

Augustine's "Discovery" of Paul (Confessions 7.21.27)*

The word "discovery" is enclosed in quotes in the title to indicate the argument of this chapter, namely that there are important qualifications and much background to be borne in mind when reading the description of the above momentous event in the seventh book of the *Confessiones*: "So it was with most intense desire that I seized upon the sacred writings of your Spirit, and especially the Apostle Paul" (7.21.27).¹ Hereafter this episode will be designated simply as the discovery scene. From that description, as well as from the context, the casual reader would be all too easily inclined to conclude that Augustine is there describing how he made a momentous discovery of the writings of Paul; writings which had been previously quite unknown to him. This seems, at least *prima facie*, to be the uncomplicated understanding of several biographers on Augustine. Thus, Bertrand suddenly introduces the saving guidance of Paul into the narrative, without any explanations.² Guardini, de Plinval and Simpson do essentially the same thing.³

Such a conclusion is valid within the declared purpose of the *Confessiones*, seen as a devotional work directed to those fellow-believers of Augustine whose ears are opened to him by charity (10.3.3) and to inspire them with a love of God's mercy and "sweet grace" (10.3.4). The above conclusion would be valid simply by being directed to these declared ends. This would be particularly so in Augustine's pre-McLuhan world of ear-dominance⁴ in which the *Confessiones* existed primarily as a prayer which "presents itself as *being spoken in the present*;" a status discovered and explored with great insight by Robert McMahon.⁵ However, analysis is favored in the modern world of print which, as Marshall McLuhan so well said, gave the modern person "an eye for an ear."⁶ The ear made for aggregation, while eye- dominance favors analysis.⁷

But the more one analyzes the "discovery" of Paul (and the Scriptures), the more problematic it becomes. Thus, consider the first implications of the central statement: "I seized upon the sacred writings of your Spirit, and especially the apostle Paul" (7.21.27). Riedinger has described this statement as a powerful hyperbole (*eine kräftige Hyperbel*).⁸ For one thing, in that age such an embracing of the entire Scriptures would have been no mean feat in view of the great bulk of the manuscripts involved. Secondly, there is the problem of which Scriptures—those of the *Catholica*, or those of the Manichees among whom Augustine had just previously spent some ten years.⁹ Again, there is the unsettling evidence that neither then, nor for at least some half dozen years subsequently, did Augustine know the Scriptures very well at all, let alone understand them; a fact well appreciated by Courcelle.¹⁰ Thus, even somewhat later Augustine claimed that he could not understand the book of Isaiah which Ambrose recommended for his reading in preparation for baptism (9.5.13). Then again, he knew so little about the Bible that he even had to ask Ambrose for his suggestions about what biblical readings he should undertake for that preparation.¹¹ Finally, there is the highly significant fact that in 391, or some five years after his conversion, as a newly ordained presbyter, Augustine had to ask his bishop for leave of absence in order to get to know the Scriptures (*ad cognoscendas Scripturas*).¹²

The combined impact of the above considerations would therefore lead one to question the first impression generated by Augustine's statement, namely that he read the entire Bible through, before confining his attention to an intensive study of the epistles of Paul. Rather does the reverse seem more plausible, namely that Augustine was *primarily* interested in Paul and only secondarily concerned with the remaining Scriptures and then perhaps only certain sections, inasmuch as they had seemed in accord, or in discord, with Paul.

But even further, Riedinger considered it necessary to point out¹³ the significant fact that chapter 21, which opens with Augustine claiming to seize upon the whole of the Scriptures and especially the Apostle Paul, ends with Augustine reading only Paul:

In a wondrous way all these things penetrated my very vitals, when I read the words of that least of your Apostles [1 Cor 15.9], and meditated upon your works, and trembled at them.¹⁴

So Riedinger concludes that the whole episode should refer only to Augustine's seizing upon the works of Paul.¹⁵

The exclusive focus upon Paul comes out in what appears to be a description of the very same event in another work, much earlier than the *Confessiones*. After mentioning his ongoing yearning for philosophy, then "certain plenteous books (*libri quidam pleni*)" [the Platonists of 7.9.13?], he says that they enkindled in him an incredible conflagration — "*incredibile incendium concitarunt*." Then, a little farther along, after writing of the covert attraction of the christian religion of his boyhood, he goes on to say: "Trembling, irresolute, and impatient, I snatched up [the writings of] Paul the Apostle . . . I read the whole book with the greatest attention and care."¹⁶ The other Scriptures are not even mentioned in this account; an omission which would seem to confirm Riedinger's claim that it was a question of the writings of Paul alone. The problem with this conclusion is that the rest of the Scriptures are clearly implied by the wording of the discovery scene: "the sacred writings of your Spirit, and especially the Apostle Paul." Why did Augustine use this wording?

However, what seems to be yet another account of the same discovery refers to the Scriptures as a whole, without singling out Paul's writings:

After I had read only a few books of Plato . . . I compared them as well as I could with the authority of those who have given us the tradition of the divine mysteries.¹⁷

We have then, what seem like two other accounts of the same discovery scene; one supporting Riedinger's view that it was concerned with Paul's works alone, while the other refers to the Scriptures as a whole, without mentioning Paul. Which one is to be believed? Or are they accounts of two separate incidents? We shall have to return to this problem later on.

Another problem about the discovery is raised by making an instructive comparison. Regarding the obviously important earlier episode of the discovery (7.9.13) of the writings of the "Platonists" (*i.e.* Neoplatonists),¹⁸ from the initial details of their discovery, we know what chance cause brought their writings to Augustine's attention, for as he there says: "Therefore by means of a certain man puffed up with most unnatural pride, you procured for me certain books of the Platonists that had been translated out of Greek into Latin" (7.9.13).¹⁹ But this "therefore" implies a preceding cause which is seen from the text to be God's healing hand upon Augustine (7.8.12), and how he would show Augustine how he resists the proud and

gives grace to the humble (7.9.13). So the significance of the man "puffed up with unnatural pride" becomes evident, as also the source of the books of the Platonists.

However, when the context of the discovery of Paul is examined, the above two important details are missing. First, unlike the case of the books of the Platonists, no indication is given of the provenance of the Scriptures upon which Augustine seized so eagerly. This is a detail of no small importance, in view of the defective nature of the Manichean Bible²⁰ which Augustine presumably then had. Why did Augustine omit this most important information? Furthermore, in the book prior to the discovery, he complained of his inability to gain access to the Catholic Scriptures (6.11.18). No indication is given that the problem had been solved in the interim. In accord with what has been said in the opening pages of this study, such problems, revealed by analysis, do not arise at the auditory level of experience of the *Confessiones*, for if they did, they would impede and dissipate the flow of the narrative.

Further analysis of the discovery account produces more problems. Thus, when the context is examined, the *itaque* implies a previous cause, but in the preceding paragraph, there is no obvious reason why the writings of the Platonists should have caused Augustine to seize "with the most intense desire," the writings of the apostle Paul. No hint is given as to why one should have led to the other. Indeed, there has not been any mention of Paul or his writings, in the preceding paragraphs, nor even in the entire previous narrative from page one onwards.²¹ Rather does it seem from the emphasis on the opening verses of John (7.20.26 onwards), that the books of the Platonists should have caused Augustine to seize most eagerly upon the Gospel of John. Why has John been displaced by Paul? We shall return to this point later on.

