally valid and considered a desirable goal by the few scholars, but only few achieve it, even fewer realise it and the fewest become famous. In the context of another argument, the many are positively connotated.

Et tamen si tam *pauci* studerent eloquentiae, quam *pauci* sunt eloquentes, numquam nos parentes nostri magistris talibus commendandos putarent. Cum igitur ad haec studia nos *multitudo* invitaverit, quae inperitorum parte *copiosa* est, ut id, quod *pauci* adipisci possunt, adamaremus, cur nobis esse similem in religione nolumus causam, quam cum magno animae discrimine fortasse contemnimus? Si enim verissimus et sincerissimus dei cultus, quamvis sit apud *paucos*, apud eos tamen est, quibus *multitudo* quamquam cupiditatibus involuta et a puritate intellegentiae remota consentit—quod fieri posse quis dubitet?—, quaero, si quis temeritatem vecordiamque nostram arguat, quod non apud eius magistros eam diligenter investigamus, cuius inveniendae nobis magna cura inest, quid respondere possimus? “Deterruit me *multitudo*?”⁸²

Those who strive after something, such as rhetorical skills, intensively are both incentive and precondition for its desirability. This can be linked to the basic argument: The goal becomes attractive by the amount of those striving after it, even if this group mainly consists of the “beginners” (*imperiti*) and only very few fully accomplish the goal. Finally, Augustine argues that the big amount does not prevent from pursuing the same goal in other ways as well:

Cur ab studio artium liberalium vix huic praesenti vitae aliquid commodi adferentium, cur ab inquirenda pecunia, cur ab honore adipiscendo, cur denique a comparanda et retinenda bona valetudine, postremo cur ab ipsa beatae vitae adpetitione, cum his *omnes* occupentur, *pauci* excellant, nulla deterruit *multitudo*?⁸³

The liberal arts, or even more so wealth, honour, health and luck are all aims in life only few people achieve, but everybody aspires and nobody is deterred by the amount of those striving for them. Here, the argument of the consensus omnium is played off against the argument of the perfect few.

2. Augustine uses the same approach with Honoratus regarding ethics. The hint at the great success of the *catholica*, however, is much more explicit here. Just like in the other anti-Manichaean passages Augustine emphasises

of the few and the many and culminates in the negative climax: *perpauci* (superlative!), *pauciores*, *paucissimi*; cf. Hoffmann, Augustins Schrift 221 f.

⁸² Aug., util. cred. 16 (FC 9 p. 122,20–124,12).

⁸³ Aug., util. cred. 16 (FC 9 p. 124,12–17).

the high ethical achievements of members of the Catholic Church. The creed of the indiscernible, immaterial God corresponds with the ethical dissociation of everything physical-material and of the “world”. As concrete examples, Augustine mentions asceticism in terms of renunciation of food and sexuality, the willingness to suffer, charity as well as the contempt of worldly affairs. By listing the extremes, he illustrates on the one hand that these ethical demands can compete with those of the Manichaeans, and on the other hand he clarifies that there is a certain span in realisation. This establishes the basis for the conclusion:

*Pauci haec faciunt, pauciores bene prudenterque faciunt, sed populi probant, populi laudant, populi favent, diligunt postremum populi, populi suam inbecillitatem, quod ipsa non possunt, non sine propectu mentis in deum nec sine quibusdam scintillis virtutis accusant.*⁸⁴

Augustine underlines the contrast between the “few” and the “many” by means of stylistic devices: The climax “pauci—pauciores” is followed by the anaphora of “populi”. These two groups form content-related contrasts (sed), but they are embraced by the alliteration (pauci—pauciores—prudenter—populi probant—populi—populi—postremum populi—populi—possunt—propectu). The first three statements about the peoples are parallel and isocolic; they are followed by two further statements with a pointed chiasm emphasising the “peoples’” appreciation (diligunt) of the ethical ideals of Christianity. Again, the core thought is that the elite of the few should convert the masses like multipliers and improve them ethically.

3. This lays the basis for a positive assessment of the great number of those who have joined the catholica. The Catholic Church gains a plethora of members who reach truth and improve ethically by following its doctrine. This is particularly hard to reach and hence particularly notable.⁸⁵ The fact that the catholica reaches what Plato and his school could not reach and did not dare to reach is a strong argument against the Platonists.⁸⁶ The masses are won over to the truth and, even more remarkable, lead to a renouncing life style. Augustine illustrates this with a similar listing like in *de utilitate credendi*.⁸⁷ In contrast to the Manichaeans he underlines

⁸⁴ Aug., *util. cred.* 35 (FC 9 p. 184,15–20).

⁸⁵ Cf. Aug., *util. cred.* 35 (FC 9 p. 182,22–184,2).

⁸⁶ Cf. Aug., *uera rel.* 6 (CCL 32 c. 4,17–19).

⁸⁷ Cf. Aug., *uera rel.* 5. The numerically big success is being emphasized again and again, cf. Hoffmann, *Augustins Schrift* 432 f.

that incredibly many, especially also simple *catholici* achieve the highest ethical standards. This issue is discussed extensively in *de moribus ecclesiae catholicae*.⁸⁸ Augustine opposes Faustus' claim to practically meet Jesus' radical ethical demands as Manichaean *Electus*⁸⁹ with a forceful iteration stressing "how many" Catholics actually meet these demands.⁹⁰ The Catholic Church therefore has an extraordinary (God-given) "progress and success" (*profectum fructumque*).⁹¹ This success gives the church credibility and authority and suggests that the truth seeker should start searching here.⁹² The "many", the large amount of followers, have now become one of the "reasonable" criteria for the authority of the *catholica*.⁹³

4. By implication, the negative evaluation of the few, which also and particularly concerns the Manichaeans, results from the same argument. They do not have any authority whatsoever to support their doctrines or sacred writings, precisely because they are "only few".⁹⁴ In his answer to *Secundinus* Augustine even expands this negative assessment.⁹⁵ Insofar he complements the argument of the perfect few with the few very bad people. He takes up *Secundinus*' claim who asserts that as a Manichaean, he belongs to the few walking on Jesus' narrow path (Mt 7,14). Then, however, he turns the claim into the warning not to belong to the group of the few very bad people.⁹⁶ Only few are without sin (*innocentes*), but at the same time only few are felons. Again, Augustine uses comparatives, but this time negative ones. Among those who do something wrong are fewer murderers than

⁸⁸ Cf. esp. Aug., *mor.* 1,65–71,77 with reference to monasticism, virgins, ascetic members of the clergy (bishops, presbyters, deacons), ascetic communities in cities etc.

⁸⁹ Cf. Faustus in Aug., *c. Faust.* 5,1–3, also cf. above note 45.

⁹⁰ Cf. Aug., *c. Faust.* 5,9 (CSEL 25 p. 281,1.3.4.5.6.8.11 f.12.13.14).

⁹¹ Aug., *util. cred.* 35 (FC 9 p. 186,5); this is where divine assistance becomes visible.

⁹² Cf. Aug., *util. cred.* 34 f. After the Ascension of Christ it has the greatest authority, cf. *ibid.* 35 (FC 9 p. 186,5–11). The reasoning is introduced by the following thesis: "*Haec (sc. auctoritas) ... dupliciter nos movet: partim miraculis, partim sequentium multitudine*" (p. 178,19–21; 180,8f.). The former is primarily concerned with the time of Jesus and his disciples while the latter deals with the following times. Augustine however revokes the judgement that the miracles were absent in the following times in *retr.* 1,14,5.

⁹³ However, Augustine qualifies the success of the *catholica* as he gains more pastoral experience and biblical knowledge, cf. Zumkeller, *Zahl* 423–432. Cf. below note 98.

⁹⁴ Cf. Aug., *util. cred.* 31 (FC 9 p. 170,3–5). In addition to that they are "turbulenti" and "novi" while the *catholica* distinguishes itself "consensione" and "vetustate" (*ibid.* p. 170,1f.).

⁹⁵ Cf. Aug., *c. Sec.* 26.

⁹⁶ Cf. Aug., *c. Sec.* 26 (CSEL 25 p. 945,12–14,21f.): "... non te decipiat species paucitatis, quoniam ipse dominus dixit angustam uiam esse paucorum. inter paucos uis esse, sed pessimos ... uide ergo, ne forte apud uos nimius horror impietatis faciat meritum paucitatis."

thieves, fewer commit incest than adultery, fewer women are like Medea and Phaedra or men like Orest (Ochos) and Busirides than other criminals. The “paucitas” is hence a two-edged category. The Manichaeans are indeed few, but they belong to a “negative elite” advocating lunatic ideas. It is even more wondrous that people fall for them at all than the mere fact that they are few. The few saints walking on the narrow path, who the Lord is talking about, are definitely not the Manichaeans, but those among true Christians who fulfil the commandments.⁹⁷ As opposed to the vast number of sinners, the righteous are the few. Augustine does not delude himself about this and freely admits it in front of the Manichaeans. The righteous will be revealed in the Last Judgement.⁹⁸

This presupposes Augustine’s conviction that the Manichaeans’ standards are untenable both in the intellectual and in the ethical realm. The reasonable insight is an unjustified “presumption” (*praesumptio*) and a “promise” (*pollicitatio*) which they do not keep.⁹⁹ Particularly the radical ascetic ethics of the *Electi* is fictitious. Augustine goes so far as to claim that the Manichaeans had big problems spotting only one *Electus* among their “paucitas” who meets the ethical standards of Manichaeism.¹⁰⁰ These harsh and partly also unfair accusations show Augustine’s great personal disappointment about his own deception, which is now mixed with the pastoral endeavour to preserve others from the same mistake.

4. CONCLUSION

We can trace a line of the motif of the few and the many throughout Augustine’s entire intellectual biography from reading the *Hortensius* up

⁹⁷ Next to Aug., c. Sec. 26 cf. esp. mor. 2, which highlights, according to Augustine’s own account (mor. 1,75 [CSEL 90 p. 81,7–10]), the discrepancy between the Manichaeans’ ethical standards and reality; cf. esp. 2,74 f.; furthermore cf. mor. 1,2,75 f.; retr. 1,7,1 and other passages.

⁹⁸ Cf. Aug., c. Sec. 26 (CSEL 25 p. 945,24–946,2); mor. 1,76 (CSEL 90 p. 81,19–82,3) both referring to the separation of the wheat from the chaff (Mt 3,12) on the barn floor of the Catholic Church.—Augustine in other (later) contexts underlines that many Christians fail to resist worldly temptations and do not adhere to the commandments. Therefore, the good ones who will be rescued in the end will only be few compared to the sinful masses, yet in absolute figures, they will be many, cf. s. 90,4 f.; 111,1,3; ep. 93,30,33; c. Cresc. 4,63 u.ö. (cf. Zumkeller, *Zahl* 429 note 32, also above note 68).

⁹⁹ Cf. Aug., util. cred. 2.21,36. Cf. Feldmann, *Einfluss* 1,591–593; *Decret*, *L’Afrique* 1,244–247; Hoffmann, *Augustins Schrift* 176 f.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Aug., mor. 1,75 (CSEL 90 p. 81,3–6). The Manichaeans seem to argue similarly in favour of their own community, cf. Aug., mor. 2,75 (p. 156,20–23).

to the discussion about grace and predestination. The young Augustine gets acquainted with the philosophical axiom of the few sapientes and the unphilosophical mass. He adopts this conviction from his reception of the Hortensius (and probably other philosophical scriptures) and abides by it until his time as mature theologian. Searching for a Christianity that corresponds to the intellectual and ethical ideal of the Hortensius, Augustine does not join the catholica, which gathers the many, but the Manichaeans. They promise to be a Christian “elite” of the few “illuminated” and “saints”, explaining the world and all its proceedings from the macrocosmic movement of the stars to the microcosmos of human nature and yielding the highest ascetic performances. It is certainly also due to this basic conviction of the small elite that the Manichaeans seemed more attractive to him than the catholica, and that he joined them. The appreciation of the few is supported by neoplatonic writings. In his steering towards the catholica, Augustine holds on to the elitist approach which in some of his early works is expressed aggressively. When he later struggles with the Manichaeans and in doing so also defends his own affiliation with the church of the many against Manichaean polemics, Augustine comes to evaluate the multitudo more and more positively. He integrates the few and the many in his hermeneutic concept of the two approaches to truth. Those who obtain the highest possible insight by their respective moral conduct are also considered the few “wise” (or saints) within the catholica, but they impress the many and guide them towards truth, which they accept in their faith. Augustine increasingly rates the big success as an argument for the authority of the catholica. This concept combines the principle of the perfect few with the positive assessment of the many followers. Thus, the controversy with the Manichaeans considerably contributes to the development of this concept. Augustine can make use of this argument against them as well as against “all heretics” who praise themselves in front of the catholica because of their “paucitas”.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Cf. Aug., c. adu. leg. 2,42 (CCL 49 l. 1294 f.).

A PROTREPTIC TO A LIMINAL MANICHAEAN AT THE CENTRE OF AUGUSTINE'S *CONFESSIONS* 4

Annemaré Kotzé

1. INTRODUCTION

In the middle of the fourth book of Augustine's *Confessions* (4.14–19) there occurs a passage of heightened emotional intensity. What I investigate here is the type of audience that may be the target of such a passage. In some respects the current article is a continuation of the deliberations expressed in a recent article (Kotzé 2013, forthcoming) on the kind of audience that may be targeted by the narrative in books 1 to 3 of the *Confessions*, this time focussing on the narrative in book 4 and coming to a conclusion quite different from that in the previous article: while books 1 to 3 frequently seem to target Catholic insiders as well as a broad late ancient audience, book 4 to my mind constitutes above all a powerful protreptic to potential Manichaean readers. In order to construct the argument concerning this claim I recapitulate a few points from the earlier article concerning the type of Manichaean reader I think may actually be envisaged as a potential reader of the *Confessions* (section 2 below). In the next sections of the article I then discuss the structure of book 4 and argue that paragraphs 4.14–19 may be regarded as a passage of central importance within the book (section 3). This forms the basis for the arguments in the following subsection (section 4) that the core of book 4 contains a powerful protreptic aimed at a liminal Manichaean reader.

2. THE 'LIMINAL MANICHAEAN'

In much of my past research I emphasized the importance of considering Manichaean readers as a significant part of the potential readership of the *Confessions*. In the case of book 4 this is an issue that is often overlooked by commentators. Whereas many of the interpretations of this book published since the 1980's seem to disregard the extent to which book 4 is a book about Manichaeism, also those who fully recognize this do not consider the extent

to which the book does not only speak *about Manichaeism*, but speaks *to Manichaeans*. In my view book 4 constitutes a strong intellectual and emotional appeal to the potential Manichaean reader to see the problematic nature and the futility of Manichaean ways of thinking. The passage at the centre of the book is as powerful a protreptic to a Manichaean reader as I have argued that the Meditation on Psalm 4 in book 9 is (Kotzé 2001). Before I go on to discuss the structure of book 4 as a background to my arguments about its intended audience(s) and communicative aim(s) it is necessary to concisely reiterate what kind of reader I envisage when I speak of a potential Manichaean reader.

My arguments about the potential Manichaean readership of the *Confessions* have evolved over the years in an effort to answer to valid criticism contending that no committed Manichaean would stomach the abuse against Manichaeism in book 3 and (less explicitly but equally potently) in the rest of the *Confessions* and then meekly continue to read to the end of the work. In a recent article (Kotzé 2013, forthcoming) I argued for the use of the term ‘liminal Manichaean’ as shorthand to refer to the kind of potential Manichaean reader I envisage as the target of many of the intellectual and emotional appeals in the *Confessions*.

The most important category of Manichaean reader that I argued one should consider is one already interested in Catholic Christianity as an alternative for Manichaean Christianity, someone, like one of the friends earlier converted to Manichaeism by Augustine or like Augustine himself some 15 years earlier. This would be a person who—because of growing intellectual objections or the increasing clamp down on Manichaeans¹—seriously considers conversion to Catholic Christianity, or who has, in fact recently converted to Catholicism.

The type of Manichaean reader who is already interested in Catholicism, on the point of converting or very recently converted is what I indicate with the term ‘liminal Manichaean,’ also in the current article. Here it is my contention that the strong appeals embodied in book 4 of the *Confessions* are eminently well designed to reach out to just such a liminal Manichaean reader.

The concept of the liminal Manichaean is also inextricably intertwined with my arguments about and definition of protreptic, which argues that the purposes of conversion and confirmation of faith and the audience locations of outsiders and insiders cannot be meaningfully separated (Kotzé 2011).

¹ See the incisive interpretation of the historical evidence by BeDuhn 2010: 136–144; 196.

The liminal Manichaean is exactly the kind of reader that cannot be neatly categorized as either an outsider or an insider. The important precision is that in many respects the type of Manichaean readers I envisage are already positively inclined towards Catholicism, eager to read about Augustine's spiritual journey and thus receptive to the exhortation embodied in the *Confessions* as a whole and also in book 4.

In the next section of the article I take a look at the structure of book 4 and the elements contained in it, mainly to support an argument that the paragraphs spatially at the centre of the book (4.14–19) also constitute the core of its meaning. This forms the basis for arguments about the ways in which the central passage of book 4 reaches out to a liminal Manichaean reader.

3. THE STRUCTURE OF BOOK 4

3.1. *Introduction*

Here I present an interpretation of the structure and coherence of book 4 of Augustine's *Confessions* designed to stand alongside earlier interpretations that emphasize its philosophical and theological aspects. My aim is to examine to what extent everything presented in this book is designed to inform the reader about Augustine's thinking in the nine the years following his conversion to Manichaeism, which was described near the end of the preceding book. What the reader is presented with here is a hasty sketch, covering in about 12 and a half pages (in O'Donnell's text) the nine years during which he most urgently endeavoured to come to an intellectual understanding of Manichaeism that would make his adherence permanent and that could theoretically in future precipitate his advancement in the sect.²

3.2. *Scholarship on Book 4*

As I have said, my emphasis here is almost exclusively on the Manichaean aspects of the narrative in book 4 and not on echoes of Platonist ideas or the indicators of philosophical development that have been at the centre

² In BeDuhn's terminology I would describe the young Augustine drawn in the pages of book 4 as one trying to "[effect] a total integration of the system in his own person, [understand] how it all fit together and [function] in the path of life Manichaeism proposed and promoted" (2010: 106).

of a number of authoritative discussions of the meaning and coherence of the book. Of course these perspectives are crucial to our understanding of Augustine's thought and of a work as multi-faceted as the *Confessions*. But, in general, the current article arises out of unease with what I see as a failure to give enough weight to the extent to which everything presented in book 4 is presented in order to highlight Augustine's thinking and his development as a *Manichaeon*. I remain aware that what I offer here is just a perspective on an under-represented aspect of book 4 and not the ultimate key to its reading or meant to replace other readings.

The opening lines of the book mentions the nine year period almost as heading, and at least as an important marker, that should influence the way in which we read what follows and how we judge the nature and the structure of the book as a whole (as I argue below).³ While it seems clear that a number of commentators on book 4 over the last decades take its Manichaean contents for granted I am not convinced that this is the only reason for the paucity of references to Manichaean issues in some of the summaries or overviews of the contents of the book. Part of the reason for this may be the fact that research on Manichaeism and research on philosophical and even theological aspects of the *Confessions* still take place very much within isolated worlds, or at least that the latter takes precedence in Augustinian studies.

In the following I quote the work on book 4 by Starnes (1990), O'Donnell (1992), Clark (1995), Erb (2004) and Brachtendorf (2005), while mostly referring only in footnotes to the earlier suggestions about the structure of book 4 by Steidle (1982), Pfligersdorffer (1983) and Verheijen (1990). Neither Steidle nor Verheijen places much emphasis on the Manichaean aspects of book 4 and their suggestions for the structure of the book differ considerably from mine, mostly because of the fact that I emphasise the section containing the apostrophe of the soul and the other souls (4.16–19) while Verheijen seems to ignore it almost completely and Steidle does not accord it any extraordinary importance.⁴ Pfligersdorffer's interpretation (1983: 323–345)

³ Steidle (1982: 451) reads these words in the same way: "Daß es eine Periode von neun Jahre zusammenfassend behandeln will, ergibt sich sowohl aus den ersten Worten als auch aus der damit korrespondierenden Wendung von 3,11,20 und dem ebenfalls korrespondierenden Rückverweis von 5,6.10."

⁴ Steidle does note that this section acquires the character of a "predigartige[n] Parænese" (1982: 458). Verheijen (1990: 190), however, discusses 4.15 and then continues: "After this Augustine begins a long 'confessing' account of beauty and its relation with joy, and on his first work: *De pulchro et apto*," which occurs in 4.20 onwards, thus making no comment on the four paragraphs in 4.16–19.

in his “Eine weniger beachtete Partie in Augustins Confessions (4,4,7–12,19) in interpretierender Darstellung” (1983), while it also pays minimal attention to Manichaean issues, does, however, provide a key parallel for seeing the central section of book 4 as one of heightened importance.

Jason BeDuhn warns that we should not be misled by Augustine’s preoccupation with his spiritual development in the *Confessions* but keep in mind that, during the successive stages of life he recounts, his secular career often occupied a much greater priority and probably claimed a much larger percentage of his attention than the narrative in the *Confessions* leads us to believe.⁵ O’Donnell, in his commentary on 5.6.10, states that “[s]ince 4.1.1 A. has portrayed his life as awkwardly divided between his public profession and his private cult. Here the two halves come together” (1992: 297). However, it is not my intention to reconstruct the life of the historical Augustine, but to read very carefully how he wishes to portray it in book 4 of the *Confessions*. In my opinion Augustine presents his secular career and his religious activities as a fully intertwined and integrated unit *already in book 4*. The question here is not whether this was in fact so, but why Augustine wishes to represent his life in this manner at this stage of the *Confessions*.

O’Donnell (1992: 203) assigns a tripartite structure to book 4: “teaching at Carthage” (4.1–4.6), “the death of a friend at Thagaste” (4.7–4.19), and “intellectual development at Carthage” (4.20–4.31). The tripartite structure arises from a relatively loose grouping together on the basis of geographical divisions that can be made rather than from thematic considerations

⁵ See BeDuhn 2010: 36–37: “There was more to his life than religion. He had a job as a teacher, a family life, a circle of friends and his own avid intellectual pursuits. The ability of the Manichaean model of selfhood to impress itself upon him depended upon how large a place he gave Manichaeism in the overall scheme of his life. At the very least, he began in his nineteenth year (372–373) to attend Manichaean meetings, listen to Manichaean instruction, read Manichaean literature, adopt the rules of conduct of an Auditor, and discuss Manichaean ideas with his friends, many of whom gravitated with Augustine towards association with the sect.” See also BeDuhn 2010: 96 “His enthusiasm for Manichaeism—the genuine enthusiasm of a new convert—was tempered with the distraction of his broader interests. Manichaeism was only one commitment among many, a single part of his complex identity as a young man of intellectual inclinations with a set of roles as student, teacher, rhetorical performer, family man, and friend. ... He read widely (among other things, Aristotle, some Pythagorean works, Cicero, Seneca, Varro, as well as various scientific and philosophical handbooks and digests) ... and frankly states that Manichaeism was far from the sole source of his ideas at the time.” BeDuhn is, of course, primarily a historian who, perfectly legitimately, endeavours to reconstruct the life of the historical Augustine rather than to read the *Confessions* (or any specific literary work) on its own merits.

and his introductory description of the book clearly illustrates the relatively random mixture of incidents thrown together in the narrative of book 4:⁶

4.1.1–4.3.6 portray A. at work as teacher, the prey of the *variae cupiditates* ... to which he had yielded in the course of the narratives of Bks. 2 and 3. ... We must therefore conclude that this book is made up of reminiscences of Carthage (376/83) framing the Thagaste episode (375/6) in the mid-section of the book ... 4.4.7–4.12.19 recount the death of his friend and present an extended meditation on its meaning ... 4.13.20–4.16.31 depict his intellectual life at Carthage, describing the circumstances surrounding the writing of the *de pulchro et apto* (4.13.20–4.15.27), then recalling an earlier, undated intellectual feat, his reading of the *categoriae* of Aristotle (4.16.28–31).⁷ The book is thus loosely bracketed by two acts of successful interpretation of difficult texts: at 4.3.5, when Vindicianus is presented as a student of astrology, and at 4.16.28, when A. reads Aristotle on the categories. (1992: 203)

My main reason for quoting the opening section of O'Donnell's commentary on book 4 here is to illustrate how, while his commentary on individual words and phrases throughout the rest of the section on book 4 gives some attention to the Manichaean issues arising in the book, this is not reflected in his opening overview. In other words, he does not seem to interpret the commentary on Manichaeism or the address to a potential Manichaean reader as crucial to understanding book 4.

Although, as I have said, the fact that book 4 is about Augustine's Manichaean phase is probably taken for granted by those writing interpretations of the book, it is striking how little explicit comment is made about this issue. Like O'Donnell, Wolfgang Erb (2004: 192–193) in his structural overview of book 4 does not once mention the word Manichaean or Manichaeism. Instead he makes a compelling argument for finding the unity of the book in its examination of the “*menschliche Grundsituation*” (2004: 192–193 *et passim*). This insight, as well as his exposition of the structure of book 4, emphasizing that Augustine here points to Christ as the way to

⁶ Courcelle (1968: 44) speaks about the “*ordre fantaisiste*” of the narration here. Verheijen (1990: 187), discussing the unity of the *Confessions* as a whole, also concedes that “there is a good dose of arbitrariness in the choice of successive subject matter in the *Confessiones*,” although he then comes, somewhat abruptly, to the conclusion that there is nothing random to this choice. Steidle argues, like I do (though on different grounds), for a unity in terms of the logical progression of thought in book 4: “Trotzdem weist aber das 4. Buch einen gegenüber den anderen Büchern klar abgegrenzten Gedankengang auf” (1982:452).

⁷ The event is not “undated”; Augustine, in fact, explicitly dates this event to his twentieth year: *et quid mihi proderat quod annos natus ferme viginti ... legi eas solus et intellexi?* (4.16.28).

God, is, of course, well compatible with the suggestion I make below: I also conclude that Augustine is concerned with human salvation and see the section on the incarnation of Christ as the climax of book 4. The main area where my suggestions differ from Erb's is in the emphasis placed on 1) the extraordinary nature of the section containing the apostrophe of the narrator's soul and the apostrophe of other beloved souls, and 2) the extent to which the central passage is designed to target liminal Manichaean readers.

Another recent example of an interpretation of book 4 that illustrates the trend to look past the central importance of its Manichaean elements is Brachtendorf's interpretation (2005: 85–99). Although he does not make a structural analysis of book 4, the two headings organizing his discussion give an indication of what he sees as the main elements of the book: 1) "Der Tod des Freundes—die falsche Art zu trauern" (2005: 85) and 2) "Der Gottesbegriff und die Kategorienlehre des Aristoteles" (2005: 96). The introductory paragraph on the contents of book 4 (1995: 85) displays the same absence of reference to Manichaeism that I have remarked upon above as well as the impression that the events narrated in book 4 are randomly chosen:

Biographisch deckt das vierte Buch die Zeit von 19. bis zum 28. Lebensjahr ab, in der Augustinus bereits selbst Rhetorik lehrt, zunächst in Thagaste, dann in Karthago.⁸ Geschildert wird Augustins Teilnahme an einem Dichterwettbewerb sowie seine Neigung zur Astrologie (2,3–3,6). Außerdem greift Augustinus die Frage nach dem Wert der höheren Bildung und deren Bedeutung für das Glück des Menschen auf, indem er über die Abfassung seiner Erstlingschrift ... (13,20–15,27) sowie über seine Lektüre der Kategorienschrift des Aristoteles (16, 28–30) berichtet. Das wichtigste Ereignis in dieser Zeit ist jedoch der Tod seines Freundes (4.7–9,14).

Of course the insights provided into the philosophical issues at play in book 4 by scholars like Erb or Brachtendorf are crucially important. Yet, I am convinced that no interpretation of this difficult book is sufficient without explicit indication of the key role played by its Manichaean elements. In this respect I therefore find Gillian Clark's opening section (1995: 159) of her commentary on book 4 and especially Colin Starnes' interpretation of this book (1990: 89–112) more satisfactory.

⁸ I read book 4 as starting with a narration of life in Carthage before moving back to the time in Thagaste (in 4.7) as O'Donnell (1992: 203) also interprets it, and then back to Carthage at 4.14; contra O'Donnell (1992: 203) who sees the move back to Carthage only at 4.20 (see my arguments below).

Clark's commentary on the various phrases from book 4 displays a thorough knowledge and awareness of the importance of Manichaeism issues for understanding this book. Her opening sentences (1995:159) also seem to reflect her understanding of the central place of Manichaeism in the book as whole: "Book 4 surveys the nine years in which A. was a Manichaeism. His delusive beliefs about God affected both his profession and his human relationships." Yet, the rest of the introductory paragraph (1995: 159–160) does not, to my mind, make explicit enough how each of the issues that make up the contents of book 4 is in fact presented as an illustration of and commentary on Manichaeism ways of thinking.

For me, Starnes' commentary on book 4 (1990: 89–112) with its explicit emphasis on the extent to which this is a book about Manichaeism, is much closer to discovering the essence of what this book is about. Yet, the bipartite structure he assigns to the book comprises two main sections of very unequal length without any accompanying arguments to motivate this decision.⁹ Furthermore, I find the division as superficial as the geographical divisions imposed on the book by O'Donnell. Nevertheless, much of my understanding of the Manichaeism elements in book 4 and especially my insight into the way in which paragraph 4.19 constitutes the climax of the central section of the book, is based on my reading of Starnes' chapter. In light of everything said above I would suggest the following overview of book 4 to stand alongside that of Starnes, Erb, or Brachtendorf and the commentaries of O'Donnell and Clark as one more way in which to look at a seemingly disjointed compositional section in Augustine's most popular work.

3.3. *The Structure of Book 4*

3.3.1. *Introduction*

As is clear from the discussion above, it is not easy to give a concise description of the contents of book 4. Following an opening paragraph that O'Donnell (1992: 204) describes as "unusually artful,"¹⁰ the narrative seems at times to jump from subject to subject rather randomly; there are two instances of *analepsis*, where the narrative suddenly moves back to an earlier stage

⁹ "I. Things done 'privately'" (1990: 90) in 4.2–3 and "II. Things done 'openly'" (1990: 92) in 4.4 to the end of the book. The second main section is then subdivided into 4 subsections.

¹⁰ "The first sentence is remarkably ornate, while the ring composition from 'inrideant et confitear' to 'sed inrideant ... autem confiteamur' sets off a passage reminiscent of 1.1.1" (O'Donnell 1992: 204).

in Augustine's life than that recounted in the previous sections (in 4.7 and 4.28);¹¹ considerable variations in narrative speed and tone as well as in emotional intensity occur.

In terms of the chronological progress of the autobiographical narrative of the *Confessions* book 4 should continue onwards from the point reached in book 3.6.10, Augustine becoming a member of the Manichaean sect in Carthage. Yet, because of Augustine's constant moving between what Feldmann (1994) calls the narrative and the reflexive levels, it is not always obvious what Augustine is about at any specific stage of the narrative and the captions allotted to specific books or sections of the *Confessions* by translators or commentators often obscure the structure or inner logic of the complicated progression of the narrative. This is one of the factors that make possible the widely varying interpretations of this book.

In a previous article on the audience of the first three books of the *Confessions* I came to the conclusion that Augustine, besides including terms and concepts that may have had special meaning for readers with a Manichaean background, certainly also addresses fellow-Catholics (or insiders) as well as, at times, a broad cross-section of late ancient readers. I argued that in the first three books he often seems unable to restrain himself from creating little cameos of general human experience, which seem to be there more for their own sake than in service of some overarching communicative purpose of the work. Part of the *Confessions* seems designed purely for the sake of entertainment, displaying Augustine's dexterity in conjuring up vivid and beautifully worded pictures of human life. This should not surprise us, given Augustine's training as a rhetorician and is definitely also true of the deservedly well-known and heart-rending descriptions of Augustine's grief at the death of his friend in book 4 and the touching sketches of friendship presented there. Yet, it seems as if the popularity of this sketch has overshadowed the importance of the following section, the apostrophe of the soul and the other souls, which is marked in my opinion by a number of

¹¹ In 4.7 Augustine recounts the time of his teaching as a grammaticus in Thagaste before becoming a teacher of rhetoric in Carthage. This falls within the nine-year period indicated as the one covered in the book but constitutes a move back in time after the narration of some aspects of teaching rhetoric in Carthage in the previous paragraphs. In 4.28 Augustine makes the size of the jump back in time more explicit. In the previous section he had indicated that the writing of the *De pulchro et apto*, on which he was commenting at that stage of the narrative, took place in his twenty sixth or twenty seventh year; at the opening of 4.28 (just a few lines later) he explicitly names the period of his reading of Aristotle's *Categories* as taking place when he was about twenty.

features as a kind of climax in book 4 (see my discussion in section 4.3). As I argue below, the description of Manichaean friendship in book 4 fulfils a very important purpose as a kind of *captatio benevolentiae*, which should make the audience receptive to the message delivered in the central section of the book.

The fact that book 4 does seem to be made up of a combination of rather randomly selected events makes possible the different interpretations discussed above. Yet, it is important to note that Augustine inscribes in the opening words a feature that allows him to write a loosely associative book. The opening indication that the book will be about his nine years of Manichaean adherence initiates a temporal linking device that is picked up at strategic points throughout the book and unites the whole as an impressionistic account touching on a number of points within this nine year period. We may even expect that these points are not selected randomly but for their ability to illustrate the salient aspects of what Manichaean adherence held for Augustine at this period of his life, or more pointedly for their ability to illustrate the main impediments to Augustine's thought caused by Manichaeism. I will not go into these in detail but focus on how an appeal to Manichaean readers in what I identify as the central passage is given additional poignancy by the episodes recounted in the preceding paragraphs.

3.3.2. *An Alternative Suggestion about the Structure of Book 4*

My view of the contents and structure of book 4 presented below is based, on the one hand on the role of the temporal articulating phrases, coupled at times with forms of *nescire* or *non noscere* (as in book 3). On the other hand my perception of how narrative and reflexive passages alternate in this book also contributes to my suggestion for the structure of book 4. In the following table I indicate the frequency of the temporal phrases that I regard as a structuring device together with a possible title for each section. A fuller motivation for this division into sections follows below.

A	4.1	PROLOGUE <i>per idem tempus annorum novem</i>	programmatic prologue
B	4.2–5	LIFE AS A MANICHAEAN <i>in illis annis</i> <i>in illis annis</i> <i>(recolo etiam)</i> <i>eo tempore</i> <i>tunc autem</i>	Main constituents of life as a Manichaean

4.7–13	<i>in illis annis</i> <i>et nunc ... tunc ... tunc</i> <i>non tempus quaerendi nunc</i> <i>(sic ego eram)</i> <i>(sic eram omnino, memini)</i> <i>quod ego tunc eram</i> <i>non vacant tempora ... de die in diem</i>	Story of the Manichaean friend in Thagaste
C 4.14–19	REFLECTION AND APPEAL the present of the narrator (no temporal phrases)	(TO A LIMINAL MANICHAEAN) reflection and appeal to own and other Manichaean souls
D 4.20–31	INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT <i>haec tunc non noveram</i> <i>tunc</i> <i>nondum videbam</i> <i>non enim noveram</i> <i>qualis in me tunc erat, nesciente</i> <i>aetate annorum fortasse viginti</i> <i>sex aut septem</i> <i>annos natus ferme viginti</i>	(LIMITS OF MANICHAEAN THINKING) writing <i>De pulchro et apto</i> reading Aristotle's <i>Categories</i> and other works
E 4.31	EPILOGUE <i>o domine ... protege nos</i>	a last appeal to the liminal Manichaean

I am fully aware that the suggestion above is just another possible arrangement of the building blocks that constitute book 4 and that there will be arguments against this as there are arguments against other suggestions about its structure. Yet there are two aspects of my suggestion that should not be overlooked and that have not received sufficient attention as far as I am aware: 1) Augustine uses temporal phrases to impose structure on and provide unity to the somewhat random selection and arrangement of events recounted in book 4 and it is exactly this use of temporal phrases which allows him to jump around within the nine year period without becoming incoherent. 2) In the centre of the book there are located six paragraphs that do not form part of the narration of past events (4.14–19). Instead of the more usual fluctuation between past narration and present reflection the section consists of two full paragraphs of reflection (4.14–15) followed by four paragraphs where the address to God moves far into the background (4.16–19):

in these four paragraphs the narrator first addresses his own soul and then he lets this soul address other souls.

These paragraphs may be seen as developing from the narrative of the death of Augustine's youth friend in Thagaste and as part of the ensuing "extended meditation on its meaning" (O'Donnell 1992: 203). Yet, the presentation of the narrative in the present of the narrator from the beginning of *Conf* 4.14 up to the end of 4.19,¹² including the strong and prolonged emotional appeal presented in 4.16–19, together with the fact that no temporal phrases occur in this section sets it apart from the more narrative sections preceding and following it and justifies to my mind seeing this section as a separate structural unit within the book. However, the most important aspect that sets this section apart from the narrative in the rest of book 4 is the fact that in these paragraphs we do not hear anything about the young Augustine. Although comments on Manichaeism do occur, this is not a depiction of the deeds or thoughts of the Manichaean Augustine; instead the perspectives related to the reader are all those of the narrator at the time of narration. Yet, this does not mean that these six paragraphs at the centre of book 4 are any less 'about Manichaeism' than the narrative in the preceding and subsequent paragraphs. It is precisely the apostrophe of the narrator to his soul with the embedded apostrophe of this soul to other souls that constitutes the strongest appeal to Manichaean readers, as I will argue below.

