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The Structure
of the Human Mind
According to Augustine

Self-reflection and
Knowledge of God
in *De Trinitate*

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Introduction

1. Intention and Outline of this Work

De Trinitate may well be the most difficult and demanding of Augustine's works. At first reading, its extraordinary compositional compactness prevents recognition of the objective structure and the inner logic of the work, as Augustine both reviews former themes and develops new ideas. Perhaps because of the hermetic impression of the work, modern scholars have primarily addressed isolated, individual teachings, rarely taking up the context of the whole. Michael Schmaus' classic *Die psychologische Trinitätslehre des heiligen Augustinus*, published in 1927, presents a cohesive interpretation of *De Trinitate*,[1] but its only, more recent successors have been the dense commentaries in the Bibliothèque Augustinienne edition of *De Trinitate*[2] and Alfred Schindler's *Wort und Analogie in Augustins Trinitätslehre*.[3]

Scholarship on Augustine has been characterized by a measure of multidisciplinarity that is hardly found in any other subject of intellectual history. Theologians, philosophers, classicists, historians, and political scientists have discovered vital topics of interest in Augustine's writings. However invaluable the communication across the boundaries of the varying disciplines is, each has a different set of questions. Consequently, it should be seen as an insufficiency that all the aforementioned books are theological treatises. For an encompassing philosophical interpretation of the entire corpus has never been attempted. Philosophical interest has been predominantly confined to single topics, offering systematic accounts of one or another aspect of Augustine's

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[1] Michael Schmaus, *Die psychologische Trinitätslehre des Heiligen Augustinus,* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1927). (Photocopied reproduction of the 1927 edition with addendum and literature supplement by the author: Münster, 1967.)

[2] *Oeuvres de Saint Augustin, Bibliothèque Augustinienne*, Vols. 15 and 16: 2me série, Dieu et son oeuvre, La Trinité, vol. 1 (BA15): Le mystère (De trin. I-VII, ed. and trans. by M. Mellet and Th. Camelot, Introduction by E. Hendrikx), vol. 2 (=BA 16): Les images (De trin. VIII-XV, ed. and trans. by P. Agaësse, commented by J. Moingt and P. Agaësse), Paris, 1955.

[3] Alfred Schindler, *Wort und Analogie in Augustines Trinitätslehre*, (Tübingen: Mohr, 1965). R. Kany offers an excellent overview in „Typen und Tendenzen der De Trinitate-Forschung seit F. Chr. Baur," in *Gott und sein Bild – Augustins De Trinitate im Spiegel gegenwärtiger Forschung*, ed. by J. Brachtendorf (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2000).

thought while treating individual works like *De Trinitate* selectively and cursorily.[4] An exception is Ludger Hölscher's *The Reality of the Mind. Augustine's Philosophical Arguments for the Human Soul as a Spiritual Substance*, which presents a detailed, systematic-philosophical interpretation of one of *De Trinitate*'s most important teachings.[5] Hoelscher's work reflects a growing interest in the philosophical treatment of mind in *De Trinitate*, an interest undoubtedly spurred by the analytical tradition of the philosophy of mind.

The time is ripe, therefore, for a comprehensive philosophical interpretation of *De Trinitate.* My study orders Augustine's isolated arguments like that of the immateriality of the mind within the overall logic of his discussion on the *mens humana* as presented in *De Trinitate.* Furthermore, I interpret Augustine's theory of mind within the context of the entire project of *De Trinitate*. The first task is indispensable for an accurate interpretation of Augustine's philosophy of mind. All too often deficits that appear in the critical literature stem from disregard of the larger contexts of Augustine's writings.

The first task, however, can be dealt with appropriately only if the second one is simultaneously tackled. Augustine's turn toward the analysis of *mens humana* is motivated by his project for knowing God. The ways he examines the human mind are understandable only by taking account of his speculation on the Trinity. The reticence of philosophers to trespass only upon theological lines of questioning has inhibited the philosophical pursuit of this connection. Books 1-7 of *De Trinitate,* accordingly, have been designated to theology, leaving merely books 8-15 open for a philosophical undertaking. This division is not conducive to understanding *De Trinitate*, and, in my opinion, it can be avoided without blurring the boundaries between the disciplines. Indeed, from the perspective of intellectual history, it is rather the rule than the exception that impulses for philosophical examination come from outside philosophy. New developments in the sciences or the arts have often stimulated philosophical reflection. This applies invariably to theology. Hans-Georg Gadamer, for instance, acknowledges

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[4] See, for example, G. O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); J. Mader, *Aurelius Augustinus. Philosophie und Christentum*, (Niederösterreiches Pressehaus: St. Polten-Wien, 1991).

[5] Ludger Hölscher, *The Reality of the Mind. Augustine's Philosophical Arguments for the Human Soul as a Spiritual Substance*, (Routledge & Kegan Paul: London, 1986).

the motivational power of theological questions when he argues that the fusion of Greek philosophy with the Christian dogma of the Trinity results in a philosophically acceptable concept of language.[6] Dogmatic guidelines need not determine the principles of philosophical thought, and I believe they do not in Augustine's *De Trinitate*. Among the interpretations of *De Trinitate*, it has become nearly a rule to attribute those elements of Augustine's analysis of mind that are either difficult or that simply defy smooth interpretation to his theological preoccupations. The individual analysis of such elements provides the sole means of clarifying the theological-philosophical relation. Principally, however, Augustine himself attempts to withhold elements of faith from the context of his analysis of mind. If he thus fails in this project, he fails the criterion he himself establishes for his project.

My philosophical interpretation, taking the entire construction of *De Trinitate* into consideration, examines the historical context of Augustine's conception of the Trinity. I then show, in outline form, the extent to which Augustine both relies on Plotinus in his discussion of the theory of principles and for his teaching on self-knowledge and separates himself from Neoplatonist conceptions (Chap. 1). I next consider Augustine's explications of the Trinity dogma. Rather than focusing on the biblical grounding that Augustine offers in books 1-4, I show how Augustine in books 5-7 draws on Platonic and Aristotelian concepts for his analysis of the penetration of thought. Under the title, "The Ontology of the Trinity," I develop those characteristics that Augustine claims are to be predicated of God understood as Trinity (Chap. II).

According to Augustine, the understanding of an object is accomplished in the vision of it. In his early works, particularly in *Confessiones*, the project of ascending to a direct vision of God plays a prominent role. In the history of Augustine's thought, the eighth book of *De Trinitate* was revolutionary, for it argues that the ontological structure of the Trinity makes a vision of the triune God impossible for finite understanding. A direct path to the Trinity vis-à-vis Neoplatonist vision does not exist (Chap. III). Augustine's replacement strategy for the unmediated *visio* is found in a mediated vision of God in images and mirrors. In the metaphysical hierarchy of being, the human mind represents

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[6] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd revised edition, trans. revised by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, (Continuum Publishing Company: New York, 1989), 405.

the highest ranking being under God. The analysis of the *mens humana* in book 9 illustrates that, despite its finitude, the *mens humana* structurally exhibits the same ontological characteristics exemplary of the divine Trinity. Because the human mind has a trinitarian form, an understanding of it may be regarded as a vision of God in God's image. The project of *De Trinitate* thus becomes an examination of the ontology of *mens humana* (Chap. IV/V).

While book 9 sketches this ontology, Augustine introduces in book 10 a distinction between an always already existing self-knowledge of mind and an expressive, yet-to-be-attained self-knowledge in the sense of the Delphic command: "*Cognosce teipsum* (Chap. IV)." The consequences of this distinction are significant. First of all, the phenomenon of immediate self-knowledge points to a core area of the mind in which the trinitarian structure is particularly pronounced. In this core, as in the divine Trinity, no time-difference exists between the members. Secondly, the distinction between existing and yet-to-be-attained self-knowledge resolves the hermeneutical problem of how the understanding of the concept *trinity*, presupposed in every act of love for the triune God, is possible. In the course of getting to know itself, the human mind is immediately familiar with a trinitarian-structured entity that so corresponds to God that it may be called *imago Dei*. Thirdly, this distinction enables the integration of ethical themes into the context of the philosophy of mind. Although on the plane of immediate self-knowledge, the mind is always already an image of God, it should—but has yet to—become an image of God on the plane of conscious reflection. Through a morally positive way of living, the mind will arrive at true self-knowledge. The mind will then know itself *as* an image of God and therewith will know God himself in the form of an image, arriving at the similarity to God that resides in wisdom. Books 11-13 present a pedagogically motivated detour for the grasping of the timeless trinity in the human mind. Augustine leads the reader who is unaccustomed to distinguishing between simultaneously arising grounds through an analysis of more easily grasped, in time differentiated triads to an understanding of the image of God.

Along with the invocation of wisdom, the ethical problematic comes to fruition in book 14 under the title "The Renewal of the Image." Augustine carries out the distinction between original self-reference and acts of expressive consciousness.

Through the norm-conformed performance of the latter, humans succeed in participating in God and therewith in happiness (Chap. VIII). Finally, book 15 compares the structure of conscious thought with the structure of the divine Trinity. Augustine extensively discusses the most important structural parallel in his teaching on the inner word. Finite, reflexive thinking, I argue, lags behind the simultaneity of the divine Trinity, particularly on account of its discursiveness. Only if the conditions of earthly existence are lifted can this limitation be removed so that expressive thought, too, will reach the greatest possible likeness to God (Chap. IX/X).

Language, which Augustine declares to be the most original manifestation of reason in the early text *De Ordine* but devalues soon thereafter in *De Magistro*,[7] plays a surprising role in *De Trinitate*.[8] *De Trinitate* culminates in a specific conception of the *word*. The "wordliness" of self-reference emerges as the common characteristic of both God and the human. In my conclusion (Chap. XI), I address the question whether the teaching of the inner word, in addition to its significance for the philosophy of mind, has relevance for the philosophy of language, as H.G. Gadamer claims. Augustine's speculation on the Trinity would, in that case, prove significant for the development of a philosophical conception of language.

Neither the historical development of dogma in general nor the much-discussed question concerning the relation between the Augustinian and the Cappadocian interpretation of the Trinity in particular constitute my concern in this work.[9] I also leave aside the question whether the apotheosis of the self-empowered subject and the triumph of individualism over the thought of community otherwise linked to Kant's transcendental philosophy or to Descartes' principle of certainty truly derive from

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[7] See Or. 2.11.32. For the decipherment of the abbreviations see the table of abbreviations.

[8] See the last chapter of this work.

[9] See F. Courth, "Trinität in der Schrift und Patristik," in: *Handbuch der Dogmengeschichte* II/Ia, (Herder: Freiburg 1988), 189-209. An overview of the history of research is found in M.R. Barnes, "De Regnon Reconsidered," in: *AS* 26 (1995), 51-79.
A defense of Augustine against the accusation that in the Latin West the language grounded in salvation economy was repressed in favor of an immanent understanding of the trinity is to be found in E. Hill, "Karl Rahner's 'Remarks on the Dogmatic Treatise *De Trinitate* and St. Augustine,'" in: *AS* 2 (1971), 67-80.

Augustine's teaching of the Trinity.[10] Such genealogical classifications are, in general, too imprecise to be used for our analysis of *De Trinitate*. Lastly, I do not claim to compile or, what is more, review the complete literature on Augustine's *De Trinitate*. Such a claim would be impossible to fulfill alone in the face of the sheer quantity of publications. I will therefore draw primarily from works that provide foundational theses or directly address positions taken in this work.

2. On the legitimacy of a philosophical interpretation

a) De Trinitate as an exercitatio animi?

In *De Trinitate*, Augustine presents a coherent line of argumentation. This interpretation is not, however, a matter of course. H.-I. Marrou once advocated the thesis that *De Trinitate* could be saved from the accusation of incoherence only if it is interpreted as an *exercitatio animi*—that is, as an attempt to lead the reader to the comprehension of a higher insight.[11] Although Marrou later retracted his thesis, his catchphrase *exercitatio animi* has become a standard conception.[12] Marrou had detected insufficient systematic unity in Augustine's works, but he stated that the goal of Augustine's writings was always to direct the reader to intelligible realities. To understand such realities, the reader's power of comprehension would have to be trained, implying all kinds of intellectual exercises. A thematic connection between these exercises and the specific content of a writing could be entirely missing, for in these texts, Augustine is purportedly concerned solely with an *exercitatio animi* understood formally. Despite their lack of thematic unity, according to Marrou, Augustine's works were purposively composed in a pedagogical sense. In his retraction, Marrou withdrew his accusation of incoherence. His previously diagnosed breaks in the line of thought do not truly exist, but rather stem exclusively from misinterpretations and a lack of understanding. Thus his thesis of *exercitatio animi* falls to the wayside.

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[10] See, for example, D.E. Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many*, (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1993). For a discussion of Gunton's work, s. L. Ayres, "Augustine, the Trinity and Modernity," in: *AS* 26 (1995), 127-133.

[11] H.-I. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique,* (Paris, 1958).

[12] See the "Retractatio" that Marrou attached to his book from the fourth edition onward.

Despite Marrou's retraction, the tendency to reduce the thematic and logical-argumentative unity of Augustine's works to mere spiritual exercises persists in recent secondary literature. Every systematic treatise, however, tries to make its arguments comprehensible and illuminative for its recipients, and an *exercitatio animi* could not fulfill its aim if it were unsystematic or methodologically inconsistent. Marrou's original interpretation reduced the claim of thematic coherence by invoking the notion of a spiritual exercise. But the project of an *exercitatio animi* does not oppose the systematic claim of a writing, but rather demands it.

According to Augustine's own interpretation, in fact, books 11-13 of *De Trinitate* do represent an *exercitatio animi*. In an orderly fashion, these books analyze a series of triads, culminating in the most opaque but fundamental triad for the human mind. But no deficiency in logical-argumentative unity exists in this analysis. Rather, precisely in these parts, the structure is completely laid bare, as the unanimity of the commentators in the interpretation of these passages demonstrates.

It is questionable, moreover, whether *De Trinitate* requires a reduction in claims. The argumentative framework is clearly recognizable. Augustine has the relations between subjects constantly in view. He knows the boundaries of his subjects, while he is sensitive to their interconnections. The appearance of thematic disorder in Augustine's works, particularly in *De Trinitate*, stems from his tendency to interrupt arguments with insertions. For example, he details the moral-philosophical consequences of a thesis in the philosophy of mind not in a separate work on ethics, but instead by inserting these consequences as an interruption of his primary argument only to return to the argument thereafter. The scope of these insertions exceeds the common limits of a corollary, but from the order of argumentation, their relations are generally clear. In *De Trinitate*, Augustine does not satisfactorily reach all his goals of argumentation, but its coherence and conclusiveness are strong enough to resist its characterization as an *exercitatio animi*. Augustine was, in fact, ever striving for coherence and conclusiveness, and it is on the basis of these criteria that *De Trinitate* can and should be assessed.

In my book, I present a systematically unified interpretation of *De Trinitate*. I refrain from making editorial or historical arguments.[13] The relative determination of the compositional time framework and the layers of revision of *De Trinitate* are important, but they need not be covered here. The work did not have to be composed in a single stroke to be seen systematically as a consistently constructed whole.

b) Theological Interpretations

A philosophical interpretation of Augustine's *De Trinitate* naturally raises theological issues. Two theological positions assert a claim of totality, which might abnegate a philosophical interpretation. One of these positions is represented by Michael Schmaus, who writes that reason is capable "of its own power neither of recognizing the mystery [of the Trinity] in its factuality nor of comprehending its content."[14] Such a position must contend, however, with those passages in *De civitate dei* 10 in which Augustine concedes that particularly Porphyry espoused a doctrine of principles resembling the Christian idea of the Trinity.[15] Although Augustine reproved Porphyry for not wanting to admit to the Incarnation, he appears, nonetheless, to have acknowledged Porphyry's capacity to discern the Trinity.[16] But according to Schmaus, the human mind cannot overcome the schemata of spatial-temporal reality to comprehend the particular structure of intelligible reality in which two is not greater than one. It is precisely this idea, however, that Augustine adopts from the Platonists. According to his own demonstration of the trinitarian structure of the *mens humana,* he believes it is comprehensible for all readers, not just believing Christians. If Augustine's thesis is taken seriously that the human mind is always already an image of God and therefore essentially trinitarian, then

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[13] For the developmental process of *De Trinitate* as well as the editorial-historical aspects of this process see A.-M.La Bonnardière, *Rechereches de chronologie augustinienne*, (Paris, 1965) as well as the Introduction to the edition of *De Trinitate* in the *Oeuvres de saint Augustin*.

[14] Schmaus, 177 [trans. of all citations of this work, A.L.].

[15] See *Civ. Dei* 10.23.29.

[16] See Olivier Du Roy, *L'intelligence de la foi en la Trinitée selon Saint Augustin. Gènese de sa Théologie trinitaire jusqu'en 391*(Études augustiniennes: Paris, 1966), 102f. Du Roy goes so far as to claim of the early Augustine: "c'est dans Plotin et par lui qu'Augustin a trouvé l'intelligence du mystère de la Trinité. Nous avons vu qu'il reconnaît exactement les trois personnes de la Trinité chrétienne dans les trois Hypostases plotiniennes (148)."

this structure should be found in an analysis of the nature of mind, independently of whether one is willing to see this structure as an effigy of God.

According to Schmaus, reason should confine itself to "the clarification of the dogma with regards to its contents, the repudiation of misinterpretations, and the debilitation of objections as well as the analogical confirmation of it"[17] to which Augustine dedicates the last eight books of *De Trinitate*. "Analogical confirmation" implies that the ascertainment of the trinitarian *mens*-structure as an image of God presupposes belief, insofar as the thesis *God is triune* constitutes a dogma. Yet it remains to consider, first of all, that Augustine establishes the comparability of God and the human mind through his philosophical interpretation of belief in the Trinity. Secondly, if analogical confirmation should truly be a confirmation, then one must naturally pursue a neutral investigation of the human mind, rather than one pre-determined by belief in the Trinity dogma.

Ernst Benz has criticized Schmaus' approach, accentuating the philosophical character of Augustine's speculation on the Trinity.[18] In contrast to Schmaus, Benz suggests that Augustine's interpretations of the divine Trinity and the *mens humana* are of a piece. The Christian idea of the Trinity, he claims, developed out of Plotinus' doctrine of hypostases wherein the knowledge of revelation is not the decisive motivating factor, but rather a philosophical reinterpretation of the will. According to Benz, even the notion of the Incarnation functions, for Victorinus, as a philosophical theorem on the path of the Logos through the world, not, however, as a historical fact, irretrievable for the processes of thought.[19] The new conception of the will, Benz states, led to the idea of the unity of intellect and will as a metaphysical law. As a result, both God and the finite mind must be conceived as triune. Despite all the differences connected to the analogical or image character of the human mind, or even because of the human mind's analogical character, it follows that the metaphysical law of the triad in self-reference is just as authoritative for the structure of the human mind as it is for the thought of God. In his critique of Schmaus' idea of a "psychological doctrine of the Trinity," Benz aims at the

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[17] Schmaus, 183.
[18] Ernst Benz, *Marius Victorinus und die Entwicklung der abendländischen Willensmetaphysik*, (Kohlhammer: Stuttgart, 1932), 367f.
[19] Ibid., 106-18.

possibilities of differentiating between divine and human thought implicit in the concept *psychological*. Precisely because the doctrine of the Trinity is, for Schmaus, only "psychological," it could serve solely as an "analogical confirmation," rather than as the comprehension of the divine Trinity. Benz maintains, to the contrary, "It is not simply so that Augustine discovered a 'psychological doctrine of the Trinity,' but rather the foundation of this psychology is the development of a metaphysical law derived from the analysis of thought processes. This metaphysical law was found two hundred years before by Plotinus as the universal law of the unfolding of mind in general, that is, as a law that governs the hypostasizing of absolute mind within the processes of self-knowledge and that is likewise thought of as self-activating in the human mind as the image of pure intellect. Augustine's doctrine of the Trinity is metaphysical, not psychological."[20] According to Benz, Augustine draws the idea of the imaged-ness of the human mind, upon which the possibility of inference from the human to God rests, superficially from Holy Scripture (s. Gen. 1:26). He asserts that from the very beginning Plotinus' interpretation that the self-contemplation of the divine mind reflects itself in and through every hypostasis up to the human soul underlies Augustine's analysis of the *mens humana*.[21] The biblical safeguarding of the relation of the image comes after the fact.[22] And Augustine interprets it, too, metaphysically, for example, when he allows exclusively the *mens* to be understood as an image of God or when he emphasizes that the *mens* is not an image of *one* divine person, but an image of the entire Trinity.[23]

Another theological interpretation of *De Trinitate* is set forth by Hendrikx in the edition of the work in "Oeuvres de Saint Augustin" (BA vol. 15/16). This edition claims not only that Augustine's interpretation of the Trinity dogma is to be understood theologically but also that the analysis of the human mind is "une oeuvre théologique, voire mystique (16)." Augustine, it insists, does not argue in the manner of philosophers from outside revelation: "Non seulement c'est la foi qui déclenche la recherche, mais

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[20] Ibid., 368 [trans. of all citations of this work, A.L.].
[21] Ibid., 374.
[22] For example in Trin. 12.6.6.
[23] See Benz, 375. The last point simultaneously contains a critique of Plotinus' hierarchy of hypostases according to which the human mind is merely an image of the second hypostasis, namely the Nous (s. Benz, 376, note 21). For further positions regarding the concept *psychological doctrine of the trinity* see Du Roy, 432ff.

c'est elle qui la juge, qui la nourrit, qui la féconde et qui la finalise (8)." The thesis that Augustine assigns to faith the role of judge over the truth in the analysis of mind is, however, unfounded. The criteria for the correctness of Augustine's ontology of the *mens humana* are its justness to phenomena, its explicative power, and its inner coherence, not its accordance with faith. Hendrikx's interpretation can be accepted insofar as it claims no more than that the Trinity dogma played a significant role in the correlation of discovery, but the claim that Augustine's ontology is grounded in revelation misses the point of his approach.[24] This theological interpretation fails to grasp Augustine's thesis that the human mind not only *should* become similar to the divine Trinity, but always already *is* structured according to the Trinity. Furthermore, this interpretation does not appreciate Augustine's view that the constitutional conditions of the human mind precede every particular thought and action. These constitutional conditions, therefore, cannot be morally judged or seen as the starting point for the effectuality of operative grace which enables humans to do good. Hendrikx ultimately misinterprets *De Trinitate* as an ethical or moral-theological treatise, eliding Augustine's epistemological foundation for a theory of thought and action.[25]

The emphasis on the difference between the human mind and God is one of the distinctive features of theological interpretations. Accordingly, the *mens* belongs ontologically to the realm of change, whereas God is claimed to be incommutable. The minds of those humans who are morally imperfect are not true, but distorted images of God (s. Trin. 14.16.22). Finally, this view asserts that Augustine himself demonstrates in detail how great the structural difference is between the divine Trinity and the *mens humana*. Despite Augustine's discourse on the image of God, this interpretation insists upon the validity that "Il n'y a qu'une Trinité. [.] Dieu seul est semblable à lui-même."[26] An analysis of the texts, however, will show that Augustine thinks with greater differentiation. The theological interpretations' asserted differences between God and the human mind concern the plane of concrete thought and action, not, however, the constitutional conditions of the *mens humana* as such. On the plane of these

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[24] "Il ne s'agit pas là d'abord d'une analyse psychologique, mais ontologique, et cette ontologie elle-même est fondée sur la Révélation (BA 16, 12)."

[25] Hill, 1971, offers an interpretation similar to that of Henrikx; see especially, 79.

[26] BA 16, 17.

constitutional conditions, the imaged-ness of the created being's mind exhibits the same structure as the uncreated divine Trinity. This structural sameness is not yet to be attained, but is always already real.

Thus, independently of the question concerning the relation between revelation and a philosophical-historical share in the development of the Christian Trinity dogma, Augustine's reflective systematization of the dogma is open to philosophical investigation. That the biblical declarations on the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are to be interpreted following Plotinus' concept of *Nous* and using the idea of an ἑν πολλά-structure is not itself a content of revelation but a conviction of the philosopher Augustine. Aristotle's doctrine of categories, which the Arians attempted to use to determine the essence of the Trinity, ultimately appears to Augustine to be inapplicable to God. A path is thus opened for an investigation of the human mind, which likewise does not remain limited by Aristotelian categories, but rather calls for a different set of tools. Augustine does not, however, present a theology of the human mind. Rather the experience of the limited validity of these categories enables new approaches for the comprehension of the human mind. Augustine's description of the *mens humana* can and should be discussed, therefore, from a philosophical perspective wherein self-referentiality will show itself to be the essence of the *mens*. In addition, it is imperative to discover that law on the basis of which the structure of the human mind corresponds to the structure of the divine Trinity established through philosophical interpretation—to discover, in other words, what it means for the *mens humana* to be an image of God.[27]

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[27] E. Booth observes even a logical-argumentative priority of the analysis of mind over the speculation on the Trinity. According to his interpretation, *De Trinitate* was initially directed against the Arianist subordination doctrine, which has its intellectual foundational framework in the Neoplatonic subordinational doctrine of hypostases. Augustine, he claims, provides the proof for a non-subordinational Trinity in the human mind in order, from this vantage point, to make it probable that the divine Trinity, too, is not to be understood in the manner of a hierarchy of hypostases. The validity of the trinitarian-theological argument therefore depends on the conclusiveness of the analysis of mind. (See E. Booth, "St. Augustine's 'notitia sui" Related to Aristotele and the Early Neo-Platonists," in *Augustiniana* 28 (1978), 199.)

I. Augustine's Conception of the Trinity and the Neoplatonic Context

1. Neoplatonic Precursors for Augustine's Doctrine of the Triune God

a) Augustine's Re-working of Plotinus' Metaphysics of Mind

In the first seven books of *De Trinitate*, Augustine primarily argues against the Arian doctrine of the trinity. He demonstrates, first of all, that the biblical passages which appear to indicate subordination among the three divine persons can be understood differently (Trin. 1-4). He then shows, on a purely conceptual plane, the conceivability of a triune God in whom the persons are equal to each other (Trin. 5-7). Arianism drew its intellectual support from Plotinus' metaphysics of mind according to which the three highest entities, namely the One, the noûs, and the soul were interpreted hierarchically. From above to below, their division corresponded to an increase in multiplicity and a decrease in unity.[1]

Augustine rejects Plotinus' hierarchization of hypostases and, in particular, his thesis that the highest principle is beyond being and thought.[2] In contradistinction to Plotinus, Augustine defines God (following Ex. 3:14: "I am that I am") as Being itself, which precedes all beings as their unchanging ground.[3] Plotinus attributed being and thought to the second hypostasis, noûs. For him, the thought of noûs was essentially a self-thinking-thought. Plotinus prioritized the One over noûs, with its particular structure of self-relationality, because every self-relation contains, next to the aspect of identity, an aspect of difference and multiplicity. He therefore concluded that noûs could not be the absolutely simple principle at the top of the hierarchy of all entities.[4] Augustine does not

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[1] Cf. Enn. V 2. E. Booth believes that Augustine's argumentation from the 8ᵗʰ Book onwards increasinglyaims at Neoplatonism on account of the influx of a multitude of educated, neoplatonically-minded Romans in North Africa after the fall of Rome in 410. (cf. Booth 1977, 102f.; 367, n. 105)

[2] Cf. ibid., 396f. Booth also provides a list of Augustine's most significant points of critique.

[3] Cf., for example, Conf. 7.11.17; 17.23; 20.26; Trin. 5.3.

[4] Explications of the duality of the thinking and and the thought in the noûs thinking itself can be found, for instance, in Enn. V 3, 13, L. 9f.; V 6, 1, L. 12f.; V 6, 6, L. 20-30. For Plotinus' doctrine of the noûs, see K.H. Volkmann-Schluck, *Plotin als Interpret der Ontologie Platos* (Frankfurt, 1966); K. Kremer, *Die neuplatonische Seinsphilosophie und ihre Wirkung auf Thomas von Aquin* (Leiden, 1971); Th. Szlezàk,

accept, however, the postulate of pure simplicity. He does not see the necessity of going beyond the Trinity of God to a platonically conceived One. For Augustine, self-referentiality is not a characteristic of ontological deficiency but an attribute of the most perfect being.[5] Consequently, Augustine can confer structural features of Plotinus' noûs on the trinitarian God.

Plotinus construes the connection of hypostases such that the respectively lower hypostases emanate from the higher ones and obtain their unity through contemplation of the higher ones. Noûs apprehends itself by turning to the One; the soul finds its unity upon apprehending noûs.[6] With his theorem of the divine persons' reciprocal interpenetration, Augustine conceives of a much closer connection. Every statement about one of the three persons (with exception of those that apply to the specific relation of one person to another) is valid for every person as well as for the trinity as a whole.[7] It follows from this interconnection of persons that every single person simultaneously represents every other person and the entire trinity. Accordingly, two or three persons are not "greater" than one. Augustine establishes the equality of the hypostases, which Plotinus had hierarchically arranged, on a plane corresponding to that of Plotinus' noûs.

For his description of the interconnection of persons, Augustine does not revert to the model of the hierarchy of principles. He adopts instead an idea used by Plotinus in his theory on the self-relationality of noûs—the idea of the ἕν πολλά-structure. In Plato's *Parmenides*, the One, as a being, is said to be many.[8] Neoplatonism, which drew largely on Plato's *Parmenides* for its doctrine of hypostases, interpreted the ἕν πολλά as a description of noûs, the second hypostasis that originates in the descent of the One beyond being to the lower level of being. In the eyes of Plotinus, Plato differentiates in *Parmenides* the first, properly entitled "One" (τό πρῶτον ἕν) from the second, which he calls "One many" (ἕν πολλά), and from the third, the "One and the many" (ἕν καὶ πολλά).

Platon und Aristoteles in der Nuslehre Plotins (Basel 1979); J. Bussanich, *The One and its Relation to Intellect in Plotinus. A Commentary on selected Texts* (Leiden, 1988).
[5] Cf. Trin. 15.10.
[6] Cf. Enn. V 3 ,6, L. 39ff.; V 3, 7, L. 1ff.
[7] Cf. Chap. II of this work.
[8] τὸ ὂν ἕν πολλά ἐστιν. (the existing One is many) (Parm. 144e).

Plato would thus be in agreement with Plotinus' doctrine of three natures.[9] Through further apparently paradoxical determinations, Plotinus expresses that noûs is a phenomenon in which the structure of the whole and each and every moment are identical: noûs is simple and not simple (ἁπλοῦν καὶ οὐχ ἁπλοῦν), undifferentiated and differentiated (ἀδιάκριτον καὶ αὖ διακεκριμένον).[10]

In later observations, Plato brought forth the notion of ἕν πολλά in the context of his thesis on the entwinement of ideas.[11] Plotinus asserts that the ideas do not act as abstract, isolated, intellectual determinations. Rather the intelligible world distinguishes itself from the visible world precisely through the fact that in the latter, every particular is merely a part, whereas in the former, the particular simultaneously exhibits the whole. Plotinus continually emphasizes that "up there" every one is everything.[12] The structure of the world of ideas therefore corresponds to the structure of noûs. According to Plotinus, noûs *is* the living cosmos of ideas reflecting itself.[13] He draws this interpretation from a statement in Plato's *Sophistes*, according to which true being (παντελῶς ὄν) cannot be without movement (κίνησις), life (ζωή), and reason (νοῦς), when all of these attributes are already found in lower levels of beings.[14] The ideas themselves are life and thought and have the character of ἐνέργεια just as the essentially living and thinking mind is ἐνέργεια. The notion of ἕν πολλά thus can be applied to noûs from two sides: on the one hand, noûs, as the second hypostasis, no longer exhibits the pure unity of the first hypostasis but is marked in a certain way by multiplicity; on the other hand, noûs is identical with the intelligible world in which all the ideas are

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[9] Cf. Enn. V 1, 8, L. 23-6. In Enn. IV 2, 2, L. 49ff., Plotinus extends this list downwards beyond the hypostases by defining the soul as "one and many" (ἕν καὶ πολλά), the forms of the bodies as "many and one" (πολλά και ἕν), and the bodies finally as "only many" (πολλὰ μόνον).

[10] Cf. Enn. I 8, 2, L. 17-9. Enn. III 8, 8, L. 40-5 states that the mind is the whole mind of all things and also that its part is wholly mind. For further comments, see J. Halfwassen, *Geist und Selbstbewusstsein. Studien zu Plotin und Numenios* (Mainz, 1994) (Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur. Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse, 1994, Nr. 10), 11, n. 23. Cf. also Enn. V 6, 1, L. 13; VI 4, 11, L. 15f.; and Enn. VI 9, 5, L. 16.

[11] Cf. Parm. 142e; 144e-145c; 157c-158d; Soph. 248e ff.; 253de; 254d-257c; Tim. 30c ff.

[12] πᾶν πᾶν καὶ ἕκαστον πᾶν (each is all; the individual is the whole) (Enn. V 8, 4, L. 8). Cf. also Enn. VI 7,14; V 9, 6, L. 3-4. See also Proclus, *Elementatio Theologica*, Par. 103 (ed. Dodds): πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν οἰκείως δὲ ἐν ἑκάστωῳ.

[13] See, for example, Enn. VI 7,14 on the parallel between the unity of the noûs and the oneness of all things in the intelligible world. See, in particular, Enn. V 9, 8 on the identity of every single idea with the noûs and on the noûs as the totality of all ideas.

[14] Cf. Soph. 248e-249a.

intertwined. Since Augustine rejected the notion of the first One and established the divine trinity on the plane of noûs, it seemed logical for him to adopt the concept of the ἕν πολλά-structure and connect it with the trinity. Augustine could parallel features of the Plotinian noûs to the second person of the trinity with particular ease because Plotinus introduced the language of σοφία, which, mediated through biblical wisdom literature, could be interpreted in Christian terms.[15] The status of wisdom in God and its mediation in the generation of things composed points of connection.[16] Both σοφία and the second person of the trinity could be interpreted as the epitome of those thoughts that provide the foundation of creation. Characteristically, however, Augustine is not prepared to prioritize an absolute One over wisdom. Instead, he distinguishes the father from the son as the un-begotten wisdom from the begotten wisdom or as the *spaientia* from the *sapientia de sapientia*.[17] Augustine is thus able to maintain the idea of the derivation of wisdom. That from which wisdom stems, however, is itself wisdom and therefore not different, with respect to the character of unity, from that which it begets.

Augustine naturally had to differentiate between the content of the interrelation of ideas and that of the interrelation of divine persons. Plotinus had used the ἕν πολλά-structure merely for the description of the cosmos of ideas and the noûs, not, however, to characterize the relation of the hypostases to each other. A difference between these two themes arises in the question of number: the number of ideas convening in an intertwined network is virtually unlimited, whereas both Plotinus' hypostases as well as Augustine's trinity are constricted to a triad of members. Augustine therefore had to demonstrate, first of all, the applicability of the ἕν πολλά-structure to the interrelation of the divine persons without being able to immediately profit from Plotinus on this point.

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[15] Cf. Enn. V 8, 4, L. 35-9; Sap. 9,1-4.

[16] Plotinus speaks of δίχη and Zeus (Enn. V 8, 4, L. 41-2); the Bible speaks of the "wisdom throned on your side" (Sap. 9:4). Cf. these passages with Enn. V 8, 4, L. 44-7 and Sap. 9:1-2. For more on this topic, see O. Perler, *Der Nus bei Plotin und das Verbum bei Augustinus als vorbildliche Ursache der Welt* (Freiburg, 1931), 72f.

[17] Cf., for example, Lib. arb. 2.15.39; *De vera religione* 58.161; Trin. 7.3. On the contrast between Augustine's Trinitarianism and Plotinus' theory of the One, see J. Koch, "Augustinischer und Dionysischer Neuplatonismus und das Mittelalter," in: *Platonismus in der Philosophie des Mittelalters*, ed. W. Beierwaltes (Darmstadt, 1969), 317-42, esp. 323-8. The criterion Koch uses to distinguish Augustine's and Dionysius' influences in the philosophy of the Middle Ages can be problematized, however. The juxtaposition of unity and multiplicity as well as the thesis that what exists has unity and strives toward unity—interpretations, which Koch depicts as Plotinian-Dionysian—can be found in both Augustine and Pseudo-Dionysius (cf., for example, Civ. dei 19.12-4).

Still, Plotinus had made known a triad of elements on the plane of noûs, namely mind, its thinking, and the thought (νοῦς—νόησις— νοούμενον).[18] On the basis of the idea that mind knows itself perfectly, Plotinus determined the interrelation of these three as identity in difference. Augustine consequently found, at least in a formal respect, a structure composed of three elements in which he could insert the doctrine of the triune God.

Augustine is interested in an interrelation of three members in which each element represents every other element and simultaneously the whole. He establishes this interrelation on the plane of the Plotinian noûs. Because Augustine does not assume the entire arrangement of Plotinus' doctrine of hypostases, however, he must formulate his own arguments to ground his projected structure of the trinity. Principally, Augustine had at his disposal Plotinus' concept of the self-relationality of noûs in which the identity of differences was already claimed. As we shall see, Augustine does indeed take up this concept and portray the divine trinity as self-relational, but he does so at the very end of *De Trinitate* after he has proven the self-referentiality of the human mind.[19]

In the first part of *De Trinitate*, Augustine does not yet draw on this idea to present the ἕν πολλά-structure of the divine trinity. Rather, the Aristotelian doctrine of categories and the propositional logic based on it serve as his point of departure. At this juncture, as well as later in his analysis of the human mind, Augustine chooses a different approach to the problematic than Plotinus.[20] He first argues that God, because of his immutability and unity, is absolved from the substance-accidents schema (Chap. II 2). Due to this unity, the divine persons must be seen as equal, and, moreover, as identical in substance (Chap. II 3). After emphasizing the unity of God in contrast to Plotinus, who was certain of the difference in essence of the three hypostases, Augustine must then accentuate the aspect of multiplicity. For despite the unity of the divine persons, it must be possible to

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[18] See Enn. V 3.
[19] See Trin. 15.10.
[20] The reason may be that the Arians support their formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity and their rejection of other proposals with Aristotelian ideas. Augustine, therefore, might have wanted to meet them on their own terrain. For the Arian logic of argumentation, see E. Vandenbussche, "La Part de la Dialectique dans la Théologie d'Eunomius 'l'Technologe'," in: *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 40 (1944/4), 47ff.; J. de Ghellinck, Patristique et Moyen Age III (Brüssel-Paris, 1948), 278f.; ibid., Quelques appréciations de la dialectique et d'Aristote durant les conflits trinitaires du IVe siècle," in: *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 26 (1930), 4ff.

speak of each person individually. In his discussion on relational propositions in which the particularity of each individual person is expressed, Augustine relies again on Aristotle's doctrine of categories. He nonetheless transcends these in a certain manner (as he had concerning the ontological character of God) in order to show that with the help of the idea of relationality the aspect of multiplicity can be expressed without attributing accidents to God and without abandoning the idea of the unity of God in favor of a hierarchy of hypostases (Chap. II 4,5). Finally, Augustine demonstrates that the ἑν πολλά-structure of the divine trinity cannot be comprehended by means of the propositional schemata of the genus-species logic. Within this logic, however, it can be depicted solely by paradoxical statements (Chap. II 6).

b) The Line of Development: Plotinus – Porphyry – Marius Victorinus – Augustine

Ernst Benz argues that the theorem of consubstantiality, as presented by Marius Victorinus and by Augustine against the Arians, was prepared for in the late writings of Plotinus, especially in Enn. VI 8 ("The free will and the will of the One"). According to Benz, two processes are significant. Plotinus, first of all, tends to attribute characteristics of noûs like "energy, life, substance, existence," and even self-knowledge to the One (even if while utilizing the οἷον, which indicates a reservation).[21] Benz writes, "The perception of the ontological otherness and inferiority of the son is in principle dispelled by the notion of consubstantiality. The being of the One is no longer beyond self-consciousness but is rather a thinking of itself, that is, the act of thinking itself takes place in itself and constitutes the being of the One. A doctrine of the trinity is therefore made possible that no longer conceives the hypostasizing as a metaphysical process outside of the One, but rather as a procedure within divine life."[22]

Secondly, Benz claims that in his later writings Plotinus held fast to the "ontological identity (295)" of will and thought in the intellect, preparing in yet another

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[21] Benz, 291 [trans. A.L.], with reference to Enn. VI 8, 7, L. 46-54 and 16, L. 19-21. For an interpretation of the reservation in Plotinus, see also W. Beierwaltes, *Platonismus im Christentum* (Frankfurt, 1998), 174-7.

[22] Ibid., 293 [trans. A.L.].

respect the way for the trinity-doctrine of Victorinus and Augustine.[23] The will is accordingly no longer simply a function, but, like thought, the substance of mind.[24] Marius Victorinus, Benz maintains, utilized precisely this thesis against the Arian Candidus.[25] Whereas Candidus apprehended the son as an effect of the father's will— this will being understood as functional, that is, as directed toward bringing forth a work—Victorinus interpreted the son *as* the will of the father. "The Son *is* the will of the Father and *is* the activity of the Father, for the spirit-nature of God *is* will and *is* activity. Therefore Christ is consubstantial with the Father."[26] Benz summarizes, "Through the identification of the will with the substance of God and through the application of the concepts delineating the kind of being of noûs to the transcendentalist idea of God, the hypostatic schema is already broken through, indicating a 'homoousian' interpretation of the hypostases in the spirit-nature of God. The Plotinian idea of God, therefore, approaches the Christian idea."[27]

Benz's interpretation of Plotinus has been contested, particularly his claims of continuity in the line of thinking from Plotinus through Victorinus to Augustine.[28] According to Pierre Hadot's critique, Benz interprets Plotinus' "Free will and the will of the One (Enn. VI 8)" too much in light of Schelling and Boehme's theory of the self-manifesting primal ground. It has been claimed, moreover, that Benz's thesis of the substantiality of the will and the resulting consubstantiality reputedly found in Plotinus goes too far. In that case, a direct line of connection from Plotinus to Augustine could not be drawn; not even a connection between Plotinus and Marius Victorinus would be plausible. According to Hadot, Willy Theiler rightfully mentions Porphyry, but his thesis that Augustine never read Plotinus but drew exclusively from Porphyry is equally

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[23] Cf. Enn. VI 8, 6; 4.

[24] See Benz, 293-306.

[25] Ibid., 140, 416-18 with reference to Marius Victorinus, "Liber de generatione divini Verbi VIII," in: Marius Victorinus, *Traités Théologique sur la Trinité*, Texte établi par P. Henry; Introduction, Traduction et notes par P. Hadot (Paris, 1960) (*Sources chrétiennes* 68), 118-22.

[26] Benz, 418.

[27] Ibid., 414.

[28] Cf. P. Henry, „Bulletin critique des études plotiniennes," in: *Nouvelle revue théologique* 59 (1932), 915-9; W. Theiler, „Besprechung zu Ernst Benz: Marius Victorinus und die abendländische Willensmetaphysik," in: *Gnomon* 10 (1934), 493-9; G. Huber, *Das Sein und das Absolute* (Basel, 1955); P. Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1968), vol. 1, 16-22.

exaggerated.[29] For his part, Hadot brings Porphyry and Victorinus together and juxtaposes them to Augustine.[30] He does not deny, however, that the motif of the Porphyrian-Victorinian teaching on the absolute paves the way in a certain respect for Augustine's conception of the trinity. This link primarily pertains to the thesis that the absolute does not possess self-knowledge like noûs but must be assumed to have some particular form of consciousness.[31] That which Benz already believes to find in the late Plotinus, Hadot concedes first to Porphyry and Victorinus. Hadot, furthermore, sees a great distance between Victorinus and Augustine. Augustine, he maintains, rejected the trinitarian schema that Victorinus found in Porphyry, opposing Victorinus' doctrine of a theogonic trinity with a spiritual exercise for the discovery of the self as an image of the trinity.[32]

Hadot's juxtaposition of the Augustinian to the Porphyrian-Victorinian trinity-doctrine poses additional problems for the notoriously difficult determination of Augustine's relation to Porphyrios. For Augustine not only refers expressly to Porphyry's Chaldaian oracle and *De regressu animae* but also to Porphyry's doctrine of principles, which is closer to the Christian idea of the trinity than Plotinus' notion.[33] Whereas Plotinus conceives the first three substances as a series of subordinations— particularly the third, the nature of the soul, as underneath the second—Porphyry is much closer to the theorem of the equality of persons, proving himself to be the pagan precursor of the "*filioque*," the idea that the spirit generates from the father *and* the son. Porphyry distinguishes God the father from God the son, whom he names "fatherly thought-puissance" or "reason," and establishes a middle instance between the two.

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[29] See Hadot 1968, vol. 1, 24-6; W. Theiler, "Porphyrios und Augustin," in: *Forschungen zum Neo-Platonismus* (Berlin, 1966). Theiler's essay was first published in: *Schriften der Koenigsberger Gelhrten Gesellschaft*, Geisteswissenschaftliche Klasse 10, 1933.

[30] See P. Hadot, "L'image de la trinité dans l'âme chez Marius Victorinus et chez saint Augustin," in: *Studia Patristica*, vol. VI, (Berlin, 1962), 409-42; R. Markus, "Marius Victorinus and Augustine," in: *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Mediaeval Philosophy*, ed. A.H. Armstrong (Cambridge, 1970), 313-419. On Victorinus, see also Beierwaltes 1998, 25-43.

[31] αὐτὸ τοῦτο γνῶσις οὖσα. Porphyry, "In Parmenidem" V 34, in: Hadot 1968, vol. II, 80-3. For an interpretation of this passage, see ibid., vol. I, 426-8. For Victorinus, see his work *Adversus Arium* IV 24, 5-10 (*Sources chrétiennes* 68, 570).

[32] See Hadot 1968, vol. I, 477f.

[33] Cf. Civ. dei 10.23.

Although Porphyry does not say anything intelligible about this middle instance, Augustine believes that he could only mean the holy spirit.

Since no trace of this interpretation is to be found in Victorinus, Hadot surmises that Augustine and Victorinus used different works of Porphyry, the former perhaps the Chaldaian oracle, the latter perhaps *De regressu animae*.[34] Due to missing sources, the entire discussion revolving around Porphyry remains speculative. This predicament is reflected, on the one hand, in the unsoundness of Theiler's criterion for identifying Porphyry's texts in Augustine, and, on the other hand, in the fact that J.J. O'Meara tried to show in an extensive essay that *De regressu animae* and the Chaldaian oracle are really one and the same work.[35]

In summary, Augustine re-forms Plotinus' vertical doctrine of principles into a horizontal orientated theory of three divine persons. He thinks of these persons as arising out each other, but the latent hierarchical moment therein is absorbed by the assertion of their essential sameness. In particular, Augustine repudiates Plotinus' thesis that a pure One must be antecedent to the plane of self-apprehension. Augustine places the divine trinity on the plane of Plotinus' noûs and utilizes concepts for its explication that Plotinus reserves for noûs, particularly the notion of the ἕν πολλά-structure. He develops an ontology of the divine trinity in contrast to Aristotle's doctrine of categories, without applying, however, Plotinus' idea of noûs' self-apprehension. Augustine will in fact attribute such a self-apprehension to the divine trinity, but he pursues this thought via an analysis of the human mind. Through inference from the human mind to the divine trinity, Augustine declares the divine trinity to be self-relational.

Historical research has shown that the "homoousian" re-orientation of the Neoplatonic doctrine of principles does not begin unmediated with Augustine; it is rather prepared for either by Plotinus himself (Benz) or by Porphyry (Theiler) and Victorinus

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[34] Cf. Hadot 1968, vol I, 475f.

[35] Theiler states that "if a doctrine from a post-Plotinian Neoplatonist can be compared with a doctrine of Augustine's according to content, form, and context but cannot be compared, at least to the same measure, with a text from Plotinus, then this doctrine may be considered to be from Porphyry (Theiler 1966, 4) [trans. A.L.]." For a critique of this criterion, see DuRoy 1966, 402-9; and Hadot 1968, vol. I, 25f. (Hadot also provides a list of other critical voices). Cf. J.J. O'Meara, *Porphyry's Philosophy from Oracles in Augustine* (Paris, 1959). For critical assessments of O'Meara's thesis, see P. Hadot, "Citation de Porphyre chez Augustin," in: *REA* 6 (1960), 205-44; G. Madec, "Augustin: Disciple et adversaire de Porphyre," in: *REA* 10 (1964), 365ff.; and E. TeSelle, "Porphyry and Augustine," in: *AS* 5 (1974).

(Hadot). My book is not, however, a further contribution to the research of sources. I will not attempt to determine Augustine's reading habits through a comparison of texts, or to detect literary dependencies, or to reconstruct lost Neoplatonic documents from Augustine's texts. It is my intention rather to develop and illustrate Augustine's systematics. To do so, I will indeed compare Augustine's systematics with Neoplatonic proposals but only where the transmission truly allows it, which ultimately is the case only with Plotinus. I will conduct this comparison in the following section with respect to the concept of self-apprehension.

2. Self-reflection and the Ascent to God

a) Plotinus' Doctrine of Self-knowledge

In Augustine's time the problem of self-relationality belonged to the established themes of philosophy, which could be discussed in terms of a far-reaching tradition.[36] In *Charmides*, Plato discusses the question whether a knowledge exists of nothing else but itself (ἐπιστήμη ἑαυτῆς) and other knowledge (ἐπιστημῶν ἐπιστήμη).[37] Plato, however, rejects this thought for several reasons. First of all, the existence of such a knowledge is unlikely because in the realm of sensory perception, no corresponding reflexive structure, like a seeing of seeing or a hearing of hearing, obtains.[38] More importantly, Plato equates the ἐπιστήμη ἑαυτῆς with prudence (σωφροσύνη), which he understands as the knowledge of good and evil and thus as useful (ὠφέλιμος).[39] Just as prudence does not contain once more the contents of the individual sciences like medicine, music, and architecture, the ἐπιστήμη ἑαυτῆς cannot be understood as a knowledge of everything one knows. The ἐπιστήμη ἐπιστημῶν does not mediate any concrete knowledge. It is not

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[36] See P. Courcelle, *Connais-toi toi-même. De Socrate a saint Bernard*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1974). See also R. Mondolfo, *LaComprensione di sogetto Umano nell' Antichità Classica* (Florenz, 1958); E. Booth, "St. Augustine's 'notitia sui' related to Aristotle and the early Neo-Platonists," in: *Augustiniana* 27-29 (1977-1979); as well as W. Beierwaltes, *Selbsterkenntnis und Erfahrung der Einheit. Plotins Enneade* V 3 (Frankfurt, 1991), 77-93.

[37] See Charm. 167bc. For an interpretation of *Charmides*, see K. Gloy, "Platons Theorie der im Charmides als Vorläufer der modernen Selbstbewusstseinstheorien," in: *Kantsstudien* 77 (1986), 137-64.

[38] See Charm. 167c-168a.

[39] Ibid., 174d.

knowledge of that which one knows, but rather solely a knowledge *that* one knows.[40] Both the content of the ἐπιστήμη ἑαυτῆς and its continuity with other knowledge appears problematic to Plato. The ethical connotations latent in the paralleling of this knowledge with the general virtue of prudence nevertheless should be borne in mind.

In later works, Plato describes the cosmos of ideas as animated and thinking—a thesis upon which the notion that the ideas are both the subject and object of self-reflection could be attached.[41] Aristotle raises the thinking of thinking (νόησις νοήσεως) to the status of the transcendent divine. Divine reason, according to Aristotle, is pure actuality; it perpetually thinks its objects. If these objects were different from it, the divine reason would find itself over against them ultimately in a condition of mere potentiality. Therefore, reason must itself be an object of its own thinking. In typical cognition-processes such as sensory perception, belief, and deliberation, the object is different than the thinker.[42] Whereas for the contemplative sciences—that is, those not occupied with material—it is a matter of λόγος and thinking (νόησις). Aristotle thus asserts an identity in the immaterial realm between the thinker (νοῦς) and the thought (νοούμενον) as well as between thinking (νόησις) and the thought (νοούμενον).[43]

The same interpretation is found in *De anima* 3, though in this work, Aristotle also treats the relation of finite thinking to the separated, passionless divine mind abiding in constant actuality.[44] Finite mind is hence, first of all, the pure possibility of being able to take up the forms and acquire knowledge. If finite mind really thinks the thinkable things illuminated by the light of the separated mind, then it itself is as equally thinkable as the thinkable things. Through the taking up of forms, finite mind approaches the condition of infinite mind—the complete reflection of itself in its knowledge—thus

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[40] Ibid., 169e-170e.
[41] See Soph. 248e ff. For the thinking-character of the ideas, see H.J. Krämer, *Der Ursprung der Geistmetaphysik. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Platonismus zwischen Platon und Plotin* (Amsterdam, 1967), 193ff.; G. Reale, "Zu einer neuen Interpretation Platons. Eine Auslegung der Metaphysik der grossen Dialoge im Lichte der "ungeschriebenen Lehren" (Paderborn, 1993), 153-98; J. Pépin, Éléments pour une histoire de la relation entre l'intelligence et l'intelligible chez Platon et dans le néoplatonisme, in: *Revue Philosophique* (1956), 39-64 (reprinted in J. Pépin, *De la philosophie ancienne à la théologie patristique* (London, 1986).
[42] See *Metaphysik* 12, 9 (1074b 15-34).
[43] Ibid., 12, 9 (1074a 36-1075a 5).
[44] See *De anima* 430a 2-5; 431b 17 for the identity of the thinker and the thought in the immaterial realm. See also the affirmative Plato report for the connection of νοῦς, νόησις, νοούμενον. Cf. *De anima* 3, 4-5 (430a 27-8).

becoming capable of self-apprehension. Whereas the eternal, immutable mind, however, always already finds itself in the condition of self-apprehension, finite mind has first to attain the thinking of itself.[45]

As the critique of Sextus Empiricus demonstrates, this topic remained lively. Sextus argued against the possibility of self-knowledge as follows.[46] Should the mind apprehend itself, it must do so either as a whole or by means of a part of itself. If it apprehends as a whole, nothing remains left to be apprehended. For if the whole mind already functions as the subject of self-knowledge, it could not also be an object of this knowledge. But self-apprehension by a part, he states, is equally impossible. For it would include the self-apprehension of this part, leaving the question whether it is as a whole that the part perceives itself or only by means of a part of itself (as part). The former is, following the aforementioned argument, impossible; the latter ultimately impels the problem into an infinite regression. Sextus concludes that the self-apprehension of mind is impossible because either, in the case of regression, the subject of reflection could not be found or, in case a subject is determined, an object could no longer be thought.[47]

Through Plotinus' conception of noûs, the topic of "self-apprehension" attained a particular prominence. Because of the absolute transcendence of the One, a positive theory of the first principle was impossible. In turn, efforts concentrated on the second hypostasis, noûs. In noûs, thought and being were supposed to coincide so that the doctrine of noûs became simultaneously ontology and a theory of self-possessing subjectivity. According to Jens Halfwassen, Plotinus "was the first in the history of philosophy to expressly pose and supply a paradigmatic answer to the question about the unity of self-consciousness."

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[45] For a deeper discussion of the structures of subjectivity in Aristotle, see Booth 1977, 104-32.

[46] See Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos* VII 284-6: 310-2.

[47] Halfwassen, 7. For Plotinus' response to Sextus' argumentation, see Enn. V 3, 1 as well as the explications of Halfwassen, 12f. See also R.T. Wallis, "Scepticism and Neo-platonism," in: *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt*, Part II, vol. 36,2 (Berlin, 1987), 911-54, esp. 917 and 921ff. E. Emilsson, "Plotinus on the Objects of Thought," in: *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 77 (1995), 21-41; ibid., "Cognition and its Object," in: *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, ed. L. Gerson (Cambridge, 1996), 217-49; I. Crystal, "Plotinus on the Structure of Self-Intellection," in: *Phronesis* 43, 264-86. For the following section, see also Beierwaltes 1991 and H. Oosthout, *Modes of Knowledge and the Transcendental. An Introduction to Plotinus Ennead 5.3 [49] with a Commentary and Translation* (Amsterdam, 1991).

Plotinus' "pure" noûs is not the finite reason of the individual human.[48] It is rather divine reason and therefore a successor to Aristotle's νόησις νοήσεως. With respect to this divine reason, Plotinus asks whether one could legitimately assert self-relationality.[49] According to him, noûs is engaged in a cognitive relation to the ideas. He poses the question whether this knowledge is purely related to objects or if it may be interpreted as self-knowledge. If the latter is the case, it may be asked whether the reflexive moment consists merely in that noûs, in the knowledge of these ideas, knows *that* it knows (reminiscent of Plato's position in *Charmides*), or whether noûs sees its own essence in the contents of its knowledge and therefore knows itself in the strict sense of the term.[50] Plotinus discusses, first of all, the levels of knowledge subordinated to noûs, namely perception and discursive thought, in order to show that no true unity of self-apprehension exists on these levels because these forms of knowledge deal with things received from outside the mind not inside the mind itself.[51] The unification of knowledge and self-relation first appears on the plane of noûs: νοῦς, νόησις, and νοητόν convene in a unity.[52] Plotinus' central argument for the unity of the self-relation in the knowledge of the ideas rests upon the combination of the Aristotelian doctrine of νόησις νοήσεως with Plato's conception of the intellectuality of the ideas themselves.[53] Thinking and being are identical in noûs so that the thinker in the thought in turn encompasses the thought. With recourse to the passage in Plato's *Sophistes* in which the noûs-character of the world of ideas is implied, Plotinus claims that in beholding the ideas, the thinker apprehends itself as thinker and therefore truly encounters itself. If the ideas are not only thoughts but are themselves noûs-esque thinking—that is, νόησις— then the thinker can behold itself as thinker in its objects. Just as noûs is pure ἐνέργεια: its objects are not to be understood as approaching it from outside, but rather as immanent to it; similarly, the ideas are pure actuality: their relation to thinking is not

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[48] Plotinus calls this noûs "pure" (καθαρός; Enn. V 3, 3, L. 21f.; 6, L. 12; L. 39; 14, L. 14), "unmixed" (ἄκρατος; 2, L. 22), and "absolute" (χωριστός; 3, L. 42f.). It is the "first" noûs (πρῶτος; 5, L. 27f; Z. 38f.) and the noûs itself (αὐτὸς ὁ νοῦς). See also Beierwaltes 1991, 190ff.
[49] Cf. Plotinus' Enn. V 3.
[50] Cf. Enn. V 3, 1.
[51] Cf. Enn. V 3, 2, L. 20-5; L. 15-9.
[52] Cf. Enn. V 3 5.
[53] Cf. Soph. 248e ff.

external but of their very essence. The noûs thinking the ideas and the cosmos of ideas thinking itself therefore convene into a structure in which noûs thinks itself in the ideas as thinking itself.[54]

Both Plato's *Charmides* and Aristotle's *De anima* 3 raise the question concerning the relation of the divine transcendent noûs that knows itself to the finite reason of the human individual aspiring for self-knowledge. First of all, the lower reason is dependent upon the divine noûs for the exercise of its functions of knowing and judging, for the concepts and principles by which it judges are "radiated" into it from above.[55] Finite reason can perceive the good or the just because it disposes of the measure of the good and the just through the divine noûs. Just as the verbalized thought is the after-image of the word in the soul, the thought in the soul is itself an after-image of something higher, namely the knowledge in noûs.[56]

For Plotinus noûs is not a part of the soul—that is, it is not "ours".[57] Rather it first becomes "ours" (and therefore is both "simultaneously ours and not ours") when we draw upon it.[58] This occurs when the capacity of deliberation follows the directives of noûs, when finite reason, in other words, thinks and assesses according to those principles imparted to it by noûs. Noûs is "separated," for it does not incline down to us. Rather the presence of the a priori principles in the soul stemming from noûs command the gaze of the soul "upward." Noûs thus makes possible the turn of the soul to higher things, mediating in this way between the soul and itself as separated, pure noûs.[59] The turn to higher things, however, need not remain confined to the implicit manner by which it is fulfilled in every cognition and evaluation, but rather it can become explicit in the exertion of the soul for self-knowledge.

Plotinus distinguishes between a higher and a lower form of self-knowing. The lower self-knowledge is fulfilled in the discursive thinking part of the soul (διανοητικόν),

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[54] See Halfwassen, 24-30. See also Enn. V 5, 1-2 and the corresponding analysis by Emilsson 1995.

[55] Cf. V 3, 3; VI 7, 21; for the optical metaphor, cf. Plato Pol. 508d 4-5; 540a 7-8; Aristotle, *De anima* 3, 5 (430a 10-25). For a comparison of the passage in Aristotle that Augustine perhaps knew through the mediation of Alexander of Aphrodisia and Plotinus with Augustine's own theory of illumination, see R.H. Nash, "Some Philosophic Sources of Augustine's Illumination Theory," in: *AS* 2 (1971), 47-66, esp. 61 ff.

[56] See Enn. I 2, 3, L. 14ff.; V 1, 3, L. 5-10.

[57] Enn. V 3, 3.

[58] Ibid., L. 26f.

[59] Cf. Beierwaltes 1991, 103f., 190-3.

which makes clear to itself that it is precisely a capacity for discursive thought and as such is dependent upon noûs. In detail, the self-knowing διανοητικόν understands "that it takes cognizance of things external; that in its judgements it decides by the rules and standards within itself held directly from the Intellectual-Principle; that there is something higher than itself, something which, moreover, it has no need to seek but fully possesses."[60] Through the apprehension of itself, discursive thought becomes aware of its dependence on a higher instance and accesses the existence and essence of noûs: "What can we conceive to escape the self-knowledge of a principle which admittedly knows the place it holds and the work it has to do? It affirms that it springs from Intellectual-Principle whose second and image it is, that it holds all within itself, the universe of things, engraved, so to say, upon it as all is held. There by the eternal engraver. Aware so far of itself, can it be supposed to halt at that?"[61] Naturally, the self-knowledge of discursive rationality can only take place in a discursive manner, but in sorting through its own capacities and in the analysis of the principles of its thinking, this rationality sees itself as what it is, namely as the after-image of noûs. Therefore, self-knowledge is the presupposition of knowledge of noûs. The διανοητικόν thinks itself, analyzes its own capacities, and knows itself as the principium of a higher principle of which it thus becomes aware.

According to Plotinus, the thinking soul (διανοητικόν) is an image (εἰκών) of noûs insofar as it possesses knowledge of the ideas. For the knowledge of the ideas is an imprint of the content of noûs.[62] In its thinking of the ideas, the διανοητικόν would know itself if it, like noûs, was identical with this knowledge. But the διανοητικόν *is* not this knowledge, but rather receives it from above through the mind.[63] On the other hand, a total difference between the subject and the object of this knowledge does not obtain on the plane of διανοητικόν because both stem "from above." Due to the common origin of mind, there maintains an affinity, albeit not an identity, between knower and known. This affinity allows a weaker form of self-apprehension that may be interpreted as an

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[60] Enn. V 3, 4, L. 15-18.
[61] Ibid., L. 18-23.
[62] Plotinus' metaphor states that the soul "holds all within itself, the universe of things, engraved, so to say, upon it as all is held There by the eternal engraver (Enn. V 3, 4, L. 21-2)."
[63] Cf. Enn. V 3, 6, L. 23-6.

image of the total self-relation.[64] This weaker form of self-relation is, however, nothing other than the discursive self-knowledge typical for the διανοητικόν from which the existence of noûs also can be accessed. The thinking soul, according to Plotinus, is an image of the divine mind not because it is capable of self-perception, but rather because it can attain—even if only in the medium of discursiveness—information about itself at all.

In the knowledge of itself, the διανοητικόν also apprehends the world of ideas belonging to noûs, not immediately in its genuine ἔν πολλά condition but in the mutual isolation of the individual ideas—that is, in abstract form. It is not in a discursive manner that noûs thinks the cosmos of ideas in which it apprehends itself as thinking. The ἔν πολλά-structure does not conform to abstract thought and therefore can be grasped on the plane of discursive thinking only in the form of paradoxical statements like, for instance, that something is simultaneously one and many. A further indication of the structure of the intelligible world lies in the fact that even in discursively driven sciences each individual statement ultimately is connected to all other statements.[65] According to Plotinus, noûs is conscious of itself not in such a mediated way; it rather apprehends itself immediately in its entirety in a manner that one can describe as intellectual vision.[66]

The second form of self-knowledge enables a retracing and participation in the performance of the self-relation of noûs. Plotinus imputes a capacity to humans with which they not only bring noûs, through discursive thought, in a derived form to mind, but also obtain direct access to the intuitive self-apprehension of noûs. Instead of merely thinking noûs, it is also possible to see it and become aware of it in us (ἰδεῖν καὶ αἰσθάνεσθαι).[67] Thus Plotinus asks, "Are we to suppose that all we can do is to apply a distinct power of our nature and come thus to awareness of that Intellectual-Principle as aware of itself? Or may we not appropriate that principle—which belongs to us as we to

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[64] The διανοητικόν "must be brought to understand by what means it has knowledge of the thing it sees and warrant for what it affirms: if it became what it affirms, it would by that fact possess self-knowing. All its vision and affirmation being in the Supreme or deriving from it—There where itself also is—it will possess self-knowledge by its right as a Reason-Principle, claiming its kin and bringing all into accord with the divine imprint upon it. The Soul therefore (to attain self-knowledge) has only to set this image (that is to say, its highest phase) alongside the veritable Intellectual-Principle which we have found to be identical with the truths constituting the objects of intellection, the world of Primals and Reality (Enn. V 3, 6, L. 25-30)."
[65] Cf. Enn. IV 9, 5.
[66] Cf. Enn. V 8, 4, L. 35-55 on the non-syllogistic character of divine wisdom.
[67] Enn. V 3, 4, L. 4.

it—and thus attain to awareness, at once, of it and of ourselves? Yes: this is the necessary way if we are to experience the self-knowledge vested in the Intellectual-Principle."[68] Whereas finite mind, with the help of discursive thought, could know itself as an image of noûs (wherewith especially its dependence on the impartation of the principles of thought "from above" plays a role), the capacity of vision places humans in the position to insert themselves in the self-apprehension of noûs. The intuitive self-relation of noûs, therefore, is not viewed from outside; it is rather internally participated in: "And a man becomes Intellectual-Principle when, ignoring all other phases of his being, he sees through that only and sees only that and so knows himself by means of the self—in other words attains the self-knowledge which the Intellectual-Principle possesses."[69]

According to Plotinus, noûs is itself an "image" or a "trace" of the One in the sense that through the turn toward the One it first obtains that unity which manifests itself in the self-relation of noûs. The apprehension of the One consequently does not prevent the total self-penetration of noûs, but rather enables it—indeed *is* it.[70] Thus the transforming elevation of the soul in noûs as the ground of the soul ultimately aims at a momentary unity of the soul with the First.[71]

For the comparison with Augustine it is important to note that Plotinus ultimately only allows self-apprehension to take place on the plane of noûs. Although discursive thought knows itself and where it comes from, this knowledge is solely an objective, propositional knowledge about itself, not an immediate self-relation. In order for such an immediate self-relation to take place, the sphere of finite mind, Plotinus asserts, must be transgressed as a pre-condition. To truly know himself, the human has to become noûs because only noûs perceives itself. The human thus knows himself, according to Plotinus, "by the Intellectual-Principle with which he becomes identical: this latter

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[68] Ibid., L. 23-30.
[69] Ibid., L. 28-30.
[70] See Crystal, 270f.
71 Beierwaltes writes, "Reflection on one's own noûs is thus the condition for the 'seeing' of the absolute origin, the One itself. Therefore the one who ascertains the mind in himself as the origin of the soul sees the archetype itself through this mind as image and trace: ὡς ἀρχῇ ἀρχὴν ὁρᾶ (Enn. VI 9, 11, L. 31f.). This seeing of the origin or the momentary, ecstatic union with the One itself is as the completion of the inner ascendence simultaneously the self-perfection of the human (Beierwaltes 1998, 179; see also Beierwaltes 1991, 115f.) [trans. A.L.]."

knows the self as no longer man but as a being that has become something other through and through: he has thrown himself as one thing over into the superior order, taking with him only that better part of the Soul which alone is winged for the Intellectual Act and gives the man, once established There, the power to appropriate what he has seen."[72] Accordingly, the human only truly can apprehend himself, if he is moved into noûs and thus ceases to be human. Plotinus identifies the human (which he also refers to as "we") with the soul to which belongs the capacity for discursive thinking. The ascent into noûs consequently implies that the human becomes "entirely other," that he is instantaneously transformed into noûs, becoming, in an ecstatic experience, similar to the divine.[73]

This transformation of the human functions as de-individualization and infinitization. Even though noûs ontologically mediates the ascent of the soul to itself, it itself, as pure and separated noûs, is a supra-individual magnitude. This noûs does not belong to any individual but is of a general nature preceding every individuality. Leaving behind one's humanity in the ascent to noûs, therefore, also entails the abdication of individuality. Whoever is transformed into noûs ceases to be *this* human and not merely in the lesser sense of a person with this or that particular attribute but in the strict sense of an I different from other I's.[74] Self-apprehension thus never means the complete self-presence of the mind-endowed individual, but rather participation in the self-relation of divine reason.

Against Sextus Empiricus, Plotinus held the thesis, first of all, that the idea of true self-relationality is not disrupted by internal contradictions and, secondly, that noûs does in fact exhibit the reflexive structure at stake. His argument stated that the thinking noûs encounters in its objects ideas in their intellectuality. The world of ideas, too, is to be interpreted as thinking, for in it, noûs beholds itself as thinking. His argument is thus attached to the notion that the totality of the world of ideas is present for intuitive vision. According to Plotinus, this condition is fulfilled for the divine noûs but not for the finite

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[72] Enn. V 3, 4, L. 10-4. For the metaphor of "drawing upward," see P. Merlan, *Monopsychism, Mysticism, Metaconsciousness* (Den Haag 1963), 16, 81f.
[73] Cf. Beierwaltes 1991, 106-8.
[74] Cf. Oosthout, 100 with reference to Enn. VI 4, 14, L. 16ff. In contrast, Christoph Horn sees especially in Enn. V 8, 11 an interpretation of the noûs that connects it positively with individuality (Ch. Horn, "Selbstbezüglichkeit des Geistes bei Plotin und augustinus," in: Brachtendorf 2000).

reason of humans. The divine noûs disposes of the entirety of all possible knowledge. In the divine noûs, the ideas obtain their being.[75] Even if it itself is grounded in the One, it does not receive any knowledge from outside itself. Noûs does not learn anything but is autarkic in the totality of its knowledge.[76] Furthermore, noûs grounds, through its knowledge, the soul beneath it and the entire visible world. This is not the case for finite human thought. Fist of all, human thinking, of its own accord, does not dispose of the knowledge of ideas but must receive it through "irradiation"; secondly, human thinking is not total but fragmentary; thirdly, this knowledge is discursive not intuitive; and fourthly, it is not world-grounding, but rather dependent on world-experience for its extension. Consequently, it is impossible, according to Plotinus' conception, for the finite mind to attain complete and adequate self-knowledge. True self-relationality can only obtain in the realm of the infinite divine noûs because the totality and autarky which enables Plotinus, against the critique of Sextus, to speak of self-knowledge takes place only in this realm. Hence leaving behind one's humanity while striving for self-apprehension necessarily entails a momentary infinitization, for only an infinite, intellectual being is in the position to apprehend itself. Full self-knowledge of an individual, finite mind is impossible. The sole remaining possibility for humans consists in participating in the self-relation of the infinite noûs, and such participation compels the abdication of that which makes a human *this* human, an individual and a human being altogether—that is, a finite, mind-endowed being.

b) Augustine's Theory of Self-Relation from his Early Works to Confessiones

Olivier DuRoy offers the most encompassing depiction of the young Augustine's interpretation of the trinity, tracing it up to the year 391.[77] DuRoy distinguishes in the

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[75] Cf. Beierwaltes 1991, 197f.

[76] Beierwaltes writes, "[A]s reflexive totality of what there is to think (intelligible, the ideas), it requires *nothing* more from the outside. In its self-unifying self-relation, it 'has' always already what it seeks and finds; it is what it could be—pure reality (Beierwaltes 1991, 230) [trans. A.L.]."

[77] DuRoy 1966. Whereas DuRoy strongly emphasizes the Plotinian influences on the young Augustine, N. Cipriani stresses the Christian tradition ("Le fonti cristiane della dottrina trinitaria nei primi Dialoghi di S. Agostino," in: *Augustinianum* 34 (1994), 253-312). For comments beyond *De Trinitate*, see also J. Heijke, "The Image of God according to Saint Augustine (De Trinitate excepted)," in: *Classical Folia* 10 (1956),

young Augustine between an anagogically and an ontologically concentrated interpretation of the trinity.[78] In his earliest remarks, Augustine, he claims, had conceived the trinity entirely in light of the Plotinian doctrine of hypostases, interpreting it as the goal of the soul's ascent. DuRoy states that the final part of *De beata vita*, in which God the father appears as unmeasured measure, the son as truth, and the spirit as the ray of light illuminating humans, reflects Augustine's early understanding. According to DuRoy, Augustine interprets the incarnation in both his early and later works not as the self-revelation of the trinity. Rather he views the God-become-human as a moral authority required by the soul to purify itself and ascend to the intelligible world.[79]

DuRoy delineates how the anagogical line of thinking is modified with time. The interpretation of the holy spirit, for instance, emerges as love. However, it is decisive that an ontological-creationist interpretation is added according to which creation is not simply to be understood as a fall into the realm of multiplicity but as a gradated reflection of the creator. DuRoy asserts that particularly in *De vera religione* the ideas of creation and the fall of the soul into the sensible world are separated because Augustine claimed that God creates things through his wisdom and sustains them through his goodness. The doctrine of *vestigia trinitatis* thus would have its source in this conception. According to DuRoy, the anagogical and the ontological interpretations competed against each other until Augustine found a compromise in the notion of analogy. If the creatures of the triune God exhibit trinitarian structures in a gradated manner, then it is possible to come closer to the divine trinity by reflecting on the creature standing closest to God, namely the human mind.[80] My research focuses on Augustine's realization of this project in *De Trinitate* and thus builds upon DuRoy's analysis. Due to the particular significance of the idea of self-relationality for my thesis, I will address Augustine's early works in this regard.

3-11. A. Schindler und U. Duchrow offer rich material on this subject, and numerous cross-references can be found in the *De Trinitate* edition in den *Oeuvres de saint Augustin* (BA 15/16).

[78] See also DuRoy's summary 1966, 413-9.

[79] Ibid., 415.

[80] Ibid., 417-9.

The young Augustine's patterns of thinking predominantly follow the tracks of Plotinian Neoplatonism.[81] This is initially the case for the topics of "self-knowledge" and the "knowledge of God." Augustine himself declared the knowledge of God and the soul as his primary concerns in his early writings.[82] Divergences from Plotinus' interpretations nonetheless quickly emerge. Augustine left numerous traces of his Plotinus readings in the scientific program of *De ordine*.[83] Its framing topic places it squarely in the discussion of theodicy. Faced with the disorder of the visible world manifest in the unjust distribution of goods and in the disparity between one's doing and one's state of being, the question concerning the goodness of creation was posed.[84] Augustine is convinced that the assumed disorder involves a mere appearance resulting from an isolated, instead of synthesizing, observation of the individual. In relation to the world as a whole, the fate of the individual would make perfect sense. The intelligible world has the advantage over the sensible, temporal-spatial cosmos because in it the ἕν πολλά-structure of the whole can be viewed immediately. "In the intelligible world, every single part is as beautiful and perfect as the whole."[85] Augustine adopts the idea, introduced by Plato and further developed by Plotinus, of an original entwinement of the cosmos of ideas, which, in the context of abstract thought, is presentable only through paradoxes.

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[81] The miserable condition of the sources hinders a reliable appraisal of the role Porphyry played for Augustine. Like almost all of his writings, Porphyry's work on the "know thyself" is lost. (Fragments of this work in: *Porphyrii Philosophi Fragmenta*, ed. A. Smith (Leipzig, 1993), 308-13.) For a compilation of the few remaining works taken from the *Sententiae* and the "Letter to Marcella," see Courcelle 1974, vol. I, 87-91. According to Courcelle, Porphyry does not go beyond Plotinus in his theory of self-knowledge but offers merely an explication of his teacher's views.

[82] See Solil. 1.2.7; 2.1.1; Ord. 2.11.30; 16.44; 18.47. See also G. Verbeke, "Connaissance de soi et connaissance de Dieu chez saint Augustin," in: *Augustiniana* 4 (1954), 495-515.

[83] On *De ordine* in general and on the scientific program in particular, see A. Dyroff, "Über Form und Begriffsgehalt der augustinischen Schrift *De ordine*," in: *Aurelius Augustinus*, Festschrift der Goerres Gesellschaft zum 1500. Todestage des Heiligen Augustinus, ed. by M. Grabmann and J. Mausbach (Cologne, 1930), 15-62; J. Rief, *Der Ordobegriff des jungen Augustinus* (Paderborn, 1962); K. Lorenz „Die Wissenschaftslehre Augustins I. Teil, in *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* (67) 1955/56, 29-60; I. Hadot, *Arts libéraux et philosphie dans la Pensée antique* (Paris, 1984), 101-36. See also the introduction and the annotations of J. Doignon in the Edition Bibliothèque Augustinienne: *Oeuvres de Saint Augustin* 4/2 (Paris, 1997) and A. Solignac, "Reminiscences plotinniennes et porphyriennes dans le debut du »De ordine« de s. Augustin," in *Archives de philosophie* 20 (1957), 455-65.

[84] See Ord. 1.1.1; 2.5.15

[85] Ord. 2.19.51

Unlike Plotinus, Augustine does not speak of the self-relationality of noûs in this context, but he does discuss the connection of human self-knowledge, knowledge of the intelligible world, and the vision of the divine. According to Augustine, the soul has transcended itself in the direction of mortal things and now has the task of returning to reason.[86] It must abandon its "preoccupation with sensible things" and strive towards the things of reason.[87] It accomplishes this through the learning of sciences. In its highest form, namely philosophy, science performs a double function: it leads to knowledge of the soul—that is, to self-knowledge—and to knowledge of God as the origin of the soul.[88] Augustine therefore incorporates Plotinus' motif of the self-reflecting διανοητικόν that knows itself as the principiate of a higher principle. The explanation of the determinate connection between the thinking soul and the intelligible world appears in *De ordine*, however, to differ from Plotinus' notion. Augustine does not reflect extensively on either the receptivity of finite reason for infinite reason or its dependence on illumination.[89] He instead thematizes the power of the human mind to construct sciences. The sciences related to language, namely grammar and rhetoric, culminate in a dialectic in which reason recognizes itself as the capacity to define, differentiate, and integrate—that is, as constitutive of science.[90] The number-orientated cycle of sciences, consisting of music, astronomy, and geometry, culminate in philosophy, which conveys deeper insight into the character of intelligible numbers and especially into the true nature of unity.[91] True unity is precisely not that of the abstract one, which stands next to another one, etc.—this unity would be characteristic of the sensible world with its deceptive temporal-spatial differences—but is to be understood as fulfilled unity, as ἕν πολλά.[92] Consequently, human reason realizes that it is obeying the ἕν πολλά-structure of the intelligible world in

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[86] Ibid., 2.11.31

[87] Ibid. 2.11.30; compare Plotinus, Enn. V 3, 3, L. 17 on the busyness (πολυπραγμονεῖν) of the soul in dealing with external things.

[88] See Ord. 2.18.47

[89] This is a topic in *De magistro*.

[90] To be precise, the dialectic is built only upon grammar because rhetoric merely serves to popularize the results that the dialectician worked out. For Plotinus' understanding of the dialectic, see Enn. I 3, 3-6.

[91] See Ord. 2.15.43-16.44; 2.18.47-48

[92] Plotinus makes distinctions between the One that is the measure itself beyond all numbers, the "essential number" (ὁ οὐσιώδης ἀριθμὸς), and the subordinated number that is used for the counting of objects (see Enn V 5, 4, l. 12-20). Plotinus establishes the essential number as equivalent to noûs insofar as it is the source and ground of the many existing things (s. Enn. VI 6, 9). For comments on the same topic from Augustine, see e.g., Gen. litt. 4.4.11-6.13.

its activity of constructing and learning the sciences. Augustine concludes that either absolute reason manifests itself directly in the scientific thought of humans or human reason orders itself through the sciences in such a way that it becomes increasingly similar to divine reason. Either way, by developing determinate unities through analysis and synthesis, as is characteristic of scientific systems, the human mind cultivates structures corresponding to those of the intelligible world.[93] Philosophically trained reason is aware of this corresponding relation. It recognizes itself in the medium of science and reaches the intelligible world by educing from its own accomplishments a higher instance, which, be it a formal or teleological cause, first enables it to achieve those accomplishments. Thus, the same relation between discursive self-knowledge and knowledge of divine reason is found in Augustine as in Plotinus. According to Augustine's *De ordine*, self-knowledge is the precondition for knowledge of God. For Augustine, however, self-knowledge is not an immediate self-relation fulfilled in intuitive vision but a propositional knowledge of the structure and capacity of the human soul in general.

Mining the Plotininan bank of ideas in yet another respect, the young Augustine believes that in the state of complete scientific formation the step from inferring the intelligible world to the immediate vision of it is possible.[94] The soul will then behold the inexpressible beauty of the intellectual cosmos and the "father of the truth itself."[95] Yet just as Augustine did not bring the ἕν πολλά-structure of the intelligible world into connection with divine self-knowledge, he does not interpret the vision here as participation by the man able to disrobe himself of his finitude in the divine self-relation. Whereas Augustine clearly appropriates the idea that discursive self-knowledge is the precondition for immediate knowledge of God, the idea of human self-perception through the transcendence of finitude and the becoming of intellect remains absent.[96] Despite his

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[93] According to Plotinus, science approaches the ἕν πολλά-structure because every proposition implies every further proposition and therefore contains, as a part, the whole. (Enn. IV 9,5).

[94] Augustine adopts the obligatory thesis within Neoplatonism that only the virtuous human is capable of intellectual vision. He interprets vice as a "dissonance" that no longer appears in a harmonious soul arranged by science.