Meanwhile, early in this century J. Gibb and W. Montgomery also noticed the unexplained jump from the Platonists to Paul. They speculated that Victorinus, as translator of the Neoplatonists and as an earnest student of Paul's epistles after his conversion (8.2.3-5), could have been the reason for the connection through allusions to Paul in his translation.²² Billlicsich deems their theory worthy of repetition.²³ This is an interesting theory, but in default of evidence, it must remain in the realm of mere speculation.

What the description of the discovery would seem to come down to, is that the *itaque* (therefore) at the beginning of the scene is therefore

implying a causation but without naming a cause. Courcelle has grasped this very point when he observed that the *itaque* is unintelligible, because as he says, no information has been furnished about the events which pushed Augustine to seize so eagerly the writings of the Apostle Paul.²⁴ However, Courcelle attempts to render the *itaque* intelligible by uniting the discovery scene (7.21.27) with the seizing of the volume of Paul in the conversion scene (8.12.29).²⁵ But if this were the case, where does it leave the visit with Simplicianus (8.2.3-8.5.12)? This visit would have to come somewhere before the discovery scene. Such could have been the case, for, despite the strongly implied importance of Paul in the discovery scene, surprisingly enough, there is absolutely no mention of the Apostle in the visit to Simplicianus which follows in the narrative. Indeed, the agenda there seems to be philosophical, with particular reference to Platonism as exemplified by the inspiring story of Victorinus. Thus, Simplicianus congratulated Augustine in that he "had not fallen in with the writings of other philosophers" (8.2.3),²⁶ and then proceeded to tell the inspiring story of Victorinus who "had read through and passed judgment on many philosophical works."²⁷ So despite the apparent importance of Paul as the principal ingredient of the discovery scene, his writings are strangely absent from subsequent events, until much later with the Ponticianus episode involving the book of Paul discovered on Augustine's table (8.6.14). Neither is there any dominant theme, from the discovery of the books of the Platonists (7.9.13) to the end of the account of the visits²⁸ with Simplicianus, to justify the implied importance of Paul in the discovery account.

From previous considerations therefore, the surprising conclusion emerges that the seemingly very important discovery scene has neither identifiable sources, nor perceptible consequences in the narrative of the *Confessiones*! It therefore seems to have been merely inserted into the text. Where then does it belong in the events of the *Confessiones*, if at all? As was mentioned above, Courcelle believes that it is an earlier part of the very same reading as that of Rom 13.13-14 in the famous conversion scene.²⁹ However, on the basis of reference analysis, I have several times demonstrated elsewhere that the justly famous conversion scene involving the seizing of the volume of Paul and the reading of Rom 13.13-14 is fictional in nature.³⁰ But this scene, as well as the discovery scene, both seem to have been inspired by a real, earlier seizing of a volume of Paul. This earlier seizing upon the writings of Paul (and the Scriptures), like the *Hortensius* episode (3.4.7),³¹ seems to have been a real experience, because of the

three descriptions of it (already featured above) in different works of Augustine.³² This raises the questions (for later considerations) of whether the cause of that seizing can be ascertained, and whether a suitable place could be assigned it in the narrative.

Meanwhile, going back to the books of the Platonists, Courcelle, in his famous *Recherches*,³³ has produced detailed and lengthy evidence that Augustine probably discovered the Platonists through listening to the sermons of Ambrose.³⁴ Also, according to Courcelle,³⁵ the man "puffed up with most unnatural pride" from whom Augustine obtained the books of the Platonists was none other than Manlius Theodorus, a former friend, a Christian and an expert on Platonism. At the time of their first meeting, living as he was, in the otium of philosophical retreat, Theodorus must have been the envy of the then-ambitious young Augustine with his *Hortensius*-induced passion for philosophy and in search of just such a happy life.³⁶ Interestingly enough, at just about the chronologically appropriate place in the *Confessiones* (6.14.24), Augustine tried vainly to form a community of himself and friends for retreat from the world and the pursuit of philosophy.³⁷ Presumably, Theodorus' later fall from favor in Augustine's eyes was due to the fact that he had abandoned his philosophical retreat for a public and worldly life.³⁸

Courcelle hypothesizes that Ambrose referred the inquiring Augustine to Theodorus as a Christian and also an expert on the Platonist elements in Ambrose's sermons.³⁹ However, seeing that bishop Ambrose would not even talk to Augustine in private, and only very quickly in public (6.3.3-4), the referral would more likely have come from the earliest of Augustine's interviews with Simplicianus, whose influence upon Augustine has been much under-rated according to Courcelle.⁴⁰ Such under-rating may well apply to the referral to Theodorus just mentioned.

It would seem to make more sense if the referral to Theodorus came, not from Ambrose, as Courcelle suggests, but from Simplicianus. This would explain one anomaly noted above, namely that though the visit with Simplicianus (8.1.1ff.) seems to follow from the discovery scene, nevertheless it contains *no mention* of Paul, but deals rather with philosophy and philosophers. Therefore, it would seem that Augustine approached Simplicianus, *not* as a result of the "discovery" of Paul, but out of a puzzled curiosity about the "Platonic" elements in Ambrose's sermons. The hypothesis that Simplicianus referred Augustine to Theodorus also makes sense

in view of Simplicianus' inspiring story about Victorinus, which would have led on naturally enough to the accessible Manlius Theodorus, a Christian and an authority on the Platonists and so possibly a likely person with some such volumes for borrowing, or buying- just the very man Augustine was looking for! From this meeting then, the inquiring Augustine would have acquired the books on the Platonists (7.9.13). If the above explanation avails, then the first visit(s) to Simplicianus would have taken place *before* the discovery of the books of the Platonists. This sequence will be assumed here.

Meanwhile, Augustine's omission of an explanation for the transition from the Platonists to Paul is all the more inconsistent when one makes an instructive comparison. As was seen above, Augustine has explained how he came upon the writings of the Platonists. But the writings of Paul were of far greater importance to Augustine at the time of writing the *Confessiones*. Surely then, there is all the more reason why the cause of his "discovery" of Paul should have been explained. Accordingly therefore, the inclusion of the former cause and the omission of the latter becomes doubly puzzling.