3.3.3. *Temporal Indications in Book 4*

Before I expand further on the nature and importance of the central paragraphs of book 4 (4.14–19), some elucidation about the temporal indications in this book is warranted. I have argued previously (Kotzé 2008) that within the narrative of his conversion to Manichaeism in book 3 Augustine uses phrases with forms of *nescire* and *non noscere* to mark the section on the defense of the Old Testament as a unit.¹³ In book 4 he uses a combination of *nescire* and *non noscere* phrases and temporal phrases in a similar manner to provide the basic framework for the structure he creates.

¹² The series of infinitives at the end of 4.13 develop from two previous verbs in the imperfect: *alia erant, quae in eis amplius capiebant animum*.

¹³ Chapters 3.7.12 to 3.10.18 are rhetorically marked as a unit (including a 'digression' on *flagitia* and *facinora* in 3.8.15 to 3.9.17) by the profession of ignorance repeated at the start of each chapter (except the chapters that form part of the digression): *nesciebam* (3.7.12), *et non noveram* (3.7.13), *haec ego tunc nesciebam* (3.7.14), and *haec ego nesciens* (3.10.18).

The very opening words of book 4, as I have pointed out, constitute a temporal phrase which announces the theme and plays an important role in providing the unity of the book: *per idem tempus annorum novem*. It is important to note that these words foreshadow the main theme of the book as Manichaeism, in the sense that it picks up a remark at the end of book 3 (3.11.20), the first mention in the *Confessions* of the duration of Augustine's Manichaean sojourn as a period of nine years: *novem ferme anni secuti sunt, quibus ego in illo limo profundi ac tenebris falsitatis, cum saepe surgere conarer et gravius alliderer, volutatus sum*. (This statement forms part of the last three paragraphs of book 3 where Monnica's reactions to Augustine's living as a Manichaean is described; this is a depiction of her reactions [and consequent actions], which take place over some time and is not a strictly chronological continuation of the story told so far.)

The words *illis annis*, used twice in *Conf* 4.2 as well as the *eo tempore* at the opening of 4.5 and the *tunc autem* in 4.6 recall the opening phrase and, after the artfully constructed and programmatic prologue reaffirm the fact that the unity of the book is provided to an important extent by the nine year period Augustine consistently (if not accurately) associates with his adherence to Manichaeism. That there is a strong arbitrariness behind the selection of the events that have to characterize the nine year period of Manichaeism is also underlined by the phrase *recolo etiam* at the opening of 4.3 which creates the impression that Augustine is narrating a memory suddenly presenting itself, rather than pursuing a chronological or narrative imperative.

The phrase *illis annis* at the opening of 4.7 can be read in two ways: firstly as an exact repetition of the previous two instances and thus marking the events subsequently narrated as also tied into the unit of the nine year period narrated in book 4; and secondly as a phrase referring simply to the period in Thagaste.¹⁴ The latter seems the more straightforward reading and points to another instance of a narrative section presented out of chronological order and the author directing the reader to the specific period, here the time spent in Thagaste. Yet, the fact that the phrase echoes the two earlier instances of the use of the same phrase, probably assures that the first notion to present itself to the reader (when reading the words *illis annis*)

¹⁴ These two possible interpretations are reflected in the translations of Boulding and Thimme respectively, with Boulding reading the opening words as referring to the whole nine year period: "At this *same* period, when I first began to teach in the town where I was born, ..." (2002: 61) and Thimme seeing the words as referring only to the time in Thagaste: "In *jenen* Jahren, da ich zuerst in meiner Vaterstadt mit meiner Lehrtätigkeit begann" (1958: 92).

will be a recollection of the nine year period as the temporal frame for the narrative in book 4. The phrase is to my mind undoubtedly designed to fulfil both functions. It also introduces one of the most powerful pieces of narrative in the *Confessions*: the poignant story of the death of the young friend in the midst of an enthusiastic friendship especially characterized by a shared passion for *Manichaeian* pursuits (*comparaveram amicum societate studiorum [sc. Manichaeorum] nimis carum*).

The story of the death of this friend is studded with temporal indications marking the incident as characteristic of the way in which Augustine thought and felt during this period of *Manichaeian* thinking: *quid tunc fecisti, deus meus* (4.8); *luctu quo tunc operiebar* (4.10); *sic ego eram illo tempore ... sic eram omnino, memini* (4.11) and *quod ego tunc eram* (4.12). Structurally I see the announcement of the end of this narrative in *atque a Thagastensi oppido veni Carthaginem*, the last words of 4.12. The narrative about the death of the friend is then brought to a neat conclusion in 4.13, a narration in the imperfect tense of the replacement of the youth friendship with other *Manichaeian* friendships (*me reparabant atque recreabant aoliorum amicorum solacie, cum quibus amabam quod postea amabam; et hoc erat ingens fabula et longum mendacium ... illa mihi fabula non moriebatur, si quis amicorum meorum moreretur*).

Paragraph 4.13 is concluded by one of Augustine's little cameos from everyday life, a depiction of the pleasures of friendship that, with its emphasis on reading and arguing, especially the academically minded can associate with. But for my reading of the overall impact of book 4 it is crucial to realize that this is not only a general description of friendship but also a very specific evocation of *Manichaeian* friendship, a poignant sketch that may even be specifically designed to trigger memories with erstwhile *Manichaeian* friends who have not yet converted to Catholicism. Although such a notion must, of course, remain firmly within the realm of speculation, it is plausible enough to help us picture the kind of audience targeted by Augustine's prose in book 4.

My main reason for seeing 4.14 as the start of a separate structural unit (4.14–19) is the fact that it is the start of a prolonged section where no narrative in the imperfect tense is found (see arguments below). The previous paragraph (4.13), in spite of its ending in the general evocation of friendship through the use of a series of present infinitives, is still a narrative in the imperfect, starting with *ecce veniebant et praeteribant de die in diem* and ending in the introductory phrase from which the infinitives develop: *alia erant, quae in eis amplius capiebant animum, conloqui etc.* After this the narrative in the imperfect tense is only picked up again in 4.20, the beginning

of the next section in book 4 where Augustine introduces the narrative of his writing of the *De pulchro et apto*, with the next temporal reference (here combined with a form of *non noscere*): *haec tunc non noveram et amabam puchra inferiora*.

3.3.4. Seeing 4.14–19 as the Central Passage of Book 4

From the beginning of 4.14 we have, instead of the usual move back and forth between narrative level and reflexive level, an extended reflection on the human tendency to become attached to that which may be lost all too easily. The narrator states that this state of affairs can only be prevented by attachment to the creator in whom and through whom all creation exists (*solus enim nullum carum amittit, cui omnes in illo cari, qui non amittitur, et quis est iste nisi deus noster, deus, qui fecit caelum et terram* in 4.14), and not to the created, which by its very nature is transient. This transience is powerfully evoked in 4.15 with its repetitive insistence on the origin and demise of all things created, in a paragraph vividly foreshadowing the better known evocation of transience in book 11.

Paragraph 4.14 starts with a reference to a preceding idea (*hoc est, quod diligitur in amicis ... hinc ille luctus, si quis moriatur*). This could be taken to refer back to the immediately earlier cameo of friendship. Yet, the culmination of the second sentence here in the striking *ex amissa vita morientium mors viventium* recalls the full impact of the whole prior story of the death of the friend, and makes it more probable that the words *hoc* and *hinc* refer back to the whole narrative about the death of the friend: it is experiences like the one described above (*hoc*) that illustrate what is loved in friends, and it is the loss of such joys (*hinc*) that explains our grief. If the opening sentence of 4.14 is taken as referring back to the whole preceding story which it encapsulates in the words *hoc* and *hinc*, this constitutes another argument for seeing the previous as a separate structural unit and 4.14 as the beginning of a new section or at least sub-section.

O'Donnell (1992: 203) assigns the passage under discussion (4.14 to 4.19) to the end of the section he calls “the death of a friend (at Thagaste).” Yet, it seems clear to me that 4.13, following after the statement at the end of the previous paragraph, *atque a Thagastensi oppido veni Carthaginem*, can be regarded as a narrative about the aftermath of the story of the death of the friend, the closing description of the healing through time and new friendships *in Carthage*. One factor that does make O'Donnell's suggestion plausible (i.e. that makes it conceivable that immediately after saying *veni Carthaginem*, Augustine continues to narrate what happens in Thagaste) is the loose and not strictly chronological construction of book 4 that I

remarked on above. Another factor that would make an inclusion of the following paragraphs also into the Thagaste period plausible is one that is also important for my arguments: paragraphs 4.14–19 do not contain narrative in the imperfect tense; instead they consist of reflection, prayer and appeal firmly anchored in the narrator's present and thus cannot be assigned to a specific place or period in his past.¹⁵

In fact, O'Donnell's remarks in his commentary at 4.15 support to an important degree my arguments for regarding the six paragraphs at the centre of book 4 as a distinct structural unit with special importance (though he limits his remarks to the last five of the six paragraphs I include in the central section):

This paragraph [4.15] stands at the center of Bk. 4. It transcends the narrative of his lost friend, offering prayer followed by the apostrophe to his own soul of paragraphs 16–19. For the extension and complexity of the development, this passage through paragraph 19 *has nothing like itself anywhere else in conf.*
(O'Donnell 1992: 234, my emphasis)

I end this section with a few remarks on the temporal phrases, in combination with the use of forms of *nescire* and *non noscere*, in the last part of book 4 (chapters 4.20 to the end). After a total absence of such phrases in the section of book 4 to which I assign central importance, temporal phrases occur again with regular frequency in the last part of the book, now underlining the misguided nature of Augustine's intellectual pursuits during the nine year Manichaean period that makes up the subject of book 4: *haec tunc non noveram* (the opening words of 4.20); *sic enim tunc amabam homines ex hominum iudicio* (opening words of 4.22); *nondum videbam ... non enim noveram* (4.24); *mens ... qualis in me tunc erat, nesciente alio lumine* (4.25); *et eram aetate annorum fortasse viginti sex aut septem* (opening words of 4.27); *et quid mihi proderat, quod omnes libros artium ... tunc ... per me ipsum legi et intellexi* (4.30); *sed sic eram ... qui non erubui tunc profiteri*; and *quid ergo tunc mihi proderat* (4.31).

To my mind it is clear that the coherence of book 4 depends to an important extent on its explicit intention to narrate a nine year period in the narrator's life. Following the opening line of *per idem tempus annorum novem*, the narrator needs only a phrase containing words like *in illis annis*,

¹⁵ Steidle (1982: 452) is of the opinion that the whole first section of book 4 is not meant to follow chronologically on the narrative of book 3; for him this only starts at 4.7: "Zu Beginn stehen einige generelle, den ganzen Zeitraum betreffende Aussagen Anschließend kommt Augustin auf ein Einzelereignis zu sprechen ... Dabei beginnt die Erzählung mit einer zum Vorhergehenden parallelen chronologischen Fixierung (4,7 *in illis annis*)."

eo tempore or *tunc* to keep together the various threads he uses to weave the structure of book 4. The absence of such temporal phrases from the section I see as the heart of book 4 also supports arguments for regarding this as somehow set apart from the rest of the book.

4. THE CENTRAL PASSAGE OF BOOK 4 AS A PROTREPTIC TO A LIMINAL MANICHAEAN

4.1. *Introduction*

Here, against the background of my arguments at various earlier occasions that the *Confessions* is to an important extent well designed to reach out to a Manichaean—or liminal Manichaean—reader, I would like to highlight the extent to which the episodes recounted in book 4, and especially the passage at the centre of the book, may be regarded as devised to appeal to the liminal Manichaean. I argue that this passage is an emotional appeal designed to convince a reader already interested in moving from Manichaeism to Catholicism to take the final step, or one recently converted to remain firm in his or her resolve, i.e. that this passage is a protreptic in the wide sense defined earlier (Kotzé 2011 and 2013, forthcoming).¹⁶

Above I commented on the fact that many interpretations of book 4 of the *Confessions* focus on the various philosophical issues that underlie the narrative while they seem to either take for granted or disregard the extent to which this is a book about Manichaeism. Thus, braving the danger of stating the obvious, I have to repeat that the way I read it, everything in book 4 concerns Manichaeism: the narrator shows the reader how Augustine the Manichaean lived and thought during his nine years as a committed Manichaean, or rather how this Augustine's everyday life as well as his intellectual and spiritual quest for truth was negatively influenced by a Manichaean world view. Although Augustine, in the artfully constructed prologue, distinguishes between what he did *palam* and *occulte* it seems clear to me that in book 4 he does not tell two stories, one about his secular career and another about his religious activities. The strongest

¹⁶ I find it fascinating that Steidle (1982: 458) calls this section a “predigtartiger Paraenese” on the basis of his insight: “[i]n 4,12,18 wendet sich Augustin nicht nur an sich selbst ..., sondern zugleich ... an die Menschen, die er liebt.” Thus he recognizes the strong appeal here, but sees it, I suspect, as an address to insiders (a paraenetic address) and not as an address to the Manichaeans (which he may have called a protreptic address according to mainstream definitions then and later).

indication that Augustine also regards the events of the secular career described here as experienced with Manichaeans and as a Manichaean is the fact that he follows the list of errors associated with the *doctrinae liberales* (in the opening paragraph) with the remark that the whole group participating in these actions hoped to be cleansed from the sins thus incurred through the Manichaean elite: *illac autem purgari nos ab istis sordibus expetentes*. The book as a whole tells the story of a Manichaean private life (living with his common-law wife and possibly practicing birth control as prescribed for Auditors),¹⁷ Manichaean friendship, a career pursued together with Manichaean friends (within the framework regarded as suitable according to Manichaean standards)¹⁸ and an intellectual and spiritual development stunted by Manichaean ways of thinking. It is important to remember that this is the Manichaean context in which the central passage is embedded.

My analysis of the central passage of book 4 is informed also to an important extent by other features of the opening paragraph. It makes sense to read the first person plural in 4.1 (*seducebamur et seducebamus*) as referring not only to Augustine but to the group of Manichaeans of whom he formed part at this stage of his life. And when Augustine switches from the plural to the singular in *et sectabar ista atque faciebam*, he repeats explicitly that this was done together with Manichaean friends: *cum amicis meis, per me ac mecum deceptis*.¹⁹ At the same time the use of the first person plural has the effect of including Manichaean readers and of expressing Augustine's identification with fellow Manichaeans. Here the distance created by the third person references in 3.6.10 (*incidi in homines ...*) seems erased. Even the biting effect of *cum eis, qui appellantur electi et sancti, afferemus escas, de quibus nobis in officinal aqualiculi sui fabricarent angelos et deos per quos liberaremur* is softened by the use of the first person plural, and thus the admission that Augustine himself was fully part of this misguided behaviour.

There is no clear indication to whom the words *arrogantes* in the next sentence (*inrideant me arrogantes*) and *fortes et potentes* in the last sentence refer (*sed inrideant nos fortes et potentes*) or whether Augustine is simply

¹⁷ See Starnes 1990: 90–92 on the presence of the notion of the three Manichaean seals in the narrative of 4.2–3.

¹⁸ See Starnes 1990: 90–91.

¹⁹ See my argument above about why I regard all the actions described in the opening paragraph as executed by Manichaeans. Especially the idea of deception was associated with Manichaeism in book 3: *seducere* in 3.6.11, 3.12.21 (also in 6.7.12, and 8.10.22) and *decipere* in 3.6.10 and 3.7.12.

quoting scripture, as Clark (1995: 161) puts it, “[surrounding] his errors with biblical phrases.” While *arrogantes* is close to the semantic fields of the terms frequently used to refer to the Manichaeans, and *horrenda arrogantia* is in fact ascribed to them in 8.10.22, in the current context this group is rather associated with *nos*, the object of the second *inrideant* and thus contrasted with the *arrogantes*, *fortes* and *potentes*. The logic of the narrative here, in fact, forces us to see *fortes et potentes* as those who have never succumbed to Manichaeism, who have never been brought as low by God: *inrideant me arrogantes et nondum salubriter prostrati et elisi a te, deus meus*. At the same time the passage conveys a strong sense of sympathy with all those who *have* fallen this low and may now speak with Augustine as *infirmi et inopes*.

To come to the central passage: the six paragraphs that I regard as crucial to the meaning of book 4 occur within the context of a book with a clear focus on Manichaeism throughout and immediately following the memorable and poignant description of *Manichaean* friendship (first with the friend who died and then in 4.13 with other *Manichaean* friends). As I have indicated, I read this section as consisting of 1) two paragraphs (4.14–15) of retrospective reflection, in the present of the narrator, on the preceding narrative,²⁰ and 2) four more paragraphs (4.16–19) that differ even more from the preceding and subsequent sections than the first two paragraphs (4.14–15) in the fact that here the narrator abandons the prayer stance and instead address his own soul, including an embedded section where he commands his own soul to address other souls.

The following represents a closer look at the whole central passage of book 4 (4.14–19), which, as I have indicated, does not contain normal narrative but only reflection mixed with prayer in 4.14–15 and the apostrophe of the soul in the last four paragraphs 4.16–19. The whole section is thematically closely linked to what went before: the death of the friend forms the background against which the contents of these paragraphs acquire meaning. Yet here we are presented with the insights and advanced understanding of the older Augustine about what the nature of the friendship *should have been* and how he *would indeed have been* able to find consolation in God, had he not been constrained by Manichaean thinking.

²⁰ Starnes' insight that 4.14 represents a kind of finality also indirectly supports my argument that this paragraph can be seen as the beginning of a new unit of meaning within the structure of the book as a whole: “This is his final answer about the cause of his grief” (1990: 98).

4.2. Paragraphs 4.14–15: Reflection and Prayer

Paragraph 4.14 is artfully constructed with the two sentences making up the first half reaffirming that Augustine understands the sweetness of friendship (*hoc est quid diligitur* and *versa dulcedine* in the second sentence) as well as the bitterness of loss that can accompany it (*hinc ille luctus, si quis moriatur, et tenebrae dolorum, et versa dulcedine in amaritudinem cor madidum*) and ending in the chiasmic oxymoron of *ex amissa vita morientium mors viventium*. The second part of 4.14 ends in another chiasmic statement, *et lex tua veritas et veritas tu*, which brings to a close the prayer it contains. This prayer with its insistent repetition of the personal pronoun, *te*, reflects the insights of the post-Manichaean Augustine. The speaker now does know how to love God and friends (*beatus qui amat te, et amicum in te, et inimicum propter te*); he knows how to prevent suffering the same loss again (*solus enim nullum carum amittit, cui omnes in illo cari, qui non amittitur*) because he now knows the relationship between God the creator and his creation (*quis est iste nisi deus noster, deus, qui fecit caelum et terram et inplet ea, quia inplendo ea fecit ea*), and that this true God (i.e. the God who is *veritas* and not the Manichaean *phantasma* in whom the earlier Augustine had tried to find solace) cannot be lost, cannot even be escaped (*te nemo amittit ... quo it aut quo fugit nisi a te placido ad te iratum?*).

The next paragraph, 4.15, starts with a prayer which can be taken as a prayer for salvation based on Ps 80:7 (*converte nos ... et salvi erimus*), which includes, in the first person plural forms, Augustine as well as his human readers, but probably especially Manichaean readers, who in 4.1 were included in the pronoun *nos* and the first person plural verbs. It can also be taken as a more literal appeal to God to turn the human being (the reader) around (*converte*) to see his face (*ostende faciem tuam*), i.e. to see or understand that they should not fix their love anywhere else than in him (*nam quoquoersum se verterit anima hominis, ad dolores figitur alibi praeterquam in te*).

Once again the insights presented here with the authority of certain knowledge, even in a distinctly didactic tone where the narrator takes recourse to the parallel from human speech (*ecce sic peragitur et sermo noster*) to illustrate the perfection of the universe consisting of transient creations, are the insights of the older Augustine. It can no longer be regarded as part of his narration about what happened earlier to the Manichaean Augustine when he lost his friend or about the thoughts or feelings of this younger Augustine. Yet these insights are the ones most needed by those suffering from the same hindrances than the earlier Manichaean Augustine,

those still involved in similar Manichaean friendships, those—like the young Augustine—unable to find solace in the true God because they may still to some extent be clinging to the *phantasmata* and the *fallacia* of Manichaeism, liminal Manichaeans.

Apart from having as its subject the transience of all things that the human soul may be inclined to cling to, 4.15 emphasizes the inability of sense perception to properly perceive the whole consisting of such ephemeral parts.²¹ The paragraph also foreshadows, on the one hand, the following main section of book 4 on the writing of *de pulchro et apto* (4.20–4.27) in its reference to *pulchris* near the opening (*tametsi figitur in pulchris extra te et extra se*) and the exhortation to the narrator's own soul in the next four paragraphs of this central section on the other hand (*laudet te ex illis anima mea*).

4.3. Paragraphs 4.16–19: Apostrophe of the Soul and Other Souls

As I have implied throughout my discussion above, the four paragraphs at 4.16–19 are highly unusual even within the *Confessions*, a work which has always moved readers to comment on its uniqueness. The urgency of the appeal embodied here is strongly reminiscent of that in the meditation on Psalm 4 which I analysed in an earlier article (Kotzé 2001). But also the nature of the speaking voice is even more enigmatic and ambiguous than at other places in the *Confessions*. This may be one of the places in the work where the image of Augustine confessing his intimate thoughts to God is pushed furthest into the background.

First, Augustine turns abruptly, without any preparation or warning, from speaking to God (*deus virtutum, converte nos* at the opening of 4.15 and *in verbo tuo* at the end of the same paragraph) to speaking to his own soul in the opening words of 4.16:²² *noli esse vana, anima mea*. Then, in the third sentence of 4.18, he urges his soul to speak to the souls it loves (*si placent animae, in deo amentur*) in the words, *dic eis: hunc amemus*. This address fills the rest of 4.18–19 (two relatively long paragraphs) except for the very last sentence where the encouragement to the own soul to speak thus urgently to the other souls is repeated in *dic eis ista*.

²¹ Sense perception was, of course, central to Manichaean epistemology and belief, as also emphasized by Johannes van Oort in his article, “God, Memory and Beauty. A ‘Manichaean’ Analysis of Augustine’s *Confessions*, Book 10,1–38,” in this volume.

²² Note O’Donnell’s precision (1992: 238): “the *anima* is not identical with the ‘self’: hence the possibility of apostrophe.”

Although I cannot go into this fascinating issue here, I have often noted that, as in 4.16–19, the fabric of the narrative in the *Confessions* almost always constitutes a complicated web of voices and the relationship between the narrated Augustine and the narrating instance frequently stretches the boundaries of the framework within which it professes to function.²³ Often the voice of the narrator (the converted bishop) makes statements that logically could only have been made by the narrated Augustine, but without introducing these properly with phrases like: “then I said” or “at that stage I believed.” There are, for example, many places where the narrative in fact presents the voice of the already converted bishop-narrator pleading to be led to God, pleading to be saved, something which may be still part of the bishop’s on-going quest to be closer to God but is certainly also on some level a reflection of the sighs and prayers of the narrated Augustine at an earlier stage of his life. This is often further complicated by the fact that the words of the speaker are words from scripture: they are words that the speaker appropriates but they are also God’s words.

In the passage under discussion here the situation is even more elusive and complicated. The narrating bishop Augustine talks to his own soul, but what he tells this soul are the things that the soul of the young Manichaean Augustine needed to know and which, presumably, the soul of the mature Augustine knows already (e.g. *audi et tu: verbum ipsum clamat, ut redeas*). I cannot but read this as the older Augustine speaking, in fact, to the soul of any Manichaean struggling with the same questions about God and life that he had struggled with during that *tempus annorum novem* described in book 4.²⁴ This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that Augustine uses the words *clamare* and *redire*, which reminds of

²³ See my earlier discussion of this issue (Kotzé 2004: 122–134).

²⁴ Contra O’Donnell (1992: 238): “The line between past and present is blurred. A. speaks as if in the present, using words only available to him in the present (cf. 4.13.20, ‘haec tunc non noveram’), but the address is apt to the condition in which he found himself. A. ‘fell’ at specific times between his sixteenth and twenty-second year (370–376): but that fall took place in response to a pattern of temptations that continued to exist and plague A. (as the examination of conscience in Bk. 10 makes clear). *The apostrophe here does not address the anima as it was twenty years earlier*; rather A. turns from contemplating his fall, as he completes its description, to *address the soul by way of admonition against the future* (my emphasis).” I agree that in some sense the apostrophe can also be read as an “admonition against the future,” but the context within which the apostrophe is embedded (the story of Augustine’s nine years as a Manichaean, of the death of a fellow Manichaean and of Manichaean friendship in general) makes it plausible that this emotional appeal is primarily meant as a consolation for a soul suffering because of Manichaean obstacles between it and God.

the Manichaean Call and Answer, thus a phrase with familiar and powerful echoes for a Manichaean reader (which is repeated, significantly in the climactic 4.19). To make the narrative even more polyphonic, we subsequently find in the text the insights of the mature Augustine into the solutions for the problems of one thinking within a Manichaean framework; but now the soul, who immediately before had been in need of consolation itself, is commanded to speak these words: *dic eis: hunc amemus: ipse fecit haec et non est longe. non enim fecit atque abiit, sed ex illo in illo sunt.*

Whereas I read the whole of the *Confessions* as a protreptic that targets to an important extent a liminal Manichaean reader, paragraphs 4.16–19 constitutes the first almost direct protreptic to such a reader (the second is found in book 9 in the meditation on Psalm 4).²⁵ Apart from the fact that the apostrophe of the own (Manichaean) soul is already well designed to appeal to the liminal Manichaean, the embedded apostrophe of the other souls constitutes an even more direct protreptic, as the phrases neatly framing this secondary address make abundantly clear: *rape ad eum [sc deum] quas potes [sc. animas], et dic eis* (4.18) and *dic eis ista ... et sic eos rape tecum ad deum* (4.19). The function of the words spoken to the other souls, so it is explicitly stated here, is to convert them. The narrator's grieving soul is commanded specifically to turn such souls away from thinking within a Manichaean framework which would make them experience similar loss and a similar inability to find consolation in the *phatasma* which they worship as god.

In the following I discuss the apostrophe to the own soul before I end with some remarks on the apostrophe of the soul to the other souls. While 4.17 recapitulates the idea of transience evoked in 4.15, as O'Donnell (1992: 240) also remarks, it is especially 4.16, through the appeal to the soul (and thus also to the reader), that has an entirely different character from the preceding. This is not theoretical reflection but a direct, emotional, one to one address (*audi et tu*). It is clear from a number of factors that some kind of climax is being approached: deep sympathy for the embattled soul is discernible in the statements that it is deafened by the din in its heart (*in aure cordis tumultu vanitatis*) and exhausted by its futile search (*fatigata fallaciis*); the soul is assured of God's presence and his desire to have it return to him (*verbum ipsum clamat, ut redeas; numquid ego aliquo discedo? ait verbum dei*); the soul is urged to find stability, without devastating loss, in (the Catholic creator) God and his word, within a world described in the

²⁵ See my earlier article (Kotzé 2001).

previous and the following paragraphs as frighteningly transient (*ibi fige mansionem tuam; veritati commenda quidquid tibi est a veritate, et non perdes aliquid*); the soul is promised powerful restoration, through a paratactic chain of no less than five verbs in the future tense (*reflorescent patria tua, et sanabuntur omnes languores tui, et fluxa tua reformabuntur et renovabuntur et constringentur ad te*); and the repetition of the promise of an end to the experience of loss (*et non te deponent, quo descendunt, sed stabunt tecum et permanebunt ad semper stantem ac permanentem deum*). The impact of these words is reinforced not only by the use of direct address, short sentences, and repetition, but also by the use of direct speech (*numquid ego aliquo discedo? ait verbum dei*) and a number of scriptural allusions and echoes, e.g. to Jn 14:23, Mt 4:23 or Ps 101:13.²⁶ The passage offers nothing less than a powerful solution to the devastation poignantly described in the episode of the death of Augustine's friend, a devastation afterwards interpreted as inevitable within a Manichaean frame of thinking.

The apostrophe of the soul as well as the theme of the previous two paragraphs continues in the first five lines of 4.18 with the assurance that loving souls in God may prevent the kind of loss that Augustine experienced earlier (*in deo amentur ... et illo fixae stabiliuntur: alioquin irent et perirent*). But, as indicated above, the bulk of paragraphs 4.18–19 is taken up by apostrophe to the other souls and here the emotional intensity is increased to an even higher level. This is achieved by a number of devices. First, there is the already discussed dramatic introduction and conclusion, using the striking verb *rape*, to express (and repeat) the command to the soul to convert the souls it addresses. In 4.18 a sense of urgency is created through the use of short, almost staccato, paratactic sentences (e.g. *ipse fecit haec et non est longe; intimus cordi est, sed cor erravit ab eo; state cum eo et stabitis, requiescite in eo et quieti eritis*, to cite just a few of the numerous examples).

The main gist of the passage is that the souls should be told to love the creator God and other souls in him because he created all and all exist in him, and he remains near (*ipse fecit haec et non est longe. nom enim fecit atque abiit, se ex illo in illo sunt*). Augustine's soul should also tell its addressees that God (who created them) is in their heart; it is they who have turned away if they do not experience this (*intimus cordi est [sc. veritas], sed cor erravit ab eo*). If they do cling to this creator God in their hearts

²⁶ For a more comprehensive indication of the scriptural quotes or echoes see for example the footnotes in Boulding's translation (2002: 67) and O'Donnell's commentary on this paragraph (1992: 239–240).

they will find stability and rest (*redite, praevaricatores, ad cor et inhaerete illi ... state cum eo et stabitis, requiescite in eo et quieti eritis*). The last part of paragraph 4.18 contains repeated questions that express a desperate desire to change the way in which the addressed souls are currently searching for God (*quo itis in aspera? quo itis? ... quo vobis adhuc et adhuc ambulare vias difficiles et laboriosas? ... quomodo enim beata vita, ubi nec vita?*).²⁷ The most important point here is that the addressees are not indifferent sinners, but (Manichaean) souls involved in an earnest search for God, rest and happiness, though searching in the wrong way and in the wrong places; the narrator's urgent concern for them is discernible in the repetitive short sentences: *non est requies ubi quaeratis eam. quaerite quod quaeritis, sed ibi non est ubi quaeritis. beatam vitam quaeritis in regione mortis: non est illic*.²⁸ The paragraph ends with the notion that these souls are searching for the *beata vita* in the region of death, where there is no happy life, in fact, no life at all. And *vita* is the word picked up at the beginning of the next paragraph: the *vita* which the searching souls cannot find is Christ (*et descendit huc ipsa vita nostra*).

This plea (which in the text Augustine's soul is urged to direct at the souls it loves) is in fact a very direct appeal to the liminal Manichaean (or then any Manichaean willing to listen to Augustine this long). And the ground for such a plea has been perfectly prepared: everything in book 4 is designed to move the focus away from judgmental criticism of Manichaeism and towards the positive common experiences of Augustine's nine years as a Manichaean, most pertinently his participation in warm and rewarding Manichaean friendships. Yet the errors touched on constantly, but subtly and in passing, are Manichaean errors: these are the ones who love creation instead of the creator (as Augustine accuses them in 3.6.10, *illa erant fercula in quibus ... inferebatur pro te sol et luna, pulchra opera tua, sed tamen opera tua, non tu*), the ones who do not love the highest God as the creator God who created everything good (for them creation is the mixture of light and matter that resulted from evil and that finally has to be dispersed); they do not understand the incarnation of Christ or the resurrection (both their docetism and their anthropology preclude this).

²⁷ There are a number of echoes in book 4 of the meditation on Psalm 4 in Book 9; there Augustine also speaks of his frustration with his inability to break through to the Manichaeans: *legebam et ardebam, nec inveniebam quid facerem surdis mortuis ex quibus fueram* (Conf. 9.11).

²⁸ For a discussion of how Augustine describes himself throughout the *Confessions* as searching for God in the wrong places and in the wrong way see Kotzé 2004: 128–129.

Thus, it is the description of the incarnation of Christ in 4.19 which constitutes the true climax of the passage that I designate as of central importance in book 4. Again, the feeling of heightened intensity is achieved by a number of devices. The language acquires an elevated tone through even more frequent echoes of scripture than in the preceding section (e.g. *descendit huc*, Jn 6:33; *tulit mortem nostram*, 2 Tim 1:10; *velut sponsus procedens de thalamo suo ... ut gigans ad currendam viam*, Ps 19:5–6; *non enim tardavit*, Ps 40:17; *abscessit enim*, Lk 24:51; *et ecce hic est*, Mt 24:23 and Mk 13:21; *mundus per eum factus est*, Jn 1:10–11; *venit in hunc mundum peccatores salvos facere*, 1 Tim 1:15; *sanat eam*, Ps 41:4; *quousque graves corde*, Ps 4:3). The use of vivid imagery (also mostly scriptural in origin) creates a sense of drama: *descendit huc ipsa vita nostra; tonuit clamans; velut sponsus ... ut gigans ad currendam viam*. But it is the contents which represent the real pinnacle of this extraordinary section in the middle of book 4: what Augustine is offering here, is nothing less than the ultimate answer to the problem of losing those one loves: resurrection in Christ.²⁹ Contra Starnes (1990: 101), who argues that those who “rise against God” (*ascendendo contra deum*), mentioned at the end of 4.19, are the Platonists,³⁰ I argue that Augustine at this stage levels at the Manichaeans the reproach that he only later levels at the Platonists. I think that the context makes clear that this is a book about Manichaeism (as Starnes so eminently illustrates); everything in 4.19 is also part of an answer to the problems caused by Manichaean thinking. The *superbia*, ascribed to the Manichaeans a number of times (e.g. in 3.6.10, 4.1 and 4.15), as well as the *horrenda arrogantia* (8.10.22), to my mind warrants accusing them too of occupying an erroneously elevated position. What is more, the penultimate sentence of 4.19, where Augustine plays with the concepts of *descendere* and *ascendere*, follows directly on the quote from Psalm 4:3, *fili hominum, quo usque graves corde?* These are words which, Augustine professes he discovered shortly after his conversion, were written as if specifically for a Manichaean reader: in the meditation on Psalm 4 he says *audivi et contremui, quoniam talibus dicitur qualem me fuisse reminiscebar* (9.9).³¹

²⁹ My interpretation here specifically (but also throughout) is based on Starnes' explanation that “[Augustine] experienced this failure because the Manichaeans did not understand God as the principle of the actual sensible concrete ... The result was that the ‘liberation’ they promised had logically to result in the dissolution of the actual individual into the contraries from which he was composed” (1990: 95).

³⁰ “[T]hose who aim at [eternal life by their own efforts] are people like the Platonists whom Augustine will later criticize in book VII on this account ... These are the ones whom he calls [at the end of 4.19] to descend” (Starnes 1990: 101).

³¹ See my earlier article (Kotzé: 2001).

5. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, I see the unity of what I identify as the central passage in book 4 in the reflection on loss, precipitated by the story of the death of Augustine's friend, and an effort to offer an alternative way of dealing with such loss. The alternative is only attainable within the world view of the post-Manichaean Augustine and his new (Catholic) understanding of the creator God and Christ. Paragraph 4.14 already indicates how a happy life (one where loss of a friend would not be totally devastating) is possible: *beatus qui amat te, et amicum in te, ... solus enim nullum carum amittit, cui omnes in illo cari, qui non amittitur*. Paragraph 4.15 explains why loss is inevitable when one thinks in Manichaean terms: firstly because all things come and go: *oriuntur et occidunt ... sic modus eorum*; and secondly because human sense perception cannot perceive a universe which consists of parts that are not present simultaneously (and thus experience loss): *tardus est enim sensus carnis ... ipse est modus eius*. The parallel phrases, *sic modus eorum* and *ipse est modus eius* highlight the main points of the paragraph, and the dilemma of a Manichaean world view where sense perception plays a crucial role (as Augustine says of himself as a Manichaean in 3.6.11, *cum te non secundum intellectum mentis ... sed secundum sensum carnis quaererem*)³² and where the view of creation and man's place in it makes catastrophic loss inescapable.³³

The last four paragraphs (4.16–19) provide the answer of the Catholic Augustine to the problem of loss he experienced at the death of his friend in Thagaste, as long as he was thinking within a Manichaean framework. These are the contents of the urgent message his soul is told to convey to the souls it loves: they should believe in God the creator of a good universe who is never far away; they will find him in their hearts and in him they will find stability, rest and an end to their *viae difficiles et laboriosae*; but most of all, if only they would at last let go of their obstinacy (*quousque graves corde?*) they will find death defeated in Christ and be able to ascend and live (*ascendere et vivere*).

Starnes (1990: 95) points out that within the Manichaean world view the death of a human being, in fact, constitutes the separation of his or

³² See Johannes van Oort's article, "God, Memory and Beauty. A 'Manichaean' Analysis of Augustine's *Confessions*, Book 10,1–38," in this volume for an incisive discussion of the role of sense perception in Manichaean thought and practice.

³³ See Starnes' section on the perspectives arising from the Manichaean worldview on the death of the friend (1990: 95–96).

her constitutive parts and the resultant total dissolution of the person into nothingness; death within the Manichaean paradigm can be nothing but total devastating loss. The incarnation and resurrection incorporated in the Christology of the Catholic world view, conversely, offer the only way not to see death as the end, and thus a triumphant solution to the core issue illuminated from paragraph 4.7 (*in illis annis ... comparaveram amicam societate studiorum*) onwards.

Augustine ends his powerful protreptic to the liminal Manichaean with an expression of his conviction that it will achieve its goal (to forcefully carry these souls to God). The reason for his confidence lies in the certainty he expresses that the soul is saying these words through the Holy spirit while burning with the fire of charitable love: *et sic eos rape tecum ad deum, quia de spiritu eius haec dicis eis, si dicis ardens igne caritatis*. To me it is undeniable that at the centre of a book focussing singularly on the problems of Manichaean thinking the narrator forcefully addresses those who may, like he himself at the stage of life recounted in this book, still be trapped within the sphere of Manichaeism.