[95] Ord. 2.19.51

[96] DuRoy (1966, 143f.) interprets the following passage of *Soliloquia* in this manner: *Ipsa autem visio intellectus est ille qui in anima est, qui conficitur ex intellegente et eo quod intellegitur, ut in oculis videre,*

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Plotinus readings, the early Augustine does not dispose of the concept of an immediate self-relation—neither on the plane of divinity nor on that of the human mind.[97]

The tendency toward objectivism in the teaching of the soul's self-knowledge manifests itself in the particular weight Augustine gives to the proofs of immortality. In *De ordine*, the soul that has penetrated to philosophy asks whether it is immortal.[98] The *Soliloquia* have the soul's self-knowledge as well as the knowledge of God as topics. Their explication of self-knowledge demonstrates that the soul must first receive from the "truth" the principles by which it judges.[99] However, the pivotal point of these dialogues is the response to the question concerning the immortality of the soul.[100] The discourses on the function of the "truth" ultimately serve it, and *De immortalitate animae* continues the discussion of this question.

The dialogue *De quanitate animae* also concerns the essence of the soul. In this dialogue, Augustine's discussion partner, Evodius, extends the question of "what we are," which means what is the soul.[101] The topic unfolds in partial questions about the origin of the soul, its composition, magnitude, and condition in the unity with the body and in the separation from the body.[102] From the onset, Augustine claims the similarity of the human soul to God and expresses the notion, so important in *De Trinitate*, of the soul as an image of God.[103] Augustine does not yet relate this similarity and imaged-ness to the structural correspondences between the human mind and the divine trinity but solely to the immateriality in which the soul accords with God. According to Augustine,

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quod dicitur, ex ipso sensu constat atque sensibili, quorum detracto quolibet videri nihil potest. (Solil. 1.6.13; Cf. Quant. Anim. 13.22: [*animus*] *mihi videtur esse substantia rationis particeps*.) This passage, however, does not assert an identity of thinker and thought, but rather—as the comparison with seeing shows—only a necessary duality in thought-processes.

[97] In the well-known 46th question, "De Ideis", from *De diversis quaestionibus* LXXXIII, Augustine defines the ideas as exemplary causes of creatures in the mind of God. The morally pure and from God illuminated soul knows the ideas through *intellegentia*. Throughout the entire Quaestio, however, neither a self-relation of divine thinking nor the self-knowledge of the *mens humana* is mentioned. For an interpretation of Quaestio 46 as well as bibliographical references, see *Oeuvres de saint Augustin*, BA 10, Texte, Introduction, Traduction et Notes par G. Bardy, J.-A. Beckaert, J. Boutet (Paris, 1952), notes 39-45, 723-7).

[98] Ord. 2.15.43

[99] See Solil. 1.2.7; 1.9.16; 2.1.1; 2.18.32, and 2.20.35

[100] Ibid., 2.1.1

[101] quid simus nos. (Quant. Anim. 1.1)

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid., 2.3. According to Conf. 6.3.4, Ambrose acquainted Augustine with the notion that the imaged-ness of the human does not reside in his corporeality. Cf. DuRoy 1966, 45-7.

the eyes cannot see themselves, but the soul indeed possesses the ability to find itself and God.[104] The soul apprehends itself through *intellegentia* and ratio, becoming aware that the incorporeal things are better than the corporeal.[105] The self-knowledge of the soul therefore consists in apprehending its place in the hierarchy of beings, namely above matter and below God.

The proof of God in *De libero arbitrio* rests entirely on the idea of the hierarchy of being in which each respective lower step is surpassed by the next-higher one.[106] To begin with, it is clear that living is better than mere being. For sentient beings, the inner sense enjoys a primacy over the external senses because the former judges over the latter.[107] By the same rationale, reason, which among sentient beings only humans possess, demonstrates its superiority over the internal sense.[108] Above human reason is solely immutable truth.[109] This truth is not judged by human reason. Rather human reason judges the lower things according to the principles that it receives from the "truth."[110] Human reason thus possesses the capacity for self-knowledge, but the content of this self-knowledge is once again only a theory of the soul claiming the precedence of reason over sensible things and reason's dependence on the "truth."

c) Self-Reflection and Transcendence in Confessiones

In his reports of ascension in *Confessiones*, Augustine offers further information concerning his view on the connection between the soul's inward turn and its capacity for knowing and seeing God. Whereas the young Augustine followed a materialistic metaphysics, the Augustine of *Confessiones* writes that the "light" of his eyes, the source of the capacity for intellectual vision, has always been in him, but he had searched for the truth outside instead of treading the path inward.[111] Inspired by the Pauline epistles, he tells how he finally did enter his innerness to behold with his soul's eye, high above

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[104] Ibid., 24.45 and 14.24.
[105] Ibid., 14.24.
[106] See Lib. arb. 2.3.7-16.41.
[107] Ibid., 2.5.12.
[108] Ibid., 2.6.13.
[109] Ibid., 2.12.33.
[110] Ibid., 2.12.34.
[111] See Conf. 7.7.11.

himself, immutable light and truth.[112] The soul's turn toward itself leads to the recognition of one's own created-ness and therewith to the inference of the creator. This discursive knowledge of God is crowned by a vision of divine light, even if only momentary and fragmentary.[113]

Subsequent to this first account of ascension, Augustine sets forth how all being refers to God, insofar as its being is imperfect, as it is good, as it strives toward a highest good, and as it is integrated into a harmonic order of the whole.[114] Augustine then reflects on the soul's capabilities in order to emphasize that, being mutable, the soul could not possess those immovable principles by which it judges the beauty of things but must have received them from incommutable truth itself.[115] The soul recognizes its primacy over external things manifest in its capacity to judge. Through the experience of its own mutability, the soul attains further self-penetration ("*intellegentia sui*") that does not ultimately precipitate a deeper self-knowledge but facilitates the turn to immutable light. Here, too, one initially arrives at God by an inference from the finite to the infinite. Still, the discursive access to the Highest will once again be superceded by a brief vision.

In his account of ecstasy in Ostia (which he presents as the most successful of his visions), Augustine relates how his mind—this time in conversation with his mother—traversed the regions of reality.[116] Transgressing the corporeal world into the innerness of the human mind without lingering in the least in the domain of the soul, he strode onward to eternal truth and unchanging wisdom. For an instant, Augustine and his mother were able to leave the domain of thought and contact the Highest.[117] To attain this brief encounter, the tumultuousness of the senses had to be left behind, but the soul also had to fall silent quieting its thoughts and, especially, its thinking of itself so that

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[112] Ibid., 7.10.16.

[113] Ibid., 7.10.16. On the Plotinian character of this ascension report, see Beierwaltes 1998, 180-4.

[114] Ibid., 7.11.17-16.22.

[115] Ibid., 7.17.23.

[116] Ibid., 9.10.23-26

[117] Ibid., 9.10.24. On the vision's moment of duration, see J. Pépin, "Primitias Spiritus. Remarques sur une citation paulinienne des *Confessions* de saint Augustine, in: *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 140 (1951), 155-201; re-published in J. Pépin, *Ex platonicorum persona. Études sur les lectures philosophiques de saint Augustin* (Amsterdam, 1977), 131-80. On "contact", see Enn. VI 6, 8, 13-14.

God would not be mediated through creation, words, or even "riddles and parables" but could be perceived directly and immediately.[118]

This narrative bears witnesses to how the inward turn of the soul subsequently leads to a discursive self-knowledge expressible in propositions and comprising the condition for the inference of God. Things that change refer to an unchangeable, and the use of eternal measures requires a transcendent source of these measures. Immediacy takes place solely in the instantaneous vision of and encounter with God, which Augustine does not interpret, in contrast to Plotinus (and in agreement with *De ordine*), as the self-apprehension of the mind transcending its own finitude.[119] As was the case both in Plotinus and in Augustine's early works, Augustine makes no mention here of an immediacy in the self-relation of finite mind.

The tenth book of *Confessiones* offers a close-up of Augustine's account of ascension in Ostia, however, with a different accent. In both accounts, Augustine initially directs himself to the corporeal world in his search for God (s. *Conf.* 10.6.9) then leaves this world behind in order to pursue the question pertaining to the *anima* of humans. In *Confessiones* 10, too, Augustine ultimately desires to transcend this *anima* in a movement toward God.[120] He distinguishes, however, different levels within the soul: the soul as the vital principle of humans, as sensibility (*Conf.* 10.7.11), and as memory. Whereas Augustine quickly moves through the first two levels, he famously deliberates extensively on the analysis of memory (*Conf.* 10.8.12-27.38). The goal of the movement illustrated in *Confessiones* is still the transcendence of the human mind and the direct contact with God.[121] But the human mind, which in the Ostia-account is nothing more than a way station on the path to the divine, is now analyzed, at least in its aspect of

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[118] *et ipsa sibi anima sileat et transeat se non se cogitando* (Conf. 9.10.25).

[119] Plotin, Enn. III 8, 8 reads as a depiction of ascension. Upon the contemplation of the soul follows the contemplation of mind and finally, the becoming one of the contemplator and his object (L. 1-9). Both of the first two levels can easily be related to Augustine's ascension-reports, but the self-reflection of mind in the world of ideas as an element of the last level is not found in Augustine.

[120] *Per ipsam animam meam ascendam ad illum* (Conf. 10.7.11). *Transibo ergo et istam naturae meae, gradibus ascendens ad eum, qui fecit me* (Conf. 10.8.12). On *Confessiones* 10, see J. Kreuzer, "Confessiones 10 – Der Abgrund des Bewusstseins. Erinnerung und Selbsterkenntnis im zehnten Buch," in: *Die Confessiones des Augustinus von Hippo. Einführung und Interpretation zu den dreizehn Büchern,* ed. N. Fischer und C. Mayer (Freiburg, 1998), 445-87.

[121] *Ecce ego ascendens per animum meum ad te, qui desuper mihi manes, transibo et istam vim meam, quae memoria vocatur, volens te attingere* (Conf. 10.17.26).

memoria, in detail. The reason for this thematic accent is that in *Conf.* 10 Augustine reflects on the enabling conditions for searching God. To search for something always entails, according to Augustine, to know what one is searching for.[122] Whoever searches for God must already possess a foreknowledge of God. Augustine claims that the place of this foreknowledge is memory.[123] God is transcendent beyond the human soul, but can be searched for solely with the aid of some kind of foreknowledge or, in other words, a pre-understanding of the word *God* that is to be found in *memoria*. The actual aim of the treatise on *memoria* in *Conf.* 10 is to extol this foreknowledge.

In *Conf.* 10, Augustine clearly does not link the encounter with God—the apex of ascension—to the notion of total self-possession. During his analysis of *memoria*, Augustine occasionally discusses, however, the function of *memoria* for self-knowledge—a topic that will play a significant role in *De Trinitate*. At the very beginning of his analysis, Augustine defines memory as the place of self-encounter. This self-encounter does not pertain to the foundational structures of human subjectivity but to the mere re-experiencing of one's own earlier deeds as well as the feelings attached to them.[124] A little later Augustine determines that without the power of memory, which he is unable to completely grasp, he would not even be able to speak about himself.[125] In the context of the analysis of *memoria*, he writes, "I entered into the very seat of my mind, which is located in my memory, since the mind also remembers itself."[126] If the mind has its seat in memory, then a potential self-reflection must be performed as a turn to one's own memory. Inversely, it must be the case that self-searching and self-knowledge are possible only because self-knowledge already exists in the "hidden caves (*caveis abditioribus*)" of memory.[127] This hidden self-knowledge does not appear of its

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[122] See Conf. 10.18.27.

[123] Ibid., 10.20.29. For an analysis of the corresponding passages from Conf. 10, see Chap. III 6 of this work.

[124] *Ibi mihi et ipse occurro meque recolo, quid, quando et ubi egerim quoque modo, cum agerem, affectus fuerim* (Conf. 10.8.14).

[125] *Et ecce memoriae meae vis non comprehenditur a me, cum ipsum me non dicam praeter illam* (Conf. 10.16.25).

[126] *Et intravi ad ipsius animi mei sedem, quae illi est in memoria mea, quoniam sui quoque meminit animus* (Conf. 10.25.36).

[127] The same criteria is valid for the knowledge of selbst as for the knowledge of all non-empirical objects: *Ubi ergo aut quare, cum dicerentur, agnovi et dixi: "Ita est, verum est," nisi quia iam errant in memoria,*

own accord in the form of a clear idea (*cogitatio*).[128] It is, however, transformed into a clear idea if, exhorted from outside, one undertakes self-reflection.

The cultivation of the concept of self-knowledge as pursued in *De Trinitate*, where Augustine speaks of the "mind's hiding place," is thus anticipated. When the mind turns to this "hiding place" in order to raise that which it knows about itself there to a *cogitatio*, it finds itself as one who always already remembers itself, thinks itself, and loves itself.[129] Thus, in *Conf.* 10, Augustine distinguishes between the plane of *cogitatio*, where expressive self-knowledge takes place, and the plane of *memoria*, where the hidden foreknowledge of the mind about itself that first enables a *cogitatio* of itself is located. Two theses remain missing in comparison with *Trin*. 14. The first thesis states that the human mind, as found in its "hiding place," exhibits a constant, cognitive-voluntative self-relation and is thus immutable. The second thesis states that this self-relation possesses a trinitarian structure, and not just any structure but precisely that structure attributed to the divine trinity. Neither the idea of an immediate, non-discursive self-relation of the human mind nor the interpretation that this mind, on account of its structural correspondence to the divine trinity, can be called an "image of God" is found in *Confessiones*. In *Conf.* 10 Augustine does, however, slightly intensify the role of self-reflection in its connection to the knowledge of God. Self-reflection, in his early work, leads only to the mutability of the mind that refers to the immutability of God, but in *Conf*. 10, self-reflection shows a foreknowledge of God in *memoria* to be the enabling condition for searching for God. Not until *De Trinitate*, however, does Augustine develop a conception of self-reflection that reveals a self-relation that is present, which, because of its trinitarian structure, serves as an access not to God in general but to the divine trinity.

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sed tam remota et retrusa quasi in caveis abditioribus, ut, nisi admonente aliquo eruerentur, ea fortasse cogitare non possem (Conf. 10.10.17)?

[128] With reference to the linguistic similiarity of *cogo* and *cogito*, Augustine explains that "thinking" means retrieving and gathering the dispersed from the removed spaces of memory—that is, placing loose parts into the context of the known. Cf. Conf. 10.11.18.

[129] In Trin. 10, the exhortation to "turn" stems from the command of the Oracle of Delphi: "Know thyself." Augustine explains this triad-structure of the self: *Hinc amonemur ess nobis in abdito mentis quarumdam rerum quasdam notitias, et tunc quodam modo procedure in medium atque in conspectus mentis velut apertius constitui, quando cogitantur; tunc enim se ipsa mens et meminisse et intellegere et amare invenit, etiam unde non cogitabat, quando aliud cogitabat* (Trin. 14.7.9).

Augustine does nonetheless approach this possibility in Book 13 of *Confessiones*. He writes that a triad can be found in the *mens humana*, which, despite its difference from the divine trinity, could help us understand the divine trinity. It is the triad of being, knowing, and willing: "For I am and I know and I will. Knowing and willing I am. I know that I am and I will. I will to be and to know. In these three, therefore, let him who is capable of so doing contemplate how inseparable in life they are: one life, one mind, and one essence, yet ultimately there is distinction, for they are inseparable, yet distinct. The fact is certain to anyone by introspection. Let him consider himself and reflect and tell me what is there."[130] Augustine thus demands a self-apprehension of the finite mind, not one that understands its grounded-ness in something higher and simultaneously transcends itself toward God, but rather a self-apprehension that becomes aware of its own structure. Initially, three undeniable moments of mind present themselves: that one is, knows, and wills. But these are not simply three different functions of one and the same mind. Rather the three moments are intertwined with each other to the point that each encompasses both of the others, respectively. In the being of mind, the knowing itself and willing itself are contained; knowing directs itself to its own being and willing, and willing to its being and knowing. Each particular member holds the other two in itself and therefore represents the whole. A three-member, encompassing ἐν πολλά-structure, which can be understood parallel to the trinity of God, manifests itself in the human mind.

This proposed triad *esse, nosse, velle* is different than the triad *esse, vivere, intellegere*, which one occasionally finds in Augustine's early work. The second triad can be traced back to that passage in *Sophistes* where Plato attributes to the Ideas movement, life, soul, and reason (κίνηος, ζωή, ψηχή, φρόνησις, νοῦς).[131] This passage had provoked a rich history of interpretation by the time of Plotinus.[132] Augustine uses this triad in *Soliloquia* and in *De libero arbitrio*. In contrast to Plato, he utilizes it as an

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[130] *Dico autem haec tria: esse, nosse, velle. Sum enim et scio et volo: sum sciens et volens et scio esse me et velle et volo esse et scire. In his igitur tribus quam sit inseparabilis vita et una vita et una mens et una essential, quam denique inseparabilis distinctio et tamen distinctio, videat qui potest. Certe coram se est; adtendat in se et videat et dicat mihi* (Conf. 13.11.12).
[131] Cf. Soph. 248e-249a
[132] See P. Hadot, "Vie Penseée chez Plotin et avant Plotin," in: *Fondation Hardt, Entretiens V »Les Sources de Plotin«* (Genf, 1960), 105-41.

example of the sure knowledge the human mind has of itself: the mind knows that it is and that it thinks; both this knowledge and the fact of thinking imply the vitality of mind. The early Augustine, however, neither pursues the idea of the mind's immediate self-relation nor discusses the topic of the trinity-structure. In *Soliloquia*, Augustine moves promptly from the thesis that the mind is sure that it is, lives, and knows to the conclusion that the mind is not sure that these things will remain thus in the future. Consequently, he turns his attention immediately to the question of the immortality of the soul.[133] In *De libero arbitrio*, Augustine reflects on the hierarchy in the triad *esse, vivere, intellegere*. The *intellegere* is the best. It is also the defining characteristic of the human, as that through which humans are superior to other beings and in which they demonstrate their dependence on a higher source of principles.[134] Augustine, however, does not in any way interpret this triad in the direction of the trinity.[135] This would hardly be possible because the *vivere*, in contradistinction to the *velle* of the triad in *Confessiones*, is not intentional and therefore, unlike *velle*, cannot be thought of as encompassing the other two members.[136] By replacing *vivere* with *velle*, Augustine, first of all, seeks a more adequate comprehension of the human mind. He accounts for a voluntative element alongside the cognitive. Simultaneously, he avoids the hierarchical structuring of the former triad in favor of equality and a mutual containment of the members. As such, this three-in-one-structure of the *mens humana* can be brought into conjunction with the divine trinity.

The possibility thus unfolds of understanding more precisely the concept of the human mind as an image of God. Instead of seeing the correspondence alone in immateriality, the three-in-one-structure could now be set forth as the common characteristic in such a way that allows the created human mind to be spoken of as an

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[133] Cf. Solil. 2.1.1

[134] See Lib. arb. 2.3.7

[135] This position would be proof for DuRoy's thesis that in Augustine's early writings the anagogical and ontological-creationistic interpretation of the trinity topic were not yet connected. On the displacement of *vivere* by *velle*, see Benz pp. 378-80. According to Benz, the older triad plays a significant role in *De Trinitate* (cf., his point of reference in Trin. 10.18), but he arrives at this interpretation only because he does not understand Augustine's term *mens* as a unity of *voluntas* and *intellegentia,* but rather reduces *mens*— without good reason—to *intellegentia*. DuRoy (1966) advocates the same interpretation (p.432f, 439). J. Ritter remains in this respect unclear (*Mundus intelligibilis. Eine Untersuchung zur Aufnahme und Umwandlung der neuplatonischen Ontologie bei Augustinus* (Frankurt, 1937), 112, n. 1.

[136] According to Benz, Victorinus' trinity analysis fails because he holds onto the concept *vivere* even though he had already developed a metaphysical concept of the will (Benz, 141).

imago of the creator. Augustine will, however, first make use of this possibility in *De Trinitate*. In *Conf.* 13, he presents the connection of *esse*, *nosse*, and *velle* as a triad but speaks neither of *imago* nor of *trinitas* but only of *haec tria*.[137] The title *trinitas* remains reserved for the divine trinity. It is suitable then that Augustine accentuates the difference between the triad of the human mind and the divine trinity: the human mind is mutable; the trinity is, knows, and wills immutably.[138] Augustine's subsequent considerations of the corresponding relation between the human mind and the divine trinity clearly have a tentative character. He poses the question of what exactly constitutes the accordance and sketches three possible responses: 1) each of the three members, *esse, nosse, velle,* corresponds to *one* of the divine persons (where *esse* would relate to the father, *nosse* the son, and *velle* the holy spirit); 2) each divine person contains in itself the entire triad of *esse, nosse, velle*; 3) the divine persons are, know, and will as individuals, but the entire Godhead is, knows and wills, too. Augustine does not dare decide in favor of any of these three responses. At the conclusion of his reflections, he warns against imprudent judgment.[139]

Augustine brings this thought-process to fruition in *De Trinitate*. Through the discovery of the non-discursiveness and constancy of the *mens humana*'s self-relation, the criterion of immutability, as the difference between God and the human mind, is relativized. Augustine can then more strongly emphasize the corresponding relation between them. He consequently no longer hesitates in *De Trinitate* to speak of the *mens humana* as a *trinitas*.[140] Moreover, he answers in *De Trinitate* the question he posed in *Confessiones* 13. Using a new terminology—Augustine no longer speaks of *esse, nosse, velle* but of *memoria, intellegentia, voluntas*—he rejects the first possible response according to which each ternary member would correspond to one of the divine persons.

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[137] *una vita et una mens et una essentia, quam denique inseparabilis distinctio et tamen distinctio* (Conf. 13.11.12).

[138] *Sed cum invenerit in his aliquid et dixerit, non iam se putet invenisse illud, quod supra ista est incommutabile, quod est incommutabiliter et scit incommutabiliter et vult incommutabiliter* (Conf. 13.11.12).

[139] *et utrum propter tria haec et ibi trinitas, an in singulis haec tria, ut terna singulorum sint, an utrumque miris modis simpliciter et multipliciter infinito in se sibi fine, quo est et sibi notum est et sibi sufficit incommutabiliter id ipsum copiosa unitatis magnitudine, quis facile cogitaverit? Quis ullo modo dixerit? Quis quolibet modo temere pronuntiaverit* (Conf. 13.11.12)?

[140] Cf., for example, the conclusion in Trin. 15.5.

Each person exhibits (in the sense of the second possibility) in itself such a triad.[141] Due to the trinitarian logic, however, every statement about one of the divine persons that does not concern his relation to the other persons but describes him himself must also be applicable to "God." Thus, the third possible response proves to be the right one.

d) Intellectualis and intelligibilis in De Genesi ad litteram 12

A discussion of the relationship between an Augustinian and a Plotinian philosophy of mind requires an examination of Augustine's definitions of the concepts *intellectualis* and *intelligibilis* in Book 12 of *De Genesi ad litteram*. In this work, Augustine distinguishes three kinds of *visiones*: first of all, the *visio corporalis* or sensory perception; secondly, the *visio spiritalis*, which occurs when the mind imagines absent objects; and thirdly, the *visio intellectualis*, in which intelligible objects are perceived.[142] Augustine qualifies each kind of *visiones*, making terminological clarifications in the meaning of *spiritus/spiritalis*.[143] The field of meaning around *intellectus* is less problematic for Augustine. He intends to use *intellectualis* and *intelligibilis* synonymously but agrees with the opinion of several philosophers, who want to differentiate between the termini so that *intelligibilis* means everything that can be grasped by the intellect, while *intellectualis* is the *mens* itself that thinks (*intelligit*).[144] Augustine states that if something can be seen intellectually, then it is *intelligibile*; if it can see intellectually, it is *intellectuale*.[145]

According to Augustine's treatment of the termini as synonymous, it must be the case that everything intellectual is intelligible and vice versa, everything intelligible is intellectual. The first of these propositions does not cause Augustine any problems. That which understands by the intellect, namely the *mens*, can also be understood by the intellect ("*mens quippe non videtur nisi mente*"). The inverse proposition, however,

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[141] Cf. Trin. 15.12.
[142] Cf. Gen. litt. 12.6.15-7.16.
[143] Ibid., 12.8.19.
[144] Ibid., 12.10.21.
[145] The parallel to the distinction between *rationalis* and *rationabile* in Ord. 2 is striking. The accent in this distinction, however, is on the development of the understanding from the knowledge of the incorporeal, ideal principles to their pure apprehension.

appears problematic to Augustine: Is there anything that is grasped by the intellect that does not itself think, anything that is only understood that does not itself understand?[146] Augustine does not answer these questions but feels authorized to factor them out. He thus continues to treat *intellectualis* and *intelligibilis* as synonymous.[147] He claims that the *mens humana* (in the present context, this alone is at stake) can grasp itself and therefore should be called both *intellectualis* and *intelligibilis*. He does not assert, however, that that which otherwise is called *intelligibilis*, namely the world of ideas, includes a intellectual self-relation. This self-relation may be, as in Plotinus, in the form of a self-reflection of the intelligible sphere, which would be interpretable as the fulfilled self-relation of noûs, or in the self-relation of the *mens humana* interpreted as the self-reflection of the ideas.[148] Augustine's failure to seize the opportunity to assert the parallelism between the self-relation of divine understanding and the self-apprehension of the Plotinian noûs confirms his earlier reservations on this point. More importantly, Augustine presents a self-apprehension of the *mens humana* without interpreting it, as Plotinus does, as the elevation of mind into a sphere of ideas reflecting upon itself. Self-apprehension in the realm of finite mind is possible, according to Augustine. Contrary to what would be expected from a Plotinian approach, Augustine characteristically does not connect ecstatic experiences with the notion of self-reflection. The mind withdrawn into the intelligible world sees "inexpressible truth" and enjoys the bliss of the vision, but it does not recognize itself in this and does not participate in a higher form of self-knowledge.[149]

Jean Pépin misinterprets *Gen. Litt*. 12.10.21 when he asserts that Augustine posits an unqualified identification of the thinker and the thought similar to the identity that

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[146] *Sed esse aliquem rem quae solo intellectu cerni posit ac non etiam intellegat magna et difficilis quaestio est* (Gen. litt. 12.10.21).

[147] *Quapropter sequestrate illa difficillima quaestione, utrum sit aliquid, quod tantum intellegatur nec intellegat, nunc intellectuale et intelligibile sub eadem significatione appellamus* (Gen. litt. 12.10.21).

[148] The fact that Augustine neither accepts this interpretation nor completely rejects it might be related to his incertitude regarding the interpretation of the "heavens of the heavens" (*caelum caeli*). Cf. Conf. 12.13.16 where Augustine speaks of *caelum intellectuale* and Conf. 12.21.30 where the *caelum intelligibile* is introduced. See also J. Pépin, "Recherches sur le sens et les origins de l'expression »caelum caeli« dans le livre XII des »Confessions« de s. Augustin," in: *Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi* 23 (1953), 185-274; republished in Pépin 1977, 41-130.

[149] Cf. the description of ecstasy in Gen. litt. 12.25.52.

Plotinus attributes to the divine noûs.[150] Pépin does indeed recognize the difficulties such an identification entails within the framework of Augustine's systematics. He therefore proposes an interpretation according to which Augustine adapted two lines of Plotinus' thought in which this identification plays a role, namely the withdrawal of intellectual from sensible consciousness and the theory of self-consciousness. Consequently, he claims that Augustine, in the belief that it was only a systematically insignificant attachment, unintentionally assumed Plotinus' identity-thesis.[151] This adoption would have had to occur unintentionally because Plotinus' identity-thesis does not accord with Augustinian thinking in two respects. First of all, designating the thinking *mens* as "intelligible" casts problems, for Augustine otherwise prefers to contrast the soul in its mutability to the immutability of the world of ideas. If the intelligible is immutable, how can the changing human soul be called intelligible?[152] Secondly, Pépin sees an even graver problem in the designation of the intelligible as thinking. For Augustine ordinarily understands the intelligible as the measure and norm of thinking, which imposes itself upon thinking subjects; the intelligible therefore could not be one of these subjects. Consequentially, according to Pépin, the identity-thesis negatively implies, first of all, the multiplication in the realm of ideas that takes effect if it no longer stands above thinking individuals but is rather connected to them, and, secondly, an autarchy of consciousness that, as *intelligiblis*, no longer receives its objects from outside but has them inside itself—and is even identical with them.[153]

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[150] J. Pépin. "Une curieuse déclaration idéaliste du »De Genesi ad litteram« (XII, 10,21) de saint Augustin, et ses origines plotiniennes (Enn. V 3, 1-9 et V 5, 1-2)," in: *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie religieuses* 34 (1954), 373-400; republished in Pépin 1977, 183-210, here 184. I will quote henceforth from the republication. For a critique of Pépin as well as an analysis of Gen. litt. 12.10.21, see A. Solignac's note complementaire 50 in the edition of *De Genesi ad litteram* in the Bibliothéque augustinienne (*Oeuvres de Saint Augustin* 49, 566-8).

[151] Cf., Pépin 1977, 190f., 203, 207.

[152] Pépin offers numerous citations for this juxtaposition (see 188 n. 11, 12). The most interesting are Lib. arb. 2.12.33, where it is claimed that truth presents itself equally to all rational beings and therefore cannot exemplify a special relation to the mind of a single human (*sic ergo etiam illa quae ego et tu communiter propria quisque mente conspicimus, nequaquam dixeris ad mentis alicuius nostrum pertinere naturam*), and Trin. 12.2, which states that because the ideas are immutable, they must be over and beyond the human mind (*rationes incorporales et sempiternas: quae nisi supra mentem humanam essent, incommutabilis profecto non essent*).

[153] Cf. Pépin 1977, 188f. Pépin believes even to have found traces of this autarchy idea in Augustine, particularly in Gen. litt. 12.14.30: *Iudicat autem sobrius intellectus divinitus adiutus.* The sobriety of the

Pépin subsequently offers numerous comparisons between the texts of Plotinus and Augustine (s. pp. 192-205). He takes Augustine's references to the teaching of intellectual consciousness primarily from *Gen.litt.* 12 and invokes *Trin.* 9 and 10 for the theory of self-consciousness. The point of this comparison is to demonstrate that Augustine thoroughly accepted those teachings of Plotinus in which the identity-thesis plays a role. Upon this basis, Pépin assumes it plausible that Augustine also adopted the identity-thesis without realizing that it stands in contradiction to his conception of human consciousness and its relation to the world of ideas.

With respect to the theory of self-consciousness, Pépin's search for parallel texts proved quite fruitful. A series of Augustine's arguments refers to Plotinus' statements.[154] No single parallel, however, compels the assumption that Augustine assumes Plotinus' doctrine of noûs and its concomitant identity-thesis. Whereas Plotinus develops his theory of self-consciousness on divine reason, which reflects itself in the ideas because it is identical to them, Augustine always speaks of the *mens humana*, which, despite possessing an immediate self-relation, has the ideas above it. As the exposition of *Gen.litt.* 12.10.21 already demonstrated, Augustine acknowledges self-relation for the *mens humana* but is not willing to connect it with a self-reflection of the intelligible sphere.[155]

Since Augustine does not propose an identity-thesis in the sense of Plotinus, Pépin's misgivings concerning the incompatibility of this thesis with the fundamental positions of Augustine's thinking may be set aside. In fact, this incompatibility that Pépin accurately observes can be taken precisely as confirmation that the self-relationality Augustine attributes to the *mens* has nothing to do with the immediate vision of the realm of eternal grounds. The self-knowledge of the *mens humana* does not resemble the absolute knowledge of the divine noûs. Pépin's misgivings therefore can be

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intellect spoken of here does not mean, however, self-sufficiency, as Pépin maintains, but the capacity to assess human moral character and differentiate between dream-images and reality.

[154] I will return to this point in the more concentrated analysis of Trin. 9 and 10.

[155] J. Ritter is interested in distinguishing between Augustinian and Plotinian ontology, arriving thereby at unnecessarily brusque juxtapositions (cf. 36-9). It is thus all the more striking that he, too, parallels Augustine's theory of self-knowledge, as presented in Trin. 10, with Plotinus' doctrine of the self-knowing noûs (cf. 116-21). The possibility of contrasting Augustine's analysis of the finite mind with Plotinus' divine mind, however, presents itself precisely on this point.

answered in the following manner: Augustine will demonstrate that the human mind, despite all change, possesses a core in which an unchanging self-relation takes place. In its original self-relation, the *mens* is not a material but an intelligible entity. This intelligible entity is, however, neither an idea nor a measure by which one judges; it is not a norm which first would have to lower itself (in an incomprehensible way) to the plane of judging subjects; it is rather a constitutive moment of the finite mind thinking itself. If one, with Augustine, distinguishes between the intelligibility of the human mind and the intelligibility of the κόσμος νοητός, then, from this characterization of mind as intelligible, neither an individualization and multiplication of the world of ideas nor an autarchy of finite consciousness results. Finite consciousness has the acquaintanceship with itself already in itself, but all other knowledge must come to it from outside.

Augustine does not discuss self-apprehension on the basis of divine noûs but on the basis of the *mens humana*. This discussion begins with the final books of *Confessiones* and is developed fully in *De Trinitate*. Whereas Plotinus interprets the self-apprehension of the soul as its "becoming noûs," making the suspension of the difference between the two into the condition for the self-penetration of the soul, Augustine maintains the difference between noûs and the soul. From the perspective of the trinitarian concept of God, ascension to the divine, as Plotinus conceives it and Augustine himself described it up through *Confessiones*, is impossible. According to Augustine, the soul reaches by way of ascension always only a One, not a trinity. The human mind remains fixed therefore on the plane of an image without being able to penetrate to a perception of the archetypε. Still, Augustine works out a novel conception of the *mens humana* as an image in counterpoint to Plotinus. He does not see the imaged-ness, as Plotinus does, residing in the possibility of dianoetic self-knowledge, shadowing the infinite noûs' immediate self-apprehension; rather he sees the imaged-ness in the trintarian structured-ness of the *mens humana*. Called to knowledge of itself, the human mind experiences itself as always already exhibiting in its core a self-relation that

possesses a three-in-one structure like the divine trinity. Through this image, humans are capable of seeing the divine trinity.[156]

Augustine demonstrates this trinitarian structure on the basis of the self-apprehension of the *mens humana*. He thus carries over a theorem of Plotinus from the divine to the human realm, attributing to humans an unmediated self-possession beyond dianoetic self-knowledge. This self-possession of the human mind is, however, of a different kind than the Plotinian noûs. Whereas the soul, according to Plotinus, must ascend to noûs in order to participate for a moment in its time-less self-apprehension, Augustine will show that this self-possession always already exists in the human mind, even when the mind does not direct its attention to it. According to the Augustine of *De Trinitate*, the alternative to discursive knowledge is not the withdrawal into the self-relation of infinite mind, but rather insight into the fact of the existing self-relationship at the foundation of the *mens humana*. In order to encounter the phenomenon of self-apprehension, the human mind does not need to transcend toward the infinity of God; it needs to be understood correctly in its finitude.

While the ascension to self-consciousness in Plotinus de-individualizes and infinitizes, the self-apprehension analyzed by Augustine takes place in the domain of finitude and proves to be a constitutional condition for individuality. According to Plotinus, noûs encompasses the entirety of the self-reflecting world of ideas. Thus, the ideas have their being in the self-apprehension of noûs. Augustine's *mens humana,* on the contrary, is a finite rational being. The *mens humana* also possesses knowledge of the ideas, but the ideas are not essentially immanent to it and their intertwinement not so present. The human mind does not generate the ideas in itself, rather—comparable to the

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[156] Verbeke deals with both Conf. 7, Lib. arb. 2 und Trin. 9/10 as testaments of Augustine's »métaphysique d'intériorité« (Verbeke 1954, 513). He therefore misses the differences between the ascent to God by means of the *mens humana* and the contemplation of this *mens* as an image of God. I thus agree with Beierwaltes, who, while emphasizing the Plotinian influence on the ascension-report in Conf. 7.10.16, describes Augustine's divergent mindset in *De Trinitate*: "This specifically Christian influence of the absolute self-relation brings a new dimension to the finite self-relation of thinking for the knowledge of itself: The human *mens* is made, in the sense of Genesis 1:26, as an "image and analogy." In its self-exploration or self-experience, the *mens* proves to be an arrangement of triadic forces bound together but thoroughly differentiated. […] Thus, in an analysis of the triadic structure of the human mind – in a more advanced and particular measure than was possible in Neoplatonic thought – the postulate that self-knowledge is the condition and the way to knowledge of God can be realized. (Beierwaltes 1998, 186)."

Plotinian διανοητικόν —it receives them.[157] If the human mind, therefore, possesses knowledge of the ideas, it is not because it itself is the world of ideas but because God imparts to it this knowledge. Undoubtedly, self-relation is essential to the *mens humana*, but this self-relation does not answer for the being of the ideas; it neither designates a quality of the κόσμος νοητός itself nor encompasses it.

Augustine shows that self-possession is the *principium individuationis* of the human mind. Through its self-relation, a subject first emerges that maintains itself as identical in all concrete actions and cognitions. This identity is far removed from enveloping everything thinkable or experience-able, but it does guarantee a pole to which all experience is referred. If it is allowable to use a Kantian phrase without invoking the full weight of his theory of constitution, one could say, Augustine analyzes the self-relation of the *mens humana* as that instance which ensures that all of my intuitions are *mine* or, stated more generally, that there is a subject different from other subjects which can have intuitions.[158]

The correspondences between Plotinus' and Augustine's theory of self-apprehension, nevertheless, come to the fore. Both possess, from a historical perspective, a common point of reference, namely the critique of Sextus Empiricus on the possibility of self-knowledge. Moreover, Augustine adopts the notion of the continuity of self-apprehension. Just as noûs, timelessly unmoved, reflects itself in itself, the self-relation of the *mens humana* is constant. Only thus can a self-maintaining identity be constituted. As continuous, this self-relation has to be non-discursive like the Plotinian noûs. For if the totality of that which is to be apprehended is not conceived at one time but in successive steps, then the requisite continuity would no longer be warranted. Finally, like Plotinus, Augustine insists on the autarchy of the self-relation. In its self-apprehension, the *mens humana* already has and knows that which it wants to have and know, namely itself. If it would seek something that has yet to be appropriated, continuity and identity would be suspended. In this respect, the *mens humana* satisfies itself. It is that which it

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[157] Cf. Augustine's theorem of the inner teacher in *De magistro*.

[158] If Horn's thesis is accurate that Plotinus ascribes an individuating function to noûs (Horn, in: Brachtendorf 2000), then it remains to ask, how it can be that noûs is simultaneously divine total-knowledge and human-individual self-consciousness. Augustine deserves at least the distinction of having separated these barely reconcilable determinations.

can be and is therefore pure actuality and perfection. But this applies, according to Augustine, only for that core area of the human mind constitutive of its identity in which the mind always already is related to itself. It is not the case, however, for the manifold, discursive world- and self-relations in which the self-identical mind is engaged. For the infinite, divine noûs, being identical to itself means knowing everything knowable, possessing everything desirable, and being, in perfect peace, blissful in itself. The human mind, conversely, is a finite entity. Identity for it is a necessary condition for knowledge and action, but this identity does not include everything knowable. In it, the goals of action are not given. Identity is thus not bliss, but rather the condition for striving for knowledge and happiness.

II. The Ontology of the Trinity (Trin. 5-7)

In the first book of *De Trinitate*, Augustine formulates the traditional dogmatic interpretation of the divine Trinity as found in holy scripture: "The purpose of all the Catholic commentators I have been able to read on the divine books of both testaments, who have written before me on the trinity which God is, has been to teach that according to the scriptures Father and Son and Holy Spirit in the inseparable equality of one substance present a divine unity; and therefore there are not three gods but one God; although indeed the Father has begotten the Son, and therefore he who is the Father is not the Son; and the Son is begotten by the Father, and therefore he who is the Son is not the Father; and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son, but only the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, himself coequal to the Father and the Son, and belonging to the threefold unity."[1] From this context, the three principles of Augustine's ontology of the Trinity can be discerned, namely the equality of the three persons, their substantial identity, and their difference from each other. In the subsequent books, Augustine substantiates these principles first with biblical testimonies (books 1-4), then through the logic of Platonic and Aristotelian ontology. His interpretation of the three principles first becomes understandable, however, upon the backdrop of his philosophical theology. Thus, I will first address Augustine's concept of God and its ontological implications in order to turn from there to the equality of persons and their relationality. Because Augustine uses the terminology of substance and relation primarily developed for the description of inner-worldly phenomena for divine being, I will discuss independently the validity of this difference for the higher spheres of being. The topic of the unity of God will form a line of continuity throughout the following discussions and will ultimately challenge the applicability of the concept of person to the Trinity.

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[1] Omnes quos legere potui, qui ante me scripserunt de Trinitate quae Deus est, divinorum Librorum veterum et novorum catholici tractatores, hoc intenderunt secundum Scripturas docere, quod Pater et Filius et Spiritus sanctus, unius substantiae inseparabili aequalitate divinam insinuent unitatem, ideoque non sint tres dii sed unus Deus, quamvis Pater Filium genuerit, et ideo Filius non sit qui Pate rest; Filiusque a Patre sit genitus, et ideo Pater non sit qui Filius est; Spiritusque sanctus nec Pater sit nec Filius, sed tantum Patris et Filii Spiritus, Patri et Filio etiam ipse coaequalis et ad Trinitas pertinens unitatem (Trin. 1.7)

Augustine always relied on the ontological tradition insofar as it was available to him. His primary concern did not consist in the cultivation of a completely new schema for the apprehension of reality in general, but rather in the adequate interpretation of the trinitarian God. This God is not, however, merely an intelligible object. He exhibits rather a unique structure. Therefore, considerable theoretical effort is required to reach a satisfying ascertainment of his essence. In his description of material being, Augustine unhesitatingly utilizes Aristotle's doctrine of categories, but he demonstrates that this teaching can only be applied to the divine Trinity and the human mind when essential parts of it are reformed.

1. God as *substantia* and *essentia*

As *Confessiones* demonstrates, Augustine was familiar with Aristotle's *Categories* (though apparently not with his *Metaphysics*).[2] He reports in *Confessiones* of the distinction between substances and that which is in them. Whereas the latter may appear in nine different genres, substance has its own genus.[3] This reception did not help him arrive, however, at an accurate conception of God. Augustine believes that under the erroneous impression that his schema of categories possesses universal validity so that every being has its assignation within it, Aristotle interpreted God, along the lines of bodies, as a carrier (*subiectum*) of attributes like magnitude or beauty. He did not recognize that God belonged to different realm of being than substances. Substances are those carriers of attributes which upon losing their attributes do not undergo a change in essence. A beautiful, big body is not beautiful and big through that by which it is a body. God, on the contrary, is himself his magnitude and beauty—that is, his attributes are insolubly bound to his being. For this reason, such attributes do not change. Whereas a substance-accident figuration is put together and therefore changeable, simplicity and immutability obtain in God. In God, there is nothing that could be otherwise. He does

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[2] Conf. 4.16.28-29

[3] Et satis aperte mihi videbantur loquentes de substantiis, sicuti est homo, et quae in illis essent, sicute est figura hominis, qualis sit et statura, quot pedum sit, et cognatio, cuius frater sit, aut ubi sit constitutus aut quando natus, aut stet an sedeat aut calciatus vel armatus sit aut liquid faciat aut patiatur aliquid, et quaecumque in his novem generibus, quorum exempli gratia quaedam posui, vel in ipso substantiae genere innumerabilia reperiuntur (Conf.4.16.29).

not have any accidents and is therefore not substance.[4] Augustine does not inquire into the conceivability of an accident-free substance, which would make the concept of substance applicable to God. Instead, he apparently presupposes that substances always possess non-necessary attributes, maintaining that the concept of substance can be applied only for the description of changing individuals. Augustine's argumentation that Aristotele's doctrine of categories does not apply to being altogether but only to changeable being serves to "regionalize" the doctrine. For God must be said to be transcategorical.

In *De Trinitate*, Augustine again emphasizes the accident-less nature of God, while showing increased openness toward the terminology of substance. This openness was largely due to the Latin Church's traditional Trinity-formula: *"una essentia vel substantia—tres personae,"* in which *essentia* and *substantia* serve as equivalents to the Greek οὐσία.[5] Augustine is quick to stress, however, that the termini *substantia* and *essentia* normally would be used for the description of those beings that possess accidents and are thus mutable, whereas God represents the "*incommutabilis substantia vel essentia* (Trin. 5.3)." Immutability and simplicity, he believes, are best expressed in the concept *essentia*. For just as *sapientia* can be derived from *sapere* and *scientia* from *scire*, *essentia* depicts a nominal form of *esse* and suggests that that being described as *essentia* always maintains its being, whereas everything mutable either actually loses its being or could lose it.[6] Solely of the immutable can it be said that it truly is.[7] In this sense, God alone is *essentia*.

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[4] [...] cum etiam te, deus meus, mirabiliter simplicem atque incommutabilem, illis decem praedicamentis putans quidquid esset omnino conprehensum, sic intellegere conarer, quasi et tu subiectus esses magnitudini tuae aut pulchritudini, ut illa essent in te quasi in subiecto sicut in corpore, cum tua magnitude et tua pulchritude tu ipse sis, corpus autem non eo sit magnum et pulchrum, quo corpus est, quia etsi minus magnum et minus pulchrum esset, nihilominus corpus esset (Conf.4.16.29)? Augustine means that accidental determinations are *in* a substance as *in* a *subiectum*. Hence, he does not differentiate between the two termini here. The example he gives for a *substantia* is *homo* by which an individual not the species is intended. His example for *subiectum* is *corpus*.

[5] Cf., Trin. 5.3. Essentiam dico quae οὐσία graece dicitur, quam usitatius substantiam vocamus (Trin. 5.9). [...] non aliter in sermone nostro, id est latino essentia quam substantia solet intelligi (Trin. 7.7).

[6] Et ideo sola est incommutabilis substantia vel essentia quae Deus est, cui profecto ipsum esse unde essentia nominate est maxime et verissime competit. Quod enim mutatur non servat ipsum esse, et quod mutari potest etiamsi non mutetur, potest quod fuerat non esse [...] (Trin. 5.3).

[7] [...] verissime dicatur esse [...] (Trin 5.3).

Throughout the ontological analyses of *De Trinitate*, Augustine uses the concepts *substantia* and *essentia* as equivalents both in the application to changing reality and with reference to God. He nevertheless points out that the application of the concept of *substance* to God is ultimately a misusage.[8] *Substantia* depicts the nominal form of *subsistere*. "To subsist," however, means to be a *subiectum*, a carrier of attributes.[9] Only changing entities can be called "substance" in the strictest sense.[10]

The ontological primacy of *essentia* over *substantiae* is demonstrated not only in the immutability of the *essentia* but also in its indestructibility. The changeability of substances initially proves only that the being of substance is not unconditionally connected to its accidental determinations. Augustine defines an accident as that which can be lost through the transformation of the thing it belongs to while the being of the thing remains unaffected by this loss.[11] The compositional character of concrete individuals demonstrates itself precisely in that a body can change in size and color while remaining a body.[12] The *subiectum* holds itself steadfast against the modifications of its attributes.[13] The body-substance is characterized by the constancy of being a body. When Augustine nevertheless states that that which changes does not preserve being itself, this change cannot mean a modification of accidents on a self-maintaining substance, but rather the destruction of the substance itself.[14] The changing existent is contingent; it is exposed to the possibility of not-being not only in its accidental determinations but also as that which it essentially is. Solely the immutable necessarily preserves its being.

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[8] Unde manifestum est Deum abusive substantiam vocari ut nomine usitatiore intellegatur essentia, quod vere ac proprie dicitur ita ut fortasse solum deum dici oporteat essentiam (Trin. 7.10).

[9] De his enim rebus recte intellegitur [sc. subsistere] in quibus subiectis sunt ea quae in aliquo subiecto esse dicuntur sicut color aut forma in corpore. Corpus enim subsistit et ideo substantia est (Trin. 7.10).

[10] Res ergo mutabiles neque simplices proprie dicuntur substantiae (Trin. 7.10). Despite this reservation, Augustine applies the terminology of substance to God. My presentation follows his usage.

[11] Accidens autem dici non solet nisi quod aliqua mutatione eius rei cui accidit amitti potest (Trin. 5.5).

[12] […] corpus autem non eo sit magnum et pulchrum, quo corpus est, quia etsi minus magnum et minus pulchrum esset, nihilominus corpus esset (Conf. 4.16.29)?
    et ideo si esse desinat vel ille color vel illa forma, non adimunt corpus corpori esse quia non hoc est ei esse quod illam vel illam formam coloremve retinere (Trin. 7.10).

[13] Augustine clearly uses *subiectum* in the sense of the υποκείμενον of the Aristotelian categories. The *subiectum* has a specific essence, even if only that of being a body, and it is thus not to be thought of as an indeterminate substrate.

[14] Quod enim mutatur non servat ipsum esse, et quod mutari potest etiamsi non mutetur potest quod fuerat non esse […] (Trin. 5.3).

From the standpoint of *essentia*, destructibility, as the dissolution of the essence of a thing, and mutability, as a change of accidents, tend toward each other. Their closeness can be seen, for instance, in Augustine's discussion of the so-called "inseparable accidents." The color black is a quality of a crow's feather and is as such an accident, but no crow's feather can be found that is not black. Porphyry, from whom Augustine might have this example, defines the inseparable accident as that which factually always appears on a particular subject but which, without the demise of the subject, could be thought away.[15] Even if there are no white crow feathers, he maintains, a crow is nonetheless imaginable without the color black. Therefore, the color black is something the crow could be without. The black color of the crow's feather thus suffices for Porphyry's definition of accidents: "An accident is that which can equally accompany or not accompany the same subject (Chap. V 4a)." In contrast, Augustine's definition of accidents aims at the mutability of the thing, and in the case of an inseparable accident, he interprets this mutability as destruction:[16] "[L]ike the color black in a crow's feather, it does lose it, not indeed as long as it is a feather, but because it is not always a feather. The stuff it is made of is changeable, and so the moment it ceases to be that animal or that feather, and that whole body turns and changes into earth it loses of course that color."[17] In his treatment of this question, Augustine sets the accent—unlike Porphyry and Aristotle—on the changeability of the thing, which manifests itself in its destructibility. Substance, in the strict sense, is thus not only everything exhibiting accidents but also everything impermanent.

In Aristotle's doctrine of categories, the first οὐσία (substance), as the individual, stands opposite its determinations, which can change without hindering the individual from being the individual that it is. Augustine assumes Aristotle's concept of οὐσία but forms it into a necessary being that, with the support of the criterion of contingency, equally opposes both accidents and that which has accidents. With his interpretation of

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[15] Cf., Porphyry's Introduction to Aristotle's Categories, esp. Chap. V 4a; see also Chap. XIV 5b and Chap. XVII 6b.

[16] […] quod aliqua mutatione eius rei cui accidit amitti potest (Trin. 5.5).

[17] sicuti est plumae corvi color niger; amittit eum tamen non quidem quamdiu pluma est sed quia non semper est pluma. Quapropter ipsa materies mutabilis est, et ex eo quod disinit esse illud animal vel illa pluma totumque illud corpus in terram mutatur et vertitur, amittit utique etiam illum colorem (Trin. 5.5).

οὐσία, Augustine thus relativizes the Aristotelian distinction between the first οὐσία and its accidents by subsuming them both under the title of "contingency." His understanding of *essentia* represents a perfected form of Aristotle's first οὐσία and has no connection to his second οὐσία. Although Augustine is well aware that *essentia*, in the sense of the general concept, will be used for the designation of species or genus (cf., Trin. 7.11), he is intent on showing that the *essentia*, called such because of the truth of its being, is not a generality but the *one* God.

2. Identity of Substance and Equality of Persons

The principle of equality, according to Augustine, stems from the accident-less nature of God. This states that there is no difference in status within the Trinity. The Father is not greater than the Son, and the Son is not greater than the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the principle of equality rejects the principle of addition within the Trinity: two persons together are not more than one person alone, and each person for himself is just as great as the entire Trinity. This notion of non-addition is Augustine's standard example for the qualitative difference between the intelligible world and the corporeal sphere for which composition and addition are intrinsic. Augustine's point of departure is God's particular relation to his attributes like greatness, justice, power, or even "being-God." For things that change, being is different from attributes. The big house is not big because it is a house. As a house, it could just as well be small. Within the context of the doctrine of ideas that Augustine advocates, the reason for the greatness of a house or a mountain is its participation in the idea of greatness itself. This idea of greatness is that by which all great things are great, and it itself is especially and to a much higher degree great than the things that are great by participation in it.[18] It thus can be said, first of all, that the idea of greatness instantiates itself in the attributes of things; secondly, that it is not the ground of being of these things as such: the attribute can be separated from the thing, and the thing is hence changeable; thirdly, that the number of possible instantiations is unlimited—

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[18] Sed illa est vera magnitudo qua non solum magna est domus quae magna est et qua magnus est mons quisquis magnus est, sed etiam qua magnum est quidquid aliud magnum dicitur, ut aliud sit ipsa magnitudo, aliud ea quae ab illa magna dicuntur. Quae magnitudo utique primitus magna est, multoque excellentius quam ea quae participatione eius magna sunt (Trin. 5.11).

there can be any number of great things that simultaneously participate in greatness; and fourthly, that greatness can be predicated of itself. Greatness does not only bestow greatness upon other things but is itself great. It is not, however, because greatness participates in itself that it is great; greatness is rather the explication of its very essence: greatness is great simply because it is greatness. Therefore, it is in an exceptional manner great and has precedence over that which is great through it. Moreover, in the realm of participating things, there are increases and decreases in magnitude, and two things taken together are greater than one of them alone. Since the being-great of greatness is not due to participation but is an expression of essence, however, there can be no variations and no addition in it. Greatness itself is not exemplary because it is the greatest thing; it is, in fact, not at all a great thing, for its greatness does not stem from participation but is rather identical with its being. Thus, it is not greater than other things but is great in a different, namely inseparable manner. This manner of being-great comes to expression in the self-predication: *magnitudo magna est*.

If God is immutable and yet attributes like greatness are to be predicated of him, then his being-great cannot depend on participation in greatness but is to be understood—like for greatness itself—as an expression of his essence. God is great because He is greatness itself. God's being is not different from his being-great.[19] This applies equally to all other attributes of God. Whereas the *esse* of *magnitudo* is identical to *magna esse*, the *esse* of *iustitia* to *iustum esse*, and the *esse* of *sapientia* to *sapiens esse*, God unifies all of these attributes in himself so that his *esse* is identical to *magnus esse*, *iustus esse*, *sapiens esse*, etc. If God is interpreted as three-personal, the individual persons should not be conceived as great in the sense of participating in greatness. Each person is God and God is greatness itself. Within the Trinity, therefore, there is no addition and no difference in greatness. The individual person is greatness itself just as the entire Trinity is greatness itself. Thus, the individual person cannot be less great than the Trinity. The equality in the Trinity does not rest on the notion that every person possesses the same attributes in the same measure because two persons, then, would still be greater than one.

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[19] Deus autem quia non ea magnitudine magnus est quae non est quod ipse ut quasi particeps eius sit Deus cum magnus est, alioquin illa erit maior magnitudo quam Deus; Deo autem non est aliquid maius, ea igitur magnitudine magnus est qua ipse est eadem magnitudo (Trin. 5.11).

The basis for equality resides rather in the immutability of both the Trinity as a whole and each individual person. Immutability underscores that God's attributes do not result from participation, but rather are expressions of his essence.[20] Equality then refers not only to the relation of the individual persons to each other but also to the relation of every person to the entire Trinity. Ultimately, the axiom of equality follows from the simplicity of God. The Trinity is only *one substantia* or *essentia*. Due to the principle of non-addition, this *essentia* is perfectly represented in every, single person. Father, Son, and Spirit are each God, but they are not three different gods or three equal gods; they are rather just the *one* God.

3. Relationality[21]

Accompanying the ontological distinction between substance and accident, according to Augustine, is a distinction between two types of propositions. Propositions about an object can be made either *secundum substantiam* or *secundum accidens*. If the essence or at least an essential attribute of an object is predicated, the proposition is of the form *secundum substantiam*, or, as Augustine also calls it, *ad se*. If the predication concerns a changing property or attribute, the proposition is considered *secundum accidens*. According to the Aristotelian doctrine of categories, relations belong among the types of accidents. Augustine claims that if the relation of one object to another is predicated of the first object, it is a matter of a proposition *ad aliquid relative* (abbreviated: *ad aliquid*). The instance to which the object is relative need not be named. It suffices that the predicate of the proposition is a relational concept like, for example, "half, double, master, slave, etc."[22]

The distinction between propositions *ad se* and those *ad aliquid relative* acquires a central position in Augustine's ontology of the Trinity. The Arian critique of the principle of equality provoked Augustine to a unique interpretation of the "begotten-

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[20] Eadem causa nec magnos tres dicimus sed unum magnum quia non participatione magnitudinis Deus magnus est sed se ipso mango magnus est quia ipse sua est magnitudo. Hoc et de bonitate et de aeternitate et de omnipotentia Dei dictum sit […] (Trin. 5.11).

[21] Barnes offers an overview particularly of all the French and English literature on the topic "relation," 51-79, esp. 62ff. Standard information and further literary references can be found in Courth, 189-209.

[22] Cf., Trin. 5.6

ness" of the second divine person. Like Augustine, the Arians held the view that God does not have any accidents. They concluded from this, however, that every proper statement about God should be understood as *secundum substantiam*.[23] In that case, the statements that the Father is un-begotten and the Son begotten would concern the substance of Father and Son. For the Arians, it follows that the Son is substantially different from and less than the Father. This view, however, would contradict both the theorem of equality and God's unity of substance. To avoid the Arian consequence, Augustine devises an alternative interpretation of "begotten-ness," which relies on a revaluation of the category of relation.

In the domain of creatures, everything losable or reducible is, according to Augustine, an accident, including the relationality of a thing.[24] Relational propositions, though, are also made of the divine persons, as, for instance, the fatherhood of the first person, the son-ness, the being-word, being-image, being-begotten of the second person, and the being-a-gift of the third person. While the Arians interpret all of these predications as *secudum substantiam* because propositions about God *secundum accidens* are forbidden, Augustine construes them as true propositions of relation. In contrast to the Arians, however, he holds that these propositions are not made *secundum substantiam,* but rather *ad aliquid relative*. In the case of an immutable being, relations should not be understood as accidents. If an accident is a determination that "can be lost by some change of the thing it modifies (Trin. 5.5)" or that "can be lost or diminished (Trin. 5.6)," then the relations within the Trinity cannot be accidental. For the Trinity exists eternally and is unchanging. Augustine can claim therefore that although no propositions *secundum accidens* can be made of God, not every proposition about him must be *secundum substatiam*. There is a third possibility, namely propositions *secundum relationem* or *ad aliquid relative*. The begotten-ness of the Son is one such relational predicate. It does not concern the substance of the Son and therefore does not endanger the equality or the substantial unity of Father and Son.

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[23] Quidquid de Deo dicitur vel intellegitur non secundum accidens sed secundum substantiam dicitur. Quapropter ingenitum esse Patri secundum substantiam est, et genitum esse Filio secundum substantiam est (Trin. 5.4).
[24] Cf., Trin. 5.5

The replacement of the distinction between propositions *secundum substantiam* and *secundum accidens* with the juxtaposition of predications *ad se* and *ad aliquid relative* demonstrates Augustine's central idea.[25] It provides verification that propositions other than those *secundum substantiam* can be made of God without having to assert that God is a carrier of accidents. Upon applying this distinction to God, Augustine clarifies that not every statement about God explicates his essence. It is precisely those statements about each individual person within the Trinity that do not possess the character of necessity of an essential predication. The fact that God is great is grounded in the being of God just as the fact that greatness is great resides in its own very essence. But the notion that God is Father, Son, or Gift does not follow from the God-ness of God. At this point, the language of accidents would be valid if it were not for the suspension of the substance-accident distinction for the divine sphere due to the criterion of changelessness.[26]

The application of the *ad se/ad aliquid relative* distinction to God results in the following depiction: Every *ad se* proposition about God is grounded in his unchanging *essentia*. Because this *essentia* lies ontologically beyond the sphere of participation, it follows that each individual person is equally this *essentia* as is the entire Trinity. Therefore, the same *ad se-* propositions are made of each person as well as of the entire Trinity: the Father is great, the Son is great, the Spirit is great, and God, as the unity of the three, is great, though not in the sense of a sum of three greats but precisely in the

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[25] To a certain extent, this juxtaposition tends to relativize the substance-accident distinction. If the pair *ad se/ad aliquid relative* forms a complete disjunction, then every proposition about an object for itself, whether it is *secundum substantiam* or *secundum accidens* is to be grasped together as an *ad se*-proposition and juxtaposed to those predications that place the subject of the statement in relation to another object. It is quite doubtful that Augustine would truly go so far as to place together, under the heading *ad se*, the substance-category with all types of accidents (besides relation) and juxtapose it with the relation-category. He is primarily interested in the application of this distinction to the divine Trinity. In it, the problem of grasping together propositions of substance and those of accidents is not posed precisely because there are no accidents. In the case of God, *ad se*-predications always concern substance. As we have already seen, however, Augustine previously relativized the substance-accident distinction by juxtaposing necessary and contingent beings. This juxtaposition placed all the *substantiae* and their accidents on one side and the divine *essentia* on the other.

[26] This point demonstrates how Augustine treats the Aristotelian doctrine of categories. Taking up the concept of the first οὐσία, he shows that there is a perfect form of the οὐσία called *essentia*, which is removed from the doctrine of categories. Through the criterion of unchangingness, the doctrine of categories' domain of validity is reduced to a definite region of being, next to which and above which is the realm of the eternal. Thus, certain elements of this doctrine of categories are adopted and modified to the conditions of the higher sphere of being.

same sense that each person is called great. The power of substance effects that what can be said *ad se* about each person is to be predicated of the entirety—not in the plural, only in the singular.[27] Viewed solely from *ad se* predications, the individual persons cannot be differentiated from each other or from the divine unity. Because what is valid for each person is exactly what is valid for God, there would be no reason to attribute anything to the persons if it were not for relational propositions. Relational propositions—and they alone—allow the possibility of making predications of the individual persons that are valid only for each particular person, not for the other persons or for the Trinity. The Son alone is begotten, not the Father, the Spirit, or God. Exclusively relational propositions enable the differentiation of the three persons in the Trinity and therefore are capable of philosophically legitimizing the specified biblical distinction of three instances. This does not mean, however, that only relational statements may be made about each individual person. Rather, the Father, for example, is by all means addressable in the form of *ad se* statements as, for instance, when it is said, "the Father is great," "the Father is God," etc. The possibility of *ad se*-predication of the individual person even shows that each person possesses the character of substance in some manner. The subject of every *ad se*-proposition about a specific person is nevertheless interchangeable, and this interchangeability demonstrates that all persons are only *one essentia* (s. Trin. 5.9). Consequently, each person is substantial but not identifiable as an individual in substantiality. Individuality first becomes possible through relations.

4. The Relation of Substantiality and Relationality

At the beginning of the sixth book, Augustine asks about the relation between substantiality and relationality within the Trinity. This topic dominates the entire seventh book. His question is whether each individual person is simultaneously substantial and relational so that both *ad se-* and *ad aliquid*-statements could be made of the Father, for example, or whether it is possible that the essence of a person be entirely absorbed in his relationality so that the person is all he is because of his relation to another person.

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[27] tantamque vim esse eiusdem substantiae in Patre et Filio et Spiritu sancto ut quidquid de singulis ad se ipsos dicitur non pluraliter in summa sed singulariter accipiatur (Trin. 5.9).

Through the criterion of changelessness, the relation was lifted out of its ontological secondary status, namely that of an accident, while its difference to the category of substance was preserved. This revaluation suggests the more radical (and seemingly modern) question of whether perhaps relationality should even be prioritized over substantiality.

The passage "*Christum Dei virtutem et Dei sapientiam* (1 Cor. 1:24)" presents a biblical occasion for this ontological discussion.[28] In the debates with the first generation of Arians, the Catholic side used this statement to show that the Son having been born is not to be understood, as Arius believed, as the beginning of the Son in time. For if the Son is the wisdom of the Father and wisdom is attributed essentially to the Father, then the Son must be just as eternal as the Father. The more advanced Arianism dropped the thesis of the origin of the Son in time, rendering the antithetical Catholic argument obsolete (Trin. 6.1). Augustine nevertheless takes up this argument because in the context of his own ontology of the Trinity, it could lead to the understanding that the Father is everything he appears to be through his relation to the Son. If the Father is not his own wisdom but is wise only through the wisdom begotten by him, then the same could be said of magnitude, goodness, eternity, omnipotence, and every other *ad se*-predication (Trin. 6.2). One could accordingly make *in se ipso* only relative statements about the Father, namely those *ad Filium*. Thus, statements of the *ad se* form would be valid only *cum Filio* or *in Filio*.[29] Because the Son is everything he is through the Father, however, one could make *in se ipso* only relative statements about the Son. Similarly, the *ad se*-propositions about the Son would be true only *cum Patre*. That which is said of one person *ad se* or *secundum substantiam* would be valid only because it refers to both persons: the Father could not be God without the Son, and the Son could not be God without the Father.[30] This conception could appear attractive, for it would not only accentuate the Son's unity of essence with the Father, as the Son is quasi the essence of

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[28] Cf., for this and the following passage: Perler, 112-118.

[29] Sed si non dicitur in se ipso nisi quod ad Filium dicitur, id est, pater vel genitor vel principium eius […]; quidquid autem aliud dicitur cum Filio dicitur vel potius in Filio, sive magnus ea magnitudine quam genuit […] (Trin. 6.3).

[30] quidquid ergo ad se dicuntur, non dicitur alter sine altero, id est quidquid dicuntur quod substantiam eorum ostendat ambo simul dicuntur. Si haec ita sunt, iam ergo nec Deus est Pater sine Filio nec Filius Deus sine Patre, sed ambo simul Deus (Trin. 6.3).

the Father; it would also draw the relation of the persons to each other into the essence of the individual person. In contrast to this possibility, Augustine's initially presented interpretation claims that that which is said *ad se* of one individual person is valid for the other persons and for the Trinity. The subject of such a statement is thus interchangeable. Accordingly, his interpretation does not contain the thesis that the *ad se*-propositions about one person can be made solely in connection with another person. The thesis that the Father is God just as the Son is God is weaker than the interpretation that the Father could not be God without the Son. In the first case, the substance and the relation of the person are separable; in the second, they are not.[31]

In the seventh book, Augustine continues this discussion by asking whether each individual person in the Trinity could for itself, apart from the others, be called great, wise, etc.[32] Statements of relation about one single person are undoubtedly possible, but at stake is whether there can be (subject to the unity of the divine *essentia*) *ad se*-propositions about a single person or whether every such predication is in truth a *cum*-statement. If the latter is true, as 1 Cor. 1:24 appears to assert, then the Father would be everything he is through his begotten Son, who represents the *essentia* of the Father.[33] *Essentia*, in this usage, would be a relational concept similar to *image* or *word*. Thus, the difference between the language of relation and that of *essentia* would be meaningless. A

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[31] R. Williams advocates an antithetical view: "What should be particularly noted is that Augustine, so far from separating the divine substance from the life of the divine persons, defines that substance in such a way that God cannot be other than relational, trinitarian (R. Williams, "*Sapientia* and the Trinity: Reflections on the *De Trinitate*," in CA 1990, 317-332, here 325). In my opinion, the crux of the Augustinian argument consists exactly in the separation of those predicates that belong to God as God because they are identical with his *esse* from those predicates that God possesses only as Father, Son, or Spirit, which do not belong to his essence as God. Augustine defines the essence of God so that he indeed may be otherwise than trinitarian. Williams' thesis is thus inaccurate: "In God there is nothing pertaining to the nature of God that does not pertain to the trintarian life, and nothing that is true of one person which is not true of all […] (325)." Each divine person has his specific relations that are different from those of the other persons and that cannot be grounded in the *essentia* of God.

[32] utrum et singular quaeque in Trinitate persona possit et per se ipsam non cum ceteris duabus dici Deus aut magnus aut sapiens aut verus aut omnipotens aut iustus et si quid aliud de Deo dici potest, non relative sed ad se ipsum, an vero non dicantur ista nisi cum Trinitas intellegitur (Trin. 7.1).

[33] […] ut sic sit Filius deitas Patris sicut sapientia et virtus Patris et sicuti est verbum et imago Patris. Et quia non aliud illi est esse, aliud Deum esse, ita sit etiam essentia Patris Filius sicuti est verbum et imago eius (Trin. 7.1). […] Patrem non esse aliquid ad se ipsum et non solum quod Pater est sed omnino quod est, ad Filium relative dici (Trin. 7.2).

being would be nothing in and of itself but would be completely absorbed in its relations to others.[34]

Augustine discusses two attempts of avoiding the dissolution of the concept of *essentia*. It could be claimed, first of all, that although the Father is completely relative to the Son, the Son at least remains addressable *ad se*. The Father, on this account, would be merely *genitor essentiae*, but the Son would be *essentia*. It would follow, according to Augustine, that every determination of the Son would become an *ad se*-predicate. Not only greatness, power, and wisdom but also the being-image and the being-word of the Son would become absolute characters. It is absurd, however, to speak *ad se* of an image, which always refers to that which it is an image of.

Secondly, through a refinement of this argument, one could try to establish a distinction so that some of the Son's attributes could be considered relative, while others, like *virtus* and *sapientia*, are maintained as essential. This line of argumentation, Augustine states, would entail, however, the abandonment of the thesis that the Father is wise through begotten wisdom. Wisdom could not be absolute in the Son and relative in the Father because every relation depends on reciprocity.[35] If the Son is granted an essentiality, then it also must be admitted for the Father. If that does not occur, the Son could not be attributed an *essentia* that is outside of his relationality. But to call relational determinations essential would constitute a simple abuse of language.[36]

In order to resolve this problem, Augustine takes recourse to ordinary language usage. The word *dominus* does not depict an *essentia* but a relativum that refers to a servant. Contrarily, *homo* is an *ad se*-expression depicting an *essentia*. In sentences like "this human is lord," "the horse is a draught-animal," or "the money is a purchase price," the *essentia* (human, horse, money) is linked to a relation (the human is as lord relative to a servant, the horse as a draught-animal refers to a burden, and money as purchase price stands in relation to goods), but this relation is only possible because the *essentia* also has its being outside the relation.[37] If the human did not have a substantial being, there would be nothing that could be relatively called "lord;" and if the horse was not an *essentia*, it

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[34] Neuter ergo ad se est, et uterque ad invicem relative dicitur (Trin. 7.2).

[35] Omnia enim quae relative dicuntur ad invicem dicuntur (Trin. 7.2). Cf., Aristotle, *Categories* 7b 14.

[36] Hoc autem unde agimus si essentia ipsa relative dicitur, essentia ipsa non est essentia (Trin. 7.2)?

[37] […] quia omnis essentia quae relative dicitur est etiam aliquid excepto relative […] (Trin. 7.2).

could not be relatively a draught-animal.[38] Augustine thus arrives ultimately at the classical Aristotelian understanding that relationality (like every accident) only can exist with reference to a substance as its carrier. The substance is earlier than the relation. Precisely this being-earlier also obtains in the realm of the divine Trinity: if the Father was not something *ad se*, then he could not enter relations.[39] Even if, due to the everlastingness of the divine Trinity, one cannot speak of substance and accidents, two interconnected points remain valid for both the divine and the non-divine realms: a being *ad aliquid* presupposes a being *in se*, and *essentia* is more fundamental than relations. Consequently, a primacy of *essentia* also applies to the divine persons. For instance, the Father—completely analogous to transitory things—is a carrier of attributes with the difference that as a carrier he is unchanging.

Augustine explains his thesis of the primacy of *essentia* over relation through a comparison of the Father-Son relation with the relationship of a colored body to its color. A determination of quality is ultimately a case of relationality because the color is always the color of a colored body, and the body, as colored, is constantly relative to the color.[40] If the colored object is spoken of as a body, the substantiality prior to the relation becomes visible because the being of the body is not expressed relatively but *ad se*. The color, at least initially, is not expressible *ad se* but exclusively in relation to the colored object. The corresponding interpretation of the relation of Father and Son, however, was already rejected in favor of the thesis that *both* Father and Son are *substantia* (and, of course, *una substantia*, Trin. 7.2). Still, the comparison with the color and that which is colored contains an interesting detail, for even if the substantiality of the Son and the Father is admitted, one could try to hold on to the parallelism of the *color-coloratum* model with the following argument: in the relation of a quality to its carrier, it is not only

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[38] Sed si non esset homo, id est aliqua substantia, non esset qui relative dominus diceretur; et si non esset equus quaedam essentia, non esset quod iumentum relative diceretur (Trin. 7.2).

[39] Quapropter si et Pater non est aliquid ad se ipsum, non est omnino qui relative dicatur ad aliquid (Trin. 7.2).

[40] Aristotle also discusses the problem with the differentiability of propositions of quality and those of relation (cf., *Categories* 11a 20-39). He does not think that every proposition of quality is ultimately a proposition about the relation between subject and predicate. He points out that only some qualities like, for instance, "to be knowing" also exhibit relations (namely to what is known). Augustine appears, in contrast, to assume that even non-relational determinations of quality stand in a relation, namely to the subject of the proposition.

the carrier, as a body, that can be spoken of *ad se* but also the quality itself. Just as greatness is great and wisdom is wise, the color white is white. The color white allows a self-predication, and self-predications are model cases of *ad se*-propositions.[41] Is the color, now that it can be spoken of *ad se*, just as much substance as the colored body? And can the relation of Father and Son be conceived analogously to the relation of color and that which is colored?

Augustine rejects these notions. The statements "*sapientia sapiens est*" and "*candor candidus est*" indeed exhibit the same linguistic form, but the underlying ontological relations, Augustine claims, are completely different. While *sapientia* is an *essentia*, the color represents merely a *qualitas* that appears on an *essentia*. *Sapientia* stands for itself (*in se ipso*), but the color exists solely in another (*in aliqua*), namely in a bodily mass. The color white effectuates the whiteness of things whose being does not coincide with being-white. For s*apientia*, however, *esse* and *sapiens esse* are inseparable.[42] Thus, the ability to make *ad se*-predications is for itself alone not a sufficient criterion for substantiality because one can speak in this manner of both that which is *in se ipso* and that which merely exists *in altero*. The color white is called white *ad se* but remains only a *qualitas*.

As further evidence of the difference between both kinds of being, Augustine re-introduces the criterion of changelessness. It definitely happens, he continues, that a soul becomes wise, that is, gains its share in wisdom or loses its share in wisdom. In each case, wisdom remains unchanged. A change takes place only on the soul's part. If a body that is white by means of the color white changes its color, however, this color no longer remains; it ceases existing.[43] Because wisdom is not—or is not only—in the wise soul, but rather *in se ipso*, it does not cease being if, due to a change in the soul, wisdom

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[41] Sicut autem absurdum est dicere candidum non esse candorem, sic absurdum est dicere sapientem non esse sapientiam; et sicut candor ad se ipsum candidus dicitur, ita et sapientia ad se ipsam dicitur sapiens (Trin. 7.2.).

[42] Sed cando corporis non est essentia quoniam ipsum corpus essentia est, et illa eius qualitas, unde et ab ea dicitur candidum corpus cui non hoc est esse quod candidum esse. Aliud enim ibi forma et aliud color et utrumque non in se ipso sed in aliqua mole, quae moles nec forma nec color est sed formata atque colorata. Sapientia vera et sapiens est et se ipsa sapiens est (Trin. 7.2).

[43] Et quoniam quaecumque anima participatione sapientiae fit sapiens, si rursus desipiat, manet tamen in se sapientia; nec cum fuerit anima in stultitiam commutata, illa mutatur. Non ita est in eo qui ex ea fit sapiens quemadmodum candor in corpore quod ex illo candidum est; cum enim corpus in alium colorem fuerit commutatum, non manebit candor ille atque omnino esse desinet (Trin. 7.2).

is no longer in it. Wisdom is therefore eternal and unchanging. In contrast, whiteness is not *in se ipso* but only in a body. Thus, if it can no longer exist in the body, it ceases to be. *Sapientia*, being *in se ipsa*, is therefore eternal, whereas *candor*, being *in altero*, is impermanent.

For the relation of Father and Son it is thus the case that if the Father was not wise by means of his being but first became wise through the Son, the Son would be his *qualitas,* not, however, his offspring (*proles*). The attempt to avoid this consequence by referring to the notion that being and attributes are not different in the Father, as he has not only his qualities but also his *esse* through the Son, results in the absurd consequence that instead of the Son being begotten by the Father, the Father would be begotten or created by the Son. There remains, according to Augustine, no other viable possibility than to admit the simplicity of the Father—that is, the identity of his *esse* with his *sapiens esse* and with every other *ad se*-predicate. The Father is that which he *in se* is, not because of a relation but because of his own essence. The Son, then, is not the ground for the attributes of the Father. He is rather equal to the Father because they both are *essentia* and *una essentia*. If they are spoken of as individual persons—that is, in their reciprocal relationality—then it is the case that they are essence of essence and wisdom of wisdom.[44] The notion of Christ as the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24) is therefore not to be understood as though the Father became wise through the Son. Rather, the Father, like the Son, is essentially (*in se*) wisdom, but the Son is begotten by the Father and is accordingly *de Patre*. In the formula *sapientia de sapientia* or *essentia de essentia*, the substantives refer to the *ad se*-aspect of each person, while the preposition indicates the relation. Christ is therefore the wisdom of God because as Son he is the same wisdom as the Father is who begot him. The relation of the Father to the Son is that of two beings that are not only equal in essence but are rather identical in essence, the one generating from the other. Thus, when the scripture speaks of *sapientia genita*, it indicates the Son in two respects—namely, in his essential identity with the Father (*ad se*), and in his derivation from the Father (*ad aliquid relative*).

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[44] Unde Pater et Filius simul una sapientia quia una essentia, et singillatim sapientia de sapientia sicut essentia de essentia (Trin. 7.3).

The discussions on the relation between the Father and the Son have yielded a two-fold outcome. It has been shown, first of all, that in both the realm of divine being and in the sphere of finite beings, essence precedes relation. The non-applicability of the substance-accident schema to God does not lead to such an inversion that the relation receives priority over essence. Rather, the relationship of the persons to each other rests on the essential determinations, which are the same for all persons.

Secondly, in Augustine's specific discourse on *verbum* (Trin. 7.4), the type of relation between Father and Son that could be characterized as total representation comes to expression. *Verbum* is a relational concept, for a word always refers to a speaker. The Son stems from the Father as the word from someone who speaks it, but because the Son is essentially identical with the Father, one sees the Father in the Son. The *verbum* is not the Father, as *verbum* and Father are relational concepts that secure the distinction of individuals. The Father nevertheless shows himself entirely in the word, for both are God.[45] Because these reflections describe the inner-trinitarian relations, the *verbum Dei* is not a matter of an audibly spoken word that follows the grasping of a thought and therefore occurs as a speaking in time. Yet even this kind of speech, typical for humans, exhibits, according to Augustine, an analogous double-aspect of the word: the word presents itself as word and allows the intended object to be seen.[46] In the *verbum internum* of the *mens humana*, Augustine will find a still deeper analogy for the doubled-face of the *verbum Dei* that is not a quality of the Father but the total expression of his essence.

5. The Logic of Language and the Problem with the Concept of *Person*

According to Augustine, the articulation of the connection of three beings that not only have the same *essentia* but together are *one essentia*, while remaining distinguishable through their reciprocal relations, evades the possibilities of ordinary speech. This difficulty or impossibility shows itself particularly when one inquires into the closer

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[45] […] quod ita ostendit [sc. verbum Dei] Patrem sicuti est Pater quia et ipsum ita est, et hoc est quod Pater secundum quod sapientia est et essentia? Nam secundum quod Verbum non hoc est quod Pater […] (Trin. 7.4)

[46] Si enim hoc verbum quod nos proferimus temporale et transitorium et se ipsum ostendit et illud de quo loquimur, quanto magis Verbum Dei per quod facta sunt omnia […] (Trin. 7.4) ?

determinations of the Trinity. Faith teaches that Father, Son, and Spirit are three, for scripture does not claim that the Father is the Son or that the Spirit is the Father or the Son. When one asks what these three in fact are, however, one immediately runs up against the limits of speech. This question is directed at a concept of species or genus—that is, at a generality, but in the case of the divine Trinity, a general concept cannot be established.[47] Augustine maintains that thought, however, is capable of overcoming the limits of language.[48] The inadequacy of all Trinity-formulas is rooted in the fact that the knowledge of God held in mind, whether this knowledge stem from faith or from insight, must be captured into words and placed before the senses in order to be able to discuss with and disprove the heretics.[49] For Augustine, the problem with both the Greek Trinity-formula (which he interprets as *una essential—tres substantiae vel personae*) and the Latin (*una essentia vel substantia—tres personae*) is that the commonality of the three is expressed by a general concept, namely *substantia* or *persona*. Although this type of tri-unity is negated by the assertion of *one essentia*, the language of three substances or persons remains inappropriate. Even though a trinity is understandable, according to Augustine, language does not allow for any other possibility of representation except that of the paradoxical statement: three persons/substances are only one.

The logic of language, for Augustine, consists in a logic of subsumption composed of genus, species, and individual. If one speaks of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and asks what it is one is speaking of, one could answer that they are three humans and would thereby have concept of species (*nomen speciale*). Otherwise, one could introduce the category of genus (*nomen generale*) in asserting that they are three living beings (*animalia*). If it is a matter of an ox, a dog, and a horse (or laurel tree, myrtle, and an oil tree), however, one can ascribe only a common concept of genus like, for example,

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[47] […] quia tria esse fides vera pronuntiat cum et Patrem non dicit esse Filium, et Spiritum sanctum quod est donum Dei nec Patrem dicit esse nec Filium. Cum ergo quaeritur quid tria vel quid tres, conferimus nos ad inveniendum aliquod speciale vel generale nomen quo complectamur haec tria, neque occurrit animo quia excedit supereminentia divinitatis usitati eloquii facultatem (Trin. 7.7).

[48] Verius enim cogitator Deus quam dicitur, et verius est quam cogitator (Trin. 7.7).