In seeking a reason for this inconsistency, there comes to mind a rhetorical device often found in the *Confessiones*, which can be described as a kind of proof by parallel scenes. In this proof, as Courcelle has shown, two similar scenes are described and some quality is imputed to the former one. In virtue of their similarity, it is implied that the same quality therefore applies to the second situation. Thus, the conversion of Ponticianus' two friends at Trier (8.6.15)⁴¹ parallels the conversion-scene from many aspects⁴² and, as it were, vouches for its authenticity. Secondly, the episode of Anthony entering the church when the Gospel was being read and taking the words he heard as divinely directed to himself personally (8.12.29) seems to bear a similar relation to the *tolle lege* command and the subsequent reading from Paul.⁴³ Thirdly, in regard to the present topic of the discovery of the Platonists and of Paul and of the delving into the Scriptures, the earlier discovery of Cicero's *Hortensius* leads on by a parallel similarity with the present topic to the first delving into the Bible (3.4.7-3.5.9). Finally, and in the fourth place, the *Hortensius* episode with its cogent realism⁴⁴ surfaces in the chapter (8.7.17), just prior to the entrance into the garden (8.8.19), where the famous conversion-scene transpires. The mention of *Hortensius* therefore seems to vouch for the veracity of this latter scene. From these four examples, it would seem to follow in a parallel fashion, that

the author *intended* that the discovery of the books of the Platonists (7.9.13-7.20.26) should somehow justify the "discovery" of Paul's writings which follows (7.21.27). That the above kind of rhetorical device is being used in the present case, is suggested by the significant presence of the *itaque* (therefore) as introducing the "discovery" of Paul.

In any case, we are still left with the problem of explaining what caused Augustine to leap from the books of the Platonists to eagerly seizing upon the Scriptures, especially the writings of Paul. At one point, as was mentioned above, Courcelle does this by ignoring the *itaque* and by claiming that a commonality of phrases unites the last thoughts on the Platonists (7.20.26) with the projected visit to Simplicianus (8.1.1).⁴⁵ But this not only bypasses the problem of the *itaque*, but also completely ignores the whole of chapter 21 in book 7. However, in another place⁴⁶ Courcelle alleges that the books of the Platonists made possible for Augustine a reconciliation of the doctrine of Paul with the law and the prophets. This attempted reconciliation does not explain the *itaque*, but it is exactly what Augustine himself says straight after the discovery:

So it was with the most intense desire that I seized upon the sacred writings of your Spirit, and especially the Apostle Paul. Those difficult passages, where *at one time* he seemed to me to contradict himself, and where the text of his discourse appeared to be at variance with the testimonies of the law and the prophets, melted away (7.21.27, *Italics are added*).⁴⁷

This extract has several points of interest. First, it apparently contradicts the above claim of Riedinger that the episode was solely concerned with the writings of Paul. Certainly, it seems to have principally involved these writings, but in reference to the law and prophets, whence the wording in the above extract. Secondly, the extract, like Courcelle's explanation, is evasive and still does not inform us exactly what caused the leap from the Platonists to Paul. What were the passages where Paul seemed to contradict himself? What were the passages in Paul which were seemingly once in contradiction with the law and the prophets? Why has Augustine not divulged this vital information? The third point of interest is that while this is the very first mention of Paul's writings in the narrative of the *Confessiones*, the reference to passages in Paul which *at one time* had created problems for Augustine clearly implies that he had *already* made a careful study of Paul.⁴⁸ Why has this information been suppressed in the narrative?

This word *already* seen against the omission of any previous mention of Paul in the narrative, is what may be termed a contextual inconsistency.

Many Augustine scholars describe closely the events of the narrative of the *Confessiones*, yet apparently without noticing the above contextual inconsistency resulting from the incompatibility between the word *already* and the earlier omission of Paul from the *Confessiones*.⁴⁹ O'Meara seems to have been one of the first to have at least implicitly sensed the inconsistency, because he suggested that the connecting link between the Platonists and Paul was Augustine's unmentioned previous study of Paul while still a Manichee.⁵⁰ Why has Augustine virtually concealed this information about his earlier studies of Paul? This question becomes more insistent when it is realized that in certain sections relating to the Platonists, Augustine seems to be *deliberately* giving the reverse impression, namely that he had read the books of the Platonists *before* those of the Scriptures, especially Paul. Thus, in the pages immediately before the discovery scene, after having described the importance to his spiritual development of the discovery of the books of certain Platonists which delivered him from his Manichean materialism,⁵¹ Augustine says quite explicitly in chapter 20:

I believe, that you wished me to come upon those books [of the Platonists] *before* I read your Scriptures so that the way I was affected by them [i.e. the books of the Platonists] might be stamped upon my memory (7.20.26. Italics added.).⁵²

Next, as if to underline the previous sequence of events, Augustine even goes on to hypothesize about the possibly deleterious effects upon his spiritual life, had he first been grounded in the Scriptures *before* he had discovered the writings of the Platonists:

If I had first been formed by your Sacred Scriptures and if you had grown sweet to me by my familiar use of them, and I had *afterwards* happened on those other volumes [of the Platonists], they might have drawn me away from the solid foundations of religion. Or else, even if I had persisted in those salutary dispositions which I had drunk in, I might have thought that if a man studies those books alone, he could conceive the same thoughts from them (*ibid.* Italics added).⁵³

Apparently taking his cue from these passages, Alaric (among others) concluded that Augustine did not know the Scriptures before discovering the books of the Platonists- "il ignorait encore les Ecritures."⁵⁴ This then-radical stance made Alaric the center of much castigation earlier in this

century in that he maintained that Augustine was converted to Platonism *before* Christianity.⁵⁵ Some ten years later, Billicsich, apparently paying great heed to the preceding chapter (7.20.26), supported the same viewpoint in that he said that Augustine thanked God that the books of the Platonists had fallen in his hands before he read the Bible.⁵⁶ The above two extracts from the *Confessiones* are very conducive to just such an interpretation. But those texts are in contradiction with the immediately preceding extract above which maintains that Augustine had *already* made a thorough study of Paul's writings *before* reading the Platonists. Yet, as noted above, prior to the seizing upon Paul's writings there has been no mention of them in the narrative. Furthermore, as shown above, this silence hints of a certain deliberateness.

This absence of Paul's writings in the earlier events is to be contrasted with the presence of those writings in certain momentous events subsequent to the "discovery" being treated here. Thus, they are next mentioned in the chance finding by a certain Ponticianus, of a volume of Paul's writings on a table in Augustine's residence (8.6.14).⁵⁷ Augustine makes the significant observation that he "extended very great pains upon those Scriptures (*illis me scripturis curam maximam impendere*)."

Presumably that *cura maxima* originated in the episode of seizing upon Paul's writings. The second momentous event involving Paul's writings is the tableau of the reading from Rom 13.13-14 in the justly famous conversion scene (8.12.29-30).

Added to the above extremely important episodes in the narrative, there is also in the text itself a deliberate, repetitive and insistent use of certain vital passages from Paul, as has been demonstrated by Lods and Pellegrino.⁵⁸ Also, examination of the distribution of quotes from Paul in the *Confessiones* will show a significant increase from the seventh book onwards, with the concluding book containing even eighty such references. So the presence of Paul (in the form of quotes) is everywhere important to Augustine the narrator, but especially from the seventh book onwards, when the writings of Paul also make their first appearance in the narrative.