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AUGUSTINE ON “THE TRUE RELIGION”:
REFLECTIONS OF MANICHAISM IN *DE VERA RELIGIONE*

Josef Lössl

1. THE MANY INFLUENCES ON AND PURPOSES OF *DE VERA RELIGIONE*

Augustine’s work *On True Religion, De vera religione*, reflects a wide variety of influences, Manichaean, Platonist, Classical, Biblical, early Christian.¹ Accordingly, its intended purpose can be judged as rather complex. That it can be considered an anti-Manichaean work is generally accepted² and confirmed by Augustine himself, who states as much both in *vera rel.* itself and later in the *Retractationes*.³ In a key passage of *vera rel.* he writes that the work is ‘most suitable’ (*potissimum*) against those who claimed the existence of two irreducible natures or substances rebelling against each other. This clearly refers to the Manichaeans. The phrase itself, *duae substantiae singulis principiis adversus invicem rebelles*, echoes the Latin Manichaean *Epistula Fundamenti*, which claims the existence of ‘two substances divided from each other from the outset’: *in exordio fuerunt duae substantiae a se divisae*.⁴ This in turn echoes a similar phrase in the *Cologne Mani Codex*, where Mani’s teaching is introduced as being in principle

¹ See J. Lössl, *Augustinus. De vera religione. Die wahre Religion* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2007) 7–74.

² See V.H. Drecoll and Mirjam Kudella, *Augustin und der Manichäismus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011) 108; and, more specifically, A. Hoffmann, ‘Secundinus in der Diskussion mit Augustinus über das *malum*: Beobachtungen zu den augustininischen Quellen der *Epistula Secundini*’, in: J.A. van den Berg et al. (eds), *In Search of Truth: Augustine, Manichaeism and other Gnosticism. Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty* (Leiden: Brill, 2011) 481–517 at 499–502.

³ Augustine, *vera rel.* 9.16 (CCL 32:198.4–6): *Contra eos tamen potissimum est instituta, qui duas naturas vel substantias singulis principiis adversus invicem rebelles esse arbitrantur*. Compare *retr.* 1.13.1 (CCL 57:36 l. 8–9): *Maxime tamen contra duas naturas Manichaeorum liber hic loquitur*. Both statements are significant. They confirm that on the one hand Augustine himself acknowledged that there are other dominant themes in the work but that on the other hand he consistently (both in 390 and in 427) saw the anti-Manichaean theme as predominant.

⁴ Augustine, *c. Ep. Fund.* 13 (CSEL 25:209.11–12); see M. Stein, *Manichaica Latina 2: Manichaei epistula Fundamenti* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2002) 23.

about 'the division of the two natures and the things concerning beginning, middle and end.'⁵

Now Augustine immediately qualifies his statement. He insists that *vera rel.* was not meant to be a one-by-one refutation of Manichaeian teachings. He had delivered such refutations elsewhere and 'with God's help' would do so further in the future.⁶ But the purpose of *vera rel.* was different. It was to demonstrate, as best as possible, with reasoned arguments, 'which the Lord was so kind to provide' (*quas dominus dare dignatur*, i. e. through his revelation⁷), that the Catholic Faith was safe from these people and that that which made contemporaries of insecure disposition fall for their preaching should not really perturb anyone's mind.⁸

It was in line with this latter passage that scholarship traditionally tended not to list *vera rel.* among the anti-Manichaeian works. Rather, it was counted among the 'theological' works. The arguments *quas dominus dare dignatur* were identified as basic tenets of orthodox Christian teachings and *vera rel.* as a whole as an *in nuce* systematic (dogmatic) theological treatise with a Platonist edge. Wilhelm Geerlings once referred to it as 'Augustine's first attempt at a comprehensive presentation [a "Gesamtsystem"] of Christian Philosophy / Theology.'⁹ The first to interpret *vera rel.* in this way was again

⁵ CMC 132.11–15: τὴν διάστασιν τῶν δύο φύσεων καὶ τὰ περὶ ἀρχῆς καὶ μεσότητος καὶ τέλους; L. Koenen and C. Römer, *Der Kölner Mani-Kodex* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1988) 94–95; cf. Stein, *Manichaica Latina* 2 (n. 4) 63.

⁶ Augustine completed *vera rel.* early in 391 at the latest. Anti-Manichaeian works he wrote before *vera rel.* include *De moribus* and *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* (both ca. 388). Many more such works followed in the years to come (between 391 and 405), and it is interesting to note here that Augustine was anticipating this future activity; *vera rel.* 9.17 (CCL 32:198.21–22): *Neque nunc eorum opiniones refellimus ... partim quantum deus siverit faciemus.*

⁷ The phrase used in *vera rel.*, e.g. 7.13 (CCL 32:196.20–21) is 'the history and prophecy of the temporal dispensation of God's providence for the salvation of humankind', *historia et prophetia dispensationis temporalis divinae providentiae pro salute generis humani.*

⁸ Augustine, *vera rel.* 9.17 (CCL 32:198.21–26): ... *sed in hoc opere, quomodo adversus eos fides catholica tuta sit, te quomodo non perturbent animum ea, quibus commoti homines in eorum cedunt sententiam, rationibus, quas dominus dare dignatur, quantum possumus demonstramus.* Drecoll and Kudella, *Augustin* (n. 2) 108 speak of the 'affirmative Gestalt' of the work, which raises doubts about its anti-Manichaeian credentials. In terms of literary form Augustine seems to say here that he intends to write a *protrepticus*, an invitation intellectually and practically to embrace the life of an orthodox Christian, quasi as a philosophy (in the sense of philosophy as a way of life); see Lössl, *Augustinus* (n. 1) 9; and compare J. Lössl, 'Augustine's Confessions as a Consolation of Philosophy,' in: Van den Berg et al., *In Search of Truth* (n. 2) 47–73 at 53 n. 32.

⁹ W. Geerlings, *Augustinus. Leben und Werk. Eine bibliographische Einführung* (Pader-

none other than Augustine himself. At the beginning of the very passage in the *Retractationes* where he also claims that ‘nevertheless, most of all, this book is against the Manichaeian teaching of the two natures’, he stresses that *vera rel.* is mainly about the oneness of God, the Trinity, salvation history, and Christian worship, i. e. core orthodox (catholic) Christian teachings, unfolded as the Christian message of God’s providence concerning the salvation of humankind.¹⁰

And, as if this were not enough, yet another potential purpose of the work has been identified. Shortly after Augustine’s death the *Indiculum*,¹¹ a list of his works traditionally attributed to Possidius,¹² but perhaps going back to a list compiled by Augustine himself during his lifetime,¹³ counts *vera rel.* as an ‘anti-pagan’ work,¹⁴ directed mainly against pagan Neoplatonism. This seems confirmed by the opening sentences of the work, where it says that the way (*via*) to a good and happy life is found in the true religion (*vera religio*), which is worship of the one true God; the error, therefore, of those who worship many gods is underlined by the fact that their so-called philosophers are divided into schools, competing against each other, while worshipping in the same temples; unlike their Christian counterparts they teach one thing in public and practice another in private.¹⁵ Augustine singles out Socrates

born: Schönigh, 2002) 170: ‘... A.’s erster Versuch, ein Gesamtsystem christlicher Philosophie / Theologie vorzulegen.’

¹⁰ *Retr.* 1.13.1 (CCL 57:36.1–8): ‘... *disputatur unum deum verum ... trinitatem ... religione vera colendum, et quanta misericordia eius per temporalem dispensationem concessa sit hominibus christiana religio ... Maxime tamen contra duas naturas Manichaeorum liber hic loquitur.* Some of these tenets, notably the oneness and the trinity of God, were endorsed by African Manichaeans, though in ways that differed markedly from catholic Orthodoxy; see J.K. Coyle, ‘Characteristics of Manichaeism in Roman Africa,’ in: J.D. BeDuhn (ed.), *New Light on Manichaeism* (Leiden: Brill, 2009) 101–114 at 108–110. Note that Augustine says that he writes mostly against the Manichaeian doctrine of the two natures rather than everything Manichaeian.

¹¹ For the title of the work see A. Mutzenbecher, ‘Bemerkungen zum *Indiculum* des Possidius. Eine Rezension,’ *REAug* 33 (1987), 129–131; G. Madec, ‘Possidius de Calama et les listes des oeuvres d’Augustin,’ in: J.-C. Fredouille et al. (eds), *Titres et articulations du texte dans les oeuvres antiques* (Paris: Institut d’Études Augustiniennes, 1997) 427–445 at 427 n. 1; W. Hübner, ‘*Indiculum* oder *Indiculus*?’, in: G. Förster, A. Grote, C. Müller (eds), *Spiritus et littera. Beiträge zur Augustinus-Forschung. Festschrift Cornelius Petrus Mayer* (Würzburg: Augustinus-Verlag, 2009) 597–614.

¹² For the link to Possidius see E.T. Hermanowicz, *Possidius of Calama. A Study of the North African Episcopate at the Time of Augustine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) 1–63.

¹³ Augustine seems to refer to such a work in *retr.* 2.41 (CCL 57:123.10): ‘... *in opusculorum meorum indiculo ...*; see F. Dolbeau, ‘*Indiculum*,’ *AugL* 3/3–4, 2006, 571–581 at 571–572.

¹⁴ *Indic.* 1.2 (A. Wilmart, ‘*Operum S. Augustini Elenchus a Possidio eiusdem discipulo Calamensi episcopo digestus*,’ in: *Miscellanea Agostiniana*, volume II. *Studi Agostiniani*, Rome 1931, 149–233 at 165).

¹⁵ Compare *vera rel.* 1.1 (CCL 32:187.4–8): ‘... *omnis vitae bonae ac beatae via in vera religione*

and especially Plato, criticising the latter for not professing in public the truth which he clearly perceived in private, whether on grounds of fear, or of opportunism (*utrum timore an aliqua cognitione temporum*).¹⁶ If Plato were alive today, thus Augustine, his teaching of the essentially intellectual character of true knowledge would surely compel his pupils to convert to Christianity.¹⁷ Augustine here touches upon the core of his argument in *vera rel.*, the distinction between the material and the immaterial, the immanent and the transcendent, the sensual and the intellectual. He eloquently professes a Christian Platonism, which is influenced by Plotinus and mediated to some degree (via Marius Victorinus as translator) by Porphyry.¹⁸ So strong is this Neoplatonist impetus that it is difficult to identify the Manichaeic reflections in the work, which undoubtedly exist. Instead, one is drawn to the work's 'monist' structure, a rhetoric of 'the One', which seems to shape the whole work and to be influenced by Plotinian Neoplatonism.¹⁹ The dualistic nature of Manichaeism in contrast is highlighted and even overexposed as a largely negative characteristic, and one that was affecting all aspects of Manichaeic teaching including the doctrine of God and the Soul.

2. TECHNIQUES OF ANTI-MANICHAEAN ARGUMENT AND MANICHAEAN RESPONSES

It has been observed that in his eagerness to depict Manichaeism as a dualistic thought system Augustine misrepresented key Manichaeic teachings, in particular the teaching on the nature and function of the Soul.²⁰ This was already picked up by Manichaeic contemporaries of Augustine such as Fortunatus, Felix, Faustus and Secundinus,²¹ who in several debates in the

... constituta, qua unus deus colitur ... hinc evidentius error deprehenditur eorum ... qui multos deos colere ... maluerunt, quod eorum sapientes, quos philosophos vocant, scholas habebant dissentientes et templa communia.

¹⁶ *Vera rel.* 2.2 (CCL 32:188.17–28).

¹⁷ *Vera rel.* 3.3 (CCL 32:188.4–8): ... *si quis eius [scil. Platonis] discipulus eo ipso tempore quo vivebat, cum sibi ab illo persuaderetur non corporeis oculis, sed pura mente veritatem videri ...*

¹⁸ For details Lössl, *Augustinus* (n. 1) 30–37.

¹⁹ For a study of this structural feature see J. Lössl, "The One". A guiding concept in Augustine, *De vera religione*, *REAug* 40 (1994) 79–103; and Lössl, *Augustinus* (n. 1) 20–25.

²⁰ See C.G. Scibona, 'The Doctrine of the Soul in Manichaeism and Augustine,' in: Van den Berg et al., *In Search of Truth* (n. 2) 376–418 at 387–388.

²¹ The relevant disputes occurred in 392 (with Fortunatus), 398 (with Felix), and ca. 400 (with Secundinus) and in *c. Faust.*, and are documented in *c. Fort.*, *c. Fel.*, *c. Sec.* and *c. Faust.*; see J.D. BeDuhn, 'Did Augustine Win His Debate with Fortunatus?', in: Van den Berg et al., *In Search of Truth* (n. 2) 463–479; G. Sfameni Gasparro, 'The Disputation with Felix: Themes and

decade following the publication of *vera rel.* attempted to put the record straight.²² As Concetta Giuffrè Scibona has pointed out, it is in *vera rel.* 9.16 that Augustine for the first time referred to a ‘Manichaeen’ teaching of two opposing souls, good and evil.²³ In the sentence before he had quite correctly, almost literally, cited from the *Epistula Fundamenti* that there existed, *in exordio*, two substances, or natures.²⁴ But nowhere does the *Epistula Fundamenti* mention two opposing souls. Rather, in Manichaeen doctrine the soul is a part of God, the good substance, which can also be referred to as ‘one’ and ‘immutable’.²⁵ As Fortunatus put it in his debate with Augustine in 392: Christ ‘elected the souls for himself as worthy of his will, sanctified by his heavenly mandates, by faith and reason filled with heavenly things so that led by him they would return to God’s kingdom according to his sacred promise.’²⁶ And probably around eight years later and ten years after the publication of *vera rel.* the Italian Manichaeen Secundinus would put it as follows: It is spirits ‘that fight for the sake of the souls [and not two souls

Modalities of Augustine’s Polemic,’ in: Van den Berg et al., *‘In Search of Truth’* (n. 2) 519–544; G. Wurst, ‘Antimanichäische Werke,’ in: V.H. Drecoll (ed), *Augustin-Handbuch* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007) 309–316 (on Fortunatus and Faustus); Hoffmann, ‘Secundinus’ (n. 2); J. van Oort, ‘Secundini Manichaei Epistula. Roman Manichaeen “Biblical” Argument in the Age of Augustine,’ in: J. van Oort, O. Wermelinger, G. Wurst (eds), *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West* (Leiden: Brill, 2001; repr. 2012) 161–173.

²² For Fortunatus see Augustine, *c. Fort.* 3 (CSEL 25/1:85.16–86.2), where Fortunatus emphasizes the incorruptibility and oneness of God and the sanctity of the elected souls, who share in the former; for similar statements by Faustus and Felix: Augustine, *c. Faust.* 20.2 (CSEL 25/1:536.9–23); *c. Fel.* 1.18 (CSEL 25/2:822.6–824.10); on the latter see Scibona, ‘The Doctrine’ (n. 26) 391–392: ‘The oneness and the immutability of such a substance, of which the Soul is part, are even more stressed in Felix’s answers to Augustine’s precise questions’; for Secundinus: Hoffmann, ‘Secundinus’ (n. 2) 481–517 at 499–502.

²³ *Vera rel.* 9.16 (CCL 32:198.10–12): ... *duas animas esse in uno corpore existimant: unam de Deo, quae naturaliter hoc sit quod ipse; alteram de gente tenebrarum*; see Scibona, ‘The Doctrine’ (n. 20) 387. In 391, roughly a year after *vera rel.*, Augustine would write *De duabus animabus* and elaborate on this doctrine. Another year later, in August 392, he would engage in a debate with the Manichaeen presbyter Fortunatus, who rejected his explanation of the doctrine as incorrect.

²⁴ See above nn. 3 and 4.

²⁵ As in the references cited above n. 22. The Latin termini used in those passages include *summus, unus, principalis, inaccessibilis, immutabilis, aeternus, co-aeternus* (for the soul), *incorruptibilis, lucidus, inadibilis, impassibilis*. The list is not complete; compare J. van Oort, ‘Index of Manichaeen Terms and Concepts,’ in: F. Decret & J. van Oort, *Sanctus Augustinus, Acta contra Fortunatum Manichaeum* (CFM SL II), Turnhout: Brepols 2004, 85–124, esp. at 121.

²⁶ Augustine, *c. Fort.* 3 (CSEL 25/1:85.16–86.2): ... *dignas sibi animas elegerisse sanctae suae voluntati mandatis suis caelestibus sanctificatas, fide et ratione inbutas caelestium rerum ipso doctore hinc iterum easdem animas ad regnum die reversurus esse secundum sanctam ipsius pollicitationem* ...

struggling against each other]. In their [i.e. the spirits'] midst is placed a soul, to which from the beginning its own [divine] nature has given the victory.²⁷

According to Secundinus the soul is victorious from the outset because it shares its nature with God. There is no evil soul opposing a good soul. Evil consists in the 'dark stuff' threatening to tie the soul to itself.²⁸ The challenge of the soul is not so much to oppose an evil will as to stay on the right (or 'light') side in the struggle of the spirits. Secundinus criticises Augustine for misunderstanding the nature of evil, which in his view is not caused by an opposing will but by the soul's being mixed with flesh and succumbing to this state rather than managing to free itself from it.²⁹ Augustine in contrast, in his 'remarkable learning', thus Secundinus, sarcastically, 'either recounts that the devil was made (*factum*) from an archangel or states that he is nothing (*nihil*).³⁰

²⁷ Secundinus, *ep. ad Aug.* 2 (CSEL 25/2:894): [*Spiritus*] ... *pugnant autem animarum gratia. Horum in medio posita est anima, cui a principio natura sua dedit victoria.* For the English translation see M. Vermes, 'Epistula Secundini', in: I. Gardner and S.N.C. Lieu (eds), *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 136–142 at 137.

²⁸ More precisely, the soul is at risk of 'being affixed' (*affigi*) to the 'globular mass', in which evil is eventually going to be imprisoned forever. According to Manichaean teaching this does not make the souls evil, or damned, their lack of commitment to God merely keeps them further away from the Father and closer to darkness, where they have to remain quasi as sentries, keeping evil in its place; for a detailed discussion of the concept see B. Bennett, '*Globus horribilis*: The role of the *bolos* in Manichaean eschatology and its polemical transformation in Augustine's anti-Manichaean writings,' in: Van den Berg et al., '*In Search of Truth*' (n. 2) 427–440, especially 430–431.

²⁹ Cf. Secundinus, *ep. ad Aug.* 2 (CSEL 25/2:894): *Carnis enim commixtione ducitur, non propria voluntate.* This does not necessarily amount to fatalism or determinism, as Augustine polemically suggested. Elsewhere the Manichaean Felix responded to Augustine, quoting a Manichaean source, the so-called *Treasury of Life*, that in its negligence the soul culpably lacked the will to follow God's commands; see Augustine, *c. Fel.* 2.5 (CSEL 25/2:822.22–27): ... *negligentia ... mandatisque divinis ex integro parum obtemperaverint, legemque sibi a suo liberatore datam plenius servare noluerint neque ut decebat sese gubernaverint.* ET Gardner and Lieu, *Manichaean Texts* (n. 27) 159. For a discussion see N. Baker-Brian, *Manichaeism. An ancient faith rediscovered* (London: Continuum, 2011) 79–80. There is some similarity with Plotinus' idea in *Enn.* 3.2.7 that although souls that are 'mixed' with bodies cannot be expected to be as perfect as pure intellects, they are not excused if they 'choose' not to strive for perfection at least within their limitations. Porphyry was to put it far more strongly, as would, perhaps influenced by him, Augustine with his concept of *nequitia* ('wickedness') in *vera rel.* 11.21 (CCL 32:200.4); see Theiler, 'Porphyrios und Augustin', in his *Forschungen zum Neuplatonismus* (Berlin: Akademie, 1966) 160–251 at 192. Thus, interestingly, the differences on this matter between Secundinus and Augustine seem to run (to a certain degree) parallel to the differences between Plotinus and Porphyry.

³⁰ Secundinus, *ep. ad Aug.* 2 (CSEL 25/2:894–895): [*diabolus*] ... *quem tua mira prudentia aut ex archangelo factum memorat, aut nihil esse fatetur.* ET adapted from Gardner and Lieu, *Manichaean Texts* (n. 27) 137.

Now it has long been observed in view of a number of passages in Secundinus' letter that Secundinus knew Augustine's *Confessiones*,³¹ which had only recently been published.³² Secundinus' letter is usually dated at around 400. However, the sentence just cited almost looks as if it might allude to *vera rel.*, even though that work had been published about a decade earlier. It was in *vera rel.* that Augustine, perhaps relying on a Neoplatonist (Porphyrian?) source,³³ identifies the good with the highest being (*summe esse*) 'opposed' by nothing (*nihil*). Evil arises, as created beings turn away from the highest being, towards this 'nothing' and towards death (*vergere ad nihilum/mortem*). This is how the highest angel becomes the devil.³⁴

Secundinus' observation therefore is up to a certain point correct: According to Augustine's explanation in *vera rel.* the devil is 'made' from an 'archangel' in the sense that the 'highest angel' 'becomes' the devil. Evil did not originally exist. It was 'nothing'. Only in combination with a certain degree of willingness (on the part of created souls, first angels, then humans) did it take on an ethical dimension and became *nequitia*, wickedness.³⁵ Secundinus takes issue with Augustine for this—as he perceives it—

³¹ Secundinus, *ep. ad Aug.* 3 (CSEL 25/2:895): *Legit enim aliquanta exile meum et qualemque Romani hominis ingenium, reverendae tuae Dignationis scripta, in quibus sic irasceris veritati, ut philosophiae Hortensius.*—'My slight and nondescript Roman intellect has read a number of writings by your reverend honour, in which you show as much anger with the truth [= Manichaeism] as does Hortensius with philosophy.' ET Gardner and Lieu, *Manichaean Texts* (n. 27) 137. This is usually understood to allude to *Conf.* 3.4.7–8. Hortensius, the title-figure of the Ciceronian dialogue which triggered Augustine's conversion to Manichaeism, was of course the stubborn and anti-intellectual Roman magnate whom Cicero tried in vain to convert to philosophy. Secundinus' allusion is full of irony: According to the dialogue Cicero did eventually succeed to convert Hortensius, but Augustine was in the end lost to 'the truth' (i. e. Manichaeism).

³² See Hoffmann, 'Secundinus' (n. 2) 481–484 (with further literature).

³³ For this possibility see once more Theiler, 'Porphyrios und Augustin' (n. 29) 187–197, especially 192; and above n. 29.

³⁴ Augustine, *vera rel.* 11.21 (CCL 32:200.1–5): ... *deus utique summa vita ... nec aliqua vita, in quantum vita est, malum est, sed in quantum vergit ad mortem ...* 13.26 (203.1–5): *Nec aliquid sanctificatis malus angelus oberit, qui diabolus dicitur, quia et ipse in quantum angelus est non est malum, sed in quantum perversus est ... Eo enim, quo minus est, quam erat, tendit ad mortem ...* 18.35 (208.1–5): ... *Qui summe est ... deus incommutabilis trinitas ... fecit [sc. omnia] ut essent. Ipsum enim quantumcumque esse bonum est, quia summum bonum est summe esse. Unde fecit? Ex nihilo ...*

³⁵ Augustine, *vera rel.* 11.21 (CCL 32:200.3–6): *Mors autem vitae non est nisi nequitia, quae ab eo quod nequiquam sit dicta est, et ideo nequissimi homines nihili homines appelluntur.* According to Lewis and Short *nequitia* denotes anything 'of bad quality', in particular 'bad moral quality'. The associated adjective is *nequam* ('worthless', 'wretched', 'vile'), not *nequiquam* ('fruitlessly', 'in vain'). *Nequissimus* is the superlative of *nequam*. The adjective *nihilus* does not seem classical, but *nihil* was used: '[*aliquem*] nihil esse', '[that x] is completely useless', or

betrayal of Manichaean doctrine, and calls on him ‘to return to the truth’ (*ad veritatem ... converte*).³⁶ The verb *converte* aside,³⁷ the repeated use of the word ‘truth’ (*veritas*) in this context, an important epithet in Manichaean texts,³⁸ echoes the adjective ‘true’ (*vera*) in the title of *vera rel.* (‘true religion’),³⁹ while Secundinus’ accusation that Augustine is ‘making excuses by resorting to lies’ (*his mendaciis te excusare*) could be an allusion to Augustine’s misrepresentation of the Manichaean teaching of the soul in *vera rel.*

3. MANICHAEAN INFLUENCES AND BACKGROUND

3.1. *The Addressee (Romanianus)*

That Augustine should have resorted to such a transparent deception seems odd considering the dedicatee of *vera rel.*, Romanianus, a notable of August-

‘powerless’ (e.g. Cicero, *ad fam.* 7.27.2); or *accepimus eum nihil hominis esse*, ‘... that he is a worthless fellow’ (Cicero, *Tusc.* 3.32.77).

³⁶ Secundinus, *ep. ad Aug.* 2 (CSEL 25/2:895): *Muta, quaeso, sententiam, deponere Punicae gentis perfidiam, et recessionem tuam ad veritatem, quae per timorem facta est, converte: noli his mendaciis te excusare.* ET Gardner and Lieu, *Manichaean Texts* (n. 27) 137.

³⁷ In *vera rel.* 15.29 (CCL 32:205.5–6) Augustine speaks of turning our love away from the desires of the body towards the eternal essence of truth, *a corporis voluptatibus ad aeternam essentiam veritatis amorem nostrum oportere converti.*

³⁸ In the excerpt from the *Living Gospel* cited in the *Cologne Mani Codex* God is called the ‘Father of Truth’ (πατήρ τῆς ἀληθείας). The text continues: ‘... and from him all that is true was revealed to me, and from (his) truth I exist’ (CMC 66; Koenen and Römer, *Der Kölner Mani-Kodex* (n. 5) 44–47). In fact it was the recognition of this phrase in the codex that triggered its identification as a Manichaean source (Gardner and Lieu, *Manichaean Texts* (n. 27) 41.156). Elsewhere Manichaeism is referred to as ‘true faith’ (*vera fides*) and Mani as the ‘true prophet’, while Manichaeans are called ‘hearers of the true word’ (ibid. 121, 34, 157). Mani is also referred to as ‘spirit’ or ‘paraclete of truth’ (1 Keph 14.3–16.2; ibid. 74), a notion which Augustine picks up in *Conf.* 3.6.10 (CCL 27:33), where the paraclete is described as ‘consoler’; the passage ends with the sarcastic remark that the Manichaeans kept on saying ‘truth, truth’, when in fact they never were in possession of it: *Et dicebant ‘veritas et veritas’ et multum eam dicebant mihi et nusquam erat in eis.*

³⁹ The title of *vera rel.* links a philosophical concept of ‘truth’ with a practical concept of ‘religion’, uniquely in early Christian literature (Lössl, *Augustinus* (n. 1) 27 and 76 n. 1). *Vera rel.* identifies ‘religion’ as worship (generically speaking) with ‘philosophy’ as ‘rational discipline’ (*rationalis ... disciplina; vera rel.* 29.53–30.54). In *vera rel.* 5.8 Augustine famously declares that philosophy is identical with religion, *non aliam esse philosophiam ... et aliam religionem ...* The only religion in Late Antiquity of which this could be said without hesitation was Manichaeism (cf. Gardner and Lieu, *Manichaean Texts* (n. 27) 11) because of its strong rationalistic outlook. The fact that in *vera rel.* Augustine understands ‘truth’ in this ‘scientific’, rationally demonstrable sense of *disciplina* and that he uses the generic term *religio* in the title as well as in the body of the work instead of the more specific *fides* (e.g. as in *Christiana fides*) suggests that when he uses the expression *vera religio* with his addressee/s in mind, he also, and in fact perhaps first and foremost, thinks of Manichaeism.

tine's home town Thagaste.⁴⁰ Romanianus had supported Augustine in his youth and become his mentor and friend. When Augustine, aged seventeen, had to interrupt his studies at the death of his father, he offered moral and financial support.⁴¹ Augustine went on to study rhetoric in Carthage and to convert to Manichaeism.⁴² Apparently it was he who persuaded Romanianus to become a Manichaean too.⁴³ Thirteen years later, in 386/7, in Milan, when Augustine distanced himself from Manichaeism and became a Catholic, Romanianus seems to have been far more reluctant than he to abandon his faith,⁴⁴ although Augustine worked hard to persuade him by dedicating to him a number of his works and writing to him a series of letters. Eventually (in the course of the 390s) Romanianus, albeit reluctantly, seems to have yielded and converted to Orthodoxy.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ For what follows see A. Mandouze, *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire 1: Prosopographie de l'Afrique chrétienne (303–533)* (Paris: CNRS, 1982) 994.

⁴¹ Augustine, *c. Acad.* 2.2.3 (CCL 29:19.6–8): *Tu me adulescentulum pauperem ad studia pergentem et domo et sumptu et, quod plus est, animo excepisti*; compare also Lössl, *Augustinus* (n. 1) 12–14; Th. Fuhrer, *Augustin. Contra Academicos* (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1997) 4–5, 128.

⁴² This would have been in 373. The main source for the relevant events is Augustine, *Conf.* 3.4.7–6.10 (CCL 27:29–33); see Drecoll and Kudella, *Augustin und der Manichäismus* (n. 2) 58–80.

⁴³ Compare *c. Acad.* 1.1.3 (CCL 29:5.73–75): *ipsa [scil. philosophia] me penitus ab illa superstitione, in quam te mecum praecipitem dederam, liberavit.*

⁴⁴ Augustine dates his conversion to autumn 386. He was baptised in Milan at Easter 387. Yet in *vera rel.* 7.12 (CCL 32:195–196), nearly four years later, he still finds that Romanianus has not yet made up his mind. His most penetrating questioning still betrays uncertainty: ... *postquam tuas acerrimas interrogationes sine ullo certo fine fluctuare.* This is not the description of a man who became (and later ceased to be) a Manichaean lightly; on Romanianus' later fate see Fuhrer, *Augustin* (n. 41) 4–5.

⁴⁵ This is not yet obvious in Augustine's dedicatory letter to Romanianus accompanying *vera rel.*, ep. 15 (CSEL 34/1:35–36): *Scripti quiddam de catholica religione, quantum dominus dare dignatus est, quod tibi volo ante adventum meum mittere ...*, which was followed by two more letters, *epp.* 16 and 17 (37–43), similar in sentiment. But a few years later, in *epp.* 27.4 (99) and 31.7 (CSEL 34/2:17–18), Augustine commends Romanianus and his son Licentius to Paulinus of Nola and Therasia (sending along a copy of *vera rel.* as a present). In turn, Paulinus himself writes to Romanianus, *ep.* 32 (9–17). On Romanianus' status relative to Augustine and Paulinus see S. Mratschek, *Der Briefwechsel des Paulinus von Nola* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002) 343–345, 478–480. If Romanianus is also the addressee of Augustine's *ep.* 259 (CSEL 57:611–615), which probably dates from 408 and is addressed to a Cornelius (who could be Romanianus, if Romanianus is identical with the Cornelius Romanianus attested in CIL 8 suppl. 1 no. 17226), then he would have converted to Orthodoxy. In that letter Augustine alludes to a *perniciosissimus error* which they shared in their youth, but which is now apparently in the past. However, Augustine now takes issue with the moral behaviour of his addressee and refuses to write him a consolatory piece on the death of his wife on grounds that he lacks remorse. See for this J. Lössl, 'Continuity and Transformation of Ancient

The difficulty which Augustine had in persuading Romanianus to reconsider his adherence to Manichaeism suggests that Romanianus was not a mere opportunist, a pushover without an intellectual or ethical stance of his own. Rather, the impression is that he knew at least some Manichaean doctrine, and held on to it.⁴⁶ Considering this it might seem slightly odd that Augustine should have seriously tried to deceive him by misrepresenting the Manichaean doctrine of the soul. A possible explanation for this might be that *vera rel.* was primarily intended as a *protrepticus* and therefore dominated by positive teachings rather than by polemic or the refutation of opposing views. Misrepresenting merely one aspect of the opposing doctrine in order to make it look more different from Augustine's own position and to do this in just one small part of the work may not have been too obvious. Polemics was not predominant, or at least not very obvious, but rather of a more subtle kind, in *vera rel.*, which on the whole impresses as a remarkably tolerant and open-minded work, not unlike the kind of Manichaean protreptic by which Augustine was won over in Carthage in 373.⁴⁷

Indeed all that positiveness in *vera rel.* may have deliberately been designed to appeal to Manichaeans and therefore contained many elements

Consolation in Augustine of Hippo,' in: H. Baltussen (ed.), *Greek and Roman Consolations. Eight Studies of a Tradition and its Afterlife* (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2013) 153–176 at 161–162 and 164.

⁴⁶ Perhaps one should take Augustine's own probable knowledge of Manichaeism during his time as a Manichaean as a measure for Romanianus' probable knowledge and ability to argue about certain questions with Augustine; for Augustine see J. van Oort, 'The Young Augustine's Knowledge of Manichaeism: An Analysis of the *Confessiones* and some other relevant texts,' *Vigiliae Christianae* 62 (2008) 441–466.

⁴⁷ As mentioned earlier, this is one of the reasons why Augustine later had to revise it so extensively in the *Retractationes*. For example, in *vera rel.* 16.31 (CCL 32:206.17) he argued that Christ never resorted to violence (*nihil egit vi*), a statement which he retracted in *retr.* 1.13.6 (CCL 57:38–39). In 390 it would have impressed the Manichaean Romanianus, for whom pacifism would have been both an ethical ideal and a trait in the personalities of Mani and Jesus; on Manichaean attitudes to violence and their preference of *πραύτης* ('meekness') see BeDuhn, 'Did Augustine Win His Debate with Fortunatus?' (n. 21) 472. In *vera rel.* 25.47 (CCL 32:216–217) Augustine argues that the time of miracles was over, in *retr.* 1.13.7 (57:39) he retracts this view. In 390 it would have been attractive to a rationally thinking Manichaean, and fitting for a rationalistic philosophy, a *disciplina rationalis*, as Augustine was proposing it. In *retr.* 1.13.8 (57:40), retracting his view expressed in *vera rel.* 46.88 (32:244 f.) that ideally even married couples should abstain from sex, he goes as far as to suggest that when expressing this view he was still unwittingly pandering to Manichaean views about mortality and procreation. Thus the later Augustine found a considerable number of problematic statements in this early work, and not all of them were problematic with a view to the Pelagian controversy; thus already A. Harnack, *Die Retractationen Augustins* (SAB.PH; Berlin: De Gruyter, 1905), 1096–1131 at 1097.

which Manichaeans would have recognized as attractive from their own point of view and to which they would have been able to relate, including elements which Augustine may actually have labelled as ‘un-Manichaean’ such as the oneness of God and the soul, and the soul’s freedom to choose.⁴⁸ It may therefore be possible to read *vera rel.* against the presence of a Manichaean layer beneath the Christian and Platonist layers, as a text which still breathes the air of the religion which Augustine himself had once—and actually not that long ago—believed to be the only true religion.

3.2. Augustine’s Own History as a Manichaean

‘Religion’ was what Augustine had been yearning for when he first converted to Manichaeism in 373, religion as an integrated intellectual and spiritual way of life.⁴⁹ This is still reflected in positive terms in *vera rel.* 5.8, where *philosophia* and *religio* are referred to as essentially the same thing.⁵⁰ But it is also reflected on in negative terms in *vera rel.* 1.1, where Augustine describes ‘the way to a good and happy life’ as ‘consisting in the true religion’ and then immediately contrasts it with the attitude of ‘those who prefer to worship many gods instead of the one true God’, including ‘their wise men, whom they call philosophers ..., who share their religion publicly, but hold different views in private.’⁵¹ The way in which Augustine in this passage uses phrases

⁴⁸ For these two crucial areas of debate, freedom vs. fatalism/determinism and monism vs. dualism (in regard to both God and the soul), see above n. 29 and nn. 22–30. With regard to both these areas the Manichaean position was often notoriously misrepresented by Augustine. In reality he shared a lot of common ground with Manichaean thinkers and even tended to endorse Manichaean positions (e. g. that of Fortunatus on free will) when not polemically challenged; see BeDuhn, ‘Did Augustine Win His Debate with Fortunatus?’ (n. 21).

⁴⁹ See *Conf.* 3.4.7–6.10 (CCL 27:29–32) for the link between study of rhetoric, Cicero’s *Hortensius* triggering an enthusiasm for ‘philosophy’, and frustrated Bible study, which led to the discovery of the Manichaeans as people who combined ‘consoling’ talk (of Christ and the Paraclete) and spiritual practice (prayer and hymn singing), which provided food for the soul, with rational enquiry (seeking truth and cosmological explanations), which satisfied intellectual demands; for the consolatory role attributed to philosophy in this context see also Lössl, ‘Augustine’s Confessions as a Consolation of Philosophy’ (n. 8) at 56.

⁵⁰ *Vera rel.* 5.8 (CCL 32:12–14): *Sic enim creditur et docetur, quod est humanae salutis caput, non aliam esse philosophiam, id est sapientiae studium, et aliam religionem ...* It may be worth imagining for a moment Augustine making this statement in 373 or shortly after. It would have fitted perfectly with his Manichaean experience.