[49] Cum enim conaretur humana inopia loquendo proferre ad hominum sensus quod in secretario mentis pro captu tenet de Domino Deo creatore suo sive per piam fidem sive per qualemcumque intellegentiam […] (Trin. 7.9).

"living being" or "substance." Thus, that which has a common concept of species also possesses a common genus, but not everything that possesses a common genus has a common species.

How does the tri-unity of Father, Son, and Spirit fit into this schema? A general concept cannot be derived from their reciprocal relationality because these relations, in contrast to three friends, for example, are specifically different for each person and unfold in being-a-Father, being-a-Son, and being-a-Gift. The Trinity-formula nevertheless insists on the notion of person. Thus, the concept *person* seems to be the general characteristic sought in the question: what are the three? Because *person* is such a general term that it applies not only to God but also to humans, it must belong, according to Augustine, to the category of genus (*nomen generale*). Since no difference in species obtains between the three persons, a common concept of species should be available in addition to the concept of genus. Augustine asserts, however, that contrary to the laws of the logic of subsumption such a concept of species cannot be found. Hence, Augustine already intimates the questionableness of the concept of *person*.

Characterizations of genus are applied to multiple samples in the plural: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are three living beings; an oil tree, a myrtle, and a laurel are three trees; Father, Son, and Spirit are three persons. Augustine accordingly asks, if one speaks of three persons, why can't *God*, as another general concept, be used in the plural? Or inversely: if—as has been demonstrated—the three are, due to their inexpressible unity, at the same time *one* God so that *God* may not be used in the plural, why should one be able to use *person* in the plural?[50] It may be claimed that scripture clearly forbids language of many gods, but it leaves open the usage of *person*.[51] Augustine sidesteps this biblical argument by appealing to the term *essentia* whose usage the Bible also leaves open. Why then does one speak with reference to God of just *one essentia* and not three, if the rhetoric of three persons is allowable? If *essentia* is used like *persona* as a general concept, regardless of whether this generality lies on the plane of species or genus, one should be able to speak of three *essentiae*. Since this is impossible due to the unity of the

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[50] […] propter ineffabilem coniunctionem haec tria simul unus Deus […] (Trin. 7.8).
[51] Audi Israel; Domiunus Deus tuus, Deus unus est (Deut. 6:4).

Trinity, the language of three substances or three persons should also be disallowed.[52] As was the case with *essentia*, the concepts *substantia* and *persona* can be attributed to each individual person, but contrary to the logic of subsumption, they cannot be general depictions. Even when these concepts are applied not to a single person but to the Trinity, they may appear solely in the singular form. The general is the individual: this is the propositional-logical consequence of the ontological structure of the Trinity. No characteristic attributed to each of the three persons may be made plural. Thus, in the strict sense, one would have to say of the Trinity: *una essenta, una substantia, una person*. Talk of a plurality of persons is acceptable only because of the necessity of speaking about the Trinity, for as soon as one speaks of three, the logic of subsumption raises the question: three what? The answer to which necessitates a concept of generality in the plural form.[53] Whenever one speaks of three persons, however, it should be remembered that this speech act is falsified by the predicate *una essentia*.

Towards the end of book seven, Augustine emphasizes that personhood is an *ad se*-depiction. It is not a predicate that indicates a relation, and consequently it cannot be used to make distinctions within the Trinity.[54] The substantialization of personhood offers Augustine the opportunity to review those Trinity-formula interpretations that accommodate the concepts *essentia*, *substantia*, and *persona* to the logic of subsumption's hierarchy of genus, species, and individual. Every classification breaks down on the prohibited plurality of *essentia*.[55] *Essentia* is not a general concept, but rather the name for an individual, which as such can contain neither a multitude of species nor a plurality of other individuals.

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[52] Aut si propter unitatem Trinitatis non dicuntur tres essentiae sed una essentia, cur non propter eandem unitatem non dicuntur tres substantiae vel tres personae, sed una substantia et una persona? Quam enim est illis commune nomen essentiae ita ut singulus quisque dicatur essentia, tam illis commune est vel substantiae vel personae vocabulum. Quod enim de personis secundum nostrum, hoc de substantiis secundum graecorum consuetudinem ea quae diximus oportet intellegi (Trin. 7.8).

[53] In the discussion with the Sabellians, who rejected the Trinity in favor of a unity, it was useful to be able to quasi overemphasize this tri-unity through a plural general concept.

[54] […] neque in hac Trintate cum dicimus personam Patris aliud dicimus quam substantiam Patris. Quocirca ut substantia Patris ipse Pater est, non quo Pater est sed quo est; ita et persona Patris non aliud quam ipse Pater est. Ad se quippe dicitur persona, non ad Filium vel Spiritum sanctum; sicut ad se dicitur Deus et magnus et bonus et iustus et si quid aliud huiusmodi (Trin. 7.11).

[55] Augustine investigates three cases: 1) Essentia as genus; substantia/persona as species. 2) Essentia as genus; substantia/persona as individual. 3) Essentia as species; substantia/persona as individual.

Augustine stresses that the terms *essentia*, *substantia*, and *persona* in their aforementioned forms of application resemble a material assignation, for like it, they express a commonality that is not a generality.[56] One could claim of three golden statues, Augustine explains, that they are *one* gold (singular!). Similar to the concept *essentia* in the Trinity, gold is removed from classification in the hierarchy of the logic of subsumption. Gold could not be a depiction of species for the individual statues because the category of species does not extend beyond its individuals, whereas the definition of gold is also applicable to golden rings and pots. Gold could not serve as a depiction of genus for the statues as species either because a species may not extend beyond its genus, but not every statue is golden. As helpful as the indication of golden statues is, as an example of a commonality not expressible in terms of an increasing generality, this Trinity-analogy quickly approaches its limits: first of all, because the divine persons are not made *out* of their *essentia* but are identical with it; thus, nothing of this *essentia* could exist outside of the Trinity, whereas independently of the three golden statues, whose statute-ness is not identical with gold-ness, there is still gold; secondly, because the statues are *addable*, which, due to its ontological character, is an impossibility for the Trinity: three statues contain more gold than one, but three divine persons are not greater than one; rather all the persons together are equal to each single person. Just as the structure of the Trinity was removed from explanation on the basis of the substance-accident schema, it also opposes classical propositional logic. The divine *essentia* is common to all three persons without being a generality that can be attributed to a plurality of individuals. The fact that three is not greater than one proves once again to be central.

I will take up the discussed characteristics of God again in my analysis of the human mind. Although the *mens humana* is a finite being that exhibits accidents, its fundamental traits cannot be interpreted in the sense of accidents. The elements of the *mens*, too, can be distinguished solely by their relations, and the extent of their mutual interpenetration is that of an identity of substance in which each individual member represents the whole. Therefore, the logic of language will prove here, too, to be

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[56] Non itaque secundum genus et species ista [sc. essentia, substantia, natura] dicimus sed quasi secundum communem eandemque materiam (Trin. 7.11).

inadequate. Since the phenomenon of self-relation obtains a particular meaning in the analysis of mind, however, I will discuss anew the relationship of essence and relation. All of these reflections appear first in books 9 and 10. Augustine first demonstrates why and to what extent the project of understanding the divine Trinity offers occasion for analyzing the human mind. He dedicates book 8 of *De Trinitate* to this topic.

III. The Failure of Vision and the Analysis of Mind (Trin. 8)

In the course of book 8, Augustine examines four attempts at directing the soul through the contemplation of ideas toward direct insight into the divine Trinity. The first attempt is oriented by the concept of truth, the second by the concept of the good, the third is based on the idea of justice, and the fourth has its center in love. According to Augustine's trinitarian ontology as developed in books 5-7, it can already be said, however, that at least the first three of these attempts will necessarily fail because the concepts veritas, bonum, and iustitia represent ad se-attributes of God. These concepts apply equally to the Father, Son, Spirit, and the Trinity and consequently allow neither an isolation of a single person nor the vision of a tri-unity. Whoever is able to see the truth sees only the veritas that God is and nothing else.

The soul contemplating the ideas is blind to the Trinity for principal reasons. Augustine does not believe that an idea corresponds to a specific relation. There is no "son-ness" as an intelligible reality through which each existing son receives his "being-a-son."[1] If no intelligible archetypal form obtains and the divine persons are identifiable only by their specific relations, then a vision of the divine Trinity by means of an ascent to the intelligible world is principally impossible. The concept *amor* could open, however, extensive possibilities, for it can easily be interpreted as a relational concept as Augustine does at the end of Book 8. Nonetheless, it will be shown that Augustine ultimately avoids the view that the divine Trinity becomes visible through the consideration of love. Thus, none of the four attempts at a vision of the Trinity achieves its goal.

Two aspects of the four principles Augustine uses as mediums for the attempted ascension can be distinguished. First of all, *veritas*, *bonum*, *iustitia*, and *amor* (with qualifications) are intelligible beings—that is, unchanging forms that govern transient existents. A vision of these realities is therefore equivalent to a vision of the eternal. Accordingly, these principles seem optimal to use as vehicles for knowledge of God. But the Augustine of *De Trinitate* deems this project a failure because these principles are

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[1] Alkinoos (cf. *Didaskalikon* 9.2) also expressly rules out the existence of ideas for relations.

incapable of making transparent the threefold nature of the eternal. The second aspect consists in the function of the forms as principles through which they govern the theoretical and practical contact of humans with their surrounding reality. Propositions about reality accord to the difference between true and false, and conduct towards reality is always determined by assumptions about its character as good or bad. The notion that humans possess knowledge of the principles in the sense of an un-thematic understanding is important for the entire 8th book of *De Trinitate*. Solely upon the basis of this always existing knowledge of *veritas* and *bonum*, humans are in the position to distinguish true from false and good from bad. For the usage of these principles does not require expressive knowledge; it suffices that the soul has them in it (*apud se ipsum*). Yet if these principles are to be used as vehicles for the ascent to the eternal, they have to be elevated out of the condition of an un-thematic foreknowledge and made into an object of attention. Augustine's repeated demand that the soul be able to see (*vide, si potes*) is directed at the capacity of the mind to elevate these principles, which it already disposes of without being clear about them, to explicit consciousness.

The ascent to the Trinity will fail, but the notion that the human mind possesses an implicit knowledge of principles capable of being explicated will prove to be an important supporting structure within the architectonic of *De Trinitate*. Augustine will argue that love for an object always presupposes knowledge of this object because only that which one knows can be loved. In the final consequence, this conjuncture entails that love for God presupposes an understanding of the meaning of *Trinity*. Book 8 demonstrates that the implicit knowledge of intelligible, in themselves relation-less, forms can neither lead to a vision of the Trinity nor even enable such an understanding. The 9th and 10th books confirm, however, that the human mind exhibits a trinitarian structure on the basis of which it is called an "image of God" and that it contains an implicit knowledge of itself. Through its un-thematic but always already existing self-knowledge, the mind is familiar with the structure of the Trinity. If this self-knowledge is elevated to an object of reflection, the mind can grasp itself as an image of God and see the divine Trinity in the contemplation of that mirror which it itself is. The idea of the human mind's foreknowledge of itself combined with the thesis of its trinitarian structure should account for the capacity of even the simplest believer to be able to love the

threefold God, on the one hand, and compose, on the other hand, the foundation for Augustine's alternative project to the ascent to God, namely the vision of the Trinity in its image.

1. *Veritas* and *bonum ipsum* as Intelligible Realities

If the soul would disengage from everything changeable and ascertain truth itself, then its spiritual eye would see in a "flash of luminosity" that God is truth. In a dramatized form, Augustine speaks of an ascending soul: "*Ecce vide, si potes, o anima praegravata corpore* […]; *ecce vide, si potes: Deus veritas est* (Trin. 8.3)". When the soul hears the word *veritas*, the understanding grasps it in one fell swoop.[2] After the soul has penetrated this illumination, it has the task of staying in it. According to Augustine, the soul, however, is incapable of abiding in this illumination. Under the weight of its greed and illusions, it sinks back into the customary and earthly way of thinking.[3]

A second attempt begins with a meditation on the manifold meaning of *bonum*. Again the soul is aroused to vision: "*Ecce iterum vide, si potes* (Trin. 8.4)". God himself is to be seen, this time not as *veritas* but as *ipsum bonum*. This ascent to vision is initiated by reflection on the numerous *bona* encountering humans. Augustine's list contains *bona* in the broadest sense, namely bodily goods (health), external goods (wealth, friends), spiritual goods (justice), and also aesthetic goods like a beautiful song or landscape. Augustine initially claims that if one thinks away all of these individual *bona*, the *ipsum bonum* is what remains. Whoever can see this, sees God.[4] This thesis concerning the possibility of a pure vision of the *ipsum bonum* requires explanation. Augustine means that we can evaluate a single good as such and establish a ranking among the individual goods, as we most clearly do, solely because the concept *bonum* is in a quasi natural way impressed upon us.[5] Wherever the language of a good is

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[2] […] *serenitatem quae primo ictu diluxit tibi cum dicerem, Veritas* (Trin. 8.3)

[3] […] *mane si pote; sed non potes. Relaberis in ista solita atque terrena. Quo tandem pondere, quaeso, relaberis nisi sordium contractarum cupiditatis visco et peregrinationis erroribus* (Trin. 8.4)?

[4] *Bonum hoc et bonum illud. Tolle hoc et illud, et vide ipsum bonum si potes; ita Deum videbis* […] (Trin. 8.4).

[5] […] *esset nobis impressa notio ipsius boni secundum quod et probaremus aliquid et aliud alii praeponeremus* (Trin 8.4).

understood, the *ipsum bonum* is simultaneously understood.[6] Therefore, the concept of *bonum ipsum* proves to be the presupposition for the judgment of individual goods. As our practical and aesthetical relation to the world demonstrates, we always already dispose of this concept.

A further step of argumentation should both clarify the claimed identity of the *ipsum bonum* with God and emphasize the metaphysical and practical significance of the concept *bonum*. If the quality of an individual good is to be expressed, then one speaks of a good soul, a good angel, or a good heaven. If one wants to speak analogously of the *bonum ipsum*, one would have to call it *bonum bonum*. In order to understand the full sense of this expression, four different meanings of *bonum* need to be distinguished:

1. In the attributive expressions "good soul" or "good heaven," the noun indicates an individual substance—that is, an existent. Corresponding to his theory already explicated in the early anti-Manichean writings, Augustine determines each existent as a good because it is a defined existent exhibiting a modus and species and because it possesses a power of cohesion with which it resists destruction—a phenomenon Augustine interprets as striving for itself or for preservation. This understanding implies a metaphysical concept of the good. It is not ethical, for it does not reveal anything about the relation of different substances to each other and their mutual contribution to flourishing or ruin. It is a concept of the good that in Scholasticism was cast in the formula "*ens et bonum convertuntur*." According to this first meaning of *bonum*, bodies, souls, angels, God, etc. are *bona* insofar as they are *entia*.

2. The second meaning of *bonum* entails that these *entia* belong to different types of being, which can be established in a hierarchy (e.g. according to their degree of integration). A spiritual being like the soul is higher than a bodily being—that is, the former is better (*melior*) than the latter. This distinction between better and worse *bona* is also a purely metaphysical one that directs the attention towards the best *bonum*, namely God. God proves to be the best *bonum* because He possesses the highest degree of being: immutable, indestructible, and simple. All subordinate *entia* exist alone qua participation in the highest being. They receive their *bonum*-character from the *summum*

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[6] *simul enim et ipsum [sc. bonum] intelligis, cum audis hoc aut illud bonum* (Trin. 8.5).

bonum and their state of being is determined by the degree of their participation in God as the ground of being.

3. The third meaning of *bonum* brings an ethical dimension into play. One not only has to observe the individual existent in itself and in the position it has within the inner structure of the hierarchy of beings but also to understand it as an active and acting existent that strives toward a goal (even if it is only the preservation of itself in a world full of divergent tendencies) and therefore experiences other existents as helpful or impedimental, beneficial or destructive. The *entia* in the happenings of the world consequently demonstrate themselves to be either goods or ills for each other. From this perspective, a being is not a good in itself nor is it good in comparison with beings subordinated to it in the hierarchy of being. Rather something is good for something else, regardless of the latter's ontological status, if it proves to be beneficial for the other's naturally-given or chosen objectives. If a specific being, namely a human, is made a reference point in the context of this perspective, then the ethical question of the highest good and the greatest ill for humans may be asked. Presupposed in this scenario is that human striving ultimately is directed at happiness and that this happiness is attained through the acquisition of goods. The Hellenistic ethical debates revolved around the determination of the good that fills the human with bliss.[7] If one, following the Stoics, designates virtue as *summum bonum* and vice as *summum malum*, then difficulties could arise in Augustine's schema because virtues and vices are dispositions not subsistent *entia*. Already at an early point in his writings, Augustine argued, however, for a substance, namely God, as the highest good of humans or of the best part of humans, the soul.[8]

4. Thus the fourth, normative meaning of *bonum* follows. Individual substances capable of developing beyond their simple existence can either reach their full form if they have the required goods at their disposal or remain behind in their development due to some condition of deprivation. For a human, the condition of perfect happiness is simultaneously that of his total development. The necessary good for this attainment is

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[7] For a classic tractate, cf. Cicero's "*De finibus bonorum et malorum*."
[8] Characteristic for the reflected transversal from virtue to God as the *summum bonum* is, for instance, *De mor. Manich* 1.6.9-10.

God. But the acquisition of God is not to be understood along the lines of the acquisition of a sum of money, but rather as the soul's adherence (*inhaerere*) to God. As beings possessing will and reason, humans must intentionally strive for this good. Due to the will's errors and disorientations, however, humans also can seek other goods in place of God and expect happiness from them (although in vain). In the fourth meaning of the word, Augustine calls a soul good (*bona*) if it directs itself toward God as the highest good and bad (*mala*) if it pursues other external, corporal, or spiritual goods as beatifying.

All four meanings taken together yield the following result. The soul, as that which it is, a *bonum* (1), is also because of its spirituality a higher *bonum* (2) than the body and is therefore to be called a good soul (*bona anima*) in a moral sense (4) if it makes the right decision in the choice of goods and strives for God as the one truly beatifying *bonum* (3). The will is in accord with nature if the soul turns to its ground of being as beatifying good.[9] The designation of the *ipsum bonum* as *bonum bonum* aims at the metaphysical-ethical double function of God. God is that good from which every mutable *entia* has its being. He is also the beatifying *bonum* through which every being capable of happiness becomes happy if it turns to him. This two-fold expression brings forth God's distinctiveness from, for instance, the bona *anima*. God is not <u>one</u> *bonum* (*ens*), as is the soul, but rather the metaphysically highest *bonum* grounding all being. He therefore deserves to be called *bonum* par excellence. Moreover, He is not morally good as is the soul. He is not called good because his will is directed toward the true good but because He is the beatifying good for all will-possessing beings. Hence according to the good, God, the soul proves itself to be morally good or evil. Augustine plays upon the multiple meanings of the word *bonum* when he describes the character of God (in the command to see God) more closely as *bonum ipsum*: "[…] *et vide ipsum bonum, si potes: ita Deum videbis, non alio bono bonum sed bonum omnis boni* (Trin. 8.4)." This statement is metaphysically valid insofar as it claims that God is not a good through another, higher good but the (highest) good from which every other good is a good; and it is comprehensible as an ethical statement in the sense that God is not (like, for instance,

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[9] *Tunc ergo voluntas naturae congruit ut perficiatur in bono animus cum illud bonum diligitur conversione voluntatis unde est et illud quod non amittitur nec aversione voluntatis* (Trin. 8.5).

the soul) good by means of a willful directive toward another good but as that good from which all morally good beings are good.

Augustine's thesis therefore claims that humans dispose of a concept of the *bonum ipsum* impressed upon them, which is implicitly understood in every discourse about the good and provides the basis for every evaluation. This *ipsum bonum* represents both the principle grounding the being of all beings and the beatifying good of the beings possessing a will. Nonetheless, this natural possession of a concept of God as *ipsum bonum* is not the same as a vision of God. Whereas this possession actualizes itself unconsciously in every encounter with a good, the vision is based on a conscious isolation of the principle from its principiates. In the vision, the *ipsum bonum*, which in the mundane encounter with good is always merely implicitly known, becomes in its purity the object of attention.[10] The natural possession of this concept certainly facilitates the perception of the principle so that in a certain sense that which is to be seen is already known. Thus, the already existing knowledge (as understood by Augustine) ultimately only has to be "remembered," but the direct perception entails a particular act that goes beyond the natural possession of a concept. Augustine invites the execution of this act with the words: "[…] *vide, si potes* (Trin. 8.4)." This vision of the *bonum ipsum* is the goal of the soul's ascension to God, and whoever adheres to this *bonum* in love will be immediately happy.[11]

2. The Relation of these Reflections to *Confessiones*

In many respects, the beginning of book 8 of *De Trinitate* resembles the ascension report of *Confessiones*, where Augustine describes how in leaving corporeal things behind he attained a vision of incorporeal light, which he addresses as *veritas*.[12] In Trin 8.2-2.3, Augustine also invites the soul to vision. Although he does not use the I-form of narration, it is not excluded that he addresses his own soul. Just as the soul in *Confessiones* is too weak, ultimately due to its iniquity (*inquitas*), to be able to abide in

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[10] *[…] perspicere ipsum bonum […]; […] per se ipsum perspicere bonum […]* (Trin. 8.5).

[11] *si ergo potueris […] per se ipsum perspicere bonum, perspexeris Deum. Et si amore inhaeseris, continuo beatificaberis* (Trin. 8.5)

[12] Cf. Conf. 7.10.16; *[…] vidi qualicumque oculo animae meae […] lucem inconmutabilem. […] Qui novit veritatem, novit eam* (Conf. 7.10.16).

the vision of *veritas*, the soul in *De Trinitate* is unable to remain in the vision, sinking instead under the weight of its desires and errors back to earthly things.[13] And in both *De Trinitate* and *Confessiones*, a reflection on the *bonum* follows the first ascension report, opening in turn onto a second attempt at ascension.[14] The *bonum*-speculation in *Confessiones*, however, emphasizes almost exclusively the metaphysical meaning of the concept and addresses from this position (in a still anti-Manichaean vein) the question of *malum*.[15] After this second attempt at ascension ends with the return to the "customary condition," Augustine reports of a third attempt, the experience in Ostia, in which the beatification through the vision of the highest good stands at the fore.[16] Even if it is clear that the vision of and contact with God can have no duration as long as our earthly-temporal existence lasts, the binding of the "first-fruits of the Spirit" before the returning descent leaves the possibility open that humans are capable of perpetually hanging onto God in love.[17] Similarly, in *De Trintate* the possibility of a continual orientation of the will toward God expressed in the formulation "*et si amore inhaeseris* (Trin. 8.5)" is not rejected. A series of literal correspondences, moreover, confirms the closeness of these two texts: the depiction of the heart as the organ for the cognition of God in contrast to the eyes of the flesh, the appointment of the *consuetude carnalis* as the decisive hindrance to the ascent, as well as the portrayal of the moment of enlightenment as a "flash."[18]

The beginning of book 8 of *De Trinitate* thus closely parallels the ascension reports of *Confessiones*. The progression of *De Trinitate* makes clear, however, that the scope of the text is quite different. In *Confessiones*, the duration of the vision of God is rejected on account of the human mind's weakness both before the conversion (Conf. 7) as well as afterwards (Conf. 9). Divine grace therefore allows a fundamental self-binding of the

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[13] *Et reverberasti infirmitatem aspectus mei* […] (Conf. 7.10.16).

[14] Cf. Conf. 7.11.17.-17-23; Conf. 7.17.23

[15] Cf. Conf. 7.13.19-16.22

[16] Cf. Conf. 7.17.23; Conf. 9.10.23-10.25

[17] Cf. Conf. 9.10.24 with Romans 8:23. See Solignac's interpretation on this comparison in: *Oeuvres de Saint Augustine, Les Confessions* (BA 14), Introduction et Notes par A. Solignac, 1962, 552-555. Cf. also Pépin 1977, 131-180.

[18] Cf. Conf. 7.17.23 and Trin. 8.2. *[…] quae primo ictu diluxit tibi […]. Ecce in ipso primo ictu […]* (Trin. 8.3). *[…] et pervenit ad id, quod est in ictu trepidantis aspectus (Conf. 7.17.23). […] attigimus eam [sapientiam] modice toto ictu cordis* (Conf. 9.10.24).

soul to God as the highest good for this life but not a perpetual *visio beatifica*. In contrast, *De Trintate* revolves around the question concerning the capacity of humans to know God as the Trinity. Accordingly, the deficiency of a vision of God as *veritas* or as *ipsum bonum* achieved in a flash (*ictu*) lies not so much in its brevity, but rather in the fact that God is not visible as triune in it. The ascent to God, as it has been described, does not contribute anything to the knowledge of the inner nature of God. This discrepancy can be witnessed in the fact that throughout the entire course of book 8 in *De Trintate* Augustine does not present any immediate results concerning the Trinity. Only at the end of the book does Augustine introduce a ternary of lover, loved, and love (*amans*, *quod amatur*, *amor*). This ternary is initially applied, however, to the love of external objects and then to the love of a friend, which is internal because its true object is the soul of the friend. A further step of ascension that would have brought God into the mix is not taken.[19] At the beginning of book 9, Augustine reiterates the basic concern of the entire treatise: to understand (*intellegere*) what is believed, namely that Father, Son, and Spirit are the one creator God and that they are distinct from each other; thus, a Trinity of persons related to each other and a unity of the same essence is to be assumed (cf. Trin. 9.1). The understanding of this structure has yet to be unfolded. Neither the natural *intellectio ipsi boni* nor the explicit vision of the truth and the good as described in book 8 count as accomplishments of this kind of understanding. Book 15 of *De Trinitate* contains two summaries of the preceding books. The first summary (Trin 15.4-5) covers the entire work, whereas the second (Trin. 15.9-10) commences with book 8, casting once again to the center the question concerning the possibility of understanding (*intellegere*) the Trinity.[20] Augustine asks whether the *per intellegentiam videre* of what is believed is achieved in the vision of the soul as portrayed in book 8. The answer: "However, that inexpressible light beat back our gaze, and somehow convinced us that the weakness of our mind could not yet be attuned to it. So to relax our concentration we turned ourselves back in reflection, between the beginning and the completion of our search, to what could be called the more familiar consideration of our own mind insofar

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[19] Cf. Trin. 8.14

[20] *Hanc ergo sapientiam quod est Deus, quomodo intellegimus esse Trinitatem? Non dixi: "Quomodo credimus?" (nam hoc inter fideles non debet habere quaestionem), sed si aliquo modo per intellegentiam possumus videre quod credimus, quis iste erit modus* (Trin. 15.9)?

as man has been made to the image of God. And from then on we lingered over the creature which we ourselves are from the ninth to the fourteenth book in order to descry if we could the invisible things of God by understanding them through those that have been made."[21] The repulsion of the mind is described in similar terms to *Confessiones*.[22] In *Confessiones*, Augustine twice mentions the return of the soul to its customary condition.[23] In the report of descent in book 8 of *De Trinitate*, Augustine once again takes up this form of expression when he addresses the soul: *"mane si potes: sed non potes; relaberis in ista solita atque terrene* (Trin. 8.3)." Yet, according to *De Trinitate*, the mind which has ascended to a momentary vision of God fails on account of its weakness no longer in the attempt to prolong the vision, but rather in the task of discerning a trinitarian structure in the vision.

3. The Knowledge in Faith

Through a reflection on the knowledge-value of faith Augustine focuses on the problematic underlying the arguments of book 8. According to the apostle Paul, humans walk upon the earth by faith, not by sight.[24] Using a further quotation from Paul, Augustine interprets this seeing as the vision face-to-face (*facie ad faciem*, 1 Cor. 13:12) first possible in life after death. Yet this condition of perfect vision can only be reached, if one loves God in this life. One can indeed know something one does not love, but nothing can be loved that one does not know. The love for God that is indissolubly bound to faith thus implies a knowledge of God that is to be distinguished from the fulfilled vision. Augustine's conceptual triangle is therefore: *credere–videre–scire*,

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[21] *Sed quia lux illa ineffabilis nostrum reverberabat obtutum et ei nondum posse contemperari nostrae mentis quodam modo convincebatur infirmitas, ad ipsius nostrae mentis secundum quam factus est homo ad imaginem Dei* (Gen. 1:27) *velut familiariorem considerationem reficiendae laborantis intentionis causa, inter coeptum dispositumque refleximus, et inde in creatura quod nos sumus ut invisibilia Dei per ea quae facta sunt conspicere intellecta possemus (Romans 1:20) immorati sumus a nono usque ad quartum decimum librum* (Trin. 15.10).

[22] Compare, for example, the beginning of the aforementioned quotation with Conf. 7.10.16: *Et reverberasti infirmitatem aspectus mei radians in me vehementer* […]; as well as with Conf. 7.17.23: *Tunc vero "invisibilia tua per ea quae facta sunt intellecta (Romans 1:20)" conspexi, sed aciem figere non evalui et repercussa infirmitate redditus solitis [...]*.

[23] *redditus solitis* (Conf. 7.17.23); *sed recido in haec aerumnosis ponderibus et resorbeor solitis* (Conf. 10.40.65).

[24] *per fidem adhuc ambulamus, non per speciem* (cf. Trin. 8.6 with 2 Cor. 5:7).

although it remains to be seen how the *Deum scire* as an implication of the *Deum diligere* relates to *credere* and to *videre*.[25] One possibility would be that the connection between *scire* and *credere* is such that faith would be the form of knowledge open to humans as long as the vision face-to-face is not yet possible.[26] But Augustine has his reservations because faith, too, is subject to a difference in truth and therefore requires a criterion in order to distinguish true faith, which alone will lead to the vision of God, from false faith. Consequently, the question is: by what means is faith true? Is this means, in turn, a form of understanding?[27]

Augustine first analyzes the faith in corporeal things "we read or hear about but have not seen (Trin. 8.7)" for a measure of knowledge. Things geographically distant and the historical past constantly serve Augustine's scientific doctrine as examples for things that because they are removed from one's own perception and thus only available through the reports of others can only be believed but in no way known. The question of knowledge in faith cannot focus therefore on the truth or falsity of statements, for faith would then be transformed into knowledge. The knowledge in faith refers rather to an understanding of those concepts that appear in such statements whose truth only can be believed but not known. Faith can be true faith only if it understands what it believes.

Whoever reads in Holy Scripture about Jesus, Mary, Bethany, or the empty tomb forms an image (*cogitatio*) of these things and people without ever having seen them. To what degree does this image correspond to reality? Well, the individual traits that every reader unintentionally envisions as those of the figure of Christ probably do not approach his true appearance. The truth of the image, however, does not lie therein, but rather in the correspondence to the general concept (*notitia*) of the human.[28] "For we have embedded in us as it were a standard notion of the nature of man, by which whenever we see some such thing we immediately recognize it as a man, or at least as the shape of a

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[25] Augustine's explanation: *Et quid est Deum scire nisi eum mente conspicere, fimeque percipere* (Trin. 8.6)? alludes to Romans 1:20—that passage in Paul which Augustine frequently connects with the topic of ascension.

[26] *Amatur ergo et quod ignoratur sed tamen creditor* (Trin. 8.6).

[27] *Nimirum autem cavendum est ne credens animus id quod non videt fingat sibi aliquid quod non est et speret diligatque quod falsum est* (Trin. 8.6).

[28] *Secundum hanc notitiam cogitatio nostra informatur cum credimus pro nobis Deum hominem factum* […] (Trin. 8.7).

man. It is in terms of this sort of notion that our thoughts are framed when we believe that God became man for us […]."[29] The image of a human whom we have never seen contains general features of the human per se as well as arbitrary concretions beyond those features. The *cogitatio* can be called true if it corresponds to the features determined by the concepts of genus and species. We dispose of this notion (*infixa notitia*) either naturally (*natura insita*) or through experience (*experientia collecta*) (cf. Trin 8.7). Augustine insists upon the certainty of this notion, which represents a measure of knowledge in faith: "And yet we firmly believe those things because we think of them in terms of general and specific notions that we are quite certain of. Thus we believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was born of a virgin who was called Mary. What a virgin is, and what being born is, and what a proper name is we do not believe, we just know."[30] It is therefore not a matter of knowledge *that* Jesus Christ was in fact born of the Virgin Mary in the stable by Bethlehem. Since these statements concern an event belonging to the distant past, they cannot be known but only believed. The knowledge in question concerns rather the knowledge of the concepts *virgin* etc. contained in the statements. The statements can be first understood on account of this knowledge. Augustine offers the resurrection of Jesus Christ as another example. Most people, it is true, have not witnessed a resurrection, but because through experience, one knows what death, life, and dying are, the conceptual content of the word *resurrection* can be easily constructed.

It should be asked then whether the divine Trinity, too, is established on such a foundation. Does the human mind naturally possess a notion of the trinity as it possesses a *notitia* of the human, which allows it to understand the Trinity? The difference between the understanding of *trinity* and the understanding of *human* can be seen if one asks about the origination of each *notitia* respectively. If everyone who believes that God became

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[29] *habemus enim quasi regulariter infixam naturae humanae notitiam secundum quam quidquid tale aspicimus statim hominem esse cognoscimus vel hominis formam. Secundum hanc notitiam cogitatio nostra informatur cum credimus pro nobis Deum hominem factum […]* (Trin. 8.7f.). Schmaus translates: "Wir haben nämlich einen gleichsam wie ein Gesetz eingeprägten Begriff der menschlichen Natur, […] [We have namely a concept of human nature that is impressed like a law]." This translation is misleading because it suggests that the concept of the human is of a priori nature. According to Augustine, however, it is a matter of a concept of something sensibly perceptible that is derived from experience.
[30] *et tamen ea firmissime credimus quia secundum specialem generalemque notitiam quae certa nobis est cogitamus. Credimus enim Dominum Jesum Christum natum de virgine quae Maria vocabatur. Quid sit autem virgo et quid sit nasci et quid sit nomen proprium non credimus sed prorsus novimus* (Trin. 8.7).

human pictures Jesus Christ differently, this faith remains nonetheless true if the image of Jesus Christ corresponds to the general concept of the human. This concept of the human is acquired, according to Augustine, through experience. Following the "law of similarity," the perception of many humans leads to the development of a corresponding *notitia*. The comparison of seen humans enables then the crystallization of common features, which, in turn, are bound together into a concept of the human. On the basis of this *notitia*, it is conversely possible to imagine the appearance of a human individual whom one has never seen. The *human* is a concept of experience and the acquirement of such a concept presupposes a plurality of comparable exemplars. This procedure is not applicable to the Trinity, however, because a plurality of instance of the concept *trinity* is not available. There is exclusively *one* three-fold God.[31] Moreover, the construction of the conceptual content from familiar elements, as is the case with the explanation of the *resurrection* from *life* and *death*, cannot contribute anything, according to Augustine, to the understanding of the trinitarian God since the knowledge of threes, which we naturally possess, is not decisive, but rather the three-foldness of the one God.

Sensibly perceptible things are, according to the Augustinian doctrine of knowledge, present in mind through images. These images are compared or, as with the concept *resurrection*, combined, increased, or reduced for the acquirement of a concept.[32] Mental realities, on the contrary, like numbers, the relations of measures, and mathematical laws, are by definition not sensibly comprehensible and are thus not represented in the mind by images. Rather, they are present themselves for the mind that represents them.[33] In this case, the search for similarities in order to acquire a concept is not only impossible, due to the absence of a plurality of comparables, but also

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[31] *Sed ex qua rerum notarum similitudine vel comparatione credamus quo etiam nondum notum Deum diligamus, hoc quaeritur* (Trin. 8.8). *Quid igitur de illa excellentia Trinitatis sive specialiter sive generaliter novimus quasi multae sint tales trinitates quarum aliquas experti sumus ut per regulam similitudinis impressam vel specialem vel generalem notitiam illam quoque talem esse credamus, atque ita rem quam credimus et nondum novimus ex parilitate rei quam novimus diligamus? Quod utique non ita est* (Trin. 8.8).

[32] *[…] et venio in campos et lata praetoria memoriae, ubi sunt thesauri innumerabilium imaginum de cuiuscemodi rebus sensis invectarum. Ibi reconditum est, quidquid etiam cogitamus, vel augendo vel minuendo vel utcumque variando ea quae sensus attigerit, [...]* (Conf. 10.8.12). *Nec ipsa [res] tamen intrant sed rerum sensarum imagines illic praesto sunt cogitationi reminiscenti eas* (Conf. 10.8.13).

[33] Augustine writes: *[...] quorum non per sensus haurimus imagines, sed sine imaginibus, sicuti sunt, per ipsa intus cernimus [...]* (Conf. 10.11.18). For this topic, cf. the entire passage in Conf. 10.10.17-12.19.

unnecessary. The divine Trinity is also a mental reality. Therefore, if a *notitia* of three-foldness is required for the understanding of the sentence "God is three-fold," then this notion cannot arise like the *notitiae human* or *resurrection*.

Augustine explicates the role of the *notitiae* of intelligible realities but not directly on the basis of faith in the Trinity. Instead, his example is the faith that the apostle Paul was a just man. The parallel to the thought-process of the previous examples does not clearly emerge because Augustine immediately asks about the implications for the love of the apostle. Yet it is clear that love of the just person springs from the belief that this or that person is just or was just.[34] Even with respect to the apostle, it only can be a matter of faith: first of all, on account of the indirectness of the witnesses, and secondly, because moral attributes of other individuals, due to the impossibility of direct access to a foreign soul, only can be ascertained from always ambivalent signs. Augustine's analysis of love for the apostle Paul intends to show that an implicit knowledge of justice is present that cannot be obtained through the principle of similarity.

According to Augustine, that which is loved in Paul, if he is loved, is his just soul. The love for him implies therefore knowledge of what the soul is and what a just person is. The knowledge of the soul represents the first case of a knowledge not based on comparison or similarity. For it is not only impossible to see another soul from which one then learns what a soul is; it is also unnecessary because everyone has a soul and therewith immediate access to it.[35] Self-knowledge includes not only the knowledge of the existence of the soul but also that of its essence.[36] The clarity with which Augustine highlights the privilege of the knowledge the soul has of itself over against the knowledge

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[34] *Cur ergo alium diligimus quem credimus iustum [...]* (Trin. 8.9).

[35] "Not implausibly we say that we know what mind is for the simple reason that we ourselves also have a mind. At least we have never seen one with our eyes, or gathered a generic or specific notion of what it is from the likeness of several we have seen. But it is rather, as I said, that we have one ourselves. What after all is so intimately known and so aware of its own existence as that by which things enter into our awareness, namely the mind?"
[*Et animus quidem quid sit non incongrue nos dicimus ideo nosse quia et nos habemus animum; neque enim umquam oculis vidimus et ex similitudine visorum plurium notionem generalem specialemve percepimus, sed potius, ut dixi, quia et nos habemus. Quid enim tam intime scitur seque ipsum esse sentit quam id quo etiam cetera sentiuntur, id est ipse animus* (Trin. 8.9)?]

[36] *Non enim tantum sentimus animum, sed etiam scire possumus quid sit animus consideratione nostri; habemus enim animum, [...]* (Trin. 8.9). Augustine appears to attribute another sense to the knowledge of the mind than the knowledge of other intellectual realities. We know mind because we ourselves have a mind. The mind is not something we have in us, however; rather, we are mind.

of others is impressive. He does not evaluate this privilege in book 8, however. Rather, he first conducts a similar analysis with respect to the knowledge of the justice of the just person.

The response to the question concerning the derivation of this knowledge is more difficult than the explanation of self-knowledge, for which the immediacy of the soul to itself could be introduced as an alternative to the experience-bound origin of knowledge. The case of justice does not allow such an argumentation because the knowledge of justice cannot be made dependent upon the moral quality of the knower. For self-knowledge, experience-mediated access is unnecessary because the soul can grasp directly what it is; for justice, however, the soul should be able to see directly what itself, quite possibly, is *not*.   The goal of Augustine's arguments is to clarify that not only the just person knows what justice is but also the person who is not yet just. If this were not the case, then the person who is not yet just could not want to become just, for he could not know justice and consequently could not love it.

Sensible perception cannot be the source of knowledge of justice because justice is an attribute of the soul, not a quality of the body. Also signs, for instance those of a body's movement, do not offer a viable solution, as they only can be understood as signs of justice when it is already known what justice is. Augustine thus concludes: "So it is in ourselves that we have learnt what "just" is. When I seek to express what it is I do not find the answer anywhere but with myself; and if I ask someone else what "just" is, he searches in himself to find the answer. And anyone who has ever been able to answer the question truly has found the answer in himself."[37]

Augustine elucidates this phenomenon with further examples of "what is known in oneself," namely his knowledge of the city Carthage, his imagination of the city Alexandria, which he himself had not visited but knows only through the reports of others, and finally the knowledge of justice.[38] Surprisingly, Augustine mentions the

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[37] *In nobis igitur novimus quid sit iustus. Non enim alibi hoc invenio cum quaero ut hoc eloquar nisi apud me ipsum; et si interrogem alium quid sit iustus, apud se ipsum quaerit quid respondeat; et quisquis hinc verum respondere potuit apud se ipsum quid responderet invenit* (Trin. 8.9). The example of "justice" as one of the mind's inherent measures already can be found in Plotinus, Enn. V 5, 1, L. 29-33. Cf. Emilsson 1995, 36.

[38] J. Pépin points out that Porphyry also mentions the example of Alexandria in his *Symmikta zetemata* (cf. Dörrie 95). Cf. Peopin, J. "Une nouvelle source de saint Augustin: le ζητήματα de Prophyre sur l'Union

knowledge of things that can be sensibly perceived, like Carthage and Alexandria, in order to explicate the concept of *apud se ipsum*, although he had previously introduced this type of having-known as a specification of those objects that are not sensibly perceived or a part of the soul. Augustine undertakes here a change of perspective without making it explicit. He initially asks about the source of knowledge of the final instance, which in the corporality of that which can be sensibly perceived lies outside of us but with justice is in us. He then takes the act of "thinking of something" or "directing one's attention to something" as his point of departure and observes that when he wants to think of Carthage or Alexandria, he takes recourse to knowledge that—due to earlier sensible experience—is already to be found in his mind. In such a case, a learning process in the sense of acquiring knowledge for the first time does not occur. Memory of a deposited content is simply actualized. From this perspective, the *apud se ipsum* admittedly loses its original function as a criterion for the distinction of sources of knowledge. The soul has all knowledge insofar as it is deposited in memory and still can be found there *apud se ipsum*. Therefore, Augustine has to (and will) nominate a new criterion in order to make clear that the soul has knowledge of justice in a different way than it has knowledge of Carthage and Alexandria.

First of all, it should be noticed how Augustine introduces the new perspective. The act of speaking serves as his point of departure. That which one knows can be expressed. The known initially must be searched for, however, and then brought into the light of attention before it can be verbally expressed. Especially in the desire to speak, the soul turns into itself to find the *apud se ipsum* content.[39] Augustine therewith initiates the doctrine of the inner word that is to carry the analogy between the *mens humana* and the divine Trinity in book 15.

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de l'âme et du corps," in: *Revue des Études Anciennes* 66 (1964), 53-107; reprinted in Pépin 1977, 213-267, here 262f.

[39] The relation of finding something in oneself and wanting to express it becomes clear through a series of formulations. Augustine writes: "When I seek to express what it [the knowledge of justice] is I do not find the answer anywhere but with myself [.]" *Non enim alibi hoc invenio cum quaero ut hoc eloquar nisi apud me ipsum* (Trin. 8.9). *Et Carthaginem quidem cum eloqui volo apud me ipsum quaero ut eloquar, et apud me ipsum invenio phantasiam Carthaginis. [...] Sic et Alexandriam cum eloqui volo quam nunquam vidi praesto est apud me phantasma eius* (Trin. 8.9).

From wherever knowledge of an object might stem, this object only can be spoken of by means of an inner intuition. Augustine surprisingly calls this intuition "word" (*verbum*). If he wants to say *Carthage*, he seeks in himself the image (*phantasia*) Carthage, which he has attained through sensible perception and deposited in his memory: "When I want to express Carthage I search about in myself in order to express it and in myself I find the image of Carthage. But I got this through the body, that is through the senses of the body, because I have been present there in body and seen and perceived it and kept it in my memory, so that I could find a word about the city to say when I wanted to say the city. Its image in my memory is its word, not this sound of two syllables made when "Carthage" is named, nor even the name thought of silently in a space of time but that which I am aware of when I utter these two syllables with my voice or even before I utter them."[40] Augustine delimits the word that is seen in the soul from the sound of the word whether it resounds externally or is—for example in its rhythmic form—merely mentally conceived. The seeing of the inner word must precede the production of the external word and in such a way that the conception of the content of meaning antecedes the expression of the word.

The mention of Alexandria proceeds analogously. The difference is solely that Augustine has to construe the concrete, inner image of Alexandria from the statements of others because, in contrast to Carthage, he has never seen this city. Again, the inner image is the word that one has before one utters with the voice the five syllables. This image is seen like a picture (*imaginem quasi picturam*) in the soul: "So too when I wish to express Alexandria which I have never seen I have its image ready to hand within me. I have heard about it from lots of people, and believed it to be a great city as people have been able to describe it to me, and so I have fabricated its image as best I could in my mind, and this is its word for me when I wish to express it even before I utter these five

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[40] *[...] ut apud me invenirem de illa verbum cum eam vellem dicere. Ipsa enim phantasia eius in memoria mea verbum eius non sonus iste trisyllabus cum Carthago nominatur vel etiam tacite nomen ipsum per spatia temporum cogitatur, sed illud quod in animo meo cerno cum hoc trisyllabum voce profero vel antequam proferam* (Trin. 8.9). The Carthage-example is also encountered in Conf. 10.16.25 and 21.30. One also finds already in *Confessiones* the idea that the presence of an inner image of that which is depicted has to precede the expression of a name (Conf. 10.8.14; 15.23). The identification of these *imagines* as *verba*, however, is not found in *Confessiones*.

syllables […]."[41] In mentioning the concept *justice*, an inner vision also takes place, but in this case, it is not the present image of an absent object that is seen, but rather the object itself is present.[42] It itself is the object of the inner intuition and therefore does not require an image to represent it. The vision is synonymous with the actual knowledge of the concept's definition: "That mind is just which knowingly and deliberately, in life and in conduct, gives each man what is his own."[43]

These three examples, Carthage, Alexandria, and justice can be systematized as variations of the relation between *cogitatio* and *notitia*. *Notitia* means the knowledge of the concept, and *cogitatio* signifies the actual thought that, should the occasion arise, is to be expressed and thus corresponds to the *verbum intimum*. In the first case (Carthage), the *cogitatio* corresponds to the inner image of the *notitia* "big city," while exceeding its content insofar as it contains individual features stemming from sensible perception. Such features are reliable, as they are based on Augustine's own perception. In being bound to the individual, they are furthermore perspectival and therefore variable. In the second case (Alexandria), the *cogitatio* also corresponds to this content, while complementing it with the addition of sensible elements, which probably do not correspond to reality, however, because they are not based on one's own perception, but rather for want thereof were freely construed. Here, too, the *cogitationes* are simultaneously true and variable since the sensible additions differ from individual to individual. In the third example (justice), it is a matter of a transcendent object. The *cogitatio* therefore does not contain any additions over and above the *notitia*, but rather

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[41] *Sic et Alexandriam cum eloqui volo quam numquam vidi praesto est apud me phantasma eius. Cum enim a multis audissem et credidissem magnam esse illam urbem sicut mihi narrari potuit, finxi animo imaginem eius quam potui, et hoc est apud me verbum eius cum eam volo dicere antequam voce quinque syllabas proferam, […]* (Trin. 8.9).

[42] "But I am perceiving something that is present to me, and it is present to me even if I am not what I perceive." [*sed praesens quiddam cerno et cerno apud me etsi non sum ipse quod cerno, […]* (Trin. 8.9).] "This form and truth cannot be loved and appreciated according to the standard of anything else. We simply cannot find anything else besides this, which is such that from this something else that we know we can love by believing this form and truth, while it is still unknown to us. If in fact you ever observe any such thing else, it is this form and truth, and so is not any such thing else, because this form and truth alone is such as this form and truth is. [*ipsa vero forma et veritas non est quomodo aliunde diligatur. Neque enim invenimus aliquid tale praeter ipsam, ut eam, cum incognita est, credendo diligamus, ex eo quod iam tale aliquid novimus. Quidquid enim tale aspexeris ipsa est, et non est quidquam tale quoniam sola ipsa talis est quails ipsa est* (Trin. 8.9).]

[43] *[…] iustum esse animum qui scientia atque ratione in vita ac moribus sua cuique distribuit* (Trin. 8.9).

corresponds to it completely. In the first case, the imagination constructs an inner image by means of one's own material intuition—the *cogiatio* was a *phantasia*. In the second case, since one's own intuition was not available and therefore an inner picture had to be constructed, the *cogitatio* was a *phantasma*. Both the *phantasia* of Carthage and the *phantasma* of Alexandria sufficed for the *notitia* (and consequently were held to be true) but were still sensibly enhanced; whereas in the case of justice, the pure content of the concept corresponds to this image. In the knowledge of its definition, justice is seen as something present ("*praesens quiddam cerno*," Trin. 8.9). The *cogitatio* is thus nothing other than the *notitia* itself insofar as the *notitia* is brought forth from the reservoir of memory and actualized as an object of attention in order to become, as a thought-content, the starting point of a speech act, namely the expression of a word. The inner word thus represents the *notitiae* in differing ways: as *phantasia*, *phantasma*, and as a direct rendition.

Augustine's criterion for distinguishing different types of what is seen in oneself is therefore the presence or absence of that which is seen. Carthage is absent; only the image of the city is present. With the thought of justice, however, such a *phantasia* representing in presence the absent object is not seen, but rather justice itself. Although the mind sees in itself all the knowledge that is to be expressed, its knowledge of corporeal things refers to an external reality that is only present by means of a representative image, whereas intelligible things present themselves in thought. Since Augustine conceives of intelligible objects as forms and designates, according to his metaphysical conception of truth, the object itself as true but its image qua image as false, he can claim that the mind *apud se* perceives the form and the truth.[44]

Just as the understanding of the sentence, "Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem," presupposes the possession of the *notitiae human*, *virgin*, *place*, etc, the understanding of the sentence, "The apostle Paul was just," is based on the possession of the *notitia justice*. Whereas the *notitiae* in the first sentence refer to things sensibly perceptible and therefore result from the comparison of images of what has been perceived, justice is an intelligible reality that is present not as an image but as itself. Its

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[44] *Homo ergo qui creditur iustus ex ea forma et veritate diligitur quam cernit et intellegit apud se ille qui diligit: ipsa vero forma et veritas non est quomodo aliunde diligatur* (Trin. 8.9).

presence is not a sign of a morally positive character, however, but is a universal-human phenomenon. For every human, even the villain, is in the position to understand the sentence, "The apostle Paul was just". From this perspective it may be asked whether the human mind has to be naturally accorded with a *notitia* of three-foldness that enables the understanding of the sentence, "God is three-fold". Augustine dwells on the topic of justice, however, in order to establish a connection between the knowledge of justice and the love for it.

4. The Discussion of Love

The love of the apostle Paul is directed at his just soul. Whoever loves it does not merely know what justice is but also loves it; and out of this love of justice that person also loves the soul of the apostle because he knows that the apostle's soul is just. Moreover, the love of justice implies that the one who loves also wants to become just if he is not already.[45] Thus far, the status of the epistemological problematic has been in the foreground, and its illumination lead to the understanding of the phenomenon of the fore-knowledge of intelligible entities. Augustine then turns to the practical sphere in order to demonstrate that similar relations obtain here. The love of the just person as well as the wish to become just oneself is grounded in an antecedent but not necessarily thematic love of justice itself. The antecedence of the love of justice, Augustine claims however, obtains only for morally appropriate love.

Augustine thus raises the love of justice at the base of the love of the apostle to a universal criterion for the appropriate love of the other and of oneself. The love of justice is not only *one* possible basis for the love of the other. It is the only possible basis, if this love is appropriate. The other should be loved on the basis of our love of justice either because he is just or because we want him to become just. The same applies for self-love, which is normatively appropriate if it is grounded in one's own justice or at least in

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[45] "Why then do we love another man whom we believe to be just, and not love this form in which we see what a just mind is, so that we too may become just?" [*Cur ergo alium diligimus quem credimus iustum, et non diligimus ipsam formam ubi videmus quid sit iustus animus ut et nos iusti esse possimus* (Trin. 8.9) ?]

the striving for it.[46] Whereas the foreknowledge of the concepts *veritas* and *bonum* should be verifiable in every act of judgment or evaluation, even false ones, the love of justice appears only at the base of true love, not however of perverted love. The difference between appropriate and perverted devotion to another being, or between love and lust, is ultimately situated in the fact that the former is mediated by a love of an intelligible entity, whereas this is not the case in the latter. Only if justice is first loved can a person be loved appropriately—that is, for the sake of justice.[47]

Augustine then interprets the love of justice, according to which the love of a person is an appropriate love, as a love of true love. The love of justice as the condition for appropriate love is replaced in his ensuing reflections by the love of love.[48] According to Augustine, the loved love takes on the characteristics of justice: like justice, it represents an intelligible reality, and the love of love is found to be implied, like the love of justice, in the love of the other person. The substitution of justice by love opens new possibilities in argumentation. First of all, next to the biblical imperative to love one's neighbor and oneself, Augustine can bring into play the imperative to love God and connect it with neighborly love, for God is love (1 John 4:8).[49] He therefore can claim that both imperatives mutually imply each other. The direction of the love of God to the love of one's neighbor (and self-love) initially results from the fact that the latter is commanded by God and that whoever loves God will surely want to fulfill his

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[46] "Whoever therefore loves men should love them either because they are just or in order that they might be just. This is how he ought to love himself, either because he is just or in order to be just (Trin. 8.9). [*Qui ergo amat homines, aut quia iusti sunt aut ut iusti sint, amare debet. Sic enim et se ipsum amare debet aut quia iustus est aut ut iustus sit* (Trin. 8.9).]

[47] Augustine indicates a further consequence by declaring that the self-love founded in the love of justice is not only the only appropriate form but also the only possible one. Whoever does not love himself in and through justice loves himself in and through injustice. Whoever loves injustice, however, hates his soul. "*Qui enim aliter se diligit iniuste se diligit quoniam se ad hoc diligit ut sit iniustus, ad hoc ergo ut sit malus, ac per hoc iam non se diligit: 'Qui' enim 'diligit iniquitatem odit animam suam'* (Trin. 8.9 with Psalm 10,6)." With the argument, the self-love that is not in relation to justice is self-hatred, Augustine declares the normative appropriate form of self-love to be the only possible one. This argument should be understood, however, as a definitional restriction of the concept of self-love, which does not contribute to the overall argument. In a later passage, Augustine explains that self-hatred, in the sense of an intended damage of the self, is not possible. Humans always want the good for themselves but often mistake the true character of that for which they strive and damage themselves in fact through the appropriation of that which they deem good (cf. the interpretation of Psalm 10,6 in Trin. 14.18). There is therefore both a true and a false self-love.

[48] The decisive sentence is: *Haec est autem vera dilectio, ut inhaerentes veritati iuste vivamus; et ideo contemnamus omnia mortalia prae amore hominum quo eos volumus iuste vivere* (Trin. 8.10).

[49] For the Plotinian variation of this phrase from John, see Enn. VI 8, 15.

commandment. But the converse can be equally asserted: neighborly love is always based on a love of love. If one considers the identification of God and love, then it applies that whoever loves his neighbor loves God (cf. Trin. 8.10). The love of God thus proves to be the condition for brotherly love.[50]

As a principle of brotherly love, the loved love obeys the same laws as the principles *veritas*, *bonum*, and *iustitia*. Augustine means that for the lover the loved love is more internal, more present, and thus more known than the beloved brother. The intellectual form that grounds the empirical execution is always "closer" to the person and consequently more known than the empirical object, even if attention is directed exclusively toward this object. Because of the equation of God and love, the implicit knowledge of love can be interpreted as an implicit knowledge of God.[51] Through the orientation of attention toward this knowledge, God as love can be made an object of intellectual vision.[52] In contrast to the three preceding examples (*veritas*, *bonum*, and *iustitia*), a triad finally appears in the vision of love.

Augustine introduces the demonstration of this triad with a certain emphasis by having the soul say: "*sed cum illam* [sc. *caritatem*] *video, non in ea video Trinitatem* (Trin. 8.12). The soul's vision of God as love appears to contribute just as little to the awareness of the three-foldness as the earlier ascensions. But Augustine responds to the

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[50] Schmaus levels Augustine's thought when he describes the conception of the love-triad as a self-evident implication of the love of an object (cf. Schmaus 1967, 227). Moreover, it is not at all a result of a merely "psychological analysis" that the love of an object, which could also be the self, "involves the love of love itself (228)." Such an analysis purely demonstrates that an intended object is wanted and loved in the act of loving but not that love itself is wanted and loved. The latter would represent a separate act that in the process of reflection on the act of love directed at an object *can* appear. Since this additional reflection *need not* take place, the love of love thus understood is contingent and not detectable through an analysis of any given act of love. Augustine's thesis of the love of love is not phenomenologically verifiable but requires an argument instead. Augustine offers such an argument when he says that love of the just soul ultimately rests on a love of justice, and true brotherly love is based on the love of God. Brotherly love, self-love, and the love of objects in the world are only then just if they occur in the horizon of the love of the highest good. This ethical principal (and not, for instance, a psychological observation) forms the basis of the thesis: in the morally appropriate love, two acts of love take place simultaneously that reciprocally demand each other. Naturally, this argument applies solely to the case of a morally qualified love, not, however, for a merely "sensual" inclination, which has no need of mediation through the love of an intelligible object.

[51] m*agis enim novit dilectionem qua diligit quam fratrem quem diligit. Ecce iam potest notiorem Deum habere quam fratrem, plane notiorem quia praesentiorem, notiorem quia interiorem, notiorem quia certiorem* (Trin. 8.12).

[52] *At enim caritatem video, et quantum possum eam mente conspicio,* […] (Trin. 8.12). "But if he were to love with spiritual charity the one he sees with human vision, he would see God who is charity with the inner vision which he can be seen by (Trin. 8.12)."

soul: "*Imo vero vides Trinitatem, si caritatem vides* (Trin. 8.12)." Where love is seen, Augustine maintains, there, too, a three-foldness is seen. Is the divine Trinity therefore visible upon the path of the vision of ideas? Does Augustine countermand his thesis that the human mind is too weak to be able to grasp, beyond the momentary vision of God, the divine Trinity? The continuation of Augustine's response to the soul already suggests that the argumentation takes a different course: "I will just remind you of a few things, and so help you if I can to see that you see it [the Trinity]."[53] Augustine's explanation of the occurrence proposes to make clear that a trinity is present. Such a necessity for explanation is untypical for things seen intellectually, for they otherwise present themselves in full presence and clarity. Intelligible objects, if they are seen, appear unveiled as that which they are. If an analysis, or particularly a construction, is necessary to demonstrate a triad in love, then this triad is definitely not an object of the intellectual vision.

The particularity of love in contrast to justice—but also to truth and the good— is its intentionality. Love is always related to an object. Augustine's argument does not simply state that one cannot love without loving something. This argument already would be satisfied in that the lover loves his brother, for example, resulting in a relation of two: *aman–quod amatur* [sc. *frater*]. It is also not only the higher form of this relation of two that is intended according to which the beloved also can be love itself, so that in the relation *amans–quod amatur* love would take the place of the brother: *amans–quod amatur* [sc. *amor*]. Furthermore, Augustine's argument does not only maintain that the lover, when he loves the brother for instance, always loves, in an accompanying act, love itself so that he constantly loves two objects, namely the brother and love. Rather Augustine's thesis states that one of these two objects, namely the loved love, is in itself intentional.[54]

Developing this thought, Augustine, first of all, claims that the common act of love for a person is accompanied by a love for a second object, love itself. Therefore, love exhibits a triad: *amans–frater amatus–amor amatus*. In order to stabilize the connection

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[53] *Sed commonebo si potero ut videre te videas* (Trin. 8.12)
[54] Cf, also DuRoy, J.-B., "L'expérience de l'amour et l'intelligence de la foi trinitaire selon saint Augustin," in: *Rechereches Augustiniennes* II, Paris 1962, 415-445, here, 435f.

between the second and the third member, Augustine identifies a mutual relation of implication. This relation functions from the bottom to the top, for the love of the brother is only possible under the condition of the love of love. Augustine had already preliminarily described the impact of the relation from the top to the bottom. He replaced love with its equivalent, God, and explicated with reference to biblical passages that whoever loves God also will want to fulfill his commandments, neighborly love belonging among them. The argument of the intentionality of loved love, however, makes recourse to biblical commandments dispensable. The loved love is, despite its character as an intelligible reality, directed toward another object. Love consequently represents a special case in that an intelligible being is not only the condition of possibility for something changeable; it also demands its existence. Insofar as love implies a beloved, it is not merely a fixed form; it also has a relational aspect. In contrast to the truth, the highest good, and justice, love is incapable of existing without the existence of something else, namely the object that it intends. Love appears to offer the project of the vision of the Trinity the unique possibility of making visible a relational reality in the realm of immutability.

In keeping his promise of showing the soul a trinity in love, Augustine explicates the movement from the top to the bottom according to which the love of love is not only the condition of possibility for brotherly love but also truly implicates it: "Only let love herself be present so that we may be moved by her to something good. For when we love love, we love her loving something, precisely because she does love something. What then does love love that makes it possible for love herself also to be loved? She is not love if she loves nothing; but if she loves herself, she must love something in order to love herself as love [….] so too love certainly loves itself, but unless it loves itself loving something it does not love itself as love. So what does charity love but what we love with love? And this, to move beyond our neighbor, is our brother."[55] Thus, the loved

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[55] *adsit tantum ipsa ut moveamur caritate ad aliquod bonum. Quia cum diligimus caritatem, aliquid diligentem diligimus propter hoc ipsum quia diligit aliquid. Ergo quid diligit caritas ut possit etiam ipsa caritas diligi? Caritas enim non est quae nihil diligit. Si autem se ipsam diligit, diligat aliquid oportet ut caritatem se diligat. […] sic et caritas diligit quidem se, sed nisi se aliquid diligentem diligat non caritate se diligit. Quid ergo diligit caritas nisi quod caritate diligimus? Id autem ut a proximo provehamur frater est* (Trin. 8.12).

love itself implies the presence of another good because as love, it always refers to something. Even if love itself is its own object, it loves itself as intentional—that is, as directed at something. In his conclusion, Augustine connects both the upward and downward implications: the object that the loved love demands is none other than the brother, who is loved on the basis of the love for love. Accordingly, there is no neighborly love without love of God and no love of God without neighborly love.

Therefore, Augustine does not in fact utilize the relational aspect of the intelligible reality *amor* for an understanding of the inner-trinitarian relations. He solely considers the relationality of the loved love in light of the relation of God to the neighbor. A vision of the three-fold God, as Augustine had announced, does not take place. If one examines the complete analysis in which God is identified with love and thus hypostasized, it is not a Trinity in God that is demonstrated, but rather a triad-structure in which God — alongside the loving person and the loved brother — appears as one of the three elements. No mention is made of an internal Trinity of God. What becomes apparent, however, is that a person's love, whether it is the love of the brother or the love of God, is not, as it may initially seem, based on a relation of two; it rather contains a third member, namely the loved love or the loved neighbor. This triad-structure does not appear in God but in an act of the *mens humana*. It is thus clear that the attempted ascension to God, which moves upward along the guidelines of the concepts *justice* and *love* and ends in the vision of the divine Trinity, fails. But more importantly, a shift in the direction of questioning also takes place. The inner structure of God himself no longer forms the object of inquiry. Rather, acts of the human mind become Augustine's focus.

Augustine's thought process seems unusual because it contains a hypostasis of love according to which *love* is not only used as a description of a person's attitude and as a characterization of his acts; rather, analogous to a person, love seems to exist and love independently. Augustine's summary in which he explicitly formulates a triad is, however, much less complex than the analysis itself. In the simplification of the preceding passages, he distinguishes between the lover, the beloved, and love.[56] Thus, love simply entails "someone loving and something loved with love (Trin. 8.14)." In

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[56] *Ecce tria sunt: amans et quod amatur et amor* (Trin. 8.14).

contrast to the preceding analysis, love is not what is loved along with the neighbor (*quod amatur*), and the intentionality of the loved love is not expressed. The concept of love instead appears to be reduced to a description of a person's attitude, namely that of the lover.[57] By de-hypostasizing the concept of love in his summary, Augustine even seems to remove the divine element from the triad-relation *amans–quod amatur–amor* and therefore restrict his analysis to the *mens humana*.

The conclusion of book 8 confirms the impression that Augustine has abandoned the endeavor of an immediate knowledge of the Trinity. He asserts that the triad *amans–quod amatur–amor* can be demonstrated in the external and carnal love of humans—that is, in human love for corporeal things but also in the love of friendship whose object is the soul of the friend. A further step of ascension, which, according to Augustine's metaphysical hierarchy, would bring God into play, is omitted in order to allow, as Augustine suggests, the attention of the soul to rest. The movement of ascension is aborted.[58] For the place where that can be found which is sought is the human mind. Thus, the ascent must lead to the human mind, but it cannot go beyond it. And insofar as knowledge of the Trinity is the goal, the ascent also need not go further because the analysis of the *mens* will provide information about the Trinity. This coda is moreover remarkable in that carnal love (*amor carnalis)* is admitted to be a manifestation of the love-triad. Since the preceding investigation was orientated on true love, carnal love represented a form of false affection whose hallmark was that it was not mediated by the love of justice or the love of love itself. The interpretation of *amor* as loved love ensured

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[57] I believe the possibility of substituting God for love is herewith already closed. J.-B DuRoy, however, is of another opinion. He suggests that first with the reduction of the relation of three to the dual relation of self-love, as presented in book 9, does God disappear from every inter-subjective relation. The self-relation of the human mind in self-love serves, he claims, as an analogue to God, who only relates to himself and is therefore enclosed in himself (cf. DuRoy 1962, 440). This suspension of the external relation of love, which ultimately is to be traced back to Augustine's Platonic roots, demonstrates the warranted, though limited, critique of Nygren on the closeness of Augustine's conception of love to egoism (cf. 416; 440). Nonetheless, DuRoy offers the insight that the true Augustine is not necessarily to be sought at the pinnacle of speculation but is found in his more pastorally-orientated writings in which the unity of the Trinity is used as a model for the unity of the church (cf, 422; with numerous references).

[58] *Restat etiam hinc ascendere et superius ista quaerere quantum homini datur. Sed hic paululum requiescat intentio non ut se iam existimet invenisse quod quaerit, sed sicut solet inveniri locus ubi quaerendum est aliquid* (Trin 8.14).

that the concrete object of love is loved in the appropriate way.[59] But carnal love does not belong to the horizon of the love of God. If it nevertheless is considered a manifestation of the love-triad, then *amor* can no longer be identified with God but is rather simply the lover's disposition of character. The concept of love no longer adheres to a moral difference according to which only true love could be called *love*. Instead, any act of inclination suffices for the triad-schema. Not only does the divine Trinity remain hidden in the love-triad, but Augustine ultimately extends the concept of love, against his own initially planned restrictions, so much that God loses his place in the triad. The triad is thus to be understood only as a description of an act of the human mind.

In conclusion, a particular problem with Augustine's conception of love should be addressed. Since the preceding discourse inquires into the conditions of possibility for an understanding of the Trinity that antecedes faith in it, Augustine leaves in the dark how faith in God augments the love of God and the knowledge of him. The inner development of the faithful person in earthly life toward a perpetually more inward relation to God represents a particular aspect of the relation between faith and knowledge. Augustine briefly addresses this aspect at the end of book 8 by returning to the topic of love for the apostle Paul's just soul. According to Augustine, Paul's self-portrayal as a true, patient, and unwavering servant of God provokes a love for him for two reasons (cf. 2 Cor. 6:2-10): because the reader sees justice as an immutable form in the truth, loves this form, and knows that a servant of God must live according to it; and because it is believed that the apostle really lived the way he claims. These reasons differ in their degree of certainty: justice is immediately seen as an intelligible object, whereas the report of the apostle's lifestyle cannot be verified and therefore only can be believed.[60] Faith, according to this schema, is a deeming-to-be-true of the reports about temporally past events. Love is primarily love of the form of justice seen in God. This love is in no

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[59] A parallel passage in *Civ. dei* 11,28 expressly states that besides the object itself, the love of the object is loved only if this love loves the good.

[60] "So it is from what we see that we love the man we believe to have lived like that; and unless above all we loved this form which we perceive always enduring, never changing, we would not love him merely because we hold on faith that his life when he lived in the flesh was harmoniously adjusted to this form." [*Illum ergo quem sic vixisse credimus ex hoc quod videmus diligimus, et nisi hanc formam quam semper stabilem atque incommutabilem cernimus praecipue diligeremus, non ideo diligeremus illum quia eius vitam cum in carne viveret huic formae coaptatam et congruentem fuisse fide retinemus* (Trin. 8.13).]

way a consequence of the faith in the correctness of the Pauline self-portrayal. Rather, this faith generates solely the love for the apostle insofar as he is identified as an object that can be understood as a specification of the already present love of justice. If one brings the love of justice together with the love of love and the love of God, it must be insisted that the faith of which Augustine speaks cannot exercise any kind of amplifying effect on the love of God and the knowledge of him. The love of God, whether as the condition of possibility for or as the actual ground of neighborly love, cannot be modified by something conditional. This classification of the love of God and neighborly love precludes a deepening of the love of God through faith in the virtues of the neighbor's character.

Nonetheless, the limits of this self-chosen schema are too restrictive for Augustine precisely because he wants to hold steadfast the positive effect of faith (*fides historica*) on the love and knowledge of God in this life: "Faith therefore is a great help for knowing and loving God, not as though he were altogether unknown or altogether not loved without it, but for knowing him all the more clearly and loving him all the more firmly."[61] Augustine is incapable, however, of anything more than stipulating the possibility of such a repercussion of faith for loving God, and he does so in the awareness that his own theoretical framework does not allow such a repercussion: "Yet I do not know how it is [!], but we are stirred all the more largely to love of that form by the faith with which we believe that someone lived like that […]."[62]

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[61] *Valet ergo fides ad cognitionem et ad dilectionem Dei, non tanquam omnino incogniti aut omnino non dilecti, sed quo cognoscatur manifestius et quo firmius diligatur* (Trin. 8.13).

[62] *Sed nescio quomodo amplius et in ipsius formae charitatem excitamur per fidem qua credimus vixisse sic aliquem, […]* (Trin. 8.13).

In his analysis of Trin. 8.13, M. Löhrer stresses the repercussion of *fides historica* for the love of God. "The belief in a historical realization of the *forma iustitiae* in the life of Paul leads to a greater knowledge and love of this form in God." (Löhrer, M., "Glaube und Heilsgeschichte in "de trinitate" Augustins," *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 4 (1957), 385-419, here, 398; trans. A.L.). The idea of such a repercussion corresponds to Löhrer's basic concern of emphasizing Augustine's notion of salvific history and therefore contributing to a "better theological understanding of history (386)." Löhrer does not see, however, that Augustine indeed intends to assert such a repercussion but does not have the possibility to do so. DuRoy claims that Löhrer's analysis is missing a sufficient distinction between the different directions of the *fides* and the *intellectus*. Faith directs itself toward temporality, the intellect toward the eternal. (cf. DuRoy 1966, 443n.) This critique is to be read in light of DuRoy's main thesis according to which Augustine, even in later writings, does not move beyond an interpretation of the *intellectus fidei*. His interpretation understands faith solely as purification and thus as the enablement of access to the eternal through the *intellectus* but does not assert an access of faith to God. In contrast to DuRoy, Löhrer can

5. A Natural Understanding of *Trinity*?

Faith leads to knowledge. This sentence applies to all of Augustine's reflections in *De Trinitate*, but it is characteristically ambiguous. (1) Knowledge, first of all, can be understood eschatologically as vision of God "face-to-face" in life after death. Only those who have believed on earth and lived accordingly will attain to this knowledge. (2) In book 8, Augustine had argued that this faith does not only lead eschatologically to knowledge but, for its part, presupposes knowledge. Whoever believes in the Trinity loves it, too, and whoever loves it already knows it. This knowledge, which first enables an understanding of faith, is the primary topic of the second part of *De Trinitate*. The argument that faith presupposes an implicit understanding of the Trinity cannot be dismissed, according to Augustine, with a reference to the dogma that describes the divine Trinity. It is rather a matter of correctly grasping the content of the dogma.

Book 8 had shown that the understanding of the Trinity cannot be attained in this life by an ascension to a *visio*. Such an ascension would entail the anticipation of the eschatological vision. Admittedly, this ascension also would presuppose faith without which grace could not be received, and grace, which purifies the character, is required as a presupposition of vision. Still, the question concerning the knowledge in faith would not be answered. Moreover, due to the strong intellectual components involved in the notion of ascension, this type of knowledge-attainment only would be open to the educated elite.

A locus classicus dedicated to a knowledge that does not first arise in an afterlife as a consequence of faith but must be already present in order that faith is at all possible can be found in Augustine's work *De praedestinatione sanctorum*. Against what he deems the false understanding that growth in faith stems from God, the beginning of faith from humans, Augustine argues that faith presupposes thought and thought, as the apostle Paul claims, is God-given.[63] Paul does not speak of a communication of a particular thought-content, and this is not what Augustine is getting at. Rather, he proceeds with a

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point to the fact that Augustine in Trin. 8.13 does attribute a special function to faith, but he does not harmonize this passage with Augustine's total conception.

[63] Cf. 2 Cor. 3:5. *Non quia idonei sumus cogitare aliquid quasi ex nobismetipsis, sed sufficientia nostra ex Deo est.*

discussion on the antecedence of *cogitare* before *credere*: For who cannot see that thinking is prior to believing? For no one believes anything unless he has first thought that it is to be believed. For however suddenly, however rapidly, some thoughts fly before the will to believe, and this presently follows in such wise as to attend them, as it were, in closest conjunction, it is yet necessary that everything which is believed should be believed after thought has preceded; although even belief itself is nothing else than to think with assent. For it is not every one who thinks that believes, since many think in order that they may not believe; but everybody who believes, thinks—both thinks in believing and believes in thinking."[64] As the definition of faith "*cum assensione cogitare*" makes clear, the antecedence of thought before faith is grounded less in the understanding that a certain content is to be believed than in the circumstance that faith always believes something of something. Faith takes on the form of an affirmative (or negative) judgment in which a subject- and a predicate-concept are joined. Acceptance in faith is directed at the truth claim accompanying such a judgment, and the judgment is accepted in faith as subjectively true. Faith transforms into knowledge if, whether by virtue of an eschatological vision or any other kind of learning progress here on earth, irrevocable reasons for acceptance are available.

Both in the condition of faith and in that of knowledge, a cognizance of the linked conceptual contents in the judgment must obtain because otherwise it would be unclear *what* exactly is believed or known. This cognizance is the thought that must precede faith and be able to be thought even without believing.[65] It would be a crude misunderstanding to raise the objection that such a cognizance would suspend faith and transform it into knowledge. For the knowledge of *what* is believed is completely separate from the knowledge of the truth of a faith-statement. The thesis, "*prius esse*

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[64] *Quis enim non videat, prius esse cogitare quam credere? Nullus quippe credit aliquid, nisi prius cogitaverit esse credendum. Quamvis enim raptim, quamvis celerrime credendi voluntatem quaedam sanctae cogitationes antevolent, moxque illa ita sequatur, ut quasi coniunctissima comitetur; necesse est tamen ut omnia quae creduntur, praeveniente cogitatione credantur. Quanquam et ipsum credere, nihil aliud est, quam cum assensione cogitare. Non enim omnis qui cogitat, credit; cum ideo cogitent plerique, ne credant: sed cogitat omnis qui credit, et credendo cogitat, et cogitando credit (Praed. Sanct. 2.5;* trans. *http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/15121.htm).* Cf., too, the more general statement in the letter to Consentius*: "cum etiam credere non possemus, nisis rationales animas haberemus (Ep. 120, 3)."*

[65] Cf. Spir.Litt. 31.54: *quid est enim credere nisi consentire verum esse quod dicitur.* The consensus that acknowledges what is said as true must first understand what is said.

cogitare quam credere," in no way contradicts the words of Isaiah Augustine likes to cite: "*nisi credideritis, non intelligitis*."[66]   In *De Trinitate*, Augustine offers a series of examples for this antecedence of *cogitare* before *credere* in the realm of sensibly perceivable things like, for example, the face of Mary and the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.[67]   The example of the qualities of the apostle Paul's character exceeds the so-called *fides historica* because the object of faith, namely the apostle's love of God is not only a matter of faith because he is temporally and spatially removed and therefore inaccessible for sensory perception but also because moral qualities in general cannot be directly perceived.   There is no reason why the law of the antecedence of thought would not also be applicable for faith in another transcendent object, the divine Trinity.   The statement: "God is three-fold one," can be made only in faith, for the life beyond first allows for verification by immediate perception.   This formulation of the statement of faith, however, presupposes a knowledge of the meaning of the concepts *God* and *three-foldness*.[68]

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[66] Is. 7:9; Augustine, Ep. 120,3. cf. Geerlings, W., "Jesaja 7,9 bei Augustin," in: *Wissenschaft und Weisheit* 50 (1987), 5-12; Ferrari, L., „Isaiah and the early Augustine," in: *Collectanea Augustiniana*. *Mélanges T.J. van Bavel*, publiés par B. Bruning, M. Laberigts, J. van Houtem, Leuven 1990 (=CA 1990), 739-756.

[67] Augustine offers another example of this sort in the 147th letter in which he explains the distinction between *credere* and *videre* with the hearing of the proposition: "*Crede Chrsitum resurrexisse a mortuis*." He emphasizes that an understanding of this proposition is only possible if the soul constructs an inner image of the resurrection. "*Videt etiam ipsius resurrectionis quamdam imaginem in animo suo factam, sine qua intelligi non potest quidquid factum corporaliter dicitur, sive credatur, sive non credatur* (Ep. 147.9)." This image is formed according to the concept of resurrection.

[68] Among the more dated authors, Th. Gangauf analyzes the understanding preceding faith. The continuous development of this understanding, he claims, leads to the deeper penetration into the object of faith, but faith does not transform into knowledge through this, but rather first in the eternal vision. (cf. Gangauf, Th., *Metaphysische Psychologie des heiligen Augustinus*, Augsburg 1852, unchanged reprint Ffm 1968, 71f.). The critique from K. Lorenz that Gangauf allows the *credere* to merge into *scire* does not appear to me to be correct and is more likely a result of Lorenz's neglect of the understanding that precedes faith (cf. Lorenz, 227f.).

Gilson correctly emphasizes that the thought before faith has a different function than the thought after faith: "Pour qu'il y ait assentiment à ce que l'on pense, il faut d'abord qu'il y ait pensée et par conséquent aussi que la raison propose un objet défini à notre acceptation." (cf. Gilson, É., *Introduction a l'Etude de Saint Augustine*, Paris 1929, 34) Cf. also the comment in Gilson, E. *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages*, New York 1938: "We cannot believe something, be it the word of God himself, unless we find some sense in the formula we believe (17f.)."

Schmaus is unable to summon any understanding for the question of knowledge preceding faith. He comments on Augustine's formula, "*credere nihil aliud est quam cum assensione cogitare* (Praed. Sanct. 2.5)," as follows: "Thought remains so indissolubly bound with the genesis of faith that without the activity of reason no act of faith can take place. Reason must, first of all, acknowledge the credibility of a testimony before the will can give its consent (Schmaus 1967, 169-190, here, 172; trans. A.L.)." He does not refer the *cogitare* to the understanding of the meaning of the statement but to its judgment on the

Basil Studer offers a helpful analysis of the interaction between faith, insofar as it deems historical events to be true, and understanding.[69] In his application to the Trinity-dogma, Studer distinguishes three levels upon which faith is effective (cf. 24ff). It first should be acknowledged that no proof may be presented on which the act of acceptance could support itself. Then, the credibility of the testimonies has to be assumed. Finally, on the third level is the knowledge of the meaning of those terms that appear together in the statement of faith. Studer writes about this level: "This *cogitatio concomitans* appears still more clearly in the exposition in which Augustine explains how we believe that Paul is a just man. Consenting to this affirmation of the Scripture, we know what a man is and what justice is (25)."

Augustine, according to Studer's interpretation, makes the acceptance of biblical testimonies as credible dependent upon the arrival of predicted events—that is, upon something historical. The content of faith is narrated in the bible and passed along to *historica traditione*. As Studer concedes, the proof that faith, according to Augustine, also concerns the understanding of conceptual contents is particularly difficult: "The impact of history upon the third level of thinking appears perhaps less evident. The deeper understanding of faith seems to be exclusively a work of the *ratio*. We evaluate terms of a proposition of faith by means of the *rationes aeternae*. Although we do not comprehend why, in a given proposition, the two terms are connected, we do understand

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credibility of the testimony. Schmaus has only Augustine's usage of Is. 7,9 in view and therefore thinks exclusively of the question concerning the truth of a statement. He consequently overlooks that the possibility of understanding has to be accounted for in the first place.

The extent to which Schmaus neglects the question concerning knowledge in faith is demonstrated in the fact that he really only takes into consideration the end of Book 8, namely, the "Trinitätsspekulation mit dem Begriff Liebe" (225-229). He furthermore ignores the failure of ascension to the Trinity through the concepts *veritas* and *bonum* as well as Augustine's lucidly worked out problematic of foreknowledge through the topic of justice without which love is not possible; it is precisely this problematic, however, that moves Augustine's entire treatise.

Löhrer offers a detailed discussion of the problem. He writes: "The *cogitare* in the act of faith is accordingly that element of content that (…) is offered to our understanding insofar as we comprehend individual conceptual contents (cf. the proposition: John is sent from God) or general truths that are realized in a specific fact of faith (e.g. the *forma iustitiae* in the life of Paul) (Löhrer 1957, 401f.)." According to Löhrer, this function of *cogitare* does not only occur in faith in spatial-temporal things but also in faith in eternal things (*fides rerum aeternarum*) (cf. 402). Unfortunately, however, he concentrates entirely on the role of the *cogitare* for the faith in temporality and forgoes a discussion on the presuppositions of knowledge for the faith in the three-fold God.