With a view to trying to understand Augustine's above textual inconsistency about his previous studies of Paul, despite a complete absence of Paul from the previous narrative, we are faced with the question of his knowledge of Paul in his life prior to the discovery scene. This also requires knowledge of Augustine's scriptural studies during this same period, as well as the larger perspective of his religious life during those years. Treating these in

reverse order, there is first the question of Augustine's earlier religious life. The *Confessiones* yields a few valuable clues. We do know that the infant Augustine was signed with the sign of the cross and seasoned with salt as soon as he was born (1.11.17), so becoming a catechumen of the Catholic Church. This speedy initiation into the catechumenate was the work of his fervently religious mother, Monica, who weeps so much for Augustine's waywardness throughout the *Confessiones*. Consequently, it is unthinkable that her solicitude for his early religious education would have stopped with that initiation. As he says, he, along with all his family, except his pagan father, were believers (*ibid.*). Furthermore, the use of the imperfect tense (above) for the being signed (*signabar*) with the sign of the cross and being seasoned (*condiebar*) with the salt, means that the actions were repeated on many occasions over a prolonged period of time.⁵⁹ It would therefore seem that as both a boy and youth, Augustine, along with his very pious mother, frequented the local Catholic church. Therefore, as a young church-goer with some degree of regularity over many years, both Paul and the Scriptures would have become known to the young Augustine, at least on a casual basis, through liturgical readings.

With this as background, a phrase in the third book (3.4.8) which is commonly translated as expressing Augustine's ignorance of Paul at the age of nineteen, must be reconsidered, and translated rather as an ignorance of a preceding passage of Paul in the text.⁶⁰ But about all this religious aspect of his earlier catechumenal life, and also about Paul, Augustine is strangely silent. One can hypothesize that such an omission could be for dramatic effect, by increasing the atmosphere of sinfulness in the years prior to his conversion.

Another surprising and very relevant aspect of his earlier religious life which is generally ignored by scholars, is that, despite his emphasis on his Manichean sojourn in that period, Augustine apparently *never* considered himself to have ceased being a catechumen of the Catholic Church and so, presumably participated in the appropriate rituals. Occasional signs of that continuing catechumenal status have been let slip in his writings. Probably the earliest observation of such an occasion was made by Gibb and Montgomery in their 1908 edition of the *Confessiones*,⁶¹ at the point where Augustine, writing of himself as a Manichee of some ten years,⁶² says that he decided to *continue* as a catechumen in the Catholic Church.⁶³ Likewise, in the sixth book of the *Confessiones*, Augustine does not consider *returning* to the Catholic Church, but rather says: "I will *fix* my feet on that step where

my parents placed me as a child" (6.11.18).⁶⁴ Again, in an earlier work of 391/392 he says of himself, as the Manichee that he was before his conversion: "but what shall I say of myself who was already a Catholic Christian (*qui iam catholicus christianus eram*)?"⁶⁵ Had he ceased being such, at least he would have said: "had been" (*fuera*m). Lest this duality of religious allegiance appear sheer duplicity, it should be pointed out that, on the other hand, the Manichees considered themselves to be the true Christians, as is testified by first-hand evidence from the Manichee, Faustus.⁶⁶ As a little thought will show, these considerations are very relevant to the heated debate, begun in 1918 by Alfarić,⁶⁷ about whether Augustine was first converted to Christianity, or to Platonism. It would seem that despite his Manichean membership of some ten years, Augustine considered himself to have never ceased being a Christian catechumen.

Earlier in the narrative, at the age of nineteen (3.4.7), Augustine's religious life changed dramatically with his joining the Manichees (3.6.10); a transformation in which the Scriptures seem to have played an important role. The subsequent ten years of Augustine's Manichean biblical studies seem to have been too much glossed over, with a resulting lack of appreciation of the Manichean biblical context so relevant to an appreciation of the discovery scene. It is time to rectify this omission.⁶⁸

First of all, returning to the *Hortensius* episode of Augustine's nineteenth year (3.4.7), he was then inflamed by Cicero's book with an ardent love for philosophy in the abstract. But the one restraint upon this passion was that the work did not contain the name of Christ (3.4.8). This is yet another sign of the depth of Augustine's early catechumenical faith. Next, with this newly awakened passion for wisdom,⁶⁹ probably guided by half-remembered liturgical readings involving wisdom,⁷⁰ he first sought enlightenment by a short investigation of the Scriptures, but was repelled by their unpolished style: "My swelling pride turned away from its humble style, and my sharp gaze did not penetrate into its inner meaning" (3.5.9).⁷² This was a natural enough reaction for an arrogant student of nineteen, studying the art of fine language. The casual reader can all too easily conclude from this, that Augustine had nothing more to do with the Scriptures until the episode of eagerly seizing upon the writings of Paul (7.21.27), but this is contradicted by occasional details in the text, as will be seen.

Meanwhile, a careful examination of the sequence of events immediately after the *Hortensius* episode shows that that sequence was really a

sequence of causes. From the repetition of the word *itaque* (therefore) at the beginnings of both the investigation of the Scriptures (3.5.9) and also of the subsequent induction into Manicheism (3.6.10), it appears that the Scriptures were part of the reason for Augustine's falling in with the Manichees. Accordingly he says a little farther along in the text:

I was as it were subtly moved to agree with those dull deceivers when they put their questions to me: "Whence is evil?" "Is God confined within a corporeal form?" "Does he have hair and nails?" "Are those to be judged just men who had many wives, killed other men, and offered sacrifices of animals?" Ignorant in such matters, I was disturbed by these questions, and while actually receding from the truth, I thought I was moving towards it (3.7.12).⁷³

And from this shocking encounter it seems, derived the above-mentioned short venture into the study of the Scriptures (3.5.9). This venture is but another sign of the depth of Augustine's catechumenical faith at that time.

Soon after joining that sect, he complains in the *Confessiones* that he was deceived into condemning "Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Moses and David, and all those others who found praise in God's mouth" (3.7.13). The reason for this general condemnation was that the Manichees considered the Old Testament the work of the Devil.⁷⁴ After several pages of basically biblical problems that Augustine seems to have had at that time, he concludes with an observation which expresses the contempt of the Manichees for the Old Testament and the prophets:

I was ignorant of such things, and I mocked at those holy men, your servants and prophets. But what did I accomplish when I derided them, except that I should become a thing of scorn to you? (3.10.18)⁷⁵

We have first-hand evidence of the Manichees' attitudes to the Bible and its contents through the testimonies of certain Manichees themselves in some of Augustine's anti-Manichean polemics. The largest and most informative of these is the *Contra Faustum* (397/8).⁷⁶ Faustus expresses his contempt for the holy men of the Old Testament by the sins that he imputes to them.⁷⁷ As for the prophets, they were not seen as predicting the coming of Christ⁷⁸ and Moses was accused of having committed the ultimate sin of cursing Christ.⁷⁹ In addition, the Manichees scorned the law of the Old Testament involving such practices as keeping the Sabbath, circumcision, animal sacrifices and abstention from swine's flesh.⁸⁰ Consequently, the