⁵¹ *Vera rel.* 1.1 (CCL 32:187): *Cum omnis vitae bonae ac beatae via in vera religione sit constituta, qua unus deus colitur et purgatissima pietate cognoscitur ... evidentius error ... eorum ... qui multos deos colere quam unum verum deum ... maluerunt ... eorum sapientes, quos philosophos vocant ... aliud ... in religione suscepisse cum populo et aliud ... defendisse privatim.* This

such as ‘the good and happy life’, ‘the way’ (*via*), and ‘true religion’, and strongly contrasts them with pagan culture, both intellectual and popular, could indicate that with a view to his addressee/s he still wanted to suggest that compared with Paganism, Manichaeism, false and error-ridden as it was, contained a surprising amount of material that was acceptable and useful to orthodox Christian perception. It is almost as if Augustine wanted to give a hint that a Manichaean like Romanianus did not have to change too much in order to convert to orthodox Christianity.⁵² Two words in particular might be worth a closer look in view of exploring Manichaean reflections in this opening statement of *vera rel.*, ‘the way’ (*via*) and ‘religion’ (*religio*).

3.2.1. *The Concept of ‘The Way’ (via)*

‘The way’ as a metaphor of life and the attempt to proceed in life in a deliberate, rational, and methodical manner including religious and worldly affairs is of course a very general concept.⁵³ It does not strike as distinctly Manichaean. It does have a number of specifically early Christian connotations which are not directly linked to Manichaeism and may well have influenced Augustine through his wider Christian socialisation.⁵⁴ The motif of the way to a happy life is also distinctly Neoplatonic. It could have come to Augustine directly from Plotinus or indirectly via Porphyry.⁵⁵ But there are also Manichaean connotations, which Augustine could have had in mind, especially with a view to his addressee/s. For example the Biblical motif of the straight and narrow path (Mt 7:14) can be found cited or alluded to in

relative hostility against Paganism is shared by Manichaeans; e. g. compare Faustus in Augustine, *c. Faust.* 20.4 (CSEL 25/1:537–538), who argues polemically that orthodox Christianity and Judaism are only modifications of pagan religion.

⁵² Similar to the Platonists he would have only a few words and sentences to change; see *vera rel.* 4.7 (CCL 32:192.22–23): ... *paucis mutatis verbis atque sententiis Christiani fierent*.

⁵³ At a very fundamental level Augustine could have been influenced by rhetorical tradition, which applied the metaphor to speech; e. g. Cicero, *Fin.* 1.9.29: ... *ut ratione et via procedat oratio ...*

⁵⁴ In Acts 9:1–2 Christianity itself is referred to as ‘the way’ and John 14:6 combines the same three terms as *vera rel.* 1.1, way, truth, and life. Part of the latter verse is cited in *c. Faust.* 12.26 (CSEL 25:355.15): *ipse [scil. Christus] dixit, ego sum via. Ad ipsum ergo ascenditur*. Another important verse is Mt 7:13, which is partly paraphrased and partly cited in *c. Faust.* 32.11 (CSEL 25:770.16): *angusta et arta est via quae ducit ad vitam*.

⁵⁵ Plotinus, *Enn.* 1.6.8: Τίς οὖν ὁ τρόπος; τίς μηχανή; the ascent itself is described in *Enn.* 1.6.6–7. For Porphyry, see Porphyry in Iamblichus, *myst.* 286.1: ἡ πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν ὁδός, cited in Theiler, ‘Porphyrios und Augustin’ (n. 29) 168. For further literature see Lössl, *Augustinus* (n. 1) 76 n. 1. Latin *via* (not dissimilar to English ‘way’) covers a range of meanings for which different Greek words would have been used including ὁδός, τρόπος, ἀτραπός or ἀταρπός (ἀταρπιτός/ἀτραπιτός).

several Manichaean sources including the *Cologne Mani Codex* and the *Tebessa Codex*.⁵⁶ The question how to proceed (by which *τρόπος*) is so frequently addressed in the *Cologne Mani Codex* that it strikes as quite repetitive,⁵⁷ although it is of course in character with a work of instruction. In *De utilitate credendi*—and occasionally in *vera rel.*—Augustine almost seems to imitate this style.⁵⁸ The relevant parts of both these works provide practical advice on ‘how’ (‘which way’) to go about searching for the truth and embarking on a ‘path’ of wisdom etc., partly in a similar way as the relevant passages in the *CMC* or similar works.⁵⁹

3.2.2. *The Concept of ‘Religion’ (religio)*

The other word besides *via* that stands out in *vera rel.* 1.1 is *religio*. Already in 386, four years before completing *vera rel.*, Augustine wrote to Romanianus that he wanted to write for him a work *De religione*.⁶⁰ There can be

⁵⁶ CMC 67.7–8: ... ἐλλογὴν ἐξελεξάμην καὶ ἀτραπὸν τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ ὕψος ὑπέδειξα τοῖς ἀνιούσι κατὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν τὴνδε.—‘I have elected the election and shown the path that leads to the top to those who according to the truth ascend to it.’ Koenen and Römer, *Der Kölner Mani-Codex* (n. 5) 46. *Codex Thevestinus* Col. 9 (III 1) 8 [= A col. 43 (9) ed. Stein]: ... *discipuli* [...] *appellati sunt non inmerito. Sunt enim et opibus pauperes et numero pauci et per artam viam incedunt angusto tramite* ...—‘The disciples are not undeservedly called [...]]; for they are both poor in resources and few in number and along a narrow road and a straight and narrow path they walk.’ J. Beduhn and G. Harrison, ‘The Tebessa Codex: A Manichaean Treatise on Biblical Exegesis and Church Order,’ in: P.A. Mirecki and J.D. Beduhn (eds), *Emerging from Darkness: Studies in the Recovery of Manichaean Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 33–88 at 60. M. Stein, *Manichaica Latina 3/1: Codex Thevestinus* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2004) 46. The passage is alluded to by Augustine in *c. Faust.* 32.11 (s. above n. 54) and by Secundinus, *ep. ad Aug.* 3 and 5 (CSEL 25/2:895/897): *An emendatum in Evangelio est quod spatiosa via non deducat in interitum? ... Ad artam festina viam, ut consequaris vitam aeternam* ...

⁵⁷ For a listing of references see *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts I: Texts from the Roman Empire* (CFM, Subsidia I), Turnhout: Brepols 1998, 26. Some examples: CMC 12.7: ὃν τρόπον, 14.5: τοῦτῳ τῷ τρόπῳ, 20.12: κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον, 21.4, 22.4: ποιῶ τρόπῳ, 45.4: περὶ τοῦ τρόπου καθ’ ὃν ..., 60.13: ὃν τρόπον καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος ἴσμεν ...

⁵⁸ Compare *util. cred.* 14 (CSEL 25/1:19–20): ... *animam ... viam ... quaerere veritatis; 20* (24.16–18): ... *cuiusmodi viam usus fuerim, cum ... quaereram veram religionem ...; 24* (30.7–8): *Si hac via veniant ...* (30.19–20) ... *ad veram religionem sacrilegam viam quaerere ...* (31.3): *via salubrior ...; see also 4* (7.12): *via sapientiae; 35* (45.25): ... *nulla certa ad sapientiam salutemque animis via ...; vera rel.* 1.1; 3.3: 3.5 (CCL 32:187.1; 188.4; 191.89). In *vera rel.* occurrences are concentrated on the opening passage.

⁵⁹ Plotinus’ *Enn.* 1.6 comes to mind, which has also been considered as a work that influenced *vera rel.*; see V.H. Drecoll, *Die Entstehung der Gnadlehre Augustins* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999) 88–89; Lössl, *Augustinus* (n. 1) 32.

⁶⁰ Augustine, *c. Acad.* 2.3.8 (CCL 29:22.43–45): ... *si quid superstitionis in animum revolutum est, eicietur profecto, vel cum tibi aliquam inter nos disputationem de religione misero* ...—‘If any form of superstition should have returned to your mind, it will be quickly removed as soon as I will have sent you a disputation between you and me concerning religion ...’. Note

no doubt that *De vera religione*, completed early in 391 at the latest,⁶¹ is this work.⁶² The use of the word *religio* in a Christian work of this kind, let alone in the title of such a work, is rare, if not unique. Although already Tertullian and Minucius Felix used the juncture *vera religio* in the body of their works,⁶³ only Lactantius used it in a title, namely that of book 4 of his *Divinae institutiones*.⁶⁴ All these authors, including Augustine, were influenced by Cicero, who in *De natura deorum* distinguished between *religio* and *superstitio*, proper (and in this sense 'true') worship of the gods, and excessive or irrational religious belief.⁶⁵ But it is not least because of this generic meaning of the word in the Classical, pagan, tradition that in Christian literature words like *fides* or *doctrina* are far more common.⁶⁶ Roughly the same is true

already here the opposition of *superstitio* and *religio*, which is influenced in particular by Cicero (see below n. 65), though with one exception: While Cicero (*nat. deor.* 2.28.72) traces the etymology of *religio* to the verb *relegere* ('to gather'), Augustine, following Vergil (*Aen.* 8.349) and Lactantius (4.28), traces it to *religare* ('to bind'); see *vera rel.* 55.11/113 (CCL 32:259): *ad unum deum tendentes et ei uni religantes animas nostras, unde religio dicta creditur ... religet ergo nos religio uni omnipotenti deo ...*; compare also *retr.* 1.13.9 (CCL 57:40–41).

⁶¹ There are indications that Augustine began writing *vera rel.* in 387, very shortly after making that statement in *c. Acad.*, but various events interrupted his work, his baptism at Easter 387, the death of his mother later that year, a forced stay in Rome due to a sea blockade in 388, and his return to Africa in 389.

⁶² Augustine, *vera rel.* 7.12 (CCL 32:195): *... cum ante paucos annos promiserim tibi scribere ... quid de vera religione sentirem, tempus nunc esse arbitratus sum ... Ep.* 15 (CSEL 34/1:35–36) records the delivery of the work to Romanianus. In *ep.* 27.4 (99) to Paulinus of Nola Augustine still refers to it as *De religione*. See above n. 45.

⁶³ Tertullian, *Apol.* 24.2; 35.1; Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 1.5. As Tobias Georges points out, Tertullian already took advantage of the wide range of meanings of *religio* (e. g. 16.3: *Iudaica religio*; 24.1: *Romana religio*; 16.14: *nostra religio*; 24.2: *laesa religio ... vera religio*); T. Georges, *Tertullian: Apologeticum* (Freiburg i. Br.: Herder, 2011) 404 n. 927.

⁶⁴ Lactantius, *Inst.* 4: *De vera sapientia et religione*.

⁶⁵ See in particular Cicero, *nat. deor.* 1.42.117, where one of the interlocutors bemoans that atheists and agnostics harmed not only superstition, but also religion: *Horum enim sententiae omnium non modo superstitionem tollunt, in qua inest timor inanis deorum, sed etiam religionem, quae deorum cultu pio continentur*; and *ibid.* 2.28.71, which in a similar vein argues that although superstition must be avoided, proper (traditional) religion (within reason) must be practised. This was not only advised by the philosophers but also by the ancestors: *Quos deos et venerari et colere debemus, cultus autem deorum est optumus idemque castissimus atque sanctissimus plenissimusque pietatis, ut eos semper pura integra incorrupta et mente et voce veneremus. non enim philosophi solum verum etiam maiores nostri superstitionem a religione separaverunt*.

⁶⁶ See e. g. in *vera rel.* 3.3 (CCL 32:190.41): *salubris fides*; 4.6 (192.19): *nostra fides*; 6.11 (195.39): *fides qua in catholica ecclesia*; 9.17 (198.23): *fides catholica*; 5.8 (193.3): *ii quorum doctrinam non approbamus*; 6.10 (194.5): *haereticis ad probationem doctrinae suae*; 17.33 (207.1): *totius doctrinae modus*. See also the discussion in E. Feil, *Religio. Die Geschichte eines neuzeitlichen Grundbegriffs vom Frühchristentum bis zur Reformation* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986) 68.

of Manichaeism,⁶⁷ albeit with one significant difference. Christianity developed gradually and imperceptibly over several generations, if not centuries. Mani constructed his religion, 'established it directly and deliberately, with its scriptures and its rituals and its organisation in place. A principal aspect of his purpose was that this teaching and this practice and this community would be universal, and would supersede all previous faiths;' thus 'we might say that Manichaeism is the first real religion in the modern sense.'⁶⁸

Through his encounter with Manichaeism in his youth Augustine was from the very beginning influenced by this new understanding of religion. When he tried to free himself from his attachment to Manichaeism, it was *religio* with which he had to come to terms. This is exactly how he put it in *De Genesi adversus Manichaeos*: 'With the Manichaeans our question is about the religion.'⁶⁹ By this he means 'that which may be assumed about God in worship' (*quid de Deo pie sentiatur*). While the primary context of this statement is his polemic against the Manichaeans,⁷⁰ his use of the concept is not polemical, on the contrary. Particularly in a work such as *vera rel.* it enables him to reach out to Manichaeans and to beat them in their own, rather successful, game. Augustine uses the concept of *religio* with its wide-ranging meaning (encompassing both intellectual pursuits [*philosophia*] and worship as well as interdenominational relations) because his understanding and his experience of religion in practice has been influenced by

⁶⁷ For example a passage in the *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto* 10.30–35 (191–225; ed. Festugière), transl. Rufinus, *Historia Monachorum* 9 (PL 21:426C–427B), which is exactly contemporaneous with *vera rel.*, refers to Manichaeism by implication as *vera fides* (in a context in which a contest was to reveal the 'true faith'). ET Gardner and Lieu, *Manichaeae Texts* (n. 27) 121. CMC 64.10 refers to Mani's 'faith companions' (οἰκείοι τῆς πίστεως), CMC 134.4/7 recounts that the converted princes were 'filled with faith' (οἱ μεγιστάνες τῆ πίστει ἐπιληρώθησαν). From his own life Mani tells CMC 11.1–4: εἰσῆλασα εἰς τὸ δόγμα [religion, faith {community?}] τῶν βαπτίστων; Koenen and Römer, *Der Kölner Mani-Kodex* (n. 5) 44, 96 and 6; Gardner and Lieu, *Manichaeae Texts* (n. 27) 49.

⁶⁸ Gardner and Lieu, *Manichaeae Texts* (n. 27) 1. Accordingly, the rhetoric of switching 'faiths' and comparing 'religions' is commonly used in Manichaeae texts. E. g. a Middle-Persian text in which Mani praises the advantages of his 'religion' (*dyn*) and compares it favourably with previous ones; see M. Boyce, *A Reader in Manichaeae Middle-Persian and Parthian* (Leiden: Brill, 1975) 29–30. This is very similar to the way Faustus unfavourably compares the 'three main religions' of his age, Judaism, Paganism and Christianity, with Manichaeism (see below n. 71).

⁶⁹ Augustine, *Gen. adv. Man.* 2.29.43 (CSEL 91:170.1): *cum Manichaeis nobis de religione quaestio est.*

⁷⁰ This is the focus of the article by J. Speigl, 'Zur apologetischen und antihäretischen Ausrichtung des Religionsbegriffes Augustins,' *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* 86 (2002) 26–43 at 30–33.

the Manichaeans. For him *religio* was always more than just *fides*. He always strove for an integration of theology and practice. Although he rejected Faustus' generic use of the word,⁷¹ his own use of it in *vera rel.* is not altogether dissimilar. At the end of the day Faustus too was not a relativist, but rather defended Manichaeism as the true religion rejecting orthodox Christianity and Judaism as schisms, split-offs, from Paganism.⁷²

In *Contra Academicos*, *superstitio* clearly refers to Manichaeism, though in other early works it could also mean a broader 'juvenile' attitude to religion, which led Augustine to embrace a religion such as Manichaeism.⁷³ In *vera rel.* he goes even further in that direction. Although he very much identifies the Christian faith with *vera religio*, he expresses this in terms that also allows for a broader understanding of religiosity, one that is aware of the variety and plurality of religious experiences and expressions and of the possibility and reality of change in religious attitudes.⁷⁴ With this he comes fairly close to the way Faustus used the term, almost already in its modern meaning, when he spoke of Jews, Christians and Pagans (*gentes*) as the three world religions.⁷⁵ Therefore, by using the word *religio* Augustine picks up an existing Manichaean concept and uses it with a view to persuade Manichaeans such as Romanianus to convert to orthodox Christianity. Moreover, at the same time, by doing so he produces as a result a piece of theological writing which impresses as rather modern in the way it thinks about religion and faith.

4. CONCLUSION

This paper could only but scratch the surface in its attempt to point to some of the Manichaean reflections which are clearly visible in *vera rel.* It

⁷¹ Faustus in Augustine, *c. Faust.* 31.2 (CSEL 25/1:757.18–19): *Tres in mundo religiones sint, quae mentis purgationem pariter in castimoniis et abstinentia ritu quamvis diversissimo reputant, dico autem Iudaeos et Christianos et Gentes.*

⁷² Faustus in Augustine, *c. Faust.* 20.4 (CSEL 25/1:537–538); see also above n. 51.

⁷³ See e.g. *beata vita* 1.4 (CCL 29:66–67): *superstitio puerilis.*

⁷⁴ The sentence *vera rel.* 10.19 (CCL 32:200): *ea est nostris temporibus christiana religio, quam cognoscere ac sequi securissima et certissima salus est*, is influenced precisely by this new concept: Christianity as the new religion our our time. Not surprisingly, this was one of the statements which Augustine felt had to be corrected in *retr.* 1.13.3 (CCL 57:37.23–34): *... res ipsa quae nunc christiana religio nuncupatur, erat et apud antiquos nec defuit ab initio generis humani ...* This latter position is the more traditional one in early Christianity, which can also be found among the apologists from the second century onwards.

⁷⁵ See above n. 51.

briefly discussed Augustine's own express statements regarding the anti-Manichaeism aspect of the work and his brief summary reference to the basics of Manichaeism doctrine in *vera rel.* 9.16 with its largely correct reference to the doctrine of the two natures and its misleading depiction of the doctrine of the soul. It highlighted the problematic nature of the latter, especially in view of its dedicatee, Augustine's mentor, friend and former fellow-Manichaeism Romanianus. By picking up on some key concepts mentioned in the opening sentence of the work, in particular *via* and *religio*,⁷⁶ it concluded with an attempt to provide some thoughts on the potential Manichaeism background of the work. Many more concepts and motifs could be discussed, for example, the humanistic approach to the concept of a saviour figure, of 'a great and divine man' worthy of divine honours in *vera rel.* 3.3, the proposal of the Christian religion as a 'rational discipline'⁷⁷ including natural scientific teaching, the focus on sensual perception, its meaning and function including the preoccupation with error and misperception (phantasm),⁷⁸ the fascination with material corruptibility and decay and a scientific concept of nature as a way of dealing with it,⁷⁹ the concern with space and light,⁸⁰ and with numbers, bodies, shapes, plants and trees, in short, with the whole of cosmology.⁸¹ All these themes also reflect Manichaeism interests and reveal an enduring presence of Manichaeism in the work of Augustine. As our knowledge of Manichaeism continues to improve in the light of new discoveries and the continuous flow of new scholarship, and as its importance and its presence in the social, intellectual and spiritual life of Late Antiquity is increasingly recognized, it is also becoming progressively easier to highlight more precisely its presence in and its influence upon a work such as Augustine's *De vera religione*.

⁷⁶ Other concepts such as *vita* and *veritas* were also briefly touched upon.

⁷⁷ *Vera rel.* 30.54 (CCL 32:222); see above n. 39.

⁷⁸ *Vera rel.* 10.18 (CCL 32:199); and compare *ibid.* 33.62 (227–228).

⁷⁹ *Vera rel.* 16.32 (CCL 32:207).

⁸⁰ *Vera rel.* 20.40 (CCL 32:211–212).

⁸¹ For a brief summary of all these themes see Lössl, *Augustinus* (n. 1) 57–59.

GOD, MEMORY AND BEAUTY:
A 'MANICHAEAN' ANALYSIS OF AUGUSTINE'S *CONFESSIONS*,
BOOK 10,1–38

Johannes van Oort

1. THE *CONFESSIONS* AS A WORK AIMED AT MANICHAEAN READERS

The past decades have seen an increasing awareness of the *Confessions* as a work which—at least partly—is aimed at Manichaean readers. One of the pioneers in the field of research was the late Erich Feldmann (1929–1998). In his 1975 Münster dissertation on the influence of Cicero's dialogue *Hortensius* and Manichaeism upon the young Augustine,¹ he often speaks of Manichaean elements in Augustine's *Confessions* in particular. Although this two-volume dissertation was never published, parts of its findings were made available in, for instance, Feldmann's major article 'Confessiones' in the *Augustinus-Lexikon*.² Partly inspired by Feldmann, but also by some other studies,³ I presented my first paper on the question as 'Augustine's Criticism of Manichaeism: The Case of *Confessions* III,6,10 and Its Implications' for an Utrecht colloquium in 1993.⁴ An expanded version of this paper was presented at the 1993 IAMS-conference in Southern Italy and published in 1997 as 'Manichaeism and Anti-Manichaeism in Augustine's

¹ Erich Feldmann, *Der Einfluss des Hortensius und des Manichäismus auf das Denken des jungen Augustinus von 373*, vol. I–II, Dissertation Münster 1975 (typescript).

² Erich Feldmann, 'Confessiones', *Augustinus-Lexikon*, Vol. 1, Basel: Schwabe 1994, 1134–1193.

³ E.g. Pierre Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de saint Augustin*, Paris: De Boccard 1968, 235–238. Here I may also mention the influence of my 'Doktorvater' Gilles Quispel who, as an expert in Gnostic and Manichaean studies, in private conversation often suggested possible Manichaean influences upon Augustine, as a rule with reference to studies of Alfred Adam, Prosper Alfarié and Ernesto Buonaiuti. One may compare the scattered remarks in his *Gnostic Studies*, I–II, Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archeologisch Instituut 1974–1975 and in *Gnostica, Judaica, Catholica. Collected Essays of Gilles Quispel*, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2008.

⁴ Johannes van Oort, 'Augustine's Criticism of Manichaeism: The Case of *Confessions* III,6,10 and Its Implications', in: Pieter W. van der Horst (ed.), *Aspects of Religious Contact and Conflict in the Ancient World* (Utrechtse Theologische Reeks), Utrecht: Faculty of Theology, University of Utrecht 1995, 57–68.

Confessiones.⁵ It was in the same year (1993) that, at the University of Stellenbosch, I became acquainted with Annemaré Kotzé who was preparing a dissertation on Augustine's *Confessiones*. I suggested some of my ideas on the matter, provided her with some key articles on Manichaeism, and all this became fruitful in her research. I myself further discussed the subject in a 2000 Nijmegen inaugural lecture on Augustine's *Confessiones*.⁶ Annemaré Kotzé incorporated the research theme into her 2003 dissertation at Stellenbosch University⁷ and, moreover, in a number of articles. First in her finely tuned 2001 study 'Reading Psalm 4 to the Manichaeans' (with focus on *Conf. IX,4,8–11*)⁸ and after that in research articles such as "The "Anti-Manichaean" Passage in *Confessiones* 3 and its "Manichaean Audience" (2008)⁹ and 'Protreptic, Paraenetic and Augustine's *Confessiones*' (2011).¹⁰ As may be inferred from these titles, Dr Kotzé approaches the subject from a number of textual points of view. Consequently, the emphasis of her research is on the internal evidence of *Augustine's* text¹¹—not so much on the analysis of religio-historical facts or Manichaean texts proper. Again and again it is highly interesting to see the results of such a linguistic approach finely corroborating the analysis of Augustine's literary corpus with the help of data gleaned from Manichaean texts. I myself still seek to study the subject this way, i.e. from a historical and, in particular, religio-historical point of view,¹² trying

⁵ Johannes van Oort, 'Manichaeism and Anti-Manichaeism in Augustine's *Confessiones*', in Luigi Cirillo & Alois Van Tongerloo (eds.), *Atti del Terzo Congresso Internazionale di Studi 'Manicheismo e Oriente Cristiano Antico', Arcavacata di Rende-Amantea, 31 agosto–5 settembre 1993*, Turnhout–Leuven 1997: Brepols Publishers, 235–248.

⁶ Published as: Johannes van Oort, *Augustinus' Confessiones. Gnostische en christelijke spiritualiteit in een diepzinnig document*, Turnhout: Brepols 2002.

⁷ Published as: Annemaré Kotzé, *Augustine's Confessiones. Communicative Purpose and Audience*, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2004.

⁸ Annemaré Kotzé, 'Reading Psalm 4 to the Manichaeans', *VC* 55 (2001) 119–136.

⁹ Annemaré Kotzé, "The "Anti-Manichaean" Passage in *Confessiones* 3 and its "Manichaean Audience", *VC* 62 (2008) 187–200.

¹⁰ Annemaré Kotzé, 'Protreptic, Paraenetic and Augustine's *Confessiones*', in: Jacob Albert van den Berg a.o. (eds.), *In Search of Truth: Augustine, Manichaeism and Other Gnosticism. Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2011, 3–23.

¹¹ See e.g. the explicit remark in 'Reading Psalm 4 to the Manichaeans', 120–121: '... can we assume that the Manicheans would read the Confessions? Courcelle [i.e., P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de saint Augustin*, Paris 1968, 236–237] seems to believe that they did and that Secundinus, a prominent Manichean auditor, alludes to the *Confessiones* in a letter to Augustine. I argue however, that the strongest evidence for this possibility is *internal evidence*' (italics JvO).

¹² As I did already in my 1986 Utrecht dissertation on Augustine's *City of God*, the English version of which was published as *Jerusalem and Babylon. A Study into Augustine's City of God*

to detect where and when Augustine was directly inspired by Manichaean texts and concepts and how (and why) he made use of them either in a positive, accepting manner (i.e., consciously or subconsciously integrating Manichaean concepts into his own thinking), or simply in a negative (i.e., anti-Manichaean) fashion.

2. ANALYSIS OF *CONF.* 10

In the past decades, the main focus was on the analysis of Manichaean elements in Augustine's *Confessions* 3 and 9. More or less general remarks have been made on Books 11–13 as well, and apart from some other passages, the same goes for parts of Books 1, 2, 4 and 5.¹³ Book 10 of the *Confessions*, however, being the longest one of the whole work (and to a certain extent still its compositional riddle),¹⁴ has been passed over in silence. I will not enter the issue of Augustine's compositional technique here, but only (and 'simply') remark that Books 1–9 focus on Augustine's past and 11–13 deal with the creation account of Genesis 1. Between these two distinct parts we find Book 10, the long discourse on Augustine's present dispositions.¹⁵

2.1. *Book 10 and Its Division*

A general division of Book 10 may be as follows. Its first paragraphs provide an extensive introduction (10,1–7); after that Augustine commences his self-analysis (10,8–11), which is followed by his discussion of memory (10,12–28).

and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities, Leiden-New York-København-Köln: E.J. Brill 1991 (repr. Leiden-Boston: Brill 2013). See e.g. *Jerusalem and Babylon*, 16.

¹³ See, apart from James O'Donnell's sparse though often pertinent remarks (James J. O'Donnell, *Confessions*, II, *Commentary on Books 1–7*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1992 and idem, *Confessions*, III, *Commentary on Books 8–13; Indexes*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1992), e.g. André Mandouze, 'Le Livre V des *Confessions* de saint Augustin', in: *Le Confessioni di Agostino d'Ipbona, Libri III–V*, Palermo: Edizioni Augustinus 1974, 39–55; Leo C. Ferrari, 'The Pear-Theft in Augustine's "Confessions"', *REA* 16 (1970) 233–242; and now in particular Jason David BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma, I: Conversion and Apostasy, 373–388 C.E.*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2010, *passim* for Books 1, 2 and 4.

¹⁴ The question of the literary unity of *conf.* is a topic since, in particular, the groundbreaking study of E. Williger, 'Der Aufbau der Konfessiones Augustins', *ZNW* 28 (1929) 325–332, who opined that Augustine first wrote Books 1–9 and 11–13 and later added Book 10. He was supported by, for instance, Courcelle (*Recherches*, 25), but disputed by, among others, G.N. Knauer, *Psalmenzitate in Augustins Konfessionen*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1955.

¹⁵ Cf. *BA* 14, 141: 'Les dispositions actuelles d'Augustin'.

Augustine subsequently deals with the quest for the happy life and for God (10,29–40), discusses the temptations of human life (10,41–64), and concludes the book by reflecting on his inquiry (10,65–66). His final meditation is on man's reconciliation with God (10,67–70).

2.2. *The Opening Passage* (conf. 10,1)

As a rule Augustine follows classical practice in indicating the theme of a work or book at its beginning. Looking for clues to find the central theme of Book 10, we read its first paragraph:

Cognoscam te, cognitor meus, cognoscam sicut et cognitus sum. virtus animae meae, intra in eam et coapta tibi, ut habeas et possideas sine macula et ruga. haec est mea spes, ideo loquor et in ea spe gaudeo, quando sanum gaudeo. cetera vero vitae huius tanto minus flenda, quanto magis fletur, et tanto magis flenda, quanto minus fletur in eis. ecce enim veritatem dilexisti, quoniam qui facit eam, venit ad lucem. volo eam facere in corde meo coram te in confessione, in stilo autem meo coram multis testibus.

In translation:

May I know you, who knows me. May I 'know as I also am known' (1 Cor. 13:12). Power of my soul, enter into it and prepare it for yourself, so that you may have and hold it 'without spot or wrinkle' (Eph. 5:27). This is my hope, therefore I speak (cf. Ps. 116:10), and in this hope do I rejoice when I rejoice healthfully (*sanum*). But the other things of this life are the less to be wept for, the more they are wept for; and the more to be wept for, the less they are wept for. 'Behold, you have loved the truth' (Ps. 51:8), for 'he who does' it 'comes to the light' (John 3:21). This I desire to do, in my heart before you in confession, and in my writing 'before many witnesses'. (1 Tim. 6:12)

At first glance these sentences are nothing unusual in the context of the work. Augustine confesses that all his hope and joy is in God. Moreover, as is typical for his writing, he intersperses his words with biblical ones from Paul and the Psalms in particular.

A closer look at the opening passage may provide some clues as regard the specific audience addressed. Previous research indicated the intended audience of the *Confessions* as being by no means one-dimensional. Apart from the traditional *servi dei*, the spiritually advanced 'servants of God', being the peers of Augustine the bishop and writer,¹⁶ a broad spectrum of possible readers has been indicated: people to be converted to (Catholic) Christianity; recently converted Catholics; Catholic Christians under pressure of

¹⁶ Cf. *conf.* 10,6.

Manichaean proselytizing; Manichaeans of diverse rank and conviction.¹⁷ An important marker may be the fact that in the immediately preceding Book 9 the Manichaeans are addressed directly¹⁸ and, moreover, Books 11–13 offer a Genesis exegesis closely connected with Manichaean issues. Something Manichaean might be expected in Book 10 as well.

A first clue emerges from Augustine's reference to knowledge in the opening sentence. Manichaeism is a form of Gnosticism and claims to supply saving knowledge.¹⁹ This knowledge (γνώσις, Coptic ⲄⲁⲎⲎⲉ) is often specified as 'the knowledge of truth'²⁰ or, for instance, 'the knowledge of thy (sc. Jesus' or Mani's) hope (ἐλπίς)'.²¹ In a Manichaean text it is stated that 'the youth' (a manifestation of the redeeming Christ figure²²) reveals itself and that its knowledge and truth and wisdom illumine the soul.²³ Augustine's speaking of knowledge through recourse to a quote from a well-known Pauline letter²⁴ appears to be indicative. It may be valued as the first indication of the book's subject matter.

Augustine continues by saying: 'Power of my soul, enter into it and prepare it for yourself, so that you may have and hold it without spot or wrinkle'. 'Without spot and wrinkle' is reminiscent of Eph. 5:27 and, moreover, calls to mind the image of a bride. In the Manichaean *Psalm-Book* both the Church (ἐκκλησία) and the soul (ψυχή) are called 'bride'.²⁵ Manichaeism was also a form of Christian mysticism.²⁶ Here we see that Augustine's words strongly

¹⁷ Kotze, 'Confessions 3', 188. For the Roman Manichaean Secundinus' reading of (parts of) the *conf.*, see Johannes van Oort, 'Secundini Manichaei Epistula: Roman Manichaean "Biblical" Argument in the Age of Augustine', in: *idem* a.o. (eds.), *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West*, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2001 (repr. 2012), 163. Cf. Courcelle, *Recherches*, 236–238.

¹⁸ *Conf.* 9,9; cf. 8,22.

¹⁹ See e.g. Mani's Gospel as quoted in the *Cologne Mani Codex* (= *CMC*) p. 68 ff.

²⁰ C.R.C. Allberry (ed. and transl.), *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, Part II (Manichaean Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Collection, Vol. II), Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer 1938, p. 6, l. 23.

²¹ *Manichaean Psalm-Book* 85,25.

²² In Manichaeism, Christ is the central redeeming figure or principle specified by different names.

²³ *Psalm-Book* 105,27–28: 'thy knowledge / and thy Truth and thy Wisdom illumine the soul'.

²⁴ I.e., also well known to Manichaeans. See e.g. *Psalm-Book* 121,9. Cf. Alexander Böhlig, *Die Bibel bei den Manichäern und verwandte Studien*, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2012, 198–199 and *passim*.

²⁵ E.g. *Psalm-Book* 159,1 and 3: 'The Bride is the Church (ἐκκλησία), the Bridegroom is [...] / The Bride is the soul (ψυχή), the Bridegroom is Jesus'.

²⁶ See below n. 34 for an indication of Manichaean mysticism. I still think that the most important *impetus* of Augustine's own mysticism came from his Manichaean past; cf. 'Augustin und der Manichäismus', *ZRGG* 46 (1994) 126–142, esp. 142.

parallel Manichaeic mystical concepts. This observation is further validated by the reference to Christ as *virtus*, power.²⁷ According to Manichaeic doctrine, with reference to 1 Cor. 1:24, Christ is the wisdom and power of God.²⁸

The next sentence is remarkable as well: 'This is my hope, therefore I speak (cf. Ps. 116:10), and in this hope do I rejoice when I rejoice *sanum*, healthfully'. The adverb *sanum* has attracted attention previously.²⁹ The peculiar word seems to be used on purpose. Why? In the *Confessions*, as in Augustine's other writings, the Manichaeans are the *insani*, the mad ones.³⁰ Labeling them this way was common practice. Mani, in Greek Μάνης, was nicknamed Μανείς, the aorist participle passive of the verb μαίνομαι, to be mad.³¹ It will not be by chance that Augustine stresses his '*sanum gaudium*'. Such a joy is not the Manichaeans' joy in their madness! Another pointer to a Manichaeic context seems to be Augustine's differentiating manner of speaking. 'This is *my hope*, therefore I speak, and in *this hope* I rejoice'. Christ who is asked to enter his heart is Augustine's hope, expressed in deliberate contrast to the Manichaeans' speaking of their religion as 'the (true) *hope*' (ἐλπίζ).³²

The next sentence is rather obscure. Already its translation causes difficulties. Perhaps it may run: 'The other things of this life are the less to be wept for, the more they are wept for; and the more to be wept for, the less they are wept for'.³³ Does Augustine refer to his weeping for Monnica

²⁷ Cf. *conf.* 11,10: 'In hoc principio, Deus, fecisti caelum et terram in verbo tuo, in filio tuo, in virtute tua ...'.

²⁸ See Faustus in *c. Faust.* 20,2.

²⁹ *The Confessions of Augustine*. Edited by John Gibb (...) and William Montgomery (...). Cambridge: University Press 1927, 272: 'The adverb [sc. *sanum*] is noted as an 'addendum lexicis latinis' in Archiv für Lat. Lexicog. 1898, p. 52'.

³⁰ E.g. *conf.* 9,8; 13,45; *c. Faust.* 12,6.

³¹ See e.g. Titus of Bostra, *Adv. Man.* (Gr.) 1,10 (ed. De Lagarde 5, 29); Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66,1 ff. (ed. K. Holl [-J. Dummer], *GCS* 37, 14 ff.). Cf. e.g. Eusebius, *HE* 7,31 (ed. E. Schwartz, *GCS* 9,2, 716).

³² Such was already the case with Mani. According to the *CMC*, his own Gospel is 'the Gospel of his most holy hope (ἐλπίζ)' (*CMC* p. 66); he said in this Gospel that he 'proclaimed hope (ἐλπίζ)' (*CMC* 67), and (in all probability also in the Gospel) it is stated that Mani's Syzygos brought to him 'the noblest hope (ἐλπίζ)' (*CMC* 69). In Coptic Manichaica such as the *Psalm-Book* and the *Kephalaia*, passages on Mani and Manichaeism as 'the (holy) hope (ἐλπίζ)' abound.

³³ Henry Chadwick, in his rightly acclaimed *Saint Augustine, Confessions. Translated with an Introduction and Notes*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1991, 179, renders: 'As to the other pleasures of life, regret at their loss should be in inverse proportion to the extent to which one weeps for losing them. The less we weep for them, the more we ought to be weeping'. But this rendering seems to make the passage even more enigmatic.

in Book 9? But what meaning would this convey in the context? Or is he 'simply' saying here that, apart from the knowledge of God, all other things of life should be deemed null and void? The words are uttered in the context of a quote from Ps. 51 (LXX 50), the famous *miserere*. The very same Psalm is quoted in the refrain of one of the typically mystic 'Psalms of the Wanderers' in the Manichaean *Psalm-Book*.³⁴ It may be noted as well that weeping is an essential element in Mani's religion.³⁵ In the *Psalm-Book* the name of one of Mani's own (semi-)canonical writings is handed down as 'The Weeping'.³⁶ From other passages in the *Psalm-Book* we may infer that this writing was often recited³⁷ and in one of the Psalms of the Bema it is stated: 'Blessed are thy (i.e. Mani's) loved ones that shed their tears for thee'.³⁸ Is Augustine polemicizing here against a well-known Manichaean habit and does he assess it as being opposed to true Christian life style?