[69] Cf. Studer, B., "History and Faith in Augustine's *De Trinitate*," (The 1996 St. Augustine Lecture), in: AS 28 (1997), 7-50.

rationally what they signify: for instance, what a man is and what justice is, or what God is and what a trinity is (27)." Following this statement, Studer explains how faith nevertheless influences understanding even on this level. He refers to Augustine's list of sources of knowledge in Trin. 15.22 where sensory perception, testimonies of others, and intellectual perception are named. Studer asserts that, following Augustine, we can construct for ourselves on the basis of narrations of others an imagined image of a city we have never seen such as Alexandria (cf. Trin. 8.9).

This reference is hardly capable, however, of achieving what it is supposed to achieve. For in the case of Alexandria, it is a matter of a sensibly perceptible object, whereas the divine Trinity is an intelligible entity. If Augustine treated the three named sources of information indiscriminatingly as origins of knowledge, it is nevertheless clear which differences are required.[70] Sensory perception and the hearing of testimonies of others are susceptible to deception and mistakes and are thus classified under the knowledge of corporeal things, whereas intellectual ascertainment is characterized by infallibility and can have only intelligible beings for an object. According to Augustine's systematic, the capacity to understand the concept *trinity* cannot stem from the reception of biblical testimonies. Rather, it must be already present in order to even understand these testimonies.

Book 10 of *Confessiones* offers a helpful application of the thesis, one can only love what one knows, to the concept of God. Augustine confesses his love of God only to ask subsequently: "When I love you, what do I love?"[71] The love of God is only possible on the basis of a preceding knowledge of the content of the concept *God*. The analysis of *memoria* in book 10 serves to explicate this knowledge and to prove that a quasi natural understanding of the concept of *God* is always already present. The loving soul's long-initiated movement of ascension through different realms of reality to God is aborted with the notice that such a striving toward God is only possible on the basis of an already existing knowledge of what is sought: "As I rise above memory, where am I to find you? My true good and gentle source of reassurance, where shall I find you? If I

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[70] For the scientific status of historiography, cf., for example, DC 2.27.41

[71] *non dubia, sed certa conscientia, domine, amo te* (Conf. 10.6.8).
Quid autem amo, cum te amo (ibid)?

find you outside my memory, I am not mindful of you. And how shall I find you if I am not mindful of you?"[72] The language of both having to rise above memory as a creaturely reality and being unable to rise above it indicates that whoever intends to seek and contact the reality of God is only capable of it if he knows what he seeks.[73] God is not to be found in memory in the sense that this finding makes the vision of and contact with God dispensable. Rather, this finding discovers merely that knowledge, which enables the seeking of God. Augustine answers the question about the content of the concept of God (what do we search for when we search for God?) in two steps. He inserts "the happy life" in the place of God: "When I seek for you, my God, my quest is for the happy life."[74] Naturally, the problem encountered in the search for God arises again: one must already have a knowledge of the *vita beata* in order to search for it.[75] But what is of concern for Augustine is not the origin of this knowledge, which he expressly leaves open, but rather the universality of striving for happiness. The universality of this striving shows that every person possesses such a knowledge and that there principally can be no striving for happiness without a knowledge of happiness.[76] Augustine's thesis thus claims that the universality of the striving for happiness bears witness to the human's natural, universal familiarity with God.

Augustine nonetheless insists that this thesis requires further precision. Through the identification with the *vita beata*, God is made into the formal goal of all striving. A more exact determination of the content is nevertheless required that explicates the good we strive for if we want to be happy and helps distinguish, despite the universality of the striving for happiness, between the true seekers of God and those gone astray. When Augustine writes: "That is the authentic happy life, to set one's joy on you (Conf.

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[72] Cf. Conf. 10.6.8-17.26; *Transibo et memoriam, ut ubi te inveniam, vere bone et secura suavitas, ut ubi te inveniam? Si preater memoriam meam te invenio, inmemor tui sum. Et quomodo iam inveniam te, si memor non sum tui* (Conf. 10.17.26)?

[73] *volens te attingere* (ibid).

[74] *Cum enim te, deum meum, quaero, vitam beatam quaero* (Conf. 10.20.29).

[75] *Quomodo ergo quaero vitam beatam? Quia non est mihi, donec dicam: "Sat, est illic."* (Conf. 10.20.29)

[76] *Nonne ipsa est beata vita, quam omnes volunt et omnino qui nolit nemo est? Ubi noverunt eam, quod sic volunt eam? Ubi viderunt, ut amarent eam? Nimirum habemus eam nescio quomodo. [...] Nescio quomodo noverunt eam ideoque habent eam in nescio qua notitia, [...] Neque enim amaremus eam, nisi nossemus. Audimus nomen hoc et omnes rem ipsam nos adpetere fatemur; [...] (Conf. 10.20.29). Non ego tantum aut cum paucis, sed beati prorsus omnes esse volumus. Quod nisi certa notitia nossemus, non tam certa voluntate vellemus* (Conf. 10.21.31).

10.32),” then he thinks of God no longer as merely the formal determined goal of all action but also as the highest good, the possession of which entails the attainment of the goal-condition. It is upon this background that the question concerning the meaning of the concept of God is posed: what do we want if we want God in order to be happy? According to Augustine, this is the “truth,” for even if some people want to deceive others, no one wants to be deceived himself: “This happy life everyone desires; joy in the truth everyone wants. I have met with many people who wished to deceive, none who wished to be deceived. How then did they know about this happy life unless in the same way that they knew about the truth? They love the truth because they have no wish to be deceived, and when they love the happy life (which is none other than joy grounded in truth) they are unquestionably loving the truth. And they would have no love for it unless there were some knowledge of it in their memory.”[77] God is known to humans in both of these forms: happiness and truth. The human can love and seek God because and insofar as he disposes of a natural knowledge of the meaning of the concept *God*. *Happiness* and *truth* are concomitantly understood when God is spoken of; and conversely, God is concomitantly understood wherever it is a matter of happiness and truth.

Two characteristics of this knowledge should be emphasized: First of all, it does not arise from the study of Christian dogma or the lessons in catechism. The possession of this knowledge belongs neither to the theologians nor exclusively to the baptized Christians. Therefore, the knowledge in faith cannot be a result of instructions in faith; it belongs rather to the basic intellectual configuration of humans. Secondly, this knowledge is only implicitly present. If the understanding of the concept *God* arises of itself because *happiness* and *truth* are understood concomitantly, this concomitant knowledge is not normally an object of attention. Rather, it requires particular philosophical effort not in order to enable the understanding of the God-concept but to make explicit the implicit understanding always already present.[78] In his analyses in book 10 of *Confessiones*, Augustine does not explain the concept of God but uncovers

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[77] *Amant enim et ipsam [veritatem], quia falli nolunt, et cum amant beatam vitam, quod non est aliud quam de veritate gaudium, utique amant etiam veritatem nec amarent, nisi esset aliqua notitia eius in memoria eorum* (Conf. 10.23.33).

[78] For the implicit knowledge of God according to *Confessiones*, cf. Verbeke 1954, 502-506.

the fact that it is already understood. Finding God in memory means making explicit that knowledge by which faith is first able to believe something. Neither this implicit knowledge nor its explication with the aid of philosophical analysis should be confused with the vision of God as Augustine describes it in books 7 and 9 of *Confessiones*. Due to the degree of cultivation required for such a vision, few people are capable of reaching it, whereas implicit knowledge belongs to every person. Moral purity is also a condition for the ascension to vision that is not required for the natural understanding of God. The explication demands an inward turn into the soul in order to bring to light its hidden contents. Although the vision also calls for introversion, it composes merely a step to be transcended on the path of ascension to intellectual-immutable reality. The vision of God transforms faith into knowledge, but the identification of God in the vision is only possible on the basis of the implicit knowledge of that which is sought in faith and found in vision.

The necessity of a foreknowledge can be seen at first in the faith in sensibly perceptible things like the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, then in the faith in imperceptible things like the justice of the apostle Paul, and finally in the faith in God. It seems logical to assume that faith in the Trinity also presupposes an implicit knowledge of the structure of three-foldness. The aforementioned characteristics of implicit knowledge are naturally valid here, too. It is not a matter of a *knowledge that* God is three-fold. Such a knowledge will first incur in the beatifying vision of God in the future life. For the present, it only can be *believed that* God is three-fold. This faith is supported by the Holy Scripture and the penetration of thought into it as mediated in catechism lessons. The anticipated transformation of faith into knowledge by means of a temporary vision (cf. Conf. 7 and 9) is, according to Augustine, impossible because our intellectual powers do not suffice. But the three-foldness of God only can be believed, if it is known *what* a three-foldness is. Even the perception of the trinitarian God in the beatifying vision (in the sense of finding what is sought) is only possible on the basis of an implicit pre-understanding of trinity.

The origin of the foreknowledge requires particular explanation, for Augustine's anthropology maintains that the human horizon of experience after the fall to sin is constituted by the world of sensible perception. Intelligible entities can be perceived only

by the philosophically educated; for the uneducated, only corporeal things are real. But in the temporal-spatial realm, no truly trinitarian entities are to be found.[79] More importantly, the trinity-structure, according to which three is not greater than one, presents a paradox that yields no sense.[80] How should a person who uncritically holds the material world for the only one possess an implicit knowledge of trinity?

Augustine's thesis states that the human mind exhibits in itself a trinitarian structure, and that self-knowledge, in the sense of a foreknowledge of oneself, is an essential characteristic of mind. What trinity is can be gathered therefore from the *mens humana*. Even if this trinity is not essentially identical to the divine Trinity, it nonetheless corresponds to it structurally. The familiarity with it thus enables an understanding of *trinity*. The philosophical analysis consequently has two tasks to fulfill: the first task consists in elevating the structural features of the *mens humana* and its processes and relating them to the ontological structure of the divine Trinity in order to grasp on a theoretical plane of Trinity-speculation correspondences and differences. This effort composes the content of book 9 in particular. The second task consists in demonstrating that an implicit self-understanding of the human mind is always already present. In book 10, Augustine shows that the mind does not first experience itself through theoretical endeavor, but rather knows itself immediately. This knowledge of itself is, in turn, to be called implicit in the sense that it is not normally an object of attention. Nonetheless, according to Augustine's thesis, this self-familiarity represents the source of knowledge from which the pre-understanding of *three-foldness* stems. Every human is familiar with himself; therefore, every human can understand the meaning of the sentence "God is three-fold," even if not everyone believes in the truth of this sentence. Augustine's goal of argumentation consists in proving that immediate self-knowledge enables a pre-understanding of *trinity*. With this pre-understanding, the

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[79] All of the analogies in the corporeal realm on which Augustine to all intents and purposes relies are missing the aspect of tri-unity.

[80] In the 147th letter, Augustine presents a brief juxtaposition of the structure of the intellect and that of the body: *[…] praeferre naturam non alibi hoc et alibi aliud, sed omnia quae habet in uno simul habentem, sicuti est nostra ipsa intellegentia, ei naturae quae ita partibus constat, ut minor sit dimidia quam tota, sicuti est omne corpus* (Ep. 147.45).

necessary condition for loving the three-fold God, seeking him, and seeing him is fulfilled.[81]

Just as the natural concept of happiness does not prevent one from making the error that happiness could be found elsewhere than in God, implicit self-knowledge does not inhibit mistakes in explicit self-interpretation. Augustine's primary example is the materialistic self-interpretation, which can be either naïve or philosophically reflective. Regardless, it cannot be seen as a valid explication of implicit knowledge. It is therefore the task of philosophy to present an explanation of the human mind that is compatible with natural self-knowledge and has its criterion of truth in it. As Augustine demonstrates in book 10 of *De Trinitate*, the Delphic imperative "know thyself" does not have its meaning in the command to acquire self-knowledge, but rather in the reconciliation of the explicit self-interpretation with the always already implicitly present self-conception. The possibility of a false explication does not prevent an implicit "natural" understanding of trinity just as the existence of false philosophical concepts of God do not obviate an accurate, implicit understanding of the concept *God*. If the explication is successful, however, then the human mind will recognize itself as the image of God that it always already is.

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[81] G. Verbeke suggests the same interpretation. He parallels the natural, implicit knowledge of God that is the condition of explicit knowledge (Conf. 10) with the triadic structure of the human mind as a precondition for the explicit knowledge of the Trinity. "Résumons brièvement le résultat de notre recherche: quand saint Augustine dit au début des Soliloques qu'il désire connaître Dieu et l'âme et quand au cours de même dialogue il exprime le voeu 'noverim me noverim Te', il ya pour lui un rapport entre ces deux connaissances, en ce sens que la connaissance de soi et la voie indiquée par l'évêque d'Hippone pour arriver à la connaissance de Dieu; ceci veut dire qu'une certaine connaissance de Dieu n'est jamais totalement absente de la conscience humaine; elle y est souvent de manière implicite et latente; la retour intérieur sera la condition nécessaire pour expliciter cette connaissance obscure et pour prendre pleinement conscience de la vérité divine que est la source de toute notre vie cognitive. C'est même en scrutant la structure de l'esprit humaine qu'on peut arriver à une certaine compréhension de la Sainte Trinité (Verbeke 1954, 512).

IV. The Trinitarian Structure of the Human Mind (Trin. 9, Part I)

Books 9 and 10 of *De Trinitate* are dedicated to the proof of a trinitarian structure in the human mind that corresponds to that of the divine Trinity. Book 9 offers a preliminary version of this structure in the terms: *mens–amor sui–notitia sui*.[1] Upon further inquiry, this version will prove to be inadequate, however, for it does not completely grasp the essence of the *mens humana*. Augustine first describes the fundament of human subjectivity in book 10 with the triad: *memoria–voluntas–intellegentia*.[2] Book 9 can be subdivided into an introduction and two main parts. In the introduction (Trin. 9.1), Augustine sketches once again the project of *intellectus fidei*: the faith that God is three-fold first will be transformed into definite knowledge (*certa cognitio*) after this life through the vision face to face. Faith nonetheless calls already now for understanding (*intellegere*). Augustine thus formulates the content of the faith in the Trinity as follows: "As far as this question of ours is concerned, let us believe that Father and Son and Holy Spirit are one God, maker and ruler of all creation; and that the Father is not the Son, and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son, but that they are a Trinity of persons related to each other, and a unity of equal being (Trin. 9.1)." The definitive characteristics of the structure of the Trinity, according to Augustine, are the identity of substance or essence of the persons, their three-ness, and their relationality.

The first main part (Trin. 9.2-5.8) aims at making these characteristics understandable. Since the ascension to the Trinity proved to be unachievable, however, the Trinity must be demonstrated on another, more easily comprehended object, namely the human mind: "We are not yet speaking of things above, of God the Father and the

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[1] W. Theiler observes the parallel of this triad to Porphyry's triad of οὐσία-γνῶσις-φιλία (*Sententiae* XL; cf. Theiler 1966, 52.). For Porphyry's interpretation of self-knowledge, see P. Courcelle, "Le connais-toi toi-même chez les néo-platoniciens grecs," in: *Le néoplatonisme* (Colloques internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique), Paris 1971, esp. 155f; see also, ibid., 1974, vol. I, 87-91.

[2] Courcelle offers an overview of the contents of books 9, 10 and 14 in relation to the idea of self-knowledge (ibid., 1974, 151-163). L. Scheglmann interprets book 9 as an analysis of the »mind« (»Gemüt«) and book 10 as a portrayal of the »intellect«. In doing so, he treats the former as »consciousness« and the latter as »self-consciousness« (cf. Scheglmann, "Der Subjektzirkel in der Psychologie Augustins," in: *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung* 22 (1968), 327-344; here, 332-337). He therefore casts Augustine's ideas into close proximity to the psychology of the late 19th and early 20th century, which emerged out of German Idealism. In my opinion, however, Augustine's texts provide no basis for such an interpretation. For a critique of Scheglmann, see Booth 1979, 115f.

Son and the Holy Spirit, but about this disparate image, yet image nonetheless, which is man; it is likely to be easier, after all, and more familiar for our mind in its weakness to examine."[3] It is a matter of a pedagogical step back from the uncreated reality to the creature. The concept of *image* performs two things here. First of all, it shows that an analysis of the *mens humana* truly guarantees an understanding of the trinitarian structure of God. Secondly, it makes clear that the human mind, not God, is the immediate object of investigation.

In the first main part of Trin. 9, Augustine analyzes the human mind in order to demonstrate that it exhibits the same structural features as the divine Trinity—namely the equality of the individual members, the independence (that is, substantiality) of each individual member within the substantial unity of the entire being, and the radical relationality of the members to each other. The elements Augustine works with here are the mind (*mens*), its love of itself (*amor sui*), and its knowledge of itself (*notitia sui*).

Whereas the first main part depicts the arrangement of these elements in a structural respect, the second main part (Trin. 9.9-12.18) primarily offers a description of the genetic relations between these elements. Most notably, Augustine addresses the conditions of origination of the *notitia* in general and the *notitia sui* in particular. This genetic investigation ultimately leads Augustine to a deeper understanding of the *mens humana*, which he depicts in book 10. It should be noted that in the passages on the genesis of these forms Augustine makes use of the doctrine of the inner word introduced in book 8 in connection with human knowledge *apud se ipsum*. He does so by equating the *notitia* with the *verbum*. Moreover, it will be shown that Augustine is interested here, as throughout his reflections, in the ethical consequences.

The secondary literature provides various interpretations of the transition from book 8 to book 9. H.-I. Marrou advocated an extreme thesis. He summarized books 1-8 as theological. In them, he claims, the Catholic Trinity-dogma is formulated and defended against heresies with the help of the bible and tradition, whereas book 9 marks the beginning point of Augustine's philosophy with which he makes understandable that

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[3] Nondum de supernis loquimur, nondum de Deo Patre et Filio et Spiritu sancto, sed de hac impari imagine attamen imagine, id est homine; familiarius enim eam et facilius fortassis intuetur mentis nostrae infirmitatis. (Trin. 9.2.2)

which up to then could only be believed.[4] Marrou strangely invokes Schmaus for this subdivision although Schmaus proposes a different division. According to Schmaus, books 1-4 present the material from scripture, while books 5-7 formulate the dogma, while with book 8, the speculative analysis begins.[5] Marrou's division misconstrues the logic of the conception of *De Trinitate*. Book 8 is not more biblical than book 9. More importantly, Marrou's interpretation leads to the notion that Augustine's philosophy of mind is ultimately merely an illustration of the Trinity-dogma that could be just as well omitted, whereas Augustine, in truth, seeks an intuition of the divine Trinity, and because this proves to be impossible (as book 8 demonstrates), he wants at least to offer an intuition of its image. The introduction of a psychological image of the Trinity at the end of book 8 (namely, the love-triad) is much less surprising than Marrou claims (65), especially since the doctrine of the human as image of God was already introduced at the end of book 7 (cf. Trin. 7.12). Marrou believes that Augustine's compositional style is incoherent in many respects, but, as his thesis maintains, this incoherence is not due to literary incompetence; it is rather an outflow of the program of *exercitatio animi* (299-327). Since Augustine, Marrou explains, is concerned with sharpening the thinking capacities, the discussions in which this sharpening takes place need not be connected in any way to the true topic of his writing.[6] The example of *De Trinitate* shows, however, that the impression of incoherence is more likely caused by a misunderstanding on the part of Marrou. If such incoherence is not present, then its justification through the thesis of *exercitatio animi* can be dropped. Furthermore, Marrou fully retracted his accusation of incoherence with respect to *Confessiones*, *De Trinitate*, and *De civitate dei* in the *Retractatio* attached to his work (cf. 665-672).

R. Williams is particularly interested in the connections of the love-triad between book 8 and book 15 and treats books 9 through 14 as an "enormous digression."[7] This digression, he asserts, is nonetheless required: "There is nothing that can be said of the mind's relation to itself without the mediation of the revelation of God as its creator and lover. At the heart of our self-awareness is the awareness of the self-imparting of God,

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[4] Marrou 1958, 64
[5] Schmaus 1967, 5
[6] See in particular Marrou's interpretation oft he Cassiciacum dialogues, 306-308.
[7] Williams 1990, 323

whereby we perceive the eternal fact underlying our existence (323)." In our analysis of book 9 and 10, it will become apparent where and how our interpretation of the self-presence of the human mind differs from Williams's, making the adoption of his outline impossible.

J. Cavadini uncovers in *De Trinitate* not only *one* ascension attempt to the vision of God, namely that of book 8 but also a second attempt in books 9 through14. He writes: "These books are, in effect, an extended exercise of the mind in the 'non-corporeal' mode of thinking with which the Trinity will ultimately be grasped. Perhaps, as a unit, they could be regarded therefore as one of the finest examples of what could be called Neoplatonic anagogy that remains from the antique world."[8] Augustine, he claims, intentionally allows this second attempt to fail in order to communicate to the soul the consciousness of its distance from God and to advocate, in the place of the direct vision of the Trinity, the effort to gradually renew the image that it is (cf. 108). Although my interpretation agrees with Cavadini's concerning Augustine's distance to the idea of ascension, I believe, contrary to Cavadini, that books 9 through 14 do not contain a second attempt at ascension to God; they contain instead the ascension to the vision of the *mens humana* in order to be able to show its analogy to the divine Trinity. With book 8, the realization of the alternative project to the Neoplatonic vision begins, namely the confirmation of the relation of archetype and image between the three-foldness of God and the three-foldness of the human mind.

1. The Soul as Analogat of God? Analogy and Ascension

The idea of a passage through the human mind and beyond it to attain a vision of God belongs to the base material of Augustinian speculation. But the belief that the divine three-foldness could be understood by the human mind seems surprising, all the more because Augustine adamantly rejects such a belief from the beginning of *De Trinitate* (among other places). In the prooemium to the work, Augustine attacks those who speak falsely about the Trinity. Errors occur in three different ways: first of all, because

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[8] J. Cavadini, "The Structure and Intention of Augustine's *De Trinitate*," in *AS* 23 (1992), 103-123, here, 105.

categories of material reality, as it is accessible through sensible experience, are transposed onto incorporeal reality;[9] secondly, because God is thought of according to the nature of the human soul and its affections;[10] and thirdly, because even though the mutable world is, in fact, transcended in order to view the immutable substance of God, nonsense is claimed of it.[11] Augustine writes, "Indeed this disease is common to all three types I have mentioned—to those who conceive of God in bodily terms, those who do so in terms of created spirit such as soul, and those who think of him neither as body nor as created spirit, but still have false ideas about him."[12] The first error shows itself when someone claims that God is red or white; the second leads to the conception that God could forget something or remember something; and the third manifests in the thesis that God created himself.[13]

That which distinguishes the soul from God is the soul's belongingness to changing reality. This belongingness manifests itself in the soul's subjection to the passions, in forgetting, and in remembering. This inconstancy applies even to a fundamental feature of the soul, namely its being alive. The soul indeed lives forever, according to Augustine, but if it is wise, it has more life, and if it forfeits wisdom, it lessens its life (cf. Trin. 5.5). In a similar manner, Augustine argues in book 7 of *De Genesi ad litteram* against those who interpret the inspiration of life by God (cf. Gen. 2:7) such that the human soul stems from the substance of God and therefore is of the same nature as God (cf. Gen. litt. 7.2.3). For Augustine, the soul is created by God, not begotten, and therefore is not of the same essence or being as God. This difference is perceptible in the

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[9] Quorum nonnulli ea quae de corporalibus rebus sive per sensus corporeos experta noverunt, sive quae natura humani ingenii et diligentiae vivacitate vel artis adiutorio perceperunt, ad res incorporeas et spiritales transferre conantur ut ex his illas metiri atque opinari velint (Trin. 1.1).

[10] Sunt item alii qui secundum animi humani naturam vel affectum de Deo sentient, si quid sentient (Trin. 1.1.1).

[11] Est item aliud hominum genus, eorum qui universam quidem creaturam, quae profecto mutabilis est, nituntur transcendere ut ad incommutabilem substantiam quae Deus est erigant intentionem; sed mortalitatis onere praegravati (Trin. 1.1).

[12] Et hic quidem omnium morbus est trium gereum quae proposui: et eorum scilicet qui secundum corpus de Deo sapient; et eorum qui secundum spiritalem creaturam, sicuti est anima; et eorum qui neque secundum corpus neque secundum spiritalem creaturam, et tamen de Deo falsa existimant (Trin. 1.1).

[13] Qui enim opinatur Deum, verbi gratia, condidum vel rutilum, fallitur….Rursus qui opinatur Deum nunc obliviscentem, nunc recordantem vel si quid huiusmodi est, nihilominus in errore est. Qui autem putat eius esse potentiae Deum ut seipsum ipse genuerit, eo plus errant quod non solum Deus ita non est sed nec spiritalis nec corporalis creatura (Trin. 1.1).

mutability of the soul, which can become better or worse.[14] Augustine furthermore rejects every interpretation of the soul as consisting of corporeal elements.[15] The soul indeed makes use of bodily organs, first and foremost the brain, for knowledge and action, but as an immaterial being, it differs from all bodies.

The comparably high but not yet perfect degree of unity of the soul can be witnessed, according to Augustine, in the antakoluthie of virtues in which different, clearly definable qualities are inseparably bound. Although courage, wisdom, temperance, and justice are different, the soul cannot possess one of these virtues without at the same time possessing the others. The soul is thus close to the simplicity of God, but the distinction remains that courageousness and the other virtues do not already reside in the being of the soul. The soul is the soul even without virtues, whereas all of these attributes are inseparably bound together with God's *esse*. Seen categorically, "being just" describes a quality of the soul that necessarily appears with other qualities like "being courageous" and "being clever" but remains accidental, whereas these attributes can be said of God in the form of an essential predication.[16]

A further aspect of the merely relative simplicity of the soul becomes apparent in its capacity to feel. Bodies exhibit the highest degree of multiplicity and the weakest unity because they consist of parts of which two is more than one so that a whole is greater than a half. Moreover, most of their attributes such as color, form, and magnitude are so loosely connected to their carriers that they are interchangeable. The soul is simpler than the body because it is not spatial and therefore is not composed of parts. This indivisibility of the soul shows itself, according to Augustine, in that the whole soul registers the activities in the body even if these activities occur only in one part of the

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[14] Porro autem animae naturam vel in deterius vel in melius commutari posse quis ambigit? Ac per hoc sacrilega opinio est eam et Deum credere unius esse substantiae.
This critique is directed primarily at the Manicheans (cf. Gen. litt. 7.11.17), but also at the Priscillians. For the disparateness of God and the soul, cf. Gen. litt. 7.2.3; 8.20.39; Ep. 18,2; Lib.arb. 2.12.34; DC 2.38.57.
[15] Cf. Gen. litt. 7.12.18-21.31.
[16] Humano quippe animo non hoc est esse quod est fortem esse aut prudentem aut iustum aut temperantem; potest enim esse animus et nullam istarum habere virtutem. Deo autem hoc est esse quod est potentem esse aut iustum esse aut sapientem esse et si quid de illa simplici multiplicitate vel multiplici simplicitate dixeris quo substantia eius significetur (Trin. 6.4).

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body. The soul is in the entire body and in all of its parts as a whole.[17] He asserts, however, that the multiplicity of the soul manifests itself in the soul's exhibition of differing and interchangeable qualities. Thus, different souls possess in varying degrees capacities like good artistic judgment, indolence, sagaciousness, and a good memory. Even the cardinal vices—*cupiditas*, *timor*, *laetitia*, and *tristitia*[18]—can command different souls to varying degrees.[19] Due to this multiplicity and mutability, it appears impossible to understand God from the soul. How is the idea of wanting to make the divine Trinity visible in the *mens humana* as its image compatible with the unlikeness of the intellectual creature and God?

The relation of archetype and image plays a decisive role here. Augustine maintains that the divine Trinity and the human mind may not be understood as examples of the same species and genus; they are rather ontologically different. But the relation between archetype and image is flexible enough to be able to bridge even ontological differences. Two entities that fall under the same definition exhibit both the same and different characteristics, but the differences only can apply to individual contingencies. Relations of similarity, however, allow for essential differences and even can connect the highest with the lowest spheres of being, as Augustine's analogies in the realm of material creation demonstrate. Similarity does not entail a sameness of essence with individual differences, but rather a correspondence of structure. The idea of the archetype-image countervails the stratification of the regions of being because similarities are capable of penetrating the borders of these regions. The notion of analogy relativizes the concept of ascension. In the ascension to each particular higher sphere the next lower sphere is left behind: the material world is overcome in order to attain to the region of mind, and this region, in turn, must be left behind in order to be able to see God. But the archetype can be perceived only *in* the image. Whoever desires to see the Trinity does

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[17] Nam ideo simplicior [anima] est corpore quia non mole diffunditur per spatium loci sed in unoquoque corpore, et in toto tota est et qualibet parte eius tota est; et ideo cum fit aliquid in quamvis exigua particula corporis quod sentiat anima, quamvis non fiat in toto corpore, illa tamen tota setit quia totam non latet (Trin. 6.8)

[18] Cf. this list with Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes* 4.7.14.

[19] possintque et alia sine aliss et alia magis, alia minus, innumerabilia et innumerabiliter in animae natura inveniri; manifestum est non simplicem sed multiplicem esse naturam (Trin. 6.8). Augustine apparently anticipates an antakoluthie of virtues but not an antakoluthie of vices.

not have to depart from the level of being of the *mens humana*. Rather, he must understand the *mens humana* correctly—namely, as the *imago* of God. Clearly, negations still have their place, for similarity is precisely not sameness. The divine Trinity remains different from the trinity of the human mind, but there is no other access to the highest sphere than the observation of the second highest. The relativization of the theory of the stages of being by the concept of similarity is an immediate consequence of the fact that the divine Trinity, on account of its internal relationality, is not reachable via the path of the vision of ideas.

Augustine thus distances himself from the concept of ascension. This distancing, however, is thoroughly different from his critique of Neo-platonism, as presented, for example, in *Confessiones*. Together with the Neo-platonists, the younger Augustine considered moral purity to be a precondition for the exaltation of the soul to the immutable things, but he accused Neo-platonism of not recognizing the necessity of the grace of God, as it is bestowed on the basis of faith in the God-become-human, for moral purification.[20] This discussion solely revolves around the subjective conditions for the capacity to ascend, not around the idea of an ascension altogether, which the Augustine of *Confessiones* emphatically affirms. In *De Trinitate*, on the contrary, the particular ontological structure of the Trinity renders ascension as a means to knowledge futile. In its stead, reflections of analogy are to be used. The intellectual vision of the Trinity is an option only for the life beyond, not for the earthly existence of humans.

Still, aspects of the conception of ascension can be found within the parameters of the concept of analogy because analogies can exist in various degrees. If the divine Trinity cannot be made immediately visible, then directly accessible realities must be found that are closest to God in the hierarchy of being. In them, the Trinity will be most clearly visible, and the requisite negations are reduced to the achievable minimum within the context of analogical knowledge. The *mens humana* is that being distinguished by the greatest possible similarity.[21] It already belongs to the intelligible realm of being and can be grasped only by leaving behind the material world and the categories appropriate to it. The first step of the traditional ascension from material-mutable being to

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[20] Cf. *De vera religione* 7.23; Conf. 7.9.14.
[21] Cf. Trin. 11.8.

intelligible-mutable being still has to be made in order to reach the best possible image of God.[22]

Even beyond this step, Augustine's philosophy of mind penetrates to the core of the *mens humana* where mutability no longer exists. Particularly book 10 of *De Trinitate* demonstrates that immutable self-love is equally constitutive of the *mens humana* as a constant self-knowledge withdrawn from the fluctuations of forgetting and remembering. The human soul, too, has an immutable dimension. This does not entail, however, that the soul is of the same substance as God. The partial immutability of a being does not stand opposed to its created nature, for God created it immutable. The distinction between creator and creature or between being itself and that which exists through participation in being is in no way challenged by the idea of an immutable creature. Therefore, while preserving this difference, it may be conceded that the best image is so close to the archetype that the objection no longer holds that Augustine illegitimately attempts to understand the immutable from the mutable.

2. An Outline of the Trinitarian Ontology of the Human Mind

In the first main part of book 9, Augustine draws upon the love-triad of the preceding book by distinguishing between the lover, the beloved, and love (*amans— quod amatur— amor*, Trin. 9.2). But Augustine does not treat this love-triad as an analogy to the divine Trinitas, as his promise at the end of book 8 would lead us to assume. Instead, he reduces the triad to a duality by concentrating on the particular case of self-love. In self-love, lover and beloved coincide. Thus a distinction can be made only between *amans* and *amor* (or between *quod amatur* and *amor*). "So there are two things when someone loves himself, namely love and what is being loved; for in this case lover and what is being loved are one thing."[23] Since Augustine limits himself to an investigation of the human

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[22] Cf. Gen. litt. 6.16.34 where, with reference to Acts 17:28 ("For in him we live, and move, and have our being."), Augustine emphasizes that the soul is so close to God that he is, for it, more readily knowable than corporeal things. For the pagan-greek and early Christian understanding of the idea of the human as an image of God, see J. Pépin, *Idées greques sur l'homme et sur Dieu* (Paris, 1971), 20-8, 189-96.

[23] Duo ergo sunt cum se quisque amat, amor et quod amatur; tunc enim amans et quod amatur unum est (Trin. 9.2).

mind, *mens* could be substituted for *amans* or *quod amatur*. The relation between *mens* and *amor* is made the object of analysis.

Even if it is a matter of two members here, the relation of *mens* and *amor* exhibit, according to Augustine, the same structural features as the divine Trinity— namely, equality, substantiality of the individual members within the unity of the substance of the whole, and relational differentness. Equality appears from the onset in an ethical context: "But what does loving itself mean but wanting to be available to itself in order to enjoy itself? And since it wants itself as much as it is, will exactly matches mind, and love is equal to lover."[24] The will of *mens can* correspond to the *mens*' degree of being, but it does not have to. If the *mens* loves itself such that it corresponds to its position in the hierarchy of being, which is at the same time a hierarchy of goods, then the loving *mens* and its love obtain coequality. The love is therefore appropriate. Moreover, love, for Augustine, is an intellectual substance like *mens*, but they are only *one essentia*. They appear different if they are spoken of relatively, that is, in their reciprocal relation to each other. In this form, they appear by the names *amans—amor* or *quod amatur—amor*.[25] The substantiality of the individual members is demonstrated by the fact that not only can relative predications be made of them, but each of them also may be addressed with *ad se*-predications. Each one, for itself, is *spiritus* or *mens* despite the fact that they represent just *one spiritus* and *one mens*.[26] The advantage of the reduction of the love-triad to a dyad of self-love consists therefore in the capacity to speak of an essential identity and a substantial unity of the members, whereas it would have been impossible to use such language for human love of external material goods, friends, or God. Nevertheless, the dual-unity of love requires an addendum for a trinity. Augustine discovers such an addendum in another essential feature of the human mind, self-

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[24] Quid est autem amare se nisi praeso sibi esse velle ad fruendum se? Et cum tantum se vult esse quantum est, par menti voluntas est et amanti amor aequalis (Trin. 9.2).

[25] Et si aliqua substantia est amor, non est utique corpus sed spiritus, nec mens corpus sed spiritus est. Neque tamen amor et mens duo spiritus sed unus spiritus, nec essentiae duae sed una, et tamen duo quaedam unum sunt, amans et amor, sive sic dicas, quod amatur et amor. Et haec quidem duo relative ad invicem dicuntur. Amans quippe ad amorem refertur et amor ad amantem; amans enim aliquo amore amat, et amor alicuius amantis est. Mens vero et spiritus non relative dicuntur sed essentiam demonstrant (Trin. 9.2).

[26] Ideoque quantum ad invicem referuntur duo sunt; quod autem ad se ipsa dicuntur, et singula spiritus et simul utrumque unus spiritus, et singula mens et simul utrumque una mens (Trin. 9.2).

knowledge. Self-knowledge comes in to play as the condition of possibility for self-love. Augustine claims that no one can love what he does not know: if the mind loves itself, it must possess knowledge of itself (cf. Trin. 9.3).

Before Augustine extends the dual-unity of the *mens humana* to a trinity through the incorporation of self-knowledge, he first ensures that self-knowledge is a matter of an intelligible phenomenon ontologically situated on the plane of the *mens*. The intelligibility of self-knowledge is demonstrated by the fact that the mind has access to itself through itself, unmediated by the senses. The mind knows itself through itself.[27] In detail, Augustine rejects the interpretation that self-knowledge is derived from the knowledge of other minds by means of sensible perception. According to such an explanation, the mind disposes of a general or a particular concept, which is obtained from the experience of dealing with other minds and subsequently transferred to oneself.[28] To grant primacy to foreign mental states implies that self-knowledge is an empirically mediated phenomenon. If this interpretation is to be avoided, then it must be acknowledged that self-knowledge has priority over the knowledge of other minds.[29] The distinction between intellectual seeing and seeing with the eyes consists in that the eyes are primarily directed at something other and can see themselves only with the help of a special apparatus, like a mirror. The mind, however, is able to perceive itself immediately. In order to comprehend bodily things, the mind indeed uses the sense organs, but that which it sees through itself is incorporeal. Thus, the intelligibility of its object stems from the non-derivability of self-knowledge.

Augustine represents the same ontological characteristics in the duality of *mens* and *amor* as in the triad of *mens–amor eius–notitia eius*. He establishes, first of all, the coequality of the three members. Augustine concludes at the end of this passage, "*haec tria cum perfecta sunt, esse consequenter aequalia* (Trin. 9.4)." But he, in fact, demonstrates only the equality of *mens* and *amor sui* and *mens* and *notitia sui*, not, however, *amor* and *notitia*. Since the first equality had already been addressed in the previous passage, Augustine just briefly treats the *notitia*. The equality of *notitia* and

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[27] Ergo et seipsam per se ipsam novit (Trin. 9.3).

[28] Aut si quisquam dicit ex notitia generali vel speciali mentem credere se esse talem quales alias experta est et ideo amare semetipsam, insipientissime loquitur (Trin. 9.3).

[29] Unde enim mens aliquam mentem novit si se non novit (Trin. 9.3)?

mens obtains if the object of *notitia* is neither lower than the *notitia* (as is the case with corporeal things) nor higher than it (as is the case with God). The knowledge of the body, representing an ideal reality, is greater than the corporeal reality of the body itself, and the knowledge of God is less than God Himself. The *notitia* of the object is equal to the object itself solely in the self-knowledge of the mind.[30] The point of this thesis is not only that there are different possible objects of knowledge ordered in hierarchical levels of being, but also that knowledge itself possesses a determined character of being—namely, that of intelligibility. Therefore, knowledge is comparable to its objects according to the degree of being.[31]

Equality in the realm of the human mind is bound to the condition of an adequate self-relation. This condition apparently *can* be fulfilled but does not have to be, whereas the equality within the divine Trinity always exists. Still, this discussion has a merely preliminary character. Up until this point, equality has been conceived purely in terms of a metaphysical coequality. The principle of equality in its full sense, however, claims the commutativity of the *ad se*-predicates and therefore an inability to distinguish the members as substances whether from each other or from the whole; it thus aims at the unity of *essentia*. In order to interpret the equality of *mens*, *amor sui*, and *notitia sui* in this sense, the substantiality of all three members must be verified.

Augustine insists that these three members are to be treated as *substantiae* or *essentiae* if they are prescinded from their common life-context and made into an object of philosophical reflection. If the elements of the *mens humana* are to be counted, *amor*

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[30] "But when the mind knows itself it does not excel itself with its knowledge, since it is knowing and it is being known. So when it knows its whole self and nothing else together with itself, its knowledge exactly matches itself because its knowledge does not belong to another nature when it knows itself."
Mens vero cum se ipsa cognoscit, non se superat notitia sua quia ipsa cognoscit, ipsa cognoscitur. Cum ergo se totam cognoscit, neque secum quidquam aliud, par ille est cognitio sua quia neque ex alia natura est eius cognitio cum se ipsa cognoscit (Trin. 9.4).
The limitation of the equality in the case in which the mind knows nothing else besides itself (*neque secum quidquam aliud*) points towards book 10. In that book, Augustine demonstrates that the purity of self-knowledge is not self-evident. If the mind falsely understands itself as a body (for example, as a result of materialistic philosophies), then there is no equality. According to É Gilson, self-love is to be understood as a natural disposition of thought, which by means of this disposition strives to think itself. When thought thinks itself, lover and beloved are equal. (cf. Gilson 1929, 285). The equality of the *mens amans* and *amor* emerges automatically, according to Gilson, if the *mens* thinks itself. The possibility that the *mens* thinks itself and does not love itself according to its metaphysical standing would thus be unthinkable.
[31] Reflections on the hierarchy of the objects of knowledge and the knowledge of these objects can already be found in Mag. 9.25-28.

and *notitia* may not be treated as accidents. They are rather to be treated as substances, each composing an independent, numerable member. Accordingly, the *mens humana* is not to be considered *a* substance on which *amor* and *notitia* appear in a dependent manner, namely as accidents. The *mens humana* is instead to be understood as three substances.[32] Naturally, the proof of unity must soon be added, but the proof of three-substantiality requires particular attention because with the rejection of the category of quality for *amor* and *notitia*, Augustine abandons the path of Aristotle's categories.[33]

Aristotle names four types of quality: 1) the *habitus* (ἕξις) and disposition (διάθεσις); 2) the natural power (δύναμις); 3) the passive qualities and affections (πάθη); and 4) the form (σχήμα) and figure of a thing (μορφή) (cf. Cat. 8b 24-10a 24). With the term ἕξις, Aristotle refers to constant formations of mind like the possession of sciences (ἐπιστήμαι) or virtues (ἀρεταί), whereas health and sickness are easily changeable conditions (διαθέσεις). Natural capacities are, for example, being able to run fast or having a healthy constitution, but the knowledge (ἐπιστήμαι) that is expressed in the capabilities of a boxer or a wrestler is also a διαθέσεις. Passive qualities are those that can create sensations like sweetness, bitterness, cold, or whiteness, whereas form and figure manifest as qualities like crookedness, straightness, or triangularity. According to Aristotle, overlaps occur between depictions of quality and specifications of relation concerning ἕξις and διαθέσεις. Thus, ἐπιστήμη is used to characterize a constant condition of the soul and is simultaneously relative to what is known (cf. Cat. 6b15-19).

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[32] Simul etiam admonemur si utcumque videre possumus haec in anima exsistere, et tamquam involuta evolvi ut sentiantur et dinumerentur sustantialiter vel, ut ita dicam, essentialiter, non tamquam in subiecto ut color aut figura in corpore aut ulla alia qualitas aut quantitas (Trin. 9.5). With reference to this passage, É Gilson addresses Schmaus' interpretation of the triad of *mens*, *amor sui*, and *notitia sui* as an active consciousness. According to Gilson, the *tamquam involuta*, in particular, shows that the image of the Trinity here in question is merely a matter of a virtual image ("une image virtuelle"). (See Gilson 1929, 286). In my opinion, the *involuta* simply indicates that *amor* and *notitia* are normally life-acts that cannot be made objects of attention. To unfold them (*evolvi*) entails making them objects of ontological investigation.

[33] For the majority of interpreters, Augustine's thesis on the substantiality of not only the *mens* but also of the *notitia* and the *amor* is incomprehensible. They therefore typically ascribe the thesis to an inattentive usage of the concept of substance (Cf., for example, Schmaus 1967, 256-61; Schindler, 185). Hölscher even maintains against Augustine's statements that the mind is to be seen as substance and its acts as accidents, or more precisely, as qualities (185). Augustine, he claims, merely intended to show that accidents of the mind enter into an intimate connection with their *subiectum* as qualities of bodily substances (186-8). Accordingly, Hölscher one-sidedly comments on Augustine's delimitation of the structure of mind from ontologically similiar phenomena as an argumentation for the substantial unity of the *mens* instead of as an explication of its trinitarian structure (195-198).

This ambiguity can be avoided, however, if one uses the name of a particular science for a depiction of quality instead of the name of the genus. Grammar or music is a non-relative name for ἕξις; one does not say that grammar is a grammar of something as one would say that a science is a science of something. Moreover, it is thoroughly possible that something is simultaneously a description of quality and of relation (cf. Cat. 11a 20-39). Aristotle's concept of ἐπιστήμη is not, however, synonymous with Augustine's concept of *notitia*. Whereas ἐπιστήμη primarily intends a construction of knowledge, *notitia* can also mean a single concept. Nevertheless, it is clear that Augustine tends to break with Aristotle when he expressly rejects the categorization of *notitia* and *amor* as qualities and instead asserts their substantial character.[34]

Augustine's argument for the substantiality of *amor* and *notitia* is of a particular kind. Love and knowledge, he claims, cannot be understood as characteristics of the *mens* in the sense of accidents because whereas the color or the form of *this* body could not be the color or the form of another body, the mind is capable of loving something outside of itself through the love with which it loves itself. Similarly, the mind knows not only itself but also much else alongside of it.[35] Whereas accidents do not extend beyond their carrier, *amor* and *notitia* are thoroughly capable of transcendence. Augustine's argument for substantiality, therefore, concerns the open intentionality of *amor* and *notitia* and concludes from it that love and knowledge are not restricted to the *mens'* self-relation. When Augustine emphasizes that the color or the form of A cannot be simultaneously the color or the form of B, he does not mean that A and B could not exhibit the same color or form, but rather that that instantiation, for example, of the

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[34] For the accident-character of science in Aristotle, see Kat. 1b 1-2 where Aristotle states: ἡ ἐπιστήμη ἐν ὑποχειμένῳ μέν ἐστι τῇ. This being in something other is the ontological characteristic of accidents. In the Hellenistic doxography, it was the understanding of the powers of the mind more than its parts that was considered Aristotelian, though it was debated whether the Aristotelian double-division of the soul or the Platonic triple-division of the soul was to be given precedence (cf. the testimonies in: *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, vol. 1: Translations of the Principal Sources with Philosophical Commentary; vol. 2: Greek and Latin Texts with Notes and Bibliography, ed. A.A. Long and D.N. Sedley (Cambridge, 1987) (=Long/Sedley), 65 K, M, P). The interpretation of the faculties as qualities has been ascribed to the schoolmasters of the Stoa Chrysippos and Zeno and has been connected with their materialistic philosophies of mind (cf. Iamblichos bei Stobaios 1.347,17-22 (SVF 2.826; Long/Sedley 28 F)).

[35] Non enim color iste aut figura huius corporis potest esse et alterius corporis. Mens autem amore quo se amat potest amare et aliud praeter se. Item non se solam cognoscit mens sed et alia multa. Quamobrem non amor et cognitio tamquam in subiecto insunt menti sed substantialiter etiam ista sunt sicut ipsa mens (Trin. 9.5). A similar comparison can be found in Plotinus' Enn. V 3, 8, L. 1-3.

universal "red" or "circularity" that is found in A is numerically different from that which appears in B. Insofar as it is numerically identifiable, the particular instantiation is exclusively linked to its carrier. The same can be said of *amor* and *notitia* because the love and the knowledge of an individual *mens* are always those of *this mens* and not another. The particularity of *amor* and *notitia*, however, is that their relation to another being does not *only* take place in adherence to a carrier. In addition and beyond, their relation is that of an intentional directing oneself toward an object, which, in the special cases of *amor sui* and *notitia sui*, can be the carrier itself but most of the time is something other. Just as the color of this table belongs precisely to *this* table, the love of this *mens*, regardless of that at which it is directed, can only belong to this *mens* and no other. But the ability to direct itself at something should be understood as the partial independence of *amor* and *notitia* from the *mens*. Attributes of color or form do not enjoy such independence, and, for Augustine, this independence demonstrates that *notitia* and *amor* are to be understood in terms of substance, not as accidents.

Since the substance character of *mens*, *amor*, and *notitia* is preliminarily safeguarded, Augustine turns to the discussion of their reciprocal relationality.[36] Because the relata are substances, their relation is not that of color to what is colored—that is, the relation of a quality to a substance; their relation rather resembles the relation of friends. Friends are, as humans, substances that can be carriers of accidents like, for example, relations (e.g. friendship).[37] Augustine returns here to the example of color and that which is colored he had used in the discussion of the relation of God as Father and Son. Although *color* and *coloratum* are expressed relatively, it is not a matter of a true relation since not both members are substances. But *De Trinitate* 7 shows that relations can only appear on substances (cf. Trin. 7.2). The condition of the substantiality of all relata is sufficiently fulfilled, however, in the case of friendship and with regard to the elements of the human mind. *Amans* and *amor* as well as *scientia* and *sciens* are relative concepts

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[36] In the following passages, Augustine presents further and stronger substantiality arguments.

[37] non sicut color et coloratum relative ita dicuntur ad invicem ut color in subiecto colorato sit non habens in se ipso propriam substantiam, quoniam coloratum corpus substantia est, ille autem in substantia, sed sicut duo amici etiam duo sunt homines quae sunt substantiae, cum homines non relative dicantur, amici autem relative (Trin. 9.5).

just as *friend* is, whereas *mens/spiritus* and *homo* are *ad se*-descriptions that name the substance at the base of the relations.[38]

3. Demarcation of the Structure of the Mind from Ontologically Similar Phenomena

a) Augustine and Aristotle on Relations

Augustine extrapolates the uniqueness of the structure of the *mens humana* by distinguishing it from ontologically similar phenomena. The accentuation of relationality toward total interpenetration, which serves, in turn, as an argument for the unity of substance, composes an important moment in this endeavor. Augustine establishes, first of all, that lover and love or knower and knowledge have a stronger relation to each other than two friends. Whereas it is possible that one friend begins to hate the other without the other being aware of it so that only one of the two remains a friend, the relation of *amans* and *amor* (or *sciens* and *scientia*) would completely collapse if the *amor* or the *scienta* would disappear.[39] In friendship, Augustine claims, one of the participating substances could maintain its character as relativum even if the corresponding substance lost its relativity. Such a one-sided relationality cannot obtain in the human mind.

A similarly strict relationality appears to be present between the head and that which has a head. Both are bodies and therefore substances, and both are related to each other such that without the head that which has a head ceases to be that which it is, headed. But even these relations are weaker than the internal relation of the *mens*

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[38] Sed item quamvis substantia sit amans vel sciens, substantia sit scientia, substantia sit amor, sed amans et amor aut sciens et scientia relative ad se dicantur sicut amici; mens vero aut spiritus non sint relativa sunt (Trin. 9.6). A striking difference between Aristotle and Augustine emerges here. According to Aristotle, the relativity of ἐπιστήμη resides in the relation to the object of knowledge, whereas Augustine maintains *scientia* in relation to the subject of knowledge.

[39] One could ask whether if this notion of friendship is compatible with the principle: omnia enim quae relative dicuntur, ad invicem dicuntur (Trin. 7.2).
Amor autem quo se mens amat si esse desinat, simul et illa desinet esse amans. Item notitia qua se mens novit si esse desinat, simul et illa nosse se desinet (Trin. 9.6).

humana because, as corporeal, the head and the headed are mechanically separable, whereas the human mind, as intelligible, does not allow for such a separation.[40]

The example of the head and the headed already can be found in Aristotle.[41] He emphasizes that the reversibility of relation often only appears if a word is coined for one of the relata. Whereas every bird has wings, for example, the converse does not obtain, for some other things also possess wings. The relation first becomes reciprocal when *winged-being* is introduced as the correlate to wings.[42] The same thing occurs with the terms *head* and *headed-being*. Aristotle takes up the example once more in order to establish that first substances cannot be relative but second ones quite possibly can be. Thus, one does not say of a particular head that it is the particular head of somebody, but rather that it is somebody's head.[43] Linguistically, in such cases, the one relatum is described by a substantive, while a participle-form of this substantive is constructed for the other. The fact that one member is named in terms of the other reveals a certain imbalance in the relation. Upon the physical detachment of the wing or the head, for example, the wing remains a wing, the head a head, whereas the winged-being or the headed-being immediately loses the quality that the coined term expresses. *Wing* and *head* are general concepts (second substances, according to Aristotle) that describe characteristics of individuals which normally (but not necessarily) appear in connection with other individuals. Even if this connection is dissolved, these concepts maintain their validity for the individual. This does not apply, however, to the construction of the participle because it expresses precisely the factual connection of the individuals. Even the amputated head is a head, but he who is beheaded is no longer headed. *Headed* refers not only semantically to *head* but is correctly used only when that which is described really has a head. In contrast, *head* gives rise to thoughts of something headed, for heads are parts of living beings, but the term does not necessitate any real connection of the head to the whole of that on which it normally appears as a part.

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[40] Sicut caput capitati alicuius utique caput est et relative ad se dicuntur quamvis etiam substantiae sint, nam et caput corpus est et capitatum, et si non sit caput nec capitatum erit. Sed haec praecisione ab invicem separari possunt, illa non possunt (Trin. 9.6).
[41] Cf. Cat. 7a 15-9.
[42] Cf. Cat. 6b 39-7a 4.
[43] Cf. Cat. 8a 26-9.

Linguistically, Augustine's use of the participles *amans/sciens* as relatum to *amor/scientia* follows the same logic. Here, too, one of the relata is described by a general concept, while the other is expressed by a participle that denotes the connectedness of its underlying substance with the substance described by the substantive. Even if both relata are substances, one could still detect an inequality. For in the case of a separation, the first member would keep its name, whereas the second one would lose it. By delimiting the structure of the *mens humana* differently than the relation of the head to the headed, Augustine rejects the notion of such an inequality. Since the *mens humana* is an intelligible, non-spatial reality, a separation of *amor* from the *mens amans* that would be analogous to the amputation of the head is impossible. There is no case in which the priority of the relational members *amor* and *scientia* could be demonstrated.

We can now perhaps better understand Augustine's argument against the model of friendship. In the justification of his thesis that the relations within the *mens humana* are tighter than those between friends, Augustine stresses that the suspension of the member described by a substantive necessarily would lead to the annulment of the participle. He nonetheless is silent concerning a possible reversal of the relation. Augustine is quite conscious of the imbalance of relations constructed with a coined term such as Aristotle recommended. As we have seen, a headed-being ceases to exist upon the detachment of the head, whereas a head, in the case of a physical separation, exists without a headed-being. Similarly, an *amans* necessarily disappears if its *amor* no longer exists, whereas the destruction of *amor* through a suspension of the *amans* is less clear. Thus the *amor* of the *amans* could behave similarly to the head of the headed. Augustine welcomes the linguistic construction of the relata out of a substantive and a participle derived from it because such a construction entails the strict relation of the participle-member to the substantive-member. The disadvantage of this construction, however, is the one-dimensionality of this strictness. Semantically and in reality, only the reference of the participle-member to the substantive-member is necessary, whereas merely a semantic connection has to obtain in the other direction. Augustine compensates for this disadvantage with the argument that the *amor* does not only refer semantically to an

amans but, on account of the intelligibility of the human mind, is also in reality inseparable from it.

b) Augustine and Aristotle on Wholes and Parts

In his treatise on the categories, Aristotle repeatedly touches upon the topic of the relation between the whole and the part. This topic already appears with the introduction of the fundamental distinction of a being that either can be predicated of a subject without being in it (καθ᾽ ὑποχειμένου τινὸς) or is in a subject without being predicated of it (ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ). This "being-in" of something that constitutes the basic ontological character of accidents should be understood as not being able to exist without being in that in which this something is. The interpretation that this "being-in" describes the status of parts that are *in* a whole is, however, expressly rejected.[44] With reference to this precaution, Aristotle later placates the concern of those who believe that due to the definition of an accident as that which is ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ, the parts of substances also would have to be defined as accidents because they are in their wholes like ἐν ὑποκειμένοις.[45] The topic reappears in the discussion of relation. Aristotle reviews the maxim that no substance can be spoken of *ad aliquid* and unreservedly endorses it insofar as first substances as wholes or parts of them are concerned.[46] The same applies to the overwhelming majority of second substances: concepts of species like *human* or *ox* are not relative. Second substances like *head* or *hand*, however, represent questionable cases, for in their definitions they refer to the whole to which they belong as parts. Thus in the relation of the part to the whole, cases seem to arise in which a (second) substance is spoken of *ad aliquid relative*.

Aristotle considers a restriction here of his initial definition of relation: "Those things are called relative, which, being either said to be of something else or related to something else, are explained in reference to that other thing."[47] The relation, formulated in the genitive (in Greek), of that which comes in addition to something reoccurs where it

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[44] Cf., Cat. 1a 24-5.
[45] Cf., Cat. 3a 28-31.
[46] Cf., Cat 8a 14-8.
[47] πρός τι δὲ τὰ τοιαῦτα λέγεται, ὅσα αὐτά ἅπερ ἐστιν ἐστέρων εἶναι λέγεται, ἢ ὁπωσοῦν ἄλλως πρὸς ἕτερον (Cat. 6a 36-8).

is said that a head or a hand is "somebody's" head or hand: "Thus, such terms as 'head' and 'hand' are defined with reference to that of which the things indicated are a part, and so it comes about that these appear to have a relative character."[48] Head and hand thus would fulfill the definition of relation. If one would tighten this definition so that one only could speak of relation when the existence of a being depends upon its being-related (which, moreover, would be in accordance with Aristotle's initial definition of accidents), then one could separate the connection between part and whole from the category of relation.[49] With this additional condition, it could be postulated that knowledge of one of the relata includes knowledge of the other. To know something as doubled would mean to know the relatum of that which is doubled. One could only claim that something is more beautiful if one knows something in comparison to which it is more beautiful. But one could possess knowledge of a certain hand or a certain head, namely that it is a hand or a head, without knowing whose hand or head it is. Accordingly, parts of a whole like hand or head are not relata.[50] Thus, the axiom that no substance is spoken of relatively is upheld. For Aristotle, however, a definitive decision on this question only would be allowable on the basis of further investigation.

The doctrine of categories is, therefore, according to Aristotle, to be distinguished from the doctrine on the whole and its parts. But in light of the doctrine of relations, and in particular that relation in which the one relat appears with a substantival designation of species while the other is characterized by a participle derived from that substantive, the doctrine of categories and mereology appear to merge. It is therefore unsurprising that following the example "*caput-capitatum*" Augustine examines the relation of part and whole in comparison with the *mens humana*. He asserts that even if there were bodies that could not be divided, they would nonetheless consist of parts. The relation between the whole and the part proves to be a fundamental characteristic of the corporeal world.[51]

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[48] ἡ κεφαλὴ τινὸς λέγεται κεφαλὴ καὶ ἡ τινὸσ λέγεται χείρ καὶ ἕκασοτον τῶν τοιούτων, ὥστε ταῦτα τῶν πρός τι δοξειεν ἂν εἶναι (Cat. 8a 26-9).

[49] "[things] whose very existence consists in their being in some way or other related to some other object." ἔστι τὰ πρός τι οἷς τὸ εἶναι ταὐτόν ἐστι τῷ προς τί πωσ ἔχειν (Cat. 8a 32-3; cf. also 8b 1-3).
"it cannot exist as apart from the subject referred to." ἀδύνατον χωρὶσ εἶναι τοῦ ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶν (Cat. 1a 25).

[50] Cf. Cat. 8b 16-23.

[51] *Quod si sunt aliqua corpora quae secari omnino et dividi nequeunt, tamen nisi partibus suis constarent corpora non essent* (Trin. 9.7).

As bodies, both the part and the whole are substances (and indeed first substances according to the Aristotelian definition). They stand in relation to each other because the part belongs to a whole and the whole consists of its parts.[52] In contrast to Aristotle, Augustine apparently has no qualms interpreting the part and the whole as in relation to each other. It should be asked, can the human mind be conceived of analogously to bodies consisting of wholes and parts?[53] Augustine has already rejected a similar interpretation for the divine Trinity. This divinity is not a tri-partiality, but rather a tri-unity ultimately rooted in an equality radically conceived in terms of substantial identity.[54] But can the *mens humana* be interpreted in the sense of a tri-partiality familiar from the corporeal world or is it—like the divine *Trinitas*—characterized by a higher form of unity?

Augustine, first of all, emphasizes that no part encompasses the whole of which it is a part. Precisely this total encompassment is characteristic, however, for the relation of *notitia sui* and *amor sui* to the *mens*. If the *mens* knows itself completely, then its *notitia* interpenetrates the whole of the *mens*; and if it loves itself completely, then it loves itself wholly and its *amor* interpenetrates the whole of the *mens*.[55] *Amor* and *notitia* are not, therefore, simply parts that cannot exceed the place they have in the whole; rather, they can direct themselves toward different things and especially toward the *mens* itself. Augustine thus believes that a complete self-objectification of the *mens* in self-love and self-knowledge is at least possible. In the corporeal world, in which there is no intentionality, such a self-interpenetration is unthinkable; the part is always smaller than the whole. Due to their intentional relation to the whole, *mens*, *amor sui*, and *notitia sui* cannot be thought of as parts of which the whole of the *mens* is composed.

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[52] Pars ergo ad totum relative dicitur quia omnis pars alicuius totius pars est et totum omnibus partibus totum est. Sed quoniam et pars corpus est et totum, non tantum ista relative dicuntur, sed etiam substantialiter sunt (Trin. 9.7).

[53] Both possibilities would remain tenable. Either the *mens* would describe the whole that consists of the love with which the *mens* loves itself and the knowledge through which it knows itself or the *mens*, *amor sui*, and *notitia sui* would represent the three parts that together compose the whole.

[54] Cf., for example, Trin. 6.9.

[55] Sed nulla pars totum cuius pars est complectitur. Mens vero cum se totam novit, hoc est perfecte novit, per totum eius est notitia eius; et cum se perfecte amat, totam se amat et per totum eius est amor eius (Trin. 9.7). There is a similarity to Plotinus, Enn. V 3, 5, 1-14; 6, 7-8.

c) Augustine's Examination of the Theory of Mixture

In the corporeal realm, an example can be found of a part's complete, though not intentional, interpenetration of the whole, namely the complete mixture (κρᾶσις δι᾽ ὅλου) of Stoic physics.[56] For this special kind of mixture, which comes into being, for example, by pouring together different fluids like water and wine, it is characteristic, according to the Stoics, that each component maintains its qualities. In contrast to a mere composite, in which only the surfaces of the different parts come into contact, all the components are present in every quantum of the mixture even if the relation of quantities among the parts is extremely unequal.[57] Explicating his example, Augustine writes, "Are we then to think of these three together, mind, love, knowledge, as being like one drink made out of wine and water and honey, in which each pervades the whole and yet they are three? After all, there is no part of the drink which does not have these three in it; they are not joined together as if they were water and oil but completely mixed up together."[58] Augustine's example of the mixture of wine, water, and honey exhibits exactly the characteristics of the κρᾶσις δι᾽ ὅλου, namely the total interpenetration of the elements while preserving the qualities of each particular element. Just as *amor sui* and *notitia sui* interpenetrate the

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[56] Cf. the testimonies in Long/Sedley 48, especially from Alexander of Aphrodisias, *De mixtione* (SVF 2.473; Long/Sedley 48 C). See also the commentary in Long/Sedley for a philosophical-historical classification of this conception, in particular, for its immanent critique of Aristotelian physics. A discussion of different types of composition including the κρᾶσις can be found in Porphyry's *Symmikta zetemata* (ed. Dörrie, esp. 36-48). Cf. also E.L. Fortin, *Christianisme et culture philosophique au cinquième siècle. La querelle de l'âme humaine en Occident* (Paris, 1959), esp. 111-23; see, too, Pépin 1977, 213-67. Porphyry's problem is, however, that of the unity of body and soul, whereas Augustine in Trin. 9 is concerned with the unity of the *mens*. On the topic of the unity of body and soul in Augustine, cf. Ep. 129 and Civ. dei 10.29. For Augustine's arguments against the objections of Porphyry concerning the faith in the resurrection, see J. Pépin., *Théologie cosmique et théologie chrétienne* (Paris, 1964), 418-61. The connection between both complexes of topics consists in that Augustine in Trin. 10.7, like usual, accepts the Neo-platonic interpretation that a new substance emerges from the mixture. Fortin provides Neo-platonic records of this interpretation, 116 n. 2.
J. Pépin attempts to demonstrate through a presentation of parallel texts that Augustine used Porphyry's *Zetemata* even though his topic, the trinitarian structure in the human mind and in God, differs from the body-soul problematic that Porphyry addresses. The common denominator, according to Pépin, is the problem of a *unio inconfusa* (Pépin 1977, 256; see also ibid., n. 1 and 2 for similar deliberations by Basilius and Hilarus). Through the exhibition of further parallels of detail, Pépin attempts to fortify his thesis that Trin. 9 is influenced by Porphyry (ibid., 261-67), but these parallels are either vague or relatively insignificant for Augustine's argumentation.

[57] Thus can a drop of wine penetrate the entire Mediterranean See.

[58] Num ergo sicut ex vino et aqua et melle una fit potio et singula per totum sunt et tamen tria sunt (nulla enim pars est potionis quae non habeat haec tria; non enim iuncta velut si aqua et oleum essent, sed omnino commixta sunt (Trin. 9.7). Cf. this passage with Porphyry, *Symmikta zetemata* (ed. Dörrie, 42-9).

whole of the *mens* (*per totum*), wine, water, and honey pervade the whole drink (*per totum sunt*) such that not even the smallest quantum can be found in which not all the parts are present. Is therefore the *mens humana* to be understood as a mixture?

The conception of the κρᾶσις δι᾿ ὅλου represents, for Augustine, the ontological apex of the corporeal world, for its structures come closest to those of the intelligible sphere. The categories of material reality nonetheless remain insufficient for adequately describing the *mens humana*. The decisive difference, Augustine demonstrates, is found in the human mind's identity of substance or essence. Water, wine, and honey may mix together to become the *one* substance of a drink, but they themselves are not of one substance. This identity of substance is precisely the case for the mind, however, because the *mens* is not loved or known by something other; it rather loves and knows itself.[59]

The human mind's sameness of substance or essence is not to be conceived as the sameness of species. Such a conception would already demonstrate a distinction to water, wine, and honey, but the human mind is characterized by the sameness of the individual. It is one and the same *mens* that interpenetrates itself in love and knowledge.[60] Complete interpenetration of the *mens humana* in the substantial identity of its elements consequently indicates that the essence of the human mind is self-reflection.

In the corporeal realm, a penetration of the whole by its parts may exist, but in such a case, it is not the whole itself that penetrates itself, but rather parts of the whole, which differ from it. *Amor* and *notitia* are identical with the mind, however, for the mind reflects itself in them. In his analysis of the divine Trinity, Augustine had already examined the material unity of three golden statues as an example of a kind of commonality that is not a generality (cf. Trin. 7.11). He now presents a similar example, namely that of three golden rings, in order to show that a three-ness of substantially identical instances is not to be thought of as a mixture because if the rings are melted, the

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[59] Sed non unius substantiae sunt aqua, vinum, et mel, quamvis ex eorum commixtione fiat una substantia potionis. Quomodo autem illa tria non sint eiusdem substantiae non video, cum mens ipsa se amet atque ipsa se noverit atque ita sint haec tria ut non alteri alicui rerum mens vel amata vel nota sit. Unius ergo eiusdemque essentiae necesse est haec tria sint (Trin. 9.7).
[60] Augustine is thinking here from the primacy of the *mens* so that, in this argument, *notitia* and *amor* appear as its functions.

three-ness disappears and only the one gold remains. Within the substantial identity of the human mind, the three-ness must be maintained so that a reciprocal relation of the members can take place. By confounding the three, however, such a relation would be impossible.[61]

4. Positive Proof of the Trinitarian Structure of the Human Mind – Self-Relationality as the Fundamental Characteristic

After this final dismissal of an ontologically similar but, due to its belongingness to the corporeal world, nonetheless different phenomenon, Augustine uncovers for his ontology of the human mind characteristics representative of the divine Trinity—namely, three-substantiality, relationality, and substance-identity. With the aid of these determinations, he offers a coherent structural description of the *mens humana*. He once again demonstrates the substantiality of each member and their relations and argues for their substantial identity.

The *mens* is a substance, he claims, because it can be the subject of an essential predication: the *mens* is called *ad se ipsam* and therefore has to be *in se ipsa*. Moreover, it is a carrier of relations, for it is called *noscens*, *nota*, or *noscibilis* in relation to its *notitia* (*ad aliquid relative*) and *amans*, *amata*, and *amabilis* in relation to the *amor* through which it loves itself.[62] The same applies to *notitia* and *amor*. According to Augustine, the *notitia* is in a relation to the knowing and known *mens*, but it also can be the subject of *ad se*-propositions, for example, if it is called *nota* or *noscens*. For Augustine, such cases are not a matter of relational concepts, as one is first led to believe, but rather *ad se*-propositions because the *notitia* through which the *mens* knows itself could not be unknown. Not only does the *mens* know itself through the *notitia*, but the

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[61] Unius ergo eiusdemque essentiae necesse est haec tria sint, et ideo si tamquam commixtione confusa essent, nullo modo essent tria nec referri ad invicem possent (Trin. 9.7).

[62] Nam et mens est utique in se ipsa quoniam ad se ipsam mens dicitur, quamvis noscens vel nota vel noscibilis ad suam notitiam relative dicatur; amans quoque et amata vel amabilis ad amorem referatur quo se amat (Trin. 9.8).

notitia knows itself as well.[63] Along with its relativity to the *mens amans*, *amor* is also to be attributed a being *in se*, for love is loved through itself.[64]

Finally, Augustine demonstrates how each of the three substances is not only *in se ipsa* and not only in a relation (*ad aliquid relative*) but also *in alternis*. This being *in alternis* is motivated by relationality but should transcend it and show the inseparability of the three substances as such in order to prove their substantial unity. Augustine, first of all, connects the three members, *mens*, *amor*, and *notitia*, to a four-part chain. The *mens amans* composes the beginning, the *mens noscens* the end. Each member is in another, namely the *mens amans* in *amor*, *amor* in the *notitia* of the *mens amantis*, and the *notitia* in the *mens noscens*. This connection can be best understood as the deployment of the thesis that the *mens* loves itself as knowing and knows itself as loving.[65] From this precept it follows that each member is in both of the others (*singula in binis*): the *mens amans et noscens* is in both the *amore suo* and the *notitia sua*; the love of the *mens* loving and knowing itself is in the *mens* and in its knowledge; and the *notitia* of the *mens* knowing and loving itself is in the *mens* and in its love. As a result, two members respectively are pairwise in the third: the *mens* that knows and loves itself is with its *notitia* in love and with its love in the *notitia*; and *amor* and *notitia* are simultaneously in the *mens* that knows and loves itself. The perfection of the members is presupposed so that a total interpenetration obtains.[66] Thus each member is entirely in every one of the others as a whole: the *mens* loves itself completely and knows itself completely; it knows its whole love and loves its whole knowledge.[67]

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[63] Et notitia quamvis referatur ad mentem cognoscentem vel cognitam, tamen et ad se ipsam nota et noscens dicitur; non enim sibi est incognita notitia qua se mens ipsa cognoscit (Trin. 9.8). For a critique of the notion of a self-referential act of knowledge, see Hölscher, 135f.

[64] Et amor quamvis referatur ad mentem amantem cuius amor est, tamen et ad se ipsum est amor ut sit etiam in se ipso quia et amor amatur, nec alio nisi amore amari potest, id est se ipso. Ita sunt haec singula in se ipsis (Trin. 9.8).

[65] quia scientem se amat et amantem se novit (Trin. 9.8). Love and knowledge, which remained unconnected in the initial demonstration of the relations between *mens amans* and *amor* and between *mens noscens* and *notitia*, are now set in relation to each other.

[66] The limitation should be observed here that, in thinking itself, the *mens* may not think anything foreign along with it.

[67] Tota vero in totis quemadmodum sint iam supra ostendimus cum se totam mens amat et totam novit et totum amorem suum novit totamque amat notitiam suam quando tria ista ad se ipsa perfecta sunt (Trin. 9.8).

The result of this play of the three substances's permutations is that in every individual substance, both of the others are present and not merely in part but entirely. Whereas the equality of the *mens*, *amor sui*, and *notitia sui* was initially established only as the metaphysical coequality of the three intelligible entities, the equality is now comprehensible—as with the divine Trinity—as the commutativity of the determinations and thus as the identity of substance and essence. If *mens*, *amor sui*, and *notitia sui* are entirely in each other, then that which can be said of one of the members can be said at the same time of all the others and of the entirety. As in the divine Trinity, each member in the *mens humana* represents the whole, and all three members together are not greater than any one of them. The *mens humana* therefore exhibits the same ontological characteristics as the divine Trinity—namely, three-substantiality, relationality, and substance-identity.

Naturally, for Augustine, God is the highest, most perfect being to which all other entities, including the *mens humana*, are subordinate. The human mind truly exhibits the same trinitarian structure as the divine Trinity, but due to its inferiority, its trinity arises out of other factors. In accordance with the results of book 9 and in comparison with the ontological characteristics of the divine Trinity, I will attempt to demonstrate in the following section that the trinitarian structure of the human mind is grounded in its intentionality. Since a reference, as occurs in an intentional directing-oneself toward something, involves a relational character, relationality is of considerably more importance for the constitution of the *mens humana* than for the divine Trinity. In short, the capacity of the mind to relate to itself will prove to be the key for understanding its structure.

For the ontology of God, the axiom of simplicity plays a significant role. The simplicity of God occluded the possibility of transformation or even destruction and implied an accident-lessness. All attributes of God are essential to Him and cannot be explained by participation in the ideas. As the possibility of *ad se*-propositions for each individual person shows, such attributes possess the character of substance. The simplicity of God implies, however, not only the equality of substance in the sense of an equal participation of all the persons in a form comprehensible by definition but, above all, the substantial unity of the persons. Talk of a Trinity was first made possible by the

differentiation of the persons with the aid of the relations. As Augustine emphasizes, the relations are grounded in substances even in the divine realm where they are not accidental. The essence of a person cannot be reduced to his relations to other persons. Relations rather presuppose substances and remain ontologically separate from them. Otherwise, an inequality of the substances and therewith a suspension of their substantial identity would result from the inequality of their relations. Thus, some determinations are attributed to each person as substance (*ad se*) while others appertain to the person insofar as he is a member of a relation (*ad aliquid relative*).

In contrast to God, the *mens humana* is not characterized by simplicity. Despite its immortality, the soul is subjected to change. Its trinitarian structure therefore cannot be cast in the same way as that of God. As we have seen, the ontological coequality of *amor* and *notitia* with the mens first must be proved. Already in the proof for the intelligibility of *notitia* and *amor*, Augustine argues from the self-relation of the *mens*. The knowledge and the love of the *mens* can have the *mens* itself as their object and thereby prove their coequality to it.[68] Augustine's argument against the interpretation of *notitia* and *amor* as qualities of the *mens* does not make use of the concept of self-reflexivity but takes recourse to intentionality as the capacity of *notitia* and *amor* to transcend the *mens* and, departing from themselves, to relate to something else.[69] Still, this argument remains preliminary. It does not yet directly prove the substantiality of *amor* and *notitia* but merely rejects the alternative interpretation of them as accidents. It nonetheless puts Augustine in the position to regard the human mind as a system of substances, which are carriers of relations. He thus can compare this system with structures that appear ontologically related in order to obtain more precise definitions. Consequently, it becomes clear that the cohesion of the elements of the mind is more robust than that of the relations in friendship or of that between the head and the headed.[70] With the rejection of the relation of part and whole, the self-relationality of the mind comes to the fore. In distinction to what a part would be capable of, love and knowledge encompass the mind in whole; and in distinction to a total mixture, it is the *mens* itself that

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[68] Cf., Trin. 9.4.
[69] Cf., Trin. 9.5.
[70] Cf., Trin. 9.6.

comprehends itself and reflects itself completely in *notitia sui* and *amor sui*.[71] The relation to itself proves to be the essence of the *mens humana*.

Does this mean that that which is disallowed according to Aristotle's doctrine of categories and that which Augustine explicitly rejects for the divine Trinity, namely that the relation has precedence over the substance, is valid for the mens? In his discussion on the relations of Father and Son, Augustine had refuted the notion that the *ad se*-propositions about the Father are ultimately grounded in his relation to the Son. The self-relationality of the *mens humana*, however, is quasi-diametrically opposed to the distinction beween propositions *ad se* and propositions *ad aliquid relative*, which Augustine rigorously maintains in his doctrine of God. The mind is neither describable by the relationless *ad se*-predications nor is its essence relative to other things. It is rather essentially relation to itself: *ad se ipsum relative*. By means of its self-relationality, the mind differentiates itself not only from the corporeal world but also from the divine Trinity.[72] Augustine conceives perfect self-reflexivity as the manner in which an intelligible but not simple being imitates the ontological structure of the three-fold God. The *mens humana* is by means of its self-relationality what the divine being is by means of its metaphysically grounded simplicity and biblically grounded language of the Father, Son and Spirit.

The basic function of the self-relation becomes especially clear where Augustine presents his concluding arguments both for the three-substantiality and for the substance-identity in the *mens humana*. Even if the capacity of love and knowledge for transcendence makes it impossible to cast them as accidents, the possibility of *ad se*-propositions not only about the *mens* but also about *amor* and *notitia* first demonstrates that they are substances. The *notitia* can be called *ad se ipsam nota* and *noscens*, according to Augustine, because they know themselves—that is, they relate to themselves, and the *amor*, too, loves itself through itself (cf. Trin. 9.8). The self-referentiality of every member is the reason that *ad se*-propositions are possbile for every memeber. Because the *notitia* knows itself, it can be said of it that *notitia noscens est* or

[71] Cf., Trin. 9.7.

[72] This distinction is at least valid for Augustine's depiction of the divine Trinity up to this point. In book 15, he will transfer the characteristic of self-relationality that he portrays by means of the *mens*-analysis to God.

notitia nota est; and because love loves itself, it is true that *amor amans est* and *amor amatus est*. These statements are indeed reminiscent of that type of self-predication that is also possible for accidents. *Candor candidus est* is valid as a true statement. Despite its *ad se*-character, it does not refer to a being of the color *in se ipso* and therefore does not indicate the substantiality of candor (cf. Trin. 7.2). But Augustine intently emphasizes that those *ad se*-propositions that are possible by means of the self-referentiality of *amor* and *notitia* express a being *in se ipsis*.[73] Self-relationality stands here for substantiality. That which already was made clear in the rejection of the mixture model applies also to *notitia* and *amor*: The being *in se ipso* is a manifestation of the being *ad se ipsum relative*.

Finally, Augustine's interpretation of the substance-identity is completely shaped by the idea of self-referentiality. *Mens*, *amor*, and *notitia* are inseparable because in the voluntary self-relation of the *mens*, knowledge is simultaneously comprehended, and in the cognitive self-relation, the *mens* comprehends itself as loving. At the end of the first main part of Trin. 9, Augustine realizes his original thesis that the *mens*, *amor*, and *notita* are a trinity by presenting step for step the self-referentiality of the human mind and by grasping the structure of the *mens* from this self-referentiality.[74]

Just as the relations in God cannot be considered accidents, so, too, is the relationality of the human mind not to be understood in the sense of accidents. The reasons, however, differ. In the case of God, the relations were explicated as distinct from essence, insofar as essence is comprehensible by *ad se*-propositions. In God, too, the relations presuppose a substance on which they appear. They may not be called accidents only because they, in contrast to accidents, are immutable. The *mens humana*, on the contrary, represents a contingent being, for even if it is immortal, its existence has a beginning. The relations here, however, are not accidental either because they cannot be separated from essence insofar as substantiality is practically constitued by self-relation. The substance-accidents schema is neither applicable to God nor to the human mind. It is not applicable to God because this schema is only able to describe finite

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[73] *Ita sunt haec* [*amor et notitia*] *singula in se ipsis* (Trin. 9.8).
[74] *Ipsa igitur mens et amor et notitia eius tria quaedam sunt, et haec tria unum sunt* (Trin. 9.4).

beings. It is not applicable to the mind because it is removed from this schema by means of its essential self-relationality.

Like the divine Trinity, the *mens* possesses a trinitarian structure on the basis of which it evades the logic of subsumption. With respect to the three-foldness of God, the language of three was biblically motivated and the language of three persons prescribed by tradition. Thus, in the ontology of the Trinity, the emphasis had to be placed on the unity of the three. With respect to the *mens*, the conditions are inverted. In this case, the establishment of three-substantiality demanded the greatest expenditure while the unity of the *mens* as individual was immediately recognizable. Therefore, in the discussion of the *mens*, none of the problems emerge that arose out of the concept of person for the divine Trinity. For against the logic of the Trinity, the concept of person was used as an *ad se*-depiction in the plural form. The members of the human mind are called *ad se mens* or *spiritus*, but it is intuitively clear that it is a matter of one *mens* or one *spiritus*, not of several. But a certain peculiarity arises in calling the members *mens*, *amor*, and *notitia*, for *mens* represents an *ad se*-depiction, whereas *amor* and *notitia* initially appear as relative concepts to *mens amans* or *mens noscens*. This anomaly is mitigated by the proof for the substantiality of *amor* and *notitia*. By means of this proof, these concepts received a second meaning. They now are both relative concepts and depictions of essence. Each member, therefore, in contrast to the divine Trinity, disposes of its own name (which naturally should not lead to the misconception that it is a matter of three species like "horse, ox, dog" whose unity resides in their common genus).

When Augustine lists the elements of the *mens* in analogy to those of the divine Trinity, he uses relative depictions although the relativity of the *mens* is expressed in a doubled form, namely as both *sciens* and *amans*. Corresponding to the Father, Son, and Spirit in the *mens humana* are *amans*, *sciens*, *amor*, and *scientia* although the last two are to be understood in their relative meaning. As Augustine says, the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Spirit is God. For the articulation of the human mind, he can apply the *ad se*-predications to the relative names and thus equally say, *amans* is *spiritus*, *sciens* is *spiritus*, *scientia* and *amor* are *spiritus*. Therefore, the ontological structures of God and the human mind obey the same trinitarian logic.