Manichees, by their complete rejection of what they saw as the primitive and superstitious practices of the Old Testament, saw themselves as the true, untainted Christians.⁸¹ In addition, they denied that Christ came, not to abolish the law and prophets, but to fulfil them (Mat 5.17).⁸² Even in the New Testament they claimed that many interpolations had been made by the evil one who sows seed in the night (Mat 13.25).⁸³

As a thoroughly convinced Manichee of some ten years duration, Augustine would have sincerely believed all the above attitudes and one would expect that the discovery scene would have precipitated a traumatic confrontation with those well entrenched beliefs and so have led to considerable upheaval. But surprisingly enough, the effect of reading Paul is quite otherwise:

Those difficult passages, where at one time he seemed to me to contradict himself, and where the text of his discourse appeared to be at variance with the testimonies of the law and the prophets, melted away (7.21.27).⁸⁴

No one seems to have noticed that this extract is amazingly proleptic about the law and the prophets; it implies that in themselves, they presented no problems at all to a former Manichee with some ten years of believing such things as those mentioned above! The latter portion of the above extract, concerning the law and the prophets, therefore becomes suspect, to say the least. In fact, it is rendered incredible by what Augustine says in the *Retractationes* of 426/7 where he makes the significant confession that his early attempt in 388 (some two years after the discovery scene) to reconcile the Old and the New Testaments was a sham because of the faulty nature of the manuscripts and also because of his inexperience.⁸⁵ Consequently, the reference to the law and the prophets, in the above extract, must be discarded.

We are therefore back with Riedinger's claim that the discovery scene is really about the writings of Paul and their inner consistency. The mention of the law and prophets seems to acknowledge a thicket of problems, hopefully to be solved at a later date. On the other hand, we do know from information elsewhere, that it took years for him to come to terms with both the law and prophets.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the mere mention of them was an adequate way of dealing with the problem on the auditory level, if not at the analytical one.⁸⁷ From the above, it would seem to follow that Paul was indeed the principal subject of Augustine's eager inquiries after all, with the

law and prophets as a postponable side-issue. This would seem to indicate the preponderant importance of Paul to Augustine, in that he was seen as more important than all the problems presented by the law and prophets in the Old Testament. One reason for this could well have been the revived importance of Paul in the Latin Church of those years, so much so that one author suggests that those last decade of the fourth century could well be called "the generation of S. Paul."⁸⁸ Another reason, to which we shall presently turn, was Augustine's Manichean background.

What then connects the books of the Platonists with Paul? Granted Augustine's visits with Simplicianus before and during his reading of the books of the Platonists, as well as his curiosity about their presence in Ambrose's sermons, then Simplicianus, himself both Platonist and priest, would have been an ideal person to offer explanations about religious implications of those books. Indeed, Simplicianus' assistance seems implied in Augustine's observations about what he, as still a Manichee at the time, did and did not find in those books (7.9.13ff.). Augustine's observations that he did not find in those books the Incarnation, or the Redemption are very proleptic indeed, as these interests presuppose his conversion. Their presence in the description probably derived from the reflections of Augustine the bishop, but also hints at possible input from Simplicianus while Augustine was reading those books. Chief among the new ideas was that of immateriality. Accordingly, to stress its importance to the seventh book of the *Confessiones*, in the opening sentences Augustine declares: "I could conceive of no substantial being except such as those that I was wont to see with my own eyes."⁸⁹ And correspondingly, in the second last chapter of book seven, after dealing with the books of the Platonists, Augustine states very purposefully:

At that time, after reading those books of the Platonists and being instructed by them to search for incorporeal truth, I clearly saw your invisible things which "are understood by the things that are made" (7.20.26).⁹⁰

The quote is from Rom 1.20 and a sign of its importance is that it occurs three times in the chapters dealing with the books of the Platonists.⁹¹ Reference analysis also shows that it is of some significance, since it occurs a dozen times in Augustine's earlier works.

So the Platonists' concept of immateriality has led to Rom 1.20 and to Paul. The threshold concept of immateriality permitted grasping the con-

cept of the God of the Christian Platonist in contrast to the material God of Light of the Manichees. In this perspective, the Incarnation could be presented in an entirely new form very congenial to the philosophical Augustine. This philosophical form would also have rendered him immune to the taunts of the Manichees about the indignity of a God being born of a woman.⁹² More to the point of Augustine's visits with Simplicianus, the Incarnation was expressed in the first chapter of John (whose prologue was so loved by Simplicianus)⁹³ — "And the Word was made flesh." This verse occurs four times in the account of the books of the Platonists⁹⁴ and some thirty-four times in Augustine's earlier works, as well as a total of fifty-two times in the forms of other verses of similar import,⁹⁵ making an impressive total of ninety occurrences in all! Therefore, despite his Manichean background, the Incarnation soon became a belief of supreme importance to Augustine. It was a belief which seems to have sprung from the early instructions of Simplicianus.

Next we come to the immediately relevant question of Paul in Augustine's religious background, especially during the ten years he spent as a Manichee. First, regarding Christ, we do know from numerous references in the *Confessiones* that his name was treasured by Augustine from his earliest years onwards,⁹⁶ generally in connection with the faith implanted in him at an early age by his pious mother. Apparently, the name of Paul was not as important in that early instruction, but seems to have first become best known to Augustine from the Manichees, a factor which could also help explain the excitement with which he seized upon the writings of Paul, in that, thanks to the discovery of the Platonists and the concept of immateriality, he suddenly saw the possibility of the *Catholica* and not the Manichees, being the rightful interpreters of Paul.

But regarding Paul's importance to Augustine during his Manichean sojourn, while we know to next nothing directly, we can however, make some deductions indirectly from certain of Augustine's works, or even from the words of certain Manichees featured in some of Augustine's polemics. First, from the words of Augustine himself, there is the remark let slip in the *Confessiones* to the effect that the Manichees considered it a good thing to read the Apostle (8.10.24). Again, just how indispensable the Manichees considered Paul is implied from the following words of Augustine: "Let us see how the Lord Himself in the gospel has taught us to live; how, too, Paul the apostle, for the Manichaeans dare not reject these Scriptures."⁹⁷

Regarding the testimony of the Manichees themselves, in the important *Contra Faustum* of 397/8, Faustus declares unequivocally his faith in Paul,⁹⁸ which evokes a lengthy attack from Augustine on the Manichees' interpretations of the Apostle. Also noteworthy is the fact that Faustus quotes approvingly nearly three dozen times from Paul during the same work.⁹⁹ In modern times, various studies have also demonstrated the importance of Paul to the Manichean faith.¹⁰⁰ A very useful analysis of the scriptural citations by the Manichees in those debates is to be found in Decret's work.¹⁰¹ Indeed, as one author puts it, Paul became a favorite of the sect.¹⁰²

Again, ancient Manichean manuscripts discovered in the present century (especially those in the Chester Beatty Collection), offer abundant and alternative first-hand evidence of Paul's high status with the sect, judging by the frequent invocations of his name. Paul's importance to the Manichees would also seem to explain the earlier problem of why Augustine writes of snatching up the writings of Paul in the text of the *Contra Academicos* (see note 16), but of the divine mysteries in the *De beata vita* extract (note 17). The former was addressed to Romanianus whom Augustine had led with himself into Manicheism, where Paul was so important, while the latter work was dedicated to Manlius Theodorus, fellow-Christian and authority on the Neoplatonists.