The text continues with "Behold, you have loved the truth" (Ps. 51:8), for "he who does" it "comes to the light" (John 3:21). The word truth (*veritas*) is highly significant, because Mani, in his Gospel, already proclaimed himself to be 'I, Mani, apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God, the Father of truth' (ἀλήθεια),³⁹ and in his letter to Edessa he states that he speaks 'the truth (ἀλήθεια) and the secrets'.⁴⁰ From the *Cologne Mani Codex*,⁴¹ from many other Manichaean writings,⁴² and not least from Augustine's own testimony in *conf.* 3,10,⁴³ we know that the Manichaeans continuously emphasized their proclamation of 'the truth'. Augustine, in all likelihood in opposition to this claim, confesses his new (Catholic) Christian love for the truth and

³⁴ *Psalm-Book* 159,21ff.: 'Put in me a holy heart, my God: let an upright / Spirit be new within me. / The holy heart is Christ: if he rises in us, / we also shall rise in him. / Christ has risen, the dead shall rise with him. If we believe / in him, we shall pass beyond death and come to life.'

³⁵ On the phenomenon see esp. N.A. Pedersen, *Studies in the Sermon on the Great War: Investigations of a Manichaean-Coptic Text from the Fourth Century*, Aarhus University Press 1994, 113–115 and 200–222.

³⁶ *Psalm-Book* 47,1.

³⁷ *Psalm-Book* 162,23–24: 'O Father, o Mind of Light, come and wear me until I have recited the woe [i.e., the Weeping] of the Son of Man'. We find the same in *Psalm-Book* 178,1–2.

³⁸ *Psalm-Book* 44,27–28.

³⁹ *CMC* 66.

⁴⁰ *CMC* 64.

⁴¹ See also *CMC* 16; 29; 41 etc.

⁴² E.g. *Psalm-Book* 3,12.20; 6,5.23; 9,5.9 etc.; [H.J. Polotsky & A. Böhlig, ed. and transl.], *Kephalaia*, Band I, 1. Hälfte (Lieferung 1–10), Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag 1940, p. 5,31.32; etc.

⁴³ *Conf.* 3,10: 'et dicebant: veritas et veritas, et multum eam dicebant mihi ...'; see further 'Manichaeism and Anti-Manichaeism in Augustine's *Confessiones*' (n. 5).

its implementation. In this way, he 'comes to the light'. This turn of phrase seems to be an evident (antithetical) allusion to the religion preached by Mani, 'the Apostle of Light'.⁴⁴

The last sentence of the opening passage restates Augustine's intention to do the truth (a) in confession in his heart *coram Deo*, and (b) in his writing before many witnesses. Truth (*veritatem, eam, eam*) and knowledge (*cognoscam, cognitor, cognoscam, cognitus*) are keywords in the passage, and both concepts are clearly reminiscent of the story of Augustine's first acquaintance with Manichaeism in *conf.* 3,10.⁴⁵ In Manichaeism truth and knowledge are closely related, for the Elect acquire knowledge of eternal truth. It seems quite likely that Augustine, where he starts a new section of his writing,⁴⁶ uses these words with a specific purpose in mind. They are pointers to direct the reader's mind towards the writer's intention. Augustine is a converted person, known by God (*sicut ego et cognitus sum*), and after his (sudden) conversion comes the transformation of the inner self.⁴⁷ The essence of this transformation is indicated as 'coming to the light' and, in the following chapters of Book 10, initiated by self-analysis. As seems to be the case in this programmatic introductory paragraph, the terms used in the analysis of the inner self may invoke elements of his Manichaean past.

2.3. *Beginning the Search for God in Memory* (*conf.* 10.7ff.)

Explicit terms that might recall Manichaean matters are sparse in the immediately following paragraphs. Although words like abyss (*abyssus*, 10,2), hidden (*occultus*, 10,2) or groaning (*gemitus*, 10,2) are well known from Manichaean texts,⁴⁸ here there seems to be no reason for ascribing a Manichaean meaning to them. The same may go for Christ addressed as 'physician of

⁴⁴ For Mani as the Apostle of Light, see e.g. *Psalm-Book* 139,48. Although, as far as I can see, only in later tradition Manichaeism itself is called 'the Religion of Light', 'coming to the light' seems to be a term for joining Mani's church, while the opposite position of 'leaving the light' is described as 'the passage of light' through someone. See Augustine, *util. cred.* 3: 'lumen per illum transitum fecit'.

⁴⁵ Cf. the analysis in 'Manichaeism and Anti-Manichaeism in Augustine's *Confessiones*' (n. 5).

⁴⁶ After he concluded Books I–IX, in which so many sections are specifically aimed at a Manichaean audience; or even after completing Books I–IX and also XI–XIII in which the Manichaean views are a specific target of polemic.

⁴⁷ Perhaps one may say, in theological terms, that the *iustificatio* is followed by the *sanctificatio*.

⁴⁸ See e.g. *Psalm-Book* 2,4.11.15; 3,24; 10,9 etc. for abyss; idem 1,4; 7,16; 12,13 etc. for hidden; idem 142,19; 209,13–14 for groaning.

my most intimate self' (*medice meus intime*, 10,3), although the designation of Christ as physician is typical of both Augustine⁴⁹ and the Manichaeans.⁵⁰ The immediate context, however, does not provide an indication to label the expression as 'Manichaean'.⁵¹ There is, on the other hand, an evident hint at his former coreligionists when Augustine, in his long prayer, says to God 'that You cannot be in any way subjected to violence' (10,7).⁵² We often find this notion in the *Confessions*, as part of Augustine's standard repertoire of anti-Manichaean polemic.⁵³

The following sections deserve specific attention. After having stated in 10,7 that he, a human person, does not fully know himself, Augustine continues in 10,8 by first expounding that the love of God, whose nature is superior to all things, is acquired by the knowledge of the senses. The text of 10,8 runs:

Non dubia, sed certa conscientia, domine, amo te. percussisti cor meum verbo tuo, et amavi te. sed et caelum et terra et omnia, quae in eis sunt, ecce undique mihi dicunt, ut te amem, nec cessant dicere omnibus, ut sint inexcusabiles. altius autem tu misereberis, cui misertus eris, et misericordiam praestabis, cui misericors fueris: alioquin caelum et terra surdis loquuntur laudes tuas. quid autem amo, cum te amo? non speciem corporis nec decus temporis, non candorem lucis ecce istum amicum oculis, non dulces melodias cantilenarum omnimodarum, non florum et ungentorum et aromatum sua violentiam, non manna et mella, non membra acceptabilia carnis amplexibus: non haec amo, cum amo deum meum. et tamen amo quandam lucem et quandam vocem et quandam odorem et quandam cibum et quandam amplexum, cum amo deum meum, lucem, vocem, odorem, cibum, amplexum interioris hominis mei, ubi fulget animae meae, quod non capit locus, et ubi sonat, quod non

⁴⁹ See e.g. R. Arbesmann, 'Christ the *medicus humilis* in St. Augustine', *Augustinus Magister*, II, Paris: Études Augustiniennes 1954, 623–629; *idem*, 'The Concept of *Christus medicus* in St. Augustine', *Traditio* 10 (1954) 1–28; P.C.J. Eijkenboom, *Het Christus-medicusmotief in de preken van Sint Augustinus*, Assen: Van Gorcum 1960.

⁵⁰ See e.g. V. Arnold-Döben, *Die Bildersprache des Manichäismus*, Köln: In Kommission bei E.J. Brill 1978, 98 ff.; A. Böhlig, *Die Gnosis, III, Der Manichäismus*, Zürich & München: Artemis Verlag 1980, 247, 249, 255 ff. For Mani himself as physician, see e.g. L.J.R. Ort, *Mani: A Religio-historical Description of his Personality*, Leiden: E.J. Brill 1967, 95–101; W.B. Oerter, 'Mani als Arzt? Zur Deutung eines manichäischen Bildes', in: V. Vavřínek (ed.), *From Late Antiquity to Early Byzantium*, Praha: Academia 1985, 219–223 (220–221).

⁵¹ Cf. *conf.* 10,39: 'medicus es, aeger sum'. A Manichaean context, however, may be assumed for *conf.* 2,15 (*non me derideat ab eo medico aegrum sanari*), as perhaps also for 4,5 (... *sed non ut medicus. nam illius morbi tu sanator, qui resistis superbis, humilibus autem das gratiam*).

⁵² *Conf.* 10,7: 'te novi nullo modo posse violari'.

⁵³ E.g. *conf.* 7,3; cf. *conf.* 7,6 and many other passages in which God's 'harmlessness' (*innocens*) and 'incorruptness' (*incorruptus*) is stressed.

rapit tempus, et ubi olet, quod non spargit flatus, et ubi sapit, quod non minuit edacitas, et ubi haeret, quod non divellit satietas. hoc est quod amo, cum deum meum amo.

In a quite literal translation:

Not with uncertain, but with assured consciousness do I love you, Lord. You pierced my heart with your word, and I loved you. But also the heaven and earth and everything in them, behold, on all sides they tell me to love you. Nor do they cease to speak to all, 'so that they are without excuse' (Rom. 1:20). But more deeply you will have mercy on whom you will have mercy and will show pity on whom you will have pity (Rom. 9:15). Otherwise heaven and earth do utter your praises to deaf ears. But what do I love, when I love you? Not corporeal beauty, nor temporal splendour, nor the brightness of the light which, behold, is so pleasant to these (earthly) eyes, nor the sweet melodies of all kinds of songs, nor the fragrant smell of flowers, and ointments, and herbs, nor manna and honey, nor limbs acceptable to the embraces of the flesh. It is not these I love when I love my God. And yet I love some sort of light, and sound, and fragrance, and food, and embrace when I love my God—the light, sound, fragrance, food, and embrace of my inner man. It is there that shines unto my soul what space can not contain, it is there that sounds what time snatches not away, it is there that smells what no breeze disperses, it is there that is tasted what no eating diminishes, and it is there that clings what no satiety can part. This is what I love, when I love my God.

One may say that the famous dictum 'You pierced (*percussisti*) my heart with your word and I loved you' is reminiscent of the famous Manichaeism concept of Call and Answer (or Hearing). In Manichaeism the human soul is considered to answer to the call from the heavenly world and, in this way, man becomes a gnostic. In many Manichaeism texts Call and Answer are even hypostasized as heavenly entities.⁵⁴ Moreover, in the Manichaeism *Psalm-Book* it is said that 'Jesus is ... in the heart of his Faithful (*πιστός*)⁵⁵ and that 'the word of God' (i.e., Jesus) 'dwells (...) in heart of the Continent (*ἐγκρατής*)'.⁵⁶ Besides, it runs in the *Psalm-Book*: 'Since I knew thee, my Spirit, I have loved thee'.⁵⁷ All this seems to indicate a Manichaeism tradition in the background of Augustine's famous dictum; or at least some echo of Manichaeism phraseology. It is difficult to believe that Christ is depicted as some sort of heavenly Cupid,⁵⁸ and that Augustine's formulation here is

⁵⁴ E.g. *Psalm-Book* 133,29; 138,7–8.17–18; 139,28; 199,9; *Keph.* p. 43,3; 182,1 ff.

⁵⁵ *Psalm-Book* 161,7–8.

⁵⁶ *Psalm-Book* 151,15–19.

⁵⁷ *Psalm-Book* 169,21.

⁵⁸ Chadwick, *Augustine, Confessions* (n. 33), 156 and 183. Chadwick, *Confessions*, 156 n. 2 states: 'The symbol of Christ as heavenly Eros was familiar from the Latin version of Origen's

meant only to express the same sense as *conf.* 9,3: 'You pierced (*sagittaveras*) my heart with the arrow of your love'.⁵⁹ The last-mentioned dictum became the source of the well-known emblem of Augustine, a burning heart pierced with an arrow.

The terms used to describe the object of Augustine's love, however, are much more conspicuous in our context. 'But what do I love, when I love you? Not corporeal beauty, nor temporal splendour, nor the brightness of the light which, behold, is so pleasant to these (earthly) eyes, nor the sweet melodies of all kinds of songs, nor the fragrant smell of flowers, and ointments, and herbs, nor manna and honey, nor limbs acceptable to the embraces of the flesh. It is not these I love when I love my God'. God is described in terms which are unmistakably reminiscent of Manichaean terms, concepts, and religious practices. It is as if Augustine brings to mind to both himself *and* his readers the sensory experiences of the Manichaean religious services. According to Manichaean belief, God is Light substance and this Light is dispersed throughout the world, in particular in certain foods. Such foods (fruits like melons, figs, olives, and also cucumbers) are beautiful and splendid and bright because of their light substance.⁶⁰ During the sacred meals of the Manichaean Elect (which meals are rightly termed 'eucharist'⁶¹) sweet melodies of all kinds of songs resound.⁶² There is evidence that flowers, ointments, and herbs were part of these sacred meals,⁶³ and also manna and honey were well known.⁶⁴ Furthermore, in Manichaeism not only the godly light substance set free through the sacred meal is adored because of its beauty, splendour, brightness and so on, but God and the godly world are described in the same terms. The 'Song of the Lovers' (*amatorium canticum*) quoted by Augustine in his *Reply to Faustus* communicates that the

commentary on the Song of Songs. Augustine's African critic, Arnobius the younger, could write of "Christ our Cupid"! As far as I can see, Chadwick is not followed in this opinion.

⁵⁹ *Conf.* 9,3: 'Sagittaveras tu corde nostrum caritate tua ...'

⁶⁰ See e.g. *mor.* 2,43.

⁶¹ Cf. Jason D. BeDuhn, 'Eucharist or Yasna? Antecedents of Manichaean food ritual', in R.E. Emmerick a.o. (eds.), *Studia Manichaica IV: Internationaler Kongreß zum Manichäismus, Berlin, 14.–18. Juli 1997*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag 2000, 14–36.

⁶² For music, see for instance a miniature from Kocho, ruin K (MIK III 6368) in Zsuzsanna Gulácsi, *Manichaean Art in Berlin Collections*, Turnhout: Brepols 2001, 92–95, which 'Hymnody Scene' might already depict music in a liturgical setting, either an Alms Service Scene or even a Bema Scene. See further e.g. the 'Psalms of the Bema' in Manichaean *Psalm-Book*, 1–47.

⁶³ E.g. *mor.* 2, 39.

⁶⁴ The Hebrew word manna occurs in e.g. *Psalm-Book* 136,38 and 139,58. Curiously, it is also mentioned in *CMC* 107 and in *c. Faust.* 19,22. For honey, see e.g. *Psalm-Book* 158,27 and 184,13.

Manichaeic God is conceived as being crowned with flowers (*floreis coronis cinctum*) and surrounded by twelve Aeons (*duodecim saecula*) clothed in flowers (*floribus convestita*), full of melodious sounds (*canoribus plena*) and throwing their flowers at the Father's face (*in faciem patris flores suos iactantia*). Besides, the 'fields' (*campi*) of the godly world are visualized as 'abounding with sweet scent and hills and trees and seas and rivers which flow forever with sweet nectar'.⁶⁵ Moreover, in the Manichaeic sources the godly Light dispersed throughout the world is identified as 'the members' (*membra*) of God which are enclosed in matter,⁶⁶ which matter is often named 'the flesh' (*caro*).⁶⁷

Augustine's quest for God as the object of his love is, very surprisingly, described in terms which denote that God is *not* to be conceived physically, i.e. not in a physical-material way such as the Manichaeans conceive their God. Thus, still in about 400 when Augustine wrote this part of the *Confessions*, his gnostic past was at the forefront of his mind.

2.4. God and the Five Senses

The passage in which Augustine commences his self-analysis discloses more. The question is: When I love God, what do I love? Augustine's answer runs: it has nothing to do with the five *physical* senses. Up to now researchers have attributed Augustine's speaking of five physical senses to his rhetorical

⁶⁵ *C. Faust.* 15,5–6: 'annon recordaris amatorium canticum tuum, ubi describis maximum regnantem regem, sceptrigerum perennem, floreis coronis cinctum et facie rutilantem? (...) sequeris enim cantando et adiungis duodecim saecula floribus convestita et canoribus plena et in faciem patris flores suos iactantia. ubi et ipsos duodecim magnos quosdam deos profiteris, termos per quattuor tractus, quibus ille unus circumcingitur. (...) invitavit enim te doctrina daemoniorum mendaciloquorum ad fictas domos angelorum, ubi flat aura salubris, et ad campos ubi scatenat aromata, cuius arbores et montes, maria et flumina, dulce nectar fluunt per cuncta saecula. (...) itane tu facie ad faciem uidisti regnantem regem sceptrigerum floreis coronis etc.

⁶⁶ E.g. *c. Faust.* 6,4; 6,8; 8,2; 13,6; 13,18; 15,7 etc. A fine example as well is in *En. in Ps.* 140,12: 'Dei membra uexat, qui terram sulco discindit; Dei membra uexat, qui herbam de terra vellit; Dei membra vexat qui pomum carpit de arbore (...). Membra iniquiunt, illa Dei quae capta sunt in illo praelio, mixta sunt universo mundo et sunt in arboribus, in herbis, in pomis, in fructibus (...). Panem mendicanti non porrigit; quaeris quare? Ne vitam quae est in pane, quam dicunt membrum Dei, substantiam divinam, mendicus ille accipiat, et liget eam in carne.' See in the Coptic sources e.g. *Psalm-Book* 127,29–31: '... because of the bond which is upon thy [i.e. the Father's] members (μέλος)' and 128, 2: 'thy members (μέλος)'.
⁶⁷ E.g. *c. Faust.* 6,4: '... ut ipsa dei membra esse credatis, a carnis carcere dimittantur ...'; 6,6: 'Cur autem, si carnis vesci non vultis, non ipsa animalia deo vestro oblata mactatis, ut ipsa dei membra esse credatis, a carnis carcere dimittantur'. Cf. the quote from *En. in Ps.* 140,12 above.

training. Is this correct? Five human senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell have been distinguished in Greek and Roman philosophy from ancient times onwards and, for Augustine's own time, one may indeed speak of 'a rhetorical device'.⁶⁸ But is, for instance, a classical writer such as Cicero his real source? It should be noted that the concept of five senses was well known in Manichaean circles⁶⁹ and, in all likelihood, even to Mani himself.⁷⁰ Manichaean religious practice, rooted in the concept of God as physical Light substance, was finely attuned to the sensory. It seems quite likely that in his talking about God, i.e. in his very *theo-logy*, Augustine is influenced by Manichaean manners of speaking.

This may already be observed in the next sentences. Although Augustine rejects the idea that direct knowledge of God can be attained via the *physical* senses, he retains the scheme of the five senses as a way to acquire knowledge of God. Instead of the physical senses, he speaks of their spiritual counterparts: God is a certain light, voice, odour, food and embrace sensed *by the inner person*. The scheme of the five senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch) in order to know God is retained, but in a non-material way. Both the material and, as its counterpart, the explicitly non-material manner of speaking seems to be inspired by Manichaean thinking. It is aimed at Manichaean readers in particular.

There is another interesting and even essential aspect. As a rule Manichaeism is considered as representing only a material world view, i.e. only believing in physical substances. Interesting passages in the *Kephalaia* demonstrate this view to be one-sided.⁷¹ First, there is a chapter in the *Kephalaia* in which Mani is said to have spoken of the (internal) intellectual qualities of consideration, counsel, insight, thought and mind through which the soul ascends to the Father and the aeons of glory.⁷² Such a text clearly demonstrates the idea of an *internal* and *mental* process of salvation in Manichaeism. Besides, many *Kephalaia* speak of the work of the Light Mind—a Manichaean concept close (and probably even identical) to the

⁶⁸ E.g. O'Donnell, *Commentary*, III, 167.

⁶⁹ E.g. *Psalm-Book* 150,22–26.

⁷⁰ See the *Letter to Menoch* (which, in all probability, is a genuine letter of Mani) in Augustine's *c. Iul. op. imp.* III,175: '... sive per visum, sive per tactum, sive per auditum, sive per odoratum, sive per gustum ...'.

⁷¹ The *Kephalaia* are quoted according to page numbers and lines in Polotsky & Böhlig, *Kephalaia* (n. 42). English translation: Iain Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher. The edited Coptic Manichaean Texts in Translation with Commentary* (NHMS XXXVII), Leiden-New York-Köln: E.J. Brill 1995.

⁷² *Keph.* Ch. 2, p. 16,32–23,13; cf. Gardner, *Kephalaia*, 22–26.

general Christian concept of Holy Spirit.⁷³ For instance in *Kephalaion* 38⁷⁴ it is stated that, according to Mani, this Light Mind (Νοῦς) enters the Elect and transforms 'the old man' into 'the new man'⁷⁵ by freeing the five intellectual qualities of mind, thought, insight, counsel, and consideration. In this way the Manichaean Elect is transformed into 'a new man', a transformation which purifies his spiritual intellect so that he can ascend *in his heart* to God the Father.⁷⁶ There seems to be even a text in which God is described as consisting of five great light limbs (μέλη), each of these limbs being connected with an element (light, perfume, voice, etc.) that can be perceived by one of the five senses.⁷⁷

Evidently, the passage from the *conf.* analyzed above has a Manichaean flavour. In the following paragraphs both Manichaean and anti-Manichaean elements may be detected as well.⁷⁸ Augustine continues his argument by stating that even 'sensing' God with one's spiritual faculties does not provide real knowledge of God. One has to delve deeper. Is God the life of the body? This idea is rejected as well: God is not this, but the *vitae vita*, the life of life (10,10). Neither is He the mind (*animus*), for also animals have mind and they also perceive through the body.

2.5. *God and Memory: conf. 10,12–13 and Kephalaion 56 Compared*

Augustine continues by asking: May God be found in my memory? I will not follow his full train of thought, but look at his terminology in particular. Augustine's theory of memory has become world famous; it is by no means my intention, when looking for the possible sources of his theory, to detract of this fame. Previous researchers have been rather vague

⁷³ See e.g. *Keph.* p. 143,29,32; 189,30 and 190,2,3,6 where the Light Mind is explicitly called 'Holy Spirit'.

⁷⁴ *Keph.* p. 89,18–102,12; cf. Gardner, 93–105.

⁷⁵ Cf. Paul and Pauline theology in e.g. Rom 6–7; Eph 4,22–23; cf. 2 Cor 4,16; Col. 3,9.

⁷⁶ *Keph.* p. 100,7–10 in Gardner's translation (Gardner, 103–104): 'He [i.e. the Light Mind] bestows a great spirit upon the elect one. Indeed, now may you find him, as he stands on the earth, *rising up in his heart and ascending to the Father*, the God of truth' (italics mine). Cf. for this process of transformation and renewing by the Light Nous of the old man into the new man e.g. *Keph.* p. 172,3–4; 215,1–5; etc.

⁷⁷ *Keph.* 21, p. 64,13–65,13; Gardner, 67–68. Unfortunately the text is rather defective.

⁷⁸ See e.g. Augustine's speaking of the 'fores carnis meae' in *conf.* 10,9 and the 'doors' [of the fleshly body] in *Keph.* 141,15–16 etc.. The opinion expressed in 10,9 that those who are of sound mind (*quibus integer sensus est*) hear truth speaking: 'Your God is not earth or heaven or any physical body' (*veritas dicit enim mihi: non est deus tuus terra et caelum neque omne corpus*) seems to be directed against Manichaean thinking as well.

about the sources of his discussions of memory.⁷⁹ They refer to Platonic and Aristotelian influences in general terms, and also state that Augustine was influenced by eclectic philosophers like Cicero.⁸⁰ As far as Platonism is concerned, of course its doctrine of recollection, still prominent in Middle Platonism and Neo-Platonic thinkers like Plotinus, has been indicated as playing an important part in Augustine's considerations.⁸¹ With regard to Aristotelian influences, Aristotle's explanation of the nature of the soul and its relationship to mind, and how memory proceeds, is deemed to be important as well.⁸² All this does not imply that Augustine himself read works of Aristotle such as *De anima* (in actual fact we only know of an independent study of *Categories*⁸³), but, like much of the Platonic and, for instance, the Stoic school tradition, the Stagirite's theories seem to have reached him via doxographic works and eclectic thinkers.⁸⁴ Detecting more precisely the philosophical traces of influence on Augustine, however, does not turn out to be simple. I believe that one should also refer to Manichaean influence.

Part of the curious Manichaean text *Kephalaion* 56 runs (in Gardner's translation⁸⁵) as follows:

138,20 Once again the enlightener (φωστήρ) [= Mani] speaks: The moulder (πλάστης) placed in the form (πλάσμα) of Adam and Eve limbs (μέλος), outside and within, for perception and activity. He [i.e. Adam, or the human form]

⁷⁹ Gerard J.P. O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind*, Berkeley-Los Angeles: University of California Press 1987; Roland Teske, 'Augustine's philosophy of memory', in E. Stump & N. Kretzmann (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2006, 148–158; James J. O'Donnell, 'Memoria', in *Augustinus-Lexikon*, III, Basel: Schwabe 2004–2010, 1249–1257. The recent chapter by Matthew R. Lootens, 'Augustine', in: Paul L. Gavrilyuk & Sarah Coakley, eds., *The Spiritual Senses. Perceiving God in Western Christianity*, Cambridge: CUP 2011, 56–70 mainly deals with Augustine's theory of the 'spiritual senses', which is indicated (56–57 n. 3) as being influenced by either Origen, Plotinus or Ambrose, while for 'corporeal' sensation reference is also made to Stoicism (57 n. 5). Mani or Manichaeism, however, do not show up anywhere in the book.

⁸⁰ E.g. O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind*, nearly *passim* for general theories of the soul (e.g. 15: 'we cannot exclude the possibility of an Augustinian amalgam of Platonic, Peripatetic and Stoic views, with a strong Ciceronian influence') and esp. 131 n. 5 (with reference to Cicero) for memory. Cf. O'Donnell, 'Memoria', 1250.

⁸¹ E.g. O'Daly, *Philosophy*, 199–201; cf. O'Donnell, 'Memoria', 1254.

⁸² E.g. O'Daly, *Philosophy*, 59 f.; 145; cf. O'Donnell, 'Memoria', 1254.

⁸³ *Conf.* 4,28.

⁸⁴ G. Christopher Stead, 'Aristoteles', in *Augustinus-Lexikon*, I, Basel: Schwabe 1986–1994, 445–448.

⁸⁵ Gardner, *Kephalaia*, 146–148. Italics, bold, Greek key terms in round brackets and words in square brackets are mine; ... indicate the lacunae in the manuscript. Cf. the original edition in Polotsky & Böhlig, *Kephalaia*, 138–140.

was apportioned house by house.⁸⁶ For everything that his perceptions (αίσθητήρια) and elements (στοιχεῖα) will receive externally there are internal storehouses (ταμειεῖα) and repositories (ἀποθήκη) and cavities (σπήλαιον); and what is received in to them is stored in them. Whenever they will be *questioned* about what is deposited in their internal storehouses (ταμειεῖα), they bring out what they have received within and give it to the *questioner* (ἀπαιτητής) who requested it of them.

138,30 In this way his faculty (Ἐνθύμησις)⁸⁷ ... outer limbs (μέλος) to look at ... every type within ... also the faculty (Ἐνθύμησις) of **the eyes** has houses and cavities (σπήλαιον) and repositories (ἀποθήκη) and stores within, so that every *image* it might see, whether good or evil, whether loveable or detestable or lustful (ἐπιθυμία), it can receive into its storehouses (ταμειεῖα) and repositories (ἀποθήκη). Also, when the faculty (Ἐνθύμησις) of **the eyes** is pleased to send out the *image* that it saw and took in, it can go in to its storehouses (ταμειεῖα) at the time and think and seek ... and it brings it out and gives it to the *questioner* (ἀπαιτητής) who *requested* it and the one who wanted it. Whether it be something from lust (ἐπιθυμία) ... or an *image* of love or ... something hateful. And thus shall that faculty (Ἐνθύμησις) [of the eyes] produce and do what it does in each category.

139,15 The faculty (Ἐνθύμησις) of **the ears** has its own storehouses (ταμειεῖα) also. Every sound it might receive, whether good or evil, shall be taken in and placed in its houses and inner repositories (ἀποθήκη), and it is guarded in its [storehouses (ταμειεῖα)] ... for a thousand days. After a thousand days, if someone comes and *asks* that faculty (Ἐνθύμησις) about the sound that it heard at this time and took into its storehouses (ταμειεῖα), immediately it shall go into its repositories (ἀποθήκη) and seek and review and search after this word, and send it out from where it was first put, the place in which it was kept.

139,25 In like order, the faculty (Ἐνθύμησις) of **scent** shall function just as that of the eyes and that of the auditory organs. Every odour it shall smell it shall take in to it and deposit in its inner storehouses (ταμειεῖα). Every time it will be asked by a *questioner*, it shall go in ... and ... storehouse (ταμειεῖα) and **remember** ... only these things.

140,1 However, even the mouth and the tongue within it, and the taste organ, have a faculty dwelling in them.

140,3 Again, that faculty (Ἐνθύμησις) too, of **taste**, has thus cavities (σπήλαιον) and repositories (ἀποθήκη) set apart for it. It too receives these tastes and gathers them in. And at any moment when someone will ask of a taste, if ... it shall send it out and remember that taste. It shall snare and give even the mark of that taste; give its **memory** to the *questioner* who *asks* for it.

⁸⁶ Gardner: 'I.e. the physical and mental senses are distributed in the appropriate places throughout the body.'

⁸⁷ Gardner: 'Lit. "thought".'

140,10 Again, the faculty (Ἐνθύμησις) of **touch** by the hands is also so: When it might touch, touch shall receive its **memory**. And it takes it in to its inner repository (ἀποθήκη) until someone will *ask* this faculty (Ἐνθύμησις) for the **memory**. Immediately, it shall go in again and bring out the **memory** of this touch that it made, and give it to whoever *asks* for it.

140,16 And the faculty (Ἐνθύμησις) of *the heart that rules over them all* is much the most like this. Every thing that **these five faculties** (Ἐνθύμησις) will receive and put in store (παραθήκη, *depositum*) for the faculty (Ἐνθύμησις) of the heart it shall receive and guard. Any time that they will *ask* for their deposit it shall send out and give every thing that they gave to it.

It is striking that Augustine, when speaking of memory in *conf.* 10,12–13, uses much the same metaphors. He starts speaking of the *campi et lata praetoria memoriae* (the fields and vast palaces of memory) where are the treasuries of innumerable *imagines* (images, representations, ideas) of all kinds of objects brought in by sense perception. The same is said by Mani: every *image* the faculty of the eyes may see is received into its storehouses (ταμειῖαι) and repositories (ἀποθήκαι). The same goes for the other senses: the faculties of the **ears, scent, taste, and touch**. One may compare what Augustine says in 10,13: it is by the eyes (*per oculos*), by the ears (*per aures*), by the nostrils (*per aditum narium*), by the door of the mouth (*per oris aditum*) and through the touch (*a sensu ... totius corporis quid durum, quid molle* etc.) that all sense perceptions enter memory.

In 10,13 Augustine continues: ‘Memory’s huge cavern (one may compare Mani’s cavities, σπήλαια), with its mysterious, secret and indescribable nooks and crannies (one may compare Mani’s storehouses, ταμειῖαι, and repositories, ἀποθήκαι), receives all these perceptions, to be *recalled* when needed and reconsidered’. The act of recalling in memory is indicated here by the verb *retractare*, but earlier, in 10,12, Augustine speaks of *posco*, I request, and the same is time and again said by Mani (see the first paragraph of *Kephalaion* 56, p. 138,26–29): ‘Whenever they will be questioned about what is deposited in their internal storehouses (ταμειῖα), they bring out what they have received within and give it to the questioner (ἀπαιτητής) who requested it of them’. The same ‘asking’ or ‘requesting’ by the questioner (ἀπαιτητής) is repeated in nearly all the following paragraphs.

Augustine’s next sentence in 10,13 has striking parallels in Mani’s text as well: ‘Each of them enters into memory, each by its own gate, and is put on deposit there’ (*quae omnia suis quaeque foribus intrant ad eam et reponuntur in ea*). One may compare Mani’s speaking of the *doors* of the senses in *Kephalaia* 141,14–17⁸⁸ and later his speaking of the ‘orifices’ or

⁸⁸ *Keph.* 141,14–17 (Gardner, 148): ‘One again the enlightener speaks: Indeed, watchmen are

openings of the body for (the organs of) sight, hearing, smell and speaking in *Kephalaia* 142,1 ff.⁸⁹ These orifices are *guarded by guards*; we shall return to this shortly.

Of course one might say that all these parallels are coincidental and that, in actual fact, they are due to a common philosophical-rhetorical tradition. Such a widespread and strong tradition indeed existed; and for the sources of Augustine's overall theory of memory and the role of the five senses reference may be made to classical authors like Cicero and some others like (possibly) Aristotle. Perhaps we may also say that Mani (and his famous disciple Addai *sive* Adimantus, if he is the real author of the *Kephalaia*) participated in that common philosophical and rhetorical tradition. Thus, Augustine may have been rhetorico-philosophically influenced in this way as well.

But the parallels with the just quoted Manichaean text *Kephalaion* 56 are most striking indeed. And apart from all these parallels (correspondences I could not find in any classical author) there is more. Augustine's theory of the five senses as the basis of memory is incomplete without his speaking of a sixth sense which governs (*praesidet*) the other senses. This is the *sensus interior*. Augustine briefly speaks of it in *conf.* 1,31, but in more elaborate form already in the much earlier written second book of *De libero arbitrio* (2,8–10).⁹⁰ Correspondingly, in *Kephalaion* 56 (140,16) Mani states that the faculty (Ἐνθύμησις) of *the heart* rules over all senses.

2.6. 'Great is the Faculty of Memory' (*conf.* 10,26),
but God Transcends It (*conf.* 10,37)

In the following sections of *conf.* 10 Augustine continues his speaking of memory and the senses, the *vis* or faculty of memory, its storerooms (which are also called *cellae* in 10,16; one may compare Mani's cellarman, κελλαρίτης, in *Kephalaia* 140,27) and so on. He summarizes his considerations in 10,26: 'Great is the faculty of memory (*Magna vis est memoriae*), an awe-inspiring

at these doors guarding them, and bolts are fastened on the doors at the hands of the guards that guard them!

⁸⁹ *Keph.* 142,1 ff. (Gardner, 149): 'The enlightener says: This body too is like the mighty camp. And the gates of the camp with their guards are like the orifices and organs of the body. Now, the orifices of the body are of sight, hearing and smell; and they that send out words.' Etc.

⁹⁰ The work *lib. arb.* deals with the question 'unde malum?'. Begun already in Rome between fall 387 and fall 388 and finished in Africa c. 391–395, it is full of (in particular) anti-Manichaean arguments.

mystery'. It has its 'wide fields' (*campi*), its 'caves' and 'caverns' (cf. Mani's cavities, *σπήλαια*). Here Augustine is in search of God. He goes on and explicitly states that he *does* find God in his memory: 'Since the time I learned to know you, you remain in my *memoria* (memory, consciousness) and there I find you' (10,35). But, 'where then did I find You?' Of course, so Augustine's reasoning, *originally* I did not find God *in my memory*. No, God far transcends my memory! Initially I did not find God in my memory, since He was far above it: 'I found You in Yourself above me': '*in te supra me*'.

2.7. God as Beauty (conf. 10,38)

One should note that, thus far in *conf.* 10, Augustine has spoken of finding God in his memory filled by the senses. But, so he tells us, this does not pertain to his first becoming acquainted with God. In his inward bound search he went beyond memory and even beyond his rational mind (*animus*).

After having described this search for God, Augustine arrives at the perhaps most famous passage in the *Confessions*: he tells of the moment he found God. The passage, in my view, is only fully understandable within a Manichaean context. Not only in Platonic texts (cf. Plotinus, *Enn.* I.6), but in particular in Manichaean texts God is time and again conceived of as being beautiful, fair, and bright.⁹¹ When Augustine tried to find God outside of himself, 'he plunged into those fair things created by God'. At that stage he himself was *deformis*, 'deformed'; this is the same word he uses in *conf.* 4,31 where he describes his Manichaean past.⁹² But, as in Manichaeism, God is here perceived by the five senses, and responded to with love. Already in a Manichaean psalm, one learns to sing "since I knew Thee (...) I have loved Thee".⁹³ The full parallel passage of Augustine runs as follows:

⁹¹ E.g. *Psalm-Book* 61,14–15 (for Jesus); 164,11: '... fair is God ...'; 174,11: 'Fair ... God ...'. Fair here is the refrain. Etc. For God and other figures of the heavenly world as Beauty (Coptic *caie*), see also e.g. *Psalm-Book* 70,11 ((Jesus); 84,31 (the image of the holy Maiden), 95,6 (Jesus 'my beauty'); 148, 30 (the beauty of the Maiden); 166,32 (Jesus as 'beauty of the fair one'); 214, 8 (the beauty of the heavenly Envoy); *Kephalaia* 88,5 (the Beauty of the King of Glory); etc.

⁹² *Conf.* 4,31: 'cum deformiter et sacrilega turpitudine in doctrina pietatis errarem'.

⁹³ *Psalm-Book* 169,21. Another important Manichaean text to be referred to here seems to be *Keph.* 64,13 ff. because here the five great light limbs in each of the twelve light limbs of the Father of Greatness are enumerated as 1. light [which is connected with the sense of sight]; 2. perfume [connected with the sense of smell]; 3. voice [connected with the sense of hearing]; etc. Unfortunately the text which enumerates five [limbs] came to us in a corrupted state, but it seems to be clear that God's qualities or limbs (*μέλος*) are perceived by the senses.—The whole text of *conf.* 10,38 seems to deserve a more extensive analysis in light of Manichaean parallels and (possible) sources.