V. Genetic Relations in the Mind – *notitia* and *verbum* (Trin. 9, Part II)

1. The Derivation of the *notitia* – *notitia* as Word

The topic of the second main part of book 9 is the genetic relations between the *mens*, its self-knowledge, and its self-love. Whereas the first main part presents the structure of the self-knowing and self-loving *mens*, the problem of the origination of the *notitia sui* now comes to the fore along with the function of *amor*. The Son is indeed essentially identitcal with the Father, but his specific relation to the Father, namely that of being a Son, expresses his derivation. Although the Son carries the same *ad se*-predications as the Father, it can be claimed that the Son would not exist if the Father had not begotten him. His derivation is evident in the characterization of the Son as word and as image, for a word presupposes a speaker and an image is logically later than that which is depicted. The same derivation of the second member from the first appears to be present in the *mens humana* as well, for it is the *mens* that returns to itself in its *notitia*. If the *mens* did not reflect itself (which is impossible because self-reflexivity constitutes its being), then there would not be a *notitia*. Augustine dedicates the second part of book 9 to proving that just as the Son is called an offspring (*proles*) of the father, the *notitia mentis* is also a *proles* of the *mens*. The *notitia*, too, is *verbum* and *imago*.[1]

In the second half of book 9, three lines of thought can be found: the explanation of the derivation of the *notitia sui*, the characterization of the function of *amor* for bringing forth the *notitia*, and a determination of the content of *notita sui*. Up until this point, Augustine had solely analyzed the structure of self-knowledge without further

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[1] M. Schmaus emphasizes that the tradition availabe to Augustine for the doctrine of the inner-trinitarian function of the Holy Spirit was exiguous (Schmaus 1967, 369-72). Augustine hardly comments on this issue but appears to incline toward the interpretation of Marius Victorinus that the Spirit is the bond of love between Father and Son (*Patris et Filii copula*) (cf. Marius Victorinus, *Adversus Arium* IV 10 (*Sources chrétiennes* 68, 528-31); *Hymnus* I 5 (*Sources chrétiennes* 68, 620)). At latest it is at this point, where there is no explicated *theologumena* available from which the *mens humana* could be interpreted, that Augustine's own place in the philosophy of mind emerges. Even though Augustine does not expressly draw the consequences of the *mens*-analysis for the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as Schmaus rightly points out, the concept of *amor mentis* acquires more sharply-defined contours than the concept of the Holy Spirit in its inner-trinitarian function.

qualifying the content of this self-knowledge. All knowledge of itself, so it appears, can compose the content of the *notitia sui*. But Augustine now differentiates between a merely subjective self-knowledge in which a *mens* comprehends its individual idiosyncrasies from the knowledge of that which makes the *mens* a *mens*. The source of subjective self-knowledge is individual introspection (*videre in se*). The source of objective self-knowledge is truth itself (*videre in ipsa veritate*). The individual's information about his subjective mental conditions only can be believed by others, for a direct perception of other minds is impossible. But statements concerning the essence of the *mens* are examinable by others, for the truth is equally open to all rational beings. The subjective self-comprehension is directed at things temporally mutable, namely at fleeting states like, for example, external or internal feelings. The objective self-knowlege comprehends, however, the essence of the *mens*, which, like all intelligible entities, is immutable and eternal.[2] Even though the individual *mens* is marked by accidents and subject to changes, its essence is unchangeable, and the concept of this essence composes the content of that *notitia mentis* that is called *verbum*.[3]

Augustine sets forth several examples to illustrate the thesis that that which is unchangeable only can be seen in eternal truth—that is, as intelligible form.[4] Both the

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[2] Sed cum se ipsam novit humana mens et amat se ipsam, non aliquid incommutabile novit et amat. Aliterque unusquisque homo loquendo enuntiat mentem suam quid in se ipso agatur attendens; aliter autem humanam mentem speciali aut generali cognitione definit. […] Unde manifestum est aliud unumquemque videre in se, quod sibi alius dicenti credat, non tamen videat; aliud autem in ipsa veritate quod alius quoque possit intueri, quorum alterum mutari per tempora, alterum incommutabili aeternitate consistere….intuemur inviolabilem veritatem ex qua perfecte quantum possumus definiamus non qualis sit uniuscuiusque hominis mens, sed qualis esse sempiternis rationibus debeat (Trin. 9.9).
"We gaze upon the inviolable truth from which we define as perfectly as we can, not what kind of thing any particular man's mind is, but what kind of thing by everlasting ideas it ought to be (Trin. 9.9)." In my opinion, the *debeat* in the concluding passage cannot be rationally understood normatively as if the individual mind sees the ideal image of the mind in the eternal truth which he has to approximate. For it is a matter here of the preceding question of how the human mind can grasp itself at all in order to be able to strive from this foundation toward the ideal of the human mind, which is first then a valid goal for it. The basis of this self-knowledge first enables the pursuit of the ideal condition. If one wanted to establish an imperative already in the process of self-knowledge, the paradox would emerge that the individual mind simultaneously would have to fall under the general concept of the human mind in order to be able to know itself and not fall under this concept because it does not yet accord with it.
[3] The substitution of notitia with verum in the trinity formula of the human mind becomes particularly clear when Augustine writes, "Cum itaque se mens novit et amat, iungitur ei amore verbum eius. Et quoniam amat notitiam et novit amorem, et verbum in amore est et amor in verbo et utrumque in amante atque dicente. Sed omnis secundum speciem notitia similis est ei rei quam novit (Trin. 9.15f.)."
[4] Augustine compares the direct experience of the intelligible with the brightness and clarity of the sky that can be seen from the peak of a mountain, whereas the corporeal world is similar to the mist beneath the

function of the *notitia* as a concept of essence and the role of *amor* and its relation to *notitia*, however, require further explication. Augustine thus chooses examples in which intelligible reality not only possesses a descriptive character but also serves as a rule and a value-concept that form the basis for concrete value-judgments. He draws a parallel, for example, to corporeal things—regardless of whether they are directly perceived by the senses or whether they are a fantasy image construed by sensible cognitions preserved in memory—that are judged according to unchangeable rules beyond the mind.[5] As witnessed already in book 8, conduct toward other humans should be determined by the love for the form of justice itself so that depending on the degree of justice of the other, one either seeks out his friendship or hopes to contribute to his betterment (cf. Trin. 9.11). An intelligible form therefore can be a concept of essence like that of the *mens humana*, but it can also represent an aesthetic rule or a norm according to which we either act ourselves or approvingly or disapprovingly judge the actions and productions of others: "Thus it is that in that eternal truth according to which all temporal things were made we observe with the eye of the mind the form according to which we are and according to which we do anything with true and right reason, either in ourselves or in bodies."[6]

In the following passages, Augustine distinguishes four instances: 1) the intelligible form as is found in the realm of eternal truth; 2) the *mens* itself; 3) the knowledge that the *mens* possesses of the intelligible form (the presence of the form, so to speak, in the *mens*); and 4) the actions of the *mens* resulting from its knowledge. These four instances are then set in relation to a metaphoric of reproduction as begetting, conceiving, and bearing, which invokes, of course, the metaphor of the begetting of the second divine person. The *mens* conceives the concepts from eternal truth. The

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peak: "Sed interest utrum ego sub illa vel in illa caligine, tanquam a coelo perspicuo secludar; an sicut in altissimus montibus accidere solet, inter utrumque aere libero fruens, et serenissimum lucem supra, et densissimas nebulas subter aspiciam (Trin. 9.11)." This experience of brightness is granted only those who are capable of ascending to the direct vision of the intelligible. Normally, the intelligible is only perceived in corporeal things "somewhat veiled by a kind of cloud (*quodam nubio subtexitur*, Trin. 9.10)."
[5] aliis omnino regulis supra mentem nostrum incommutabiliter manentibus vel approbare apud nosmetipsos vel improbare convincimur cum recte aliquid approbamus aut improbamus….Viget et claret desuper iudicum veritatis ac sui iuris incorruptissimis regulis firmum est (Trin. 9.10).
[6] In illa igitur aeterna veritate ex qua temporalia facta sunt omnia formam secundum quam sumus et secundum quam vel in nobis vel in corporibus vera et recta ratione aliquid operamur (Trin. 9.12).

knowledge the *mens* has of these concepts is connected with an action on the side of the *mens* itself, which Augustine defines as a begetting through the *mens*. Augustine calls the result of conception and begetting—that is, the *mens*' actual knowledge of an intelligible form—word. This conceived and begotten word is, like the embryo in its mother's womb, in or "with" the *mens*. The word is born if it leads to an internal or external action although the word as knowledge, in contrast to the embryo, is not removed from the *mens* in being expressed. Such actions could entail the vocal pronunciation of the word so that it is audible to and understandable for others, the execution of an act through the limbs of the body, or the pronouncement of moral judgments. The production of an inner word precedes every action, for no one does anything voluntarily that he has not previously uttered as a word "in his heart."[7]

The most striking element in this explanation is the "inner word."[8] One could have expected that the *mens* attains its knowledge of the forms through the vision of eternal truth such that the eternal truth "begets" the knowledge in the *mens*, and the mens "conceives" its knowledge from the truth. Augustine stresses, however, that the *mens* itself begets the conceived word. He thus opens the possibility of distinguishing between two kinds of presence of a *notitia* in the human mind—namely, a presence only conceived and a presence also begotten. In the latter form, the *notitia* is a *verbum*. Augustine differentiates here, but not yet clearly, between a knowledge as mere *notitia* and a knowledge that can be qualified as *verbum*. Nonetheless, so much can be said of this qualified knowledge: it corresponds, on the one hand, to eternal truth by depicting the object found there and by receiving its content from there; but, on the other hand, it results from an act of knowledge by the *mens*—an act, which, as the metaphor of begetting indicates, is constitutive for this knowledge. Book 15 first clarifies the matter by connecting the word with the concrete thought (*cogitatio*), which actualizes a content out of the already, individually existing *notitiae* in memory and places it in the context of

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[7] atque inde conceptam rerum veracem notitiam tamquam verbum apud nos habemus et dicendo intus gignimus, nec a nobis nascendo discedit. Cum autem ad alios loquimur, verbo intus manenti ministerium voices adhibemus. Nihil itaque agimus per membra corporis in factis dictisque nostris quibus vel approbantur vel improbantur mores hominum quod non verbo apud nos intus edito praevenimus. Nemo enim aliquid volens facit quod non in corde suo prius dixerit (Trin. 9.12).
[8] For an understanding of the concept of *word*, see W. Beierwaltes, "Zu Augustins Metaphysik der Sprache," in: *AS* 2 (1971), 179-95.

knowledge.[9] Augustine's intention in introducing the concept of *verbum* is nevertheless already recognizable here.   The derivation of the *notitia* from the *mens* is to be explained such that the *notitia* can be spoken of as *proles*, *verbum*, and *imago*. Augustine does not want the content of the *notita sui* to be understood as contingencies of the individual mind that are seen "*in se*," but rather as the *mens*' knowledge of its concept seen in truth (*in ipsa veritate*).   This juxtaposition signifies in particular the distinction of the knowledge of merely subjective states from the generalizable knowledge of essence. It thus should not be understood as if the knowledge of essence and self-observation stand in contradiction. Rather, the knowledge of essence takes place precisely when the object to be known is fully present to the seeing intellect. The fact that the essence is seen "in truth" does not entail that the mind must look away from itself in order to be able to comprehend itself; rather it must observe itself in the right way in order to discover what it in truth is. The concept of *notitia sui* as *verbum sui* is supposed to express both of these aspects: that self-knowledge has the *mens*' concept of essence as its content and that this knowledge is the *proles* of the *mens*.

2. Moral-Philosophical and Epistemological Aspects of the Inner Word

The inner word composes the basis and the point of departure for all actions—and not only of actions but also of all evaluative judgments concerning lifestyle.[10] Thus, the inner word is also the basis of all of those words "that we do with our bodies in deeds or words to express approval or disapproval of the behavior of men." The word is born, according to Augustine, "when on thinking over it we like it either for sinning or for doing good."[11] This liking is always morally qualified according to the Augustinian categores of enjoyment (*frui*) and use (*uti*). Insofar as it is a matter of the word of

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[9] Quocirca invenimus nihil esse aliud discere ista, quorum non per sensus haurimus imagines, sed sine imaginibus, sicuti sunt, per se ipsa intus cernimus, nisi ea, quae passim atque indisposite memoria continebat, cogitando quasi colligere atque animadvertendo curare, ut tamquam ad manum posita in ipsa memoria, ubi sparsa prius et neglecta latitabant, iam faliliari intentioni facile occurrant (Conf. 10.11.18).

[10] "And so there is nothing that we do…which we have not anticipated with a word uttered inside ourselves. Nobody voluntarily does anything that he has not previously uttered as a word in his heart." *Nihil itaque agimus…quod non verbo apud nos intus edito praevenimus. Nemo enim volens aliquid facit quod non in corde suo prius dixerit* (Trin. 9.12).

[11] Nascitur autem verbum cum excogitatum placet aut ad peccandum aut ad recte faciendum (Trin. 9.13).

immutable truth, our liking should be that of enjoyment; insofar as it is a matter of the word of a mutable, created nature, on the contrary, the modus of liking may only be that of use. The birth of the inner word therefore means that the thing given by the word is made, in either a good or bad way, into the object of striving. Augustine does not yet focus on the transposition of the will's tendency into an external act. His eye remains steadfast here on the inner process of finding a liking for an object or of an inclination toward a certain goal of action. It is in this context that he interprets the words of Jesus: it is not only the execution of an evil deed that qualifies as sin but already the will to do it even if it does not come to its execution. The "mouth of the heart" reveals the true motivation.[12]

Augustine nonetheless offers an intrepretation in book 9 of the conception and birth of the word that does not take into consideration its fundamental inwardness. He expresses here the significance of the difference between the intellectual-transtemporal and the corporeal-temporal goods in terms of the difference between the inner and the outer. For the intellectual goods alone, the conception and the birth of the word remain internal, whereas the birth is external for temporal goods. In analogous fashion, Augustine juxtaposes the conception to the birth of the word and the desire for an object to its attainment. Of the intellectual goods he claims, "But the conceived word and the born word are the same thing when the will rests in the act itself of knowing, which happens in the love of spiritual things."[13] Conception appears to entail the acquisition of the concept of justice while the birth entails the possession of justice in love for it. In contrast to the previous passage, the word cannot be said to be already born when the will is directed toward an object represented in the conceived word; the word is instead first born when it has attained the goal of its striving. This attainment remains internal for the intellectual goods, but not for the temporal ones: "But in the love of temporal and material things the conception of a word is one thing and its birth another, as it is with the breeding of animals. In this case the word is conceived by wanting and born by getting,

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[12] "And thus when he would refer all good deeds or sins to this bringing forth of a word, he said *Out of your mouth you will be justified and out of your mouth you will be condemned* (Mt 12:37); by 'mouth' he wished to signify not this visible one but the inner invisible one of the thoughts and the heart (Trin. 9.14)."
[13] Conceptum autem verbum et natum idipsum est cum voluntas in ipsa notitia conquiescit, quod fit in amore spiritalium (Trin. 9.14).

as it is not enough for greed to know and love money unless it also has it."[14]   The
conception corresponds, in turn, to the knowledge of an object as a desired object,
namely money, eating, copulating, honor, or power, whereas the birth signifies the
possession of money, for example. This interpretation of the birth of the inner word as a
having of a thing competes with its earlier interpretation as the adoption of a direction of
will.

In the following passage, Augustine discusses once again the practical dimension of
the inner word in such a way that one gets the impression that the concept of the *verbum
intimum* is a genuine ethical concept, not an epistemological concept that is secondarily
analyzed ethically. Augustine asks whether all knowledge is to be called word or only
loved knowledge.[15]   His answer is that that which we do not like should not be
understood as either conceived in mind or born. "Not everything that touches our mind
in any way is conceived, so it may only be known without being called the kind of word
we are now talking about."[16] It appears as if Augustine does not want to confer the status
of the inner word on knowledge in general but only on concepts ethically qualified; and,
even among those, he does not include concepts of evil but only those of goods. The
word would be then "knowledge with love."[17] Only the knowledge of goods would be
conceived and born in the mind, and only it would be allowed to be called word. Other
things may touch us or be known to us without therefore qualifying as word.

Another picture emerges, however, if one considers Augustine's own
differentiations. He distinguishes three possible concepts of word. Word could entail
whatever occupies a temporally extended syllable-formation—that is, the formulated
word earlier excluded. The following two definitions, however, are more important: "In
another sense, everything that is known is called a word impressed on the consciousness,
as long as it can be produced from memory and described, even when we dislike it; but in

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[14] In amore autem carnalium temporaliumque rerum sicut in ipsis animalium fetibus alius est conceptus
verbi, alius partus. Illic enim quod cupiendo concipitur adipiscendo nascitur, quoniam non sufficit avaritiae
nosse et amare aurum nisi et habeat (Trin. 9.14).

[15] Recte ergo quaeritur utrum omnis notitia verbum an tantum amata notitia (Trin. 9.15)?

[16] Novimus enim et ea quae odimus, sed nec concepta nec parta dicenda sunt animo, quae nobis displicent.
Non enim omnia quae quoquo modo tangunt concipiuntur, ut tantum nota sint non tamen verba dicantur
ista de quibus nunc agimus (Trin. 9.15).

[17] Verbum est igitur cum amore notitia (Trin. 9.15).

the sense we are now using, that is called a word which we like when it is conceived by the mind."[18]   Augustine first introduces a gnoseological interpreation of the word according to which the word represents a knowledge recallable from memory. He asks whether and to what extent this interpretation of the inner word requires an ethical qualification. Clearly, he wants to uphold the third concept of the word that includes a liking of the object without accepting its concomitant restrictions on applicability. He therefore argues that the disapproval is ultimately an approval of the rejection and consequently represents an indirect liking. Moreover, and this is the decisive point, one has pleasure, Augustine claims, in the mere knowledge, even if it is a matter of concepts of that which is to be rejected like, for example, "immoderation." Not only the object but also the knowledge of the definition of its concept arouses pleasure. "It pleases me that I can know and define what immoderation is, and this is its word."[19] Augustine relates the initially restrictive condition that the known must be liked, if it a matter of an inner word, to the knowledge of the concept itself. Since all conceptual knowledge is liked, however, the restriction to certain objects of knowledge is cancelled. In the form of the third interpretation of the inner word, Augustine confirms, in fact, the general definition of the inner word as a recallable and definable knowledge from memory.   An ethical specification of the object of this knowledge does not take place. When Augustine determines the *verbum intimum* as *cum amore notitia*, only that *amor* is intended that is directed at knowledge in general. Despite all appearances, the *verbum intimum* is not a genuinely ethical concept. It is rather a matter of a title for conceptual knowledge altogether. This knowledge can be ethically relevant, namely when it refers to goods (like justice) or evil (like immoderation), but such knowledge constitutes merely a special case of knowledge in general.[20]

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[18] aliter omne quod notum est verbum dicitur animo impressum quamdiu de memoria proferri et definiri potest, quamvis res ipsa displiceat; aliter cum placet quod mente concipitur (Trin. 9.15).
[19] Nam placet mihi quod novi et definio quid sit intemperantia; et hoc est verbum eius (Trin. 9.15).
[20] U. Duchrow's interpretation of these connections is unclear. He claims that for Augustine's theory of the inner word, it is not the relational function of the word that is significant, but its ethical function alone, which is first found in *De mendacio* (cf. Duchrow, 122-48, esp. 137-44). I believe the ethical function is subordinate to the gnoseological function and even presupposes the latter. Duchow seems to highlight precisely this position when he states that Augustine "sees the the inner word's capacity for analogy not simply in the act of thinking but in willful acceptance or rejection, which is enabled by true judgment and which is the beginning of an ethical action, whether true or mendacious (137, trans. A.L.)." [Augustine

Clarity concerning the practical aspect of the doctrine of the inner word can be best attained if one inserts a distinction in the concept of *amor*. There is an *amor* with which the mind takes a stand on the content of the inner word. This position is subject to moral difference. If it corresponds within the hierarchy of goods to the status of the object thought in the word, then it is morally right, and if it does not correspond to it, then it is morally false. This love is to be classified as belonging to the birth of the word, which consists in the pleasure found in what is thought (cf. Trin. 9.13)—that is, a valuative stance is taken with respect to what is thought. This finding of pleasure in something remains internal for the intellectual things, which provide the will satisfaction simply in being known. It turns to the outside for material goods, however, because on the outside, the concept merely first arouses the desire, whereas the true pleasure first arises through the possession of the good. Since this *amor* is subject to the difference between good and evil, it is either desire (*cupiditas*) or pure love (*caritas*).[21]

Due to the doctrine of the *verbum* as *notita amata*, however, this *amor* is to be distinguished from the love of which Augustine says, "This word is conceived in love of either the creature or the creator." He then concludes, "So love, like something in the middle, joins together our word and the mind it is begotten from, and binds itself in them as a third element in a non-bodily embrace, without any confusion."[22] On the metaphorical plane, this *amor* is not connected with the birth of the word but with its begetting and conception. On the objective plane, it is to be understood as the love of

"sieht die Analogiefaehigkeit des inneren Wortes nicht einfach im Denkakt, sondern in der vom wahren Urteil ermöglichten, willentlichen Zustimmung oder Ablehnung, welche der Anfang einer ethischen Tat, einer wahren oder lünerischen, ist."] Accordingly, the inner word would be primarily the capacity for judgment and only secondarily a movement of the will. This ambiguity impairs Duchrow's analyses of *De Trinitate* throughout.

[21] Cf. Trin. 9.13. Due to the precedence of thought over the *amor* thus conceived, both statements can stand side by side, namely that we act on the basis of the word "*vera et recta ratione*," and that we do not do anything that is not anticipated by an innerly produced word. ("Nihil itaque agimus per membra corporis in factis dictisque nostris, quod non verbo apud nos intus edito praevenimus (Trin. 9.12).") The first statement initially seems to claim that only morally correct actions are to be conceived as stemming from an inner word, whereas the second statement claims precisely that all actions are produced from such a word. A contradiction can be avoided, however, if one refers the first statement to the generation of the word and the second to the evaluating position toward what is thought. Even if the word is grasped "*vera et recta ratione*" and thus corresponds to eternal truth, that which is thought in the word can be falsely evaluated and therefore lead to an evil action. Thus, even evil action is based on a "*recta ratio*".

[22] Quod verbum amore concipitur sive creaturae sive Creatoris (Trin. 9.13).
Verbum ergo nostrum et mentem de qua gignitur quasi medius amor coniungit seque cum eis tertium complexu incorporeo sine ulla confusione constringit (Trin. 9.13).

knowledge itself that first drives the *mens* to produce the inner words (that is, offspring), which, in turn, can become objects of *cupiditas* or *caritas*. Augustine attributes, therefore, a practical aspect to the production of the inner word, but because the act of knowing belongs to the essence of the mind, this *amor* also precedes a judgment of good and evil.

Therefore, Augustine can reformulate the structural statement about the *mens*—that it knows and loves itself—in terms of the genetic statement that the word of the mind is joined with it in love.[23] This formulation differs from the former structural statement in that, firstly, the verbum does not contain just any knowledge about the *mens* but expresses its essential determination; and secondly, the *amor* represents a dynamic component that does not merely join two existing members but aims at the production of the *verbum mentis*.

Augustine connects depictions of equality and similarity to these reflections on the production of the *verbum mentis* out of the *mens*. These depictions lead to the establishment of the equality of the *notitia sui* as an image and a word with the *mens*. He establishes that all knowledge of the essence of an object is similar to the known object.[24] Moreover, the soul itself, he claims, becomes similar to the object through this knowledge so that the soul, if it knows God, becomes like him.[25] But this likeness cannot mount to an equality, because, firstly, we do not know God as he knows himself; and secondly, the soul stands beneath God in the metaphysical hierarcy. Thus, a distance between the two remains that cannot be suspended by any approach of the soul to God. Both obstacles—incompleteness of the knowledge and metaphysical inferiority—are removed, however, in the self-knowledge of the mind. For in this case, the mind directs itself towards itself, and its self-knowledge is not only similar to its object but the same.[26] If the *mens* knows itself, the similarity of the knowledge of essence to its object increases

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[23] Verbum est igitur quod nunc discernere ac insinuare volumus, cum amore notitia. Cum itaque se mens novit et amat, iungitur ei amore verbum eius. Et quoniam amat notitiam et novit amorem, et verbum in amore est et amor in verbo et utrumque in amante atque dicente (Trin. 9.15).

[24] Sed omnis secundum speciem notitia similis est ei rei quam novit (Trin. 9.16).

[25] Habet ergo animus nonnullam speciei notae similitudinem….Quocirca in quantum Deum novimus similes sumus (Trin. 9.16).

[26] Ex quo colligitur quia cum se mens ipsa novit atque approbat sic est eadem notitia verbum eius ut ei sit par omnino et aequale atque identidem quia neque inferioris essentiae notitia est sicut corporis neque superioris sicut Dei (Trin. 9.16).

to the point of equality and sameness. As an image and a word, the *notitia mentis* is just as equal to the *mens* as the begotten is to the begetter.[27] Just as the word of God is itself God such that it is called "*Deus de Deo*" or "*sapientia de sapientia,*" the *verbum mentis* corresponds perfectly to the mens in complete self-knowledge. And just as God is revealed in the Son, the *mens* demonstrates its essence (not its accidents) exhaustively in its word.

3. The Function of *amor* in the Production of the Word

According to Augustine, the *mens* is just as much a cause of its love as it is of its knowledge, but the production of knowledge is mediated by love, which, so to speak, represents an urge to knowledge. Although the *amor* itself is a product of the mind, it functions more as a means in the *mens'* acquisition of knowledge, not as the goal of the process. Since only the result, not the driving force, of the process is called *prole*, word, or image, it is legitimate that the *amor* does not receive this title.[28]

In the following explication of the predominant relations in the human mind, Augustine draws on the example of a temporal process, namely that of the acquisition of knowledge:[29] "If [one] urgently and passionately wants to know he is said to be studious, a term which is commonly used about the pursuit and acquisition of various kinds of learning. So parturition by the mind is preceded by a kind of appetite which prompts us to inquire and find out about what we want to know, and as a result knowledge itself is brought forth as offspring; and hence the appetite itself by which knowledge is conceived

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[27] Ideoque et imago et verbum est quia de illa exprimitur cum cognoscendo eidem coaequatur, et est gignenti aequale quod genitum est (Trin. 9.16).

[28] The trinitarian-theological parallels to this consist in the fact that the Son alone is called *word* or *image*, not the Spirit, although both come from the Father. So, too, it is said of the Son alone that He is begotten of the Father.

[29] "Here [in the mind bestowed with understanding] there exists in the time dimension a knowledge of some things that was not there before, and a love of some things that were not loved before. So this examination will reveal to us more distinctly what we are to say, since it is easier for speech which has to proceed in a time dimension to explain something which is comprehended in the time dimension."
Ergo ad illam imaginem quae creatura est, hoc est ad rationalem mentem diligentius de hac re interrogandam considerandamque redeamus ubi temporaliter exsistens nonnullarum rerum notitia quae ante non erat, et aliquarum rerum amor quae antea non amabantur, distinctius nobis aperit quid dicamus quia et ipsi locutioni temporaliter dirigendae facilior est ad explicandum res quae in ordine temporum comprehenditur (Trin. 9.17).

and brought forth cannot appropriately itself be called brood or offspring."[30] Although Augustine does not yet elaborate the temporal aspect of knowledge in book 9, the originating process of knowledge and love refers to the accidental side of the *mens humana* in which there are changing passions and in which forgetting, memory, and learning take place. Augustine does not speak here of the essence of the *mens* and its foundational act—self-knowledge. Instead, his example concerns a peripheral phenomenon in comparision, namely the acquisition of the knowledge of objects as occurs in the *disciplinae*.[31] If Augustine sees an image of the divine Trinity in the process of knowledge-acquisition, then it is only "an image in a certain manner." In other words, it is not the best possible parallel because the *mens humana* is not taken into account at its highest level. The learning process certainly makes manifest the founding of the word on love because it demonstrates the connection of foundation in a temporal series. It is precisely this temporalization, however, that distinguishes this triadic relation not only from the divine Trinity but also—as book 10 makes clear—from the essential structure of the *mens humana*. In order to understand the center of the *mens* and the divine Trinity from this image, the temporal difference must be conceptually removed.

The inadmissability of the example can be seen in various details. It is, for instance, incapable of keeping begetting and birth separate. The appetite for knowlege entails that it both effectuates the conception of knowledge and brings about the birth. If Augustine would argue that the appetite is the means of producing the offspring and therefore could not "appropriately itself be called brood or offspring," then it could be objected that the birth of love is not the matter in question but its begottenness.[32] The shortcoming of the example is shown particularly, however, in the way in which Augustine distinguishes the will to find a result from the voluntative approval of the found result. The pleasure in the achieved result can be called love, for it fulfills the maxim that love must always contain a knowledge of the beloved. But the will to investigate is, according to Augustine, a form of love, although this love cannot possess

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[30] quod maxime in assequendis atque adipiscendis quibusque doctrinis dici solet. Partum ergo mentis antecedit appetitus quidam quo id quod nosse volumus quaerendo et inveniendo nascitur proles ipsa notitia, ac per hoc appetitus ille quo concipitur pariturque notitia partus et proles recte dici non potest (Trin. 9.18).

[31] quod maxime in assequendis atque adipiscendis quibusque doctrinis dici solet (Trin. 9.18).

[32] ac per hoc appetitus ille quo concipitur pariturque notitia partus et proles recte dici non potest (Trin. 18).

any knowledge of the result which has yet to be found.[33] The latter would be a clear violation of the rule that one could only love what one knows.

Augustine does not, however, commit such a violation. It is important to note that the end of book 9 is left open and therefore leads into book 10. The proof that every proccess of seeking for knowledge is shaped by an already existing foreknowlege is found at the beginning of book 10. In contrast to what could be assumed from the end of book 9, the *appetitus* for knowledge is never blind. For the *appetitus*, too, it is true that it could not love what it loves if it did not in some way know what it loves. Even that love, through which the mind produces a clear knowledge of itself, is already determined by a fundamental self-knowledge of the mind. As we have seen, the example of the learning process in the human mind is metaphysically below the divine Trinity, and for various reasons it is also below the essential structure of the human mind, the exposition of which was the topic of book 9. In book 10, this conclusion will be confirmed, for Augustine procedes hierarchically through an analysis of various phenomena of knowlege up to the self-knowledge of the *mens humana*. Along this path, he shows what was left open in book 9—namely, that the fundametal self-relation of the mind does not represent a process in time. The rational creature as a whole is subject to changes, but in the center of the *mens humana*, constancy and immutability reign.

In the first part of book 9, Augustine argues that the human mind (with the three elements *mens—notitia sui—amor sui*) exhibits the same ontological structure as the divine Trinity. Although God and the *mens humana* are juxtaposed as infinite and finite beings, the structural equality makes it possible to see, through observation of the mind, God as in a mirror. In the second part, Augustine examines the genetic relations within the trinity of the human mind and finds there, too, the same principles as in the divine Trinity. He emphasizes the activity of the *mens* in the production (begetting and conception) of the inner word. Although he initially considers the word in its moral meaning as the intention to act, he then portrays the word in its fundamental significance as concrete, actual knowledge. A doubling of *amor* results. On a subordinate plane,

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[33] Qui appetitus, id est inquisitio, quamvis amor esse non videatur quo id quod notum est amatur (hoc enim adhuc ut cognoscatur agitur), tamen ex eodem genere quiddam est. Nam voluntas iam dici potest quia omnis qui quaerit invenire vult, et si id quaeritur quod ad notitiam pertineat, omnis qui quaerit nosse vult (Trin. 9.18).

amor establishes a stance in light of a finished thought by judging whether the content of what is thought is a more or less important good or evil. This judgment can be subjected to moral critique. On a fundamental plane, the *amor* represents the moving force in all mental acts of thinking something, of memory, or of directing its attention to something, etc. A striving is at the basis of the activity of the mind in the production of knowledge as it is at the basis of every activity. Augustine aims at this striving with the concepts *voluntas* and *amor*. As the end of book 9 demonstrates, the striving for knowledge can take place on a variety of levels in which the constantly present *amor* always takes on a particular form. Most importantly, this *amor* must always already know the knowledge that is first sought. In book 10, Augustine will work out the significance of this foreknowledge for different types of knowledge, in particular for self-knowledge.

VI. The Original Self-Relation of the Human Mind and its Trinitarian Structure

In book 10, Augustine arrives at his fully developed and deepened understanding of the *mens humana* and its reflexivity. He begins by calling into question the interpretation of *amor* that he had presented at the end of the previous book. If love is to be seen as the urge of the *mens* to produce a *notitia* (*verbum*) of itself, the consequence would be that this *amor* is blind. For if the knowledge of the *mens* of itself is first the result of its activity, then its activity cannot be led by knowledge. The *amor* that precedes knowledge, helping it emerge, would have to be undetermined. But this is impossible, for, according to Augustine's repeatedly stated premise, every love loves *something* and knows that which it loves. His solution to this problem consists in establishing a more fundamental self-knowledge of the *mens* that orientates its striving aimed at the production of a *notitia* (*verbum*). This knowledge, too, cannot exist without *amor*, and this *amor* is, in turn, led by knowledge. This referral does not result, however, in an infinite regress. Rather, Augustine argues that in the original self-knowledge of the human mind, knowledge always already includes love, and love always already possesses knowledge. In sum, Augustine submits a two-levelled model of the self-relation and terminologically distinguishes the deeper level of *se nosse* from the higher level of *se cogitare*. One could distinguish the two levels as an implicit and an explicit self-knowledge or as immediate self-knowledge and reflexive, mediated self-knowledge. At any rate, the decisive result of book 10 of *De Trinitate* is that the structure of the trinity of the *mens humana*, thus far articulated as the triad of *mens–amor sui–notitia sui*, requires further distinctions because it has been developed without yet differentiating between the two levels of self-relation.

Upon the basis of this distinction, it remains to ask whether the thesis of the trinitarian structure of the human mind refers to explicit self-knowledge or to implicit self-knowledge. From the perspective of the theory of the inner word, as developed in book 15, the triad of *mens–notitia* (*verbum*) *sui–amor sui* more likely refers to the reflexive, mediated self-knowledge. This triad thus would appear as a merely derived phenomenon that presupposes a fundamental structure, which Augustine describes with

the terms *memoria–intellegentia–voluntas*.[1] The criteria cultivated in book 9 for a trinitarian structure are also valid, however, for this more fundamental triad. I will show that, for Augustine, the deeper triad always already and essentially fulfills these conditions, whereas the less fundamental triad of explicit self-knowledge is only truly trinitarian in the condition of perfection.

In the transition from book 9 to book 10, Augustine initiates the interplay between explicit and implicit self-apprehension that will play a decisive role for the construction of the remaining books. The progression of this interplay is made more complicated by various factors, the most important of which is that a vocabulary is not readily available with which one could unequivocally describe the fundamental triad of the human mind. Even the terms *memoria*, *intellegentia*, and *voluntas* ultimately prove to be inadequate, for they are created for the description of those mental processes that do not take place on the plane of original self-relation.

In the course of the book, Augustine demonstrates the inadmissability of the concept of *amor* at the end of book 9 (Trin. 10.1-5) in order to show that this concept refers to a fundamental self-knowledge of the *mens* (Trin. 10.5-6). With the aid of an

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[1] The connection between the two ternaries is mostly overlooked. M. Schmaus interprets book 10 up to the introduction of the *memoria–intellegentia–voluntas* ternary as an explication of the *mens–amor sui–notitia sui* triad, not however as the transcendence of it. He understands the *memoria* ternary simply as another fortunate discovery: "The analysis of the facts of consciousness brings to light a futher analogy in the human mind" [Die Analyse der Bewusstseinstatsachen fördert eine weitere Analogie im menschlichen Geiste zutage.] (Schmaus 1967, 264, trans. A.L.). He sees a connection between the two formulas only to the extent that the second one avoids a trinitarian-theological weakness of the first one. Whereas the *mens* has precedence over *amor* and *notitia*, since they are only acts of the *mens*, the ternary of book 10 contains three equal members and therefore better corresponds at least to the Latin conception of divine threefold-ness (cf. ibid., 264, 277).

Schindler maintains that Augustine does not give "any real information" about the relation of the two ternaries. Their existence alongside of each other, he insists, does not disturb Augustine. On the one hand, it demonstrates the character of *De Trinitate* as a spiritual-intellectual exercise, which need not be precise about the coherence of the whole; on the other hand, it becomes clear here, Schindler claims, that Augustine is much less interested in a consistent analysis of the human mind than in a trinitarian-theological topic. Schmaus' argument for the superiority of the second ternary repudiates Schindler's thesis (cf. Schindler, 106f.).

W. Theiler's commentary illustrates the general ambivalence of the historical research of sources. Theiler does not recognize the function of Augustine's refection on the Delphic command for his analysis of the human mind and its relation to the divine Trinity. Instead, he asserts that book 10 does not contain for the most part any relation to the topic of the Trinity. In order to support his thesis, however, Augustine quotes Porphyry's lost work: περὶ τοῦ γνῶθι σεαυτόν (Theiler 1966, 49). In contrast to this interpretation, I dedicate this chapter to a crystallization of Augustine's genuine epistemological arguments in their stringency.

ingenious discussion of the saying of the Delphic oracle "know thyself," he demonstrates that only the *se cogitare* is subject to a practical imperative, whereas the *se nosse* represents a condition for the possibility of this imperative. From his interpretation of this saying, Augustine, furthermore, mines arguments for an idealistic, immaterial understanding of the *mens humana*. The appropriate philosophy of mind is characterized, he claims, by bringing the *se cogitare* into agreement with the *se nosse* so that the self-understanding of the human corresponds to its reality (cf. Trin. 10.7-16). Finally, Augustine proves for the newly attained triad *memoria–intellegentia–voluntas* that they meet the known criteria of the trinity.

1. The Discovery of Original Self-Knowledge

With a series of examples at the beginning of the book, Augustine attempts to substantiate the thesis that all love presupposes a knowledge of the beloved. The love for a beauty of which one has heard rumors but not yet seen is rooted in a general knowledge of the beauty of bodies.[2] The good man who one has not yet met in person is loved according to a knowledge of virtues (*ex notitia virtutum*). In the realm of the sciences (*doctrinae*), it is true that one is typically aroused to the subject matter through the authority of famous teachers. This love for the sciences would not be possible, however, without an outlined understanding of the concept of each science.[3] This understanding may concern, in a general way, the content of the particular science, as one roughly knows that rhetoric is the *scientia dicendi*, or the goal, which in the case of the knowledge of letters (i.e. *grammar*) as well as the knowledge of the meaning of words consists in the universal capacity to communicate. The mind "knows and sees by insight in the very sense of things how beautiful the discipline is that contains knowledge of all signs; and how useful the skill is by which a human society communicates perceptions

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[2] quia generaliter novit corporum puchritudines (Trin. 10.1).
[3] et tamen nisi breviter impressam cuiusque doctrinae haberemus in animo notionem, nullo ad eam discendam studio flagraremus (ibid.)

between its members."[4] Augustine asserts that even in that love which manifests in the search for the meaning of a word never heard before, the knowledge of the form of signs and its beauty is presupposed. The thesis from the end of book 9 is thus set in its appropriate light: especially in scientific investigations, there is an *amor* that is not based on the knowlege of the result (or the offspring) because this first emerges at the end of the investigation. This love also presupposes at least a general knowlege stemming from intellectual vision. "And so we see that all the love of a studious spirit, that is of one who wishes to know what he does not know, is not love for the thing he does not know but for something he knows, on account of which he wants to know what he does not know."[5] Generally stated, all knowledge is loved because it is known what knowledge is.

Augustine applies the thesis "that things cannot be loved unless they are known" (*neque omnino quidquam ametur incognitum*) to the particular case of the *mens humana*, which strives for self-knowledge—that is, in the terms of book 9, whose *amor* aims at the production of a *notitia* (*verbum*) *mentis*. This *mens* can only strive for self-knowledge if it loves itself. It is capable of this, however, only because it already knows itself. At the basis of this effort for self-knowledge, an already existing self-knowledge must be assumed. "When it [the mind] seeks to know itself, it already knows itself seeking. So it already knows itself."[6] But whence stems this familiarity with itself?

Augustine dismisses various answers in order to bring forth the uniqueness of the foreknowledge the *mens* has of itself. Since the *mens* is a matter of an intelligible object, the familiarity with itself cannot stem from external experience. It also differs from the sciences in which in the "canon of eternal truth," it is seen how wonderful it is to have, for example, a knowledge of all the meanings of words so that one is motivated to research into the meaning of single words. In contrast, Augustine maintains that the *mens* must already know itself if it knows how wonderful it is to know oneself.[7] Moreover, he

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[4] Quid ergo amat nisi quia novit atque intuetur in rationibus rerum quae sit pulchritudo doctrinae qua continentur notitiae signorum omnium; et quae sit utilitas in ea peritia qua inter humana societas sensa communicat (Trin. 10.2).

[5] Quamobrem omnis amor studentis animi, hoc est volentis scire quod nescit, non est amor eius rei quam nescit sed eius quam scit propter quam vult scire quod nescit (Trin. 10.3).

[6] Quapropter eo ipso quo se quaerit magis se sibi notam quam ignotam esse convincitur (Trin. 10.5).

[7] Et hoc quidem permirabile est nondum se nosse et quam sit puchrum se nosse iam nosse (Trin. 10.5). Cf. this passage with Plotinus, Enn. V 3, 1, l. 22-27; II 9,1, l. 33-51.

rejects the thesis connected to the notion of the "egressus" of the soul from a state of perfection. This thesis claims that the mind could remember this perfect state and knows, too, that self-knowledge is the condition for its return. It, therefore, strives for self-knowledge. Augustine believes if the memory of the state of bliss could persist, then self-familiarity also would have to persist. Furthermore, it is not the case that the *mens* loves knowledge as such (*nosse*) and thus realizes that it is missing knowledge and strives for self-knowledge in order to fill this gap. For it would have to already know what knowledge is, and it would have to know itself as knowing. In that case, self-knowledge already would be presupposed.

With all of these examples, Augustine attempts to emphasize that in the case of the *mens*' striving for self-knowledge, not only must a foreknowledge be assumed, as is true of all striving for knowledge but also, for self-knowledge, the foreknowledge is the same as the goal. This foreknowledge cannot be a matter of a generality like, for instance, the beauty or topic of a *doctrina* or even of knowledge itself to which striving self-knowledge would relate as a particular. Moreover, there cannot be a practical motivation for self-knowledge that would not already contain a familiarity with itself. Instead, the striving of the *mens* for self-reflexivity requires that self-knowledge be based on self-knowledge. The *mens humana* can only form a *notitia* (*verbum*) *sui* because it always already knows what it seeks to know about itself.

2. Implicit and Explicit Self-Knowledge

How then can the striving for self-knowledge be interpreted? Augustine sharpens the question about the sense of self-searching by rejecting the notion that in its self-knowledge the mind only partially knows itself. If this were the case, then an antecedent partial self-knowledge could be admitted, and there would still remain room for the striving for further knowledge about onself.

Augustine's concern with the question of the relation between self-knowledge and self-searching reaches back to the 10th book of *Confessiones*. He comments there on the problem of the character and the range of self-comprehension. Fundamentally, Augustine claims that at least in this life not even God is so close to the human mind as

the mind is to itself. "It is true that we now see only a tantalizing reflection in a mirror, and so it is that while I am on pilgrimage far from you I am more present to myself than to you."[8] Self-knowledge is nevertheless subject to certain limits. In the *memoria*-analysis, Augustine describes the abundance of sensibly appropriated contents of memory, which through the imagination can be connected to ever new contents. In light of this inexhaustibility, Augustine writes, "this faculty of memory is a great one, O my God, exceedingly great, a vast, infinite recess. Who can plumb its depth? This is a faculty of my mind, belonging to my nature, yet I cannot myself comprehend all that I am. Is the mind, then, too narrow to grasp itself, forcing us to ask where that part of it is which it is incapable of grasping? Is it outside the mind, not inside? How can the mind not compass it?"[9] This circumstance offers occasion for wonderment, according to Augustine, that the faculty of memory belongs to the I without being fully transparent to it. The mind is thus too narrow for itself. On the one hand, the I enjoys a primacy over all other objects of knowledge; on the other hand, its own self-apprehension is limited. In the *Confessiones*, the question remains of how the thesis of the merely fragmentary self-presence of the I relates to the statement that nothing, not even God, is more present to the I than itself.

In *De Genesi ad litteram*, Augustine continues to work on the question of how the human mind can be present to itself while also eluding itself so that it must seek itself. In book 7, he writes of the soul searching for itself: "When, therefore, it knows itself as seeking, it certainly knows itself. Now, in its entire being it knows all that it knows; and therefore, when it knows itself as seeking, in its entire being it knows itself; and therefore it knows itself entirely. For it is not something else but itself that it knows in its entire being. Why, then, is it still seeking itself if it knows itself as seeking? For if it did not know itself, it could not know itself as seeking itself. But this applies to the present.

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[8] Et certe "videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate," nondum "facie ad faciem;" et ideo, quamdiu pereginor abs te, mihi sum praesentior quam tibi (Conf. 10.5.7).
[9] Magna ista vis est memoriae, magna nimis, deus meus, penetrale amplum et infinitum. Quis ad fundum eius pervenit? Et vis est haec animi mei atque ad meam naturam pertinet, nec ego ipse capio totum, quod sum. Ergo animus ad habendum se ipsum angustus est, ut ubi sit quod sui non capit? Numquid extra ipsum ac non in ipso? Quomodo ergo non capit (Conf. 10.8.15)?

What it seeks to know about itself is what it was formerly or what it is going to be."[10] Augustine proceeds from the fact that the soul seeks itself. The statement in *Confessiones* that the I cannot entirely grasp itself is confirmed in the notion that the soul seeks to experience its past and its future. The total knowledge of the past and the future is reserved for God. As in the *Confessiones*, Augustine denies that the soul has a total knowledge of its past. The possibility of completely grasping one's own memory is thus rejected.

What is new in *De Genesi ad litteram*, however, is the lengths Augustine goes to to combat the attempt of interpreting the partial self-withdrawl of the I in terms of the divisibility of the soul. For Augustine, divisibility is an attribute belonging to the corporeal world from which the soul, as an intelligible being, is supposed to differ.[11] Augustine attempts to demonstrate that the self-relation of the soul is not to be understood as part-part relation, but rather as the relation of the entire soul to itself as a whole. He therefore argues as follows: 1) If the soul seeks itself, it knows itself as seeking itself. More generally, it could be said that in the performance of any act, the soul always possesses a consciousness of itself as performing that act. 2) The soul knows everything that it knows as a whole (*et omne, quod novit, tota novit*). 3) If the wholly knowing soul truly knows itself (namely as the performer of the act of self-seeking), then it must know itself as a whole. The soul that knows itself as seeking itself knows itself wholly as a whole. This does not mean that the soul knows everything about itself—the depths of the *memoria* remain inscrutable. Augustine's thesis can be interpreted as claiming that where the soul has an immediate consciousness of itself (as, for example, in the performance of conscious acts), a difference between knower and known cannot exist. Theses 2) and 3) initially could appear unfounded. Why, it could be asked, does the soul know everything as a whole and not merely as a part? And why cannot self-apprehension be merely fragmentary? It can be countered that Augustine wants to draw attention to the self-apprehension of the I that grasps itself immediately in the performance of acts. The I

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[10] Cum ergo quaerentem se novit, se utique novit et omne, quod novit, tota novit. Cum itaque se quaerentem novit, tota se novit, ergo et totam se novit; neque enim aliquid aliud, sed se ipsam tota novit. Quid ergo adhuc se quaerit, si quaerentem se novit? Neque enim si nesciret se, posset quaerentem se scire se; sed hoc in praesenti; quod autem de se quaerit, quid antea fuerit vel futura sit quaerit (Gen. litt. 7.21.28).
[11] Cf., for example, Gen. litt. 7.21.27.

can only grasp itself if a real self-relation is already present. A difference in the members would entail the suspension of the I's identity and would leave unexplained the fact of the self-experience of the I as identical. Since this takes place, however, whenever an act is performed, the entire soul knows itself as a whole, to use Augustine's words. Hence, Augustine's thesis that "even if the soul does not know everything about itself, it knows itself entirely" can be re-formulated as follows: the I is identical in all of its acts even if the contents of its own memory are not unreservedly available to it.

Augustine treats the same topic again in *De Trinitate* 10 but in greater detail. Here, too, he is concerned with refuting an interpretation that intimates that the simultaneity of self-presence and self-elusiveness of the I leads to an understanding of the self-relation of the mind in terms of a part-part relation. Augustine maintains, in contrast, that despite the mind's incapacity to grasp the whole, as was established in *Confessiones*, the identity of the I is incontestable. It is absurd to claim, he continues, that the *mens* does not know as a whole what it knows. "I am not saying 'It knows the whole,' but 'What it knows, the whole of it knows.'"[12] Nonetheless, he develops the thesis that the whole *mens* knows itself as a whole in three respects. In general, it can be said, if the *mens* knows something about itself, which it only can know as a whole, then it knows itself wholly in this knowledge.[13] First of all, it knows that it knows something; thus, it knows itself wholly.[14] Moreover, the *mens* knows that it lives. It lives as a whole, however, and thus knows itself as a whole in knowing of its vitality.[15] Finally, the *mens* that seeks itself knows that it is *mens* and therefore already knows itself wholly.[16] Directing his argument against the idea of divisibility within the self-relation, Augustine claims that according to

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[12] Deinde cum se quaerit ut noverit, quaerentem se iam novit. Iam se ergo novit. Quapropter non potest omnino nescire se quae dum se nescientem scit, se utique scit. Quid ergo dicemus? an quod ex parte se novit, ex parte non novit? Sed absurdum est dicere non eam totam scire quod scit. Non dico, Totum scit; sed quod scit, tota scit (Trin. 10.5-.10.6). Cf. the analysis of Hölscher, 193-5 and the commentaries from Booth 1978, 191f.
The thesis directed against Sextus that the mind thinks itself as a whole through itself wholly, not as one part thinking another part, can also be found in Plotinus: καὶ ὅλος ὅλῳ οὐ μέρει ἄλλο μέρος (Enn. V 3, 6, l. 7f.) Plotinus grounds his thesis, however, with the totality of the noûs' knowledge, not, as Augustine does, with the identity of finite consciousness in all of its acts. Of the noûs, according to Augustine, it could not only be claimed that "*quod scit, tota scit*" but also "*Totum scit.*"

[13] Cum itaque aliquid de se scit, quod nisi tota non potest, totam se scit (Trin. 10.6).

[14] Scit autem se aliquid scientem, nec potest quidquam scire nisi tota. Scit se igitur totam (Trin. 10.6).

[15] Sicut ergo mens tota mes est, sic tota vivit. Novit autem vivere se. Totam se igitur novit (Trin. 10.6).

[16] Porro si hoc in se novit quod mens est, et tota mens est, totam se novit (Trin. 10.6).

this idea, one cannot even speak of the mind's self-searching because the already found part does not search for itself since it is already found, and the part not yet found does not search for itself since it is sought by the already found part. The idea of divisibility thus proves to be unsuitable for capturing two points—namely, that self-searching makes sense and that it presupposes an already existing self-knowledge.

Augustine finds an indication for the distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge in the realm of the sciences. If someone who is versed in various sciences—including, for example, grammar—practices medicine and in practicing medicine does not think about grammar, one would not say of him that he does not know grammar. The knowledge (*nosse*) is distinct from thinking-about-something-in-this-moment (*cogitare*). Knowledge can remain existent even if that which is known is not the current object of attention. Augustine uses the notion of topicality to make the antecedence of self-knowledge compatible with the striving for self-knowledge. If the knowledge of oneself always already exists, it does not mean that one always thinks of this knowledge so that it remains current or topical. "It is one thing not to know oneself, another not to think about oneself."[17] Thus, the striving for self-knowledge can be interpreted as turning one's attention away from other objects and turning towards the always already existing self-knowledge. By directing its attention to itself, the content of the *se nosse* becomes the content of the *se cogitare*.

This way of argumentation appears, however, to trivialize the entire line of questioning. In what does the meaning of self-searching consists, one could ask, if all that is required for finding oneself is to attend to oneself instead of other objects? According to Augustine, the poignancy of this shift in attention consists in the rarity of its success. Through its constant association with corporeal beings, which makes it accustomed to sensible objects, the mind is no longer capable of completely abstracting itself from materiality even if it thinks of itself. If the mind wants to make itself the object of its attention, it cannot find its true essence and interprets itself instead in accordance with things. The schemata to which the mind has become accustomed through its association with bodily things, not the *se nosse*, become the content of the *se*

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[17] Ita cum aliud sit non se nosse, aliud non se cogitare (Trin. 10.7).

cogitare. The will to *se cogitare* no longer penetrates into the core of the *mens*—its always existing knowledge of itself—but remains stuck halfway, thinking itself as a thing.[18] A practical act lies at the basis of this illusory connection. In a decision conceived as before time, the soul turned away from God as the eternal, immutable source of its bliss, expecting its happiness from ephemeral goods. Precisely because of their transitoriness and losability, the mind had to exercise particular effort to obtain and possess these goods, which as a rule are corporeal things. On account of this effort, the power of the mind's love for them has become so great that even if it would want to turn back and think of itself, it carries the conceptions of corporeal things over and interprets itself as a body (cf. Trin. 10.7). A false ethical attitude thus exists that does not recognize the highest good as such and falsely esteems lower goods as beatifying. This error manifests itself primarily in the mundane lifestyle of average human beings. If philosophical reflection is enlisted, then the false hierarchy of good leads to mistaken, namely materialistic, theories on the essence of the *mens*. Augustine insists that philosophical interpretations of the mind as blood, brain, heart, air, fire, the ensemble of atoms, or as the harmony of body parts—all positions that assert the mortality of the mind by connecting it with corporeality—ultimately result from a false way of life.[19] He emphasizes, however, that even these philosophically false theories testify (even if in disguise) to the presence of the *se nosse*, for none of the mentioned philosophies claims that it does not know the mind at all precisely because an implicit self-knowledge is always already present. Their mistake, Augustine claims, consists merely in that the mind's turn backwards upon itself is incapable of making the *se nosse* purely the content of the *se cogitare*. Instead, the mind tends to think something else in addition that does not belong to the essence of mind (cf. Trin. 10.10). Thus, even these theories, which interpret the *mens* ontologically from external objects, confim that the mind is not to be found outside—that is, it is not sought as if it were not yet there, but rather is known as always already present. Even the material philosophies of mind imply, according to Augustine, that self-knowledge is the presupposition of every attempt at finding oneself.

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[18] Sed quia in his est [mens] quae cum amore cogitat, sensibilibus autem, ad est corporalibus, cum amore assuefacta est, non valet sine imaginibus eorum esse in semetipsa. Hinc ei oboritur erroris dedecus dum rerum sensuarum imagines secernere a se non potest ut se solam videat (Trin. 10.11).

[19] Cf. Trin. 10.9; Gen. litt. 7.12.18.

For Augustine, self-reflection possesses significance not only as the point of departure for the development of philosophical theories but also as a therapy for humans in the sense of liberation from false value estimations. For this reason, Augustine introduces the Delphic command, "know thyself." This command challenges its listener, first of all, to direct his attention to himself, and secondly, to grasp himself purely—that is, without mixture of corporeal substance: "So when it is bidden to know itself, it should not start looking for itself as though it had drawn off from itself, but should draw off what it has added to itself."[20] Therefore, Augustine concludes, "Let it not try to learn itself as if it did not know itself, but rather to discern itself from what it knows to be other."[21] If the human is successful in this endeavor, then he could avoid all materialistic errors and grasp his own nature—his metaphysical middle position as an intellectual-mutable being above material things and below the intellectual-immutable God. Since the hierarchy of being is, for Augustine, simultaneously a hierarchy of values, the insight into one's own nature is of utmost moral relevance because this insight enables humans to live according to their nature: "Why then is the mind commanded to know itself? I believe it means that it should think about itself and live according to its nature, that is it should want to be placed according to its nature, under him it should be subject to and over all that it should be in control of."[22] The "know thyself" is to be understood as the command to direct one's attention to the already existing self-relation, grasp it purely in order to clearly recognize one's own essence and validate this insight in one's way of life. The command is relevant for those living unreflectively and hanging onto a false notion of values who are nonetheless capaple of insight because reflection upon oneself will demonstrate the inferiority of the corporeal world. The command possesses a particular significance for the philosopher, however, because it will not only improve his way of life but also enable

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[20] Cum igitur et praecipitur ut se ipsam cognoscat, non se tamquam sibi detracta sit quaerat, sed id quod sibi addidit detrahat (Trin. 10.11).

[21] Nec se quasi non norit cognoscat, sed ab eo quod alterum novit dinoscat (Trin. 10.12).

[22] Utquid ergo ei praeceptum est ut se ipsa cognoscat? Credo ut se cogitet et secundum naturam suam vivat, id est ut secundum suam naturam ordinari appetat, sub eo scilicet cui subdenda est, supra ea quibus praeponenda est (Trin. 10.7). Augustine's phrase "*secundum naturam suam*" has frequently occasioned the search for parallels in Cicero's works. H. Hagendahl refers to Cicero's conversations in *Tusculum* I 9-10; 18-22 (H. Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics,* vol. I (Göteborg, 1967), 140; similarly, S. Schindler, 247f. Courcelle (1971) juxtaposes Trin. 10.7 with Cicero's *De finibus* 3.5.16; 5.16.44, and 5.9.24, 155f. Courcelle believes that Antiochos of Ascalon adapted the Platonic γνῶθι σεαυτόν to Chryssippos' anthropology.

him to achieve a better philosophical understanding. In Augustine's interpretation, "know thyself" aims simultaneously at instruction and conversion as a command to discover what always already is present.

3. Self-Presence and the Criterion of Certainty

By following the Delphic command, the mind obtains access to its own essence. An original self-knowledge antecedent to the act of attention is characteristic of this essence. But this command does not require any extra exertion, Augustine claims, because understanding the content, in particular the "thyself," already implies its observance. Just as in the grasping of the word *veritas* (cf. Trin. 8.3), an understanding of the *te ipsum* effectuates an immediate realization of what is intended because what is intended is not like something absent that first must be sought but is rather always already present. Whoever understands the *cognosce te ipsum* thereby does that which the command demands, namely think of itself (cf. Trin. 10.12).

This interpretation is dissatisfying, however because it appears to appeal simply to the capacity of the mind to realize its true essence, whereas it was earlier stated that this capacity is weakened, if not lost, through false habits. From this position, Augustine would have to say that most humans do not understand this command. Beyond a mere appeal, it would be desirable to receive either instruction in the proper way of knowing oneself or a list of criteria with which one could decipher whether the mind has been found in its purity or whether foreign elements still mingle in thought. Augustine's thesis of the comprehensibility of the "thyself" can be interpreted more loosely, however. According to this interpretation, full self-knowledge does not already arise in this understanding; rather merely the fact of self-relationality comes to consciousness. What this self is and how to methodologically proceed in the interpretation of it is left open.

Augustine does not, in fact, let the command stand as an appeal to an inner intuition whose content would have to be discovered by everyone on his own. In general, such an intuition of the original self-relation does not play much of a role for Augustine. He rather names and grounds a criterion whose usage enables the distinction of what belongs to *se nosse* and what does not. This criterion is epistemological certainty (*certitudo*).

Only those attributes of itself of which the mind is certain may be acknowledged as elements of the *se nosse* and thus taken up in the *se cogitare*. Augustine consequently summarizes the Delphic command, "The whole point of its being commanded to know itself comes to this: it should be certain that it is none of the things about which it is uncertain, and it should be certain that it is that alone which alone it is certain that it is."[23] The criterion of certainty determines when the mind that directs its attention toward itself actually reaches itself and when it does not. Only unquestionable theses on the mind may claim to be explications of original self-knowledge (*se nosse*) in the medium of the *se cogitare*. The grounding of this criterion lies in the distinction between presence and absence. Present things are immediately available and thus can be known certainly, whereas absent things do not present themselves but are graspable only mediately. Consequently, they cannot be made objects of true and certain knowledge. Because the mind that asks about itself is always already present to itself, even if it does not sufficiently recognize itself, indubitability can show when the mind truly relates to something present—that is, itself. Since Augustine establishes a knowledge of itself (*se nosse*) as the core of the mind, he can go on to say that an unquestionable thesis of the mind about itself explicates the knowledge residing in the *se nosse* and makes it the content of the *se cogitare*. The mere hearing of the Delphic command and the thinking of onself that it invokes allow the dimension of the *se nosse* to emerge as a fact in consciousness. The exhaustion of the contents of this dimension does not result from simple self-observation, however, but from the transfer of the *se nosse*-knowledge into the *se cogitare*-knowledge with the assistance of the criterion of certainty.

It could be asked whether the criterion of presence is really adequate for distinguishing false notions from true ones since even the false notions are present as notions. If the mind directs its attention toward itself, it can find many notions, both right and wrong, that are present to it. By virtue of their presence, the mind knows with certainty that it has these particular notions. Such an argumentation, in fact, would not make possible the distinction between true and false self-interpretations. But Augustine's idea differs from the one thus criticized. He does not take the presence of a notion as his

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[23] Totumque illud quod se iubetur ut noverit, ad hoc pertinet ut certa sit non se esse aliquid eorum de quibus incerta est, idque solum esse se certa sit quod solum esse se certa est (Trin. 10.16).

point of departure from which only the certainty about having this notion could be concluded.[24] Augustine does not infer certainty from presence; rather, conversely, he infers the relation to something present from the indubitability of the content of a representation. If we are certain of the truth of a statement about the mind, then we know that this statement explicates something present, namely the mind itself.

This strategy, moreover, enables the distinction between merely individual states of the mind and its general structure. Pure introspection equally would grasp contingent determinations of each particular *mens* and those characteristics that the *mens* possesses as *mens*. With the assistance of the criterion of certainty, the knowing mind is capable of leaving aside its individual particularities and of grasping its essential features. The mind fulfills the contemplation of itself in truth (*in ipsa veritate*), of which Augustine writes at the end of book 9, by reflecting on that of which it is certain in relation to itself.

The argument of self-presence also can be used to defend the objectivity of the *se nosse* against skeptical objections. From the latter perspective, it could be said that presence as certainity could indeed guarantee that the content of the *se cogitare* corresponds to that of the *se nosse*, but how does one know that the self-understanding on the plane of the *se nosse* reflects the reality of the mind? Or is not a mistaken orientation possible which could only be removed with recourse to a still more fundamental self-understanding ad infinitum? Sextus Empiricus' argument against the possibility of intellectual self-apprehension ultimately points in this direction.[25] He attacks the idea of self-presence insofar as it is thought of as a process of self-representation by means of the the mind's turning back upon itself. In modern terms, it is a matter of the aporias concerning the model of self-conscious reflection.[26] Self-knowledge cannot be defined as the reflection of a subject upon an object that is identical with the subject because the

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[24] Several anti-skeptical arguments in Augustine's early works aim at the indubitability of having a representation regardless of what it corresponds to in reality (cf. Contra ac. 3.11.26). On such a strategy of immunization from skeptical objections common to both Augustine and Descartes, see G.B. Matthews, *Thought's Ego in Augustine and Descartes* (Ithaca and London, 1992), 52-63. Augustine's argument in Trin. 10, however, takes a different direction.

[25] Cf. above Chap. I

[26] Cf. D. Henrich, "Fichtes ursprüngliche Einsicht," in: *Subjektivität und Metaphysik*, Festschrift für W. Cramer, ed. D. Henrich and H. Wagner (Frankfurt, 1966), 188-232.

knowing subject only could be aware of its identity with the object if it already possessed knowledge of itself. Thus, self-knowledge is not explained, but rather presupposed.

The *se nosse* represents, for Augustine, a final instance of self-knowledge. He assumes that the core area of mind persists in eternal self-presence. Only the *cogitare* changes the objects of its attention and reflects on something other than the mind. It, therefore, not only risks that it is unable to adequately perform self-reflection when it wants, but it is also subject to the necessity of having to return to itself in order to be able to think itself. The original knowledge of the mind, on the contrary, nevers changes its object. The *se nosse* does not first have to find its way back to itself but is always already present to itself.

The argument for the existence of such a sphere of transparent self-presence, however, can be obtained from the phenomenon of self-searching as such. A self-searching factually takes place in all of the mind's attempts to attain an understanding of itself, whether a philosophical understanding like, for instance, the various concepts of a philosophy of mind or a life-historical understanding like the Delphic command. This self-searching would not be possible, according to Augustine's argument, if a self-knowledge was not already present. An antecedent knowledge of itself is the condition for the possibility of the mind's searching for itself. Since this search is real, the self-knowledge also must be real. Subsequently, Sextus' objections could be answered with Augustine's argument as follows: however the true notion of the return of the mind to itself might look, the fact that self-searching takes place demonstrates that an original, true knowledge of the mind about itself must already exist. The existence of this *se nosse* absolutely cannot be denied if one admits that the mind is capable of asking about itself. What can be learned from the skeptical objections is that this self-knowledge may not be understood as a result of a representation in the sense of a learning process; it is rather to be conceived as an always already existent self-presence. Since the *mens* is an intelligible being, it relates to itself by means of itself. In other words, it is immediately present to itself.[27]

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[27] The fact that the *mens* must also be certain of what it *is* is not simply a presupposition of Augustine's, as Schindler maintains (200f.). It follows rather from the concept of self-presence.

Long before Descartes and the "official" beginning of modern philosophy, it is Augustine who makes use of the argument of indubitability in order to grasp the essence of the human mind. Despite the similarities, Augustine's approach in *De Trinitate* differs from Descartes' reflections in that Augustine understands the insights into the structure of the *mens* as explications of an original self-knowledge. Augustine does not simply argue that the existence of the *mens* is indubitable because even doubt presupposes this existence. He attempts to bridge such arguments with the further-reaching thesis that the mind always already possesses a self-relation and that certain knowledge about the mind testifies to a successful representation of the original, infallible knowledge of itself. In contrast to Descartes, Augustine does not merely make technical, argumentative use of the indubitability of certain theses. He instead offers an explanation for this particular trait of some arguments. This explanation states that indubitability obtains if the always present, implicit knowledge of the *mens* about itself is explicated—that is, if the *se cogitare* reaches the *se nosse*. Descartes detaches Augustine's argument from the context of the question concerning an original self-knowledge of the human mind and thus sacrifices its deeper meaning.[28]

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[28] Augustine's usage of arguments of the type "*Si fallor, sum*" has occasioned much analysis and comparisons with Descartes' *cogito* argument. See, for instance, O'Daly 1987, 162-71; E. Booth, *Saint Augustine and the Western Tradition of Self-Knowing*, The St. Augustine Lecture 1986 (Villanova, 1989); J.A. Mourant, "The Cogitos: Augustinian and Cartesian," in: *AS* 10 (1979), 27-42. In an original manner, R. Williams attempts to separate Augustine's argumentation from Descartes'. (R. Williams, "The Paradoxes of Self-Knowledge in the *De Trinitate*," in: *CA* 1993, 121-34.) He goes too far, however, in his devaluation of epistemological topics. A self-reflection that aims, in particular, at an experience of the finitude of the reflecting subject is an idea that, with some reservations, can be associated with Augustine's theses, but it is not the focus of book 10.
Descartes' own reaction to the question of how his argument is related to that of Augustine is unfortunately disappointing. With reference to *De civitate dei* 11.26, Descartes explains that whereas Augustine proceeds immediately from the proof of our existence to a comparison with the divine Trinity, he utilizes the proof of existence to demonstrate that the thinking I is an incorporeal substance (cf. the letter of Descartes on Colvius from 11.14.1640, in *Oeuvres de Descartes*, vol. III, ed. Charles Adam and Paul Tannery (Paris, 1964), 247. Descartes does not know (or alleges not to know) that in *De Trinitate* 10, Augustine also argues for the incorporeality of the mind departing from the argument of doubt.
B. Bubacz has worked out Augustine's version of the "*Si fallor, sum*" argument within the entire context of Augustine's theory of knowledge (B. Bubacz, *St Augustine's Theory of Knowledge: A Contemporary Analysis* (New York-Toronto, 1981), esp. 39-60. G. B. Matthews offers an encompassing comparison of Augustine's and Descartes' arguments in light of modern theories of the I. While parallels between the two maintain even in the details with respect to the argument of doubt and its evaluation, differences emerge particularly in the composition of their respective projects on the whole: "Augustine has no such project as Descartes's rational reconstruction of knowledge. What he wants to do is answer global skepticism. But to answer global skepticism he needs only vindicate sample knowledge claims in the face of the most clever attacks the global skeptic can mount (Matthews, 61)." But neither Bubacz nor Matthews perceive

Augustine's conception is in accordance with the ideas, for example, of Fichte's early philosophy or of Schelling and Hölderlin in that, like them, he believes himself capable of establishing a genuine self-knowledge of the *mens humana* that is not reflexively mediated.[29] Even Augustine's introduction to this phenomenon with the help of the Delphic command is paralleled by Fichte's imperative, "Be mindful of oneself."[30] There are nonetheless significant differences. For German Idealism, the characteristic concerns are two-fold: an insistence on a principle of philosophy without presupposition and an insistence on the logical deduction of all results from this beginning. Presuppositionlessness therefore entails an indetermination of the principle, for every determination represents a negation and thus a determinate being, which is what it is only because it is not something else. This other becomes, however, the ground for the determinate being so that a principle, if it is really the first, is to be thought of as indeterminate. The principiate result from a seamless deduction from this principle while the deduction takes the form of an increasing concretization of the indeterminate beginning. Fichte in particular (and, with him, Hölderlin and the young Schelling) utilized the immediate self-presence of the I—he speaks of "immediate consciousness" and "immediate self-consciousness"—as the highest philosophical principle. Immediacy, in the sense of a self-presence not grounded in reflection, is thus interpreted as indeterminacy. All contents of knowledge, the thesis of absolute Idealism claims, must emerge from this principle. Empirical consciousness, with all of its determinations, is,

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Augustine's distinction between immediate and mediate self-knowledge or the particular significance that Augustine's argument of doubt obtains throughout this distinction. In Bubacz' case, it is particularly striking because he dedicates an entire chapter to the discussion of the *memoria* (Bubacz, 61-92) and nevertheless neglects the topic of self-knowledge's precedence.

For a comparison of Augustine with Kant, see K. Delahaye, *Die 'memoria interior'-Lehre des heiligen Augustinus und der Begriff der 'transzendentalen Apperzeption' Kants. Versuch eines historisch-systematischen Vergleichs* (Würzburg, 1936). In his comparision, the author does not focus on transcendental philosophical topics in the strict sense; he rather focuses on the positions of Augustine and Kant from an anthropological perspective in order to establish that both thinkers place great significance on the spontaneity of the mind. On this topic, see also K. Flasch, *Augustin. Eine Einführung in sein Denken* (Stuttgart, 1980), 350ff.

[29] For an interpretation of Fichte, see also J. Brachtendorf, *Fichtes Lehre vom Sein. Eine kritische Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehren von 1794, 1798/99 und 1812* (Paderborn, 1995).

[30] Cf. the attempt at a new portrayal of Fichte's Wissenschaftslehre, *Fichtes Werke*, vol. I, ed. I.H. Fichte, 522.

according to its form and content, nothing other than the way immediate consciousness reflects on itself.

The concept of a philosophical method as a deduction from a presuppositionless principle is foreign to Augustine, however, and the idea of making the essential self-presence of the *mens humana* the highest principle undoubtedly remained beyond his intellectual horizon. Augustine and Fichte shared the idea of an immediate self-knowledge, but Augustine is far removed from declaring the *mens humana* in its original self-relation absolute. Neither the forms nor the contents of the knowledge that is not self-knowledge are grounded, according to Augustine, in the *mens*. As a finite being, the *mens* is rather necessitated to learn. Augustine develops a theory of finite subjectivity, but not a pure idealism. A programmatic statement of Fichte's like—"What you see is always you yourself"—would have been incomprehensible to Augustine.[31]

4. The Contents of the Mind under the Criterion of Certainty

Upon adding the thesis that the mind grasps its whole being in the original *se nosse*, it can be said that the mind is only that of which it is certain of being. Only indubitable statements about the *mens* are valid as explications of the *se nosse*, and it must be formulated in such statements as a whole. Indubitability serves, therefore, as the criterion for the determination of the contents of the essence of the *mens humana*. In the fourth part of book 10 (cf. Trin. 10.13-16), Augustine undertakes such a determination. He attempts to prove that materialistic interpretations of the human mind are incapable of fulfilling this criterion. The mind not only knows with certainty that it is itself and nothing else; it also possesses further-reaching knowledge of its contents. Everyone admits to having intelligence (*intellegentia*), will (*voluntas*), and memory (*memoria*). Each of these three faculties implies the being and the vitality of the *mens*, Augustine claims, because only an existing and, moreover, active instance can think, will, and

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[31] J.G. Fichte, *Einleitungsvorlesungen 1813*, *Fichtes Werke*, vol. IX, 78.

remember.[32] The knowledge of the mind about its existence, vitality, and faculties can be proved to be unshakeable with the aid of arguments by retorsion: "Nobody surely doubts, however, that he lives and remembers and understands and wills and thinks and knows and judges. At least, even if he doubts, he lives; if he doubts, he remembers why he is doubting; if he doubts, he understands he is doubting; if he doubts, he has a will to be certain; if he doubts, he thinks; if he doubts, he knows he does not know; if he doubts, he judges he ought not to give a hasty assent. You may have your doubts about anything else, but you should have no doubts about these; if they were not certain, you would not be able to doubt anything."[33] The materialistic theses on the nature of the mind—namely, that it is brain, blood, atoms, one of the four elements, or even a fifth—cannot be safeguarded by arguments of retorsion.[34] The same applies to the Pythagorean interpretation of the mind as the harmony and humor of the body.[35] The plurality of diverging views already demonstrates that doubt is possible in these matters (cf. Trin. 10.14). But Augustine offers more than a mere "*argumentum ex dissensione philosophorum.*"[36] This dubitability, according to Augustine, indicates that these statements are not contents of the always present knowledge of itself in *se nosse*. Therefore, they do not impart any insight into the essence of the mind. Only because of the correlation of the original foreknowledge of the mind about itself and the indubitability of statements about the mind can one already conclude the falsity of a thesis from its mere dubitability. From the dissent and without recourse to the presence of foreknowledge, one could only reach the suggestion to withhold judgment. One could not arrive at the thesis that all interpretations of the *mens humana* that are not safeguarded by arguments of retorsion are unfounded. Materialistic philosophies of mind

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[32] *omnes tamen se intellegere noverunt et esse et vivere….Item velle se sciunt neque hoc posse quemquam qui non sit et qui non vivat pariter sciunt….Meminisse etiam se sciunt simulque sciunt quod nemo meminisset nisi esset ac viveret* (Trin. 10.13).

[33] *Vivere se tamen et meminisse et intellegere et velle et cogitare et scire et iudicare quis dubitet? Quandoquidem etiam si dubitat, vivit; si dubitat, unde dubitet meminit; si dubitat, dubitare se intelligit; si dubitat, certus esse vult; si dubitat, cogitat; si dubitat, scit se nescire; si dubitat, iudicat non se temere consentire oportere. Quisquis igitur alicunde dubitat de his omnibus dubitare non debet quae si non eseent, de ulla re dubitare non posset* (Trin. 10.14).

[34] In Gen. litt. 7.12.18-21.31, Augustine argues elaborately against a material interpretation of the soul, but the argument of retorsion is less explicit there. The closest parallels can be found in Gen. litt. 7.21.28.

[35] See also Gen. litt. 10.21.37.

[36] One such *argumentum* can be found in Sextus Empiricus' *Adversus mathematicos* VII 313.

can be rejected, according to Augustine, with the help of the criterion of retorsion. But this criterion is not be to used in the positive sense according to which one proves to the sceptic, for example, that he must draw upon that which he doubts in order to be able to present his doubt at all. Rather, it is effective in only a negative sense: all theses that cannot be safeguarded by retorsion against skeptical inquiries—and these are the materialistic theses—must be false. The epistemological criterion of certainty allows only for an idealistic interpretation of the *mens humana*.

Augustine amplifies this thesis with a reference to the discrepancy between ideas and their objects. The mind knows in true presence what it is because nothing is more present to it than itself. Through the imagination (*per phantasiam imaginariam*), however, it thinks of what it is not—namely, fire, air, harmony and so forth.[37] Since fire and air are corporeal things, the idea feigns the presence of something absent. These things are not experienced as truly present but, like everything sensibly perceived, are thought "*per imaginale figmentum*."[38] Augustine does not further mention the ability to distinguish the cognition of what is truly present from the cognition of that which merely simulates presence. More importantly, it remains undisclosed whether a psychological criterion like an idiosyncracy of the given idea that is graspable by an inner cognition exists that would enable this distinction or whether the distinction must once again be made with the aid of the argument of doubt. In the first case, Augustine would have offered an additional argument against materialistic theories of mind, whereas the second case would have served him strictly as a corollary to the preceding argument.

Augustine's refutation of materialism also supports the argument from book 9 for the substantiality of the actions of the *mens*. In book 9, Augustine claims that *amor* and *notitia* could not be understood as accidental attributes that adhere to the mind as their *subiectum* because they, in their intentionality, move beyond their *subiectum* and because they, on account of the self-presence of the mind, are to be conceived as totally interpenetrating the mind. As Augustine demonstrates at the end of book 10, however, both the materialistic and the harmonic-pythagorean philosophies of mind are based on

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[37] *non enim quidquam illi est se ipsa praesentius* (Trin. 10.16; see also Gen. litt. 7.21.28).
[38] For an interpretation of the argument of immateriality, which particularly stresses this point, see Hölscher, 152ff. One also finds there a list of older literature on the topic.

an interpretation of *intellegentia*, *voluntas*, and *memoria* as *qualitates*—that is, as attributes (thought of as bodies) on a *subiectum*. Whoever understands the *mens* as air, for example, interprets, from an ontological perspective, the air as substance and the *intellegentia* as attributes of this substance.[39] The Pythagoreans indeed did not interpret the mind as a body but as the harmony of a body. Consequently, they also did not understand the *mens* as a substance, to which, as *subiectum*, the attribute *intellegentia* adheres. For them, rather, the mind itself is a *qualitas* while the harmony in the body is its *subiectum*. Since this concerns the mind as a whole, the *intellegentia* also must be thought of as a quality of a body.[40] Thus both materialistic and Pythagorean theories share the interpretation of *intellegentia* (and so, too, *voluntas* and *memoria*) as an accident. Although Augustine certainly does not cover every sort of theory within such an ontology of mind, he can claim on the basis of these two examples that philosophies of mind that are not based on an adequate concept of intelligible being can only think of the *intellegentia* as an accident adhering to a substance, and Augustine had already rejected such an interpretation as inadequate in book 9. Augustine's critique of materialism, therefore, can be extended to a critique of the ontological claim of the universality of the substance-accident schema. This schema has validity in the realm of corporeal beings, but as soon as the step is made to the intelligible reality of the human mind, it is no longer applicable. For this region of being, the definitive schema is instead the trinitarian—that is, the schema of the relationality of different individual substances which together compose just *one* substance.

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[39] ut substantia sit aer vel ignis sive aliud aliquod corpus quod mentem putant, intellegentia vero ita insit huic corpori sicut qualitas eius ut illud subiectum sit, haec in subiecto, subiectum scilicet mens quam corpus esse arbitrantur, in subiecto autem intellegentia (Trin. 10.15).
[40] isti autem ipsam mentem in subiecto esse dicunt, corpore scilicet cuius composito vel temperatio est. Unde consequenter etiam intellegentiam quid aliud quam in eodem subiecto corpore existimant (Trin. 10.15)?

5. *Se nosse* and Consciousness

L. Hölscher presents an impressive, phenomenologically oriented depiction of Augustine's doctrine of self-knowledge.[41] According to his reconstruction, Augustine argues as follows: every intellectual act, independent of kind or of the object it is directed at, is accompanied by a consciousness of its performance. In this consciousness, the I experiences the reality of the mind as the performer of its acts (cf. 147). The *cogitatio* directs itself at an arbitrary object and can bend back upon the I in self-reflection but remains subject to errors and false self-interpretations. With the *se nosse*, on the contrary, Augustine intends precisely that self-experience of the acting subject that accompanies all acts, is not reflexive but clearly aware, and, on account of the immediacy of the mind to itself, is free of illusion (cf. 159 ff.). The self-experience in the *se nosse* is indeed immediate, according to Hölscher's interpretaton, but it is also capable of explication. All explications participate furthermore in the basic character of the *se nosse*—namely, in its certainty resulting from self-presence. Such explications are, for instance, the knowledge of the mind that it exists, wills, knows, and so forth. Hölscher concludes that the certainty of self-knowledge can be traced back to self-presence. It follows that everything of which the mind is not certain of being is not an object of immediate self-cognition and therefore cannot belong to the essence of mind. Hölscher's interpretation, orientated by the consciousness of acts, thus can account for Augustine's thesis that the mind is only that of which it is certain of being—that it is not a material being.

Augustine emphasizes the constancy of the triad *memoria sui*, *intellegentia sui*, and *voluntas sui* and its antecedence to every act of conscious self-interpretation. He writes, "We were in the process of bringing the mind to light in its memory and understanding and will of itself, and discovering that since it was seen always to know itself and always to will itself, it must at the same time be seen always to remember itself and always to understand and love itself, although it does not always think about itself distinctly from

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[41] L. Hölscher, *The Reality of the Mind. Augustine's Philosophical Arguments for the Human Soul as a Spiritual Substance* (London and New York, 1986).

things that are not what it is."[42] The self-relation of *memoria sui*, *intellegentia sui*, and *voluntas sui* always persists: it is constant and does not depend on whether acts are performed on the plane of explicit consciousness or on the form of these acts.

As this self-relation, the *se nosse* transcends the co-consciousness of the performer of acts in the performance of all conscious acts, for this co-consciousness occurs by definition only when a conscious act is performed (eg. 172). It is therefore not constant but discontinuous. Augustine had argued that if the mind seeks itself, then it knows itself as seeker and consequently already knows about itself; and if it does not know itself, then it knows about itself as not-knowing itself and thus knows itself (159; cf. Trin. 10.5). This antecedence of self-knowledge can be interpreted in the sense of an accompanying consciousness of acts, but if the *se nosse* is supposed to be constant and always already exists, it cannot be exhausted in the consciousness of acts. The *se nosse* cannot be completely bound to consciousness even if it is a matter of a non-reflexive awareness. Rather, Augustine seems prepared to concede that the *se nosse* has a being beyond consciousness. The co-consciousness of the performer of acts in the performance of conscious acts would be then a manifestation or form of appearance of the *se nosse* that originally belongs to a still more fundamental dimension.

