

An Analysis of Augustine's Conversion Reading

(*Conf.* 8. 12, 29)

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At the well known climax of the *Confessions* (8, 12, 29),¹ in response to what he takes to be a heavenly command, saint Augustine takes up a volume of his beloved Paul's epistles, opens it at random, and reads the following verses (Rom. 13, 13-14):

Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.²

In a previous study³ I showed that these same verses were not of any demonstrable significance to Augustine prior to the writing of the *Confessions* in 397 through 401. That study and the present one are based on a computer file I created of all Augustine's biblical references (whether citations or allusions) from the earliest works of 386, up to, and including, those works of the year 401 in which he completed the *Confessions*.⁴ This continuum consists of sixteen years, and in it may be distinguished three possible types of reference distributions: *premedial*, *postmedial* and *random*.⁵

Regarding the above celebrated text from Paul's epistle to the Romans, there remains the question of the significance in Augustine's earlier works, both of various elements from that text and also of similar texts from Paul's other writings. It is hoped that an investigation of both of these aspects will throw some light on Augustine's earlier spiritual development and perhaps on the presence of the above text in the conversion scene.⁶

Sins of the Flesh

To begin, there is the list, in the above cited text, of the various sinful activities, which the concluding allusion would seem to identify as sins of the flesh: "and make not provision for the

flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." While there are no other significant⁷ earlier uses of the verses of Rom. 13, 13-14, there are however several other lists of such sinful activities to be found elsewhere in Paul's writings. An investigation of Augustine's use of these texts should therefore be instructive.

Paul explicitly lists the works of the flesh in Gal. 5, 19-21, where he writes:

Now the works of the flesh are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like.⁸

Augustine cites, or alludes to, this passage on a dozen occasions in works of the relevant period. The earliest occurrence is in the *De sermone Domini in monte* of 394 where he lists the various sins, fairly much as above.⁹ Three other works of this and the next two years contain lists in substantial agreement with the previous one.¹⁰ Interestingly enough, the next four years of 396 through 399 are devoid of references to the scriptural passage.

The years 400 and 401 contain just over half of the references to Gal. 5, 19-21, with all but one being found in the anti-Donatist treatise on baptism. Least noteworthy are three very brief allusions in this work.¹¹ Two listings found elsewhere in the same work are in substantial agreement with that cited above,¹² while a third substitutes some other items.¹³ Finally, the treatise against the epistle of Parmenianus, of 400, contains a somewhat abbreviated list of the sins.¹⁴

The diachronic distribution of these references to Gal. 5, 19-21 is therefore exclusively postmedial, in the sense already explained. None occur prior to 394. But one would expect them to have been particularly numerous in the earlier years, after Augustine's conversion in 386, when he had only recently renounced such sins. The same expectation is encouraged by the dramatic events of the conversion scene with its highlighting of the sins of the flesh, not to mention their condemnation elsewhere in the eighth book.¹⁵ Those dramatic events are commonly accepted as describing that early conversion. On the other hand,

what we actually find is that references to Gal. 5, 19-21 do not start occurring until some eight years later, being almost equally divided between a cluster in the years 394 through 395 and a second cluster in the years 400 through 401, leaving a puzzling lacuna in the period of 396 through 399. This lacuna is all the more surprising in that in these same years, Augustine was planning and writing the first books of his *Confessions*. Presumably, his preoccupation in this work with the sins of the flesh did not extend to Gal. 5, 19-21, of which we will see more later.

Another interesting aspect of these references concerns the varying items on each list. Indeed, there are sufficient variations to suggest that Augustine did not have the list completely committed to memory.¹⁶ Fornication (*fornicatio*) and impurity (*immunditia*) are unique in that they appear on every list, and even on one list where they are the only items.¹⁷ This pair would correspond to the second pair of sins in Rom. 13, 13-14, namely chambering (*cubiles*) and wantonness (*impudicitiae*). In regard to these two sins, we are reminded of Augustine's repeated insistence that his conversion scene is concerned above all with the breaking of the bonds of sexual habits.¹⁸ There are other factors showing the affinity of Rom. 13, 13-14 to Gal. 5, 19-21. Thus in the extract of Rom. 13, 13-14, rioting (*comessationes*) and drunkenness (*ebrietaes*) are also found as such in all but one of the eight longer lists of Gal. 5, 19-21, as already pointed out above. Finally, in regard to the extract of Rom. 13, 13-14, there are two remaining elements, namely strife (*contentio*) and envying (*aemulatio*). The former is found on eight of the Galatian lists, and the latter on seven. It is noteworthy that for all the occurrences in the Bible of *comessatio*, *ebrietas*, *impudicitia*, *contentio*, and *aemulatio*, those occurring in Gal. 5, 19-21, are almost exclusively the object of Augustine's repeated references.¹⁹ Other elements in Gal. 5, 19-21, while not relevant here, may be noted.²⁰

Considering the above appeal to Augustine of Gal. 5, 19-21 in the years 394 through 401, one may well ask why it was not chosen for the conversional reading, rather than Rom. 13, 13-14. One factor would seem to be a dramatic one. The list of sins is about twice as long as that of Rom. 13, 13-14 and so the dramatic impact of the conversion scene would have been considerably weakened by the mere reading of a lengthy list of vices. Secondly,

Gal. 5, 19-21 is impersonally descriptive, while Rom. 13, 13-14 is personally applicable to Augustine's particular case. Furthermore, unlike Gal. 5, 19-21, it is succinctly sin-negating and hortative. It briefly negates three pairs of sins and terminates in an exhortation which also points quite definitely in the new direction for Augustine: "put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."