Late have I loved You, o Beauty so ancient and so new. Late have I loved You. And see, You were within and I without, and there did I seek You. I, deformed, I plunged into those fair things which You made. You were with me, but I was not with You! Those things kept me far from You, which unless they had their existence in You, had no existence at all. You called and cried aloud and forced open my deafness. You did gleam and shine, and chase away my blindness. You were fragrant and I drew in my breath, and now pant after You. I have tasted You, and I feel but hunger and thirst for You. You touched me and I'm set on fire for Your peace.⁹⁴

3. CONCLUSIONS

Here, at this climactic point, we stop our analysis of the first part of *conf.* 10, leaving the remainder (10,39–70) as a subject of future research. Yet, the famous passage *Sero te amavi* also is the quite natural ending of Augustine's dealing with the theme of God, Memory and Beauty. It is at this juncture that we may wind up with some provisional conclusions.

Firstly, it is crystal clear that Hippo's bishop, when writing Book 10 some years after 400, still has his former co-religionists at the forefront of his mind. To a certain extent they determine his manner of reasoning and, conceivably, even the theme he is dealing with.

Secondly, apart from many small reminiscences of Manichaean turns of phrase, it is also clear that pivotal notions such as Augustine's concepts of God, Memory and Beauty are strongly influenced by Manichaean concepts, as a rule in an anti-thetical manner, but also in a positive thetical way.

Thirdly, Augustine seems to have been acquainted with the contents of the Manichaean *Kephalaion* 56, either in a direct way (i.e., by hearing or reading a Latin version of this 'Chapter' of Mani's teaching) or indirectly (i.e., by hearing the essentials of this teaching from Manichaean contemporaries or reading them in Manichaean books).

Fourthly, Augustine's familiarity with Manichaean teaching had a deep effect not only on him, but via his immense influence, also on our intellectual history. Or, stated otherwise, essential elements of 'Western' thought

⁹⁴ *Conf.* 10,38: 'Sero te amavi, pulchritudo tam antiqua et tam nova, sero te amavi! et ecce intus eras et ego foris, et ibi te quaerebam, et in ista formosa, quae fecisti, deformis inruebam. mecum eras, et tecum non eram. ea me tenebant longe a te, quae si in te non essent, non essent. vocasti et clamasti et rupisti surditatem meam: coruscasti, splendisti et fugasti caecitatem meam: fragrasti, et duxi spiritum, et anhelus tibi, gustavi et esurio et sitio, tetigisti me, et exarsi in pacem tuam.'

on memory, as well as on God as being Beauty, appear to have their origins in Mani's teaching.

MANICHAEAN SELF-DESIGNATIONS IN THE WESTERN TRADITION

Nils Arne Pedersen

1. AUTONYMS AND EXONYMS AMONG CHRISTIAN GROUPS IN ANTIQUITY

Augustine starts his work *On Heresies* from the years 428–429 with these words:

I write something on heresies that is worth reading for those who desire to avoid teachings which are contrary to the Christian faith and which, nonetheless, deceive others, because they bear the Christian name.¹

So basically heresies are teachings containing an anti-Christian faith, even though they still claim to be Christian. This definition must also include the Manichaeans since they are treated by Augustine in *On Heresies*, chapter 46.

By saying that heresies are anti-Christian teachings which still call themselves Christian, Augustine probably had the word of Jesus from Matthew 7:22 in mind. Here Jesus speaks about certain rejected persons who will say to Christ on judgment day: “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?”

However, the word “heresies” used by Augustine is not found in Matthew, so it also seems clear that his definition is an echo of an older heresiological topos which was more clear-cut when it was first expressed in Justin Martyr’s *Dialogue with Trypho*, chapter 35. This chapter, which seems to combine Matthew 7:15 and 7:22 and other words of Jesus, states that the heretics should not be named after Christ but only after their heresiarch, the originator of their heresy. This viewpoint was repeated by many subsequent Christian authors and it shows how much the name “Christian” had become an ‘insider’ name or *autonym*, even if it was also the preferred name

¹ *De haer.* Preface 1, translation Teske 1995, 31 (“... ut de haeresibus aliquid scribam dignum lectione cupientium dogmata devitare contraria fidei christianae et christiani nominis obumbratione fallentia ...”, Vander Plaetse & Beukers 1979, 287:2–4).

used by outsiders, e.g. by persecutors like Pliny, as we know from his letter to the emperor Trajan. The crucial question put by Pliny to those who were accused of being Christians was precisely whether they were Christians, and this corresponds with the Christian martyr literature which often states that the persecutions occurred because of the “name”. So the name Christian was both an autonym and an *exonym*, that is an ‘outsider’ name.

In fact, according to most scholars’ interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles 11:26, the name “Christian” was originally an exonym, coined in Antioch, while Acts also uses another name for the Christians, namely “the Way” (ἡ ὁδός) (Acts 9:2; 19:9.23; 22:4; 24:14.22). This name was especially used in the context of conflict or persecution. In Acts 24:14 it becomes clear that “the Way” was an insider designation distinguished from the term ἀἱρεσις used by outsiders at that time. However, it has also been argued that the name of Christians was coined by the Christians themselves with respect to the outside world while between themselves the first Christians preferred the names of “brethren”, “believers”, “Saints” and so forth.² This argument illustrates the possibility that a group may have had an autonym only intended for use in communication to outsiders.

Justin Martyr would not allow the heretics to be called Christians, and this shows how dear this name had become to the Christians themselves. This was perhaps due to its central role in the persecutions, but it may also have something to do with its association with the anointments linked to baptism. So exonyms may also have become autonoms, and they raise the question of the origin and function of the names of heretics mentioned by Justin and other church fathers. The heretics called themselves Christians, but the church fathers called them Marcionites, Valentinians, Basilidians, Saturnilians and so on. This could mean that these names were only exonyms used by heresiologists and proto-orthodox groups. But it is also possible that these groups sometimes also turned exonyms into autonoms and thus actually called themselves Valentinians, Basilidians etc.

The fact that the texts from Nag Hammadi did not use such names as self-designations, however, raised the suspicion in scholarship that they were solely exonyms used by proto-orthodox authors in order to cast doubt on the Christian character of their adversaries. It should be observed, however, that we have a unique piece of epigraphic evidence as to the use of the name Marcionite, or more precisely Marcionist, as an autonym in an inscription dated to the year 630 of the Seleucid era (i.e., 318–319 AD). It was

² Cf. Bickerman 1986.

discovered about three miles south of Damascus, but is now unfortunately lost. It reads as follows:

The meeting-house of the Marcionists, in the village of Lebaba, of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Chrestos. (Erected) by the foresight of Paul, a presbyter. In the year 630.³

These followers of Marcion may, however, have called themselves Christians as well, even though they probably chose the spelling Χρηστός for theological reasons. The spelling probably expresses the Marcionite antithesis between “goodness” and “righteousness” and perhaps also conceals the Old Testament background of the name Christ meaning the anointed one—and through these markers also expresses the difference from “proto-orthodox”/“Catholic” Christians.⁴

³ Συναγωγή Μαρκιωνιστῶν κώμ(ης) Λεβάβων τοῦ κ(υρίου)υ κ[α]ι σ(ωτή)ρ(ος) Ἰη(σοῦ) Χρηστοῦ, προνοῖα Παύλου πρεσβ(υτέρου), τοῦ λχ' ἔτους.—Waddington 1870, 583–584 No 2558. The dating refers to the Seleucid era.—The inscription is now presumably lost, cf. Marksches 2007, 342 n. 20.

⁴ Due to the iotacisms, there was no longer any difference in pronunciation between Χριστός and Χρηστός, but this circumstance was exploited to express special points of meaning. Very widespread in antiquity was the apologetic Christian interpretation or word-play with the spelling Χρηστός to express the idea that Christians were not associated with *flagitia*, moral corruption, but with moral goodness; cf. Peterson 1959, 83–85. The Marcionites sometimes calling themselves with the Greek loan-word *k^erīst^eyānē* (or perhaps *k^erēst^eyānē*), “Christians”, and not with the native *m^ešihāyē*, “worshippers of Messiah”, in Syriac-speaking areas, seems to follow from the story in the hagiographical life of Mar Aba, the Catholicos of the Church of the East, chapter 3, Bedjan 1895, 213:7–214; cf. the German translation in Braun 1915, 189–190. Cf. also Walter Bauer’s discussion of the passage (1964, 27–29): Bauer assumed that this usage meant that the Marcionites had been the first Christians in this area of Mesopotamia and furthermore that this had also been the case in Edessa—“sehr zum Ärger der Rechtgläubigen, die sich mit mißverständlichen Ersatzmitteln wie ‘Messiasverehrer’ begnügen müssen” (Bauer 1964, 29). It seems, however, highly improbable that the Marcionites were the first Christians in the Syriac-speaking regions. The fact that the Peshitta version of the Old Testament is a translation from the Hebrew proto-Masoretic text and not from Greek makes it probable that it was the work of a Jewish group that later became Christian and brought the translation with them, or even a Jewish group which was already Jewish-Christian; cf. the contribution and summary of the discussion in Romeny 2005. The Peshitta Old Testament seems at least to predate Tatian’s Diatessaron (cf. Brock 1977, 97–98) and there is no reason to assume that it was later than Syriac Marcionism. But if this is the case, I cannot see why *m^ešihāyē*, which is linked to the Syriac *m^ešihā* used in the Peshitta (e.g. Psalms 2:2) cannot be just as old in Syriac as *k^erīst^eyānē*. In Ephrem’s hymns, *m^ešihāyē* is used alongside *k^erīst^eyānē* (*Hymni contra haereses* XXII:7, Beck 1957, 80:14; XXIII:9, Beck 1957, 89:12.14). Furthermore, the name “Christian” cannot have been monopolized by the Marcionites in Edessa, since it was also used by the Bardaisanites; cf. *Liber legum regionum* 46, Nau 1907, 607:17.20. Perhaps the form *k^erīst^eyānē* was preferred when Syriac-speaking Christians wanted to stress their cultural links to Christian congregations further west in the Roman Empire?

Against this background, it is natural to ask whether the noun and adjective “Manichaeian” was also only an exonym, never used by the Manichaeians themselves—that is, the groups which were called so by the outsiders. In what follows, I will examine Manichaeian texts in Greek, Latin, Coptic and Syriac, but have chosen to disregard (except for a few insufficient remarks) the texts from Turfan that were transmitted in a mainly non-Christian cultural context and therefore require special discussion.

2. THE OPINION OF RICHARD LIM

Recently Richard Lim wrote an article called “The *Nomen Manichaeorum* and Its Uses in Late Antiquity” which also addresses this question.⁵ Initially Lim argues that Secundinus called himself both a Manichaeian and Christian in his letter to Augustine, and that the ‘Manichaeian name’ stood for him “as a badge of honor” (p. 143). “In thus employing the *nomen* as a term of praise reserved for the ‘lovers of truth,’ Secundinus was”, according to Lim, “distinctly in the minority—even close to being unique—among the extant writers of Late Antiquity” (p. 144). Addressing the history of the label “Manichaeian”, Lim furthermore writes that “[a]t first glance, the *nomen Manichaeorum* belonged generically to the class of sectarian labels that identifies the follower in reference to the founder of the religion or philosophical sect” (p. 145). He admits that “[i]nsiders often came to embrace terms of abuse by outsiders as sources of positive identity” (p. 146), as was, for instance, the case with the name “Christian”, but he does not think that Manichaeians identified themselves in the same way with the label Manichaeian. On this basis, Lim draws a number of further conclusions, namely that “we owe the sense of a distinctive Manichaeian identity to the works of catholic/orthodox writers” and “that people whom we have grown accustomed to calling Manichaeians mainly represented themselves as Christians” (p. 147). Mani called himself Apostle of Jesus Christ and his followers “did not always mark themselves off as distinct from [other] Christians” (p. 149). Mani “had not insisted upon a distinctive name for his church” (p. 149), and he thinks that Secundinus was “a philosophically inclined Christian who has chosen to follow the superior teachings of Mani” (p. 160), who perhaps did not hold “active membership in a socio-religious institution called the Manichaeian ‘church.’”⁶

⁵ Lim 2008.

⁶ Cf. Lim 2008, 159, about the Manichaeian Julia in Mark the Deacon’s *Life of Porphyry of Gaza*, whom Lim considers to be “a female counterpart to Secundinus”.

So according to Lim, the name “Manichaean” was mainly an exonym and in the very few cases where it was an autonym—first and foremost in Secundinus’ letter—it was perhaps not a group designation but rather an individual’s self-designation implying adherence to the thinking of true philosophers. It was the Christian heresiologists who, according to Lim, constructed “the Other” and thereby created the *nomen Manichaeorum*. Normally people called Manichaeans by their adversaries have simply viewed themselves as Christians, and they have not always distinguished themselves from other Christians.

Lim’s article contains some very good observations, but still his results are clearly marred by a number of misunderstandings. This is not because I disagree with the viewpoint that the people we call “Manichaeans” may not always have called themselves so, or that I disagree with the viewpoint that they sometimes called themselves “Christians”. However, it is important to observe that Mani’s writings and the literature building on and celebrating these writings were not suitable as literature for philosophically interested individuals since they always stressed a certain religious community as indispensable for salvation. Lim thinks that scholarship has continued an ancient reification of the identity of Manichaeans being reliant upon a master narrative of Manichaeans as a clearly distinct religious tradition (p. 150 and 154). But for all the differences between Manichaean traditions, they always seem to have been bound up with a special group feeling and an ecclesiastical organization. Hence it is more probable that the Manichaean literature was only transmitted within this very same community. Still, the question of how this community designated and understood itself is certainly of great interest.

3. THE CASE OF SECUNDINUS

It should initially be stressed that the question about Manichaean autonoms is not solved by a reference to the fact that the names of Jesus Christ and of Mani in the form Manichaios or Manichæus are positively emphasized in Manichaean sources. Even though in some passages Lim argues in this way,⁷ it is methodologically wrong. Jesus is for instance also called Messiah in Islam even though Muslims do not understand themselves as Christians,

⁷ Lim 2008, 147, states that the Manichaeans mainly represented themselves as Christians by referring to the fact that Mani claimed himself to be an “Apostle of Jesus Christ”. This reference in itself is, however, insufficient as regards the question of Manichaean autonoms.

and the important question is whether Manichaios is used not as a personal name but as a designation for members of a group and as an adjective.

Furthermore, I suggest that self-designations for groups should mainly be understood in different contexts, that is, they are identifications dependent on their function. This means that the same group may well have identified itself with different names depending on the contexts they were situated in.

Looking first at Secundinus' *Epistula*,⁸ we see that he indirectly confirms the self-designation "Christian" since he writes that while reading Augustine's *Confessions* he has not discovered a Christian in its author (Zycha 1891–1892, 895:13); furthermore he doubts that he was ever a Manichaean since he does not really know Mani's teachings (Zycha 1891–1892, 895:18–20). This means that Secundinus considered both the name "Manichaean" and the name "Christian" positive designations which must have been autonyms. The Christian autonym is not surprising if we take the Christian character of Secundinus' *Epistula* into account, as stressed by Johannes van Oort.⁹ It is possible that Secundinus dissociates himself from his opponent's use of the designation "Catholic" and not from the word itself, but his remark is probably better interpreted as mere sarcasm.¹⁰

Even though Secundinus did not find the name "Manichaean" offensive, I cannot see that his *Epistula* entitles us to assume that it was a name normally used by him and his co-religionists. The *Epistula* was not written for internal use in his congregation but for that public, which presumably called Secundinus' co-religionists "Manichaean". In principle, of course, this consideration also applies to his use of the name "Christian" since the *Epistula* was directed to a public seeing itself as Christian.

4. THE CASES OF FORTUNATUS, FELIX AND FAUSTUS

Besides the *Epistula* of Secundinus, the names "Manichaean" and "Christian" are also known as autonyms from other Latin texts preserved in connection

⁸ Zycha 1891–1892, 891–901. The English translation used here is in Gardner and Lieu 2004, 136–142.

⁹ Van Oort 2001.

¹⁰ Secundinus says about the Devil: "Afterwards his wickedness grew so far that he devised various problems for him and his apostles who gathered there, under their name, which is all the worse, dividing among all the superstitious the dignity of the term Catholic" (translation by Mark Vermes in Gardner and Lieu 2004, 139–140).—"at postea tantum eius creuit iniquitas, ut et ipso et apostolis eius illuc ascendentibus diuersas conponeret quaestiones, sub eorum, quod peius est, nomine superstitiones omnibus, id est catholici uocabuli diuidens dignitatem", Zycha 1891–1892, 897:23–894:4.

with Augustine's works. While Secundinus was a Manichaean from Rome, these Manichaeans were from North Africa, that is Fortunatus, Felix and Faustus.

*Contra Fortunatum*¹¹ is not a literary text like the *Epistula* of Secundinus or the *Capitula* of Faustus, but minutes from a public debate. All three texts, however, share the feature of being directed to the outside world, and not to the Manichaean congregations themselves. Fortunatus admitted that he and his co-religionists could be called "Manichaeans" by saying to Augustine: "Because I know that you were one of us, that is, that you had a role among the Manichaeans, these are the principal points of our faith." ("Quia te medium fuisse nostrum scio, id est inter Manichaeos administrasse, ista principalia sunt fidei nostrae" [I,1, Zycha 1891–1892, 84:8–10]; translation Teske 2006, 145). The wording does not suggest that "Manichaean" was an important autonym for Fortunatus; it rather seems to be the designation of the outside world which Fortunatus, however, had no objections to and could recognize as a correct identification. Possibly, it was a name invented by the Manichaeans themselves, but only for use in communication with the outside world. Later on, Fortunatus also recognizes "the authority of the Christian faith" ("auctoritas fidei christianae" [II,20, Zycha 1891–1892, 99:11]; translation Teske 2006, 154), but here again it is within a debate directed to the public which understood itself as Christian.

*Contra Felicem*¹² contains, like *Contra Fortunatum*, summaries of a public debate with Augustine. Unlike the other texts, Felix never uses the noun or adjective "Manichaean", but he seems to be on the verge of doing so at the end of the first book when he signs in this way: "Felix the Christian, a worshipper of the law of Manichaeus" ("Felix christianus, cultor legis Manichaei", Zycha 1891–1892, 827:4). Like this signing, many other passages in Felix confirm that "Christian" and "Christianity" were his autonoms (e.g. Zycha 1891–1892, 825:10; 830:1.4–5; 841:27.28).

The *Capitula* of Faustus of Mileve¹³ are preserved as verbatim excerpts in Augustine's *Contra Faustum*. The *Capitula* seem to have been based on public disputations between Faustus and various Catholics,¹⁴ and in general

¹¹ Zycha 1891–1892, 79–112. The English translation used here is in Teske 2006 (quoted with slightly revised orthography).

¹² Zycha 1891–1892, 799–852.

¹³ Zycha 1891–1892, 249–797. The English translation used is in Teske 2007. The title *Capitula* is used by Augustine in *Contra Faustum* XXXIII,9, Zycha 1891–1892, 796:15, and has become traditional in scholarship. Recently, however, van Oort (2010, 529–530) has argued that the original title of Faustus' work may in fact have been *Disputationes*.

¹⁴ Cf. van Oort 2010, 529–531.

Faustus only refers to his own group and his opponent's group as "we" versus "you". Only one passage in the long excerpts show that Faustus could use the adjective "Manichaeic" as a positive autonym: in Book XVIII,3 where he speaks about "Manichaea fides" (Zycha 1891–1892, 492:1) as the basis for considering Matthew 5:17 a spurious saying of Jesus. The rare use of this autonym in Faustus may mean that he had the same attitude to it as I have suspected in connection with Fortunatus and perhaps also Secundinus, namely as the designation towards the outside world which is not wrong and which therefore is permitted for use even though it is not the usual self-designation of Faustus and his congregation.

In most passages, Faustus accepts the traditional classification of religious groups from the second century consisting of three "races". This classification may already be present in Aristides' *Apology*, but at least it is found in Tertullian's *Ad nationes* (I,8 and I,20), where we are informed that the Christians were called "the third race", "genus tertium". Faustus, however, does not use the word "race" but speaks of three "religiones" (XXXI,2, Zycha 1891–1892, 757:19), "Iudaeos et christianos et gentes" (XXXI,2, Zycha 1891–1892, 757:11). This implies, however, that Faustus' own group—that is, this "we" on behalf of whom he is speaking—must be Christians. However, Faustus also repeatedly states this (e.g. Zycha 1891–1892, 262:11; 268:17–18; 305:19; 310:14–15; 730:10); especially one should observe how he identifies himself as being of Gentile origin in Book IX,1 but claims that while he has become a Christian, others of Gentile origin have become Jews—obviously thinking of the Catholics (Zycha 1891–1892, 307:21–24). Corresponding to this, Faustus rejects—with a reference to Adimantus—from the very outset the "semi-Christians" whom he puts on a par with Judaism (I,2, Zycha 1891–1892, 251:3).

In fact, Faustus frequently uses the argument of the Gentile origin of Christians to stress the irrelevance of the Old Testament (cf. XIII,1, Zycha 1891–1892, 377:12–279:6, full of evidence of the word "Christian" as a Manichaeic autonym), but this is mere rhetoric, since he also stresses (e.g. in XV,1, Zycha 1891–1892, 417:22–418:5) that in the same way the Jews should leave the Old Testament and its God behind them. Faustus' really important argument consists in the opposition of old and new, Judaism and Christianity: Catholics "turn the Christian faith into a centaur, neither a complete horse nor a complete man" ("christianam denique fidem Hippocentaurum facite, nec equum perfectum nec hominem" [XV,1, Zycha 1891–1892, 417:4–5]; translation Teske 2007, 183).

Due to his basic missionary goal, Faustus of course tries to show the common ground between himself and the Catholics, namely that they do not

follow the Jewish law either. So Faustus claims to represent the true version of his opponents' tradition; even though he reserves true Christianity for himself, the Christian tradition of his opponents is also important in order to convince them that they should join him. Faustus sometimes seems to think of Christianity as a big movement with many schools, for instance when he writes that there exist "christianarum haeresium" (Zycha 1891–1892, 446:2), including "catholici" (Zycha 1891–1892, 446:3) (XVI,7). Faustus also knows about Jewish Christians, as is evident from his mention of the Nazareans or Symmachians, whom he does not seem to consider Christians but whose position he still thinks is more consistent than the Catholic one since acceptance of the Old Testament must also imply observance of its laws (XIX,4, Zycha 1891–1892, 500:3–28).¹⁵ Faustus never reckons with any positive contents in the word "Catholic". It is simply the right designation for his opponents (cf. XXIII,2, Zycha 1891–1892, 708:27 or "conventu catholico" in XXX,3, Zycha 1891–1892, 749:20–21). Among the Catholics, however, he can also make a gradation and refer to the ascetics as "christianioribus" (XXX,3, Zycha 1891–1892, 749:11).

Thus it seems that this line of reasoning must mean either that Catholics are Jews or that they are defective Christians. In an interesting section, however, a different approach is taken by Faustus in that he uses a special distinction between the concepts "schisma" and "secta". Faustus defines the two concepts in this way: "unless I am mistaken, a schism is a group that holds the same opinions and worships with the same ritual as others but wants only a division of the congregation. But a sect is a group that holds opinions far different from others and has established for itself a worship of the deity with a far different ritual" ("schisma, nisi fallor, est eadem opinantem atque eodem ritu colentem quo ceteri solo congregationis delectari discidio; secta uero est longe alia opinantem quam ceteri, alio etiam sibi ac longe dissimili ritu diuinitatis instituisse culturam", XX.3, Zycha 1891–1892, 537:4–8; translation Teske 2007, 262). The setting for this approach is a Catholic accusation against "us", as Faustus says, for being Gentiles or a schism from the Gentiles because of "our" worship of the sun (XX,1, Zycha 1891–1892, 535:23–24). Instead Faustus wants to show that "we" constitute a "secta", a community whose opinion and worship is completely different from the opinion and worship of the Pagans. "The pagans teach that good and evil, the dark and

¹⁵ At least Faustus seems to disassociate himself from the Jewish Christians' claim to be Christians with the wording "sub christiani quamuis nominis professione" (Zycha 1891–1892, 500:10). This may be because their observance of the Jewish law removed them from what Faustus considered the essence of Christianity.

the bright, the perpetual and the perishable, the changeable and the stable, the bodily and the divine have one principle. I myself hold views quite contrary to these. For I hold that God is the principle of all good things, but that Hyle is the principle of their contraries. For our theologian calls by that name the principle and nature of the evil" ("pagani bona et mala, tætra et splendida, perpetua et caduca, mutabilia et certa, corporalia et diuina unum habere principium dogmatizant. his ego ualde contraria sentio, qui bonis omnibus principium fateor deum, contrariis uero hylen; sic enim mali principium ac naturam theologus noster appellat", XX.3, Zycha 1891–1892, 537:10–14; translation Teske 2007, 263).¹⁶ Faustus continues by demonstrating that in accordance with this, the worshipping of the Pagans is material, with altars, shrines, images, sacrifices, and incense, while "our" worshipping is spiritual: the altar and the image are in the mind of man, and the prayers are the true sacrifices (XX.3, Zycha 1891–1892, 537:15–21).

It may seem curious that Faustus does not consider the Gentiles or Pagans—he makes use of both words—to be polytheists, but he probably thought of the Paganism of Late Antiquity with its stamp of neo-Platonism that attempted to understand the world as a unity originating from one divine principle.

Having established that "we" and the Gentiles constitute two different "sects", that is, communities with a completely different doctrine and worship, Faustus tries to demonstrate that the doctrine and worship of the Jews and Catholics are not very different from those of the Pagans, which means that the Jews and Catholics are merely two "schisms" from the Pagans. Jews and Catholics alike claim, according to Faustus, that God is the cause of everything; thus their doctrine is basically the same as the doctrine of the Pagans. The worship of God among the Jews was—with its temple and sacrifices—like the Pagan cult. The worship of the Catholics is merely a modification of the Pagan cult—Faustus thinks *inter alia* that the Christian martyr cult had similarities to Paganism (Zycha 1891–1892, 537:27–29 and 538:2–16). Faustus' conclusion is therefore that there is no communal spirit between "you" and "us": "It is not true, however, even if you call me a schism of you, though I reverence and worship Christ. For I worship him with another ritual and another faith than you do" ("sed nec uestrum quidem

¹⁶ "Hyle" is the Greek word for "matter"; it is probable that Mani—who may be the "theologus noster" here—really used this Greek word as a loanword in his Syriac writings (cf. Schaefer 1927, 112, *inter alia* referring both to Faustus and Ephrem the Syrian's refutations of Mani).

schisma si me dixeris, uerum est, quamuis Christum uenerer et colam, quia alio eum ritu colo et alia fide quam uos, XX.4, Zycha 1891–1892, 537:29–538:2; translation Teske 2007, 263). Thus the only real difference between Gentiles, Jews and Catholics is that the two last-mentioned groups have chosen to keep their gatherings separate. Jews and Catholics are two schisms from the Pagans (Zycha 1891–1892, 538:16–19). This means that it is only the doctrine and worship of Faustus and his co-religionists which differs from the Pagans. The final conclusion is therefore: “But if you are looking for sects, there will be no more than two, that is, that of the gentiles and that of us” (“porro autem sectas si quaeras, non plus erunt quam duae, id est gentium et nostra”, XX.4, Zycha 1891–1892, 538:19–20; translation Teske 2007, 264).

So in the end, Faustus nevertheless rejects the idea of three races or religions in favour of a distinction between just two “sects”. Such a distinction may also be more fitting for a dualistic theologian. However, whether the Catholics are viewed as a kind of inferior Christians or as Jews or as constituting a “secta” together with Jews and Gentiles, it is clear in every context that the deepest conviction of Faustus is that he and his co-religionists are the true Christians. Since Faustus addresses non-Manichaeans, it is possible that this self-designation was mainly used in communication with the outside world, but there can be no doubt that Faustus sincerely understood himself and his group as Christians.

This observation raises, however, new problems since the whole argument of Faustus, his consistent reference to “we” and “us”, must mean that the Manichaeans were a distinct group. Faustus believed that he belonged to this sharply outlined group in which the members felt solidarity with each other and considered themselves to be a unity, and, furthermore, felt a difference between themselves and certain outsiders. If this is true, the Manichaeans to whom Faustus belonged must have possessed some autonyms which could mark their difference in relation to the outside world. The word “Manichaean” could be such a word, but the fact that it is only used once makes it less probable that it was used frequently by the Manichaeans themselves. The word “Christians”, on the other hand, was not helpful as a distinguishing designation in relation to that outside world which also called itself Christian.¹⁷

¹⁷ This must in fact have been a problem for all groups calling themselves Christians. A clear example of this is precisely Augustine, who obviously considered the name Christian an insufficient autonym since he often preferred the qualifying variant “christianus catholicus”; for examples, see van Oort 2010, 528 n. 124.

The names “Christian” and “Manichaeian” are not used in the fragments of Mani’s own writings preserved in Latin, the *Epistula fundamenti* or the *Thesaurus*, which were probably works primarily intended for use within the Manichaeian congregations themselves. However, Mani refers in a fragment of the *Epistula fundamenti* (preserved in Evodius’ *De fide* V) to his congregation as “the Holy Church” (“sanctam ecclesiam”, Zycha 1891–1892, 953:2).

5. THE ‘MANICHAEAN’ BASSA

Moving away from the Latin-speaking regions, we find that the fragmentary Greek epitaph from Salona in Dalmatia which may be dated to circa 300 is most interesting. The preserved part of the inscription reads: Βάσσα Παρθένος Λυδία Μανιχέα, obviously referring to a virgin called Bassa, who was a Manichaeian and came from Lydia.¹⁸ The epitaph was obviously set up by the Manichaeians themselves, but it may be too bold to conclude that “Manichaeian” was an important autonym in Dalmatia since it was probably the intention that the inscription should also be read by the non-Manichaeian neighbours. For this reason the identification of Bassa may have been felt as necessary.

6. THE COPTIC SOURCES

The Coptic-Manichaeian literary texts that have been found in Medinet Madi and Ismant el-Kharab in Egypt differ not only from the statements made by Secundinus, Felix, Fortunatus and Faustus because of the different cultural and linguistic region but also because the Coptic texts seem to address themselves to the congregations and not to non-Manichaeian surroundings. Therefore a comparison is difficult.

The fact, however, that the word “Manichaeian” is never found in them¹⁹ fits the interpretation that the word is primarily intended for the outside world. Probably the Egyptian Manichaeians would also have recognized the word since there is no polemic against it either. Here it is of interest to men-

¹⁸ Kugener and Cumont 1912, 175–177.

¹⁹ The sole exception would be *Kephalaia* 271:15, which Alexander Böhlig edited and restored in this way: ρωμε γαρ ημ ηεκλεκτος η[ϩηϩ]αλος, “for every Elect [Manich]aeian man”. The combination of the *nomen sacrum* (ϩηϩ) and the full form (ηαηηαλος) seems, however, doubtful to me. Cf. also Gardner’s note of caution (Gardner 1995, 278 n. 146).

tion that the *Kellis Agricultural Account Book*²⁰ refers to a place, Τόπος Μανι, as a tenant farm. Since τόπος often designates a monastery in Byzantine Greek and in Coptic, it has been argued by Roger Bagnall that this could be a reference to the Manichaean monastery mentioned in some private letters from Kellis, even though Mani is otherwise called Μάνης or Μανιχαίος in Greek texts.²¹ Therefore it seems doubtful that Mani could be a personal name here, and I think it is worth considering whether Μανι could be an abbreviation for Μανι(χαίων), or (τῶν) Μανι(χαίων), meaning “the monastery of the Manichaeans”? This would show that the exonym of the Manichaeans in Kellis was actually “Manichaeans”, also in a commercial context where they themselves must also have had to acknowledge its relevance. However, the fact that there are no other examples of this abbreviation makes it very uncertain.

The clear difference between the Latin-Manichaean texts and the Manichaean texts from Egypt is that no instances of a clear use of the word “Christian” (χριστιανός) as an autonym have been found in the last-mentioned texts. The word is found once in the form χρηστιανός in the *Manichaean Homilies*²² (72:9; ἸΧΡΗΣΤΙΑΝΟΣ), and once as χριστιανός in the *Kephalaia*²³ (258:29; ΝΡΩΜΕ ἸΧΡΙΣ[ΤΙΑΝ]ΟΣ), but in both instances the word does occur in a fragmentary context.²⁴ Still, a cautious discussion of these two passages seems worth attempting.

Based on the passage itself it is not possible to say whether ἸΧΡΗΣΤΙΑΝΟΣ in the *Manichaean Homilies* 72:9 refers to the Manichaeans or not.²⁵ Only

²⁰ This is a codex consisting of wooden boards found at Ismant el-Kharab, ancient Kellis, in which the manager of an agricultural estate kept records of produce collected from the tenants and any amounts which they owed. It is edited in Bagnall 1997.

²¹ Cf. Bagnall 1997, 81–82 n. 77, about the meaning of τόπος (with references). Τόπος Μανι is mentioned twice in the *Kellis Agricultural Account Book*: 320 and 513. Bagnall, *ibid.* 81, writes: “In the circumstances in which this term occurs, it must be a corporate entity paying rent on leased land”, cf. 192. Later on, the Monk Petros pays instead of the τόπος Μανι: *Kellis Agricultural Account Book* 975–976 (Πέτρος μοναχ(ός) ἀντὶ Μανι), cf. Petros in the *Kellis Agricultural Account Book* 1109, 1433; another monk, Timotheos, is mentioned in the *Kellis Agricultural Account Book* 1079–1080. Bagnall 1997, 83, argues that Mani is the eponym of the monastery, and he also writes (84): “Mani is usually referred to in Greek texts as Manichaios, not as Mani, and some caution may be in order.”

²² Editions: Polotsky 1934; Pedersen 2006.

²³ Editions: Schmidt, Polotsky, and Böhlig 1940; Böhlig 1966; Funk 1999–2000.

²⁴ The word is not found in the Manichaean *Psalm-Book* II (edition: Allberry 1938).

²⁵ The word is followed by a punctuation mark and the word ὡαῦτ τ.[: “they shall make [...]”, but we cannot say whether this third person plural refers to ἸΧΡΗΣΤΙΑΝΟΣ or to somebody else that were mentioned in the long lacunae preceding this word. Cf. the distinction between first person plural and third person plural in line 12. ΝΛΟΓΜΑ, designating non-Manichaean

material from other texts may illuminate its meaning, and consequently it is highly probable that the word is a Manichaean self-designation. In his *Contra Manichaei opinioniones disputatio* 24, Alexander of Lycopolis states as follows:

Christ however, whom they do not even know, but whom they call *chrestos* (good), introducing a new meaning instead of the generally received one by changing the *i* into *e*, they hold to be Intellect ...²⁶

The Coptic translation of one of Mani's epistles has likewise *Χρηστός* instead of *Χριστός*: "[Manichæus, the A]postle of [Je]su[s] Chrestos".²⁷

Because of the positive contents of *ἡΧΡΗΣΤΙΑΝΟΣ*, it therefore probably designates the Manichaeans themselves.²⁸

Alexander Böhlig understood chapter 105 in *Kephalaia* 258:28–259:23, where the word combination *ἡρώμε ἡχρί[τ]ιαν[ο]ς* occurs, as containing a distinction between "Christians" and adherents of Mani.²⁹ This interpretation seems probable even though it is partly based on a number of restored lacunae. According to this chapter, the Christians use Christ's name in three contexts. The first one concerns invocations, while the third one concerns oaths. The second context, however, is described thus: "The second point: They will call people who love him by hi[s name] and they will give his name to his children and [chil]dren's children".³⁰ Here, Böhlig referred to John 2:7, but also to the generic name *χριστιανοί*.³¹ In what follows, Mani asserts his own importance as well as the same use of his name, even though this is not specified with the same details. Among other things, the text also allows Mani to say: "Be[h]old: also because of my good and

errors, are mentioned in lines 14 and 18 but it seems doubtful that *ἡΧΡΗΣΤΙΑΝΟΣ* should be included among these.

²⁶ Τὸν δὲ χριστὸν οὐδὲ γινώσκοντες, ἀλλὰ χρηστὸν αὐτὸν προσαγορεύοντες τῇ πρὸς τὸ ἦ στοιχείον μεταλήψει ἕτερον σημαϊνόμενον ἀντὶ τοῦ κυρίως περὶ αὐτοῦ ὑπειλημμένου εἰσάγοντες νοῦν εἰναί φασιν, Brinkmann 1895, 34:18–21; translation Mansfeld and van der Horst 1974, 91–92.

²⁷ [μανιχαῖος πα]ποστολος ἡ[ιη]σο[γ]ος πεχρηστος: P. Kell. Copt. 53 (12:1–2), ed. Iain Gardner and Wolf-Peter Funk, in Gardner 2007, 34–35, cf. 74, 79.

²⁸ Peterson 1959, 83–84 n. 61 assumes that the Manichaeans took this designation for Christ and themselves from the Marcionites. This is possible but then it is probably only in the Greek- and Coptic-speaking contexts that this borrowing took place since a distinction between *Χριστός* and *Χρηστός* would hardly have made sense in a Syriac context.

²⁹ Böhlig 1968, 204, 262–265.

³⁰ *Kephalaia* 259:1–4: π[μαρ]σνεγ χεγναμογτε ἡρώμε ετμείε ἡμαρ ἡπε[φρεν] ἄγω ἡσετ πεφρεν ἡνεφωρε ἡἡ ἡωρε ἡἡ[φρη]ρε. Gardner (1995, 264 n. 136) suggests emending ἡνεφωρε instead of ἡνεφωρε, resulting in: "(their) children and [chil]dren's children".