In his discussion of the unity of the mind, Hölscher ultimately abandons his standpoint on consciousness because, due to the discontinuity of conscious acts, such a standpoint on consciousness is incapable of reflecting the identity of the subject in Augustine's thesis on constancy.[43] In a renewed discussion of Augustine's doctrine of *memoria sui,* Hölscher speaks of the mind as an "ontologically identical reality throughout time (200-1)." This identity is called "ontological" because it is not immediately experienceable. Consciousness and the I belonging to it represent, according to Hölscher, ultimately only an accident of this ontological reality (cf. 189f.).

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[42] Mentem quippe ipsam in memoria et intellegentia et voluntate suimpetipsius talem reperiebamus, ut quoniam semper se nosse semperque se ipsam velle comprehendebatur, simul etiam semper sui meminisse semperque se ipsam intellegere et amare comprehenderetur, quamvis non semper se cogitare discretam ab eis quae non sunt quod ipsa est (Trin. 10.19).

[43] "This fact [that the mind endures in time as one and the same ontologically identical subject] does not seem knowable directly through inner experience (199)." The context of memory, which Hölscher substitutes for the missing inner experience (cf. 200), is able to avouch only for "personal identity" in the sense of Locke's fragmentary connection of parts, but not for a thorough-going identity of the I.

Augustine's thinking does indeed exhibit an "ontological" or metaphysical strain insofar as it asserts a plane of principles that precedes and quite possibly exists without consciousness. This principle is not a matter of a substance that is in itself and without relations but a matter of a constant, active self-relation. It enters into connection with actual consciousness (as clear but non-reflexive knowledge) if conscious acts are performed, but it can also remain latent by purporting that self-relation which enables self-seeking and by being so present to the plane of the *cogitatio* that its contents, with the aid of the certainty-criterion, are transferable into explicit knowledge. Augustine's construction acquires its particular accent by defining the plane of principles as structured in the sense of a cognitive-voluntative self-relation. Thus, one must account for two forms of self-knowledge, namely that of the fundamental plane and that of explicit consciousness. Due to this distinction, Augustine can claim that the mind, on the fundamental level, is always already aware of itself even if it is not conscious of itself on the level of explicit knowledge. The *mens humana* knows itself without necessarily having to be conscious of this fact.

6. Characteristics of the Triad of Immediate Self-Knowledge

a) Trinitarian Structures

Since Augustine re-introduces the triad of *intellegentia*, *voluntas*, and *memoria* in book 10, he has to provide arguments for their trinitarian structure just as he did for the triad of *mens*, *amor sui*, and n*otitia sui* in book 9. As in book 9, he must prove the substantiality, unity, relativity, and equality of the structural elements. Apparently in the conviction that the acquired results from book 9 carry over to book 10, Augustine is content in offering a short statement regarding the first three characteristics. The *memoria* could be called life (*vita*), mind (*mens*), and substance (*substantia*), he claims, and thereby would be addressed *ad se ipsam* bringing its substantiality to the fore. The name *memoria*,

however, tends to indicate something else whose memory it is.[44] This double-aspect of substantiality and relativity takes place in the same way with *intellegentia* and *voluntas*. The unity of the elements manifests in that all three are but *one vita*, *one mens*, and *one essentia*. Whatever is predicated *ad se ipsa* of each one of the members can be said of all three together, not as a plurality, however, but singularly, as of one. Finally, Augustine asserts the equality of *intellegentia, voluntas, and memoria* in their reciprocal relationality: each one is equal to every other and each one is equal to the whole as can be seen in their reciprocal encompassment.[45]

Augustine lists the possible permutations at this juncture. He remembers having memory, understanding, and will; understands that he understands, wills, and remembers; and wills that he wills, remembers and understands. Augustine inteprets the fact that all three elements can become the intentional object of each one of the members as the equality of each one with the whole. Equality entails, moreover, that every single action grasps each of the members as a whole. For example, the memory—at least potentially—is directed at the *whole* memory, the *whole* understanding, and the *whole* will because that which one could not remember is simply not in memory. Furthermore, one always knows what one understands and wants. What one knows, one remembers, too. The same applies to the understanding. What one knows, one understands and can also remember; and what one does not understand could not be willed. Lastly, the will encompasses the whole understanding and the whole memory if it uses the entirety of that which was understood and remembered. Augustine concludes, "Therefore since they are each and all and wholly contained by each, they are each and all equal to each and all, and each and all to all of them together."[46] The reflexivity of the *mens* is first expressed here. In book 9, Augustine did not consider *amor* and *notitia* per se as elements of the trinitarian structure, but rather the *amor sui* and *notitia sui* of the *mens*. Similarly, in the discussion of the theorem of equality in book 10, he emphasizes how *intellegentia*,

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[44] Memoria quippe quod vita et mens et substantia dicitur ad se ipsam dicitur; quod vero memoria dicitur ad aliquid relative dicitur (Trin. 10.18).

[45] Eo vero tria quo ad se invicem referuntur. Quae si aequalia non essent non solum singula singulis sed etiam omnibus singula, non utique se invicem caperent (Trin. 10.18).

[46] Quapropter quando invicem a singulis et tota omnia capiuntur, aequalia sunt tota singula totis singulis et tota singula simul omnibus totis (Trin. 10.18).

memoria, and *voluntas* turn back upon the *mens*. This reflexivity consists in the fact that the *intellegentia* does not only have arbitrary things as its object but is rather the understanding in everything understood, remembered, and willed by the mind. *Memoria* equally directs itself at everything understood, remembered, and willed by the mind, and the same applies for the *voluntas*.

b) Perfection as the Defining Feature

Can the *voluntas* be said to contain a moral difference? Is the voluntative aspect of the *se nosse* to be judged in terms of good and bad? We have already seen, concerning the doctrine of the inner word in Trin. 9, that Augustine steers the concept of *notitia amata* in a direction in which the love of knowledge appears as the defining feature of the *mens humana*. He therefore deems it appropriate to leave the *notitia amata* out of discussions about what the human *should* love. We have also seen that in his reflections on the theorem of equality in light of the ternary *mens–notitia sui–amor sui*, Augustine accentuates an ethical difference. The love of the *mens*, he claims in this passage, is equal to the *mens* if it loves in accordance with its metaphysical status—that is, more than corporeal things and less than God. Self-love accordingly can be either good or bad depending on its degree. On the plane of the mind's original self-relation, however, such a distinction can no longer be made. If self-knowledge represents a characteristic trait of the human mind and if a voluntative element is constitutive for the self-relation, then this element cannot be an object of moral valuation. Only that which is capable of being different than it is can be subject to an imperative. If the *mens humana* already exists, it can relate to its object somehow or other and thus can be the addressee of imperatives. On the plane of contingently being able to relate to something, a relation of the mind to itself also takes place that is equally regulable by an imperative. The constitution of the *mens humana* itself would have to precede this self-relation, and if a voluntative element is to be assumed of this constitutional plane, then it is—upon the condition that there is a *mens*—not contingent, but necessary. As a result, it makes no sense to subject the original *voluntas sui* to the demand of an appropriate measure because there would not yet be an addressee at whom this demand would be directed. If the action of a *mens* is

subject to imperatives, then the constitutional conditions of the *mens* cannot be the object of moral judgments. For if they were different than they factually are, there would be no *mens*. Augustine's interpretation of the Delphic Oracle can be understood in this sense. He writes that the command "know thyself" is given to the mind so "that it should think about itself and live according to its nature, that is it should want to be placed according to its nature, under him it should be ruled by, over all that it ought to rule (Trin. 10.7)." Thus, it seems that the *voluntas sui* of book 10 is assigned to the nature of the *mens* that is to be known, whereas the *amor sui* of book 9 is subordinated to the demand of conforming to the metaphysical status of the *mens*.[47]

It is difficult to distinguish between *memoria* and *intellegentia* in the realm of the *se nosse*, according to Augustine, because there is no temporal separation. Insight into the existence of the *voluntas sui* also demands extensive effort, however, for this *voluntas* is not readily perceptible, because the beloved object is always present and therefore is not sensed as a need. "Love too is not felt so obviously to be present when no neediness exhibits it, because what is being loved is always to hand."[48] The imperceptibility of the original self-love indicates that this love is not regulable by the *mens* itself. Consequently, it does not fit into the realm of those *voluntates* that are capable of an evaluation of good and evil.

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[47] J. Mader presents an interpretation according to which only the *intellegentia* produces the self-relation, whereas the *voluntas* achieves a transcendence of the subject toward the other (cf. Mader 1991). Mader asserts that although the human mind is prinicipally "in-itself" concerning "knowledge", it should be understood as "in-otherness" concerning the "will" (337). He arrives at this interpretation by substituting "love" for *voluntas* and understands love in the sense of book 8 as the love for love, which always loves something, especially the brother (336f.). The openness of the individual for the other would therefore be anchored in a higher principle. Intersubjectivity is, on this account, practically linked to the constitutional condition of the subject. As attractive as this position may be, it, first of all, does not accord with Augustine's conception, and secondly, it introduces systematic problems. For the neighborly love of book 8 suggests the condition of moral perfection and thus represents more than an ontological characteristic of the mind like an existential openness for the other that functions as the condition of possibility for one's behavior towards the other, but not as a qualification of this behavior in the sense of moral perfection. The interpretation rejected by Mader that the *voluntas sui* is to be understood as an in-itself in willing itself just as the *intellegentia sui* is to be understood as an in-itself in knowing itself (cf. 335) still seems to me to be accurate. My suggestion of dividing the planes, however, is capable of accommodating Mader's concern. For if the relation to other humans is not located on the plane of the original self-relation, one could attempt to connect the being-with-others to the acquirement of explicit self-understanding. Even here, though, one must make sure that forms of perfect action are not declared to be transcendental conditions of action in general.

[48] amorque ipse non ita sentitur esse cum eum non prodit indigentia quoniam semper praesto est quod amatur (Trin. 10.19).

The human mind can be considered an image of God, according to book 9, only if it recognizes itself as that which it in truth is and if it loves itself in accordance with its being.[49] On the plane of explicit self-understanding, these conditions appear as demands. Humans are only capable of discarding their mistaken self-interpretations and of recognizing what they really are through corresponding education and moral betterment, which will not emerge without divine assistance. In the realm of explicit self-knowledge, the *mens humana can* be similar to God; it *is*, however, not yet really similar, but rather *should* first attain this similarity. On the plane of original self-knowledge, on the contrary, these conditions are always already fulfilled. Neither the cognitive nor the voluntative dimension of this self-relation can cloud or deform this self-relation because, on this plane, the mind, in its very essence, grasps nothing other than itself. In the original self-knowledge, the self-interpenetration is always already complete, and only because this is the case can the mind even attempt to obey the Delphic imperative and become like God on the plane of conscious lifestyle. The move beyond the triad of *mens–notitia sui–amor sui* to the trinity of *memoria–intellegentia–voluntas* did not intend to show that the human mind *should* become like God, as was implied by the stipulation of perfection in book 9, but that it, in its core, always already *is* an image of God.

In his explanation of that of which the mind could be certain, Augustine had emphasizes existence, life, and the power of judgment in addition to understanding, memory, and will. He does not offer, however, any further justification for the reduction of his analysis to the three mentioned members. One could claim that *intellegentia*, *voluntas*, and *memoria* demonstrate higher functions that presuppose, contain, and transcend existence and life. The power of judgment could also be attributed to the *intellegentia* in the broadest sense. Nonetheless, it seems surprising that Augustine includes *memoria* in the ternary that is decisive not only for book 10 but also for the rest

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[49] Quid est autem amare se nisi praesto sibi esse velle ad fruendum se? Et cum tantum se vult esse quantum est, par menti voluntas est et amanti amor aequalis (Trin. 9.2). Cum ergo se totam cognoscit neque secum quidquam aliud, par illi est coginitio sua quia neque ex alia natura est eius cognitio cum se ipsa cognoscit (Trin. 9.4). Tota vero in totis quemadmodum sint iam supra ostendimus cum se totam mens amat et totam novit et totum amorem suum novit totamque amat notitiam suam quando tria ista ad se ipsa perfecta sunt (Trin. 9.8). Ex quo colligitur quia cum se mens ipsa novit atque approbat sic est eadem notitia verbum eius ut ei sit par omnino et aequale atque identidem quia neque inferioris essentiae notititia est sicut corporis neque superioris sicut Dei (Trin. 9.16).

of the entire work. The fact that the original self-relation of the *mens humana* would be attributed a cognitive and a voluntative aspect could have been surmised from book 9. But that Augustine would bring memory to bear in the center of the mind is astonishing considering that a permanent and clear self-presence is supposed to exist in this center that would render superfluous a capacity to remember what was once known. Memory, one could object, has its place precisely where the contents of the *mens* are not immediately present, not even to the mind itself.

Augustine's inclusion of *memoria* in the trinitarian structure of the *mens humana* is naturally not an oversight, and he himself is thoroughly aware of the difficulty involved with such an assertion. He writes, "And thus it seems to be difficult to distinguish in it [the mind] between its memory of itself and its understanding of itself. That these are not in fact two things, but one thing called by two names, is the impression you might get in this case where they are joined together very closely and one is not prior at all in time to the other."[50] Normally, in the cognition of something other than the *mens*, a knowledge emerges that is then deposited in memory and can be later re-actualized. The achievements of the *intellegentia* and the *memoria* are temporally successive. So long as the mind does not think of itself in distinction to that which it is not, it expects to encounter the same succession in its self-cognition—namely, that the mind first knows itself and then commits that which is known to memory. But if it is true that the *mens* need not first *get to know* itself but always already knows itself, then the typical succession of the learning process of *intellegentia* and *memoria* does not pertain. If self-knowledge need not be first acquired but is always already present, then *memoria sui* and *intellegentia sui* exist simultaneously. *Memoria sui* expresses the constancy of this knowledge. Moreover, the connection to the *intellegentia* indicates that this constancy, which could be spoken of for common contents of memory as well, does not mean a condition of inactuality, as it does in common usage, but a perpetual actuality of self-knowledge. This actuality exists, of course, only in the core of the *mens*—that is, in the sphere of the *se nosse* but not in that of the *se cogitare*. In the *se cogitare*, the *mens* first

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[50] Ac per hoc difficile in ea [mens] dinoscitur memoria sui et intellegentia sui. Quasi enim non sint haec duo sed unum duobus vocabulis appelletur, sic apparet in ea re ubi valde ista coniuncta sunt et aliud alio nullo preceditur tempore (Trin. 10.19).

has to remember its self-knowledge just as it remembers other arbitrary contents of memory. In their application to the immediate self-relation, the concepts *memoria*, *intellegentia*, and *voluntas* have to be interpreted against the grain of their common usage.

In light of the aforementioned characteristics of the connection between *memoria sui*, *intellegentia sui*, and *voluntas sui* (the trinitarian structure, simultaneity, constancy, actuality), it should be clear that Augustine is not speaking of intellectual faculties. Faculties can be easily isolated from each other and do not possess constancy because they can be activated or remain inactive. They cannot be attributed pure actuality. Rather, they require a higher instance that can activate them should the occasion arise. Augustine's statements on the fundamental self-relation of the human mind therefore only can be understood as the description of an act-structure. In its actuality, the original self-relation *is* what it can be and *has* what it can have. It is perfect. Even if this self-relation does not encompass the totality of the knowledge of ideas, like the Plotinian noûs, it is comparably autarkic.

Augustine's concern of making comprehensible the specific language of the *memoria* serves as a guideline for the books following book 10. In these books, he lays out for those who are incapable of understanding the simultaneity of the *intellegentia sui* and *memoria sui* the interplay of understanding and memory for the knowledge of external objects in order make intelligible the structure of the *se nosse* along the path of an increasing interiorization of the objects—a goal Augustine believes to have first reached around the middle of book 14. It is first then that he once again takes up the discussion from the end of book 10.[51] It is thus a matter of the second pedagogical step backwards within the composition of *De Trinitate*. Whereas at the end of book 8, the idea of a vision of the Trinity was abandoned for an analysis of the *mens humana* because such a vision of the Trinity proved to be fundamentally impossible for the soul living on

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[51] "And so even those who are slower on the uptake will find some light shed on these matters if we discuss things that are added to our awareness in time, and what happens to it in a time sequence when it remembers something it did not remember before, and sees something it did not see before, and loves something it did not love before."
Quapropter etiam tardioribus dilucescere haec possunt dum ea tractantur quae ad animum tempore accedunt et quae illi temporaliter accidunt cum meminit quod antea non meminerat et cum videt quod antea non videbat et cum amat quod antea non amabat (Trin. 10.19).

earth, the understanding of the *se nosse* is not impossible. Augustine anticipates that some readers will immediately and correctly grasp the explications in book 10, whereas "slower minds" require further assistance in order to arrive at an understanding of the center of the *mens humana*. Even if the human is incapable of seeing the divine Trinity, the vision of its analogate—the *mens humana*—represents merely a pedagogical, not a fundamental, problem.

VII. Self-Knowledge and Wisdom (Trin. 11-13)

1. The Ascent to the Image of God as a Pedagogical Project (Trin. 11)

Beginning with book 11, Augustine tackles the project of ascension to the vision of the *mens humana*. His analysis extends much further, however, than his transition from book 9 to book 10. In that transition, Augustine reflected on the process of learning within the *doctrinae*. Now, he begins with sensible knowledge in order to move from it to pure intellectual knowledge and beyond to the self-knowledge of the mind. This movement proceeds through all of the layers of the soul that pertain to knowledge. Its decisive criterion is not primarily that of the metaphysical status of the object, however, but rather its temporality. Triads are found on every step of the ascent, but the goal is first reached where a *trinitas* comes to the fore that does not exhibit any temporal succession in its members regardless of whether this succession consists in an antecedence of the object of knowledge before knowledge or is constituted by the antecedence of the *mens* before knowledge. The movement has its goal in the understanding of that constant triad of *memoria*, *intellegentia*, and *voluntas*, which Augustine described as the essence of the *mens humana* in book 10. Augustine reserves for this timeless triad the title of *imago Dei* because there is no intermediate being between it and the divine Trinity in the metaphysical hierarchy. As *imago Dei*, the core of the *mens humana* occupies the position immediately beneath the divine Trinity and represents its direct image. In contrast, the other triads possess a similarity to the *imago* (and through it to God), but due to the character of their temporality, Augustine calls them *vestigium Trinitatis*, *effigies Trinitatis*, or simply *trinitas*.[1]

This path through the *vestigia* to the *imago* has a pedagogical significance insofar as it is supposed to enable "slower minds" to distinguish instances that have a non-temporal conditional relation. The ground and the grounded can be easily distinguished, for example, if the ground exists first and the grounded appears later, whereas less

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[1] *Non sane omne quod in creaturis aliquot modo simile est Deo etiam eius imago dicenda est, sed illa sola qua superior ipse solus est. Et quippe de illo prorsus exprimitur inter quam et ipsum nulla interiecta natura est* (Trin. 11.8).

insightful minds, according to Augustine, tend to identify the two if there is not a temporal separation. Both for the understanding of the divine Trinity and for insight into the essence of the human mind, it is indispensable to be able to keep apart elements otherwise than merely by temporal succession. In the procession through the lower triads of the soul, it is imperative to practice that *dinoscere*, the difficulty of which Augustine confirms at the end of book 10, by advancing from the elements appearing in temporal succession to those that are simultaneous.[2] The exceptional position of *amor* yields yet another field of practice. Augustine claims of *amor* that, unlike the *notitia sui*, it is not *proles*, *verbum*, or *imago* even though, like the *notitia sui*, it is produced by the *mens*. In his analyses of the triads in book 11, Augustine not only emphasizes the difference between the first and second members respectively but also the difference of the will as the third element from the begetter and the begotten.

In order to illustrate the conditions within the intelligible sphere, Augustine draws upon examples from the corporeal world. The intelligible entity in question, the human mind, belongs to the "inner person," whereas that part of the soul through which it is in contact with bodies found "outside" is called the "outer person." The inner person is purely intellectual; the outer is found in the sensible sphere.[3] The triads in book 11 belong to the outer person, that is, they represent structures arising from sensory perception.

If the gaze of the eye is directed at a corporeal object, a triad emerges out of the object (*res*), the perception of the object (*visio* as formed sense), and the attention of the soul (*animi intentio*) through which the gaze is directed at the object and held there. The distinction of the three elements does not present much difficulty, first of all, because they are of different natures, and secondly, because temporal succession governs their

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[2] *Ac per hoc difficile in ea dinoscitur memoria sui et intellegentia sui* (Trin. 10.19).
Already by the time of Augustine, the notion of making the relations in the intelligible realm understandable through the less perfect but more easily graspable structures of subordinate realms of reality (and in particular through the perception of external objects) had become a tradition. In nuce, one already can detect this method in Aristotle, Met. 12, 9 (1074b 35-1075a 4). Plotinus makes full use of this method (cf. Enn. V 3, 2-5), and Victorinus attempts to make the structure of the divine Trinity understandable through the act of seeing (cf. *Adversus Arium* III 5, in: *Sources chrétiennes* 68, 450-4). For Victorinus, see Benz, 142-4; for Plotinus and Augustine, see ibid., 364-73.
[3] *ut si quando interiora spiritalia adcommodatius distinguere atque facilius insinuare conamur, de corporalibus exterioribus similitudinum documenta capiamus. Sensu igitur corporis exterior homo praeditus sentit corpora* (Trin. 11.11).

connection. The object is a body, whereas the *visio* belongs to the realm of the soul. Since the eye is a bodily organ, however, the *visio* is to be distinguished from the *intentio animi*, which is purely of the soul. Moreover, the object was already there before it was perceived just as the visual sense (*sensus*) already existed before the perception of this particular object.[4] Nonetheless, "slower minds" may find it difficult to make the requisite distinctions. The sense itself cannot distinguish between the form of the object seen and the formed-ness of the sense corresponding to this form during perception. The intellect alone is capable of separating the forming form from the formed form because it alone, according to Augustine, knows of the temporal antecedence both of the *res visibilis* and the *sensus* before the *visio*.[5] Although the object and the vision are substantially different, the will produces in the attention of the soul such a close connection between the two that only the intellect can carry out their separation.[6]

Since the difference between *res* and *visio* is established and—with the inclusion of the will—a triad is secured, the object and the vision can be attached to each other like begetter (*parens*) and offspring (*proles*) while the will plays the mediating role of uniting the two. Since it is a matter of a subordinate triad, the *parens-proles* relation is quite weak. The perception is not entirely produced by the object, but rather depends equally on the sense of vision, which first must be directed at the object (cf. Trin. 11.9). The will unites, in this case, merely a quasi-begetter with a quasi-offspring. It is nonetheless clear that the will is neither *parens*, since the *visio* is not formed by the will but by the *res*, nor *proles*, since the will is earlier than the perception. Due to the inferiority of this triad, those features can be recognized that are difficult to demonstrate for the core of the *mens*:

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[4] *Haec igitur tria, corpus quod videtur et ipsa visio et quae utrumque coniungit intentio, manifesta sunt ad dinoscendum non solum propter propria singulorum verum etiam propter differentiam naturarum* (Trin. 11.2).

[5] *Ac per hoc tardioribus ingeniis difficillime persuaderi potest formari in sensu nostro imaginem rei visibilis cum eam videmus, et eandem formam esse visionem* (Trin. 11.3).

[6] Cf. Trin. 11.5. This problem of differentiation, if it truly is a problem, would not emerge if the senses acted like a piece of wax, which still retains the form of the ring impressed unto it even after its removal. For, in this illustration, the duality of the formed form and the forming form is apparent. According to Augustine, however, water makes for a better comparison. Water takes on the form of the object in it but immediately loses it again if the object is removed. Augustine knows of two phenomena of visual perception in which the formed-ness of the sense in itself and in its difference from the form of the object become apparent: first of all, the afterimage of certain perceptions of light that remain visible for a brief time after averting one's glance or even upon closing one's eyes, and secondly, the apparent doubling of a candle held directly before the eyes, which occurs if one focuses on a distant object (cf. Trin. 11.4).

the distinction of both of the first elements from each other and the exceptional position of the third.

Augustine finds a second triad in the relation of the image of memory produced by a sensory perception (*species in memoria*) to the inner vision of this image in memory (*phantasia cogitationis*) and to the will that directs the inner gaze at a concrete content of memory (*acies animi*). This triad is more internal than the first one because all of the elements belong to the soul. Since the intended contents of memory stem from sensory perception, however, this triad is also attributed to the outer person. Like in the earlier *trinitas*, the first and second members of this *trinitas* stand in a quasi-*parens/proles* relation from which the third, voluntative element is to be distinguished because it temporally precedes the origination of the *phantasia*. The difference in the members is less apparent, however, because with the replacement of the *res* and the *sensus* by the *memoria* and the *phantasia* respectively, the difference in substance no longer exists. The argument for the antecedence of the will seems to state that every concrete memory is in the context of other memories. The will to remember yesterday evening's meal arises, it would follow, not from the image of the memory of this meal itself but, for instance, from the antecedent knowledge that one ate supper the day before.[7] With reference to the variability of the *phantasia*, Augustine argues for the difference between it and a specific image of the memory. Every perception indeed corresponds to just *one* image of memory, but in thought (and Augustine interprets memory in terms of thinking), these images can be modified. As a result, a virtually unlimited number of images emerge from a finite number of images of memory. This variability of thought is not really due to the fact that thought can extend beyond memory; it can be explained rather by the capacity of the mind to disassemble images of memory and reassemble their components into things never before seen.[8] Rooted in this ability to ply elements is not only the capacity to understand descriptions of that which has never been directly perceived but also the capacity to carry out compositions that do not correspond to reality

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[7] Augustine, therefore, asserts the difference of the will from a certain memory insofar as it is explained as emerging from other memories.

[8] *Quapropter dum coniuncta cogitamus quae singillatim sensa meminimus, videmur non id quod meminimus cogitare cum id agamus moderante memoria unde sumimus omnia quae multipliciter ac varie pro nostra voluntate componimus* (Trin. 11.17).

and thus to think something false like, for example, a black swan.[9] Memory is the measure of thinking, according to Augustine, because it provides a finite amount of elements, whereas the *visio* is comparable to the number due to its capacity to combine and multiply. The will, finally, corresponds to weight because it allows thought to come to rest with a particular object.[10]

Consequently, the discussed psychological processes in book 11 are to be distinguished: 1) the form of the body that is seen, 2) the form that arises in the sense of the seer, 3) their impression in memory, and 4) the re-actualization in the sight of the thinker (cf. Trin. 11.16). The will connects members 1) and 2) to a triad of perception and 3) and 4) to a triad of thought. In both cases, the will appears as the unifier of a quasi-*parens* with a quasi-*proles* and therefore can be itself neither *parens* nor *proles*.[11] In the step from the first to the second triad, an internalization of the members already occurs and therewith a unification toward the sameness of substance. It could be expected that Augustine continue this movement and, after a greater or lesser number of intermediate steps, finally arrive at that triad in which no internal temporal differences occur so that a true *parens-proles* relation obtains. The begotten element then would be not merely a partial but a perfect self-manifestation of the begetting element, and the *imago Dei* would be found in immediate self-knowledge. I will show, however, that the path Augustine takes in the following books is much more complex than book 11 leads one to believe. The most striking step consists in Augustine's discussion of *wisdom*, with its significant ethical connotations, in the context of leading the reader to the image of God even though the topic of image, at least insofar as it is connected to the phenomenon of immediate consciousness, does not belong to ethics but to the philosophy of mind.

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[9] Cf. Trin. 11.14; Trin. 11.17.

[10] Cf. Sap. 11:21 in: Trin. 11.18.

[11] *Nunc interim voluntatem copulatricem rei visibilis atque visionis quasi parentis et prolis, sive in sentiendo sive in cogitando, nec parentem nec prolem dici posse, quomodo valui et quibus valui demostravi* (Trin. 11.18).

2. Knowledge and Wisdom (Trin. 12)

a) Knowledge and Wisdom as Topics of Ethics

In book 12 of *De Trinitate*, the movement of ascension reaches the stage of the *homo interior*—that is, those layers of the soul by which the human transcends the animal.[12] Whereas Augustine attributes perception, memory, and the arbitrary formation of ideas to that *ratio* common to both humans and animals, he ascribes only to humans a higher form of *ratio*. Through this ratio, humans are in contact with "immutable truth" and the "*rationes incorporales et sempiternae*" by which they—and they alone—are capable of judging corporeal things.[13] This higher ratio can fulfill two different tasks. The first task is the contemplation of the eternal (*contemplatio aeternorum*). Augustine does not mean here the unreflected usage of unchangeable measures for the judgment of changing things, but rather the conscious turning of attention toward the eternal. The second task entails the proper administration of temporal affairs as well as the appropriate association with them. Augustine is anxious to distinguish this association from the practical relation animals have to their environment when they flee from harm and seek what is beneficial. He thus emphasizes that the part of the *ratio* that administers over temporal affairs is only functionally different from the part that is capable of contemplating the eternal. The former is "lead out" of the latter in order to be able to fulfill its task.[14] If the lower part of this *ratio* deals with temporal things, it does so by issuing from the higher part and is in its service. Therefore, it is not to be attributed to the outer person, but to the inner person.

The promised proof of triads does not take place in book 12, however, and the topic of the structure of the trinity remains entirely peripheral. Only in the rejection of the naïve interpretation that the image of the divine Trinity is a triad of man, woman, and

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[12] *Ascendentibus itaque introrsus quibusdam gradibus considerationis per animae partes unde incipit aliquid occurrere quod non sit nobis commune cum bestiis, inde incipit ratio ubi iam homo interior posit agnosci* (Trin. 12.13).

[13] *Sed sublimioris rationis est iudicare de istis corporalibus secundum rationes incorporales et sempiternas quae nisi supra mentem humanam essent, incommutabiles profecto non essent atque his nisi subiungeretur aliquid nostrum, non secundum eas possemus de corporalibus iudicare. Iudicamus autem de corporalibus ex ratione dimensionum atque figurarum quam incommutabiliter manere mens novit* (Trin. 12.2).

[14] *Illud vero nostrum quod in actione corporalium atque temporalium tractandorum ita versatur ut non sit nobis commune cum pecore rationale est quidem, sed ex illa rationali nostrae mentis substantia qua subhaeremus intellegibili atque incommutabili veritati tamquam ductum et inferioribus tractandis gubernandisque deputatum est* (Trin. 12.3).

child does Augustine mention the thesis that immutable love is like the wife of God the Father who has her being from him but not like a *proles*, but rather so that He begets the word with her (cf. Trin. 12.5-6).[15] The last section of book 12 demonstrates that the threads of book 11 are not immediately picked up and pursued in Trin. 12. Augustine explains that if one ascends from the outer person and his triads of perception and memory inward, one runs into the understanding of temporal things before the knowledge of the highest things and that a triad will be sought in the former in the following book.[16] If the topic one would expect to be handled in book 12 is first treated in book 13, what then is the actual topic of Trin. 12?

Augustine articulates ethical themes in the main part of this book with respect to the relation of the lower *ratio* to the higher *ratio* in the inner person. The administration of temporal affairs should always follow the measure of the higher *ratio* and its openness for the eternal. In the lower ratio, however, a tendency toward immoderateness can be found in its dealings with temporal things, and if no limits are established for it by the higher part of the *ratio*, this tendency can pull down the higher part and prompt it to sanction its doings (cf. Trin. 12.13). Augustine expresses this process in the terminology of *scientia* and *sapientia*. He states that the love of wisdom can be transformed into greed for knowledge out of the experience of the temporal.[17] The concept of *scientia* that is used is practically orientated. Augustine assigns the provision of action and conduct in the realm of temporal things necessary for this life to that part of the understanding that possesses *scientia*.[18] Whereas the *ratio sapientiae* is directed toward the eternal, the *ratio scientiae* is found in direct proximity to the appetite (*appetitus*). It manifests itself in the *scientia actionis* that has to do with corporeal things by either directing its dealing with

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[15] DuRoy traces the interpretation of the mind as a feminine principle back to Porphyry (cf. DuRoy 1966, 263; and Booth 1979, 102).

[16] *Relinquentibus itaque nobis ea quae exterioris sunt hominis et ab eis quae communia cum pecoribus habemus introrsum ascendere cupientibus, antequam ad cognitionem rerum intellegebilium atque summarum quae sempiternae sunt veniremus, temporalium rerum cognitio rationalis occurrit. Etiam in hac igitur inveniamus si possumus aliquam trinitatem* (Trin. 12.25).

[17] *Cum enim neglecta caritate sapientiae quae semper eodem modo manet concupiscitur scientia ex mutabilium temporaliumque experimento, inflat non aedificat* (Trin. 12.16).

[18] *Nunc de illa parte rationis ad quam pertinet scientia, id est cognitio rerum temporalium atque mutabilium navandis vitae huius actionibus necessaria, susceptam considerationem quantum dominus adiuvat peragamus* (Trin. 12.17).

them toward the eternal or wanting to enjoy these things themselves as good.[19]   In the relation between *ratio sapientiae* and *ratio scientiae*, the fundamental distinction for Augustine's ethics between enjoyment and use is reflected.[20]   If the *ratio scientiae* apprehends temporal things as being for use, then it is subordinate to the right direction of the *ratio sapientiae*. If it defines temporal things as being for enjoyment, however, then the higher understanding is in danger of losing control over the lower understanding and by sanctioning its plans is pulled down to it. In this practical perspective, the *sapientia* marks the beatifying vision and the enjoyment of the eternal, whereas the *scientia* is concerned with the good usage of temporal things in action.[21]   The *scientia actionis* is immediately connected with the cultivation of virtues because only upon the basis of virtues can one use the temporal things in the appropriate way and live rightly, ultimately passing through this life to the eternal beatifying vision of the life beyond (cf. Trin. 12.21f.).   Whatever is done in prudence, courage, temperance, and justice belongs, Augustine claims, to that *scientia* through which action in the realm of change is directed toward the striving for the good and the avoidance of evil. In addition to the doctrine of virtues, this *scientia* also has a historical component in the collection of examples intended to either encourage or disencourage (cf. Trin. 12.22).

Augustine does not appear to make sharp terminological distinctions here. He calls the knowledge of action in the realm of change (i.e. ethics) predominantly *scientia* but also at times *disciplina* (cf. Trin. 12.22).   But he also offers constructions of the theoretical connection between temporality and eternity in which he portrays the function of *disciplinae*.   One thus can assume that Augustine assigns both a practical and a theoretical role to the lower *ratio*. Accordingly, this *ratio* does not only allow action in the temporal realm to be determined by the higher *ratio* (in this respect, it would be *scientia*); as *disciplina*, it also aligns the knowledge of changing things with the eternal. Augustine means that eternal, immutable grounds determine not only things set in space

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[19] *Rationi autem scientiae appetitus vicinus est quandoquidem de ipsis corporalibus quae sensu corporis sentiuntur ratiocinator ea quae scientia dicitur actionis; si bene ut eam notitiam referat ad finem summi boni; si autem male ut eis fruatur tanquam bonis talibus in quibus falsa beatitudine conquiescat* (Trin. 12.17).

[20] The locus classicus of this distinction is DC 1.4.4-40.44.

[21] *Distat tamen ab aeternorum contemplatione actio qua bene utimur temporalibus rebus, et illa sapientiae, haec scientiae deputatur* (Trin. 12.22).

like a cuboidal body but also movements in time like, for example, a beautiful melody (cf. Trin. 12.23). Whereas these things are naturally perceptible for everybody, the direct apprehension of the immutable grounds is only open to those few who are capable of ascending to the intelligible. Even their vision is quickly repelled, however, so that a passing thought is constructed of a non-passing thing. The *disciplinae* give this thought duration by embedding it in a learning context and entrusting it to memory where it can be called upon and remembered at any time.[22] Even if no memory remains, one could be brought back to a knowledge of the eternal under the direction of a science (*doctrina*).[23]

b) Contemplation of the Eternal and Self-Knowledge

How is the distinction between *scientia* or *disciplina* and *sapientia* linked to the overarching project of explicating the trinity-structure of the *mens humana*? And which role does the topic of ethics, which was already implicitly present in book 11 and prominent in book 12, play within this project? The first question can be best approached from temporality. The lower understanding, in its theoretical and practical functions, deals only with changing things. Thus, a triad in its domain, if one is found, does not have the quality of constancy that is characteristic for the *imago*. Upon a closer examination, however, it can be seen that the *ratio scientiae* does not have transient things as such for an object, for this was the characteristic of the even lower form, perception. Instead, it thematizes changing things with respect to their unchanging grounds, whether they are of a practical kind like the highest good or of a theoretical nature like the laws of geometry. Therefore, the emphasis shifts from the temporality of the object to the temporality of the knowledge of the object. One learns in *scientia* and *disciplina*, and this means that the soul takes on a state that it did not possess before. The learning process effectuates a change of the soul in time. The self-referentiality of the

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[22] *Ad quas mentis acie pervenire paucorum est, et cum pervenitur quantum fiere potest, non in eis manet ipse perventor, sed veluti acies ipsa reverberata repellitur et fit rei non transitoriae transitoria cogitatio. Quae tamen cogitatio transiens per disciplinas quibus eruditur animus memoriae commendatur ut sit quo redire posit quae cogitur inde transire* (Trin. 12.23).
[23] This thesis is formulated against Plato's anamnesis doctrine. It claims a natural capacity of the *ratio* for knowing the eternal, which could better explain the young slave's surprising knowledge of geometrical laws depicted in Plato's *Meno* than the doctrine of recollection (cf. Trin. 12.24).

mens is, on the contrary, coextensive with the *mens*, which as such always already knows of itself and never ceases to know of itself. The self-knowledge that is constitutive for the *mens humana*, therefore, cannot be the object of the *disciplinae* and the result of research. The lower part of the *homo interior* is ontologically subordinate to the center of the *mens* on account of its changeability in time.

It initially seems logical that in his efforts to portray the trinity of the *mens* on the path of ascension to it, Augustine transcends the *ratio* occupied with changing things in order to reach that part of reason through which the contemplation of the eternal takes place. To what extent then is the self-knowledge of the *mens* comparable to the *contemplatio aeternorum*? According to the interpretation of the *notitia sui* as *verbum sui* Augustine offered in book 10, the direct self-knowledge of the *mens* is a knowledge of its concept. This concept is as such unchanging, and the *mens* itself also cannot cease to be once it enters existence. As a result, the immediate self-knowledge of the mind could be understood as *contemplatio aeternorum*. The constancy of self-knowing also must be taken into account. As Augustine depicts them in books 7 and 9 of *Confessiones* as well as in book 8 of *De Trinitate*, visions of the eternal take place at the apex of all experiences of ascension, but these visions were merely momentary. *Contemplatio aeternorum*, in its fullest sense, includes, however, the constancy of the vision. Precisely this constancy is given in the self-knowledge of the *mens*. Thus, the seemingly mundane phenomenon of self-relation comes closer in a certain way to the vision of the eternal than ecstatic experience.

Yet even though self-knowledge appears to belong to *sapientia* on account of these characteristics, its differences to *sapientia* are weighty. First of all, in the knowledge of the *mens* about itself, only the vision of the one eternal takes place, namely the essence of the mind, whereas the *contemplatio aeternorum* encompasses all unchangeable principles. Secondly, the vision in self-knowledge is merely implicit; it becomes an object of attention only through a particular act. In contrast, the contemplation of the eternal suggests an unchanging directedness of attention. Thirdly, an ethical significance does not immediately inhere in self-knowledge because it results from an essential, non-contingent act of the *mens*, whereas the *contemplatio aeternorum* represents the fulfillment of human striving for happiness and is conferred, as eternal beatitude, at the

end of a virtuous life. The full contemplation of the eternal remains in suspension and is to be understood eschatologically, whereas the distinctiveness of self-knowledge lies in its being always already present.

This distinction of the epistemological concept of *self-knowledge* from the ethically motivated idea of *contemplatio* is reflected in the difference between the meanings of *imago* and *similitudo*. In the Genesis verse: "*Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostrum* (Gen. 1:26), both concepts are used in parallel, but Augustine attributes different meanings to them. He does not refer *imago* to the entire human but only to the unchanging trinitarian-structured core of the *mens*, whereas he gives *similitudo* an ethical content. It is the *similitudo Dei* that, on the one hand, is lost through false usage of temporal things, that is, through the enjoyment of them, which results in the similarity of the human to the animal (cf. Trin. 12.16). On the other hand, this *similitudo* increases through the love for God so much that the unity of the mind with God emerges that opens out into a *contemplatio aeternorum*. The *imago Dei* is unchanging, and the human cannot cease being a carrier of this *imago* as long as he exists as a rational being. The human either can ascend or descend on the ladder of the *similitudo Dei*, however, but the imaged-ness of the image is not affected. The same *imago Dei* can be found in a human who, due to his evilness, exhibits merely a small degree of similarity to God as in a morally perfect soul. The structure of the *mens* as *imago* remains invariable, whereas the *similitudo* is variable depending on the changes in the moral value of one's character. As *contemplatio aeternorum*, the concept of *sapientia*, in its ethical-eschatological meaning, is not related to the *imago* but to the *similitudo*, designating its highest form.[24]

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[24] For the concept *imago*, cf. P. Hadot, "L'image de la trinité dans l'âme chez Marius Victorinus et chez saint Augustin," in: *Studia Patristica*, vol. VI (Berlin 1962), 409-42; H. Somers, "Image de Dieu et illumination divine. Sources historiques et élaboration augustinienne," in: *Augustinus Magister*, Congrés International Augustinien (Paris 1954), 3 vols. (=AM), vol. I, 451-62; J.E. Sullivan, T*he Image of God. The Doctrine of St. Augustine and its Influence* (Bubuque 1963). For the history of the terminological relations between *imago* and s*imilitudo*, cf. P. Lammarche; A. Solignac; R. Javelet; R.-L. Oechslin; L. Scheffczyk, "Image et ressemblance," in: *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, vol. 7, 1401-72.

R.A. Markus analyzes important passages in which Augustine defines the relation between *imago* and *similitudo*: *De Genesi ad litteram liber imperfectus* 16,55-62; *De diversis quaestionibus* LXXXIII, q. 51,4; 74; *De Trinitate* 7.12; *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum* V 4 as well as *Retractationes* I 26 (cf. R.A. Markus, "*Imago* and *similitudo* in Augustine," in *REA* 10 (1964), 125-143). Markus focuses his investigation on question 74 from De div. quaest. 83 where Augustine establishes that the concept *similitudo* covers a

Augustine's concept of ascension thus takes on a different form than initially expected. He does not proceed with it from a less fundamental triad of the human mind to immediate self-knowledge; the metaphysical status of the objects of mind represents rather the guideline for the advancement. Augustine first addresses the sensory perception of bodily objects; with the topic *knowledge*, he extends the horizon to the consideration of these objects in light of their eternal grounds; and in the topic *wisdom*, he examines these eternal grounds themselves. Augustine's interest is not directed at these objects as such, but rather at the characteristic triad-configuration in the human mind that accompanies the interpretation of each type of object respectively. Still, it remains unclear how such a procedure is connected with the pedagogical project of an approach to immediate self-knowledge. Apparently, this self-knowledge cannot be easily inserted into the pattern of knowledge and wisdom conceived on the basis of *similitudo*, for self-referentiality as such neither is a moment on the path to beatifying vision nor can it be assigned to the eschatological state of happiness. It rather characterizes the essence of the mind both during the time of its dealing with changing things and in the vision of the eternal. However the intellectual triads are composed that appear in knowledge and wisdom, the *trinitas* of immediate self-knowledge arrived at in book 10 cannot be included among them because it need not first arise but is always already actual.

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broader range than *imago*, for not every similarity is to be understood as an image but every image is similar to its archetype. Markus consequently states that, according to Augustine, similarity adds nothing to the image. This conclusion would entail Augustine's departure from the theological tradition reaching back to Irenaeus that claims that the *imago*-relation of the human to God is given from the beginning, whereas the human's *similitudo* to God first emerges with the final judgment (cf. Markus, 126). The passage from the late work *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum* V 4 fits this conception well. In this work, Augustine turns his interpretation of Gen. 1:26f. against an eschatological understanding of the *similitudo*: "*quibusdam visum est similitudinem aliquid amplius esse quam imaginem, quod homini reformando per Christi gratiam postea servaretur. Miror autem si non propterea postea imaginem solam voluit commemorare, quia ubi imago, continuo et similitude est….Cum enim nulla similitude fit, procul dubio nec imago fit; quoniam si imago, utique et similitudo.*"

Markus himself does not establish a connection between his results and the doctrine of the human as an image of God in *De Trinitate*. From the perspective of our results, however, it can be said that the rejection of a merely eschatological interpretation of *similitudo* should be positively supplemented with the idea of a process of gradual approximation. Moreover, it should be added that the distinction between the ontological and the moral character of the human mind, which Augustine undoubtedly makes, goes beyond the specific classifications of *imago* and *similitudo* in his earlier works. If an image as image already exhibits similarity to the original, then one must distinguish between an always already existing ontological similarity and a *similitudo* that is first to be produced through an appropriate way of living and perfected in the eschaton.

3. Faith as Act and as Way to Wisdom (Trin. 13)

In book 13, the eudemonistic-ethical significance of the distinction between *scientia* and *sapientia* becomes clearer when *scientia* is conceived as a way to *sapientia*—that is, as a way to the maximal similitude to God. Augustine supplies an example from Holy Scripture in order to elucidate the distinction of book 12 between a higher faculty, which the mind exercises for the contemplation of the eternal, and the lower faculties of *cognitio* and *actio*, which are related to changing things.[25] The example encompasses the first fourteen verses of the prologue to the gospel of John. At the beginning of the prologue, John speaks of eternal things that are related to *sapientia*: at the beginning was the word and the word was with God. Thereafter, he mentions temporal things associated with the processes of *scientia*: the word being made flesh and the sending of John the Baptist. Augustine's analysis of the example, which extends throughout the entirety of book 13, intends to portray how the *scientia* leads, in its theoretical-practical double-function, to *sapientia* as a *contemplatio aeternorum*. Augustine does not yet inquire after a triad on the plane of the *sapientia*, but he finds characteristic triads both in the domain of the *scientia* and in the structure of the act of faith. He thus continues the series of triads within the *mens* that he had begun in book 11.

Augustine assigns the temporal-related statements about the word becoming flesh and the sending of the Baptist to that *scientia* that has to do with historical knowledge.[26] Like everything historical, the reported events of the prologue are removed from the possibility of verification through one's own perception. If they are accepted as true, then this acceptance can only take place in the modus of faith. The *cognitio historica* is inseparable from the *fides*. The act of faith represents a higher-standing psychical phenomenon than sensory perception and the image of memory because it is not a product of the effect of external objects. With a typical argumentation aiming at the privileged access to interiority, Augustine wants to make clear that, in contrast to the

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[25] *In libro superiore huius operis duodecimo satis egimus discernere rationalis mentis officium in temporalibus rebus, ubi non sola cognitio verum et actio nostra versatur, ab excellentiore eiusdem mentis officio quod contemplandis aeternis rebus impenditur ac sola cognitione finitur. Commodius autem fieri puto ut de Scripturis sanctis aliquid interseram quo facilius posit utrumque dinosci* (Trin. 13.1)

[26] *Hoc iam temporaliter gestum est et ad scientiam pertinet quae cognitione historica continetur* (Trin. 13.2).

objects of external perception, the distinctive feature of faith is that it is an object of inner cognition. Bodies are only apprehensible through mediation: either through the sense organs, if they are present, or through an image of memory, if they are absent. Even the mind of another human being is not directly accessible but can be known only through the detour of a conclusion by analogy from one's own mind. The believer, on the contrary, sees faith immediately in himself and therefore possesses the most certain knowledge of it. Although the objects of faith are "outside" and absent, as historically past, the act of faith is "inside" and always present. It is immediately accessible.[27] Faith, as an act, is an inner object and therefore belongs to the inner person. This act is performed in time and can end in time, for faith and unfaith are reactions to claims confronting a listener at a certain time.[28] The act of faith thus exhibits the typical combination of features for the domain of *scientia*, namely inwardness and temporality.

Thus far, it only has been shown that the act of faith as an object of inner perception differs from objects of external perception. But is not the image of memory, too, if not also effective sensation, internally perceived? What composes the primacy of the act of faith, which as an element of *scientia* belongs to the inner person, over the achievements of perception and memory, which are common to the human and the animal alike? This question imposes itself precisely because the testimonies about historical events, which are believed or disbelieved, are only accessible through the mediation of the senses. Since such testimonies are typically spoken, the *cognitio historica* is primarily dependent upon hearing. It is precisely by means of this hearing of words that the difference becomes clear between mere sensation and meaning, a difference which is also present, though to a lesser degree, in sight. Only the audible enunciation of a word is a matter of sensory perception. It is apprehended by the sense of hearing and deposited as such in memory so that it remains accessible and can be recognized. The apprehension of the meaning of a word, however, no longer belongs to sensation, but rather to understanding. The understanding of language presupposed by

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[27] *Non sic videtur fides in corde in quo est ab eo cuius est, sed eam tenet certissima scientia clamatque conscientia.…ipsam tamen fidem quando inest in nobis videmus in nobis quia et rerum absentium praesens est fides, et rerum quae foris sunt intus est fides, et rerum quae non videntur videtur fides* (Trin. 13.3).
[28] *et ipsa tamen temporaliter fit in cordibus hominum; et si ex fidelibus infidels fiunt, perit ab eis* (Trin. 13.3).

the *cognitio historica* thus must be imputed to the inner person (cf. Trin. 13.4). Just as the meaning of a word is based on the event of its sounding while nonetheless representing a higher plane, the understanding of the meaning is to be attributed to the *ratio scientia*, whereas the perception of the sound remains a matter of sensation. The plane of the inner person is attained with the *cognitio historica* for two reasons: first of all, because it relies on the understanding of language, and secondly, because the act of faith, which can emerge from this understanding, is an internally originating phenomenon.

The derivation of the *ratio scientiae* from the *ratio sapientiae* demonstrates that the former should serve the latter. The *scientia* has the task of making its knowledge of temporal things fruitful for human striving toward bliss in the *contemplatio aeternorum*. *Scientia*'s contribution for the attainment of *sapientia* differs depending on the area of focus of a particular knowledge. The contemplation of the movements of the heavens is connected to human striving for happiness in different ways than research into the history of Israel. The right conduct toward the statement in the prologue to John that the word is become human, according to Augustine, entails faith in its truth and the orientation of one's life in accordance with this faith. This way alone, he says, can lead to eternal bliss. Although the *cognitio historica* belongs to the theoretical side of *scientia*, it receives a practical meaning through faith in its truth, and the contribution of this knowledge for the attainment of the eschatologically understood *sapientia* consists in this meaning. Augustine's effort to link the *cognitio historica* to *sapientia* through the practical meaning of faith explains why he uses the greater portion of book 13 for the depiction of fundamental positions in his ethics, especially those concerning the relevance of virtue and the faith that modifies virtue for the finding of human happiness.[29] The *cognitio historica* has consequences for the *scientia actionis*, and the main part of Trin. 13 is concerned with these consequences.

Augustine moves from the discussion of the act of faith to that of the ethical problematic with the indication that the act of faith, as an inner act, is a private event. Undoubtedly, one can speak, as far as character is concerned, of the *one* faith of all

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[29] Cf. Trin. 13.6-24.

believers, but numerically each believer must execute his own act of faith. The same is true of the will, for one's own will alone is visible, whereas the will of another is only indirectly accessible.[30] Nevertheless, a universally valid goal of all willing can be formulated: happiness.[31] Augustine thus picks up a main topic of his early writings and explicates it initially in a similar way, namely by following Cicero's Hortensius. He quickly gives these reflections other accents, however, as he similarly does in his portrayal of this topic in *De civitate dei*.[32] On the basis of the thesis of the universality of the striving for happiness, Augustine attempts to demonstrate that the prevalent theories of happiness—namely, the Epicurean and the Stoic—do not do justice to the claim of this striving. Augustine rejects Epicurus' doctrine of pleasure with the aid of Cicero's thesis: to will what is not beseeming is wretched.[33] To live as one wills only makes one happy if one wills in the right way, that is, virtuously. But Augustine equally rejects the Stoic thesis that whoever lives according to virtue truly lives as he wills and is therefore happy because this thesis is incomplete since it does not take the human wish for immortality into consideration. Only he who does not have to die, Augustine claims, truly could live as he wills.[34] But eternal life is open only to the one who believes. First of all, faith in the statements of Holy Scripture alone teaches that an eternal life for the soul and the body can be expected at all, whereas the best philosophers had merely penetrated to the immortality of the soul. Secondly, the mediation that Jesus Christ achieved in his life and death in order that humans have access to the eternal can be appropriated only through the faith in God's having become human.[35] Augustine elaborately argues that the unhappy human situation, which the human brought upon himself by the original sin, is rescindable only through the birth of God as a human and through his death. Only thus is the *contemplatio aeternorum* attainable.[36] For the virtues, this means that they can fulfill their sense only in connection with the faith in God's having become human. Virtues are not loved, according to Augustine, on account of themselves but only on account of

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[30] Cf. Trin. 13.5.
[31] Cf. Trin. 13.6.
[32] Cf. 13.7-9 with De beata vita 4;10; see also Civ. dei 19.1-11.
[33] Cf. Trin. 13.8.
[34] Cf. Trin. 13.10.
[35] Cf. Trin. 13.12.
[36] Cf. Trin. 13.12-23.

happiness, and happiness is only then attainable if faith composes the horizon of signification for virtuous action.[37] Not only is faith necessary for the forgiveness of sins, which virtues could not possibly achieve, but in order for virtues to be *true* virtues, Augustine claims, they have to enter into the context of an appropriate understanding of God as is produced by faith.[38] Through its function within the framework of the *cognitio historica*, faith also plays a central role in the *scientia actionis*.

Augustine's explication of the connection between *scientia* and *sapientia* at the beginning of the prologue to the Gospel of John is summarized in the statement: "Our knowledge therefore is Christ, and our wisdom is the same Christ."[39] The actions of the word become flesh in space and time are objects of *scientia*. The soul appropriates the effects of the mediating role of Christ through faith in the truth of the reports of these historically distant occurrences and thus can attain the vision of the eternal word—that is, the *contemplatio aeternorum*. Through Christ (as word become flesh) we pass through to Christ (as eternal word). Through science we aspire to wisdom.[40]

For Augustine's clarification of the difference and the connection between *scientia* and *spaientia*, it is not decisive that his example stems from Scripture. Principally, a similar argument from an arbitrary object of any science should be able to achieve the same result. It proved to be advantageous, however, to revert to a historical science because through it, the understanding of language and the act of faith as an act of the inner person (insofar as it deals with temporal things) could be shown. An arbitrary example from the history of the ancient world would have completed the same task, but it appeared advisable to Augustine to draw upon biblical history and within it the historical event of the birth of God because this example directly demonstrates the practical service-function of *scientia* for the attainment of *sapientia*.

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[37] *Nisi forte virtutes quas propter solam beatitudinem sic amamus persuadere nobis audent ut ipsam beatitudinem non amemus. Quod si faciunt, etiam ipsas utique amare desistimus quando illam propter quam solam istas amavimus non amamus* (Trin. 13.11)

[38] *quae fides per dilectionem operatur ita ut virtutes quoque ipsae quibus prundenter, fortiter, temperanter, iusteque vivitur omnes ad eandem referantur fidem; non enim aliter verae poterunt esse virtutes* (Trin. 13.26).

[39] *Scientia ergo nostra Christus est, sapientia quoque nostra idem Christus est* (Trin. 13.24) Augustine draws this formulation from the epistle to the Colossians, where it is written: "*Christus Jesus in quo sunt omnes thesauri sapientiae et scientiae absconditi* (Col. 2:3)."

[40] *Ipse* [*Christus*] *nobis fidem de rebus temporalibus inserit; ipse de sempiternis exhibet veritatem. Per ipsum pergimus ad ipsum, tendimus per scientiam ad sapientiam* (Trin. 13.24).

At the end of book 13, Augustine accounts for the advancement of the project of approximating the *imago Dei* from subordinate triads. The path of ascension is traced out: after the demonstration of the triads of the outer person, a *trinitas* should be found both on the plane of *scientia* and on that of *sapientia*. An example for the triad of the outer person obtains if someone does not understand the "words of faith," perhaps because he does not master the language in which they are presented, but retains the audible tone in memory. Such a person could recollect the sound through which a *trinitas* of *memoria soni*, *acies recordantis*, and *voluntas recordantis* emerges (cf. Trin. 13.26). But this merely echoes book 11, for it does not concern the inner person. A triad on the plane of *scientia* occurs if the meaning of the words is understood and committed to memory. In the case of a re-actualization in memory, the contents of memory, keenness (*acies cogitationis*), and the will (*voluntas*) connecting the two act together again.[41] Since the object of memory is the meaning of the words, however, such a triad concerns the inner person.[42] Admittedly, this *trinitas* is ethically neutral, for it is only bound to the condition of understanding the meaning of the words regardless of what these words refer to. It is not compelled to believe them (if they report something historical) or to have this faith (if it concerns the God become human, for example) become relevant for one's way of living. The human, Augustine claims, should live according to the triad of the inner person insofar as the contents of memory are composed by the words (*notiones*) of faith, but the *imago Dei* is not yet found with this triad. Augustine concludes that if one truly does live according to faith, then one's mind will be able to realize in itself the triad that emerges in the contemplation of the eternal. The *sapientia*-triad represents the last link in the chain of *trinitates* that began with the discussion of the triad of perception in book 11.

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[41] *Voluntas ergo illa quae ibi coniungit ea quae memoria tenebantur et ea quae inde in acie cogitationis impressa sunt implet quidem aliquam trinitatem cum ipsa sit tertia* (Trin. 13.26).
[42] *Si autem quod verba illa significant teneat et recolat, iam quidem aliquid interioris hominis agit* (Trin. 13.26).

VIII. Being an Image and Becoming an Image (Trin. 14)

Part One: The Image-Character as the Defining Feature of the Human Mind

1. The Precedence of Being an Image over the Participation in God

Augustine dedicates book 14 to the discussion of wisdom and to the establishment of the relation of the *sapientia*-trinity to the *trinitas* of immediate self-knowledge. The tensions implicit in books 11-13 are now brought to a head. The decisive question is: Does the image of God reside within the series of those triads that emerge in the human mind in the apprehension of certain objects, or is it in the immediate self-relatedness of the mind that antecedes every orientation of objects? Does the mind become an image in the contemplation of God as the most perfect object, or is it always already an image because it cannot exist without knowing itself? Does being an image take place in wisdom as the moral condition of perfection or in that essential self-relatedness that precedes every qualification according to good and evil?[1]

While introducing the distinction between *ratio scientiae* and *ratio sapientiae* in book 12, Augustine disclosed various trinities. One trinity consists in the entirety of the mind insofar as it antecedes the division of various assignable functions. If such a functional division is made, however, one should be able to find a *trinitas* in both the higher and the lower parts. But Augustine claims that a trinity that could be called *imago Dei* resides alone in that part which is associated with the contemplation of the eternal.[2] This passage appears to argue that only the wise soul can be an image of God.

The first chapter of book 14, however, already indicates a different direction. Although Augustine has thus far presented the concept of *sapientia* primarily in its

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[1] O. DuRoy laments that Augustine offers no information on how the presence of the image that cannot be lost is connected with the capacity of the soul to remember God (DuRoy 1966, 445). This connection will be clarified in the following chapter.

[2] *in una nusquam dispertita mente trinitas inveniatur, et facta iam ista distributione in eo solo quod ad contemplationem pertinet aeternorum non solum trinitas sed etiam imago Dei; in hoc autem quod derivatum est in actione temporalium, etiamsi trinitas posit, non tamen imago Dei posit inveniri* (Trin. 12.4).

eschatological orientation, he now gives it an accent of actuality by interpreting wisdom as piety and the worship of God (*pietas*, θεοσέβεια, *Dei cultus*; cf. Trin. 14.1). Both of these take place in this life. Augustine even ascribes to *scientia* a service-function for this presentially understood *sapientia*. Only that knowledge truly belongs to *scientia*, he writes, which "breeds, feeds, defends, and strengthens the saving faith which leads to true happiness."[3] His interpretation of *sapientia* as piety incurs problems, however, as Augustine himself makes clear on the basis of faith, which essentially belongs to the worship of God. Faith indeed leads to the eternal, but it itself is bound to time in multiple respects: the act of faith is performed in time whereupon the soul experiences a change in its condition; the object of faith consists in those deeds that the eternal did for humanity in time; and the virtues connected to faith not only emerge temporally in the soul but also serve to regulate life in time. Faith has temporal things as its object and emerges temporally in the soul.[4] It, therefore, does not fulfill the criterion of constancy for the *imago*. Accordingly, the image of God cannot reside in the act of faith. One can conclude, moreover, that the image of God is not found in piety or in the worship of God. For even if one differentiates *fides* and *pietas* such that the former has something temporal as its object while the latter, on the basis of the former, is oriented toward the eternal, the soul has not always already been pious and wise, but rather first has become so at a certain time through faith. What Augustine says of faith applies equally to *pietas*, namely that the human mind does not see anything eternal when it sees its piety. Therefore, piety cannot be considered the image of God either. The problem of classifying the *imago* and *sapientia*, or the being of the image and the renewal of the image, occupies a large part of book 14. From a systematic perspective, these reflections are once again a matter of the relation between a descriptively proceeding philosophy of mind and a normatively orientated ethics.

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[3] *non utique quidquid sciri ab homine potest in rebus humanis ubi plurimum supervacaneae vanitatis et noxiae curiositatis est huic scientiae tribuens, sed illud tantummodo quo fides saluberrima quae ad veram beatitudinem ducit gignitur, nutritur, defenditur, roboratur* (Trin. 14.3)

[4] "Otherwise we would appear to be setting up this image in temporal things, although it should only be set up in things that are eternal. Clearly, when the human mind sees the faith with which it believes what it does not see, it is not seeing something everlasting."

ne in rebus termporalibus constituta videatur quae constituenda est in aeternis. Mens quippe humana cum fidem suam videt qua credit quod non videt non aliquid sempiternum videt (Trin. 14.4)

In Trin. 14.6-14, Augustine sets forth the epistemological theses of book 9 and in particular book 10 and explicates them with respect to invariability, which is definitive for the movement of ascension in books 11 through 13. He emphasizes that the *mens*, in its fundamental self-relation, fulfills the criterion for being an image. Augustine strikingly chooses formulations that constrict the demand for immutability to such a degree that having a beginning, which is the case for the *mens* as a finite being, is allowed. Invariability from the time of origination onward suffices. He observes that the structure of faith could not be considered an image of God because faith will one day end, namely in the moment it is displaced by the eschatological vision, whereas the *imago* will always be.[5] Thus, neither an eschatological trinity that does not yet exist nor a trinity that in the eschaton will prove to be exceeded may be called the image of God: "What we have to find in the soul of man, that is in the rational or intellectual soul, is an image of the creator which is immortally engrained in the soul's immortality."[6] Since the soul is immortal, the image of God in it cannot cease to exist. Even the conditions of the soul, whether it fall to vanity and sin, partake in a blessed life, or be damned without any hope, cannot annul the image of God.[7] In order to stress the indifference of being-an-image regardless of human moral orientation, Augustine repeatedly quotes Psalm 39: "Although man walks in the image, yet he is troubled in vain; he treasures up and does not know for whom he gathers them." He inverts the statement, however, in order to suit his own purposes. Whereas the verse actually states that although the human is an image, he drifts morally astray, Augustine interprets it as the declaration that even if the human is foolish and sins, he is still an image of God.

Augustine connects being-an-image with the reasonableness of the soul. He writes that the image of the creator is to be sought in the "rational or intellectual soul."[8] The intellectuality of the soul is expressed in its ability to know intelligible objects and

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[5] *Non igitur in fidei retentione, contemplatione, dilectione, quae non erit semper, sed in eo quod semper erit invenienda est quam dici oporteat imaginem Dei* (Trin. 14.4).

[6] *Nec illa igitur trinitas quae nunc non est imago Dei erit, nec ista imago Dei est quae tunc non erit, sed ea est invenienda in anima hominis, id est rationali sive intellectuali, imago Creatoris quae immortaliter immortalitati eius est insita* (Trin. 14.5).

[7] *profecto ab initio quo esse coepit ista tam magna et mira natura, sive ita obsoleta sit haec imago ut pene nulla sit sive obscura atque deformis sive clara et pulchra sit, semper est* (Trin. 14.6).

[8] sed ea [sc. imago Dei] est invenienda in anima hominis, id est rationali sive intellectuali, imago Creatoris (Trin. 14.5)

ultimately to know God. When Augustine writes that the soul "was made to the image of God with reference to its capacity to use reason and understanding in order to understand and gaze upon God," this statement should not be understood as claiming that only the soul that knows God or only the pious soul is an image of God.[9] Augustine does not speak in this passage of the actual contemplation of God, but rather only of the intellectuality of the soul expressed in the capacity to apprehend intelligible things regardless of whether this capacity is used or not. The fact that the soul "is capable of the greatest nature and can share in it" merely states that it is rational.[10]

The rationality of the human is, however, doubly conditioned:

1) The first condition is the existence of that original self-relation analyzed in books 9 and 10 in which the *mens humana* proved to be of the same structure as the divine Trinity. Only a being that exhibits a constant self-relation and therefore is an image of God is also *capax Dei*. In this respect, the characteristic of being *able* to participate in God is ethically neutral: it characterizes not only the wise and happy soul truly participating in God but also the foolish soul and even the damned soul, which definitively do not participate in God. The damned soul is only removed from the vision of God on account of a verdict imposed upon it, not however, on account of an inner incapacity.

2) The human mind encompasses more than the original self-relation. Besides the constant self-knowledge, it also possesses the faculty of directing its attention toward objects of all kinds. This faculty is the plane of conscious thinking. Although this plane is perhaps less fundamental, it represents the sole means of reflexive access to the world, the self, and God. This directedness of attention occurs in time even if the intended object is eternal, and it is discontinuous: one thing can be regarded if another is not regarded. Moral conditions also are implicated in the attempt to make intelligible things—and God in particular—objects of attention. Thus whoever is capable of making God his object of attention is wise and *particeps Dei*; and whoever is factually incapable of it because he does not fulfill the moral conditions is still *capax Dei*. Since only those

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[9] *ac per hoc si secundum hoc facta est [sc. anima humana] ad imaginem Dei quod uti ratione atque intellectu ad intellegendum et conspiciendum Deum potest* (Trin. 14.6). [Translation modified., A.L.]
[10] *summae naturae capax est, et esse particeps potest* (Trin. 14.6).

beings that exhibit an original, constant self-relation can direct their attention to what is higher, all of them are *imago Dei*. The immediate self-relation and the capacity for reflection are thus the two conditions that must be fulfilled for a being to be *capax Dei*. Such a being is capable of having an appropriate relation to God. If that being realizes this capacity, then it will be wise and participate in God.

Augustine explains that being-an-image is not identical with the *participatio* in a later passage: "But first of all the mind must be considered in itself, and God's image discovered in it before it participates in him. For we have said that even when it has lost its participation in him it still remains the image of God, even though worn out and distorted. It is his image insofar as it is capable of him and can participate in him; indeed it cannot achieve so great a good except by being his image. Here we are then with the mind remembering itself, understanding itself, loving itself. If we see this we see a trinity, not yet God of course, but already the image of God."[11] Being-an-image is thus not identical with being wise, for he is wise who is mindful of God. It is rather the condition for the possibility of being wise because only a being that is an image in its self-relation and that possesses the capacity of reflection beyond its self-relation is capable of apprehending God. It is at the same time true that being-an-image is the precondition not merely for wisdom but also for knowledge, for only rational beings, not animals, are in the position of rationally apprehending transient things and of referring to intransient things. The inner person, in fact, depends in all of its aspects on the original self-relation of the mind. Being-an-image, therefore, actually stands outside of the distinction between *scientia* and *sapientia*.

2. Implicit and Explicit Self-Reflection

Since the original self-relation antecedes the intentional relation to God, Augustine offers a renewed portrayal of the results of book 10 (cf. Trin. 14.7-14) before addressing what it means for the human to be wise (cf. 14.15-26). The exposition of the self-relation is

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[11] *Sed prius mens in se ipsa consideranda est antequam sit particeps Dei et in ea reprienda est imago eius. Diximus enim eam etsi amissa Dei participatione obsoletam atque deformem Dei tamen imaginem permanere. Eo quippe ipso imago eius est quo eius capax est eiusque esse particeps potest, quod tam magnum bonum nisi per hoc quod imago eius est non potest. Ecce ergo mens meminit sui, intellegit se, diligit se. Hoc si cernimus, cernimus trinitatem, nondum quidem Deum se iam imaginem Dei* (Trin. 14.11).

subdivided, however, into a description of the original self-relation, a discussion of explicit self-reflection, and an analysis of the relation of the two. While explicating the context of wisdom, Augustine strikingly uses the self, not God, as an example for a content of conscious thought. But this concentration on the thought of the self is solely a consequence of the basic idea of *De Trinitate*: Since God cannot be immediately seen, he has to be sought in the human mind. If the mind wants to know God, then it must apprehend itself as image—that is, it must reflect upon itself.

For the discovery of the image of God in that nature which is *capax Dei*, Augustine does not need to add anything to the claims of book 10. He nevertheless spares the reader the work of searching out those passages and instead presents once again the material discussed there. This time, however, he emphasizes the contrast between the *memoria-intellegentia-voluntas* trinity and the reflexive-conscious act of self-realization on the plane of the *cogitatio*. He establishes that the mind has knowledge of itself, for it knows nothing so well as that which is present to it, and nothing is more present to it than itself.[12] With the question of whether the mind of children knows itself, Augustine re-introduces the distinction already put forth in book 10 between an original self-knowledge and a conscious, reflexive self-relation. In book 10, it was the Delphic command "know thyself" which brought the difference between the two planes of self-relation to the fore by commanding that attention be directed to oneself instead of at other things. It then became clear that the intended self-knowledge is only possible upon the basis of a more fundamental, always already existing self-knowledge. Small children are not possible addressees of this command, because they cannot understand its words and because their attention is so fixed on the external world from which both life-giving nourishment and threats arise that they would not be able to turn thought back upon themselves. These caveats do not entail, however, that the minds of children do not possess any self-relation. They suggest instead a distinction between an original self-knowledge that is characteristic of the human mind in general and an intentional thinking of oneself of which children, in contrast to adults, are incapable. Augustine calls the

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[12] *Inter cetera ergo in libro decimo diximus hominis mentem nosse semetipsam. Nihil enim tam novit mens quam id quod sibi praesto est, nec menti magis quidquam praesto est quam ipsa sibi* (Trin. 14.7).

fundamental form of self-knowledge *se nosse* and the willed directing of attention toward oneself *se cogitare*.[13]

When the mind thinks of something (*cogitare*), it places that which is thought in its field of vision (*conspectus*). In expressive self-reflection, the *mens* itself comes into its own field of vision, which only could occur through the *cogitatio*.[14] Augustine finds it astonishing that the mind is also able *not* to be in its field of vision (precisely when it does not think of itself) although it never could be without itself as if the mind was something other than its vision.[15] For the corporeal eye, the capacity to not be able to see itself is easily understandable because it is in a certain place in space, and its vision is directed from this place toward objects spatially removed. An artificial apparatus is necessary for the eye to be able to see itself at all. For the mind, on the contrary, reflexivity is essentially innate so that it is remarkable that it is capable of directing its attention toward other things besides itself. Since the mind is an intelligible being, its appearing before itself in the *cogitatio sui* cannot be understood as a spatial movement. In such a case, it would have to abandon its position as a subject in order to arrive in the position of an object, or it would have to divide or double itself in order to become visible to itself. For a non-spatial entity, according to Augustine's implication, the capacity for self-knowledge is not a problem.[16] The fact that the mind also can think of something other than itself, even though it is essentially self-relation, is ultimately understandable by means of the familiar distinction of planes. The constancy of the self-relation is not

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[13] With respect to the mind of children, Augustine asks: "*An etiam ipsa se nosse credenda est, sed intenta nimis in eas res quas per corporis sensus tanto maiore quanto noviore coepit delectatione sentire, non ignorare se potest sed cogitare se non potest?*" As an answer to this question, Augustine repeats what he had already stated in book 10: "*Quod autem aliud sit non se nosse, aliud non se cogitare iam in eodem volumine ostendimus* (Trin. 14.7)."

[14] *Tanta est tamen cogitationis vis ut nec ipsa mens quodam modo se in conspectu suo ponat nisi quando se cogitat, ac per hoc ita nihil in conspectu mentis est nisi unde cogitatur ut nec ipsa mens qua cogitatur quidquid cogitatur aliter posit esse in conspectu suo nisi se ipsam cogitando* (Trin. 14.8).

[15] *Quomodo autem quando se non cogitat in conspectu suo non sit cum sine se ipsa numquam esse possit quasi aliud sit ipsa, aliud conspectus eius, invenire non possum* (Trin. 14.8).

[16] *Proinde restat ut aliquid pertinens ad eius naturam sit conspectus eius, et in eam quando se cogitat non quasi per loci spatium sed incorporea conversione revocetur* (Trin. 14.8). Augustine's argumentation can be understood—as already in book 10—as a counterargument to Sextus' critique. Whereas the argument of book 10 was directed at original self-knowledge by claiming that even the attempt of reflexive self-apprehension presupposes a knowledge of oneself as factually existing, Augustine defends here the possibility of the *cogitatio*-reflection with the argument that a critique like that of Sextus is based on the false premise that the mind has to be thought of in analogy to spatial things.

established on the plane of the *cogitatio*, but rather on a deeper plane connected with memory.[17]

Augustine does not discuss here the structure of that original self-relation, however, but highlights the trinity of the *cogitatio*-reflection. What applies to knowledge in the realm of the *disciplinae* also applies to self-knowledge (and ultimately all knowledge), namely that we possess it as "hidden knowledge" in memory precisely when it is not an object of attention.[18] In the directedness of the attention toward such an *arcana notitia*, a trinity emerges from the content of memory, its image in the field of vision, and from the will directing the attention. Conscious self-reflection in the *cogitatio sui* is merely a single case subject to this schema. The will actualizes the self-knowledge resting in memory by making it the object of thought and thus perceives itself. In this manner, the mind begets the understanding (*intellectus*) and knowledge of itself.[19] Accordingly, the memory would be the begetter; the formed *cogitatio* from the particular contents of memory would be the begotten; and the will would connect both of them by initiating the process of begetting.

3. Temporality as the Difference between the Two Forms of Self-Reflection

Augustine writes, "This is why we thought the trinity of the mind should be put forward under these three names, memory, understanding, and will."[20] This statement should not be understood, however, as if the *cogitatio*-reflection is equated with that trinity of *memoria–intellegentia–voluntas* characterized in book 10 as the original self-relation. Augustine rather gives here an indication of why he uses these terms for the description of fundamental self-knowledge. The true meaning of the terms of the trinity of the *cogitatio*-reflection characterized by temporality consists in the following: The *memoria*

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[17] *Cum vero non se cogitat, non sit quidem in conspectu suo nec de illa suus formetur obtutus, sed tamen noverit se tamquam ipsa sibi sit memoria sui* (Trin. 14.8).

[18] *Sicut multarum diciplinarum peritus ea quae novit eius memoria continentur, nec est inde aliquid in conspectu mentis eius nisi unde cogitat; cetera in arcana quadam notitia sunt recondita quae memoria nuncupatur* (Trin. 14.8).

[19] *Mens igitur quando cogitatione se conspicit, intellegit se et recognoscit; gignit ergo hunc intellectum et cognitionem suam* (Trin. 14.8).

[20] *Ideoque etiam illis tribus nominibus insinuandam mentis putavimus trinitatem, memoria, intellegentia, voluntate* (Trin. 14.8).

with its contents and the *voluntas* already exist before the *cogitatio* is directed toward a specific content of memory and thus becomes *intellegentia*. This *trinitas* differs from the trinity of memory of the outer person (cf. Trin. 11) solely in the manner of acquiring the contents of memory. In the former, such knowledge stems from an intellectual perception of the intelligible, whereas in the latter, it arises from sensory perception of corporeality. When Augustine applies the concepts *memoria-intellegentia-voluntas* to that self-relation in which there is no temporal succession, he does so due to the quandary of having no better terms at his disposal for the apprehension of the unceasing simultaneity of the three elements. Since the best solution does not exist, he has to accept a next best one, consisting in applying the conceptuality proper to the temporal *cogitatio*-reflection to atemporal self-knowledge. This solution is the next best one because no other trinity is as close to the original self-relation as the *cogitatio*-reflection. Moreover, the usage of this conceptuality also has a propaedeutic sense. If it is difficult for the majority of people to differentiate elements that are not successive but simultaneous, then it could be propaedeutically helpful to grasp a structure characterized by simultaneity in terms that imply a temporal succession. The aid for understanding should not lead, however, to a misunderstanding. That's why the imprecision of the terminology must be specifically pointed out. Augustine highlights this hazard when he writes at the end of book 10, "And thus it seems to be difficult to distinguish in it [sc. the mind] between its memory of itself and its understanding of itself. That these are not in fact two things, but one thing called by two names, is the impression you might get in this case where they are joined together very closely and one is not prior at all in time to the other; love too is not felt so obviously to be present when no neediness exhibits it, because what is being loved is always to hand."[21] As the presentations of book 14 demonstrate, these concepts, which are supposed to facilitate the distinction (*dinoscere*) of the instances depicted by them, can impede the apprehension of what is separated as simultaneous precisely for this reason. The propaedeutic function of Augustine's chosen conceptuality consists in being capable of leading "slower minds" to a point immediately preceding the apprehension of

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[21] *Ac per hoc difficile in ea dinoscitur memoria sui et intellegentia sui. Quasi enim non sint haec duo sed unum duobus vocabulis appelletur, sic apparet in ea re ubi valde ista coniuncta sunt et aliud alio nullo praeceditur tempore; amorque ipse non ita sentitur esse cum eum non prodit indegentia quoniam semper praesto est quod amatur* (Trin. 10.19).

the structure of original self-knowledge. The last step from the *cogitatio*-reflection has to be made, however, without this aid, which proves to be misleading.

Augustine explains the problematic of this terminology in book 14 as follows: "We said toward the end of the tenth book, however, that the mind always remembers, always understands and loves itself, even though it does not always think about itself as distinct from things that are not what it is.[22] So we must go on to inquire in what way understanding belongs to thought, while awareness of anything that is in the mind even while it is not being thought about is said to belong only to memory. If this is so, then it did not always have these three in such a way that it remembered, understood, and loved itself, but it only remembered itself, and then came to understand and love itself when it began afterward to think about itself."[23] The first sentence of this passage re-affirms that the original self-relation in its constancy is independent of whether a *cogitatio*-reflection is carried out, or if it is carried out, it remains independent of whether it is successful. The further remarks highlight that the understanding of *intellegentia* and *memoria* obtained from the *cogitatio*-reflection is not applicable to fundamental self-knowledge. The criterion is once again temporality. By directing the attention toward a content of memory, a formation of the *cogitatio* takes place according to the already existing *memoria*. If the *intellectus* is coupled with the *cogitatio*, and the *notitia*, according to which the *cogitatio* is formed, is connected to memory, then it follows that *intellegentia* and *amor* are not integral components of the self-relation. They would rather temporally succeed *memoria*, in which alone the *notitia sui* is stored, when a *cogitatio*-reflection

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[22] Augustine writes at the end of book 10, "We were in the process, you remember, of bringing the mind to light in its memory and understanding and will of itself, and discovering that since it was seen always to know itself and always to will itself, it must at the same time be seen always to remember itself ad always to understand and love itself, although it does not always think about itself distinctly from things that are not what it is."

Mentem quippe ipsam in memoria et intellegentia et voluntate suimetipsius talem reperiebamus ut quoniam semper se nosse semperque se ipsam velle comprehendebatur, simul etiam semper sui meminisse semperque se ipsam intellegere et amare comprehenderetur; quamvis non semper se cogitare discretam ab eis quae non sunt quod ipsa est (Trin. 10.29).

[23] *Se quoniam mentem semper sui meminisse semperque se ipsam intellegere et amare, quamvis non semper se cogitare discretam ab eis quae non sunt quod ipsa est, circa eiusdem libri decimi finem diximus, quaerendum est quonam modo ad cogitationem pertineat intellectus, notitia vero cuiusque rei, quae inest menti etiam quando non de ipsa cogitatur ad solam dicatur memoriam pertinere. Si enim hoc ita est, non habebat haec tria ut et sui meminisset et se intellegeret et amaret, se meminerat sui tantum, et postea cum cogitare se coepit tunc se intellexit atque dilexit* (Trin. 14.9).

takes place. If, in the name of the sempiternity of the self-relation, the notion of succession is to be avoided, then *intellegentia* and *voluntas* have to antecede the *cogitatio*. In that case, the *notitia sui* cannot be a passive content of memory which only becomes present if the *cogitatio* is directed toward it. It is rather always already actualized in a fundamental *intellegentia*. This actuality is, so to say, underneath the plane of the *cogitation*—that is, it remains latent as long as it is not placed in the field of vision by the *cogitatio*. Thus, the mind discovers that "it remembers and understands and loves something too, which it was not thinking about while it was thinking about something else."[24] Already on the plane reserved for memory, according to the *memoria-cogitatio* schema, the timeless, intertwined play of *memoria*, *intellegentia*, and *voluntas* takes place through which the *mens humana* is the image of God.

A two-fold concept of memory emerges. The *memoria*, which is part of the original trinity, should be differentiated from the *memoria* from which the *cogitatio* nourishes itself. The original triad therefore can be seen as a possible content of the latter *memoria* because the *cogitatio* can just as well return to self-knowledge as it can direct itself toward other contents of memory. Augustine once again justifies his passage through the *memoria–cogitatio–voluntas* triad by referring to their temporal successivity, which accommodates the effort to make distinctions. "The reason why I wanted to introduce some sort of example of thought which could show how the attention is informed in recollection by the things contained in the memory, and how something is begotten where a man does his thinking that is like what was in him where he was only remembering before thinking, is that the distinction is easier to observe where something crops up in time and where parent precedes offspring by an interval of time."[25] Augustine distinguishes this memory, however, from the "inner memory" that is timelessly bound to the "inner understanding" and the "inner will."