A second list comparable to Rom. 13, 13-14 is found in 1 Cor. 6, 9-10, where Paul says:

Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor sexual perverts, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God.

A mere allusion to this passage first occurs in 394.²¹ A complete list is found in Augustine's exposition of Galatians²² of 394-395, and in two other works of about the same time.²³ Surprisingly enough, there is a complete absence of references in the years 396 through 399, which corresponds exactly with the lacuna observed above in the case of Gal. 5, 19-21. The *Contra epistolam Parmeniani* of 400 also contains a complete list in substantial agreement with the three previous ones.²⁴ Again, as with Gal. 5, 19-21, the treatise on baptism of 400-401 contains about half the references, but only one contains a full list of sinners,²⁵ while the others invoke but two kinds of sinners, namely the greedy and robbers.²⁶ It is noteworthy that the diachronic distribution of references to 1 Cor. 6, 9-10 closely resembles that of references to Gal. 5, 19-21. Both are postmedial, both show a lacuna in 396 through 399, and in both cases, the treatise on baptism contains about half the references.

Next, comparing the items on the list of 1 Cor. 6, 9-10 with those of Rom. 13, 13-14, the former features more varieties of sexual sinners (*neque fornicatores ... neque adulteri, neque molles, neque masculorum concubitores*), while Rom. 13, 13-14 condemns sexual sins only in a general manner: *non in cubilibus et impudiciis*. Of the other items found in Rom. 13, 13-14, only that of drunkenness (*ebrietates*) is found in the list of 1 Cor. 6, 9-10, while this omits the other sins of Rom. 13, 13-14.

Considering the emphasis on sexual sins in 1 Cor. 6, 9-10 and also in the eighth book of the *Confessions*, as mentioned above, one could perhaps expect that the former would have made a good text for the conversational reading in the latter. However, a divinely directed reading from 1 Cor. 6, 9-10 would have had Augustine being implicitly accused of some very specific sins, mostly sexual in nature. In addition, the above factors for the disqualification of Gal. 5, 19-21 would also apply. While the list is sin-negating, it is lengthy (containing ten items in the Latin), which would detract from its dramatic impact. Also, the passage is not hortative, as explained in the previous case. Finally, the passage, like the previous one, is not directly addressable to Augustine in his particular situation in the conversion scene.

A third list of vices, even longer than either of the previous two, is found in Rom. 1, 29-31, where, writing of the ungodly, Paul says:

They were filled with all manner of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

The only items of Rom. 13, 13-14 which could be said to be represented on this list are envy and strife. For all its length, the above list does not contain rioting, drunkenness, chambering and wantonness. Indeed, if 1 Cor. 6, 9-10 concentrates on sexual sins, the above list omits them altogether. Despite its length, the above list of sins was not as popular with Augustine as the two previous lists. Indeed, only one verse was cited by him, and only on two occasions.²⁷ Almost equally long lists of sinners are found in 1 Tim. 1, 9-10 and 2 Tim. 3, 2-4, neither of which receives significant attention in Augustine's writings. Also, these last lists all suffer from the limitations already pointed out.

Finally, the list of sins in Paul's epistles which probably best rivals Rom. 13, 13-14 is that of Col. 3, 5-6:

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming.

Only the first verse is used by Augustine, and again references to it are postmedial, with the first two occurring in 394.²⁸ Three works of the period 397 through 400 each contain a reference.²⁹ Finally, a full citation is found in the anti-Donatist treatise on baptism of 400.³⁰

Compared with Rom. 13, 13-14, the list of Col. 3, 5-6 has the dramatically desirable virtue of succinctness, but is neither as forcefully, nor as repetitively sin-negating as Rom. 13, 13-14 with its *non ... non ... non....* Furthermore, as the extract shows, Col. 3, 5-6 ends with an ominous warning quite unconnected with the closing events of the conversion scene. By contrast, the exhortation of Rom. 13, 13-14, to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, leads directly into those events, and indeed they are "justified" by the conversational reading itself.