³¹ Böhlig 1968, 263.

useful te[a]chings which I have revealed they c[a]ll the people who love me with my name.”³² Böhlig’s comments were: “Wie die Christen nach Christus haben die Manichäer nach Mani ihren Namen.”³³

This interpretation seems the most probable one.³⁴ However, the very fact that no example has yet been found of the use of the word “Manichaeian” as a self-designation in the Coptic-Manichaeian texts raises the question whether chapter 105 describes a real practice or is a prescriptive text trying to impose such a practice on the congregations. In line with this argument, it is furthermore possible to speculate whether the *Kephalaia* represents an attempt to dissociate Manichaeism from Christianity—as recently stressed by Iain Gardner.³⁵ Thus Mani is always called “the Apostle of Light” in the *Kephalaia*, while his own more subordinating self-designation “Apostle of Jesus Christ” is never found.

Even though the texts never mention the word “Manichaeian” and only rarely the word “Christian”, there are other autonyms. A reference to “the Elect and the Catechumens” (ⲛⲉⲘⲱⲧⲓⲛ ⲟⲩ ⲛⲉⲕⲕⲗⲉⲕⲧⲟⲥ ⲛⲓⲛ ⲛⲕⲁⲧⲏⲭⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ, e.g. *Psalm-Book* II, 20:2; 21:22–23; 25:27; 27:14) actually refers to the congregation in its entirety. This is also the case with references to “the Holy Church” (ⲧⲉⲕⲕⲗⲏⲥⲓⲁ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲅⲉ, e.g. *Psalm-Book* II, 8:25) and the “Righteousness” (ⲧⲁⲓⲕⲁⲓⲟⲩⲩⲛⲏ, e.g. *Manichaeian Homilies* 14:9; 15:12–13). Often autonyms are used that are metaphorically derived from the family sphere, such as “Sons” (ⲛⲉⲘⲱⲛⲣⲉ, e.g. *Psalm-Book* II, 14:9.16; 42:29; 44:10; 58:24) or “Sons of the Living Race” (ⲛⲉⲘⲱⲛⲣⲉ ⲛⲧⲣⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲉⲛⲉ). This last-mentioned designation was used by Mani in his *Epistles* and *Living Gospel*, preserved in Coptic.³⁶ I have probably found its Syriac form as *b^enayyā d^e-šarb^tā ḥayy^etā* in some fragments in Manichaeian script, even though some letters must be restored.³⁷

³² *Kephalaia* 259:11–13: ⲉⲛ ⲛⲁⲥⲃ[ⲁ]ⲩⲉ ⲉⲘⲱⲩ ⲉⲧⲁⲛⲓⲧ ⲉⲧⲣⲱⲉⲩ ⲉⲧⲁⲓⲟⲩⲁⲛⲣⲟⲩ ⲁⲅⲁⲗ ⲉⲓ[ⲥ]ⲧⲉ ⲥⲉ-ⲙ[ⲟ]ⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲛⲣⲱⲛⲉ ⲉⲧⲙⲉⲓⲉ ⲛⲓⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲡⲁⲣⲉⲛ.

³³ Böhlig 1968, 265.

³⁴ Gardner (1995, 264) seems to interpret the second point about the Christians somewhat differently when he summarizes: “Mani recounts how Christians use the name of Christ in invocations, personal names and oaths.” I am, however, not convinced that personal names containing the elements “Jesus” or “Messiah”/“Christ” really were very common in Syriac-, Greek- or Coptic-speaking groups in the third and fourth centuries.

³⁵ Gardner 2010.

³⁶ Cf. the epistle of Mani preserved in P. Kell. Copt. 82:7 (Gardner 2007, 68) and the quotation from the *First discourse* of Mani’s *Living Gospel* in Gardner 2007, 83.

³⁷ That is, in some fragments (P. 22364) in the papyrus collection in Berlin; cf. the forthcoming edition of them by Nils Arne Pedersen and John Møller Larsen in the Series Syriaca of the CFM (Brepols).

The Manichaean congregations are often clearly delimited from other religious groups which are called $\bar{\nu}\Delta\sigma\mu\alpha$, that is, the Greek loan word $\delta\acute{o}\gamma\mu\alpha$ which may also signify a religious system. It is clearly stated that the Jews and the Magians belong to these $\delta\acute{o}\gamma\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$ (*Psalm-Book* II, 15:5–12), while there are no explicit polemics against “the Christians”. Neither do the expressions “semi-Christians” or “Catholics” known from Faustus recur: there are only implicit polemics against such Christian groups, for instance in the *Psalm-Book*, which states about Jesus: “He was not born in a womb corrupted” ($\bar{\nu}\rho\omicron\gamma\Delta\pi\alpha\upsilon\ \bar{\epsilon}\bar{\nu}\ \alpha\tau\epsilon\ \epsilon\upsilon\chi\alpha\lambda\epsilon\mu\epsilon$, *Psalm-Book* II, 52:23–24, cf. also 120:25–26; 121:27–32; 122:19–25; 175:16).

Many passages in the Coptic-Manichaean texts demonstrate the centrality for the faith of both Jesus and Mani, and they reckon with their close relationship. This is especially true in the Manichaean *Psalm-Book*, which also describes the Church as both the Church of Jesus Christ (e.g. II, 56:24; 59:18; 134:19–20) and the Church of Manichaios (e.g. II, 8:25; 21:7). This perspective seems more blurred in the *Kephalaia*. In spite of the fact that the *Psalm-Book* and the *Kephalaia* were found together at Medinet Madi and therefore were most likely read and used by the same persons, it seems probable that they have their origin within different groups of Manichaeans.

Consequently, it seems likely that the Egyptian Manichaeans only seldom used the name and adjective “Manichaean”—just like their Latin co-religionists. However, unlike them we have no clear evidence for any use of the name “Christian” as an autonym. Fluctuating autonoms seem to have been sufficient for internal purposes in Egyptian Manichaeism. The absence of polemics against Christians, however, allows for the possibility that Christians was one of these fluctuating appellations, even though the unambiguous evidence has not yet been found.

7. CONCLUSION

There seems to be common ground between Faustus and the Coptic-Manichaean *Psalm-Book* as regards the centrality of Jesus. Even though there are many reminiscences of this in the *Kephalaia*, Jesus does not stand out as markedly central in comparison to many other mythological figures. Since the *Kephalaia* collection is probably translated from a Syriac original while it is not necessary to suppose that the *Psalm-Book* in its entirety had a Syriac original, it would be natural to assume that originally Manichaeism had a less Jesus-centered outlook. In its movement towards the West, however,

it became more and more Christianized. This interpretation seems, however, to conflict with the impression of a Manichaeism centered around Jesus which we get from the Mani-epistles in Coptic translation from Kellis, which have recently been edited by Iain Gardner and Wolf-Peter Funk.³⁸ So, maybe, the *Kephalaia* represent a secondary development which, however, was also translated into Western languages like Coptic because of continued personal connections between Manichaean groups in the East and West?³⁹ If this is the case, it is possible that the more explicitly Christian outlook of Faustus and the Manichaean *Psalm-Book* is in line with the intentions of Mani himself. This interpretation also allows for the possibility of Mani calling his movement “the Christians”, even if this has only been one of several autonyms used by him. If this holds true, he probably did not use the Syriac term *k^erīst^eyānē* but rather *m^ešīhāyē*, corresponding to his background in southern Babylonia and his self-designation *Mānī š^elīhā d^e-yešū’ m^ešīhā*,

³⁸ Gardner 2007, 11–93.

³⁹ The collectors and redactors responsible for the *Kephalaia* seem to have shared the interest in dissociating Manichaeism from Christianity with those Manichaean groups that organized their Eastern mission. Nevertheless the word “Manichaean” has not been identified in the Turfan texts either. The words with this semantic meaning listed in Durkin-Meisterernst 2004, 410, are all of a different origin: the Parthian word *drōdzādag*, “child of well-being”, i.e. a Manichaean (Durkin-Meisterernst 2004, 140); the Middle Persian word *nāf zīndag*, “the living family” (Durkin-Meisterernst 2004, 238)—probably partly corresponding to 𐭌𐭕𐭎𐭕𐭎 𐭎𐭕𐭎𐭕𐭎 𐭕𐭎𐭕𐭎 *b^enayyā d^e-šarb^etā hayy^etā*; the Parthian and Middle Persian word *ram* or *ramag*, “flock” (Durkin-Meisterernst 2004, 296); the Parthian and Middle Persian word *dēn*, “religion, the religious community” (Durkin-Meisterernst 2004, 150); the Middle Persian word *māzdēs*, “Mazdā-worshipping”, “epithet of Zoroastrianism also used for Manichaeism” (Durkin-Meisterernst 2004, 227). Nor is the word Christian found in this literature, but the Persian word for a Christian, *tarsāg*, “(God) fearer”, which was used as both an autonym and an exonym for Christians (cf. De Blois 2002, 9–10), may be connected with the word *tarsāgī*, possibly meaning “Christendom” in the unpublished Middle Persian text M15 V 1 (Henning 1937, 88; De Blois 2002, 9 n. 48; Durkin-Meisterernst 2004, 325). Furthermore, the word is used in Sogdian, both as an autonym by Nestorian Christians and as an exonym in Sogdian-Manichaean texts for Christians; in these last-mentioned texts it clearly designates a group different from the Manichaeans themselves: *tarsāk*, *tarsākānē*, *tarsākānč*, and also *tarsākya*, “Christianity”; cf. Gharib 1995, 391, and De Blois 2002, 9–10. The fact that Latin Manichaeans called themselves Christians and Iranian Manichaeans called themselves Mazdā worshippers could of course be interpreted as meaning that they all truly viewed themselves only as Manichaeans, so their other self-designations were only used tactically and insincerely. The truth in this is that the stable element in Manichaean identity was always the feeling of belonging to Mani’s congregation (even though this is seldom expressed with the word “Manichaean”), but this does not mean that the identifications with Christian or Iranian religious traditions were tactical. It is also historically implausible that the Manichaeans would have been able to retain an unalterable identity in widely different cultural contexts and throughout hundreds of years.

“Mani, the Apostle of Jesus the Messiah”, the Syriac form of which we know from a rock crystal seal which is in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.⁴⁰

Unfortunately, decisive evidence is lacking. But a passage which may be read in line with this has been quoted by Iain Gardner from a yet unpublished Mani-epistle from Medinet Madi, *The Seventh Ktesiphon Letter*. In Gardner’s quotation it reads like this: “[...] on account of our good saviour, our god Christ Jesus, the one in whose name I have chosen you”.⁴¹

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⁴⁰ Menasce and Guillou 1946.

⁴¹ Gardner 2007, 91, referring to the unpublished Medinet Madi codex Berlin P. 15998. The passage also seems to say something markedly different from *Kephalaia* 259:11–13, quoted above.

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APPENDIX

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

THE MANICHAEAN BISHOP FAUSTUS:
THE STATE OF RESEARCH AFTER A CENTURY OF SCHOLARSHIP

Gijs Martijn van Gaans

INTRODUCTION: THE DISCOVERIES OF 1929 AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS

During the last century the dry sands of Egypt have proven to be a treasury for ancient history. The arid climate has conserved a number of historical sources from which a large number of fields in ancient history have profited enormously. One of these fields is the study of Manichaeism. It was in Egypt that a significant number of Manichaean texts have been recovered.

In 1929 seven papyrus codices were found in the Egyptian oasis of Medinet Madi. They turned out to contain the *Kephalaia of the Teacher*, Mani's *Epistles*, the *Synaxeis of the Living Gospel*, a Manichaean Church history, a book of psalms, a collection of homilies and the *Kephalaia of the Wisdom of My Lord Mani*. All these texts were composed in Coptic and date from around 350–400 AD. They are translations of original Syriac texts and reach back at least to the first century of the Manichaean church. Another major source emerged in the Cairo antiques market and was purchased by the University of Cologne in 1969. This so-called *Cologne Mani Codex* (CMC) was written in Greek and also dates from the fourth century, although a later date has been proposed as well. The text offers written testimonies by some of Mani's disciples on his earlier life and missionary journeys. Besides, from the 1980's onwards excavations in the Egyptian Dakhleh Oasis—the Roman period village of Kellis—recovered papyrological evidence of a Manichaean community there. The Australian conducted excavation project has unearthed a large number of various sources, including legal documents and personal correspondence written by Manichaean believers.¹

All these primary Manichaean sources have increased our insight into the ancient religion of Manichaeism. They also enabled scholars to analyse Manichaean influence on Western religious thought more closely. Until

¹ Iain Gardner & Samuel N.C. Lieu, *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 2004, 35–45.

1929 our most important source on this issue had been the North African church father Augustine (354–430). He had been a well-known *auditor* of the Manichaeian Church for some ten years, before he converted to Nicene Christianity. As a bishop of Hippo Regius (present day Annaba in Algeria), Augustine vehemently defended his Catholic faith against his Manichaeian opponents. Because he himself had escaped from the ‘devil’s snare’ of Manichaeism, he must have been considered an appropriate person to disprove the false beliefs of this rival Church. Some opponents, like the Manichaeian *doctor* Felix and the presbyter Fortunatus, he confronted in open debates that are preserved in Augustine’s *Contra Felicem Manichaeum* and the *Acta contra Fortunatum Manichaeum* respectively.² To others he reacted in writing. For example, he responded to the Roman *auditor* Secundinus in his *Contra Secundinum*.

These debates with Manichaeians have received considerable attention over the last years. A recent book on the topic of ‘Augustine and Manichaeism’ presented several new contributions on Felix, Fortunatus and Secundinus.³ These contributions aim to understand not only the course of the debates, but also the main theological positions that were at stake. The same sources that enable the analysis of Augustine’s Manichaeian influences, do also allow us to understand the Manichaeian background of his opponents.

Of these opponents, the Manichaeian bishop Faustus of Milevis deserves closer attention, and for two main reasons. Firstly, Augustine met him while still being an *auditor* of the Manichaeian Church in Carthage. The Catholic bishop describes their encounter in a well-known passage of his *Confessiones*.⁴ With intense yearning he had awaited Faustus’ arrival for almost nine years. As an auditor, Augustine had compared Manichaeian astrological teachings with those of the philosophers. Because the philosophical writings seemed to offer more plausible explanations of occurrences like solstices and eclipses, he had started doubting Manichaeian teachings.⁵ His

² *Acta contra Fortunatum Manichaeum*, translation, introduction and commentary by François Decret and Johannes van Oort (CFM SL II), Turnhout, Brepols 2004.

³ Jason D. BeDuhn, ‘Did Augustine Win His Debate With Fortunatus?’ in: Jacob Albert van den Berg, Annemaré Kotzé, Tobias Nicklas & Madeleine Scopello (eds.), *In Search of Truth: Augustine, Manichaeism and other Gnosticism. Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, NHMS 74, Leiden–Boston: Brill 2011, 463–480; Andreas Hoffmann, ‘Secundinus in der Diskussion mit Augustinus über das *malum*: Beobachtungen zu den augustianischen Quellen der *Epistula Secundini*’ in: *idem*, 481–518; Giulia Sfameni Gasparro, ‘The Disputation with Felix: Themes and Modalities of Augustine’s Polemic’ in: *idem*, 519–544.

⁴ *Conf.* 5,6.10–5.7.13.

⁵ *Conf.* 5,4.6.

fellow believers, however, assured Augustine that Faustus would take away his doubts. But in the end the long-awaited encounter with the Manichaean bishop was a great disappointment. Faustus did not even want to discuss these matters. Furthermore, Augustine found Faustus to be less versed in the liberal arts than he had expected him to be. If this was the best Manichaeism had to offer, there was no use remaining an adherent. Augustine became dissatisfied with the Manichaean faith altogether.

Secondly, the Manichaean bishop deserves particularly attention, because he himself at one point published a work called *Capitula*. This work has been preserved in one of Augustine's writings: the very extensive *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* in 33 books. The work *Capitula* itself is one of the more extensive writings of Western Manichaeism that have come down to us. Augustine relates that the work fell into the hands of some of his (Catholic Christian) 'brethren'. They asked their bishop to reply to the work, since it spoke against 'correct Christian faith and Catholic truth.'⁶ Augustine consented and refuted the work chapter by chapter, first quoting Faustus' text in full. The *Capitula* thus enable us to complement the image of Faustus that emerges from the *Confessiones* considerably. The work can also be used to reconstruct the message of a fourth century Manichaean bishop in its context, namely the historical context of a threatened gnostic Church.

1. SCHOLARLY DEBATE BEFORE THE FINDS OF 1929

1.1. *Albert Bruckner*

The Swiss scholar Albert Bruckner was the first in the twentieth century to study Faustus' *Capitula*.⁷ He characterized the work as an instrument of Manichaean (non-Christian) propaganda. Christian elements present in the *Capitula* were to be interpreted as polemic instruments rather than genuine expressions of Christian convictions.⁸ This premise determined the outlook of Bruckner's research.

⁶ *c. Faust.* 1.1.

⁷ Albert Bruckner, *Faustus von Mileve: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des abendländischen Manichäismus*, Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt 1901.

⁸ Bruckner saw Manichaeism essentially as a non-Christian religion. He believed Mani himself had little contact with Christianity. More than hundred years later, this view is highly debated. Historians of religion and Patristic scholars, among others, view Manichaeism more and more as a Christian current in its own right.

Faustus' Critique of Catholic Exegesis

Bruckner considered Faustus' critique on Christian (Catholic) exegesis to be the central theme of the *Capitula*. This criticism concentrated on two issues. Firstly, Faustus stressed that the Old and the New Testament are completely divergent, something Catholics apparently denied. Faustus deemed this Catholic denial unreasonable (*c. Faust.* 8.1). In his view, Jesus' Beatitudes clearly contradict the Law of Moses. Faustus also denied the idea that Jesus' coming had been foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament. The validity of his Christian faith had been sufficiently proven by divine testimony and Jesus' works (*c. Faust.* 12.1). Furthermore, Faustus claimed that Jesus had not fulfilled the Law. His works and teachings proved to Faustus that Jesus in fact abolished the Jewish Law. And, although they said otherwise, the Catholics, in his view, rejected the Old Testament as much as Manichaeans did. They clearly refused to follow some of its main commandments, like circumcision and keeping the Sabbath.

Secondly, Faustus was convinced that Christian Scripture was corrupted by Jewish adversaries. He only accepted the New Testament, because its promises of the Kingdom of Heaven and of eternal life are preferable to the earthly and carnal promises of the Old Testament (*c. Faust.* 4.1). According to the Manichaean bishop the gospel is nothing more than the preaching and commandments of Christ (*c. Faust.* 5.2). But in his view the gospels used by the Catholics contained more than that, since neither Christ, nor his apostles, were their only authors. Later men, using the apostles' names, had inserted new passages. In order to reconstruct the authentic gospel from corrupted Scripture, Faustus employed a critical and purely logical exegesis. He only accepted words recurring in a similar context as authentic. Furthermore, those words could only be properly understood when studied together.⁹

Faustus rejected all stories concerning Jesus' birth and genealogy and also those passages that seem to support the unity of both testaments. The scope of this article does not permit to discuss Faustus's arguments in great detail. However, one argument should receive some particular attention, because it provides a good example of Faustus's exegesis. As will become clear later, this argument concerns a central text in Faustus' polemic, namely Mt 5:17 ('Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil.'). Accepting a disparity between the Old and the New Testament, Faustus was logically reluctant to accept this verse. He

⁹ Bruckner, *Faustus von Mileve*, 62.

pointed out that only Matthew relates these words. Yet Matthew had himself not been present when Jesus uttered them. At that time Jesus had not even chosen Matthew as one of his disciples. The apostle John was present, but his gospel does not mention these or similar words. So, Faustus concluded, as 'ein gewandter Advokat nach diesem Zeugenverhör', that the authenticity of Mt 5:17 is doubtful.¹⁰

The Manichaean bishop provided an additional argument. Mt 9:9 relates the moment when Matthew became an apostle. It does so by using the third person, instead of the first ("And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him."). Based on this verse, Faustus argued that Matthew could not have written the entire gospel himself. He therefore rejected Mt 5:17 as genuine words of Jesus (*c. Faust.*, 17.1).¹¹ Even the Pauline Letters did not escape Faustus' exegetical criticism. Bruckner states that he also rejected Rom. 1:3, 1 Tim. 4:1–3 and Titus 1:15, among others.¹²

Faustus' Manichaeism

Writing decades before the important discovery of Manichaean texts in 1929, Bruckner's knowledge of Manichaeism was obviously limited. Nevertheless he recognized some distinct Manichaean theological ideas in the *Capitula*: the myth of the two principles (*c. Faust.* 20.2) and a Manichaean belief in the Trinity. In his Trinitarian concept of God, Faustus equated the Almighty Father, the unspeakable light, with the principle of good. The Son Christ is equated with the second, visible Light. The Holy Spirit is believed to have impregnated the earth and thereby brought forth the 'Suffering Jesus' (*Iesus patibilis*). According to Bruckner though, this Jesus seems to have been a *Fremdkörper* in Faustus' ideas: the Manichaean bishop does not seem to have integrated this concept of Jesus into his theology.¹³

Bruckner argues that Faustus taught a docetic view of the crucifixion. The Manichaean polemicist recognized a twofold Jesus: the son of Mary and the Son of God. They were united at Jesus' baptism (*c. Faust.* 12.1). However, the earthly and the heavenly Jesus somehow remained separated. The Son of God clothed himself with the son of Mary and eventually did not suffer on

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, 52.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, 52–53.

¹² *Ibidem*, 60.

¹³ *Ibidem*, 20–21.

the cross. Faustus understood the passion to be a mystical suffering, not a really corporeal one.¹⁴

According to Bruckner, Faustus' contribution to Manichaean propaganda had been great. He increased the available polemic material and also established firm critical exegetic principles, while using New Testament Scripture to support his arguments. His propaganda was aimed at the lack of Scriptural knowledge amongst Catholic Christians. This Catholic deficiency contrasted sharply with their faith in Scripture (*Bibelglauben*).¹⁵ Faustus voiced his opinions with great irony and biting sarcasm.

In Bruckner's view, then, Faustus is a good example of a wandering Manichaean teacher. He used criticism of the Bible and Catholic exegesis to convince the masses through public debates of the falseness of the Catholic faith. The work *Capitula* is viewed as an example of propagandist treatises that would have been used by Manichaeans in the absence of such Manichaean teachers.

1.2. Paul Monceaux

In 1926 the French scholar Monceaux published his work *Le manichéen Faustus de Milev. Restitution de ses Capitula*.¹⁶ Monceaux characterized Faustus' writing as a collection of individual *capitula* (sing. *capitulum* = little chapter). The term *capitulum* referred to a citation from Scripture followed by an exegetical analysis of the controversy it addressed. Thus, the *Capitula* were the controversies of the Manichaean bishop Faustus,¹⁷ and as such the work should be considered polemic. It was written to assist the *auditores* of the Manichaean Church in defending their faith. The individual *capitula* provided these *auditores* in particular with answers to questions Catholic opponents might ask in debates.¹⁸

Although Monceaux discussed the nature and aim of the work, above all he wanted to reconstruct the original sequence of the individual *capitula*. According to him, Augustine did not hand them down in Faustus' original order. Consecutive *libri* of *Contra Faustum* often discuss controversies that are not related, although some *capitula* suggest such a relation. For example,

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, 59–60.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, 47.

¹⁶ Paul Monceaux, *Le Manichéen Faustus de Milev. Restitution de ses Capitula*, Paris: Imprimerie nationale 1926.

¹⁷ 'Bref, les controverses du Manichéen étaient des *Capitula*,' *ibidem*, 17.

¹⁸ 'Cet ouvrage de Faustus était une sorte de manuel apologétique à l'usage des Manichéens, surtout des laïques.' *Ibidem*, 17–18.

in *c. Faust.* 32.1 Faustus promised he would examine whether the prophets of the Old Testament did announce Christ. The subsequent book *c. Faust.* 33, however, does not discuss the issue. Monceaux argued that Augustine had reacted to all the *capitula* he received and had not altered the sequence himself. He rejected the possibility that later copyists changed the sequence. Somehow the original order got lost before Augustine received the work. In Monceaux's view, the Catholics of Roman Africa had collected all the individual *capitula* piece by piece. They then transcribed them on a *uolumen* and delivered that to their bishop as being one book.¹⁹

Monceaux's reconstruction is based on a simple method. First he started by accepting the main themes of the work as mentioned by Augustine in his *Retractationes* (*Retr.* 2.7): criticism of the Old Testament, the Law and the prophets; Faustus's view of God of the Old Testament; his view of the Incarnation; and his belief that the Scriptures of the New Testament had been corrupted. After studying each *capitulum* individually, Monceaux first seems to have placed them in one of these categories before looking for the best logical sequence within each category. Finally his work provides a reconstructed version of the *Capitula* in Latin.

2. AFTER 1929

2.1. François Decret

In 1970, François Decret published his *Aspects du manichéisme dans l'Afrique romaine. Les controverses de Fortunatus, Faustus et Felix avec saint Augustin*.²⁰ Decret studied the nature of North African Manichaeism by analysing the controversies of Augustine with its well-known spokesmen Fortunatus, Faustus and Felix.

Like Bruckner and Monceaux, Decret characterizes Faustus' *Capitula* as a "compendium à l'usage du 'parfait polémiste manichéen' pour des favorables."²¹ Faustus started composing this work when he was in exile.²² This banishment had involuntarily put his missionary activities on hold. He recorded his main polemic arguments, in order to support similar activities

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, 24.

²⁰ François Decret, *Aspects du manichéisme dans l'Afrique romaine. Les controverses de Fortunatus, Faustus et Felix avec saint Augustin*, Paris: Études Augustiniennes 1970.

²¹ *Ibidem*, 61.

²² Faustus was denounced a Manichaean in 385/386 and as such was banished to an island somewhere in the Mediterranean.

by other Manichaeans. He might have completed and published his work after his release.²³

Decret deems Monceaux's restitution of the *Capitula* questionable. For one thing, we are uncertain whether Augustine received all of Faustus' *capitula*. Yet, like Monceaux, he accepts the main themes as mentioned in the *Retractationes*. Nevertheless, he distinguished between those *capitula* that discuss interpolations in the Pauline epistles and those in the Gospels.²⁴

Manichaean Myth in Faustus' Capitula

Since the discovery in Egypt of Manichaean texts our knowledge of Manichaean ideas and myths has expanded. Decret compared these ideas with those apparent in *Contra Faustum* and in the *acta* of the debates between Augustine on the one hand and Fortunatus and Felix on the other. He concluded that Faustus seldom referred explicitly to Manichaean myths. Decret's close reading of *Contra Faustum* showed that these myths definitely formed the backdrop of Faustus' theological thinking. Concerning Faustus' theology two issues should be discussed further: the fundamental Manichaean dualism, and the corresponding concepts of both God and the devil and Faustus' soteriological convictions.

Faustus explicitly distinguished the principle of Darkness from that of Light in *c. Faust.* 20.1–4, 21.1 and 25.1. Faustus seems to have felt uneasy with this Manichaean dualism and the underlying concepts of God and evil. The reader gets a glimpse of his concept of God in *c. Faust.* 25.1. In the corresponding *capitulum* Faustus reacted to the Catholic question whether he believes God is limited or not. Manichaeans accepted that the principle of Darkness poses boundaries to the principle of Good. In his defence, Faustus argued that Catholics limit their God as much as Manichaeans do. Rhetorically, he asked if they pray to the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob? By accepting the Old Testament in this way, Catholic Christians accept that God limits himself to those circumcised like a shepherd who accepts as his flock only those sheep that are branded with his sign. With this answer he did not deny dualism and at the same time avoided discussing Manichaean myth at great length.

Faustus referred to the principle of Darkness as *hylē* (matter; *c. Faust.* 21.1). On the nature of *hylē* he is not outspoken either. He called it 'the demon' (*c. Faust.* 21.1), because that is how it is commonly called. It possesses all evil

²³ Decret, *Aspects du manichéisme*, 61.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, 66–67.

(*c. Faust.* 20.1) and limits the expansions of God. When this acceptance of the two principles led to charges of polytheism, Faustus rejected these sharply; Manichaeans only accepted the principle of Good as God.²⁵

Why did Faustus remain comparatively vague on these issues, especially compared to Felix and Fortunatus? The Catholics labelled Manichaean myth as superstition. Considering that Manichaeans stressed their reliance on reason, Faustus might have wanted to avoid this accusation by not discussing the issue in great detail. It is also possible that his rank as a bishop made him more prudent in these matters. Decret, however, provides another hypothesis, one that does not exclude the former two: the *Capitula* were not *acta* of an open debate. In such debates skilled opponents, like Augustine, would have forced Faustus to discuss his convictions more thoroughly. They would subsequently have characterized these ideas as incredible fables, thereby disproving the reasonable nature of Manichaeism. Since Faustus probably wrote his work in a less demanding setting, he was able to remain relatively silent on this subject.²⁶

Decret argues that in *c. Faust.* 24.1 Faustus discussed the creation of man. With reference to Eph 4.22–24 Faustus distinguished between two types of men, each with his own birth. The first is the earthly man, whose carnal birth is caused by the forces of Darkness. The second type of man is the ‘internal celestial man’, who is created by the forces of Good in a second birth. Faustus viewed this second birth as a liberation, which ‘consiste à nous initier à la foi, dans le Christ Jésus, par l’Esprit-Saint, sous l’enseignement des hommes de bien.’²⁷

Faustus’s soteriology was clearly Manichaean: salvation meant the liberation of the divine particles from matter and their return to the spiritual realm of the Father. These particles had been dispersed in the material world. In Faustus’ work this soteriology was closely connected to his Christology. The Manichaean bishop accepted Jesus as the spiritual Christ—which Decret equates with the *Iesus patibilis*—who came to bring the message of salvation to those *partes dei*. He accepted Christ as the Word, the Son of God (*c. Faust.* 2.1). He came from the Father alone and had therefore no terrestrial parents. Hence, Faustus could never accept the birth stories in the Gospels.²⁸ Jesus in his view had never been born in the flesh, but remained a purely spiritual being. He never became mixed with matter, which is the

²⁵ *Ibidem*, 198–199.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, 244–245.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, 259.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, 280.

principle of Darkness. Because the Son of God had never been truly born, he could never have actually died. Therefore his suffering could never have been corporeal, only mystical.²⁹

Mani also played a significant role in Faustus' soteriological thoughts. He is called 'the theologian' (c. *Faust.* 20.3) and 'the teacher' (c. *Faust.* 19.5). He is considered to be the Paraclete, promised by Christ himself, to reveal the entire Truth (Jn 16:15; c. *Faust.* 32.6).³⁰ This Truth entailed a consciousness (*gnosis*) of man's forgotten divine origin. Thus Mani's teachings provoke an *anamnēsis* of this divine nature in all the faithful, thereby bringing about a *metanoia*.

Salvation does not lie in this *gnosis* alone; man needs to follow moral commandments as well. Faustus considered Jesus' Beatitudes to be both the central message of the gospel and the basis of his own ascetic lifestyle (c. *Faust.* 5.3).³¹ The moral obligations—contenance and the prohibition of drinking wine and eating meat—are those of the Manichaean Elect. These *electi* then become the most rigorous followers of Christ's teachings.

Manichaean gnosis

Eight years later Decret published *L'Afrique manichéenne (IV^e–V^e siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale*.³² In this two-volume work he studied Faustus' concept of *gnosis* more closely. Manichaeans juxtaposed their critical stance in religious matters to the blind faith of their Catholic opponents. To prove that this stance was justifiably Christian, Faustus referred to the story of the apostle Thomas. In doubt Thomas was not spurned or simply told to believe, but was given proof of the resurrection (Jn 20:27; c. *Faust.* 16.8). However, in Manichaeism knowledge depended on *gnosis*, not on discursive and rational thought. Texts like *The Fundamental Epistle* seem to present this *gnosis* as the fundamental 'science' on which all true knowledge is based.

Faustus believed that truth is attained by meditation and contemplation, not by 'scientific methods'.³³ One may take Faustus' doubts on Mt 5:17 as an example (see above). Through rational analysis of this *locus* Faustus

²⁹ *Ibidem*, 285.

³⁰ Although Mani is not mentioned specifically, Decret believes he is referred to: 'Certes, le nom de Mani n' est pas cité, mais « le bienheureux père » est clairement désigné par le rôle qu' il a assumé.' *Ibidem*, 286.

³¹ *Ibidem*, 286–289.

³² François Decret, *L'Afrique manichéenne (IV^e–V^e siècles). Étude historique et doctrinale*, Paris: Études Augustiniennes 1978.

³³ *Ibidem*, 260–289.

accepted only the Jewish Christians as the true Christians, because they accepted the entire Law. Faustus therefore once thought of joining the Jewish-Christian community (*c. Faust.* 19.5) The *Manichaea fides* however taught him that this text had been corrupted (*c. Faust.* 18.3). Thus, truth is not attained by rational thinking but through Manichaean *fides* and *gnosis*.

In *c. Faust.* 32.6 Faustus cited Jn 16.15 as proof for his view of the Paraclete. The Manichaean bishop seems to have used a codex that mentioned the verb *inducere* to describe the Paraclete's mission. He is said to 'lead you into all truth and he will proclaim to you all things and remind you of them'. It was the Paraclete who would initiate into *gnosis*. The verb *inducere* renders Jn 16.15 the perfect justification for the initiative character of the Manichaean Church. Faustus furthermore claimed that one becomes a disciple into the faith of Christ through the Holy Spirit and through the teachings of wise men (*c. Faust.* 24.1). The Latin text uses *discipulati*, which can be translated as 'become disciples'. Decret however chose to translate it as 'nous sommes initiés' (we are initiated). In this translation, the Holy Spirit becomes the power that initiates us. Manichaeans would have understood this as an initiation into the *gnosis* of our divine nature.³⁴ Faustus saw in Mani the 'grand promoteur de la Gnose.' It was he in his role as the Paraclete who revealed the principles of Good and evil and men's divine origin.

2.2. *Small Contributions between 1978 and 2001*

In the first volume of the *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire* André Mandouze and his collaborators provided an overview of the then current consensus on Faustus.³⁵ They largely accept the image that is presented in the *Confessiones*, but they also acknowledge Faustus' extensive knowledge on both the Old and the New Testament. Furthermore, they discuss an interesting episode in Faustus' life. Faustus probably travelled to Rome in 382/383, where he would have met the Manichaean *auditor* Constantius. This 'hearer' experimented with a form of communal living in his own house. The experiment failed, because some of the participants were quite lax in following Mani's commandments. Some other participants, however, wanted to persevere and created a schism from the Manichaean community. They were called 'Mattarians', since they preferred to sleep on simple mats.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, 272.

³⁵ 'Favstvs 2', in André Mandouze (ed.), *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire. 1: Prosopographie de l'Afrique chrétienne (303-533)*, Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique 1982, 390-396.

Augustine confronted Faustus personally with this episode, attacking the bishop's ascetic lifestyle (*c. Faust.* 5.5). The bishop of Hippo argued that Faustus' less than sober lifestyle had not only shunned the Mattarians, but also his poor family from Milevis. It seems therefore that Augustine referred to a personal experience of his Manichaean opponent.

In 1991 François Decret published an article on the fundamental Manichaean dualism in Faustus' thoughts.³⁶ The doctrine of the two principles had been a pillar of Manichaean faith from the very beginning and was part of the instruction of the *auditores*. Decret argues that Faustus approached the doctrine in his *Capitula*, especially in the *capitula* of *c. Faust.* 20 and 21.³⁷

In *c. Faust.* 21.1 he defends Manichaeism against the accusation of being polytheistic, an accusation that was probably based on the Manichaean acceptance of both a Prince of Light and a Prince of Darkness. Yet, as Faustus points out, his Catholic opponents wrongly assume that Manichaeans believed that the Prince of Light and the Prince of Darkness share a divine essence. The human soul is consubstantial to the Prince of Light, since it comes forth from his kingdom, not to the Prince of Darkness. A Manichaean like Faustus could never accept the idea of the Prince of Darkness being at the same level of 'divinity' as the Prince of Light. They simply did not share the same divine substance.

Our soul is awoken by the appeal of Jesus-the-Splendour and is from that point considered to be a purely spiritual being. In *c. Faust.* 24.1 Faustus calls this awoken soul *homo novus*, using a particular Pauline formula (see for example Rom 6:6 and 1Cor 15:47–49). As Decret pointed out, Manichaean doctrine taught that a spiritually awoken person was actively engaged in the grand scheme of liberation of the divine particles, the divine substance, from matter. Within the Manichaean church the *electi* were considered to be such new men.

In the *capitulum* of *c. Faust.* 20.1–4 Faustus defends his faith against another accusation: that of Manichaeism being a schism from paganism. Considering that Manichaeans viewed their Prince of Light in some way as a material being and pointing out that pagans share a similar view of their gods, Faustus' Catholic opponents argued that Manichaeism is in fact another form of paganism.

³⁶ François Decret, 'Le dogme fondamental des deux principes selon Faustus de Milev' (1991) in: idem, *Essais sur l'Église manichéenne en Afrique du Nord et à Rome au temps de saint Augustin*, Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum 1995, 147–158.

³⁷ Decret believes these two *capitula* were somehow reversed in Augustine's *Contra Faustum*. 'L'ordre des deux *capitula* paraît ainsi avoir été inversé dans le classement donné par Augustin dans son *Contra Faustum*'. François Decret, 'Le dogme manichéen', 155.

In order to refute this accusation, Faustus presented Manichaeism as a sect. He defines a sect as a religious group that holds opinions that differ from those of other groups and that has another mode of worship (*c. Faust.* 20.3). Contrary to Manichaeans, pagans believe that good and evil have their origin in the same principle. They also honour their gods with temples, shrines, idols, sacrifices and incense. This difference in beliefs proves that Manichaeism should not be considered as a schism of paganism. Both the Jewish and Catholic faith and cult, however, are similar to those of the pagans (*c. Faust.* 20.4). Therefore Faustus accuses his Catholic opponents of being the actual schism of paganism.