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[24] *tunc enim se ipsa mens et meminisse et intellegere et amare invenit etiam unde non cogitabat quando aliunde cogitabat* (Trin. 14.9).

[25] *Propter hoc itaque volui de cogitatione adhibere qualecumque documentum quo posset ostendi quomodo ex his quae memoria continentur recordantis acies informetur et tale aliquid gignatur ubi homo cogitat quale in illo erat ubi ante cogitationem meminerat, quia facilius dinoscitur quod tempore accedit et ubi parens prolem spatio temporis antecedit* (Trin. 14.10).

"For if we refer to the inner memory of the mind with which it remembers itself and the inner understanding with which it understands itself and the inner will with which it loves itself, where these three are simultaneously together and always have been simultaneously together from the moment they began to be, whether they were being thought about or not, it will indeed seem that the image of that other trinity belongs only to the memory."[26]

The ambiguity consists in that the *imago* is attributed to the *memoria* on account of its antecedence to the *cogitatio* and on account of its constancy. This assignation is correct if that *memoria* is meant which contains the possible contents of the *cogitatio*, but it is false if one understands it as one of the three elements of the original self-relation, for the moment of the permanent—even if latent—actuality of self-knowledge would not be taken into consideration. The *imago* is constituted not only in memory but also in the *intellegentia* and is therefore always present. It is not a matter of an *intellegentia* that emerges through explicit thinking about oneself in the *cogitatio*, but rather of an inner understanding, which despite its actuality remains hidden in comparison to the "outer" understanding. The *intellegentia* can be constant only as latent knowledge because only thus is it not bound to the discursiveness of thought according to which only separate and successive objects can be contents of the *cogitatio*. Just as there is an inner memory and an inner understanding, there is also an inner will that is to be distinguished from an outer will. The outer will is directed toward different objects superseding each other to become the goal of the will, and it strives to obtain its goals. The *voluntas interior*, in contrast, is directed at only *one* object, namely the self, and it does not aim at this object, but rather always already possesses it. Like the inner *intellegentia*, the inner *voluntas* is not discursive.

Both an inner and an outer trinity emerge. The inner one—composed of *interior memoria*, *interior intellegentia*, and *interior voluntas*—is constant; it never changes its object and is equally original to the *mens*. Augustine thus can state that "these three are simultaneously together and always have been simultaneously together from the moment

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[26] *Nam si nos referamus ad interiorem mentis memoriam qua sui meminit et interiorem intellegentiam qua se intellegit et interiorem voluntatem qua se diligit, ubi haec tria simul sunt et simul semper fuerunt ex quo esse coeperunt sive cogitarentur sive non cogitarentur, videbitur quidem imago illius trinitatis et ad solam memoriam pertinere* (Trin. 14.10).

they began to be." The outer trinity is composed of *memoria*, *cogitatio* (including the outer *intellegentia* arising from it), and the will that unites the *memoria* and the *cogitatio*. In the special case of self-reflection, the inner trinity, which is the content of the outer *memoria*, becomes the object of the *cogitatio* and the outer *intellegentia* and *voluntas*. But sempiternity does not govern this act, for the will constantly directs the *cogitatio* toward new objects. Moreover, the demands for moral purity arise because alone through moral purity is the directedness of the attention toward the intelligible and the original self-knowledge possible. The inner will is not contingent and therefore is not a possible addressee of imperatives, but the outer will requires guidance, as it is straddled in the difference between good and evil intentions.

Since the inner trinity does not change its contents and since it possesses the *one* content it has always already, it is closed ever since it began to exist. New objects cannot be added from within or from without. The outer trinity, on the contrary, is open because the *cogitatio* is capable of actualizing only one section of the *memoria* at a time, whereas the inner *intellegentia* totally represents the content of the inner *memoria* in every moment. In the inner trinity, the *memoria*, as origin, and the *intellegentia*, as offspring, are always equal and simultaneous. Due to the discursiveness of the attention, however, they are not only unequal in the outer trinity but also non-simultaneous because the contents of memory already exist before their actualization. A further aspect of this openness on the plane of the outer unity consists in that new contents arise and the mind itself is capable of taking up new positions. The mind's capacity to learn is thus attached to the outer trinity.[27]

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[27] The difficult passage in the middle of Trin. 14.10 is more readily understandable with the aid of the distinction between the inner and outer trinity:

videbitur quidem imago illius trinitatis et ad solam memoriam pertinere. Sed quia ibi verbum esse sine cogitatione non potest (cogitamus enim omne quod dicimus etiam illo interiore verbo quod ad nullius gentis pertinet linguam), in tribus potius illis imago ista cognoscitur, memoria scilicet, intellegentia, voluntate. Hanc autem nunc dico intellegentiam qua intellegimus cogitantes, id est quando eis repertis quae memoriae praesto fuerant sed non cogitabantur cogitatio nostra formatur, et eam voluntatem sive amorem vel dilectionem quae istam prolem parentemque coniungit, et quodam modo utrisque communis est.

Since Augustine defines the *intellegentia* as a formation of the *cogitatio* through the *memoria*, which already existed before the act of the formation, he can intend only the *intellegentia* that exists in temporal difference—the outer trinity. The statement that the *imago* is more easily recognizable in *memoria*, *intellegentia*, and *voluntas*, therefore, is to be interpreted within the context of Augustine's pedagogical project. The *imago* is not more easily recognizable because it is present in them in greater purity but

Augustine dedicates the following passages to the clarification of the last-mentioned aspect. In a summary of books 11-13, he establishes that all of the mentioned contents are "adventitious" to the soul, whereas the inner trinity is always already present to itself. Augustine recapitulates how in searching for the image he traverses, on account of the ponderous reader, through the realm of the manifest as well as the sphere of the "salutary knowledge of human affairs." But this image is first found in the best part of human nature, namely in the mind "remembering itself, understanding itself, loving itself" in the timeless manner of the inner trinity (cf. Trin. 14.11).

Not only are the trinities of sensory perception constituted in time but also the contents of *scientia* are "adventitious to the consciousness." They are adventitious regardless of whether it is a matter of historical or natural scientific knowledge, or of the changes in the soul itself through which, either by instruction or through one's own reflection, something emerges in humans which was not before, like, for example, faith or the virtues.[28] "All these and similar cases proceed in a temporal order, one thing after another, which makes it much easier for us to observe the trinity of memory, sight, and love."[29] In the learning procedure, both the soul and the knowable object precede knowledge, but for those acts and mindsets which the soul produces from itself, namely faith and virtue, only the soul itself is antecedent. Even this antecedence suffices, however, for rendering such acts adventitious. Even if it should prove to be true that virtues are not only necessary for leading one's life in time but that they also possess a function in eternal life, this fact would not change anything of the temporal priority of the soul before the appropriation of virtue.[30]

Besides these two forms of time-differential—namely, between an object and the knowledge of the object and between the soul and the states it takes on in time—Augustine introduces a third form concerning the relation of *memoria* and *cogitatio*. It thus concerns the outer trinity. He proceeds from the example of the perception of a

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because it manifests itself in temporal extension, thus accommodating slower minds. The true *imago* belongs, on the contrary, solely to the *memoria* of the inner trinity.

[28] *velut adventitia sunt in animo* (Trin. 14.11).

[29] *Haec atque huiusmodi habent in tempore ordinem suum, in quo nobis trinitas memoriae, visionis et amoris facilius apparebat* (Trin. 14.11).

[30] For this topic, cf. Trin. 14.12.

sound that is simultaneously produced and heard. In this case, the knowable begets the knowledge without a difference in time. But within the mind, this knowledge, too, is subject to a temporal succession, namely, when it is stored in the memory and later becomes an object remembered.[31] Augustine admittedly proceeds from an example of sensory perception, but he arrives at the conclusion that the trinity of *memoria*, outer *intellegentia* (*cogitatio*), and outer *voluntas* is subject to temporal succession regardless of the nature of its contents. Due to its inwardness, this trinity is suitable for introducing the *imago*, but due to its temporality, it cannot itself be the *imago*. The *imago* is only in the inner trinity. Augustine writes, "In the mind, however, it is not so. For the mind is not adventitious to itself, as though there came to itself already existing, that same self not already existing, from somewhere else, or did not indeed come from somewhere else, but that in the mind itself already existing, there was born that same mind not already existing; just as faith, which before was not, arises in the mind which already was. Nor does the mind see itself, as it were, set up in its own memory by recollection subsequently to the knowing of itself, as though it was not there before it knew itself; whereas,doubtless, from the time when it began to be, it has never ceased to remember, to understand, and to love itself, as we have already shown."[32] Augustine thus rejects all three forms of temporal succession for the self-knowledge of the inner trinity. Self-knowledge neither impinges from outside upon the already existing self (as in the case of the perception of an external object), nor does it emerge in the already existing self (as in the case of faith), nor can it be understood as a deposited content in memory to which the attention would come back after the deposit. The last option is typical for knowledge obtained in time, but the fundamental self-relation is equally original with the *mens* and therefore is constant. Its triad-structure is consequently not bound to chronological order.

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[31] *Cognitione vero facta cum ea quae cognovimus posita in memoria recordatione revisuntur, quis non videat priorem esse tempore in memoria retentionem quam in recordatione visionem et huius utriusque tertia voluntate iunctionem* (Trin. 14.13)?

[32] *Porro autem in mente non sic est; neque enim adventicia sibi ipsa est quasi ad se ipsam quae iam erat venerit aliunde eadem ipsa quae non erat, aut non aliunde venerit sed in se ipsa quae iam erat nata sit ea ipsa quae non erat sicut in mente quae iam erat oritur fides quae non erat, aut post cognitionem sui recordando se ipsam velut in memoria sua constitutam videt quasi non ibi fuerit antequam se ipsam cognosceret, cum profecto ex quo esse coepit, numquam sui meminisse, numquam se intellegere, numquam se amare destiterit sicut iam ostendimus* (Trin. 14.13).

Augustine once again contrasts the original self-relation to the *cogitatio*-reflection. He writes: "When it [the mind] turns to itself in thought, a trinity is formed in which a word too can be perceived. It is formed of course out of the very act of thought, with the will joining the two together. It is here then more than anywhere that we should recognize the image we are looking for."[33] Here, too, the *imago* is not more easily knowable (*magis agnoscenda*) because it is fully realized but because it still appears in temporal difference on the plane of the *cogitatio*. Even in the most sublime of the three forms, it accommodates our inadequacy at distinguishing the simultaneous. The *cogitatio*-reflection is ontologically closest to the *imago Dei*. The latter is implied in the former without, however, fully manifesting itself in it.

Due to its constancy, the immediate self-knowledge is present at every moment independently of whether the attention is directed toward the mind itself or at something else. If a self-reflection takes place on the plane of the *cogitatio*, then the attention raises self-knowledge up from the *memoria*, which, in this case, is to be understood as an element of the outer trinity. Augustine asserts that this procedure is not to be conceived as the realization of a past perception with the aid of an image of memory. Rather, a present though latent knowledge is raised up from its state of latency and placed in the light of attention. Since self-knowledge is always present, the relation of the object of express self-reflection to the act of reflection cannot be that of something past to something present. Their relation is rather that of the latently present to the openly present. Augustine rejects the terminological objection that it is nonsense to place the *memoria* in connection to something present because it always only deals with something past. He instead holds fast that no memory of something past takes place in self-reflection; it discloses rather something present. Augustine dismisses the critique of his terminology with a quotation from Virgil stating that Odysseus did not forget himself as danger called.[34] If Odysseus did not forget himself, Augustine claims, he must have remembered himself and was present to himself. Therefore, from Virgil's perspective, too, it is legitimate to define the memory not only as the capacity to remember something

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[33] *Ac per hoc quando ad se ipsam cogitatione convertitur fit trinitas in qua iam et verbum posit intellegi; Formatur quippe ex ipsa cogitatione, voluntate utrumque iungente. Ibi ergo magis agnoscenda est imago quam quaerimus* (Trin. 14.13).
[34] *Nec talia passus Ulysses, oblitusve sui est Ithacus discrimine tanto* (Aeneid 3, 628/9; Trin. 14.14).

past but also as that instance in which the constantly present self-knowledge is located so that it can be raised up from the state of latency by the *cogitatio*: "[…] so as regards something present, which is what the mind is to itself, one may talk without absurdity of memory as that by which the mind is available to itself, ready to be understood by its thought about itself, and for both to be conjoined by its love of itself."[35] It becomes once again clear in this formulation that Augustine does not understand the self-reflection of Odysseus as an expression of the inner trinity of *memoria*, *intellegentia*, and *voluntas*, but rather as a virtuous act in which the will directs the attention toward the outer *memoria* allowing the available self-knowledge in this *memoria* to become the content of a *cogitatio*.

Part Two: The Renewal of the Image

1. The *cogitatio*-Trinity as Addressee of the Call for Renewal

In the second half of book 14 (Trin. 14.15-26), Augustine turns to the ethical problematic. He does not really develop new theses but formulates his already existing teaching in terms that stem from the doctrine of the image and from the conceptual framework that he gives it. For this presentation, the terminology of the renewal of the image (*renovatio*) takes on special significance alongside the concepts *imago* and *similitudo*.[36] We will see that Augustine undertakes a doubling of the concept of image. He maintains that the inner trinity is *imago Dei*, but, at the same time, he tends to apply the concept of image to the plane of the *cogitatio*-reflection as well. This new usage of the concept is in close connection with the ethical idea of a renewal of the image and a becoming similar to God over and beyond the already existing similarity of the inner trinity. Since Augustine uses the concept *image* equivocally, an interpretation must constantly consider which meaning is at hand in a given line of argumentation. The criteria for distinguishing the two

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[35] *sic in re praesenti quod sibi est mens memoria sine absurditate dicenda est qua sibi praesto est ut sua cogitatione possit intellegi et utrumque sui amore coniungi* (Trin. 14.14).
[36] For the biblical references of *imago* and *similitudo*, cf. Gen. 1:26; 1 John 3:2; for the references of renewal, cf. Romans 12:2; Eph 4:23f; Col 3:10; 2 Cor 4:16; 2 Cor 3:18.

meanings are the same as those which separated the *cogitatio*-reflection from the immediate acquaintanceship with oneself.

The ethical orientation of the second part of Trin. 14 is manifest right from the beginning where Augustine distinguishes wisdom from foolishness. "This trinity of the mind is not really the image of God because the mind remembers and understands and loves itself, but because it is also able to remember and understand and love him by whom it was made. And when it does this it becomes wise. If it does not do it, then even though it remembers and understands and loves itself, it is foolish. Let it then remember its God to whose image it was made, and understand and love him. To put it in a word, let it worship the uncreated God….It is after all written, 'Behold the worship of God is wisdom (Job 28:28).'"[37] The *imago Dei*, Augustine appears to say, is not in the immediate self-relation but in the right relation to God. Does the image of God truly manifest itself in the wisdom defined as the worship of the creator (*Dei cultus*) and not in the inner trinity of self-acquaintanceship?

For an appropriate understanding, the cited passage needs to be considered more closely. With the first word, the pronoun *haec*, Augustine suggests that the trinity that is capable of wisdom (and foolishness) is identical with the *trinitas* discussed at the end of the previous passage. This *trinitas* was, however, the triad of *memoria*, *cogitatio*, *voluntas*. The fact that Augustine speaks here of *intellegere* instead of *cogitare* need not confuse, for he also knows, in other passages, an *intellegere* that follows from the *cogitatio* and is therefore to be distinguished from the *intellegentia interior*.[38] Accordingly, the inner triad is not the object of discussion. Rather, the call to make God the object of remembering, thinking, and willing directs itself at outer reflection.[39]

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[37] *Haec igitur trinitas mentis non propterea Dei est imago quia sui meminit mens et intellegit ac diligit se, sed quia potest etiam meminisse et intellegere et amare a quo facta est. Quod cum facit sapiens ipsa fit. Si autem non facit, etiam cum sui meminit seque intellegit ac diligit, stulta est. Meminerit itaque Dei sui ad cuius imaginem facta est eumque intellegat atque diligat. Quod ut brevius dicam, colat Deum….propter quod scriptum est: Ecce Dei cultus est sapientia* (Job 28:28) (Trin. 14.15).

[38] *Mens igitur quando cogitatione se conspicit, intellegit se et recognoscit; gignit ergo hunc intellectum et cognitionem suam* (Trin. 14.8). *Hanc autem nunc dico intellegentiam qua intellegimus cogitantes* (Trin. 14.10). In Trin 15.40, Augustine distinguishes an *intellegentia quae qpparet in cognitione* from an *intellegentia quae in memoria iam fuerat, sed latebat*. For *intellegentia interior*, cf. ibid.

[39] In this passage and in the following section, the expression "outer trinity" does not refer to the trinity of the outer person, as depicted in book 11, but rather to the *trinitas* on the *cogitatio*-plane. It is therefore distinguished from the inner trinity of immediate self-knowledge.

The original self-knowledge has only itself for an object and cannot change its object without abrogating its own existence. Thus, the outer reflection alone can be the addressee of the demand. For not only is the inner *intellegentia* inalterable but also—as has been already been established—the inner *voluntas* is essentially constant. It is not a possible addressee of a call to wisdom or a warning against foolishness. If this *voluntas* would cease willing the self in order to orientate itself toward God instead, the *mens* would cease to exist in that very moment. It, therefore, is clear that the exhortation to think of God only can be directed at the outer trinity. Augustine cannot intend here a suspension of the immediate self-relation in the name of wisdom.

Augustine calls the outer trinity, whose form decides over wisdom and foolishness, an image of God. He again does not identify the imaged-ness with the condition of wisdom but locates it in the capacity to make God an object of the attention. The mind is an image "because it is also able to remember and understand and love him by whom it was made. And when it does this it becomes wise. If it does not do it, then…it is foolish (Trin. 14.15)." Being-an-image does not reside in the actuality but in the potentiality of the relation to God. This potentiality inheres in the mind as such and does not disappear in foolishness, as Augustine will show in the course of book 14. Depending on the intellectual and moral quality of character, there are consequently wise and foolish images of God.

2. Remembering God

According to Augustine, only the one who truly loves and thinks of the highest good, God, can be happy. The love of God is the highest moral command. God is an object of the attention, but in many respects, he is like the self. The mind is normally occupied with corporeal things and the fantastic images corresponding to corporeal things. The thought of God is thus, like the thought of oneself—the exception. They are in fact both so exceptional that one has to be exhorted to think of them. In self-reflection, the thought of oneself took the form of a disclosure of the self-knowledge constantly present though initially latent. Augustine applies a parallel notion to the reflection on God. The mind should remember God in order to think of him and love him and therefore to attain wisdom. Analogous to his depiction of the self, Augustine interprets the act through

which God appears in one's field of vision as memory. The exhortation to think of something always presupposes a capacity to remember what is to be thought. If God was not rememberable, then an exhortation to think of God and to love him would be meaningless. Inversely, the exhortation to think of God, which is directed at all humans, presupposes a natural capacity to be able to remember God as well as a universal, natural acquaintanceship with him.

Augustine distinguishes various degrees of forgetting, ranging from a not-thinking of something in the moment, which, if desired, easily can be brought up from the memory, to the total loss of a content of memory (cf. Trin. 14.17). The memory of God, Augustine claims, never could be completely lost; it is always possible upon being appropriately reminded.[40] Like in his understanding of the memory of the self, Augustine does not interpret the memory of God as the recourse to an image of memory, which representatively keeps a past event present. Remembering God is not a matter of a historical memory of an earlier meeting in Adam or of an encounter during the creation of the soul. Every trace of the memory of these occurrences is irrevocably effaced, he claims, just as every memory of the condition of happiness before the fall to sin is completely lost.[41] Augustine assumes rather a metaphysically understood omnipresence of God whose divine light can touch the soul at any time, as, for example, in the provocation of an exhortation: "The mind does however remember its God. He always is; it is not the case that he was and is not, or is and was not, but just as he never will not be, so he never was not. And he is all of him everywhere, and therefore the mind lives and moves and is in him, and for this reason is able to remember him."[42] This metaphysical encompassment of the mind by God is manifest in every soul's being-touched by the divine light, even the soul turned away from God. By virtue of this light,

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[40] Augustine interprets the Psalm verse: "Let sinners turn back to hell, all the nations that forget God (Ps 9:17)" in the light of another verse: "All the ends of the earth will be reminded and turn back to the Lord (Ps 22:27)" and concludes: "So these nations had not so forgotten God that they could not even remember when reminded of him." (*Non igitur sic erant oblitae istae gentes Deum, ut eius nec commemoratae recordarentur* (Trin. 14.17)).

[41] Cf. Trin. 14.21. For the implications of these remarks with respect to the question of the origin of the soul, cf.: R.J. O'Connell, *The Origin of the Soul in St. Augustine's Later Works* (New York, 1987), 246-81.

[42] *Domini autem Dei sui reminiscitur. Ille quippe semper est, nec fuit et non est, nec est et non fuit, sed sicut numquam non erit ita numquam non erat. Et ubique totus est, propter quod ista in illo et vivit et movetur et est* (Acts 17:28), *et ideo eius reminisci potest* (Trin. 14.21).

even the godless grasp the notion of eternity and dispose of the knowledge of the immutable laws of morality. And by virtue of this light, they rightly praise and reprove much in the behavior of humans.[43] Even one who does not know the rules of how to live one's life "is touched from time to time by the brilliance of truth everywhere present, when he receives a warning reminder and confesses."[44] Augustine interprets the mind's natural knowledge of the fundamental moral principles brought to bear on both the evil and the seemingly ignorant soul as the memory of God. We can remember these laws, he concludes, because they have been impressed upon the hearts of humans like the imprint of a ring in wax. This memory is also a memory of something present—namely, and ultimately, truth itself. Since the "impression of the ring" belongs to constitution of the mind, the memory of God is always possible. Therefore, every human in principle is in the position at all times to comply with the command to worship God. Like the self, God, too, is always present in the *memoria* in order to become the object of remembering, thinking, and willing. Nonetheless, self-love and the love of God are not on the same plane, as Augustine explicates in the following section.

3. The Original Self-Relation in Practical Life – Self-Love and the Love of God

If a reflection on God actually does take place, then God appears as the object of attention in the mind's field of vision and becomes the object of thought and love. In the ideal-typical case, the mind recognizes the metaphysical status of God and his character as *summum bonum*, disengages its will from its orientation on transient things, and strives for the enjoyment of the sole good that beatifies. The correction of one's conduct toward the beings metaphysically underneath God and, in particular, the correction of the mind's conduct toward itself also belong to the rectification of the will. The self-affirmation in the inner trinity, however, also plays a special role, for it cannot be relinquished.

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[43] *Sed commemoratur ut convertatur ad Dominum, tamquam ad eam lucem qua etiam cum ab illo averteretur quodam modo tangebatur. Nam hinc est quod etiam impii cogitant aeternitatem et multa recte reprehendunt recteque laudant in hominum moribus* (Trin. 14.21).
[44] *Qui autem nec videt quemadmodum sit vivendum excusabilius quidem peccat quia non est transgressor legis incognitae: sed etiam ipse splendore aliquotiens ubique paresentis veritatis attingitur quando admonitus confitetur* (Trin. 14.21).

Augustine dedicates particular attention to the problem of self-love. The human mind is created such that "it never does not remember itself, never does not understand itself, never does not love itself."[45] The natural self-love aims at the preservation of the self and at the augmentation of its life up to its full form—happiness—but it succeeds in this endeavor only if it strives for truly beneficial goods. Most of the time, the human goes astray by erring in the true value of things and by setting its hope for happiness in impermanent things that cannot fulfill this hope and instead make one unhappy. Although all living beings by nature are filled with such an inclination of self-preservation, many humans ultimately do things that are highly unbeneficial to them. Augustine allows the metaphorical expression of "self-hate" for the phenomenon of choosing false goods. Self-hate does not describe, however, the intention of a being, but rather the consequences of his error. Since self-love naturally inheres in humans, they cannot really want to harm themselves. Every act of choosing a good occurs on the basis of self-love, but a wrong decision factually harms the actor who had hoped for something beneficial from it. Self-love turns thereby into self-hate. The consequences of the action are unintentionally damaging to the actor, and, in their harmfulness, they resemble acts arising out of hate.[46] As an alternative to self-hate, Augustine also speaks of perverted self-love, which takes the place of proper self-love. Since the truly highest human good is God, whoever properly (*recte*) loves himself loves God, and vice versa, whoever does not love God loves himself perversely (*perverse*) and thus hates himself.[47] But this manner of speaking is purely metaphorical. Every human loves himself and wants to be happy, but most humans miss the way to happiness, for it is found only in the love of God

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[45] *Sic itaque condita est mens humana ut numquam sui non meminerit, numquam se non intellegat, numquam se non diligat* (Trin. 14.18).

[46] "But if you hate someone you are dead set on doing him harm, and so it is not unreasonable to talk about the mind of man hating itself when it does itself harm. It does not know it is wishing itself ill while it imagines that what it wants is not to its disadvantage, but in fact it is wishing itself ill when it wants something that is to its disadvantage, and that is why it is written, 'Whoever loves iniquity hates his own soul' (Ps 11:5)."

Sed quoniam qui odit aliquem nocere illi studet, non immerito et mens hominis quando sibi nocet odisse se dicitur. Nesciens enim sibi vult male dum non putat sibi obesse quod vult, sed tamen male sibi vult quando id vult quod obsit sibi und illud scriptum est: "Qui diligit iniquitatem, odit animam suam (Ps. 11:5)" (Trin. 14.18).

[47] *Qui ergo se diligere novit Deum diligit; qui vero non diligit Deum etiam si se diligit, quod ei naturaliter inditum est, tamen non inconvenienter odisse se dicitur cum id agit quod sibi adversatur et se ipsum tamquam suus inimicus insequitur* (Trin. 14.18).

as the truly beatifying good. Self-love, therefore, does not depend on the love of God but is the basis for all striving after goods, whether they are merely supposed goods like riches and honor or true goods, like God.

With his reinterpretation of self-hate as self-love, Augustine prepares an argumentation that draws out the practical aspect of the inner trinity. Books 9 and 10 primarily focus on the theoretical side of being an image by bringing to the fore a self-knowledge that has to be presupposed in every search for self-knowledge, while book 14 offers a section, even if only a short one, that highlights the antecedence of the self-love belonging to the inner trinity before all striving for goods. In this context, the original concept of image emerges again, as the reference to Psalm 39:8 indicates. At the end of this section, the two meanings of *image* can be related to each other.

Even the fool in his blindness and inability remains an image of God because the naturally given memory, understanding, and love of himself cannot be lost.[48] Despite his erring in vanity, he, too, walks as an image (cf. Ps 39:8) insofar as every *mens* disposes of *memoria sui*, *intellectus sui*, and *amor sui*.[49] Augustine clearly refers here to the inner trinity and its character as *imago Dei* in order to illustrate its function within human praxis, which composes the ethical part of Trin. 14. Augustine gives two examples that are supposed to demonstrate the irrevocability of being-an-image by making visible the antecedence of the fundamental self-love before every choice of goods. If the fool who strives after riches was placed before the choice of either relinquishing his treasures or abandoning his mind, he naturally would want to keep his mind: "is there anyone so mindless that he would rather have the treasures than his mind? Treasures can frequently turn the mind upside down, and the mind that is not turned upside down by treasures can live much more easily and lightly without any treasures at all. But in any case, who can possess any treasures except with the mind?"[50] The argument does not simply state that

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[48] *Non tamen in his tantis infirmitatis et erroris malis amittere potuit naturalem memoriam, intellectum et amorem sui* (Trin. 14.19).

[49] *Verumtamen quia etiam talis in imagine ambulat homo, et habet memoriam et intellectum et amorem sui hominis mens* (Trin. 14.19).

[50] *quis usque adeo non habet mentem ut thesauros mallet habere quam mentem? Thesauri enim possunt mentem plerumque subvertere, et mens quae thesauris non subvertitur sine ullis thesauris facilius et expeditius potest vivere. Quis vero ullos thesauros nisi per mentem poterit possidere* (Trin. 14.19)? *Per lumina enim corporis quisque possidet quidquid libenter vide* (Trin. 14.19).

the mind is a higher good than wealth and therefore is preferred. If it was simply a matter of an order of preference between material and intellectual goods, Augustine could not claim that that every human would rather keep his mind; for if the fool esteems money higher than God, then why shouldn't he strive more for it than the mind? Decisive is rather that the *mens* composes the presupposition of all possession of goods and every striving for them. In an ethical perspective, *good* is a relative concept because it always requires a being for whom something is a good. Without the mind, neither wealth nor anything else could be enjoyed or strived for.

Augustine explains the antecedence of the mind through the relation of the eyes to what is seen. Despite all the enjoyment experienced in an object seen, one would choose, if necessary, the possession of the eyes over that which is seen because the eyes are the condition for the possibility of the joy of seeing in general. "Through the eyes in his head everyone possesses whatever he likes to look at."[51] The condition for the possibility of striving always will be preferred, not because it possesses a higher rank in the tiered realm of goods but because without it no goods would exist at all. Augustine does not discuss here the limit case of someone being placed before the choice of wanting to have either the mind or the highest good itself. This case is problematic because with the abdication of God, the hope for happiness is relinquished and the meaning of existence altogether is called into question. In principle, however, the possession of the mind should be preferred in this case also, even though the mind is lower than the *summum bonum* in Augustine's hierarchy of being, because it is only through the mind that goods are goods.[52]

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[51] *Per lumina enim corporis quisque possidet quidquid libenter vide* (Trin. 14.19).

[52] In Lib. arb., Augustine invites to self-contempt: "*Ut autem in contemplatione summae sapientiae (quae utique animus non est; nam incommutabilis est), etiam seipsum, qui est commutabilis, animus intueatur, et sibi ipse quodammodo veniat in mentem, non fit nisi differentia qua non est quod Deus, et tamen aliquid est quod possit placere post Deum. Melior est autem cum obliviscitur sui prae charitate incommutabilis Dei, vel seipsum penitus in illius comparatione contemnit. Si autem tanquam obvius placet sibi ad pervers imitandum Deum* (Lib. arb. 3.25.76)." But this passage merely states that the mind is underneath God within the hierarchy of goods, which is established according to their value of happiness. It is not concerned with the problem of the antecedence of self-possession before all striving for goods. The mind does not become happy through self-possession, but without self-possession, there would be no mind that could become happy.

Augustine remarks that this argumentation is made for the "slower readers" (*tardiores*) into whose hands his work could fall.[53] According to what was stated at the end of book 10 (Trin. 10.19), intellectual ponderosity is not only expressed in the incapacity to distinguish things arising simultaneously but also in the inability to recognize the work of *amor* where its object is not first sought but is always already possessed, as is the case with the inner trinity. Augustine comes to the aid of this inability by referring to the antecedence of the image and the self-affirmation inherent in it before all possession of goods, which first must be sought before they can be appropriated. This antecedence appears even in the decision of the fool to rather let his wealth go than his mind. In Augustine's examples, the precondition for all dealings with goods proves to be the always already existing self-possession with its constant self-affirmation.

Self-love thus precedes all ethical orientation and is found both in the wise and in the fool. Since the mind could not love itself if it did not possess knowledge of itself—that is, if did not remember and understand itself—self-love implies the entire inner trinity in which the *mens* is the image of God. This *imago* is the precondition for all striving for and enjoyment of goods. Even the striving for God, characteristic of the soul that has attained wisdom, has self-love as its precondition.[54] Therefore, Augustine can write: "There is such potency in this image of God in it [the mind] that it is capable of cleaving to him whose image it is."[55] The capacity to cleave to God demonstrates that the mind is the *capax Dei* and has the ability to become *particeps Dei*. The inner trinity is thus the presupposition of the capacity for wisdom. At the beginning of the ethical part of book 14, Augustine had said that the mind not only "remembers and understands and loves itself, but…is also able to remember and understand and love him by whom it was made (Trin. 14.15)." Upon this background it becomes clear that Augustine does not present the self-relation and the relation to God as alternatives. Rather, the capacity for an explicit relation to God is based, for him, on the constancy of the immediate self-

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[53] Cf. Trin. 14.20.

[54] For the problem of self-love in Augustine, cf. A. Nygren, *Eros und Agape. Gestaltwandlungen der christlichen Liebe* (Gütersloh, 1954); J. Burnaby, *Amor Dei* (London, 1938); O. O'Donovan, *The Problem of Self-love in St. Augustine*, (New Haven, 1980).

[55] *Qua in se imagine Dei tam potens est ut ei cuius imago est valeat inhaerere* (Trin. 14.20).

relation. The human being is able to seek God on the plane of the *cogitatio* only because his search for himself has always already reached its goal on the plane of the inner trinity.

4. The Image of God on the Plane of Conscious Reflection

Augustine understands the turning of the soul to God as a "renewal" and a "reformation" of the image that finally leads to the vision of God in which the similarity to God is perfect (cf. Trin. 14.23) and the mind will become "one spirit" with God (cf. Trin. 14.20). The human comes to participate in the divine nature and "it will live unchangeably and will see as unchangeable in it everything that it sees," whereas "for the time being…when it sees itself it does not see anything unchangeable."[56] The mutability the mind now witnesses in itself and that will no longer exist in the vision of God concerns human misery and happiness. The human sees himself now as one who is unhappy but who can attain eternal happiness in the vision of God.[57] Augustine calls the renunciation of the original happiness through sin and the restoration of this happiness the deformation and the reformation of the image: "But by sinning man lost justice and the holiness of truth, and thus the image became deformed and discolored; he gets those qualities back again when he is reformed and renovated."[58]

The topical complex of the renewal of the image cannot concern the inner trinity because renewal implies the changeability of the image, and, as Augustine repeatedly observes, the inner trinity is unchangeable. The question of happiness and unhappiness then has to do with the outer will whose striving can remain unfulfilled, not the *voluntas interior*, which always already has what it wills. Therefore, the changeableness that the human now sees in itself cannot entail the inner trinity but only the outer. The image capable of renewal is to be sought on the plane of the *cogitatio*-triad of which Augustine writes that it is "not really the image of God because the mind remembers and understands and loves itself, but because it is also able to remember and understand and

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[56] *In illa itaque natura cum feliciter adhaeserit immutabile videbit omne quod viderit….Se ipsam vero nunc quando videt non aliquid immutabile videt* (Trin. 14.20-21).

[57] *Quod ideo certe non dubitat quoniam misera est et beata esse desiderat, nec ob aliud fieri sperat hoc posse nisi quia est mutabilis* (Trin. 14.21).

[58] *Sed peccando iustitiam et sanctitatem veritatis amisit, propter quod haec imago deformis et decolor facta est; hanc recipit cum reformatur et renovator* (Trin. 14.22).

love him by whom it was made. And when it does this it becomes wise (Trin. 14.15)."
What is true of the inner trinity—namely, that it is the *imago Dei* by means of its self-relation—is not true of the outer trinity whose character as image consists in its ability to align itself with God. Augustine thus accounts for two different types of images, one unchangeable and the other changeable. The former is the condition of all praxis and striving for happiness but is itself neither happy nor unhappy; the latter became deformed and can be restored, finding its way back to its original happiness.

Augustine's situating of an image on the plane of the *cogitatio* characterized by changeability may seem odd initially, especially considering the lengths he went to in the disclosure and analysis of an unchangeable trinity in the human mind with its structural correspondence to the divine Trinity. A juxtaposition of the inner and outer trinities shows that those characteristics which make the inner trinity an *imago Dei* are not present on the *cogitatio*-plane. The inner trinity is constant, closed, and without an internal time-differential, whereas the *cogitatio*-trinity changes its object and is therefore inconstant, mutable, open, and subject to temporality. The inner trinity demonstrates perfect self-reflection. It is not discursive because the *intellegentia* totally represents the *memoria* just as all the members in the self-reflection interpenetrate one another such that one can speak of an identity of substance (cf. Trin. 9.7), according to which every individual member of the totality is equal (Trin. 9.8). The metaphysical equality arises only if the *mens* has itself for an object.[59] In contrast, the thought of God and the love for him as well as the capacity to think and love God do not compose an act of self-perception. This thought is discursive since it objectifies only one part of the *memoria*—namely, the memory of God. It cannot demonstrate a total interpenetration of *memoria*, *cogitatio*, and *voluntas* and thus exhibits neither an identity of substance nor an exchangeability of the individual members for the totality. Moreover, it is obvious that a metaphysical inequality is at hand when the *mens humana* has God as its object.

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[59] I cannot agree with Schmaus when he writes that Augustine "does not first and foremost see the realization of the image of the trinity in the direction of the powers upon one's own I" and that, especially for the triad of *memoria*, *intellegentia*, and *voluntas*, it was "not at all the intention of Augustine…to limit the activity to one's own I." (Schmaus 1967), 282f. Cf. also Schmaus' critique of G.A. Meier, *Die Lehre von der Trinität in ihrer historischen Entwicklung* I (Hamburg and Gotha, 1844). In my opinion, Meier comes closer to the truth than Schmaus. The thesis of the sempiternity of the inner trinity makes sense only if it is related to immediate self-knowledge.

Whereas Augustine conceives the inner trinity as now already *imago Dei*, he considers the *cogitatio*-trinity from the condition of consummation. In the last passages of book 14, he describes the process of renewal and the condition of being renewed. The human who was created in the image of God in justice and truth but forfeits them through sin will recover this justice and truth (cf. Trin. 14.22). The mind will be renewed so that its love shifts from temporal things to the eternal, from visible things to the intellectual (cf. Trin. 14.23). The mind will then cleave entirely to God and be one spirit with him (cf. Trin. 14.20). In the perfect vision of God, the similarity of the image will be complete.[60] Inversely, the similarity of the mind with God in this life is quite marginal. Perfect similarity first commences in the final vision.

The fact that Augustine calls the *cogitatio*-trinity an image of God insofar as it *can* align itself with God now can be reconsidered upon this background.[61] It was, first of all, a matter of depicting the conditions of this ability—namely, the original self-relation and outer reflection. An additional meaning of this "can" could entail that the *cogitatio* is first truly an image of God when the mind sees God and is thus completely similar to him. The mind would be then not only an image of God because it possesses the capacity to see God, but it will be an adequate image of God when it realizes this capacity. In this life, the mind is an image of God as concerns the inner trinity as the precondition of all thought and action. The outer trinity is, however, capable of perfection. In the condition of human depravity, its similarity to God is marginal and the image that it represents distorted and deformed. In the condition of perfection, however, the outer trinity—that is, the concrete thought and action and therefore the entire mind—will become an image of God. The imaged-ness is realized on the outer plane according to the general law that the mind conforms to those things toward which it directs its attention and love. Augustine explicates the structural consequences of this conformity for the human *cogitatio* in book 15.

The image that the human mind always already is distinguishes itself from that image whose similarity first emerges in the vision of God with respect to the function of

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[60] *In hac quippe imagine tunc perfecta erit Dei similitudo quando Dei perfecta erit visio (Trin. 14.23). Hinc apparet tunc in ista imagine Dei fieri eius plenam similitudinem quando eius plenam perceperit visionem* (Trin. 14.24).
[61] Cf. Trin. 14.15.

recognition. The renewal of the image does not occur suddenly—that is, as soon as God is made the object of attention and love; the approach to God rather takes place in a day-by-day progression. The recognition of God takes on an important function in this progression but initially occurs only through mirrors and puzzling reflections.[62] A factor in the conformity to God is thus the recognition of God in that mirror which the human mind is. Through the understanding of the inner trinity as an image of God, the mind is capable of seeing God imaged through itself and consequently of becoming more similar to him. The recognition of the image *as* image, a recognition that is a matter of the *cogitatio*, therefore has soteriological significance. Augustine does not accord the eschatological, perfected image of the *cogitatio*-plane any function of recognition, however, because the mind first reaches its full similarity to God when the divine Trinity is directly seen, making the mediation through an image superfluous.

The distinction of the image that the mind always already is from the image that develops in the mind up to perfect resemblance in the vision of God casts new light on the context of argumentation in books 11-14. Augustine pursues two different trains of thought: one drawing slower minds closer to the trinity-structure that exhibits no internal time-differential; and the other searching for the image of God in the realm of wisdom. These two different projects nonetheless show a certain connection. The first line of thought aims at the inner trinity, which alone is timeless insofar as there is nothing "adventitious" for it or in it. This trinity is neutral toward the distinction between knowledge and wisdom because it is presupposed in every inner-temporal mental activity. It is the universal principle of all concrete thought and action, but it is solely this universal principle: it does not further qualify thought or action; it is neutral to the distinction between wisdom and foolishness; and, considered in itself, it is soteriologically irrelevant. It cannot be the trinity exclusively found in the wise soul that is the goal of the second line of argumentation. The trinity in the realm of wisdom is, however, highly relevant for happiness, for wisdom is a morally qualified condition that ultimately flows into the perfect beatitude of the vision of God. Such wisdom is a state

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[62] *Imago vero quae renovatur in spiritu mentis inagnitione Dei non exterius sed interius de die in diem, ipsa perficietur visione quae tunc erit post iudicium facie ad faciem, nunc autem proficit per speculum in aenigmate* (Trin. 14.25).

attained or received in time and is thus "adventitious." The mind is not already wise when it appears in existence; it rather undergoes a change when it becomes wise. Consequently, this trinity must be different from the one discussed before. Immediate self-acquaintanceship is not wisdom. The two images have to be separated.

The two lines of thought are connected in such a way, however, that justifies Augustine interweavement of them in books 11-14. This connection entails more than the fact that even wise action is preconditioned by the original self-relation of the actor and is ultimately of a soteriological kind. The inner trinity is found in fools and the wise alike. The transition from foolishness to wisdom occurs through the worship of God (*cultus Dei*), that is, God becomes the object of the *cogitatio* and the *voluntas*. The trinitarian God, though, is not otherwise visible to finite reason except in the mirror and image of the inner trinity. Concerning the knowledge of God, the thought of God occurs by means of the mind's self-reflection, for the *cogitatio* only can direct itself toward the three-fold God by looking at the structure of the original self-acquaintanceship of the mind and apprehending it as an image of God. The immediate knowledge of oneself has to become the object of a mediated self-knowledge if the three-fold God is to be thought. Explicit self-reflection therefore is not merely a way-station for the apprehension of God that can be left behind once the goal of knowledge of God has been reached. There is rather no other cognitive means of knowing God in this life besides the contemplation of his image. Before the eschaton, no way leads beyond the image that could make it superfluous. First in the afterlife will the mind be able to turn away from the image in itself and directly focus on God. Wisdom is the worship of God, but it cannot be attained other than by following the Delphic command, "know thyself." The trinitarian structure of implicit self-acquaintanceship whose structure is so similar to that of the divine Trinity that it is called its image becomes visible only in explicit self-knowledge.[63]

Self-knowledge converges with the knowledge of God because the self is an intelligible object and thus belongs to that realm of being whose apprehension presupposes the freedom of the soul from vices and errors. Moral purity is achievable,

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[63] This statement is valid only for the project of knowing God. Such knowledge is not necessary for the access of faith to God. For faith, the implicit understanding of *trinity* that is always available to the human mind suffices.

however, only with God's help. And this help comes only to those who believe that God is capable of helping them. Strictly speaking, only that person is capable of apprehending the immediate self-relation through a mediated self-reflection who also knows that this structure corresponds to that of God. The ambivalence of Augustine's critique of Platonism consists in that, on the one hand, he attributes to the Platonists the discovery of ideal being, and, on the other hand, he denies that they demonstrate the humility through which alone God's help for the purification of the soul can be received. Despite their arrogance, the Platonists, Augustine claims, possess the right metaphysics.[64] As he explains in *De civitate dei*, Plotinus and Porphyry advocated a three-principle doctrine, which does not really correspond with the Christian idea of the Trinity but, in the case of Porphyry, came so close that he could be considered a pioneer of the *filioque* because he did not place the third principle underneath the second but between the first and the second.[65] A further loosening of the connection between metaphysical power of insight and the Catholic-Christian orientation of life is found in a passage from book 15 of *De Trinitate*.[66] According to this passage, Augustine maintains that it is possible to have an adequate knowledge of the structure of the human mind without interpreting the *mens humana* as an image of God, whether on account of the unacceptability of the idea of God altogether or because a non-Augustinian notion of the trinity forms the basis of it.

Despite these differentiations, Augustine claims that self-knowledge converges with wisdom. Thus, when he leads the "slower minds" to the understanding of the trinitarian structure of the original self-relation, he leads them simultaneously to wisdom. The fool is an image of God, he just doesn't know it. The foolish mind is consequently a distorted image. The wise person, on the contrary, is not only an image of God but also attains to the knowledge of himself as an image. The image in him is thus renewed. Likewise, the mind that under Augustine's guidance arrives at an understanding into the structure of his own self is thereby capable of seeing God in image and thus of thinking God, remembering God, and loving God. Insight into the image-character of the inner trinity leads to wisdom and ultimately to the outer trinity's becoming an image.

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[64] The entire book 7 of *Confessiones* handles this problem.
[65] Cf. Civ. dei 10.23.
[66] Cf. Trin. 15.44.

Augustine's argumentation can be summarized as follows: The human is created according to the image and analogy of God. In the condition of this life, however, only the core of the mind in which it is immediately related to itself represents an image of God. The stratum of the mind in which the human consciously interprets himself and his bearing in the world and accordingly sets priorities in his goals of action does not constitute an image of God. On this plane, the mind requires renewal through which it arrives at a proper understanding of itself and a praxis corresponding to this understanding. The human goal is the total conformity of the mind with God, entailing a transformation of the plane of conscious attention and concrete striving toward an image of God. This transformation occurs definitively through a perfect vision of God. It is prepared for in earthly life through explicit self-reflection in which the original self-relation is grasped *as* an image of God. God is seen in this image. Augustine names two structural conditions of this process. First of all, the immediate self-knowledge in the unity of the inner *memoria*, inner *intellegentia*, and inner *voluntas* is required. Through this inner trinity, the human always already possesses an implicit knowledge of itself. Secondly, the *memoria–cogitatio–voluntas* structure of conscious reflection is required, which is capable of guidance and in which an explicit, true self-reflection takes places if the will is able to direct the *cogitatio* to the latent self-knowledge hidden in the *memoria* and make it explicit. The inner trinity is always already an image of God, whereas the similarity of the outer trinity to God increases from the state of self- and God-forgetfulness through the self-knowledge as image to the direct vision of God in the eschaton. In this final stage, the image-character of the *cogitatio*-plane first truly emerges. Thus, the human mind in its essence *is* an image, and, at the same time, it is appointed to *become* an image.

Isabelle Bochet traces the epistemological foundations in Augustine's theory of the soul's natural striving for God.[67] She discusses, first of all, the thesis presented in *Confessiones* 10 of the soul's always present, implicit knowledge of God that represents the condition of possibility for an explicit seeking of God.[68] In order to explain the origin of this implicit knowledge, she takes recourse to Augustine's concept of the human as an image

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[67] I. Bochet, *Saint Augustine et le désir de Dieu* (Paris, 1982).
[68] Ibid., 143-74

of God. This contextualization becomes clearer, according to Bochet, through the consideration of Plotinus' conception of the emanation of the hypostases and Augustine's reception of this idea. Plotinus, she claims, has the noûs emanate from the One through which initially only "being" emerges. Being first becomes noûs by turning back towards the One.[69] The becoming of noûs occurs in two steps, namely, as *processio* and *conversio*. Plotinus writes that a desire is already at hand in the condition of the second hypostasis before the *conversio*, but only a vague notion of the object of this desire exists.[70] Through the *conversio*, this indefinite notion transforms into an actual vision. She suggests that Plontinus' depiction of the subordinate hypostasis as an image of the superordinate hypostasis from which it emerges allows the possibility of interpreting Augustine from this context.[71]

Bochet describes how Augustine nevertheless makes several changes to Plotinus' conception in order to make it compatible with the Christian faith. The notion of a *processio*, Bochet claims, is replaced by that a *creatio ex nihilo* and the *conversio* is no longer an expression of a natural bond but is to be understood as a free answer to a divine call. The call of God, for Augustine, she states, is not directed at an already constituted nature. The mind is rather constituted in the answer to the call. It first becomes the mind and obtains its form as *imago Dei* in the *conversio* to God. There is nonetheless a difference for the human mind, she asserts, between its initial formation, which already presupposes a *conversio*, and its perfected formation, which corresponds to heavenly beatitude.[72] The more intensely the mind turns to the eternal, the more similar it becomes to God and the more it becomes an image of God. There is not a human mind, according to Bochet, that has not already answered the call of God. Being a mind means having performed a *conversio* to God. The human mind is an image of God as one who is

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[69] Cf. Plotinus, Enn. V 2, 1; Bochet, 196f. Cf. also J. Bussanich, *The One and its Relation to the Intellect in Plotinus* (Leiden, 1988), esp. 11-4.

[70] ὥστε ἄλλου μὲν ἐπεύμησεν ἀορίστως ἔχουσα ἐπὶ αὐτῇ φάντασμά τι. (It [the eye] sought something of which it found the vague presentment within itself; it returned with something else.) (Enn. V 3 11, l. 6-7).

[71] Cf. Enn. V 2,1.

[72] "L'appel divin ne se surajoute pas à l'esprit déjà constitué: c'est au contraire en répondant à cet appel, en se tournant vers Dieu que l'esprit est constitué et qu'il reçoit sa forme d'image de Dieu. Mais, à cette conversion nécessaire pour la formation de l'image, s'ajoute, dans le cas de l'homme, une extension: il y a une distance en effect entre sa formation initiale qui suppose déjà un movement de conversion vers Dieu, et sa formation parfaite qui correspondra à la béatitude céleste (201)."

always already "turned." There are nonetheless degrees of increasing similarity. The original turn toward God has only an initial forming as a consequence. The maximum of similarity occurs at the end of a steady, conscious turn toward God in the process of life.

Upon this background, Bochet seeks a balance between Augustine's thesis that the human mind is an image of God by means of its essential, inextinguishable self-relation and his statement that the image-character consists in the mind's capacity to turn to God.[73] On her account, the relation to God and therefore the image-character of the sinner—that is, the image-character of the mind that turns away from God—is only potential. The image actualizes itself, she claims, if the soul consciously turns to God.[74] Bochet thus sees the connection of self-reflection and the turn to God in the idea that the mind only appropriately interprets itself if it apprehends its essential turn to God through which it first constitutes itself as mind.[75] The mind, accordingly, would always already have an essential relation to God. As a consequence, self-knowledge would aim particularly at the apprehension of this relatedness of the mind to God, and true self-knowledge simultaneously would be knowledge of God as the principle of the mind.

I would like to discuss two elements of this interpretation, namely, the distinction between potential and actual image and the idea of an original *conversio*. The sinner and the saint's varying degrees of similitude to God have to be addressed. But, particularly in light of the thesis of the mind's original *conversio*, it seems remarkable that the mind of the sinner should be merely potentially an image of God. As an original act, the turn must have been performed always already. Based on Augustine's text, it is more accurate to say that he considers the mind an actual image of God. For he does not write that the mind *could become* an image of God if it consciously turns to God, but rather that it *is* an image of God because it *can* remember and love God, which would apply also to the sinner.[76]

The conception of original conversion more likely would support the thesis of the natural imaged-ness of the mind as I have advocated. This conception nevertheless has weaknesses. Therefore, the aforementioned thesis, in my opinion, should not be based on

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[73] Cf. Trin. 14.15; Bochet, 214-20.
[74] Cf. Bochet, 217.
[75] Cf. Bochet, 220.
[76] Cf. Trin. 14.15

the foundation suggested by Bochet. The text of Augustine that comes closest to Plotinus' theory of the emanation of hypostases, and to which Bochet refers, actually argues against Bochet's interpretation and thus against a narrow parallelization with Plotinus. The conflicting interpretations revolve around the first three books of *De Genesi ad litteram*.[77]

Augustine interprets the creation of the "light,"[78] explicating this light as the totality of the purely intelligible creatures, that is, the "angels and virtues."[79] He then observes that the creation of humans as rational beings follows the same principles as those of the angels.[80] As a result, what can be said of the creation of light can be said of the creation of humans.

"The spiritual or material matter" (*materia sive spiritalis sive corporalis*) is, according to Augustine, initially created as formless (*informitas*), imperfect (*inperfectio*), and dissimilar (*dissimilis*) to God.[81] Such an imperfect creature first obtains its similarity to God "when in view of its own appropriate conversion to the true and eternal Being, namely, the Creator of its own substance, it also receives its proper form and becomes a perfect creature."[82] Through this conversion (*conversio*) and formation, the creature imitates God. Such an imitation would not take place, however, "if it [the creature] is turned from its Creator and remains formless and imperfect."[83] Augustine therefore interprets the conversion of the creature to God as formation, perfection, and as the cause of similarity. At the same time, he intimates that formation thus understood is not an essential characteristic of the creature, for it also can exist in an imperfect, dissimilar condition.

This last aspect will become clearer in the following chapter because Augustine emphasizes there that he is not speaking of the existential conditions of the intelligible being but of its moral character. The word as the Son of God, he writes, does not merely

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[77] Cf. Bochet, 201 n.1.

[78] Gen. litt. 1.3.7-5.11.

[79] Ibid., 2.8.16.

[80] Ibid., 3.20.31.

[81] Ibid., 1.4.9.

[82] *sed tunc imitatur verbi formam semper atque incommutabiliter patri cohaerentem, cum et ipsa pro sui generis conversione ad id, quod vere ac semper est, id est ad creatorem suae substantiae, formam capit et fit perfecta creatura* (Gen. litt. 1.4.9).

[83] *si aversa a creatore informis et imperfecta remaneat* (ibid).

have being (life) but his life is always already a wise and blessed life. The intellectual creature, in contrast, can very well have a formless life because its life (being) is not necessarily the wise and blessed life. Turned away from the immutable wisdom, its life is foolish and miserable—this is its unformedness. It obtains formation, however, by turning to God.[84] The turn toward or away from God decides not only over the being and life of a creature but also over the quality of this life—namely, whether it is a wise and blessed or a foolish and miserable life. Augustine does not claim, as Bochet assumes, that the creature first becomes mind through a *conversio*. Rather, the intellectuality of the intellectual creature is given independently of whether this creature has performed a *conversio* or not. The creature turned away is still an intellectual/spiritual being. The *conversio* does not first constitute the intellectuality but decides over the kind of life the intellectual being leads. If Bochet's interpretation of Plotinus is accurate, one would have to say that Augustine strips Plotinus' ontological interpretation of the turn and replaces it with an ethical interpretation. Thus, contrary to Bochet's interpretation of Augustine, having answered a call cannot be considered a characteristic of the human mind as such. The required self-knowledge in *De Trinitate*, moreover, cannot be understood as the mind's reflection on the fact of its having-once-already-answered. It consequently appears more accurate to understand the natural imaged-ness of the human mind not in terms of an essential *conversio* to God (especially since it remains unclear how the essentiality of such a turn is compatible with the idea of a free response to the call of God), but rather as a structural analogy between the human mind and the divine Trinity.[85]

The theses of the irrevocability of being-an-image and of the perfect similarity with God in the final vision can be harmonized if the always already existing image is identified with the immediate self-relation as the principle of all concrete thought and action and if the image that is to be restored is associated with precisely this thought and

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[84] *Non enim habet informem vitam verbum filius, cui non solum hoc est esse quod vivere, sed etiam hoc est ei vivere, quod est sapienter ac beate vivere. Creatura vero quamquam spiritalis et intellectualis vel rationalis, quae videtur esse illi verbo propinquior, potest habere informem vitam, quia non, sicut hoc est ei esse quod vivere, ita hoc vivere quod sapienter et beate vivere. Aversa enim a sapientia incommutabili stulte ac misere vivit, quae informitas est. Formatur autem conversa ad incommutabile lumen sapientiae, verum Dei* (Gen. litt. 1.5.10).
[85] Cf. Bochet, 200.

action. The editors of the *Oeuvres de Saint Augustin* attempt a different solution. They affirm that there is only *one* image of God, and this image is on the plane of the *cogitatio*.[86] Explicit self-reflection in the word, they claim, produces perfect equality, reciprocity, and identity between *memoria*, *intellegentia*, and *voluntas*.[87] The last conclusion is inaccurate, however, on account of the discursiveness of the *cogitatio*, which prevents an identity of *memoria* and *intellegentia*. Moreover, the notion of the unity of the image undervalues the image in its immediate self-relation, which is degraded to the mere possibility of being-an-image. The true image first would emerge in wisdom: "L'âme est donc image…parce qu'elle est appelée à vivre divinement et que, en vertu de cet appel, quelque chose de sa destinée est préfiguré dans son être initial. C'est-à-dire qu'elle est image moins par ce qu'elle est que par ce qu'elle est appelée à devenir."[88] This conception may be right for the image of God in wisdom, but it is inadequate as a statement about Augustine's theory of image on the whole because the pre-moral being-an-image is not appreciated at all. A similar reduction arises when it is claimed of the inner trinity: "Dans la première trinité, l'âme est en fait 'infirme et enténebrée'; son amour, 'perverti', la divise plus qu'il ne l'unit; sa mémoire, 'assoupie', ne se rappelle plus de qui elle est. Les trios puissances sont bien là, mais à l'état inchoatif, récapitulées dans l'élément de la mémoire; élément informe, image voilée."[89] This description does not at all capture the inner trinity, for it is not obscure to itself but is rather perfectly transparent, and its love is not even capable of erring. Their description applies solely to the outer trinity as long as the mind finds itself in foolishness. Instead of grasping the inner trinity as the presupposition of *every*—even wise—action and thought, they equate it with a particular manner of action and thought, namely, with foolishness.

The deeper reason for this reduction is due to their radical theological interpretation of *De Trinitate* according to which Augustine's theory of image exclusively describes humans in the light of revelation: "Nous sommes dans une perspective qui se réfère au point des vue de Dieu sur l'homme et toutes les expériences humaines ne sont

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[86] BA 16, 632 n. 46.
[87] Ibid., 636f n. 48.
[88] Ibid., 631 n. 45.
[89] Ibid., 634 n. 46.

interprétées qu' à la lumière de la Révélation."[90] In my opinion, Augustine's *De Trinitate* cannot be understood in this sense, for such a theological interpretation is incapable of doing justice to the doctrine of the image of God in the inner trinity.

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[90] Ibid., 632 n. 45.

IX. Human Subjectivity and the Divine Trinity – Correspondences and Differences (Trin. 15)

1. The Comprehension of the Incomprehensible

Book 15 of *De Trinitate* is divided into three parts. The first part reiterates the concern of the knowledge of the Trinity and recapitulates the results of books 1-14 (cf. Trin. 15.1-16). With recourse to the theory of the inner word, the second part compares the relation of *memoria* and c*ogitatio* to the relation between God the Father and the Son (cf. Trin. 15.10-26). The third part pertains to the Holy Spirit (cf. Trin. 15.27-51) but also addresses the general topic of being-an-image.

In the first fourteen books, Augustine presents an interpretation of the divine Trinity supported by scripture (cf. Trin. 1-4) and permeated with philosophical reflections (cf. Trin. 5-7) in order to disclose the trinity-structures in the human mind (cf. Trin. 8-14). With the onset of book 15, he clearly reverses his line of argumentation. Proceeding from the traits of the *mens humana*, Augustine infers attributes of the divine Trinity. Beginning with the creature, he ascends to the uncreated nature in order to demonstrate that it is three-in-one "not merely to faith on the authority of divine scripture, but also to understanding, if we can, by some evidence of reason."[1] Augustine also introduces a series of biblical testimonies in order to justify before believers his idea of a knowledge of the Trinity departing from creatures.[2] But he immediately endeavors to remove any all too rationalistic sounding edge from his formulations. The knowledge of the divine Trinity from the creatures can be advanced, he claims, only if we are capable (*si possumus*) and if what is found in creation are "signs of that supreme trinity (*indicia summae illius Trinitatis*, cf. Trin. 15.3)." The idea of an analogy between the divine

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[1] *Supra hanc ergo naturam si quaerimus aliquid et verum quaerimus, Deus est, natura scilicet, non creata, sed creatrix. Quae utrum sit Trinitas non solum credentibus divinae Scripturae auctoritate, verum etiam intellegentibus aliqua si possumus ratione iam demonstrare debemus* (Trin. 15.1).

[2] Romans 1:20 is the first reference Augustine cites: "For his invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." (*Invisibilia enim eius, a creatura mundi, per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta conspiciuntur*). He also quotes Wisdom 13:5: "For from the greatness of the beauty and of the creature the creator of these things can knowably be seen." (*A magnitudine enim speciei et creaturae cognoscibiliter poterat horum Creator videri.*)

Trinity and the human mind does not allow the former to be apprehended in reflection in the same way as the latter. Analogates are never completely identical but are different in several respects. Difference does not impede, then, the project of a knowledge of God from creatures if one can specify what the difference consists in. Augustine can even enlist the thesis of the incomprehensibility of God as long as it does not entail an absolute incomprehensibility, but rather consists, for example, merely in a connection of elements that are known from an analysis of the human mind in a different way than in the *mens humana*.

The incomprehensibility of God is reflected in the framework of natural theology through a dialectic of seeking and finding. Whoever seeks the divine Trinity with Augustine will find it as something incomprehensible. But precisely because of not yet being able to comprehend it, he will want to advance in his search in order to better find it—an advancement that is accompanied by the betterment of the seeker. If it is faith that motivates one to seek, it is nonetheless reason that finds. But, confronted with the incomprehensibility of what is found, it, too, continues to seek.[3]

In the subsequent section, Augustine applies his depiction of the problem concerning the knowledge of the incomprehensible to the entire course of *De Trinitate* thus far treated. At the end of a summarizing review of his work (cf. Trin. 15.4-5), Augustine emphasizes that finally in book 14 "a trinity in the image of God" is brought to light "which is man in terms of mind; the mind which is *being renewed in the recognition of God according to the image of him who created* (Col 3:10) man to his own image."[4] After the *image* of God has become manifest in the wisdom of humans, he concludes, we now must search in the eternal things, in the vision of which the happy life consists, for that Trinity that is God.[5] It is thus a matter of the step from the knowledge of the image of God to the knowledge of God himself or from the apprehension of the image to the understanding of the original.

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[3] *Fides quaerit, intellectus invenit….Et rursus intellectus eum quem invenit adhuc quaerit…. Ad hoc ergo debet esse homo intellegens ut requirat Deum* (Trin. 15.2).

[4] *et eo pervenit disputatio ut trinitas appareat in imagine Dei quod est homo secundum mentem quae renovatur in agnitione Dei secundum imaginem eius qui creavit hominem ad imaginem suam* (Trin. 15.5).

[5] *Iam ergo in ipsis rebus aeternis, incorporalibus et immutabilibus in quarum perfecta contemplatione nobis beata quae non nisi aeterna est vita promittitur Trinitatem quae Deus est inquiramus* (Trin. 15.6).

Thus, Augustine follows at first the path of natural theology according to which every positive characteristic of finite beings refers to the perfection of an infinite being preeminent over everything created. God is "the most powerful, just and beautiful, the best and happiest spirit of all (Trin. 15.6)." As is sufficiently clear from the preceding books, these attributes of God are not accidental but substantial (e.g. God is not wise but is wisdom), and all of these attributes are identical to each other (cf. Trin. 15.7-8). But no knowledge of the Trinity can be derived from them because only relational predicates, not essential attributes, enable the distinction of the persons. Enumerating once again all of the kinds of triads encountered in a procession through the human mind, Augustine recapitulates the turn toward the contemplation of the human mind as an image of God— the turn that was occasioned by the impossibility of a direct vision of God. Decisively, all of these triads were accessible to reason (*videre*, *conspicere*). Augustine therefore asks whether the divine Trinity is understandable like these *trinitates*: "But just because we see these evident trinities…does it mean that we also see God as trinity in the same way, since there too we intellectually observe one as uttering, and his word (that is, the father and the son) and the charity common to them both proceeding thence, namely the holy spirit?"[6] Can it be that the trinities of the human mind are more seen than believed, whereas the divine Trinity is more believed than seen?[7] This would entail a restriction of the natural knowledge of God, a possible knowledge that Augustine defends with constant referral to Romans 1:20 against potential theological objections. According to this restriction, either nothing of God is made visible through creation or at least some things, like his threefold-ness, only can be believed, not understood.[8] Augustine argues against this restriction and for the possibility of understanding the divine Trinity.

The possibility of this understanding is subject, however, to several conditions. Augustine works out these conditions in his interpretation of the apostle's words

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[6] *ita videmus etiam Trinitatem Deum quia et illic intellegendo conspicimus tamquam dicentem et verbum eius, id est Patrem et Filium, atque inde procedentem caritatem utrique communem, sanctum scilicet Spiritum* (Trin. 15.10)?

[7] *videmus potius quam credimus….Deum vero esse Trinitatem credimus potius quam videmus* (ibid.).

[8] *Quod si ita est, profecto aut invisibilia eius per ea quae facta sunt nulla intellecta conspicimus, aut si ulla conspicimus, non in eis conspicimus trinitatem, et est illic quod conspiciamus, est quod etiam non conspectum credere debeamus* (Trin. 15.10).

concerning the knowledge of God in a "mirror" and in an "enigma" (1 Cor. 13:12).[9] Paul used the language of a mirror, Augustine explains, to illustrate that an immediate vision of God is not realizable. Only contemplation in image is feasible, and the image of God is the highest ranking creature, the human mind. The knowledge of God inferred from creatures occurs, therefore, by means of the contemplation of that image that the *mens humana* is. Augustine goes on to define the enigma as a particular form of allegory. In allegory, "one thing is understood from another."[10] Enigma thus represents, for Augustine, a dark, obscure allegory. Taken together, the words pertaining to a mirror and an enigma mean that the image's role in knowledge is always accompanied by difficulties. It is not immediately clear that and how statements about the human mind may be understood as statements about God. The similarity of the image to that of which it is an image is not at all obvious.[11]

The inaccessibility of the mind as an image is, first and foremost, due to a lack of insight into the structure of the mind. "Who fails to see his own thought? And on the other hand who does see his own thoughts—and I do not mean with the eyes of flesh but with the inner gaze? Who fails to see them and who does see them?"[12] Indeed, everyone knows that he has thoughts, but the true concept of the *cogitatio* is seldom understood. Either a bodily or material conception of the mind impedes the understanding, or it is not recognized that the thought of all objects (whether they be corporeal or incorporeal, immanent to the mind like virtues and vices or transcendent) is carried out through the *cogitatio* as "a kind of sight of the consciousness."[13] The mysteriousness of the image can be disbanded only through the development of a true, i.e. idealistic concept of the

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[9] In the Ostia-report of *Confessiones* (9.10.25), Augustine still appears to assume the possibility of at least a momentary, direct perception of God that is not reliant on the mediation of the image and enigma (*nec per enigma similitudinis*).

[10] *Quid est ergo allegoria nisi tropus ubi ex alio aliud intellegitur* (Trin. 15.15).

[11] *Proinde quantum mihi videtur sicut nomine speculi imaginem voluit intellegi, ita nomine aenigmatis quamvis similitudinem tamen obscuram et ad perspiciendum difficilem* (Trin. 15.16).

[12] *Quis enim non videt cogitationem suam? Et quis videt cogitationem suam (non oculis carnalibus dico sed ipso interiore conspectu)? Quis non eam videt, et quis eam videt* (Trin. 15.16)?

[13] The mundaneness of this phenomenon creates the impression that the matter is of no particular concern and conceals its dubiety so much so that Augustine claims that the greatest enigma actually consists in our own obliviousness to the mysteriousness of the mind. "*Et hoc est grandius aenigma ut non videamus quod non videre non possumus* (Trin. 15.16)."

human mind. The *mens humana* first understands itself in explicit self-knowledge to the extent that it no longer poses an enigma for itself.

The mind's self-knowledge is merely the necessary, not however sufficient condition for the apprehension of the image as image. At the end of book 15, Augustine argues that self-knowledge and knowledge of God do not necessarily go hand in hand but are definitely separable. He anticipates readers "who merely observe in their own minds what we have discussed and suggested" without recognizing the mind in its imaged-ness: "So those who see their mind insofar as it can be seen, and in it this trinity which I have discussed from many angles as best I could, but do not believe or understand it to be the image of God, see indeed a mirror, but are so far from seeing by the mirror the one who now can only be seen by a mirror, that they do not even know the mirror they see *is* a mirror, that is to say an image."[14] Thus, the enigma that the mind poses for itself can be resolved without the mind recognizing itself as an image of God. Augustine appears to be thinking of representatives of other interpretations of the Trinity. They are very well capable of following his analysis of the human mind but do not admit that the structure of the mind, as presented by Augustine, sheds light on the structure of the divine threefold-ness even if it is only per analogiam. The words of the apostle on the knowledge of God in a mirror and enigma insist, according to Augustine, that the mind must have both a correct concept of itself and knowledge of itself as an image in order to achieve insight into God through the contemplation of itself and through the observation of the differences between infinite and finite substances. According to a subordination or modal interpretation of the Trinity, the knowledge of God in the image of the human mind is impossible because the *mens humana* exhibits a total trinitarian structure that, in the view of these interpretations, does not inhere in God. Conversely, an appropriate understanding of the structure of the mind together with the knowledge of its image-character enables a knowledge of God in which his threefold-ness comes to the fore. The differences between God and the human do not fundamentally change anything about the correspondence of their trinitarian structures.

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[14] *Qui ergo vident suam mentem, quomodo videri potest et in ea trinitatem istam de qua multis modis ut potui disputavi, nec tamen eam credant vel intellegunt esse imaginem Dei. Speculum quidem vident, sed usque adeo non vident per speculum qui est per speculum nunc videndus ut nec ipsum speculum quod vident sciant esse speculum, id est imaginem* (Trin. 15.44).

In book 8, Augustine shows God to be the immutable good, and in book 14, he reminds the reader that if the human possesses wisdom, he receives it from God who is wisdom itself. He then argues upon this basis as follows: "Could it be that this other wisdom which is called God does not understand itself, does not love itself? Who would ever say such a thing? Or does anybody fail to see that where there is no knowledge there cannot possibly be any wisdom? Or is it to be supposed that the wisdom which God is knows other things and does not know itself, or loves other things and does not love itself? It would be folly and impiety to say or believe such a thing. So there we have a trinity, namely wisdom and its knowledge of itself and its love of itself. We found a similar trinity in man, namely the mind, and the knowledge it knows itself with, and the love it loves itself with."[15] In this passage, Augustine infers the self-relationality of God from the self-relationality of the human mind. If human wisdom includes self-knowledge and self-love, why would this be otherwise for God when he is wisdom in a much higher sense?

The striking thing about this observation is that in Augustine's depiction of the doctrine of God up until this point, self-referentiality, even if it was never ruled out, had not occupied a central interest. Augustine had conceived God rather as perfect *essentia* and had endeavored to make the infinity and simplicity of this *essentia* compatible with its threefold-ness, which he achieved in his doctrine of relations. Self-relationality was more significantly the leitmotiv of the *mens*-analysis. For as a finite substance, the *mens* does not have the trinitarian attributes of the infinite substance, but through its self-relation, it could attain these characteristics. Since Augustine now interprets God's wisdom as reflexivity, which was not the case earlier, he transfers the essential attribute of self-referentiality to God.[16] What initially appeared to be a structure with which an inferior being attempted to imitate the attributes of God proves to be a point of departure

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[15] *An haec spaientia quae Deu dicitur non se intellegit, non se diligit? Quis hoc dixerit? Aut quis est qui non videat ubi nulla scientia est nullo modo esse sapientiam? Aut vero putandum est sapientiam quae Deus est scire alia et nescire se ipsam, vel diligere alia nec diligere se ipsam? Quae sive dici sive credi stultum et impium est. Ecce ergo Trinitas, sapientia scilicet et notitia sui et dilectio sui. Sic enim et in homine invenimus trinitatem, id est mentem et notitiam qua se novit et dilectionem qua se diligit* (Trin. 15.10).

[16] Augustine had the opportunity before, especially in book 7, to interpret God in terms of reflexivity. In book 7, he discussed the relationality of wisdom, the *verbum*, and the *imago* in the sense of the derivation of the Son from the Father (e.g. in Trin. 7.4), but he did not address the reflexivity of the divine Trinity.

for a conclusion by analogy. With the help of the conclusion by analogy, Augustine can show that insight into the self-relationality of the human mind simultaneously entails insight into the self-relationality of God. Methodologically, the analysis of the divine Trinity does not precede the *mens*-analysis so that Augustine could use its results as thematic guidelines for the latter. Rather, we know through reflection on the mind that wisdom implies self-knowledge, which is articulated in *memoria sui*, *cogitatio sui*, and *voluntas sui*, and conclude that such an articulated self-relation is also found in God.

2. A Comparison between Conscious Reflection and Immediate Self-Relation

It is important to note that it is not the inner but rather the outer triad that serves Augustine as a point of departure for his conclusion by analogy. He does not infer God from the inner constant triad, even though it composes the better image of God, but rather from the *cogitatio*-plane whose true form is human wisdom. In book 14, Augustine occasionally called the *cogitatio* word.[17] In book 15, the triad of *memoria*, *cogitatio* (*verbum*), and *voluntas* constitutes the foundation from which Augustine extrapolates the Trinity of God the Father, Son (*verbum Dei*), and Holy Spirit. The initial point of inference is significant because, on account of the differences between the inner and the outer trinity, the placement of negations varies depending on which triad is chosen as a basis. Augustine names three differences between the divine and the human *trinitas* in the following section.

The first negation concerns the relation between person and trinity. For Augustine, it is not the entire human who is an image of God; it is not even his entire soul, but rather the *mens* alone. The person *is* not threefold but *possesses* threefold-ness in its mind.[18] God, on the contrary, is in his entirety nothing other than threefold-ness. Whereas for humans one person is an individual human, in God the three persons are of one essence.[19]

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[17] Cf. Trin. 14.10; 14.13.

[18] *Et una persona, id est singulus quisque homo, habet illa tria in mente vel mentem* (Trin. 15.11). Augustine equates person and individual in this discussion.

[19] *Nec aliquid ad naturam Dei pertinent quod ad illam non pertineat Trinitatem, et tres personae sunt unius essentiae non sicut singulus quisque homo una persona* (Trin. 15.11).

This depiction is initially confusing because Augustine appears to take back what he never claimed, namely that the human in his entirety is an image of God. It was evident in book 9 at the latest that only the *mens* can have the status of an *imago Dei*.[20] Augustine's thesis is more readily understandable if one brings it into connection with the relation between the human and the Trinity. The human *has* a trinity, namely his mind. In contrast, God *is* a trinity. If one introduces the concept of *person*, it follows that the human person possesses a trinity. The three divine persons *are* a trinity. In a later passage, Augustine makes more explicit what it means for a human person to possess a trinity: "But when these three things [i.e. to remember, understand, and love] are found in one person, such as man is, someone could well say to us: 'These three, memory understanding and love, are mine, not their own; and whatever they do, they do it for me and not for themselves—or rather, I do it through them….It is I who remember, I who understand, I who love with all three of these things—I who am not either memory or understanding or love, but have them.' This can indeed be said by one person who has these things and is not himself these three things. But in the simplicity of that supreme nature which is God, although God is one the persons are three, father and son and holy spirit."[21] To have a trinity instead of being it therefore entails for a person that it is the executor of acts of memory, understanding, and love. The person (or the human) does not lose itself in these acts and not merely in the sense that the person is composed of the body and other lower parts of the soul besides the mind. The execution of these acts is rather, first and foremost, subject to the person's will. The person will remember, understand, and love only if it decides to do it. The intellectual faculties are not subjects of their own execution. Rather, the person acts and therefore differs from the faculties. God, on the contrary, does not stand opposite of his threefold-ness so that he could execute it or not; he is identical with it.

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[20] Cf. Gen. litt. 7.24.35.

[21] *Verum haec quando in una sunt persona sicut est homo potest nobis quispiam dicere: Tria ista, memoria, intellectus et amor mea sunt, non sua; nec sibi sed mihi agunt quod agunt, immo ego per illa. Ego per omnia illa tria memini, ego intellego, ego diligo, qui nec memoria sum nec intellegentia nec dilectio, sed haec habeo. Ista ergo dici possunt ab una persona quae habet haec tria, non ipsa est haec tria. In illius vero summae simplicitate naturae quae Deus est, quamvis unus sit Deus, tres tamen personae sunt, Pater et Filius et Spiritus sanctus* (Trin. 15.42).

A second difference concerns the distinguishability of the trinitarian elements. The thesis of the threefold-ness of not only the three divine persons together but also of every individual person logically results from the interpretation of wisdom as self-relation. According to the trinitarian logic, *ad se*-predicates, like "wise," are equally valid both for God and for every individual person. To say that God remembers himself, knows and loves Himself simultaneously means that the Father, Son, and Spirit, each for Himself, knows, remembers, and loves Himself as well as the other persons. The triad of *mens*, *notitia*, and *dilectio*, or *memoria*, *intellegentia*, and *voluntas* found in the human mind thus cannot be applied to God as if the *mens*/*memoria* corresponded to the Father, the *notita*/*intellegentia* to the Son, and the *dilectio*/*voluntas* to the Spirit. The human is capable of remembering solely through the memory; understand solely through the understanding; and love solely through the will. But in God, each of the three persons exercises all three functions. If this was not the case, then the interpretation would result—although only by restricting wisdom solely to the *intellegentia*—in an interpretation that Augustine already rejected in book 7, namely that the Father is wise only through the Son.[22]

The third difference between the divine and the human mind concerns the simultaneity or discursiveness of knowledge. This difference also indirectly deals with self-reflection. God's knowledge is simultaneous in a two-fold sense: first, what is future and what is past are, for this knowledge, just as present as the present itself; second, thought contents are not merely individually apprehended so that one content must be dropped in order that another content can become an object of attention— thought contents are rather simultaneously present.[23] The human, in contrast, does not see the future, but rather everything is developed from the past. Moreover, the human mind is incapable of making all of its knowledge appear within the horizon of his attention at one time. Contents rather can be thought merely individually and

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[22] Cf. Trin. 15.12. Augustine is now certain of the answer to his question posed but left undecided in Conf. 13.11.12: the third possibility is the right one.

[23] *Quis ergo hominum potest istam sapientiam qua novit Deus omnia ita ut nec ea quae dicuntur praeterita ibi pratereant, nec ea quae dicuntur futura quasi desint expectentur ut veniant, sed et praeterita et futura cum praesentibus sint cuncta praesentia; nec singula cogitentur et ab aliis ad alia cogitando transeatur, sed in uno conspectu simul praesto sint universa; quis, inquam, hominum comprehendit istam sapientiam eandemque prudentiam eandemque scientiam* (Trin. 15.13)?

successively. This last point also can be understood as a thesis on the relation of *memoria* and *cogitatio* (i.e. outer *intellegentia*). God's *intellegentia* is an exhaustive image of his *memoria*, whereas the human *intellegentia/cogitatio* is capable of presenting merely a small extract of the *memoria*.[24]

In conclusion, it can be said that the divine Trinity, according to Augustine, transcends the human mind in three ways: 1) God does not execute his threefold-ness but is it. 2) In the human mind, every faculty is associated with a specific act: the human remembers only through the memory, understands only through the understanding, and loves only through the will, whereas in God every individual person is trinitarian. 3) God thinks simultaneously, the human discursively. In these three points, the image of God that is the *mens humana* must be negated in order to speak adequately about the original. Since the only trinity we can really understand is the one that we ourselves are (or have), God's Trinity is incomprehensible to us. This becomes particularly clear with respect to the third thesis. The simultaneity of divine thought is incomprehensible for a being that is only capable of discursive thought. But this incomprehensibility means only that the conditions under which simultaneous thought is possible are not accessible for us. It does not mean, however, that we cannot understand what simultaneous thought is. In fact, precisely this notion becomes understandable with the help of specific negation: simultaneous thought corresponds to human thought and exhibits the same structures as it with the exception that in simultaneous thought the *cogitatio* and *memoria* are not temporally different or different with regards to content.

The secondary literature often takes these distinctions to be Augustine's final word on the relation betweem the divine and the human trinities.[25] If this interpretation were correct, then Augustine would have distanced himself in the last book of his work from the thesis that the human mind structurally corresponds to the divine Trinity to the point that the latter is pictorially visible in the former. A different interpretation emerges when

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[24] Augustine writes that God "does not observe things by thinking of them one by one, but embraces everything that he knows in one eternal, unchangeable, and inexpressible vision."
qui non singula cogitando aspicit sed una, aeterna et immutabili atque ineffabili visione complectitur cuncta quae novit (Trin. 15.13).
[25] Cf., for example, Schmaus 1967, 399-406; J. Moingt, *Oeuvres de saint Augustin* BA 16, 643-5 n. 53; Booth 1979, 122.

the distinction between the two planes in the human mind is carefully considered. Augustine clearly does not choose the inner but rather the outer triad as his point of comparison for the explanation of the differences of the divine Trinity to the *mens humana*. The separability of the person as executor of its acts and the acts themselves could not be claimed of the inner triad. However the relation of individual and immediate self-acquaintanceship is to be understood, it is clear that the original self-relation is not to be understood as an act that a person can either execute or omit. The inner triad is the constitutional condition of a rational being in general and therefore is not subject to the decisions of this rational being on the activation or inactivation of its faculties. The original self-relation is neither a system of contingent acts nor can it be opposed by an actor existing independently of the execution of these acts. On the plane of the inner trinity, the self is nothing that exists outside of the *memoria sui*, the *intellegentia sui*, and the *voluntas sui*. Like God, this self does not *possess* a trinity; it *is* this trinity. Augustine's first difference obtains only between the outer triad and God. It does not concern the inner triad, which, in this respect, proves to be a true image of God.

The third difference also can refer only to the outer, not the inner triad. Discursiveness occurs only where the content deposited in memory comes into view of the *cogitatio*. It does not take place, however, in the realm of the inner triad where the entire *memoria* is always present in the *intellegentia*. In this realm, the self is completely transparent to itself; it sees itself in one glance. This glance is unchanging not only because its horizon apprehends its entire content at one time but also because, on account of the closed-ness of the inner triad, there is no past and no future for it. Nothing can disappear from it and nothing new can enter into it. The thought of the inner triad is no less simultaneous than the thought of God.