We are left then with Rom. 13, 13-14 as Paul's list of sins most suitable for the reading in the conversion scene. Rom. 13, 13-14 alone has what is lacking in all the lists considered. It possesses dramatic brevity, is sin-negating in a suitably general manner, has a direct (as opposed to indirect) addressability to Augustine's particular case and leads on to the important exhortation to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, an important conclusion emerges from the diachronic distribution of Augustine's references to all the lists considered. They are all postmedial in the sense explained, and further, they all show a distinct tendency to cluster in the period of 397 through 401, when Augustine was writing the *Confessions*. The conversational reading in its famous setting of the garden in Milan can therefore be seen as the immortal expression of a preoccupation which, from 394 onwards, had become increasingly important to Augustine. On the other hand, had that famous conversational reading really occurred in 386, as some maintain, then at the very least, frequent premedial occurrences of the references would have been discernable, whereas the years from 386 through 393 contain

next to no references. This phenomenon is in complete agreement with the findings of previously published studies.³¹

Flesh and Spirit

The conversional reading with its negating of the sins of the flesh implies a more important contrary, namely the good works of the spirit, as enumerated in Gal. 5, 22-23. These are alluded to by Augustine on nearly a half a dozen occasions.³² The underpinning of Augustine's conversional reading is therefore the dualism involving the mutual hostility of flesh and spirit which receives its most explicit and antithetical formulation in Gal. 5, 17: "For the desires of the flesh are against the spirit, and the desires of the spirit are against the flesh."

This is one of three such dualisms found in Paul's writings and which are related to one another by Augustine. One is the dualism of letter and spirit (2 Cor. 3, 6)³³ which became so important to the young Manichean Augustine soon after he met Ambrose.³⁴ Augustine also identifies this dualism with the flesh-spirit one.³⁵ In the *ad Simplicianum* (1, 1, 17) of 396 he distinguishes between observing the law literally and observing it in grace. That this implicitly contrasts the letter and spirit is evident from a passage in the *contra Faustum* of 397:

The true bride of Christ ... knows the difference between the letter and the spirit, or in other words, between law and grace, and in serving God no longer in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit, she is not under the law, but under grace.³⁶

This passage is also of significance for the corresponding contrast of oldness and newness (following Rom. 7, 6), which distinguishes the old written law from the new life of the spirit. One is reminded of the old carnal life of Augustine, and the new spiritual life portrayed as emerging from the conversion scene.³⁷ The flesh-spirit dualism will be first examined here.

The above dualism is prominent in two places in the eighth book, prior to the conversion scene. First, it finds repeated expression in the lengthy consideration of the habits formed from sin (8,

5, 10-12). Secondly, it occurs at the conclusion of the considerations on the conflict of the two wills (8, 10, 22). Furthermore, the same dualism occurs at two other places in the *Confessions*, one being in the book prior to the conversion scene, and the other in the next book but one, after that scene. Accordingly, in the seventh book, it enters into the thoughts consequent upon the "discovery" of the writings of Paul (7, 21, 27),³⁸ while in the tenth book it is seen as an obstacle to the happy life (10, 23, 33). The flesh-spirit dualism is therefore not only featured four times in comparison with only two for the letter-spirit form (in 5, 14, 24 and 6, 4, 6, as noted above), but by reason of its various locations, it is also more closely associated with the conversion scene itself. Further, as I hope to show in regard to another formulation of the dualism, it can be seen as important to the paulinizing of Augustine's conversion scene.

Meanwhile, the occurrences in the *Confessions* of the various individual elements of the previous dualisms are of interest principally as general criteria of their importance to the work as a whole.³⁹ As identified above, these individual elements of the dualisms would be: letter, spirit (or allegory), law, grace and flesh. Only spirit and flesh are of numerical importance.⁴⁰ *Spiritus* and *spiritalis* are found about one hundred sixty times, while there are one hundred eighteen occurrences of *caro* and *carnalis*. These may therefore be termed "megawords," in that they occur about a hundred times or more in the work. Furthermore, there are ten cases of various degrees of juxtapositional contrast between spirit and flesh.⁴¹ The above considerations therefore point up the numerical preponderance of the elements of spirit and flesh and of the dualism itself in the *Confessions*.

Also of significance is the fact that Augustine's preoccupation with the spirit-flesh conflict of Gal. 5, 17 predates the *Confessions*. The first recorded example of it in Augustine's writings occurs when Fortunatus confronts him with Gal. 5, 17⁴² in the debate of 392.⁴³ The dualism is next cited and explained in a work of two years later.⁴⁴ Subsequently, Gal. 5, 17 is explained at length in the *Expositio epistolae ad Galatas* (46) of 394-5. The verse is featured again in the *De libero arbitrio* completed in 395.⁴⁵ Coming nearer to the *Confessions*, Gal. 5, 17 is considered in the *De doctrina christiana* (1, 24, 25-27) in the section of 396, when

Augustine treats of the proper love of the body. In the *ad Simplicianum* (1, 2, 21) of the same year, an astonishing resolution of the conflict has occurred in that the outcome of the hostility is seen as determined entirely by a divine predilection which relates each person to God as the clay to the potter, in accordance with Rom. 9, 21.⁴⁶ The *contra Faustum* (12, 21) of 397-8 sees the spirit and the flesh as symbolized by the men and women in Noah's ark. Gal. 5, 17 makes another appearance in the *Annotationes in Job* (In 39) of 399, and finally, in the *Contra epistolam Parmeniani* (2, 7, 14) of 400.