Significantly and surprisingly, Paul is but sparsely quoted in the early works of Augustine until the *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* (388/389), his earliest explicitly anti-Manichean work, which releases a veritable torrent of references to Paul. Indeed, these constitute some sixty percent of the total scriptural references in that work. Moreover, Augustine's very manner of prefacing his quotes from Paul strongly implies that he is very conscious of turning the Manichees' foremost Christian authority against them. Of the three dozen quotes in the work, two-thirds are prefaced by the words: "The Apostle says . . .", or its equivalent. So began, with a cloudburst of quotations, what subsequently became the powerful presence of Paul in all of Augustine's subsequent works.

It would seem that from his Manichean background as well as his polemics against his former coreligionists, there was nourished Augustine's lengthy preoccupation with his exegesis of Paul; a vast undertaking which was aimed at clearly defining his own interpretation over and against that of the Manichees.¹⁰³ Augustine's resulting volumes are an enormous trib-

ute to the unspoken importance of the Manichean Paul who was so silently omitted from the first seven books of the *Confessiones*.

As to why he omitted that Manichean Paul from the *Confessiones*, the thought probably occurred to Augustine that the topic had received ample attention in his anti-Manichean writings. Also, featuring the Manichean Paul in his masterpiece of the *Confessiones* would have publicly mired the Apostle once more by association with the despised Manichees from whom Augustine probably considered that his anti-Manichean polemics had finally rescued Paul.¹⁰⁴ Also, explanations about the Manichean Paul would border on the pedantic and would have greatly detracted from the intended aural impact of the *Confessiones* as script for a dramatic reading.¹⁰⁵ Similarly, tackling the problem in the *Confessiones* would have involved its author in a complex issue which would have greatly detracted from the main lesson of the *Confessiones* itself, which was the irresistible nature of divine predestination; a divine revelation granted Augustine in 396, or just prior to beginning the writing of the *Confessiones*.¹⁰⁶ So Augustine's silence about Paul prior to the discovery scene can be now understood, as well as why he tried to conceal that absence. But he was thereby faced with the problem of giving Paul a credible presence in the narrative, prior to the central role of Paul's writings in the conversion scene. Augustine therefore had to perform a literary leap from the Platonists to Paul; a leap which until now, has remained unexplained, and so given rise to much speculation.

NOTES

* To the memory of Charles De Koninck (d. 1965), former Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy, Laval University.

1. Such unqualified references are always to the *Confessiones*. The Latin text is: "itaque avidissime arripui venerabilem stilum spiritus tui et prae ceteris apostolum Paulum." All Latin texts are from the *Opera Omnia*, Paris: Gaume Freres, 1836-1839. Passages of the *Confessiones* in English are from the Ryan Translation.

2. Louis Bertrand, *Saint Augustin*, Paris: Fayard, 1913, 234.

3. Romano Guardini, *The Conversion of St. Augustine*, (tr. Elinor Briefts), Westminster: The Newman Press, 1960, 143; G. de Plinval, *Pour connaître la pensée de saint Augustin*, Paris: Bordas, 1954, 35; and W. J. Sparrow Simpson, *St. Augustine's Conversion; an Outline of his Development to the Time of His Ordination*, London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1930, 90.

4. Noteworthy in this regard are the dozen references to hearing in 10.3.3-4 where Augustine is explaining the reasons for his personal confessions.

5. See his *Augustine's Prayerful Ascent; An Essay on the Literary Form of the Confessions*, Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1989, especially the first chapter.
6. *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962, 18-21 & 26-28.
7. See Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*, London & New York: Methuen, 1982, 73-74.
8. Utto Riedinger, "Zur Auffassung von Conf. 7.21," *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift*, 2 (1951) 431-434. See 432.
9. As Decret has rightly pointed out, the distinction was not as clear as we would like to think (François Decret, *Aspects du Manichéisme dans l'Afrique romaine*, Paris: *Études Augustiniennes*, 1970, 151-152). Besides the lack of an orthodox canon, there were for instance, certain books and verses rejected by the Manichees and also different exegeses performed on what they accepted in common. And of course, the Manichees rejected the entire Old Testament.
10. Writing of the discovery scene, he observed: "Il y a là, nous l'avons vu [p. 158], une erreur de perspective, puisque Augustin connaissait alors fort mal les textes sacrés et n'avait encore lu qu'un 'tout petit nombre', deux or trois traités de Plotin." (*Recherches sur les Confessions de saint Augustin*, Paris: Editions E. De Boccard, 1968, 172). This famous work will hereafter be referred to as *Recherches*.
11. Cf. P. Simon, *Aurelius Augustinus; sein geistiges Profil*, Paderborn: Schöningh, 1954, 59.
12. *Epistula* 21, 3-4.
13. *Art. cit.*, 432.
14. "Haec mihi inviscerabantur miris modis, cum minimum Apostolorum tuorum legerem, et consideraveram opera tua, et expaveram."
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Contra Academicos*, 2.2.5, (of 386), (Denis J. Kavanagh O.S.A. translation) in *The Fathers of the Church (A New Translation), Writings of Saint Augustine* vol. 1, New York: Cima Publishing, 1948. The Latin is: "itaque titubans, properans, haesitans, arripio apostolum Paulum . . . Perlegi totum intentissime atque cautissime."
17. *De beata vita*, 4, (of 386), (Ludwig Schopp translation). This is in the volume in the previous note. The Latin text is as follows: "Lectis autem Platonis paucissimis libris . . . collataque cum eis, quantum potui, etiam illorum auctoritate qui divina mysteria tradiderunt."
18. On the identities of these "Platonists" see pp. 109-112 and 145-149 in Aimé Solignac's Introduction in *Les Confessions* (livres I-VII), vol. 13 of *Oeuvres de saint Augustin*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1962. In future, this Introduction will be referred to simply as Solignac. In accord with Augustine's usage, the word "Platonists" will be used here to designate those Neoplatonists. Neither in his notes on the seventh book, nor in his footnotes to the text (p. 639) does Solignac betray any

awareness of the discovery scene being problematic. See also P. Courcelle, "Litiges sur la lecture des 'Libri Platoniorum,' par saint Augustin," *Augustiniana* 4 (1954) 225-239 (= 9-23). Courcelle's observations on the present problem will be dealt with later.

19. "Procurasti mihi per quemdam hominem immanissimo typho turgidum, quosdam Platoniorum libros ex graeca lingua in latinam versos." On the identity of the person in question, see *Recherches*, 153-155.

20. 5.11.21. See also Francois Decret, *op. cit.*, 123-182.

21. Augustine does seem to indicate (3.4.8) that the writings of the Apostle were not known to him at the age of nineteen- "nondum mihi haec apostolica nota erant." We shall return to this point below. On Augustine's use of Apostolus for Paul, see *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum*, 3.3.4 (420/421). There is also an oblique reference in 7.9.15 which does not pertain to the narrative.