The encyclopaedia *Augustine through the Ages* devoted two separate lemmas on the subject: one on Faustus himself and one on *Contra Faustum*. Allan D. Fitzgerald's contribution on the bishop primarily provides a short biography. On Faustus' religious ideas Fitzgerald remarks: 'Faustus accepted *quae saluti convenientia* from the New Testament, but rejected the whole Old Testament.' This view is consistent with Bruckner's: Faustus used the New Testament to substantiate his propaganda.³⁸

In his contribution on *Contra Faustum*, J. Kevin Coyle notes that Faustus presented Manichaeism as the purest form of Christianity. Coyle points out that Faustus only referred to those writings that were accepted by the Catholics when repudiating their religious ideas. Faustus never explicitly referred to Manichaean works in order to substantiate his arguments.

Faustus' primary target was the inspired character of the Old Testament. The *Capitula* is therefore characterized as 'the most extensive Manichaean polemic we possess against what is seen to be the Old Testament's wicked dietary, meaningless ritual requirements, and moral deficiencies, and the fraudulent character of Moses and the prophets.'³⁹

In the *Augustinus Lexikon*, François Decret again discusses both Faustus and *Contra Faustum*.⁴⁰ He still characterizes the *Capitula* as a *disputatio* on specific Scriptural *loci* and as an instruction for propaganda. Contrary to what he argued in his *Aspects du manichéisme*, Decret here believes that Augustine refuted all of Faustus' *capitula*. Monceaux's reconstruction is still rejected, since there might well have been no original order. Because they

³⁸ Allan D. Fitzgerald, 'Faustus of Milevis', *Augustine Through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, Grand Rapids–Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans 1999, 356.

³⁹ J. Kevin Coyle, 'Faustum Manichaeum, Contra', *Augustine Through the Ages*, 355–356.

⁴⁰ François Decret, 'Faustus Manicheum (Contra-); Faustus Manicheus' in: *Augustinus-Lexikon*, 2, Basel: Schwabe 1996–2002, 1244–1255.

addressed several controversies, the individual *capitula* might have been distributed separately. Decret however still largely accepts the themes that were proposed by Monceaux as the central controversies of Faustus' work.

C. Faust. 21.1 is still understood as a defence against polytheism. In this respect Decret also refers to *c. Faust.* 20.2, where Faustus responds by arguing that 'we have the same religious attitude regarding all things as you have regarding the bread and the cup' (*c. Faust.* 20.2). In his view, the Catholic Eucharist was based on a similar materialism, making Catholic criticism of Manichaeism hypocrite.⁴¹

2.3. Gregor Wurst

In a more extensive contribution to the debate, Gregor Wurst argues that the term *capitula* should be understood as a Latin translation of the Greek term *kephalaia*.⁴² This would make a parallel between Faustus' work and the Manichaean *Kephalaia* plausible. These *Kephalaia* were a well-known and widely distributed *genus litterarium* within the Manichaean Church. Because it was such a popular Manichaean genre, the *Kephalaia* must have been known in Roman North Africa, although there is no proof that they were actually read there. According to Wurst, the content of both Faustus' *Capitula* and the *Kephalaia* support such a parallel. Each *capitulum* and *kephalaion* is written according to a similar structure: the teacher—whether it is Faustus (*Capitula*) or Mani (*Kephalaia*)—answers a question on theological issues. Both works also accept the practice of a Manichaean instructive lecture as the '*Sitz im Leben*'.⁴³

Both works do differ in some respects. First, the *Capitula* only once mention an actual opponent (*c. Faust.* 23.1). The *Kephalaia* on the other hand often mention the questioner, who is usually one of Mani's followers, by name. Faustus is more interested in his opponents' questions than in their personalities. Secondly, the *Capitula* are written in the first person, while the *Kephalaia* are composed in the third. Finally, the *Kephalaia* are often concluded with an acclamation, a doxology, or an expression of gratitude towards the teacher. These are absent from Faustus' *Capitula*.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, 1248.

⁴² Gregor Wurst, 'Bemerkungen zu Struktur und *genus litterarium* der *Capitula* des Faustus de Mileve' in: Johannes van Oort, Otto Wermelinger & Gregor Wurst (eds.), *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West. Proceedings of the Fribourg-Utrecht Symposium of the International Association of Manichaean Studies (IAMS)*, Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill 2001 (repr. Leiden-Boston: Brill 2012), 307–324.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, 310–311.

The *Kephalaia* and the *Capitula* both belonged to a popular genre in Late Antiquity, the so-called *Quaestiones et Responsiones* or *Erotapokriseis*-literature. This genre is characterized by a dialogue in which the questions are only short and the emphasis is on the substantially longer answer. Yet, Wurst argues, the title of *Capitula* or *Kephalaia* seems to have been limited to Manichaean literature.

The Structure of the Capitula

Wurst rejects the order of Faustus' original *Capitula* as it was reconstructed by Monceaux. He notes that Monceaux accepted as the main themes of the *Capitula* those themes Augustine mentioned in the *Retractationes*. Wurst argues that these were only relevant to Augustine and should not be considered as well-demarkated subjects of Faustus' work. Because Monceaux's reconstruction departs from these themes, he could only have reconstructed what Augustine had taken to be the order. That order does not necessarily correspond to a possible sequence of the original *Capitula*.

In his *Contra Faustum* Augustine clearly indicated that the *uolumen* he had received was composed by Faustus himself (*c. Faust.* 1.1). This book fell into Augustine's hands after which he handed it to his brothers. Therefore, the title *Capitula* could not have referred to a number of individual *disputationes* which Augustine's had collected individually.⁴⁴ Wurst accepts the structure of the *capitula* as presented in *Contra Faustum* as that of the Faustus' own *uolumen*.

There is another sound reason to accept the sequence presented in *Contra Faustum*. The questions of the *capitula* of *c. Faust.* 2.1–11.1 are asked in second person singular, while those of *c. Faust.* 12.1–17.1 are posed in the second person plural. Wurst believes that these two sets of *capitula* constitute two distinct units within Faustus' work: "Dieses formale Ordnungskriterium ist zu evident, als daß es sich um einen bloßen Zufall handeln könnte, insbesondere vor dem Hintergrund der restlichen *capitula* in *c. Faust.* 20–33, wo die Anfragen des Katholiken sehr unterschiedlich formuliert sind."⁴⁵

Furthermore, both sets are thematically coherent. In *c. Faust.* 2–11 only two issues are discussed: the Manichaean reluctance to accept the Old Testament and the denial of the human birth of Christ. These issues are debated from different angles. *C. Faust.* 12–17 address the problem of whether Christ was foretold in the Old Testament.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, 313–318.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, 320.

Wurst thus concludes that *Contra Faustum* retained the original sequence of Faustus' *Capitula*. It was not Faustus' intention to structure his work logically. The genre of the *Erotapokriseis* did not expect him to do so. Faustus only employed a loosely thematic arranging principle, as shown in *c. Faust.* 2–11 and 12–17.

2.4. *Jacob Albert van den Berg*

In his 2009 PhD dissertation, Jacob Albert van den Berg presented another approach to Faustus' ideas and sources.⁴⁶ This dissertation focusses on the ideas of Adimantus in his *Disputationes*. Adimantus had been the first major Manichaeian missionary to the Roman Empire. After studying both Adimantus' work and the *Capitula*, van den Berg recognized some striking connections. Faustus held Adimantus in high regard, characterising him as the 'only person we need to study after our blissful father Manichaeus' (*c. Faust.* 1.1). Sixteen of Faustus' thirty-two *capitula* include at least one biblical passage already used in the *Disputationes*. The argument that the Law of Moses contradicts the Gospel of Jesus on circumcision, the Sabbath, sacrifices and dietary laws, is used by both Manichaeians. Also, Augustine explicitly referred to *Contra Adimantum* in his *Contra Faustum* (*c. Faust.* 6.6 and 16.30). Both references concern Mt 5.17, which, as we have seen, was an important passage in Faustus' argument. It had apparently been important to Adimantus as well. Van den Berg concluded that Faustus was profoundly involved in a discussion similar to the one Adimantus was involved in when he wrote his *Disputationes*.

Although Faustus never mentioned Adimantus as a source for particular *capitula*, he might have used arguments against the Old Testament from Adimantus' *Disputationes*. Unfortunately Adimantus' works discussing the New Testament have not been preserved. Van den Berg argues that, because Adimantus was apparently such an important source for Faustus, the *Capitula* can be used to reconstruct some of Adimantus' lost ideas on the New Testament.⁴⁷ Although Van den Berg acknowledges that Faustus lifted Adimantus' arguments from their original context, he nevertheless believes this approach to be valid.

To support his approach van den Berg quotes *c. Faust.* 12.1, where Faustus mentions the books of the 'Manichaeian fathers' (*parentum nostrorum*

⁴⁶ J.A. van den Berg, *Biblical Argument in Manichaeian Missionary Practice. The Case of Adimantus and Augustine*, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2009.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, 100–106.

libris). The exact identity of these fathers is not revealed. Referring to *c. Faust.* 1.1, van den Berg proposes that Adimantus was at least one, if not the only one of the aforementioned fathers. Furthermore, *c. Faust.* 22.1–5 and 32.4 discuss the immoral life of the Hebrew prophets. In *c. Faust.* 22.5 Faustus recalls the atrocities, mostly sexual in nature, committed by those prophets. In *c. Faust.* 22.4 the Manichaean bishop reminds his readers that the authors of the Old Testament even dared to publish calumnies against God. As van den Berg points out, similar arguments are found in Titus of Bostra's *Contra Manichaeos* 3.7. Earlier in his work van den Berg used a fragment from Photius' *Bibliotheca* to argue that Titus actually wrote against Adimantus.⁴⁸ The fact that both Adimantus and Faustus used the same arguments, strengthens his hypothesis.

Van den Berg also addresses the issue of the *Capitula*'s structure. He explains it from its *Sitz im Leben*; the individual *capitula* originated in actual debates with Catholic opponents. Since individual debates would have differed in length, so do the corresponding *capitula*. At the same time, the same issues might have been debated several times, which explains that some *capitula* address similar controversies from different angles. Faustus' work itself does not contain *verbatim* reports though. The accounts were polished in order to provide more effective instructions for later missionaries. Van den Berg follows Wurst in arguing that the *Kephalaia* served as a stylistic example for Faustus' *Capitula*. However, he notes that the word *Kephalaia* should have been translated more correctly as *Capita*. By using the diminutive term '*Capitula*', Faustus might have acknowledged that his work was of a lesser standard than those *Kephalaia*.⁴⁹

Adimantus as Faustus' Paraclete

In order to validate his attempt to use the *Capitula* as a source for reconstructing Adimantus' ideas, van den Berg discusses Faustus' view of the Paraclete. In *c. Faust.* 1.2 Faustus already claimed that Adimantus unmasked the deceptions of the *semichristiani*. Van den Berg believes these deceptions refer to the faulty Catholic exegesis of the New Testament. Faustus argued that it was through the guidance of the Paraclete that Manichaeans could discern authentic passages of the New Testament. Van den Berg therefore suggests that Faustus accepted Adimantus as well as Mani as being the Paraclete. To substantiate this hypothesis, van den Berg also cites a Latin

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, 48.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, 181–184.

Formula of Renunciation which identifies both Adimantus and Mani as the Manichaean Paraclete.⁵⁰

This argument is not entirely convincing. For one thing, as van den Berg himself acknowledges, the Latin *Formula* is of a later date. The Manichaean *doctor* Felix, himself a contemporary of Faustus, straightforwardly stated that the Manichaeans believed Mani was the Paraclete (c. *Felicem* 1.9). Furthermore, Faustus' criticism of the Old Testament might have been derived from a wider (Western) Manichaean exegetical tradition just as much as directly from Adimantus. In that case Adimantus would have been an early and important exponent of that exegetical tradition, to which others (such as Faustus) subsequently contributed. It would be impossible to discern which of the ideas expressed in the *Capitula* originated earlier in that tradition and which were Faustus' additions.

2.5. *Alban Massie*

In 2010 Alban Massie presented his PhD dissertation, *Peuple prophétique et nation témoin. Le peuple juif dans le Contra Faustum de saint Augustin*. This dissertation was published by the Institut d'Études Augustiniennes in the following year.⁵¹ Massie analysed Augustine's thoughts on the Jewish people in *Contra Faustum*. Because these ideas are expressed in refuting Faustus' views on the subject, the *Capitula* are analysed first.

Like Monceaux and Decret, Massie characterises the *Capitula* as a collection of controversies (*disputationes*) on specific Scriptural *loci* and their exegesis. He also notes that the *Capitula* were written in a period of severe persecution. Notwithstanding the dangers they faced, Manichaeans remained well known for their love of controversies and debate. These public *disputationes* allowed them to stress the reasonable nature of their faith that was demonstrably based on sound exegesis. Massie agrees with Wurst that Faustus' work is comparable to the Manichaean *Kephalaia*. He underlines that both the *Capitula* and the *Kephalaia* take the form of *Quaestiones-Responsiones*/*Erotapokriseis*. This genre was an important literary instrument of Manichaean propaganda.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, 208.

⁵¹ Alban Massie, *Peuple prophétique et nation témoin. Le peuple juif dans le Contra Faustum manichaeum de saint Augustin*, Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes 2011.

Faustus' Manichaean Prophetology

Massie's thoughts on the main subject of Faustus' work constitute his greatest contribution to the debate. He considers Faustus' refutation of the Catholic prophetic argument to be the central theme of the *Capitula*. This argument stressed that there is a harmony between the Old and the New Testament; both Testaments do not contradict each other.⁵² The Catholics accepted the Old Testament prophets as precursors to Christ, because they had foretold his coming. Christ in turn had confirmed this harmony by stating that he had come to fulfil the Law. Jesus' mission was an announced part of the divine plan, which was accomplished through history. The Catholics saw their prophetic argumentation proven by Mt 5:17 and Lk 24:27 and 47 in particular.⁵³

The reason why Faustus rejected both the Old Testament and its prophets lies in the fact that their particular nature contradicted Manichaeism's universal pretensions. The Old Testament presented only the Jews to be God's chosen people. Yet, as Decret already pointed out, Faustus did not use familiar Manichaean ideas to invalidate the Catholic acceptance of the Old Testament and its prophets.

In order to prove that Faustus' ideas on prophets was thoroughly Manichaean, Massie sketches a framework of Manichaean prophetology. This Manichaean view of prophets differed greatly from that of Catholic Christianity.⁵⁴ Foremost, it does not propose a succession or an evolution of the message of Salvation. Instead, this message was believed to be essentially a-historical; it supposes the continuous renewal of the original message brought by Jesus-the-Splendour. This message was believed to bring forth an illuminatory *gnosis*. The Manichaean *gnosis* entailed at least the discernment of the two principles, their current mixed state—in both this world and the human soul—and the three times. Manichaean prophets, called prophets of Truth, were all believed to be beneficiaries of this message. Thus, the prophets of Truth invoked an *anamnēsis* of the Kingdom of Light. Mani's message was believed to be valid for all time, past, present and future. In that sense his vocation was truly a-historical.⁵⁵

In his *Capitula* Faustus argued that a real prophet of Truth does not need Scriptural validation. He referred to Jn 10:38 ('If you don't believe me, believe

⁵² *Ibidem*, 70 & 185.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, 72.

⁵⁴ Apart from the *CMC*, Massie's reconstruction is heavily indebted to Michel Tardieu, *Le manichéisme*, second revised edition, Paris: PUF 1997.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, 89–94.

my works') and Mt 7:16 ('grapes are never harvested from thorns or figs from thistles') to support this claim. A prophet's truthfulness is sufficiently proven through his works; it becomes apparent in his *uita honesta, prudentia et uirtus* (c. *Faust.* 12.1). Jesus' life could indeed be described as honourable, wise and virtuous. The Old Testament prophets and patriarchs on the other hand had failed to live such a life. Therefore they are to be considered fruits of the bad tree, which is the Hebrew God.⁵⁶ They can not be accepted as prophets of Truth.

Faustus demonstrated, for example, that Moses lacked the *prudentia* of a prophet. In Dt 21:23 Moses had cursed Christ by referring to the crucifixion ('Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'). By cursing the Son he proved he could never have known the Father and therefore lacked the *prudentia* of a true prophet.⁵⁷ In Massie's view this lack is significant, since *prudentia* was accepted as a cardinal virtue in the fourth century. Jesus on the other hand had proven himself to be a wise prophet.

In order to distinguish the Hebrew and pagan prophets on the one hand from the prophets of Truth on the other, Faustus provided a tripartite taxonomy. Departing from Rm 2:14–15 and 8:2 he distinguished three types of law: the Law of the Hebrews, which Paul calls 'the Law of sin and death'; the law of the gentiles, which is identified as the natural law; and the Law of Truth. Subsequently, he discerns three types of prophets: the Hebrew prophets; the pagan prophets (like the Sybil or Hermes Trismegistos); and the prophets of Truth (c. *Faust.* 19:2).⁵⁸ Within this taxonomy the Law of Light is superior, the Law of the Hebrews inferior. In c. *Faust.* 12.1 the Hebrew prophets are negatively qualified as *uates* (seers), a term which also refers to pagan priests.

Manichaeen prophetology argued that prophets of Truth invoke the Manichaeen *gnosis*—the discernment of the two principles, their mixture and on-going combat, and their unavoidable final separation. Faustus provided additional criteria to distinguish true from false prophets. The attainment of this saving *gnosis* results in *uita honesta, prudentia et uirtus*. A true prophet can be recognized not only by his teachings, but by his life and works as well. Faustus' Jesus had proven to be a prophet of Truth. Not only did he live a moral, wise and virtuous life (c. *Faust.*, 12.1), his teachings were in accord with Manichaeen teachings.

In the *Capitula*, Faustus based his emphasis on a moral lifestyle on the New Testament, not on Manichaeen writings. He employed Paul's scheme

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, 110–112.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, 121–122.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, 70–71.

of the two births as mentioned in Rm 6:6 and Eph 4:22–24 to juxtapose the physical birth with the celestial one (*c. Faust.* 24.1). Our natural birth encapsulates our soul, a *pars dei* in matter (*hylē*) and is therefore caused by the forces of Darkness. The Manichaean *gnosis* brought forth by the principle of Light induces our second, spiritual birth. Referring to Col 3:9–10 ('Strip off the old man with his actions, and put on the new, who is being renewed in the knowledge of God in accordance with the image of him who created him in you'), Faustus argued that this second birth has ethical consequences. The *anamnēsis* of the two principles, their mixed state and our divine origin, makes man follow the ethical standards of the Manichaean *electi*. Those Manichaean Elect thereby become the missionaries of this *gnosis*, through both their teachings and moral behaviour.

Faustus accepted Christ's *euangelium* as a *mandatum*, an instruction for conduct. This *mandatum* is encapsulated in Jesus' Beatitudes and contradicts the Law of Moses (*c. Faust.* 5.1).⁵⁹ The Hebrew prophets that had followed the Law can not be accepted as prophets of Truth. Not only was their life immoral, but their teachings (the Law) were completely disparate from the message of Light as well.

Polemic against Catholic Prophetic Arguments

Apparently Faustus's Catholic opponents criticized the Manichaean rejection of the New Testament by referring to a few specific *loci* of the New Testament. In their view these verses clearly disproved the validity of Manichaean propaganda. Mt 5:17 seems to have been an important *locus* in this debate, since it explicitly connects the Law of the Old Testament with Christ's Gospel. The *capitula* of *c. Faust.* 17.1–2, 18.1–3 and 19.1–6 provide arguments to counter the Catholic understanding of this verse. *C. Faust.* 17.1–2 provides the argument already discussed by Bruckner: the authenticity of Mt. 5:17 is doubtful. In *c. Faust.* 18.1–3 and 19.1–6, Faustus shows that Christ's works indeed contradict the Law.⁶⁰

Another relevant locus was Jn 5:46 ('For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote about me'), which verse is discussed in *c. Faust.* 16.1–8. According to Faustus it primarily poses a hermeneutic problem. He starts by stating that no prophesies about Christ are to be found in the writings of Moses (*c. Faust.* 16.2–3). He then cites two verses from Deuteronomy which Catholics apparently used to defend their prophetology: Dt 18:15

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, 128–129.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, 129.

(‘I will raise up for them from among their brothers a prophet like you’) and 28:66LXX (‘They will see their own life hanging and will not believe’). Since these verses do not explicitly name Christ, they should be rejected as proof for the idea that he is foretold by the Old Testament. Again the Manichaean bishop argued that the tradition (*traditio*) of Moses is very dissimilar from that of Christ. If someone believes in one of them, he would necessarily reject the other.

In his polemic Faustus showed an understanding of Catholic prophetic argument as well as an extensive knowledge of the Old Testament. His criticism of both the Old Testament prophets and Catholic Christology are based on Scriptural arguments from both Testaments. When he discussed his own faith he made use of Pauline language. The epistles of the apostle play a significant part in the *Capitula*.⁶¹ Faustus’ faith seems to have been based on the clear notion of *gnosis* as described above. In this, Faustus clearly accepts the Pauline distinction of the two births and the two men. Only the second birth is man’s initiation in the truth, since it is the work of the Holy Spirit.⁶² His tripartite taxonomy itself is mostly derived from his reading of Paul’s letter to the Romans. This language, according to Massie, is more than a *captatio benevolentiae*, a polemic tool to win over Catholics: it is his own religious language. St Paul is an important source for Faustus’ Manichaean theology.

Faustus’ Contribution to Manichaean Thought

Faustus was not the first Manichaean to criticize the Catholic acceptance of the Old Testament and its prophets, for Adimantus had done the same in his *Disputationes*. Faustus’ ideas about prophets correspond largely to what is known from other Manichaean sources. Nevertheless Massie is convinced that the *Capitula* is a unique work. It is the only Manichaean source we have on the specific tripartite taxonomy of prophets. This taxonomy then must have been one of Faustus’ contributions to Manichaean propheticology.

The contents of Faustus’ *Capitula* indicate that Western Manichaeans employed a prophetic argument of their own. Only the prophets of Truth, those who taught the Law of Light, were to be accepted as true prophets. The prophets of the Hebrews and of the pagans should be rejected. True prophets could be recognized both by their message and by their moral conduct. This criterion excluded the Jewish prophets, since their life had

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, 135–139.

⁶² *Ibidem*, 186.

been amoral. It also unmasked their God, whose promises were carnal. Yahweh should therefore be equated with *hylē*, the principle of Darkness. Because Catholics did not straightforwardly reject this 'Jewish superstition', Faustus accused them of being only *semichristiani*.

2.6. Jason David BeDuhn

Although Massie's analysis of Faustus' *Capitula* is extensive, his overall view of the Manichaean bishop and his work differs little from that of earlier authors. He sees the *Capitula* as a work of polemics, a guide book for Manichaean polemicists to come. Faustus' ideas are believed to be in accordance with those we know from (western) Manichaean texts. In his article 'A Religion of Deeds: Scepticism in the doctrinal liberal Manichaeism of Faustus and Augustine', American historian of religion Jason David BeDuhn challenged that view.⁶³ His hypothesis was elaborated a year later in his publication *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma. 1: Conversion and Apostasy, 373–388 C.E.*

BeDuhn argues that Faustus' Manichaeism was highly sceptical in nature.⁶⁴ This sceptical Manichaeism had been developed by Adimantus. It appropriated the Manichaean faith to the western Christian context in two ways: it accepted the Marcionite criticism of the Old Testament and it developed a sceptical rhetoric, derived from the Platonic New Academy.

Philosophers of the New Academy rejected infallible knowledge. In order not to resort to *apraxia*, i.e. the inability to act, the sage should act on 'discovered probabilities', which meant on evident truth. Augustine mentions that Faustus had read some works of at least one sceptic philosopher, namely Cicero (*Conf.* 5.6.11). Cicero's scepticism was a practice-centered philosophy. He maintained that to prove the truth-likeness of an assumption, one must look at the effects of actions based on it. If such an action is successful, the underlying assumption is likely to be true, though never certain.

Since (North African) Manichaeans stressed their reliance on reason, they displayed great scepticism towards accepting ideas merely based on authority.⁶⁵ According to BeDuhn, this attitude was an adaptation of

⁶³ Jason David BeDuhn, 'A Religion of Deeds: Scepticism in the doctrinally liberal Manichaeism of Faustus and Augustine' in: *idem* (ed.), *New Light on Manichaeism. Papers from the Sixth International Congress on Manichaeism*, NHMS 64, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2009, 1–28.

⁶⁴ Jason David BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma. 1: Conversion and Apostasy, 373–388 C.E.*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2010.

⁶⁵ 'Religion of Deeds', 2–3.

Manichaeism to the sceptical-dogmatic debate of Hellenistic philosophy. However, Manichaeans usually did not adopt a sincere sceptical position. Rather, they tactically accepted sceptical rhetorical techniques.

BeDuhn believes that, like Cicero, Faustus sceptically subordinated doctrine to practice. In *c. Faust.* 32.2 he states that Manichaeans only accept from the Gospel what is useful. The rest is rejected. BeDuhn also recognizes Carneades' three principles for determining probable truths in the *Capitula*: the persuasive, the non-contradicted, and the tested. Faustus deemed the Manichaean dualism persuasive. In the *capitulum* of *c. Faust.* 32.7 he argued that there is no contradiction between Christ's teachings and the myth of the two principles. He also argued that the Manichaean interpretation of Christ's words is correct since it is not contradicted by Christ's works (*c. Faust.* 12.1). Finally, the truth of Mani's ideas is confirmed by its ability to sustain a moral life (*c. Faust.* 12.1).⁶⁶

Faustus criticised Catholic emphasis on belief over practice as contradicting the practical nature of Christianity. Dogmas unrelated to justifying a moral life were especially suspect. 'Implicit in Faustus's emphasis is the idea that details of doctrine are not as important as a system of practice rooted in a plausible general account of the nature of things.'⁶⁷ By rejecting the adherence to unproven beliefs as undeniable truths, he showed himself a sceptic. This position permitted him 'to apply sceptical criticism to his opponent and to maintain a remarkable liberal stance towards his own religion's ideological propositions.'⁶⁸

The Gospel as a mandatum

As a Manichaean *electus*, Faustus claimed to be an embodiment of the precepts of the Sermon on the mount (*c. Faust.* 5.1). The moral lifestyle as expressed in the commandments of Jesus' Beatitudes is considered to be the core of a Christian life. In the ideas of BeDuhn's sceptical Faustus, this lifestyle became proof for the truth-likeness of his message.⁶⁹ Since the life of the Elect is clearly moral, the faith on which it is based is valid. Catholic Christians put too much trust on dogma's that were not able to induce a moral life. Manichaeism, which led to a life corresponding to the Beatitudes, should therefore be seen as being the authentic Christianity.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ BeDuhn, *ibidem*, 9–11.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, 4.

⁶⁸ BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma*, 113.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, 116; BeDuhn, 'Religion of Deeds', 7.

⁷⁰ *Idem*, 'Religion of Deeds', 4–8.

Faustus saw the Gospel as a *mandatum*, a set of instructions for conduct. This view was also put forward by Massie. BeDuhn however interpreted this in a sceptical way. Faustus equated the Gospel with Christ's commandments. To follow the Gospel then means to follow these commandments, independent of any metaphysical Christological reflections. True religion thus provided instructions for the construction of a new self, appropriate with the self required for salvation.

With these teachings, BeDuhn admitted, Faustus went well beyond the Manichaean tradition. He adopted sceptical philosophy more thoroughly, not only as a mere rhetorical instrument. As such, Faustus should be considered as 'the missing link between Manichaeism and scepticism that is hinted at throughout Augustine's works. Manichaeism is not a sceptical tradition, but Faustus is a sceptical individual, and as an individual had a powerful influence on Augustine against which he later reacted.'⁷¹ That is not to say that Faustus adhered to a 'thoroughgoing Academic scepticism' or that 'he offered a complete embodiment of Manichaean principles', but 'both alliances were qualified, and idiosyncratically hybridized, in Faustus.'⁷² BeDuhn's view on Faustus's teachings is intriguing, but has yet to receive some consensus.

2.7. *Johannes van Oort*

Johannes van Oort has briefly discussed Faustus' *Capitula* in his article 'Manichaean Christians in Augustine's Life and Work.'⁷³ Van Oort examines the origin of the name *Capitula*. He considers it foremost a technical term for the scriptural passage that appears to be the basis of each of Faustus' *disputationes*. The term also refers to the discussion itself and its doctrinal outcome. The name *Capitula* is only mentioned once in *Contra Faustum*. In *c. Faust.* 33.9 Augustine states that he had refuted all Faustus' slanders, at least those of his *Capitula* (*dumtaxat horum eius capitulorum*). Van Oort therefore believes it more reasonable for modern scholars to call Faustus' work *Disputationes*, the same as Adimantus' work. Van Oort disagrees with Wurst (and Massie) on this point and explicitly states: "Though there may be some similarity between Faustus's so-called *Capitula* and the Manichaean *Kephalaia* from Medinet Madi (in any case, both seem to belong to some form or

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, 9.

⁷² BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma*, 126.

⁷³ Johannes van Oort, 'Manichaean Christians in Augustine's Life and Work', *Church History and Religious Culture* 90 (2010) 504–546, esp. 529–532.

another of *erotapokriseis*-literature), the contents of Faustus's work and the *Kephalaia* are very different and likewise (...) their (supposed) literary structure and genre.⁷⁴

Referring to *c. Faust.* 1.2, van Oort opines that Faustus had built upon Adimantus' *Disputationes*. Both dealt with Manichaean biblical interpretation, although over time the focus had shifted from purely exegetical questions to certain doctrinal issues.⁷⁵

In 2011 Johannes van Oort published a lengthy and in-depth review of BeDuhn's *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma*. He points out that unambiguous textual proof for a sceptical Faustus is hard to find.⁷⁶ Although in the *Confessiones* Augustine indeed mentioned that Faustus had read some of Cicero's orations, only some common philosophical influence may be inferred. In *Conf.* 5.7.13 Augustine related he read some works together with Faustus. BeDuhn argued that they read works by Cicero, but this is highly speculative. Neither in *Conf.* 5 nor in *Contra Faustum* is Faustus explicitly presented as a sceptic Manichaean.⁷⁷

According to van Oort, Faustus did not opine that religion is all about ethics and praxis. Rather, his emphasis on ethics, while concealing the doctrines typical of Manichaeism, may be considered a tactical movement in his discussion with Catholics. In most of his *capitula* he did indeed blame the Catholics for not following Christ's commandments meticulously. Yet, his faith was twofold: comprising of both deeds and words (*c. Faust.* 5.3).⁷⁸ In some *capitula* he makes some distinct doctrinal statements, for example on the Manichaean Trinity, on *Iesus patibilis* and on the two principles. Van Oort therefore remarks: "As far as historical research can establish, Faustus was not the person described by BeDuhn."⁷⁹

3. REMARKS, CONCLUSIONS AND NEW QUESTIONS

More than one hundred years of scholarship have enlarged our insights in the Manichaean bishop Faustus and his *Capitula*. Especially the recovery

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, 529–530; quote 530 n. 134.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*, 530–531.

⁷⁶ Johannes van Oort, 'Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma in Context', *Vigiliae Christianae* 65 (2011) 543–567, esp. 558–564.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, 559–560.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, 561–562.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, 563.

of primary Manichaean sources allowed scholars to analyse the *Capitula* against the backdrop of Manichaean doctrinal and other texts. Some subjects have met a considerable amount of consensus, but others are still debated.

There is no decisive reason to doubt that the *Capitula* were written as a Manichaean polemical manual. The work is widely considered to be a literary adaption of actual *disputationes* held between Faustus and Catholic opponents. Whereas Bruckner considered Faustus' Christian language to have been a polemic tool, nowadays scholars increasingly consider it Faustus' own vocabulary. This language was inspired by Faustus' reading of the Pauline epistles in particular.

Faustus' use of Scripture has been a relevant subject of research since Bruckner. The possible Manichaean sources of the *Capitula* received more and more attention after the discovery of Manichaean texts in Egypt. The example of the *Kephalaia* has been discussed. Faustus never mentioned Manichaean sources by name, but themes known from them are often recognizable in his theology. Faustus has almost certainly studied Adimantus' *Disputationes*, since he straightforwardly admits his high esteem for this Manichaean missionary. The way in which he used these *Disputationes* requires more research.

So far little attention has been paid to Faustus' possible apocryphal sources. In *c. Faust.* 30.4, for example, he mentions that Paul preached to Thecla, a story well known from the *Acta Pauli*. Other possible sources include the Acts of Andrew, John, Peter and Thomas.⁸⁰ In his contribution to Wilhelm Schneemelcher's translation of New Testament Apocrypha, Kurt Schäferdiek noted that in *c. Faust.* 30.4 Faustus appeals to the Acts of Paul for the story of Thecla's conversion to continence. Some lines earlier the Manichaean bishop remarks: 'For I am passing over the other apostles of our same Lord, namely, Peter and Andrew, Thomas and that blessed John [...]' (*c. Faust.* 30.4). This passage strengthened Schäferdiek in his opinion that Manichaeans transmitted the apocryphal acts of Paul, Peter, Andrew, Thomas and John as a distinct collection.⁸¹ Faustus knew of these acts and

⁸⁰ J. Kevin Coyle, 'The Gospel of Thomas in Manichaeism?' in: *idem, Manichaeism and Its Legacy*, NHMS 69, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2009, 123–124.

⁸¹ Kurt Schäferdiek, 'The Manichaean Collection of Apocryphal Acts Ascribed to Leucius Charinus' in: Wilhelm Schneemelcher (ed.), *New Testament Apocrypha*. Volume Two: *Writings Related to the Apostles; Apocalypses and Related Subjects*, revised edition, translated from German by R. McL. Wilson, Cambridge and Louisville: James Clark & Co and Westminster John Knox Press 1993.

will probably have read them.⁸² Possible philosophical sources, Cicero in particular, also deserve more scholarly attention.

Three issues are still debated more intensively: the *genus litterarium* of the *Capitula*, its structure, and the nature of Faustus' Manichaeism. Most scholars accept the *Capitula* as an example of the *Erotapokriseis*-literature. Wurst argues that it was based more specifically on the Manichaeian *Kephalaia*. The *Acta Archelai* seem to support this hypothesis. When enumerating the so-called false Pentateuch of Manichaeism, it mentions the *Capitula* at the same place as the *Panarion* mentions the *Kephalaia*.⁸³ Yet, the *Acta Archelai* is not always considered a reliable source. But what if Faustus himself had not named his work *Capitula*? What if it only referred to the genre of Faustus' 'Scriptural *disputationes*'? Van Oort's proposal to refer to the work as Faustus' *Disputationes* may be valid. Similarities with the *Kephalaia*, both in name and in style, then may be just a coincidence.

Most scholars have rejected Monceaux's reconstruction of the *Capitula*. Wurst accepts the sequence as preserved in *Contra Faustum*. His hypothesis rests on the idea that Augustine received a *uolumen* published by the Manichaeian bishop. If Faustus had composed this 'book', the structure must be his. Van den Berg deemed Wurst's hypothesis plausible, because the *Capitula* were most likely transcripts from debates. On the other hand, there might not have been a deliberate structure to begin with. The genre of *Erotapokriseis* indeed does not need such a structure.

As regards Faustus' Manichaeism, roughly two lines of argument can be discerned. On the one hand there are those scholars who stress that Faustus' teaching corresponds to the teaching encountered in other Manichaeian sources. Scholars like Decret and Massie point out that Manichaeian notions like the two principles, their mixed state, the soteriology of the particles of Light, the concept of *gnosis* and even Manichaeian prophetology are all demonstrable in Faustus' work.

On the other hand there are those who regard Faustus as being characteristic for a specific Western type of Manichaeism. According to BeDuhn, Faustus incorporated both Hellenistic sceptical philosophy and Marcionite

⁸² Peter Nagel at least recognizes the use of the Acts of Paul in *c. Faust.* 30.4 and the Acts of Peter in *c. Faust.* 14.1. P. Nagel, 'Die Apokryphen des 2. und 3. Jahrhunderts in der manichäischen Literatur. Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach den christlichen Elementen im Manichäismus' in: K.-W. Tröger (ed.), *Gnosis und Neues Testament: Studien aus Religionswissenschaft und Theologie*, Gütersloh: Mohn 1973, 149–182.

⁸³ *Acta Archelai* 62.3; *Panarion* 66.2.9; Tardieu, *Manichaeism*, translated from the French by M.B. DeBeviore, Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press 2008, 49–50.

criticism of the Old Testament in his Manichaean discourse. He argues Faustus had read Cicero and that his argumentation shows definite sceptic influences, especially from Carneades. This sceptic Faustus interprets the Gospel as a *mandatum*. Its instructions for conduct would lead to a moral life. That life in turn would be proof for the truth-likeness of the convictions on which the *mandatum* was based.

Although Massie also acknowledges that Faustus accepted the gospel as a *mandatum*, he interprets the relationship between that *mandatum* and a moral life differently. According to him, the Gospel is to be viewed as a summary of Jesus' teachings. These teachings brought *gnosis*, i.e. the saving knowledge of our divine nature and our current mixed state. This *gnosis* provoked the *anamnēsis*, which causes the faithful person to live a moral life. Such a moral life does not prove the inherent truth of the Gospel, it proves that someone has received the saving *gnosis*.

Obviously the exact interpretation of Faustus' ideas is an important issue. If we want to understand the precise influence that the Manichaean bishop may have had on the young Augustine, his ideas must be fully understood. In order to interpret the *Capitula* correctly, the questions concerning its structure and its sources should be answered. One thing is clear: Faustus possessed more than just some ordinary Manichaean knowledge. His *Capitula* testify to a man who is both well-read and a skilled exegete and polemicist. After more than one-hundred-and-ten years, the Manichaean bishop Faustus remains an intriguing subject for scholarly inquiry.

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