Noteworthy is the fact that Gal. 5, 17 does not first occur until 392 and then only as cited by the Manichee, Fortunatus. Furthermore, thereafter, it is cited by Augustine only on an annual basis. This paucity of references stands in marked contrast to the numerical importance of flesh and spirit as megawords in the *Confessions*, as noted above. We can therefore see this contrasting emphasis as required by the dramatic exigencies of the text, and not as indicating an intense preoccupation with Gal. 5, 17 during the preceding years, despite what Augustine says about his own lusting of the spirit against the flesh and vice versa (8, 5, 11).⁴⁷ Moreover, with one rare exception (the reference by Fortunatus), these references again show postmedial distribution in that they are all found in the comparatively late period of 394 through 401, which is also roughly the period of the references seen above.

What is most amazing about the diachronic distribution of references to Gal. 5, 17 is that the first occurrence is not until 392, and then only as cited by the Manichean, Fortunatus. Yet, on the other hand, Augustine has this very text featured as a most important element in the description of the preambles to his conversion scene. Writing there about his struggles against the chain of his carnal habits, he says (8, 5, 11):

Thus came I to understand from my own experience, what I had read how that 'the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.' I verily lusted both ways.

Supposedly these events occurred in 386, yet he does not refer to the text of Gal. 5, 17 until after he is seemingly reminded

of its existence by Fortunatus in 392. Had the above description been of historically real events of 386, then the writings of the years immediately following should have contained many references to Gal. 5, 17.

Mind and Members

Augustine's interest in the flesh-spirit conflict of Gal. 5, 17, is easily surpassed by the mind-members dualism of Rom. 7, 14-25. This is shown by the number of occasions on which he refers to various of these verses. But the greater number of references is not surprising in that it is question, not of one verse (as with Gal. 5, 17), but of a dozen. On the other hand, the large number of references does indicate Augustine's persistent interest in the mind-members dualism with its various repercussions, as explained by Paul. In Rom. 7, 14-25, Paul is apparently again dealing with the flesh-spirit conflict, but in terms of the impotence of the law of God in his mind, when pitted against the law in his members, which law serves, not God, but sin.⁴⁸ One great difference from Gal. 5, 17 is that here (in Rom. 7, 14-25), Paul has personalized the conflict by speaking throughout in the first person singular.

As to the various individual verses of Rom. 7, 14-25, verse 14 concerns Paul's admission that while the law is spiritual, he is carnal and sold under sin. This verse is featured on four occasions.⁴⁹ Interestingly enough, verses 15 through 17 concerning Paul's inability both to understand his own actions and also to do what he wants to do, are not even alluded to by Augustine. This omission would seem to imply that Augustine did understand his own actions, or thought that he did, or else the lack of understanding just had not occurred to him. As for the last part of the verses, about Paul's inability to do what he wants to do, this is treated by Augustine in the other verses considered here. In verse 18 Paul admits that nothing good dwells in him, that is, in his flesh. So he can will what is right, but cannot do it. Augustine alludes to this verse alone on one occasion.⁵⁰ On two other occasions, it occurs in association with subsequent verses.⁵¹ Verses 20 and 21 are not alluded to. Verse 22 is found four times, of which one occasion has been noted above (see previous footnote). The others are in association with subsequent verses.⁵² Verse 23 occurs seven times,

of which two have already been mentioned in the previous footnote. On two occasions, verse 23 is featured alone.⁵³ Verse 23 is also found twice in association with verse 24 in which Paul laments: "wretched man that I am! who will deliver me from this body of death?"⁵⁴ Both verses 23 and 24 are cited in 392 by Fortunatus (c. *Fort.* 21). Verse 24, as used by Augustine, also occurs in three other places.⁵⁵ In addition, verse 24 is found on four occasions in conjunction with the first part of verse 25 which verse part need not concern us here.⁵⁶ Finally, verse 25, after an initial prayer, returns yet again to the mind-flesh conflict: "so then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin." Sound evidence of Augustine's predilection for this verse is the fact that it occurs on a dozen occasions, beginning with the earliest writings.⁵⁷

The chronological distributions of references to Gal. 5. 17 and Rom. 7, 14-25 make for interesting comparisons. Unlike Gal. 5, 17, verses from Rom. 7, 14-25 occur commonly in the earliest works. Thus, references to these verses Rom. 7, 14-25 are to be found ten times in works of 393 or earlier.⁵⁸ Thereafter, unlike Gal. 5, 17, many references Rom. 7, 14-25 are found in almost every year with peaks in 394 and 399, as has just been seen. Finally, there are some eight of these references in the years 396-401, when Augustine was planning and writing the *Confessions*. Rom. 7, 14-25 therefore exhibits something of a random distribution as explained above.

As would be expected from the previous findings, the verses of Rom. 7, 14-25 are also important to the eighth book of the *Confessions*. Their first appearance is towards the end of the seventh book (7, 21, 27) in the considerations consequent upon the "discovery" of the writings of Paul, where Augustine uses verses 22 and 23:

For though a man delight in the law of God after the inward man, what shall he do with that other law in his members which warreth against the law of his mind, and bringeth him into captivity to the law of sin, which is in his members?