22. See their 1908 edition of the *Confessiones* (Cambridge: University Press, 197, n. 8).

23. F. Billicsich, *Studien zu den Bekenntnissen des heiligen Augustinus*, Wien: Verlag Mayer und Comp., 1929, 84-85.

24. "Aucune explication n'est fournie sur les événements qui l'ont conduit à se saisir avidement des épîtres de Paul. Le *uiaque* est inintelligible" (*Recherches*, 169).

25. *Recherches*, 169-170 & 199, n. 1.

26. "Gratulatus est mihi, quod non aliorum philosophorum scripta incidissem."

27. "Quique philosophorum tam multa legerat et dijudicaverat" (*ibid.*).

28. Courcelle maintains, with good reason it seems, that there were a series of such visits (*Recherches*, 170-171). See however R. J. O'Connell, S.J., "Confessions VII, IX, 13 - XXI, 27; Reply to G. Madec," *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 19 (1973) 87-100, especially 87-90.

29. "Il s'agit en réalité d'une seule et même lecture des Épîtres de Paul." *Op. cit.*, 199, n. 1. I find much of Courcelle's reasoning in this footnote to be based on very arbitrary assumptions. For one thing, he seems persuaded that Augustine is reading the pauline epistles for the very first time; whereas from his ten years as a Manichee, he was probably well acquainted with them.

30. Reference analysis is based on a file of all the biblical references (whether quotations or allusions) in Augustine's works from 386 up to and including those of the year 401 when he completed the *Confessiones*. I have designated works of this period as Augustine's earlier works. Of the several studies that I have published on the fictional nature of the conversion scene, the latest is "Saint Augustine's Conversion Scene; The End of a Modern Debate?" *Studia Patristica* 22 (1989) 235-250. Two earlier studies on the conversion scene were published in the *Augustinian Studies* of 1980 and 1982. Also very relevant to this controversy about the conversion scene is my "Truth and Augustine's Conversion Scene," *Collectanea Augustiniana*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 1989, 9-19. Despite her protests, in my opinion Paula Fredriksen is essentially a fictionalist. However, it would seem that

with her phrasing of "the retrospective self" she has cleverly set her sails to profit from the winds generated from both sides of the debate — the fictionalists and the factualists. See her "Beyond the Body/Soul Dichotomy; Augustine on Paul against the Manichees and the Pelagians," *Recherches Augustiniennes* 23 (1988) 87-114, especially footnote 70 (pp. 102-103), as well as her 1986 article mentioned therein.

31. This realism is indicated, not merely by its passionate description in the *Confessiones*, but also by its presence elsewhere in Augustine's writings: *Confessiones*, 8.7.17, *De beata vita*, 1.4, *Contra Academicos*, 1.1.4 & 3.14.31, *Soliloquia*, 1.10.17.

32. *Contra Academicos*, 2.2.5, *De beata vita*, 1.4 (both of 386) and *Confessiones*, 7.21.27.

33. *Op. cit.*, 93-138.

34. 5.14.24-25, 6.3.4 & 6.4.6.

35. *Op. cit.*, 153-156.

36. Whence the *De beata vita* dedicated to Theodorus (1.1).

37. But see *Recherches*, 178-179.

38. *Recherches*, 154.

39. *Op. cit.*, 155.

40. *Recherches*, 170-171; see however, R. J. O'Connell, s.j. "Confessions VII, ix 13 - xxi, 27: Reply to G. Madec," *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 19 (1973) 87-100, especially 88-90.

41. See *Recherches*, 181-187.

42. *Op. cit.*, 196-201.

43. *Op. cit.*, 196.

44. See note 31.

45. *Op. cit.*, 169, n. 3. (Courcelle's reference here mistakenly has VIII, 1, 2 instead of VIII, 1, 1).

46. *Op. cit.*, 102 & n. 3.

47. "itaque avidissime arripui venerabilem stilum Spiritus tui, et prae caeteris apostolum Paulum; et perierunt illae quaestiones in quibus mihi aliquando visus est adversari sibi, et non congruere testimoniis Legis et Prophetarum textus sermonis ejus." In the notes to his translation, Ryan points out that those passages included Rom 11.3 and 2 Cor 15.16 (*op. cit.*, 392, notes to chapter 21).

48. This seems not to have occurred to Courcelle.

49. Most obvious among such scholars are: Ch. Boyer, *Christianisme et Néoplatonisme dans la formation de saint Augustin*, Paris: Beauchesne, 1920, 126 & 138-139; J. Le Blond, *Les conversions de saint Augustin*, Paris: Aubier, 1950, 127; C. Mayer, *Die Zeichen in der geistigen Entwicklung und in der Theologie des jungen Augustinus*, Würzburg: Augustinus-Verlag, 1969, 151; J. Nørregaard, *Augustins Bekehrung*, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1923, 73; Michele Pellegrino, *Les Confessions de saint Augustin: Guide de lecture*, Paris: Alsatia, 1961, 172-3 and V. Bourke,

Augustine's Quest of Wisdom; The Life and Philosophy of the Bishop of Hippo, Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1945, 58. Both Brown and O'Meara seem most explicitly conscious of the fact that Augustine had known both the Bible and Paul before the "discovery" of Paul's writings (7.21.27): Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo; A Biography*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: The University of California Press, 1969, 104-105, and J. J. O'Meara, *The Young Augustine; the Growth of St. Augustine's Mind up to his Conversion*, London: Longmans, 1954, 157. Also, on Augustine's seizing upon the writings of Paul, see Courcelle, 175-178.

50. *Loc. cit.*

51. Augustine remarks how those books taught him to search for incorporeal truth (7.14.20 & 7.20.26). See also *Recherches*, 159-165 and Solignac, 698-703.

52. "In quos me propterea, priusquam Scripturas tuas considerarem, credo voluisti incurrere, ut imprimeretur memoriae meae quomodo ex eis affectus essem."

53. "Nam si primo sanctis tuis Litteris informatus essem, et in earum familiaritate obdulsisses mihi, et postea in illa volumina incidissem, fortasse aut abripiissem me a solidamento pietatis, aut si in affectu quem salubrem imbiberam perstissem, putarem etiam ex illis libris eum posse concipi, si eos solos quisquam didicisset."

54. Prosper Alfarc, *L'évolution intellectuelle de saint Augustin*, volume 1 (the only volume published), Paris: Emile Nourry, 1918, 378-382.

55. *Recherches*, 7-12. Against this especially, see Ch. Boyer, *op. cit.*, 126, 130 & 139.

56. F. Billicsich, *op. cit.*, 83: "Er aber dankt Gott, dass ihm die platonischen Bücher in die Hand fielen, bevor er noch die heiligen Schrift las."