The verses appear again in the fifth chapter of the eighth

book where Augustine is considering the causes which alienate us from God (8, 5, 10-12). The first section leads to identification of the two wills within himself- "the one old, the other new, one carnal, the other spiritual" (8, 5, 10). Next follow considerations on Gal. 5, 17, with its mutual lusting of flesh and spirit, and also containing allusions to Rom. 7, 14-25. The twelfth and final section of the chapter, dealing with the devastating inertia that becomes evident to Augustine when he attempts to respond to the truth perceived, closes with a lengthy paraphrase of the verses of Rom. 7, 22-24.

Previous considerations have shown that the verses of Rom. 7, 14-25 had a more persistent appeal to Augustine than Gal. 5, 17 and from a much earlier date. The most obvious reason for this persistent appeal would seem to derive from Augustine's years with the Manichees and their doctrine of the rebellious, evil principle in the body (see footnote 43). But the same applies to Gal. 5, 17. Another reason would seem to have been the difference already noted, that in Rom. 7, 14-25 Paul has personalized the flesh-spirit conflict by speaking throughout in the first person singular. Paul was therefore baring his soul about his own inner conflict. It would seem that this revelation met with a heartfelt response from Augustine who apparently was all too aware of the same conflict within himself. One manifestation is in the repeated and extensive allusions to verses in Rom. 7, 14-25, even from the earliest years. Another seems to have been the paulinizing of the conversion scene. It would appear that the Paul of Rom. 7, 14-25, with his self revelations, was the original inspiration for the self-revelations of the *Confessions* in general, and of the conversion scene in particular. And so it seems, there resulted the descriptions of Augustine's conversion, a description transparently modelled on the conversion of his great hero Paul, as I have shown elsewhere.⁵⁹

Finally, it is noteworthy that Augustine's interest in the flesh-spirit, or mind-members conflict was not extinguished by the writing of the *Confessions*, but seems to have even increased after this achievement.⁶⁰

"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ"

From previous considerations, we now have a better appreciation of the factors which lay behind Augustine's choice of the verses of which the reading is portrayed as having effected his conversion:

Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

These verses however, contain another element which was not included in the previous considerations, namely the putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ. This element is also found⁶¹ in Gal. 3, 27, when Paul says: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." This verse occurs a mere four times in Augustine's works, and indeed, only in works of the time of writing the *Confessions*.⁶²

Again, what may be considered an equivalent expression, namely putting off the old nature and putting on the new, as found in both Eph. 4, 22-24 and Col. 3, 9-10, is found nineteen times. Six of these references are among the earlier works.⁶³ Apart from the previously noted references, the next earliest one occurs in 394 (c. *Adam. Man.* 5, 2). However, most of the references are found in the postmedial period, and mostly at the time of writing the *Confessions*,⁶⁴ Furthermore, two references are also found near the end of that work (13, 22, 32 and 23, 33), making a total of about a dozen postmedial references.

This notion of the putting off of the old nature and the putting on of the new, therefore seems to fare somewhat better for representation in the earlier works than the putting on of Christ. The exchange of natures is invoked six times in the pre-medial section, as well as about a dozen times in the postmedial period. Paul's exhortation to put on other things besides Christ and the new nature, have evoked minimal, or nonexistent references in Augustine's works of the period 386 through 401.⁶⁵

Finally then, the most surprising conclusion of the above

considerations would seem to be that Paul's putting on of Christ was not a significant feature of Augustine's earlier life, but rather of the time of writing the *Confessions*, and even then, apparently only after it had been brought to his attention by Faustus in 397-398. Yet, supposedly the putting on of Christ was the climax of the divinely directed conversional reading in 386. Its absence in the intervening years is all the more amazing in view of Augustine's confession that at the beginning of his conversion, he could not find a way of enjoying God until he had embraced Jesus Christ (7, 18, 24):

And I sought a way of acquiring strength sufficient to enjoy Thee; but I found it not until I embraced that 'Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus' (1 Tim. 2, 5).

One possible explanation for the absence of references to the putting on of Christ prior to his writing of the *Confessions*, is that he had discovered Christ *as mediator* (*ibid.*) which was also a Manichean notion,⁶⁶ but his Manichean mind had rebelled at the notion of putting on Christ, as required by Gal. 3, 27. However, even this seems unlikely as an explanation, since Faustus used the figure of speech in the context noted above. Therefore, the amazing conclusion would seem to follow, that despite his protestation in the *Confessions* (7, 18, 24), the putting on of Christ was not of particular significance to the conversion of Augustine.

Summary

Of the various lengthy lists of sins, or of sinners, in Paul's writings, Rom. 13, 13-14 alone possesses all the qualities rendering it perfectly suitable for its role in the context of the conversion scene. The underpinning of the conversional reading is Gal. 5, 17, with its mutual hostility of the flesh and the spirit. This text is highly important to the *Confessions*, and especially to the conversion process of the eighth book. Despite all this, it is absent from the writings of the first eight years after 386, the year when the events of the eighth book supposedly occurred. Likewise, the exhortation to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the climax of the conversional reading is also absent, and indeed only appears at the time of writing the *Confessions*. As I have explained else-

where,⁶⁷ these inconsistencies are easily explainable once the quasi-theatrical nature of the *Confessions* is understood. While there can be no doubting the profound sincerity and the permanence of Augustine's conversion in 386, it apparently did not transpire as described in the justly famous conversion scene of the eighth book. Finally, Rom. 7, 14-25 is unique in that it goes back to Augustine's earlier writings and seems to have been the inspirational source of the self-revelatory character of the *Confessions* and of the paulinizing of the conversion scene.

NOTES

¹ All unqualified references are to the *Confessions*; Latin citations are from the standard Skutella text; dates are from the chronological tables in Peter Brown's *Augustine of Hippo; A Biography*, 1967.

² English extracts of the *Confessions* are from the Pilkington translation in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (hereafter NPN) New York, 1886-1888.

³ "Paul at the Conversion of Augustine (Conf. viii, 12, 29-30)," *Augustinian Studies* 11 (1980) 5-20.

⁴ References were gathered from the Gaume *Opera omnia* of 1836-1839. In the present study, I shall again be using the same technique used in the above-mentioned article, which technique I have named "reference analysis." In essence, this technique explores, in a diachronic manner, the paratextual world of Augustine's biblical references.

⁵ The middle, or medial point would be between the end of 393 and the beginning of 394. With *premedial distribution* all, or most, of the references would be found in the earliest years, up to, and including 393. *Postmedial distribution* would therefore mean that all, or most, of the references would occur from 394 onwards. With

random distribution neither of the previous tendencies would be evident.

⁶ Unless otherwise stated, all considerations will be confined to the range specified, from the earliest works of 386, up to and including those of the year 401 in which he completed the *Confessions*.

⁷ See pages 12-15 in the article of footnote 3 for some insignificant uses of Rom. 13, 13-14.

⁸ English biblical citations are from the *The Common Bible* (Revised Standard Version, ecumenical edition), Collins, 1973.

⁹ *Op. cit.* 2, 24, 81.

¹⁰ In all references, the date of composition will be placed in brackets immediately after the abbreviated title of the work. *Exp. ep. ad Gal.* (of 394-395) 48; *De div. quaest.* 83 (388-396) 76, 2. If its position in this treatise be regarded as an indication, this list would have a positional date of about 395. (The positional date is obtained by dividing the number of the question by 83 and then multiplying the product by 9 (the number of years through which the work was written), then adding the result to 388 (the year of starting the work). Decimal digits are ignored in the final figure. Such positional dates are of course based upon certain obvious assumptions, so that at best they are merely probable. This positional method of calculating dates will be used for future references to this particular work.) *Ep.* 29 (395) 6. In addition, the *De doct. christ.* (396 portion) 3, 3, 7 contains an insignificant grammatical allusion.

¹¹ *De bapt.* 6, 12, 19; 6, 43, 84; 7, 54, 103.

¹² *Op. cit.* 4, 18, 25; 5, 14, 16.

¹³ *Op. cit.* 6, 12, 18.

¹⁴ *C. ep. Parm.* 1, 10, 16.

¹⁵ 8, 5, 10-12 & 11, 25-27.

¹⁶ Compare for instance, *De bapt.* 4, 18, 25 and 6, 12, 18.

¹⁷ *De bapt.* 6, 12, 19.

¹⁸ 8, 1, 1; 8, 5, 10-12; 8, 11, 25-27; 9, 1, 1.

¹⁹ Also popular, but in another context, are *contentio* (Phil. 1, 15 & 17) and *aemulatio* (2 Cor. 11, 2).

²⁰ Occurring in 8 lists are: *dissensio*, *haeresis*; in 7 lists: *idolorum servitus*, *beneficia*, *inimicitia*, *animositas*; in 4 lists: *luxuria*; and in 1 list: *incestus*, *sectae*, *zelus*.

²¹ *De serm. dom.* 2, 25, 84.

²² *Op. cit.* 48.

²³ *Ep.* 29, 5, and *De div. quaest.* 83 76, 2. As explained above, the positional date of the present citation would be about 396.

²⁴ *Op. cit.* 3, 2, 9.

²⁵ *Op. cit.* 4, 19, 26.

²⁶ *Op. cit.* 4, 4, 6; 4, 9, 12; 4, 17, 24; 5, 23, 32. This last reference is to robbers only.

²⁷ *c. Faust.* (397-398) 19, 24; *De cat. rud.* (399-400) 11, 16.

²⁸ *De serm. dom.* has the verse alluded to in the first book (1, 12, 36) and partially quoted in the second (2, 13, 45).

²⁹ *c. Faust.* of 397-398 cites the entire verse (22, 92), though with some variations from the items listed here in the text. *Quaest. evang.* of 397-400 contains a partial quote (1, 2), as does *C. ep. Parm.* (3, 1, 3) of 400.

³⁰ *De bapt.* 4, 5, 7. This list differs from that of the *c. Faust.* as also from the list cited here in the text.