57. On the Ponticianus episode and its aftermath, see Solignac, 155ff.

58. M. Lods, "La personne du Christ dans la 'conversion' de saint Augustin," *Recherches Augustiniennes*, 11 (1976) 3-34. See especially the section entitled 'Collationnement des citations de saint Paul' (4-15). Also of interest is: M. Pellegrino, "San Paolo nelle Confessioni di Sant'Agostino," *Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus Internationalis Catholicus*, Romae, Pontificum Institutum Biblicum, 1963, 503-512.

59. See Solignac, 114.

60. "Nondum mihi haec apostolica nota erant" refers to the preceding lengthy quote of Col 2.8-9, as the word haec [verba] (referring to that preceding quote) clearly indicates, a fact overlooked by various translators, including Pilkington, Pusey and Warner. Even the erudite Courcelle appears ambiguous when he writes: "il ignorait encore les lignes de Paul" (*Recherches*, 38) when "ces lignes" would have called attention to the immediately preceding quote. Gibb and Montgomery do not see the wording as ambiguous (*op. cit.*, 59, n. 19). In any case, to understand opera instead of verba (as referring to that preceding quote), is to ignore the requirements of the immediate context.

61. See p. 135, n.10.

62. That is, from nineteen (4.1.1) to twenty-nine (5.3.3).

63. "Statui ergo tamdiu esse catechumenus in catholica ecclesia" (5.14.24).
64. "Figam pedes in eo gradu in quo puer a parentibus positus eram."
65. *De utilitate credendi*, 1.2 (391/2).
66. *Contra Faustum*, 10.1, 13.1, 15.1, 16.8, 18.2, 19.5, 26.2.
67. See notes 54 & 55.
68. See also, J. P. De Menasce, "Augustin Manicheen," *Freundesgabe für Robert Ernst Curtius*, Bern: Francke, 1956, 79-93.
69. "With incredible ardor of heart I desired undying wisdom" (3.4.7). Noteworthy too, is the fact that wisdom (*sapientia*) and its cognates occurs some 65 times in the *Confessiones*. See Rodney H. Cooper, Leo C. Ferrari, Peter M. Ruddock and J. Robert Smith, *Concordantia in libros XIII Confessionum S. Aurelii Augustini*, Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1991.
70. The Vulgate text contains over five hundred references to wisdom (*sapientia*) and its cognates.
71. "Tumor enim meus refugiebat modum ejus; et acies mea non penetrabat interiora ejus."
72. Gibb and Montgomery note a similar initial repugnance with Jerome, *op. cit.*, p. 60, n. 14. See also Courcelle, 56-60 and Solignac, 667-668.
73. "Et quasi acutule movebar ut suffragarer stultis deceptoribus, cum a me quaererent unde malum; et utrum forma corporea Deus finiretur et haberet capillos et ungues; et utrum justis existimandi essent qui haberent uxores multas simul, et occiderent homines, et sacrificarent de animalibus. Quibus rerum ignarus perturbabar; et recedens a veritate, ire in eam mihi videbar." Cf. *De agone christiano*, 4.4, written in 396, or just before he began the *Confessiones*.
74. F. Decret, *Op. cit.*, 123-124.
75. "Haec ego nesciens, irridebam illos sanctos servos et Prophetas tuos. Et quid agebam cum irridebam eos, nisi ut irriderer abs te?"
76. See also: *Acta contra Fortunatum Manichaeum* (392) and *De actis cum Felice Manichaeo* (398).
77. *Contra Faustum*, 22.5 & 32.4.
78. *Op. cit.*, 12.1, 13.1, 16.1-3, 17.1-2.
79. *Op. cit.*, 14.1.
80. *Op. cit.*, 6.6, 10.1, 19.1-6, 22.2.
81. See Decret, *op. cit.*, 124 and also note 66.
82. *Contra Faustum*, 18.1, 19.1.
83. *Op. cit.*, 18.3 & 32.1.
84. "Et perierunt illae quaestiones in quibus mihi aliquando visus est adversari sibi, et non congruere testimoniis Legis et Prophetarum textus sermonis ejus."
85. *Recherches*, 178.

86. Leo C. Ferrari, "Isaiah and the Early Augustine," *Mélanges T. J. Van Bavel* (*Augustiniana*, 1990 & 1991 volumes) 739-756. See especially the table of biblical references on p. 748.
87. One event which seems to have given Augustine some temporary respite from the urgency of this problem was Ambrose's distinction between the letter and the spirit (5.14.24 & 6.4.6).
88. Brown, 151.
89. "Qui cogitare aliquid substantiae nisi tale non poteram, quale per hos oculos videri solet." Cf. 5.14.25.
90. "Sed tunc lectis Platoniorum illis libris, posteaquam inde admonitus quaerere incorpoream veritatem, invisibilia tua, per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta conspexi." Yet a third reference to the discovery of immateriality and its implications is contained in the opening sentences of book eight: "Yet all my doubts concerning incorruptible substance, and that every other substance comes from it, had been removed from me." ("Dubitatio tamen omnis de incorruptibili substantia, quod ab illa esset omnis substantia, ablata mihi erat.") See also, Régis Jolivet, *Saint Augustin et le Néoplatonisme chrétien*, Paris: Les Editions Denoël et Steele, 1932, 124.
91. 7.10.16, 7.17.23 & 7.20.26.
92. *Contra Faustum*, 24.1 & 28.1.
93. *Recherches*, 171.
94. 7.9.13 & 14, 7.18.24 & 7.19.25.
95. Other verses of similar import, with their numbers of occurrences in brackets, are: Rom 1.3 (20 times), Gal 4.4 (15), and Phil 2.7 (17). These numbers were ascertained from the previously mentioned file of biblical references.
96. See 1.11.17, 3.4.8, 5.14.25, 6.4.5 & 7.5.7.
97. "Videamus quemadmodum ipse Dominus in Evangelio nobis praeceperit esse vivendum; quomodo etiam Paulus apostolus: has enim Scripturas illi [Manichaei] condemnare non audent" *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* 8.13 (388).
98. *Op. cit.* 11.1.
99. See Decret, *op. cit.*, 171-172.
100. See Decret, *op. cit.*, 151-182, especially 173ff. For an overview of the research on Paul and the Manichees see Julien Ries, "La Bible chez saint Augustin et chez les Manichéens," *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*, 1964, 309-329, especially 322-325. Also informative is W. H. C. Frend, "The Gnostic-Manichaean Tradition in Roman North Africa," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 4 (1953) 13-26.
101. *Op. cit.*, 123-149. Also valuable are the articles of Ries on the Bible and the Manichees, "La Bible chez saint Augustin et chez les Manichéens," *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*, 7 (1961) 231-243, 9 (1963) 201-215, 10 (1964) 309-329.
102. Ries, *art. cit.*, (1964) 323. See also p. 20 in Frend, *art. cit.*
103. Peter Brown, *op. cit.*, 153.

104. Indeed, Augustine's largest anti-Manichean work, the *Contra Faustum* (397/8) was written in the earliest year(s) of starting the *Confessiones*.

105. See my "Saint Augustine's Conversion Scene . . . , " of note 30, especially pp. 242-245.

106. *De praedestinatione sanctorum*, 4.8 (428/429).