³¹See articles in footnotes 3 and 59.

³²*De Gen. c. Man.* (388-9) 2, 25, 38; *De serm. dom.* (394) 2, 21, 81; *Ep. 29* (395) 6; *Serm. 89* (396-7) 1; *De bapt.* (400-1) 1, 18, 27.

³³See Jean Plagnieux, "Le chrétien en face de la Loi d'après le *De spiritu et littera* de saint Augustin" *Theologie in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Michael Schmaus zum sechzigsten Geburtstag... (München, 1957) 725-754.

³⁴5, 14, 24; 6, 4, 6. See also *De ut. cred.* (391-2) 3, 9, Yoshichika Miyatani, "Spiritus und Littera bei Augustin," *Kwansei Gakun University Annual Studies* (Nishinomiya, Japan) v. 22, Dec. 1973, 1-16 and Thomas Vincent Gilbride, "St. Augustine's Interpretation of the Pauline Antithesis between the Letter and the Spirit in his *De spiritu et littera*," Diss., Catholic University of America, 1968.

³⁵*De doct. christ.* (in the 396 part) 3, 5ff.

³⁶*Op. cit.* 5, 8. See also 19, 7. (Albert H. Newman translation, NPN.)

³⁷This is anticipated by Augustine in several earlier places in the eighth book: "voluntas autem nova, quae mihi esse coeperat" (8, 5, 10); "duae voluntates meae, una vetus alia nova" (8, 5, 10); "dixit hoc et turbidus partituratione novae vitae" (8, 6, 15). See also the "non quis fuerim, sed quis iam sim et quis adhuc sim" (10, 4, 6) as pointed out in Ernesto Valgiglio, "L'ansia di verità su sfondo autobiografico, centro unitario delle 'Confessioni' di sant'Agostino," *Renovatio* (Genova) 15 (1980) 620-630, especially 620-623.

³⁸See my "Augustine's 'Discovery' of Paul's Writings (Conf. 7, 21, 27)," *Augustinian Studies* (in press).

³⁹All word-totals are from an *Index verborum Confessionum* constructed in 1982 with the help of Prof. Rodney H. Cooper, Mr. Peter Ruddock and Prof. J. Robert Smith.

⁴⁰*Littera*, as opposed to allegory, or spirit, occurs only three times, but in the important cases already noted above (5, 14, 24; 6, 4, 6 (2)). Likewise, *allegoria* is found three times in the concluding

chapters of the *Confessions*, when referring to understanding various ingredients in the text of the Old Testament (13, 21, 30; 13, 24, 37; 13, 25, 38). *Lex* occurs about forty times, but mainly as referring to the law of God. It was not found in the sense required in the dualism contrasting law and grace. *Gratia* was found about forty times as either referring to God's grace, or as giving thanks to God (*gratias agere*). No cases were found in which it was contrasted with law.

⁴¹5, 10, 20; 5, 14, 25; 6, 3, 4; 8, 5, 10; 12, 17, 24; 12, 32, 43; 13, 12, 13; 13, 13, 14; 13, 18, 23; 13, 23, 33.

⁴²Of the other texts adduced by Fortunatus in the same context, Rom. 8, 7 is not of particular significance in that it occurs only three times in the works of Augustine with which we will be concerned here. However, Rom. 7, 23-25 is part of important considerations later in this article.

⁴³*c. Fort.* 21. The text is adduced by Fortunatus as evidence that Paul seemed to agree with the Manichees in recognizing an evil and rebellious principle in human nature (5, 10, 18). For the later consequences of this, see Malcolm E. Alflatt, "The Development of the Idea of Original Sin in St. Augustine," *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 20 (1974) 113-134, and, by the same author, "The Responsibility for Involuntary Sin in Saint Augustine," *Recherches Augustiniennes* 10 (1975) 171-186.

⁴⁴*De div. quaest.* 83, 70, of which the calculated date is about 395.

⁴⁵*Op. cit.* 3, 18-20. Here Augustine sees sin as deriving from the ignorance and difficulties caused to the soul by being in the body.

⁴⁶See also Isaiah 45, 9 and Sirach 33, 13.

⁴⁷See *Conf.* 4, 15, 26; 5, 10, 18 where Augustine refers to his vague awareness, as a Manichee, of the flesh-spirit dualism, due to the fact that his mind was totally confined to the carnal order (see 7, 20 26; 12, 6, 6 and also 4, 15, 24).

⁴⁸For various works on Rom. 7, including these verses, see *Fichier Augustinien*, Matières, v. 2, 429.

⁴⁹ *de Gen. c. Man.* (of 388-389) 2, 19, 29; *Exp. ep. ad Gal.* (394-395) 7; *ad Simp.* (396) 1, 2, 21; *Conf.* (397-401) 8, 10, 22.

⁵⁰ *Ann. in Job* (399) in 36.

⁵¹ *De lib. arb.* (391-395) 3, 18, 51, where it occurs along with verse 19 in which Paul confesses that he does evil instead of the good he intended. In *De serm. dom.* (394) 2, 6, 23, it is alluded to, along with verse 22 about the delight that Paul has for the law of God according to his inmost self, namely in his mind, in contrast to the hostile law in his sinful members.

⁵² *Ann. in Job* (399) in 39, where allusion also occurs to verse 23 about the sinful law in Paul's members, which law takes him captive, notwithstanding the law of God in his mind. The same association applies to the allusion in *Enarr. in Ps. 26* 1, 6. Commentaries on the first 32 psalms were completed before 392 (Peter Brown, *op. cit.* P. 74.) All the *Enarrationes* mentioned in this article belong to the period prior to 392. Some of these psalms have second commentaries which seem to have been composed after 392. These are not used here.

⁵³ *Exp. ep. ad Gal.* (394-395) 47; *De actis cum Fel.* (398) 2, 8, where the verse is quoted by Augustine.

⁵⁴ *De vera rel.* (389-391) 53, 103; *De serm. dom.* (394) 2, 11, 38.

⁵⁵ *De div. quaest.* 83 (388-396) 67, 6 of which the calculated date would be about 395. *Ann. in Job* (399) in 36; in 37.

⁵⁶ *De mus.* (387-389) 6, 5, 14; *De serm. dom.* (394) 1, 12, 36; *c. Faust.* (397-398) 12, 78; *Enarr. in Ps. 2* 8.

⁵⁷ *De mus.* (387-389) 6, 11, 33; *de Gen. c. Man.* (388-389) 1, 25, 43; *Enarr. in Ps. 3*, 10; *Enarr. in Ps. 4*, 6; *Enarr. in Ps. 6*, 7. *De fide et symb.* (393) 9, 23; *De serm. dom.* (394) 2, 6, 23; *Exp. ep. ad Gal.* (394-395) 46; *Exp. prop. ex ep. ad Rom.* (394-395) 35 and 53; *De div. quaest.* 83 (388-396) 65 and 67, 6, with calculated dates of about 395.

⁵⁸ *De mus.* (387-389) 6, 5, 14; 6, 11, 33; *de Gen. Man.* (388-389) 1, 25, 43; 2, 19, 29; *De vera rel.* (389-391) 53, 103; also in the following *Enarr. in Ps.* 3, 8 & 10; 4, 6; 6, 7 and *De fide et symb.* (393) 9, 23;

⁵⁹ "Saint Augustine on the Road to Damascus," *Augustinian Studies* 13 (1982) 151-170.

⁶⁰ Thus, if allusions to Gal. 5, 17 and Rom. 7, 22-25 are any criterion, the works of the years 386 through 401 inclusive contain 28 such references. These same works occupy about 3100 columns in the 1836-1839 Gaume edition of the *Opera Omnia*. For the subsequent equal period of sixteen years (from 402 through 417), 37 references are found in about 2000 columns. This works out to about twice the frequency of the previous period.

⁶¹ The element as located in Rom. 13, 13-14 is not found in Augustine's early works. See article of footnote 3, especially pages 12-15.

⁶² *c. Faust.* (397-398) 24, where the verse is cited for the first time, and by Faustus; *De op. mon.* (400) 32, 40; *De bapt.* (400-1) 1, 11, 16; 5, 24, 34. Considering this chronological sequence and also the amazing lack of earlier citations of the verse, it would seem that Faustus first drew Augustine's attention to the verse in 397-398.

⁶³ *De mor. eccl. cath.* (388-390) 19, 36. *Enarr. in Ps.* 6, 2 & 9; *Enarr. in Ps.* 8, 10. *De div. quaest.* 83, contains two premedial references, which, with their calculated dates are: (393) 51, 1; (393) 64, 2.

⁶⁴ *De div. quaest.* 83 (395) 68, 2; *De doct. christ.* (396 section) 2, 16, 24; *c. Faust.* (397-398) 4; 12, 8; 24, 1 (2) (both these last references are cited by Faustus); 24, 2; *Quaest. ev.* (397-400) 1, 1; *Ep.* 55 (400) 3, 4; *De op. mon.* (400) 32, 40 (2)

⁶⁵ Paul's call to put on the armour of light (Rom. 13, 12), or of God (Eph. 6, 11), have one reference each, while no references are found to Paul's exhortation to put on other metaphorical forms of armour (1 Thess. 5, 8), or of various virtues (Col. 3, 12) including love (Col. 3, 14).

⁶⁶ Pierre Jean de Menasce, "Augustin Manichéen," *Freundesgabe für Ernst Robert Curtius* (Bern, 1956) 79-93, especially 88ff.

⁶⁷ "Saint Augustine's Conversion Scene - The End of a Modern Debate?," (in press) a Master Theme Paper delivered at the tenth International Conference on Patristic Studies at Oxford in August, 1987, and "Beyond Saint Augustine's Conversion Scene," (in press) a paper delivered at the Sedecentennial Celebration of Augustine's Baptism. The Celebration was held at Toronto in May 1987. See also my "Truth and Augustine's Conversion Scene," (in press) *Collectanea Augustiniana* (Augustinian Historical Institute, Villanova).