Admittedly, immediate self-knowledge refers only to the self and nothing else, while God's knowledge encompasses everything knowable. The fact that Augustine employs a comparison between the outer triad and God at all, although the inner triad is much more similar to God, can be explained by his orientation on human perfection. The inadequacy of the inner triad consists in that—as similar to God as it is—it embodies merely a small portion of total knowledge. It would be better if all human knowledge, not only immediate self-knowledge, was structured like it—that is, if the outer triad

possessed the same attributes as the inner triad. Through the approach to God and the betterment of character, the state of perfection should be attained. In this state, not only will the immediate self-relation, as it is also found in the fool, be similar to God but also the entire human mind. Augustine therefore does not compare the outer triad with God because it is now already more of an image of God than the inner triad but because it can become an image of God. It will then represent a more encompassing correspondence of the mind with God than is now already at hand in immediate self-relation.

The second difference requires more extensive treatment. It also is based on the notion of an actor who executes acts of remembering through his memory, understands through his faculty of understanding, and loves through his will. The ability to isolate these faculties from another is not available on the plane of the inner triad. The thesis, in God each person does not exercise simply one function but all three functions and both with reference to itself and to the other persons, is ultimately a reformulation of the axiom that three are not more than one. As long as it is a matter of *ad se*-attributes—and that is the case—each person represents the entire Trinity. Augustine discoveres precisely this structure in the human mind as well. The *mens*, *amor sui*, and *notitia sui* (cf. Trin. 9.8) or *memoria sui*, *intellegentia sui*, and *voluntas sui* (cf. Trin. 10.18) mutually encompass and interpenetrate one another such that each particular element represents the entire trinity. The non-add-ability of the elements is an essential feature of the intelligible world in general and consequently applies to the *mens humana*, and not only to the primary triad but just as equally to the *cogitatio*-triad. At the conclusion of his discussion on the parallel of the Father-Son relation to the relation between *memoria* and the inner word, Augustine writes, "I have been attributing to memory all that we know even though we are not thinking about it, and to intelligence in the proper sense a kind of formation of thought."[26] That which is understood in thought is thus deposited in the memory where it can be later recalled. But the true depths of the memory emerge when one does not recall a knowledge acquired and appropriated into the faculty of memory but when contents are found that have never been thought: "But there are more hidden depths in our memory, where we found this thing even when we thought about it

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[26] *memoriae tribuens omne quod scimus etiamsi non inde cogitemus, intellegentiae vero proprio modo quamdam cogitationis informationem* (Trin. 15.40).

for the first time, and where the innermost word is born that does not belong to any language—born as knowledge from knowledge and sight from sight, and as understanding which is manifested in thought from understanding which was already lurking, but hidden, in memory."[27] With this reference to the contents of memory that are found without ever having been acquired, Augustine makes a transition from the outer to the inner triad whose contents compose its essence and are therefore equally original with it. But not only must a memory be assumed that lays deeper than the capacity to store what is learned, a special *intellegentia* also must be determined that is not identical to the *intellegentia* in the *cogitatio* and the *verbum intimum*. Augustine claims that this special *intellegentia* differs from that in the *cogitatio*, first of all, because, like the inner memory, it precedes every conscious act of attention and is thus normally hidden, and secondly, because the *intellegentia* of the *cogitatio*-plane stems from this deeper laying *intellegentia*. Augustine thus describes the structure of explicit self-reflection in which the mind raises the always already existing knowledge of itself into consciousness making it the content of explicit thought. But besides the *intellegentia*, a latent love (*dilectio*) also has to be determined on that fundamental plane because when the *cogitatio* takes recourse to this plane, it finds that the mind already knows and loves.[28]

Augustine draws on his depiction of the primary triad in book 10 in which an analysis of the *memoria exterior* leads to the discovery of a *trinitas interior*. The decisive point for the present context is, however, that the first member of the outer *memoria–intellegentia* (*cogitatio*)–*voluntas* triad proves to be internally trinitarian insofar as it encompasses the inner triad of *memoria—intellegentia—voluntas*. Moreover, the *cogitatio* also turns out to be a triad, for it could only access a specific content of memory when it knows what it wants to remember. A kind of consciousness of what has already been thought is required, according to Augustine, for the identification of a sought content of *memoria*. This consciousness also represents a memory but one that does not

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[27] *Sed illa est profunditas nostrae memoriae ubi hoc etiam primum cum cogitaremus invenimus et gignitur intimum verbum quod nullius linguae sit tamquam scientia de scientia et visio de visione et intellegentia quae apparet in cogitatione de intellegentia quae in memoria iam fuerat, sed latebat* (Trin. 15.40).
[28] *Sicut ergo inest intellegentia, inest dilectio illi memoriae principali in qua invenimus paratum et reconditum ad quod cogitando possumus pervenire quia et duo ista invenimus ibi quando nos cogitando invenimus et intellegere aliquid et amare quae ibi erant et quando inde non cogitabamus* (Trin. 15.41).

belong to the *memoria* but to the *cogitatio* itself since it is the condition of the *cogitatio*'s access to the *memoria*.[29] Augustine furthermore claims that the *cogitatio* and its own *memoria* are connected by love "because the gaze of our thought only goes back to something by remembering, and only bothers to go back to it by loving."[30] Therefore, like the *memoria*, the *cogitatio* also proves to be a trinitarian connection of *cogitatio*, *memoria*, and *dilectio*.[31]

Finally, the will, too, is to be considered Trinitarian, at least when it is right. The will, according to Augustine, either can follow direct stimuli which come to it from the outside—in which case its action would be false—or it can distance itself from these stimuli and assess the goods offered in them according to their value. This is the condition for right action. The right will thus presupposes such a capacity—that is, it knows what it should strive for and what it should avoid.[32] This knowledge implies memory and understanding.[33] Therefore, third member of the secondary triad also proves to be trinitarian in itself.

Consequently, the second difference between the divine Trinity and the *mens humana* does not really exist. Just as each of the three persons represents the entire Trinity in God, each individual element in the *memoria–cogitatio–voluntas* trinity of the human mind is in itself trinitarian. The original thesis that the human remembers only through the *memoria*, understands only through the *cogitatio*, and loves only through the *voluntas* proves to be false because in the *memoria*, understanding and love are always already operating, because the *cogitatio* has its own memory and its own love, and because the *voluntas* knows of itself what it wills. In light of the arguments from books 9 and 10 on the unity of the *mens humana* in accordance with the unity of God, the thesis

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[29] *quamquam et ipsa cogitatio quandam suam memoriam nisi haberet, non reverteretur ad ea quae in memoria reliquerat cum alia cogitaret* (Trin. 15.40). Augustine does not take a position regarding the infinite regress threatening this line of thought. If the necessity of a pre-memory is asserted to be the means for discovering a sought content of *memoria* (insofar as one can only search if one knows what one is searching for), then how can the thesis be rejected that for the identification of this knowledge yet another prior memory is required, and so forth?

[30] *Nam nisi reminiscendo non redit ad aliquid, et nisi amando redire non curat nostrae cogitationis intuitus* (Trin. 15.41).

[31] *Et sicut inest memoria, inest dilectio huic intellegentiae quae cogitatione formatur* (Trin. 15.41).

[32] The equation of reflective and right action is dubious because immoral action naturally can be accompanied by intelligence and therefore based on deliberate reflection.

[33] *Porro si scit profecto inest ei sua quaedam scientia, quae sine memoria et intellegentia esse non possit* (Trin. 15.41).

of the separability of the three functions cannot stand. The discussions of book 15 nevertheless do not merely repeat what is already known. In book 10, Augustine carried out the distinction between the primary and secondary triads and demonstrated the unity of the primary trinity. He could have made the impression, therefore, that his thesis in book 9, which was developed without this distinction, only refers to the primary *trinitas*. In book 15, Augustine submits an argument that demonstrates that the principle of non-add-ability also applies to the secondary trinity of the human mind.

X. Language as a Mirror of the Trinity (Trin. 15)

1. The *cogitatio* as *verbum*

The biblical reference of the Son as the word of God (John 1) in which the Father expresses himself serves Augustine as a bridge from language to the Trinity. When Augustine speaks of the word of God, he does not mean scripture, for although scripture indeed contains a divine teaching, it is formally a document written by humans (the authors) and addressed to humans (Trin. 15.20). The word of God instead indicates the relation of the first to the second divine person as is found, for example, in the statements: "The word was God (John 1:1)," "Through him all things were made (John 1:3)," and "The word became flesh (John 1:14)." Thus, in those passages of book 15 that contain explanations of the inner word, the third divine person hardly plays a role. Augustine interprets the relation of *notitia* and *verbum* solely in terms of the relation of the Father and the Son.

Augustine's argumentation in Trin. 15 does not begin by addressing the question concerning the acquirement of knowledge but concentrates on an investigation into those things "which we think of when we are aware of them, and have in our awareness even if we are not thinking of them."[1] The speaker's actual inventory of knowledge stored in memory composes Augustine's point of departure. It is a matter of "knowledge in general and all together, in which everything is known to us that *is* known to us."[2] The attention can direct itself to this inventory of knowledge and actualize particular things by raising them out of the condition of potentiality. Augustine calls this actualization of a particular content thinking (*cogitare*) or thought (*cogitatio*). In this case, thinking does not entail finding new knowledge, but rather making available knowledge present. "But to be sure, if we wished to utter them ["the things we are aware of even if we are not thinking of them"] we could not do it unless we thought about them. Even if no words

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[1] *Sed nunc de his loquamur quae nota cogitamus et habemus in notitia etiam si non cogitemus….De his ergo nunc disserimus quae nota cogitamus et nota sunt nobis etiam si non cogitentur a nobis* (Trin. 15.17).
[2] *Nunc ergo simul de universa scientia hominis loquimur in qua nobis nota sunt quaecumque sunt nota* (ibid).

are spoken, the man who is thinking is of course uttering in his heart."[3] Thought undoubtedly can be communicated in external ways through utterance. Decisive for the relation of the doctrine of the inner word, however, is that Augustine does not only call the audible utterance of a thought *word* but also, and first and foremost, the thought itself. According to Augustine, the *locutio cordis* is to be called *word* in the strictest sense while the outwardly spoken word only should be called a sign of the word or the sound of the word. For the purpose of communicating our thoughts we refer to them through a bodily sign, the *signum verbi*. "Thus the word which makes a sound outside is the sign of the word which lights up inside, and it is this latter that primarily deserves the name of 'word.' For the one that is uttered by the mouth of flesh is really the sound of a 'word,' and it is called 'word' too because of the one which assumes it in order to be manifested outwardly."[4] Words then are not to be regarded as signs for mental states and thoughts (*cogitationes*) that make these communicable.[5] Rather, thoughts themselves are called *words*, while the audible utterances are signs for words. Consequently, the object of Augustine's meditation on language is not primarily the unity of sound and meaning, but rather thought as a mental event.

2. Truth and Falsehood of the Inner Word

a) The Principle of Congruence (Yes-Yes; No-No)

Augustine initially claims that knowledge—i.e. the reference point of the inner word—is always true since only something true can be known. If something is known to be false, then the knowledge of this falseness represents, in turn, a truth. "It must all [the entire knowledge of a human] be true, otherwise it would not be known. No one knows false things except when he knows them to be false. If he knows this he knows something

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[3] *Sed certe si ea dicere velimus, nisi cogitata non possumus. Nam etsi verba non sonent, in corde suo dicit utique qui cogitat* (Trin. 15.17).

[4] *Proinde verbum quod foris sonat signum est verbi quod intus lucet cui magis verbi competit nomen. Nam illud quod profertur carnis ore vox verbi est, verbumque et ipsum dicitur propter illud a quo ut foris appareret assumptum est* (Trin. 15.20).

[5] Cf., for example, the passages: *Verba enim prorsus inter homines obtinuerunt principatum significandi quaecumque animo concipiuntur, si ea quisque prodere velit* (DC 2.3.4). *Sed innumerabilis multitudo signorum quibus suas cogitationes homines exserunt, in verbis constituta est* (ibid.).

true, since it is true that they are false."[6] The truth and falsehood of the inner word are determined by its relation to always true knowledge. The word is true if "what is in awareness should also be in word and what is not in awareness should not either be in word."[7] Just as Augustine characterizes the truth or falsehood of the outer word in terms of its relation to the *cogitatio*, he also determines the truth and falsehood of the inner word through its relation to the *notitia*. If the content of the *verbum intimum* corresponds to the *notitia*, it is true; if it does not correspond to it, then it is false. Augustine refers the dictum "Yes, yes; no, no (Mt 5:37)" to the relation of *notitia* and *verbum*: a yes in word corresponds to a yes in knowledge, and a no to a no, if the word is to be a true word. The inner word is true when it is congruent with the knowledge that rests in our memory. "For when we utter something true, that is when we utter what we know, a word is necessarily born from the knowledge which we hold in the memory, a word which is absolutely the same kind of thing as the knowledge it is born from. It is the thought formed from the thing we know that is the word which we utter in the heart."[8] The falsity of the inner word is at hand, on the contrary, when it is discrepant from knowledge so that a no (or yes) in word stands opposed to a yes (or no) in knowledge.

The last quotation already indicates a problem with this interpretation of the inner word. On the one hand, since the *verbum* (or the *cogitatio*) is considered true when it is informed by our knowledge, the contrary case of the falsity of the word is equally conceivable. On the other hand, Augustine asserts that the *cogitatio* formed by knowledge is the inner word. Consequently, a word that is not determined by knowledge can no longer be considered a word. The inner word would be defined as true. A false word would be impossible.

The problem of the false word is of particular significance for the delimitation of the human capacity of thought over against the divine Trinity and therefore for the characterization of human subjectivity. Since the Father expresses himself wholly in the

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[6] *quae utique vera sunt alioquin nota non essent. Nemo enim falsa novit nisi cum falsa esse novit. Quod si novit, verum novit; verum est enim quod illa falsa sint* (Trin. 15.17).

[7] *Quando ergo quod est in notitia, hoc est in verbo, tunc est verum verbum et veritas qualis exspectatur ab homine ut quod est in ista, hoc sit et in illo; quod non est in ista, non sit et in illo* (Trin. 15.20).

[8] *Necesse est enim cum verum loquimur, id est quod scimus loquimur, ex ipsa scientia quam memoria tenemus nascatur verbum quod eiusmodi sit omnino cuiusmodi est illa scientia de qua nascitur. Formata quippe cogitatio ab ea re quam scimus verbum est quod in corde dicimus* (Trin. 15.19).

Son, the divine word necessarily must be true. "There supremely can we recognize Yes, yes; no, no. And the reason this word is truly truth is that whatever is in the knowledge of which it was begotten is also in it; and anything that is not in that knowledge is not in it. And this Word can never have anything false in it because it unchangeably finds itself exactly as he from whom it is finds himself. For, *The Son cannot do anything of himself except what he sees the Father doing* (Jn 5:19)."[9] Does the difference of the human mind from the divine Trinity consist in that it can be exposed to inner discrepancies or are the differences to be found elsewhere? In the following sections, I will trace Augustine's arguments concerning the problem of the false inner word. Augustine distinguishes the lie as intentional falsehood from deception as unknowing falsehood and develops the topic of the false word in both directions. I will first address intentional falsehood. Can the inner word be mendacious?

b) The Problem of the Lie[10]

Due to God's substantial unity, the divine word always corresponds to the Father. It should be asked then whether the human *verbum intimum* analogously is always congruent with the *notitia* or whether a yes-no or a no-yes is possible for it. With reference to the analogy of divine creation and human work, Augustine claims that the latter is the case. In both divine creation and in human work, the inner word is translated into an action (which also can entail speech). Just as creation occurs through the word, human works are first uttered in the heart.[11] But in contrast to God's works, human works can be good and evil. Good works, according to Augustine, are based on a true

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[9] *Ibi summe illud agnoscitur, est, est; non, non (Mt 5:37). Et ideo Verbum hoc vere veritas est quoniam quidquid est in ea scientia de qua est genitum, et in ipso est; quod autem in ea non est nec in ipso est. Et falsum habere aliquid hoc Verbum numquam potest quia immutabiliter sic se habet ut se habet de quo est. Non enim potest Filius a se facere quidquam nisi quod viderit Patrem facientem* (Jn 5:19) (Trin. 15.23).

[10] Cf. M. Colish, "The Stoic Theory of Verbal Signification and the Problem of Lies and False Statements from Antiquity to St. Anselm," in *Archéologie du Signe*. Papers in Medieval Studies 3, ed. L. Brind'Amour and E. Vance (Toronto, 1983), 17-43.

[11] "Just as it is said of that Word, *All things were made through him* (Jn 1:3), stating that God made all things through his only-begotten Word, so too there are no works of man which are not first uttered in the heart. That is why it is written, *The beginning of every work is a word* (Sir 37:16) (Trin. 15.20)."
quod sicut de illo verbo dictum est: Omnia per ipsum facta sunt, ubi Deus per unigenitum Verbum suum praedicatur universa fecisse, ita hominis opera nulla sunt quae non prius dicantur in corde. Unde scriptum est: Initium omnis operis verbum.

inner word; evil ones, on the contrary, on a lying inner word: "If it is a true word, it is the beginning of a good work. And a word is true when it is begotten of the knowledge of how to work well, so that here too one may apply the Yes, yes; no, no; so that if it is yes in the knowledge by which one ought to live, it should be yes in the word through which one has to work and if no, no. Otherwise such a word will be a lie and not the truth, and from it will come a sin, not a right work."[12] In his elucidation of the correspondence principle (yes-yes; no-no), Augustine clearly refers to the practical meaning of the inner word as explicated in book 9. In both contexts, the word means the direction of the will toward a certain good that precedes the action and is at the basis of it.[13] The knowledge of good action (*scientia bene operandi*), which the work has to correspond to if it is to be the source of a good deed, should be understood as knowledge of the hierarchy of goods and evil. If the intention of an action is determined by insight into the status of a good or evil—if, in other words, we strive more for higher goods and less for lower goods—then we act well. Sin thus entails the prioritization of lower goods over higher ones. The truth of the inner word is at hand when it corresponds to this insight; a lie when it contradicts this insight.

This arrangement contains several difficulties. For starters, it presupposes that the knowledge of good action is definitely available. If this were not the case, then a reprehensible act could conceivably be called good because the intention corresponds to the erroneous knowledge of the value-hierarchy. The inner word would be true even though it produces a reprehensible deed. Augustine simply applies here the (unfounded) model of the lie as a lack of congruence, that is, as the discrepancy between the utterance and the thought of the speaker. This interpretation is insufficient because the liar thoroughly expresses the thought he wants to express but knows that the expressed thought contradicts an unexpressed thought and that this latter one is true. Therefore, the lie, as intended falsehood of the uttered word, is not a discrepancy between *verbum*

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[12] *Sed etiam hic cum verum verbum est, tunc est initium boni operis. Verum autem verbum est cum de scientia bene operandi gignitur ut etiam ibi servetur: Est, est; non, non, ut sie est in ea scientia qua vivendum est, sit et in verbo per quod operandum est; si non, non; alioquin menacium erit verbum tale, non veritas, et inde peccatum, non opus rectum* (Trin. 15.20).

[13] Included are also the secret intentions and wishes not readily visible in the actually performed action. In modern terms, one could say that the inner word corresponds to the motivation.

externum and *cogitatio*, but rather a discrepancy between expressed *cogitatio* and concealed *cogitatio*.

Just as the outer word is mendacious when it does not correspond to the *cogitatio*, according to Augustine, the *cogitatio*, as inner word, is equally mendacious if it does not correspond to the *scientia bene operandi*. The more complex model of the lie, namely the correspondence of an utterance to a *cogitatio* of which one knows that it contradicts another, true *cogitatio* hardly can be applied to the relation of *notitia* and *verbum intimum*. Lies, in this context, only can mean living in the lie in the sense of following a false orientation of values. Still, a bad lifestyle does not necessarily indicate a discrepancy between *notitia* and *verbum intimum* but more likely the existence of a false *notitia*, which the inner word follows. Even in the case Augustine describes in *Confessiones* 7-8 in which the understanding into the true hierarchy of goods is knowingly disobeyed, it is precisely bad habit that allows a false hierarchy of goods— that is, an erroneous *scientia bene operandi*—to be determinant. Augustine's application of the principle of congruence (yes, yes; no, no) to the relation of *notitia* and *verbum intimum* therefore leaves basically no room for a false inner word. If the truth of the inner word consists in its agreement with a *notitia*, then it is always true. A false way of life is better attributed to a flawed *notitia* than to a discrepancy between the knowledge of the objective status of a good and its place in the subjective order of priorities.

c) Deception and Error – Augustine's Late Critique of the Academics

Upon the basis of the problem of deception or error, Augustine also raises the question of the truth and falsehood of the *verbum intimum* within a gnoseological horizon. From a theoretical perspective, it is not only the correspondence of the content to knowledge that makes the inner word true, according to Augustine, but also the sameness of kind of the *notitia* and the *verbum intimum*. In the true word, knowledge (*scientia*) is inwardly expressed as it is (*sicuti est*) and therein lies the truth of the word. If, however, the knowledge is to be uttered vocally, that is, expressed outwardly, then "it is not uttered

just exactly as it is, but as it can be seen or heard through the body."[14] The uttered word thus never can be true because it *is* not knowledge itself but merely *designates* it or the inner word. The inner word, on the contrary, is true because it *is* nothing other than actualized knowledge itself.

Augustine obviously invokes a metaphysical concept of truth, for the sign is untrue not, for example, because it designates falsely—the correctness or incorrectness of the designation remains an open question—but because it is only a sign and not the thing itself. The parallel to the relation of Father and Son clearly demonstrates Augustine's concern. The relation of knowledge and thought informed by the yes-yes and no-no resembles the relation of Father and Son "in which God the Son is declared to be substantially like the Father in all respects."[15] It is, therefore, substantial sameness of knowledge and thought that makes the inner word true and substantial difference of knowledge and external sign that makes it false. It remains unclear, however, what the claim of consubstantiality has for a theoretical function of truth. On the one hand, it could be interpreted as identity, which implicates the sameness of the content; on the other hand, a mere commonality in the kind of being is possible, which would leave room for differences in detail. In the founding of the metaphysical concept of truth, an indissoluble congruence of knowledge and inner word exists, but this concept of truth does not contribute anything to the question concerning the correspondence of their *contents*.

The thesis of congruence, according to which the inner word is true if it corresponds to knowledge, involves the sources of knowledge and the origin of deception. If it turns out that the phenomena of deception and error should not be interpreted as a lacking of congruence between a *memoria*-content and the *verbum intimum*, then another explanation for the possibility of deception has to be found. Such an explanation could be, for instance, the falsity of the *notitia*. If a false content of the *memoria* is the object of attention, then congruence would be assured even in deception. But can *notitiae* be false? This question gives Augustine occasion to take up a central

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[14] *Nam quando per sonum dicitur vel per aliquod corporale signum, non dicitur sicuti est sed sicut potest videri audirive per corpus* (Trin. 15.20).
[15] *Sic accedit quantum potest ista similitudo imaginis factae ad illam similitudinem imaginis natae qua Deus Filius Patri per omnia substantialiter similis praedicatur* (ibid.).

topic of his early writings, namely the critique of Academic skepticism. Cicero had advocated, with the skeptical academy, that nothing could be known with certainty. Thus, the extent of true knowledge would be practically nothing. The conditions for the truth of the *verbum intimum* would be principally unrealizable. In order to show something of which there can be a true inner word, Augustine has to prove that knowledge is possible as well as what can be known.[16]

Augustine explicitly refers to his early writing *Contra academicos*.[17] The decisive outcome of this work was the establishment that "there are, after all, two sorts of things that can be known, one the sort that the consciousness perceives through bodily sensation, the other the sort it perceives through itself."[18] In its critique of the Stoa, Academic skepticism had argued elaborately against sensuous knowledge, but it could not object whatsoever to the perfectly certain self-perception of the soul. In Trin. 15, Augustine calls statements grounded in self-relation indubitable: "I know that I am alive," "I know that I want to be happy," and "I know that I do not want to be mistaken." But, at most, only the first statement may be considered indubitable insofar as the doubt of its truth presupposes that the doubter lives. The other two sentences, in contrast, cannot be safeguarded against the doubter by arguments of retorsion. The challenge to the claims "I want to be happy" and "I do not want to be mistaken" does not contain any internal contradiction. These statements, then, can be defended only with reference to general anthropological facts. Augustine insists, however, that if only these three sentences of immediate self-experience compose the scope of human knowledge, then it is very small indeed—unless "any point of knowledge can be so multiplied that its instances, far from being few, turn out to extend to infinity."[19] Augustine thus also counts the potentiation of these sentences to the stock of certain knowledge: I know, that x—I know that I know that x—I know that I know that I know that x. The infinite

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[16] Cf. O'Daly 1987, 162-71; Rist 1994, 41-8; Bubacz, 93-131; Matthews, 52-88.

[17] And not to *De vera religione* where he also addresses epistemological questions.

[18] *Cum enim duo sint genera rerum quae sciuntur, unum earum quae per sensum corporis percipit animus, alterum earum quae per se ipsum, multa illi philosophi garrierunt contra corporis sensus; animi autem quasdam firmissimas per se ipsum perceptiones rerum verarum* (Trin. 15.21).

[19] *Sed si talia sola pertinent ad humanam scientiam, perpauca sunt nisi quia in unoquoque genere ita multiplicantur ut non solum pauca non sint, verum etiam reperiantur per infinitum numerum tendere* (Trin. 15.21).

iterability of this procedure corresponds to the contentlessness of the newly formed sentences.

Of the three mentioned examples for definite certainties grounded in the self-relation of the soul, none of them are to be found in *Contra academicos*. In this early work, Augustine attempts rather to account for certainty through recourse to logical regularity and through subjectification. Thus, he believes that the connection of a sentence with its contradictory opposite, which leads to total disjunction, leads, in turn, to the truth of this disjunction. Even if it is uncertain whether the world is eternal or not, the sentence, the world is either eternal or not, represents a certainty (cf. Contr ac. 3.10.23). Augustine opens up a further residuum of certain knowledge through the subjectification of sensory perception. One can indeed doubt, in the sense of the Academy, that sensory perception informs us about external realities, but one cannot doubt, Augustine claims, the quality of the sensation. Whatever the cause of a certain color, taste, or olfactory sensation is, the fact that the feeler has this sensation is something he knows for certain (cf. Contra ac. 3.10.24-26). In *Contra academicos*, Augustine thus does not actually argue against the Academy's critique of dogmatic claims of knowledge insofar as these claims concern knowledge of the external world. He does not claim there that we have certain knowledge of sensibly perceptible things. He instead seeks to establish an area of inwardness in which the skeptical critique does not affect a possible criterion of certain knowledge.

De Trinitate appears, at first, to make great concessions to the skeptical critique of sensuous knowledge. Augustine writes that "things that come into the consciousness from the senses of the body, so many of which are other than they appear that an insane person excessively crammed with convincing delusions about them thinks he is sane."[20] He thinks that the Academics are completely right in this respect. Their mistake consists merely in doubting everything including intellectual things. In the domain of external perception, it is verily the case that things are different than they appear. The eye, for example, errs when an oar seems broken in the water, and the seamen err when the

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[20] Trin. 15.21.

lighthouse seems to be moving.[21] In contrast to *Contra academicos*, Augustine strives in Trin. 15 to transform the outer perception qua subjectification into an inner perception and in this way save it from critique.

But Augustine only seems to be more open to the concerns of skepticism than in earlier works. For although he does not provide any argument, he writes, "Far be it from us to doubt the truth of things we have learnt through the senses of the body. It is through them that we have learnt about heaven and earth and all that is known to us in them."[22] Augustine stresses not only the subjective certainty of sensory perception but also objective correctness. There is no criterion of certainty for sensory perception, and there is no argument analogous to self-knowledge that can be implemented against illusory perception. Nevertheless, Augustine maintains that one need not doubt the truth of such perceptions. It appears as if Augustine is simply thinking practically and appeals to the mundane contact with the world in which one normally (though not without occasional disappointment) relies on sensory perception.

Augustine's appeal for the truth of testimonies seems even more drastic. He no longer relegates reports of things that one cannot see for oneself—that is, reports of historical or distant things—to the domain of belief but imputes them to knowledge. "Far be it from us either to deny that we know what we have learnt on the testimony of others; otherwise we would not know the Ocean exists; we would not know that there are countries and cities commended to us by their celebrity and renown; we would not know that the men and their works which we have learnt about from our historical reading really existed.…finally we would not know where we were born or of what parents, because these are all things that we have believed on the testimony of others. If it is absurd to say such things, then it has to be admitted that a very great deal has been added to our knowledge by the senses of other people's bodies as well as of our own."[23] For this

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[21] *ut in eo sic fallatur oculus quemadmodum fallitur cum in aqua remus videtur infractus et navigantibus turres moveri et alia sexcenta quae aliter sunt quam videntur* (Trin. 15.21). In his early works, Augustine, on the contrary, rejected the claim that mistakes in the perception of the external world are based on sensory deception. Cf., for example, *De vera religione* 61.174: *sed ne ipsi quidem oculi fallunt.*

[22] *Sed absit a nobis ut ea quae per sensu corporis didicimus vera esse dubitemus. Per eos quippe didicimus caelum et terram* (Trin. 15.21).

[23] *Absit etiam ut scire nos negemus quae testimonio didicimus aliorum; alioquin esse nescimus Oceanum; nescimus esse terras atque urbes quas celeberrima fama commendat; nescimus fuisse hominess et opera*

startling thesis, especially when compared with *De magistro* and *De doctrina Christiana*, Augustine does not offer any argument except for the appeal to the life-praxis in which we often indiscriminately rely on the accuracy of others' testimony.[24] But it is not at all clear how such mediated knowledge should transcend the sphere of things that are probably or likely true and enter into our *scientia*.[25] It appears almost as if Augustine wants to insist on the infallibility of all sources of knowledge. Not only are the self-perception of the soul and the apprehension of intelligible objects immune to error but so, too, is sensory perception. Even historical reports, he seems to say, are fundamentally reliable and therefore may be called *knowledge*. If this were the case, however, the possibility of deception would be ruled out in an undesirable and counterintuitive manner.

Even in *De Trinitate*, however, Augustine does not really assert the infallibility of all sources of knowledge. He is quite clear that the self-knowledge of the soul, on account of a *firmissima perceptio per se ipsum*, principally differs from sensory perceptions and the testimonies of others. Knowledge based on self-knowledge is distinguished from other contents of memory, Augustine claims, because it cannot be lost. What was once known can be forgotten. The knowledge that we live belongs, however, to the nature of the soul and therefore cannot elapse as long as the soul exists.[26] Not all contents of knowledge have the same attributes. Only immediate self-knowledge and the implicit apprehension of intelligible realities are in themselves certain, but precisely this knowledge is merely latent. In their explication, momentous mistakes occur like, for example, when the self or God are held to be material realities. In the domain of explicit self-apprehension, some mistakes can be avoided through arguments of retorsion, but the entire knowledge of the external world, whether it concerns present or past things, cannot be safeguarded in this manner. Thus, Augustine essentially

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eorum quae historica lectione didicimus…postremo nescimus in quibus locis vel ex quibus hominibus fuerimus exorti quia haec omnia testimoniis credidimus aliorum. Quod si absurdissimum est dicere, non solum nostrorum verum etiam et alienorum corporum sensus plurimum addidisse nostrae scientiae confitendum est (Trin. 15.21).

[24] Cf., for example, Mag.12.40 on the impossibility learning from others; for the discussion on the scientific status of historiography, cf., for example DE 2.27.41.

[25] Cf. Trin. 15.17.

[26] *Sempiternum est enim animo vivere, sempiternum est scire quod vivit, nec tamen sempiternum est cogitare vitam suam vel cogitare scientiam vitae suae* (Trin. 15.25).

maintains his distinction between knowledge and belief against his overexpansion of the concept of *scientia*. Knowledge acquired through the usage of the senses or through appropriation of the testimonies of others possesses a much smaller degree of certainty than intellectual knowledge. Augustine's seemingly higher estimation of sensuous and historical knowledge in Trin. 15 than in *De magistro* and *De doctrina christiana* is thus merely terminological.

d) The Necessary Correspondence of cogitatio and notitia

Elements of an interpretation can be found in *De Trinitate* according to which the *cogitatio* is always congruent and the inner word always true, whereas the cause of deception is to be sought on the plane of the *notitia*. Augustine indirectly concedes the possibility of false contents of memory when he observes that the inner word also could stem from errors. Our word is born of our knowledge just as the divine word is born of the knowledge of the Father (cf. Trin. 15.24). God knows everything through himself (cf. Trin. 15.22), whereas our soul knows only some things through itself and others through external perception. In a characteristic manner, Augustine asks, "Is our word only born of our knowledge? Do we not also utter many things which we are ignorant of?"[27] Of the various forms of saying what one does not know, the ones that could be associated with the inner word include doubt, the lie, and deception. Doubt is quickly excluded because it does not imply any claim of truth and therefore does not produce any falsehood. In the self-application of doubt, the claim one doubts proves to be a true claim. Similarly, the lie differs from true deception. For in being deceived, one assumes that what is said is true, whereas with the lie, one offers a false word knowingly and willfully. In self-application, the lie is transformed into truth, for whoever lies has a true knowledge of lying. Unwilled and unconscious deception is, therefore, the only real form of falsehood of the inner word. Thus, Augustine continues, "Do we not also utter many things of which we are ignorant of? We say them of course without hesitation, supposing

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[27] *Numquid verbum nostrum de sola scientia nostra nascitur? Nonne multa dicimus etiam quae nescimus* (Trin. 15.24)?

them to be true."[28]   The truth of a word is not measured though by this supposition; it stems rather from the knowledge of the thing that is supposed to be expressed in the word.   "And if they [the words] do happen to be true, they are true in the things themselves we are talking about and not in our word, because a word is not true unless it is born of a thing that is known."[29]   The segment "true in the things themselves" and the conditional clause "unless it is born of a thing that is known" indicate for the first time a correspondence between the thing and the *notitia* as the condition for the truth of a word. And by implication, it demonstrates that a discrepancy between the thing and the *notitia* is the cause of the unwilled and unrecognized falsehood of the word in deception. Consequently, the word would be false if the *notitia* that it actualizes does not correspond to the thing, i.e. if the *notitia* itself is false.   The cause of the false inner word is thus the falsity of the *notitia*. *Cogitationes* can be false not because they contradict the always true *notitia* but because they are congruent with a false *notitia*.   As in the discussion of the lie, it is not the congruence or incongruence of the *cogitatio* to the *notitia* that decides over truth and falsehood but the relation of the *notitia* to reality.

Augustine brings the invariance of the relation between *cogitatio* and *notitia* to the fore in the following chapters of book 15.   With recourse to the gnoseological line of thinking, according to which the *cogitatio* represents an actualized *notitia*, Augustine argues that the *verbum intimum* always has to be true.   He once again compares the *verbum divinum* as the second divine person with the human *verbum intimum*.   The divine word is not capable of lying because there is no yes-no or no-yes present in him, but rather constant congruence.   He states, "If it is not true, it should not even be called a word….When our word is true and therefore rightly called a word." [30]   In this statement Augustine is no longer talking about the divine word, however.   He instead means that just as the divine word is always true, the human *verbum intimum* also must be always true.   For if the *cogitatio* is defined as an actualization of the *notitia*, then it is defined as

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[28] *Nonne multa dicimus etiam quae nescimus? Nec dubitantes ea dicimus sed vera esse arbitrantes* (Trin. 15.24).

[29] *Quae si forte si vera sunt, in ipsis rebus de quibus loquimur non in verbo nostro vera sunt quia verbum verum non est nisi quod de re quae scitur gignitur* (Trin. 15.24).

[30] *At enim nec verbum dicendum est quod verum non est….Quid cum verum est verbum nostrum et ideo recte verbum vocatur* (Trin. 15.24).

congruent with the *notitia*. If there is no congruence, then one cannot speak at all of a *cogitatio*. The inner word always corresponds to knowledge, for if it did not correspond to it, it no longer would be an inner word. For "it is the thought formed from the thing we know that is the word which we utter in the heart."[31] If one wants to describe this congruence as truth, as Augustine does, then the *verbum intimum* is necessarily true.

Between the *notitia* as a concrete content of the *memoria* and its actualization as an inner word in the *cogitatio*, neither a possible moral difference nor a difference in truth exists. Augustine's analyses show that it is solely a matter of a relationship of image in which an image represents the original. This relationship remains intact even if the original—as in the case of error or moral depravity—is deficient. As concerns practical or theoretical truth and falsehood, the principle of congruence reigns in the human mind equally unimpeded as in the divine Trinity. Therefore, the relation of *memoria* and *verbum intimum* corresponds exactly to the relation between God the Father and the Son.

3. The Word of God as Inner Speech

How is the human inner word, then, different from the *verbum Dei*? How can human thought as the interplay between *memoria* and inner speech be differentiated from the self-manifestation of God in the Son? Just as the Son is substantially the same as the Father, the *verbum intimum* is also of the same kind as the *notitia*. Just as the principle of congruence is always valid in God (yes-yes; no-no), human cogitation is also defined as congruent with his *notitia*. If, contrary to the initial assumption, it is not the possibility of incongruence (yes-no; no-yes) that separates human thought from the connection of the first two divine persons, in what does the difference between the divine Trinity and the secondary trinity of the human mind consist?

The difference between the divine and human word is not to be sought in truth-value but, first of all, in the phenomenon of forgetting, and secondly, in the selectivity of the human word. The knowledge and the being of the human mind are separate. Contents of knowledge can disappear from the *memoria* through forgetting without

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[31] Trin. 15.19.

threatening our existence.[32] Augustine claims that for God, on the contrary, being and essence are so deeply bound together that the loss of a single trait in the essence of the Father is unimaginable. Moreover, the word of God (*verbum dei*) could not be called the thought of God (*cogitatio dei*), but for the human mind, the inner word is nothing other than precisely the *cogitatio*. God does not think! This initially surprising assertion can be explained by examining the concept of thought Augustine operates with. *Cogitatio*, in this context, no longer means a content of knowledge raised up by the attention from the otherwise inconspicuous storage of memory, but rather the intellectual capacity to move the attention from one content to another and the faculty to allow itself to be determined by a known object. The *cogitatio* is movable and changeable—movable because it can take up different contents only successively and changeable because it alters its form when it shifts from one content to another or from contentlessness to the thought of an object. As an intellectual faculty, the *cogitatio* is defined by discursiveness and therefore by potentiality and mutability. The word of God, however, is not subject to these conditions. It does not shift from content to content and does not alter in form. It rather represents the Father at all times and in entirety. While the inner word of the human is capable of expressing the realm of objects of which it "speaks" merely successively, the word of God says everything at one time and thus remains constantly the same. For this reason, the Son of God is called *verbum dei*, not *cogitatio dei*.[33]

Once again, to be sure, both differences—the possibility of forgetting and discursiveness—apply only to the relation of the secondary triad in the human mind. The primary triad, in contrast, is non-discursive. There is no *cogitatio* in immediate self-acquaintanceship just as there is none in God. Moreover, the thesis of the difference between being and essence also only applies to the secondary, not the primary triad. In the primary triad, the cognitive and the voluntative self-relations are not things appearing in the mind; they are the mind itself. The mind knows solely one thing, itself. If it should forget this knowledge, it immediately would cease to exist. And even on the more

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[32] *Quid ita? Quia non hoc est nobis esse quod nosse* (Trin. 15.24).
[33] *Non ergo ille dei filius cogitatio dei sed verbum dei dicitur. Cogitatio quippe nostra perveniens ad id quod scimus atque inde formata verbum nostrum verum est. Et ideo verbum dei sine cogitatione dei debet intellegi ut forma ipsa simplex intellegatur, non aliquid habens formabile quod esse etiam possit informe* (Trin. 15.25).

encompassing plane of the *cogitatio*, it holds that self-knowledge, in the sense of the inner triad, cannot be lost even if it remains latent. For only by virtue of this always existing knowledge is the human receptive for the command "know thyself."

A true image of God shows itself once again in the primary trinity of the *mens humana*. In the various aspects thus far discussed, the relation between the inner *memoria* and the inner *intellegentia* corresponds to that of the first and second divine persons, whereas the differences of the secondary trinity to the divine Trinity are considerable. When he chooses the secondary triad as a point of comparison, Augustine directs his readers' attention to the state of perfection because in eternity, he claims, the thoughts of the human mind will no longer wander. In the state of human corruption, only the primary trinity, which is limited in its scope to the self, is simultaneous. In the state of perfection, the *intellegentia* will encompass the entire *memoria* and therefore the entire knowledge of the mind in one glance. The *verbum intimum*, then, will be non-discursive and like the *verbum dei*.[34] In the direct vision of the divine Trinity, the imaged-ness of the human mind no longer will be only in the primary but also in the secondary trinity. This is the condition of the greatest possible similarity of the human to God. But even at this stage, the secondary, more encompassing trinity moves through a change in the mind from discursiveness to simultaneity, whereas God was always already how he is.[35] With the amendment, "since it began to be," the term "always already" also applies to the primary trinity but not to the secondary trinity.

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[34] *Fortassis etiam non erunt volubiles nostrae cogitationes ab aliis in alia euntes atque redeuntes, sed omnem scientiam nostrum uno simul conspectus videbimus* (Trin. 15.26).
[35] *Neque infomis, neque formata, ipsa ibi aeterna est immutabilisque substantia* (Trin. 15.26).

XI. The Inner Word – A Semantic Concept?

Augustine's doctrine of the inner word has drawn attention in recent literature on the philosophy of language. Particularly Hans-Georg Gadamer has advocated the interpretation that, viewed historically, Augustine's conception of the Trinity is of utmost importance for the development of an appropriate concept of language.[1] Gadamer claims that the concept of the *inner word* and its paralleling of the relation between thought and speech and God the Father and the Son broke through the classical Greek undervaluation of speech and established it as equally originary to thought. Just as the Father and the Son are one, so, according to Gadamer's reading of Augustine, are thought and speech one. In Gadamer's view, Augustine therefore demonstrated that the reigning alternative throughout the whole of antiquity since Plato between conventionalistic and naturalistic understandings of language is mistaken. For in both cases, a retroactive fitting of language onto thought is assumed, which from the onset misses the true character of language. With the help of Christian speculation on the Trinity, Augustine reversed a calamitous course in the philosophy of language, according to Gadamer, and paved the way toward an understanding of what language truly is and does.

First of all, I will depict the naturalistic and conventionalistic interpretations of language by looking at Plato's *Cratylus*, antiquity's most influential theoretical treatise on language. Afterwards, a brief passage through Augustine's linguistic tractates before *De Trinitate* will clarify his positions on this problem. Upon this backdrop, I will discuss the linguistic-philosophical significance of the doctrine of the inner word. Therefore, in offering a response to Gadamer's interpretation, I also will be able to determine the significance of the doctrine of the inner word within the context of Augustine's thought.

1. *Cratylus* – Naturalistic and Conventionalistic Conceptions of Language

The dialogue *Cratylus* is concerned with the question of whether there is a natural correctness of words for both Hellenes and barbarians, that is, for all languages (cf. Crat.

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[1] Cf. Gadamer, 361-404

383; 391a a.o.), or whether correctness is always grounded in contract and agreement and is therefore only relatively required (cf. 384d). The first position is represented by Cratylus, the second by Hermogenes. The expression "correctness of words" already suggests a normative understanding of language, but the question remains whether the normativity of the meanings of words is grounded in the nature of the words themselves so that a universal norm of language obtains for all speakers or whether it is established by the consensus of a group and thus possesses only particular validity.

Plato has Socrates first argue against Hermogenes—that is, against the consensus theory—that appellations are accorded to things from nature (cf. 390e). It is the task of the dialectician (390) to implement accurate appellations; and in order to discover them, he initially orientates his endeavor on etymologies, ultimately tracing back all words to certain roots (422ab). Their correctness, in turn, is based on imitation (μίμησις). The argument states that as one can imitate an object through gestures without using the voice, one also can imitate the essence of something by means of the voice through letters and syllables (423e). This depiction appears to show the origin of the thesis advocated by the Stoics and reported by Augustine concerning the similarity of the signifier and the signified.[2] Socrates allusively presents this thesis by attributing qualities of motion to the phonetic values of several letters. The letter ρω, for example, is the organ of every motion representing it in words like ῥεῖν (to flow) and ῥοῆ (the flow) (cf. 428e). In this sense, the word is a teaching tool (388b). Words teach by denoting something correctly (cf. 428e), by imitating it accurately. At the same time, a naturalistic theory of language opens up the possibility of a theory of teaching and learning based on the primacy of language. For if words faithfully reproduce the signified object through their phonetic value, then it suffices to hear words in order to know which object is intended. In this respect, learning essentially means finding words (436a). Language opens the access to the world. But this is not to be understood in the modern sense that language possesses a transcendental function because it provides schemata of interpreting the world. Rather, Cratylus' view purports that sign and thing stand in a relation of image. For the question of how knowledge is acquired, which in the context of language-conception will become

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[2] Cf. Augustine, *De dialectica* VI, 93-97

virulent, this understanding entails that words deliver images that allow the signified to be recognized. Questions like "what is X?" are then answered by means of the phonetic form of X. For example, the meaning of the word "go" ["gehen"] becomes apparent through the sound of the word "go."

At this juncture, however, two different interpretations are possible. Can unknown objects also be recognized with the aid of the phonetics of words so that a word never heard before, which stands for an object never seen before, brings this object into view, so to say, thus extending the realm of things, attributes, and activities known to us? Or do the imitative qualities of the words simply enable the identification of the example within the mass of already accessible entities such that language administrates the recognition of what is already known? The first possibility would completely replace the direct access to things through perception with language and therefore make language the universal and exclusive means of acquiring knowledge. In contrast, the second possibility would require an access to the world outside of and before language that would provide the basis for the capacity of words to identify. In the first case, language would be the sole necessary source of knowledge; in the second case, it would presuppose other sources of knowledge despite its teaching function.

In the second part of the dialogue, Socrates argues against Cratylus' naturalistic language theory. Among other things, he includes elements of Hermogenes' conventionalistic conception in his argumentation, highlighting the diversity in and between languages. Language differences and different languages, he claims, cannot be explained such that one is right and all the rest are wrong. Such diversity suggests more readily that language is based on habit and arrangement (434c-435d). Consequently, there can be no natural correctness. Socrates furthermore asks whether the thing is always imitated well and whether it is always completely imitated or perhaps only in certain respects (430a ff.). Cratylus objects that even if the gods had not introduced the words and guaranteed their correctness (425d), the language-giver (νομοθέτης, 389a; 429a) must have been a superb dialectician who precisely recognized and imitated the essences of the things to be signified.

But with this statement, Cratylus concedes that a language-free access to the things is possible. Next to the acquisition of knowledge about things through the finding of

words, it must be possible to know things without words in order to be able to create images. The production of words, which, as images, are supposed to be in agreement with the originals, is only possible upon the foundation of a word-free access to reality. Thus, the theory of images requires the possibility of an understanding of the world that is not linguistically mediated. Such an understanding, according to Socrates, is to be prioritized over language usage, for it entails immediate access to the originals, whereas language only allows accession to images (438d-439b). We indeed learn through language, but it is nevertheless secondary from an epistemological perspective. Consequently, even an extreme naturalistic understanding of language contains a moment of skepticism with regard to language.

The controversy between Heraclitus and Plato's teaching of ideas comprises the particular background for this critique of the naturalistic understanding of language. The thesis that the imitation of reality is primarily achieved through the movement-character (and also the relative still-character) of letters is reminiscent of Heraclitus' notion that the world is fundamentally in motion (440c-e). Plato's teaching opposes this notion, claiming, "the beautiful, the good, and every other thing also exist (440c)," that is, they have constant properties (440d ff.) and can be known in the strict sense. Reality is basically not in flux but constant. For this reason, Plato advises against relying on language when it is a matter of utmost importance, the salvation of the soul. "No man of sense will like to put himself or the education of his mind in the power of names. Neither will he so far trust names or the givers of names as to be confident in any knowledge which condemns himself and other existences to an unhealthy state of unreality; he will not believe that all things leak like a pot, or imagine that the world is a man who has a running at the nose."[3] At the end of the dialogue, Cratylus sides with Heraclitus. The conventionalist Hermogenes proves to be more open to platonic metaphysics than the naturalist Cratylus.

The topic of *Cratylus* is ultimately access to reality. For the soul that strives for fulfillment it is essential to know reality as it truly is. Therefore, the discussions on the theories of language in *Cratylus* have ethical relevance. Socrates proves to be skeptical

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[3] 440cd. Cited in *Plato: Collected Dialogues*, ed. by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, Bollingen Foundation: New York 1961, 474.

of naturalistic interpretations of language in two respects: first of all, against its own claim, such an interpretation presupposes a non-linguistic access to reality; and secondly, the manner in which it depicts reality leads to the false opinion that changeability is its definitive characteristic. Conventionalism, on the contrary, concedes from the start the necessity of a non-linguistic knowledge of objects; and, moreover, it does not obstruct the soul's view of the grounds of beings because it does not claim that language could teach us about these grounds.

The occasion of this critique on the naturalistic understanding of language is surely contingent. A mimesis-theory of language that is not based on the qualities of motion, but that, as for instance in the Stoic conception, emphasizes tactile characteristics like the softness or hardness of the tone poses merely a minor challenge, if any at all, to Plato's doctrine of ideas and theory of knowledge.[4] The argument of the primacy of a non-linguistic access to the world persists independently of this particular motivation. Augustine takes up a similar line of argumentation without Heraclitus' understanding of the world playing a role.

2. Augustine's *De dialectica*

De dialectica (= Dial.) constitutes Augustine's first writing on the theory of signs.[5] His explanation of the power and validity of signs can be found in Dial. VII. The power of

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[4] Cf. Augustine's report in *De dialectica* VI, 95-99.

[5] For an interpretation of this work, see J. Pépin, *Saint Augustin et la dialectique* (The Saint Augustine Lecture 1972), Villanova 1976, 7-132; K. Mizuochi, Augustine and De Dialectica: A Consideration on the Author's Intention in the Work, in: *Studia Patristica*, vol. XXVII, Leuven 1993, 350-355. See also: H. Ruef, *Augustin über Semiotik und Sprache: Sprachtheoretische Analysen zu Augustins Schrift De dialectica, mit einer deutschen Übersetzung*, Berne 1981. For Augustine's theory of signs in general, see Rist, 23-40; O'Daly, 171-178; Kirwan, 35-59. See also W. Beierwaltes, "Zu Augustine's Metaphysik der Sprache," in: *AS* 2 (1971), 179-195; C.P. Mayer, Die *Zeichen in der geistigen Entwicklung und in der Theologie des jungen Augustinus*, Würzburg 1969.
The long-contested authenticity of *De dialectica* was verified substantially by Belford Jackson's statistical methods. See his Preface to Augustine, *De dialectica*, ed. J. Pinborg, translated with introduction by B. Darrel Jackson, Dordrecht/Boston 1975. The most important arguments against Augustine's authorship concern the content of the writing: the otherwise not encountered technical character of the work and the untypical absence of an attempt to connect the theory of signs with metaphysics and ethics. It should be noted, however, that the work remains incomplete. Even concerning the content, though, examples and individual theses found in *De dialectica* reappear in *De magistro*, *De doctrina christiana*, and *De Trinitate*. Therefore, it can be assumed that, following ancient tractates on dialectics, Augustine composed *De*

the word (*vis verbi*) is measured by how valid it is, and it is valid insofar as it is capable of moving the hearer.[6] Augustine does not understand this movement in an emotional sense. Rather, the power of the sign moves the mind toward the signified subject matter and to its acceptance in the mind. Augustine interprets the process of signification psychologically. As an acoustic stimulus, a valid sign is capable of moving the mind to acceptance or acknowledgement of an object.[7] A sign thus possesses power and validity when it is able to give the mind something to understand—that is, when it really designates something. Similar statements are found in *De magistro*. Augustine writes: "we simply cannot engage in conversation unless the mind is directed by the sound of the words to the realities signified by these signs (Mag 8.22)."[8] In a later passage, he speaks of signification (*significatio*), through which the link between the sound (*sonus*) and the signified thing is produced, as *vis verbi* (cf. Mag 10.34). Although he does occasionally mention the differences between the Greek and Latin meanings of words, this consideration does not lead him initially to view the connection of *sonus* and *significatio* as dependent on consensus.[9] It is first in the second book of *De doctrina christiana* that Augustine expressly explicates that speaking communities (or communities of sign-usage in general) are constituted by a consensus concerning the meaning of signs. Consequently, signs only possess meaning relative to such communities.

Nevertheless, precursors of a conventionalistic theory of signs can be detected. In Dial. VI, Augustine discusses the origin of words by detailing the Stoic theory and then by taking up Cicero's critique of this theory. The Stoics claimed, according to Augustine, that the relation between the signified thing and the sound of the word is not arbitrary but based on similarity.[10] The pseudo-tactile quality of the sound of the word, they stated, is directed at the signified object. Since, for example, pleasure is something

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dialectica as a linguistic treatise, which contains semantic, logical, and grammatical aspects of the same pattern as the other works.

[6] *Vis verbi est, qua cognoscitur quantum valeat: valeat autem tantum, quantum audientem movere poetest* (Dial. VII, 100).

[7] *Sensum vero non secundum se, sed secundum id quod significat verbum movet, quando per verbum accepto signo animus nihil aliud quam ipsam rem intuetur, cuius illud signum est quod accepit* (Dial. VII, 100).

[8] *sermocinari nos omnino non posse, nisi auditis verbis ad ea feratur animus, quorum ista sunt signa.*

[9] Cf. Dial. X on the various meanings from *tu* in Greek and Latin as a linguistically conditioned case of ambiguitas. See also Mag. 5.15;6.18.

[10] […] *ut res cum sono verbi aliqua similitudine concinat* […] (Dial. VI, 94).

enjoyable, the word that designates it, *voluptas*, has a pleasant sound; and since the cross (*crux*) is an instrument of agony, it is signified by a word that produces an unpleasant hearing sensation.[11]   The fact that such a theory possesses a very narrow field of application and is riddled with arbitrariness is apparent.   As a result, even the Stoics conceded that the origin of many words remains in the dark.   Augustine surmises, however, that the words do not have an origin based on similarity.[12]   And if a natural connection based on the similarity between the sound of a word and the thing signified is not a viable option, then the notion of a conventionalisitic theory of meaning asserts itself ex negativo.

3. The Theory of Signs in *De magistro*

a) Critique of Grammar

De magistro can be subdivided, according to Augustine, into three parts.[13]   The first part deals with how signs are signified through signs (4.8-6.18).   The second section addresses the value-order of signs and things (8.22-9.28).   Finally, the third section tackles the problem that is decisive for our investigation, namely whether one learns everything through signs, or whether there are things that are learned without signs (e.g. activities), or whether nothing at all is learned through signs (10.29-14.46).[14]   This outline into signs for signs, signs for things, and the things themselves is to be understood in terms of an augmentation in the degree of reality.

 De dialectica does not contain any statements concerning a hierarchy of *verba* (*signa*) and *res*.   Yet Augustine completes the first part of *De magistro* with an apology

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[11] *Ita res ipsae afficiunt, ut verba sentiuntur* (Dial. VI, 94).

[12] *Innumerabilia sunt enim verba, quorum origo, de qua ratio reddi possit, aut non est, ut ego arbitror, aut latet, ut Stoici contendunt* (Dial. VI, 96).

[13] For *De magistro*, see, in particular: M.F. Burnyeat, "Wittgenstein and Augustine *de magistro*," in: *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, supplementary volume 61 (1987), 1-24; G.C. Stead, "Augustine's *De Magistro*: A Philosopher's View," in: *Signum Pietatis: Festgabe für Cornelius Mayer*, Würzburg 1989, 63-73; T. Borsche, "Macht und Ohmacht der Wörter. Bermerkungen zu Augustins *De Magistro*," in: *Sprachphilosophie in Antike und Mittelalter*, ed. by B. Mojsisch, Amsterdam 1986, 121-161; B. Mojsisch, "Augustine," in: *Klassiker der Sprachphilosophie*, ed. by T. Borsche, München 1996, 63-76.

[14] The passage reads: *Ex quo admoniti sumus aut signis signa monstrari aut signis alia, quae signa non sunt aut etiam sine signo res, quas agere post interrogationem possumus* […] (7.20).

that he has spent so much time on the question of the internal relations of signs—a question that has no relevance for salvation—instead of concentrating his discussion on the demonstration of the importance of the *beata vita* (8.21). To speak of things instead of signs entails, for Augustine, setting one's sights on reality and its grounds. The theory of language is nothing more than a preliminary practice for metaphysics. But even metaphysics is not the final goal of his efforts. Rather beyond metaphysics is the question about human happiness, the question of the *vita beata*. According to Augustine, the *vita beata* only can be found with and in God, who is thought of as an immaterial immovable being. There is thus a connection between the doctrine of happiness and the theory of being. Only he who is capable of recognizing the goal of human striving for happiness advocates the right metaphysics. In clear-cut terms, Augustine devaluates the theory of signs in light of the doctrine of happiness: "Still if I say that there is a blessed life, to which I desire that we may be led under God's guidance—that is, by truth itself through stages of a degree suited to our weak progress—I fear to appear laughable because I have set out on such a road by considering not the things themselves which are signified, but signs. But be indulgent with this preparation, since it is not for amusement, but in order to exercise the strength and keenness of the mind by means of which we cannot only bear the warmth and light of that region where the blessed life resides, but can also love the true."[15] Augustine thus conceives of a movement of ascension that begins with the theory of language but quickly leaves the doctrine of signs behind as irrelevant for salvation in order to climb the steps toward the signified things (*res*). From the things signified he aims at the goal of the entire movement, namely God as the immutable being whose vision beatifies humans.

It should be observed nonetheless which type of theory of signs Augustine rejects as a mere exercise of the intellect. In sections 4.8-6.18, Augustine is interested in ordering

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[15] *Et tamen, si dicam vitam esse quamdam beatam eamdemque sempiternam, quo nos Deo duce, id est ipsa veritate, gradibus quibusdam infirmo gressui nostro accomodatis perduci cupiam, vereor, ne ridiculus videar, qui non rerum ipsarum, quae significantur, sed signorum consideratione tantam viam ingredi coeperim. Dabis igitur veniam, si praeludo tecum non ludendi gratia, sed exercendi vires et mentis aciem, quibus regionis illius, ubi beata vita est, calorem ac lucem non modo sustinere, verum etiam amare possimus* (Mag. 8.21; cited in *Lord God of Truth and Concerning the Teacher: Gordon H. Clark and Aurelius Augustine*, using the 1938 Leckie translation, The Trinity Foundation: Hobbs, New Mexico 1994, 72.)

grammatical concepts according to genus-species-relations and investigating them for extensional equalities. Therefore, a river (*res*), for example, is signified by the sign *river*. Grammatically, *river* is a noun [*nomen*], and every noun is a word [*verbum*] (cf. 4.9). Augustine interprets all of these relations as relations of signs and the signified. *Verbum* signifies *nomina*, *nomen* signifies *river*, and *river* signifies the real river.[16] Moreover, Augustine examines which signs also signify themselves while signifying. For instance, the word *signum* is itself a *signum*, and the word *verbum* is itself a *verbum*, whereas the concept "*coniunctio*" is not itself a *coniunctio*.

In Dial. IX, Augustine already describes similar cases as *ambiguitates*, which result from a technical (grammatical) usage of language (*ex arte*). Such ambiguities always arise when a word is taken in an *intentio recta* as a sign for something but then is also examined in an *intentio obliqua* for its attributes as a word. Thus, *Tullius* could mean the great orator, but it also could be used as an example for a noun or a *pes dactylus*. Augustine also specifies words in Dial. IX that can serve as examples for themselves. Just as in *De magistro*, all of these examples rely on a juxtaposition of *intentio recta* and *intentio obliqua*: *nomen* is a noun, *dactylus* is a dactyl, *adverbium* is not an adverb, and "*pes creticus*" is not a *pes creticus* (a Cretan metrical foot).

Augustine expends much effort in *De magistro* on the proof that the concept of *nomen* [noun] is not subordinate to that of *verbum* [word] but is extensionally equal to it (cf. 5.11-16). All types of words can be nominalized in grammatical discourse: for example, if one speaks of the terms *if* and *because*. Augustine concludes his investigations into the question of how signs can be represented by signs with the distinction between signs that signify themselves (*signum*, taken as a word, is itself a *signum*), signs that mutually signify each other (*nomen* is a *vocabula* and *vocabula* is a *nomen*), signs with equal extension (all *nomina* are also *verba* and all *verba* are also *nomina*), and finally signs that only differ from each other in pronunciation like *nomen* and ὄνομα (cf. 6.18).

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[16] Augustine apparently does not recognize that the relation between sign and signified does not correspond to the relation between concepts of genus and kind. The word *river* is not the superordinate concept for the real river.

Augustine nevertheless insists that metaphysical research should be prioritized, over such discussions of grammar on signs and signs for signs because the latter have no relevance for happiness, whereas the knowledge of true being is at the same time knowledge of the highest good. The question poses itself, however, whether the meaning of signs consists precisely in their capacity to make being accessible altogether. Augustine does not even address the relation of signs to things in the first section of *De magistro*. But the debate between a naturalistic and a conventionalistic interpretation of language and the question about the possibility of teaching and learning through language revolve around the relation between language and reality. This relation must be analyzed.

b) Critique of the Naturalistic Conception of Language

The third part of *De magistro* is of particular interest (Mag. 10.29-14.46). Augustine seems to claim initially that nothing other than signs is taught.[17] In the introduction to *De magistro*, he offers such activities as eating, drinking, sitting, standing, etc. as examples of matters that possibly could be grasped without signs. Such activities could be illustrated by simple demonstration, requiring no further linguistic explanation. Augustine addresses this topic again in the third part through the example of walking.[18] Adeodatus concedes at first that the meaning of action-words like "walking" can be explained by simple demonstration—that is, without using signs—if the activity is first taken up in response to a question.[19] But he then withdraws his concession, insisting that simple demonstration does not suffice, for it is not unequivocal. If he is asked what walking is and answers by standing up and walking, the questioner could think that only Adeotatus' striding motion or only these particular movements mean "to walk" (cf. 10.29). Consequently, even activities require linguistic aid—namely, a definition—in order to be explained consistently. A sign-free access to things does not appear possible if not even action-words are rendered comprehensible by simple demonstration.

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[17] *Confectum est igitur et nihil sine signis doceri* […] (Mag. 10.31).
[18] *Quare iam illud magis magisque discutiamus, quale sit genus rerum, quas sine signis monstrari posse dicebamus per seipsas, ut loqui, ambulare, sedere, jacere, atque huiusmodi caetera* (Mag. 9.28).
[19] Cf. Mag. 3.6; 7.19,20

It is at this point in the course of the discussion, however, that the decisive peripety occurs. Augustine simply dismisses the thesis extracted from the example of walking. A sensible person, he begins, already will recognize what walking is after a few steps.[20] But the previous interpretation that nothing can be shown without signs is false not only in this respect, for there are "innumerable other things" that disprove it.[21] Augustine then ultimately inverts the aforementioned thesis into its opposite, claiming that nothing is learned by signs. For if, on the one hand, a sign is given and one does not already know the thing that it is supposed to signify, the sign itself does not teach it. But if, on the other hand, one already knows the thing, then the sign does not teach anything.[22] Therefore, one does not learn things through the meaning of words (*significatu*), but conversely, one learns the meaning of signs through the sight (*adspectu*) of things.

It is, first and foremost, a matter of establishing the connection of already known things with the sounds of words and thus bestowing the words with meaning (cf. the example of *head* in 10.34). Augustine focuses on language's capacity to identify. He concludes that words alone are incapable of accomplishing identification. He begins by discussing the case of a meaning of a word that one knows refers to an object but that is unknown because one does not know the object.[23] His concern is no longer for linguistic expressions of known things, but rather the more systematic, epistemological problem of how one knows things at all. Such knowledge definitely occurs, according to Augustine, without language, either through sensory experience or through intellectual understanding, depending on the aspect of reality. "For all things which we perceive are perceived either through a sense of the body or by means of the mind. We call the former sensibles, the latter intelligibles; or to speak in the manner of our authorities, the former

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[20] *Si enim sit bene intellegens, paucis passibus ambulatione monstrata, totum, quid sit ambulare, cognoscet* (Mag. 10.32).

[21] [...] *falsumque illud sit, quod nobis paulo ante videbatur nihil esse omnino, quod sine signis possit ostendi. Iam enim ex his non unum aliquid aut alterum, sed milia rerum animo occurunt, quae nullo signo dato per se ipsa monstrentur* (Mag. 10.32).

[22] *Quod si diligentius consideremus, fortasse nihil inveniens, quod per sua signa discatur. Cum enim mihi signum datur, si nescientem me invenit, cuius rei signum sit, docere me nihil potest, si vero scientem, quid disco per signum* (Mag. 10.33)?

[23] His examples here are taken from the *saraballae* mentioned in Daniel 3:27. Cf. Mag. 10.33;35)

are carnal, the latter spiritual."[24] When Augustine asks in this context, "What can be said to indicate that we learn anything by means of words beyond the sound which strikes the ear?," his thesis that we do not learn anything through words takes on the import that the usage of language presupposes the experience of objects and is itself incapable of accomplishing this experience.[25] The possibility of language usage depends on knowledge acquired through perception.

Once familiarity with something has been acquired, the second step of establishing the correlation between sign and thing still remains to be taken. This step too, Augustine claims, cannot be taken by language alone. His main argument states that the knowledge of things first enables the identification of the sound of the word as a signifier (*signum*), which distinguishes it from a mere meaningless noise.[26] In a strict sense, then, the understanding of a word presupposes three things: familiarity with the object, familiarity with the sound of the word, and a knowledge of the relation of the sound of the word to the object—a knowledge that first makes a sign of the noise.

In the introduction to *De magistro*, Augustine purports that language serves either as instruction or as memory.[27] Of these two, only the latter remains. Memory takes place when an already known thing is called to mind by means of a known sound of a word that has already been used for the designation of that thing. Words only can have meaning—that is, signifying power (*vis verbi*)—if both their specific relation to the object and the signified objects themselves are antecedently known.

c) Sextus Empiricus' Critique of Language

A critique of teaching and learning that in several respects resembles Augustine's is that of Sextus Empiricus.[28] His overarching question focused on whether the art of living,

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[24] *Namque omnia, quae percipimus, aut sensu corporis aut mente percipimus. Illa sensibilia, haec intellegibilia sive, ut more nostrorum auctorum loquar, illa carnalia, haec spiritualia nominamus* (Mag. 12.39: p. 88).

[25] ibid.

[26] *Quod priusquam repperissem, tantum mihi sonus erat hoc verbum; signum vero esse didici, quando, cuius rei signum esset inveni, quam quidem, ut dixi, non significatu, sed aspectu didiceram* (Mag. 10.33).

[27] *Videtur ergo tibi nisi aut docendi aut commemorandi causa non esse institutam locutionem* (Mag. 1.2)?

[28] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, trans. by R.G. Bury, Cambridge and London 1990 (=P.H.), III 266ff.

which composes the object of ethics, is teachable (P.H. III 252). Like Augustine, Sextus handles the problem of teaching within the context of the search for happiness.

In sum, Sextus offers three theses against the possibility of teaching. First of all, it is impossible to teach because we do not dispose of a criterion of truth (P.H. III 253); secondly, for this reason, no teacher could exist (P.H. III 259-265); and thirdly, no method of teaching is possible (P.H. III 266-273). In each section, Sextus gives a list of reasons. Some of his statements on method coincide with Augustine's theory of language as presented in *De magistro*. Learning occurs, according to Sextus, either through sensory evidence (ἐνάργεια) or through language (λόγῳ). And language designates either nothing—in which case, of course, nothing is taught through it—or it designates something either by its very nature or through agreement (θέσει). This alternative, also discussed by Augustine, has been known since Plato. Due to the difference of existing languages, the first possibility is ruled out. Since barbarians and Greeks do not understand each other, Sextus concludes that there could not be any natural meaning of words (cf. P.H. II 214). But even under the assumption that meanings are based on agreement, nothing, he claims, could be learned through language. For in order to grasp the things to which the words refer, one would have to have known them beforehand. One does not learn from the words what one does not yet know; one solely remembers by means of them something already known. Those people, however, who do not know the things to which the words refer will not get to know them through the words (P.H. III 268). Familiarity with things must be already at hand in order for words to be capable of having meaning. Words do no inform one about unknown objects; they merely evoke thoughts of known objects.

In this respect, Sextus' critique of language coincides with Augustine's in *De magistro*. Although Augustine's immediate sources are not known, this parallel suggests that he took recourse to the stock of theory available to him. Sextus furthermore makes clear that this type of language-critique presupposes a conventionalistic understanding of language. But whereas Sextus also rejects the other possibility of learning, namely through evidence (ἐνάργεια) (cf. P.H. I 138), Augustine asserts both the possibility of adequate sensory perception of what is present and the infallibility of intellectual apprehension. Therefore, he can hold onto the possibility of learning and can name a

teacher, namely the one who shows us things, in particular intellectual objects. Whereas Sextus argues skeptically in every respect, Augustine advocates an epistemological dogmatism, at least with respect to intelligible objects, which asserts the possibility of knowledge while precluding language as a way to knowledge in favor of evidence. Augustine thus moves beyond Sextus' language-critique. In order for words to be understandable, according to Augustine, not only what is designated must be known in advance but also the correlation between sound and object.

Augustine's thesis that words do not instruct runs contrary to Cratylus' conception of the naturalness of meanings. He insists, entirely in the sense of the Socratic argument, that there first must be the possibility of a language-free access to objects. While Socrates claims this access only for the νομοθέτης, who as the creator of words must have knowledge of things before language exists, Augustine contends that the immediate perception of what is designated is not only the condition for the possibility of creating language but also of using language altogether. This argument is leveled at the maximal thesis of naturalism that language is the only necessary and sufficient means of access to the world.

But Augustine also argues against the weaker form of naturalism, which concedes an antecedent, non-linguistically acquired familiarity with objects while still maintaining that words could identify the intended object. The similarity of the phonetic form of the word to the signified thing is produced, according naturalism, by the relation between *sonus* and *significatio*. Proponents of naturalism contend that the demonstrative gesture is inherent to the sound such that no further measure is required in order to distinguish the meaning-carrying sound of words from meaningless noises and thus to be able to grasp words as words. Augustine denies that such a similarity exists. The gesture, he claims, has to be added externally to the word in order to render it recognizable as a word. The connection between *sonus* and *res* is, for Augustine, artificial. This connection had to be created at some point in time through formulation and every speaker has to learn it anew.

4. *Augustine's Theory of Language-Acquisition in Confessiones 1*

The brief passage in the first Book of *Confessiones* in which Augustine describes his own acquisition of language as a child is quite instructive. Like all small children, he initially

used his voice and bodily movements in order to express his will, but he soon discovered a more effective tool—language. His observation that in uttering certain sounds humans motion toward things with gestures and looks lead him to the conclusion that sounds are meant to depict certain things. This conclusion demonstrated the decisiveness of his faculty of memory, for this faculty enabled him to retain the relation of sound, gesture, and thing, recognize it in the case of repetition, and therefore apprehend it as constant and intentional.[29] He learned that some sounds are words—that is, signs for things.

In stark contrast to naturalism's fundamental thesis of language, this brief report implies the understanding that there is no essential connection between the sound and the thing. The gesture takes its place. According to Augustine, however, the language of gestures cannot be conventional because otherwise a further procedure would be necessary for us to be able to understand gestures. Gestures, he claims, represent rather the quasi natural words of all peoples.[30] On the plane of body language, the immediate unity of sign and meaning can be found that is missing in the language of words. Memory enables the boy to use the immediately understandable language of signs as a tool for understanding the language of words. For this tool to lead to understanding, the boy must be able to retain the sounding tone, memorize the situation of the utterance, that is, the event of the certain sound in the presence of a specific object, and relate the demonstrative motion to this situation. Of course a semantic relation does not emerge through the simultaneous appearance of these three events: the sound, the presence of the object, and the bodily movement. Even in the repeated and recognized appearance through memory, nothing more than a familiarization with the simultaneity of three physical events would occur. It rather must be clear in advance that this process is a matter of a signification. Such an awareness is given with the understanding of gestures. Due to the natural understandability of body language, the demonstrative motion (in contrast to the sounding tone) can be recognized immediately as carry meaning. Its

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[29] *Prensabam memoria, cum ipsi appellabant rem aliquam et cum secundum eam vocem corpus ad aliquid movebant: videbam et tenebam hoc ab eis vocari rem illam, quod sonabant, cum eam vellent ostendere.* [...] *Ita verba in variis sententiis locis suis posita et crebro audita quarum rerum signa essent paulatim colligebam* [...] (Conf. 1.8.13). Cf. Wittengenstein's position to this passage in: *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (Werk-ausgabe Bd. 1), 237-256.

[30] *Hoc autem eos velle ex motu corporis aperiebatur tamquam verbis naturalibus omnium gentium, quae fiunt vultu et nutu oculorum* [...] (Conf. 1.8.13).

meaning could be expressed in the form: with (x) I mean (y). The intention of signifying something is three-figured and encompasses the speaker, the uttered sound (x), and the intended object (y). Since the position of the speaker is occupied by the author of the gesture and the demonstration is always a demonstration of something, the actual achievement of language acquisition consists in being able to identify x and, more fundamentally, to grasp the openness of the demonstrative gesture for the insertion of the position x. Principally, it must be understood that the demonstrative gesture, which in itself is two-figured, is extendable to a third position, the vocal utterance.[31]

How then are the theses of *De magistro* on teaching and learning related to this passage? First of all, the thesis presented in *De magistro* that one does not learn anything through words is confirmed in *Confessiones* when Augustine writes: "It was not that older people taught me [to speak] by offering me words by way of formal instruction, as was the case soon afterward with reading."[32] Letters can be taught because they do not have meaning and do not signify, but, on the plane of words, semantic difficulties arise that make learning problematic. In the process of learning the meaning of words, as Augustine describes it in *Confessiones*, the sensible presence of the intended object is always assumed. A familiarity with signified objects antecedes the usage of language. This understanding corresponds to the interpretation of *De magistro* that language usage is only possible under the condition of previous experience with objects.

Yet the perspective in *Confessiones* differs from that in *De magistro* insofar as it not only defines the condition of language-usage but also depicts the genesis of language in a child. Both writings contain the thesis: words do not teach because they cannot be substituted for experience with objects, but the *Confessiones* goes further, inquiring into how we learn words. Augustine's response, "It was not that older people taught me [….] No, I taught myself, using the mind you gave me, O my God," is misleading insofar as his mind's capacity to remember was only a necessary but not the sufficient condition of

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[31] Augustine suggests that a small child does not only use gestures to express his innerness but also its voice with which it produces noises of discontent. If it is kept in mind that such noises from a child belong to the natural universal language and therefore function analogously to gestures, then the circumstance that, in its nature, the voice serves expression could promote its integration into the more complex processes of signification.

[32] *Non enim docebant me maiores homines praebentes mihi verba certo aliquot ordine doctrinae, sicut paulo post litteras,* […] (Conf. 1.8.13).

language-acquisition.[33]   For without the connection between the sound and the object through a gesture, the child Augustine never could have learned what a word is. Adults must have repeatedly demonstrated this connection to the boy just as they produced the sound always in the same way. The gesture itself did not require explanation, for as part of the natural language, it is self-explanatory.   But the connection between a demonstrative gesture aimed at a specific object and a certain sounding tone required explanation, for on his own, Augustine never could have constructed this connection. In this case, it was indeed the adults who taught him words. Naturally, this instruction presupposes of the learner the capacity to memorize sounds and associate them with the specific gesture in order to be in the position to abstract entirely from the gesture and grasp the sound alone as signifying. Therefore, we do not learn things through words, but rather through our own perception, but we do learn words through gestures and thus require human teachers. With his comment that it was not his elders who taught him to speak but rather he himself, Augustine appears to illegitimately extend his foundational thesis that the experience of objects cannot be replaced by language to language-acquisition in general. Yet the result of his own analysis of language upholds that perception only can be performed by the perceiver himself, whereas the acquisition of language cannot be achieved alone.

5. The Treatment of *artes* in *De doctrina Christiana* – Conventionality and Reality

Augustine distinguishes between two types of *doctrinae* used by the pagans according to their subject matter. One type is concerned with human constructions (the teaching of *signa*), the other with traditional things or things appointed by God (the teaching of *res*).[34]   Augustine counts diverse social phenomena to human constructions, which

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[33] *Non enim docebant me maiores homines [...], sed ego ipse mente, quam dedisti mihi, deus meus,* […] (Conf. 1.8.13).

[34] *Duo sunt genera doctrinarum, quae in gentilibus etiam moribus exercentur. Unum earum rerum quas instituerunt homines; alterum earum quod animadverterunt iam peractas aut divinitus institutas* (DC 2.19.29). For the theory of signs in *De doctrina christiana*, see, in particular, R. Markus, "Signs, Communication and Communities in Augustine's De doctrina Christiana," in: *De doctrina Christiana. A Classic of Western Culture*, ed. by D.W.H. Arnold and P. Bright, Notre Dame 1995 (=DC 1995), 97-108; G.A., "The Subject and Structure of Augustine's De doctrina christiana," in: AS 11 (1980) 99-108. F. van

compose the first group of *doctrinae*. These phenomena have in common that they represent systems of signs based on agreement. The sciences of human constructions are teachings of conventional systems of signs. From the perspective of conventionality, Augustine discusses, on the one hand, superstitious doctrines like, for example, astrology as the teaching of heavenly constellations insofar as these are supposed to be signs for the destiny of life, magic as a teaching of signs with the help of which demons can be conjured, and fortune-telling as the art of interpreting phenomena like the flight of birds and dreams as signs for the past and the future. On the other hand, Augustine examines other, non-superstitious conventional systems of signs, namely language, poetics, dances, visual art works of an imitational character like paintings and statues, as well as clothing standards, measurements, and weights.[35] Augustine thinks that some of these systems of signs are damaging, namely the superstitious ones; some are superfluous like, for instance, the imitational arts; some are, for him, however, useful or even indispensable like language and the units of measurement. The common denominator of all of these systems is that they do not possess in and of themselves a signifying power but first acquire it through convention.[36]

It can be principally said of all visual signs (*imaginariis signis*) that "either draw people to the worship of idols or of creation and its parts as though they were gods, or that have to do with remedial charms and observances" that "[they] have not been, so to say, publicly promulgated by God to promote love of god and neighbor, but […] instead distract the hearts of wretched people in pursuit of their own private appetites for temporal goods."[37] Augustine differentiates here between signs that serve the "*dilectio dei et proximi*" in the sense of the teaching of bliss from *De doctrina christiana* 1 and

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Fleteren treats the more general aspects in his essay, "St. Augustine, Neoplatonism, and the Liberal Arts: The Background to De *doctrina christiana*," in: *DC* 1995, 14-24; see also K. Pollmann, *Doctrina Christiana. Untersuchungen zu den Anfängen der christlichen Hermeneutik unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Augustinus, De doctrina Christiana*, Freiburg 1996.

[35] Cf. DC 2.21.32-25.39

[36] Augustine even judges the dance and gestures of actors as purely conventional and therefore as a system of signs requiring explanation to outsiders (cf. DC 2.25.38). In *De magistro*, he was still of the persuasion that these signs are self-explanatory and possess their own signifying force from nature (cf. Mag. 10.32).

[37] *Hoc de omnibus imaginariis signis sentiendum est quae vel ad cultum idolorum vel eiusque partes tamquam deum colendas trahunt vel ad remediorum aliarumque observationem curam pertinent. Quae non sunt divinitus ad dilectionem dei et proximi tamquam publice constituta, sed per privatas appetitiones rerum temporalium corda dissipant miserorum* (DC 2.23.36).

those that arise from the appetite for temporal things. The good signs are established by God (*divinitus constituta*) and are generally valid (*publice*), whereas the bad ones can be traced back to the initiatives of individuals (*per privatas appetitiones*). In contrast to the divinely established signs, those that are based on human initiative do not possess a general, but only a private, validity. They can obtain a relative degree of generality by means of convention, but the signs will still only have a subjective validity, not the power to apprehend the essence of things. The argument of conventionality and its resulting ineffectiveness carries Augustine's critique of superstition.[38]

In his theory of language, Augustine also emphasizes the private character of signs composed by convention. He considers language a purely conventionally constructed system of signs as he illustrates in his use of the argument of foreign languages. Signs of letters like X or words like *beta* or *lege* have different meanings in Latin and in Greek. Therefore, they do not signify naturally but through consensus.[39] The significations affect the participants of a consensus only according to the consensus. Augustine admits that one indeed attempts to establish signs that are similar to the signified things. But because similarities can consist in manifold ways, unambiguousness is solely capable of being produced through arrangement.[40] Augustine thus clearly subscribes to a conventionalistic understanding of language. He makes explicit in this work the consequence of language models he depicts in *De dialectica* and in *De magistro*.

The difference in status between the doctrine of signs and the doctrine of things can be seen clearly. The objects of the former have merely an artificial relation to reality, which of itself does not convey anything about the essence of reality, whereas the latter

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[38] With respect to the belief in demons and divination Augustine cannot simply refer to the ineffectiveness of signs because he affirms the existence of evil angels and concedes that humans can receive accurate predictions of the future through contractual contact with them (cf. DC 2.23.35). The devil, who wants to prevent the human return home to God, is reality for Augustine (cf. DC 2.23.36). But even here, the conventionality of signs is the decisive argument: "They [the superstitious interpretation of natural events] have not, in fact, been noted down because they had any value, but they have been given a certain value by being noted down and treated as signs." Such signs only obtain power for those who have engaged demons and made agreements with them. But even in such cases, they have merely private validity because the spirits comply with the speculations of their contractual partners. Demonic signs are thus efficacious but only privately because they are based on convention.

[39] […] *non natura sed placito et consensione significandi* […] (DC 2.24.37).

[40] *Appetunt tamen omnes quondam similitudinem in significando, ut ipsa signa, quantum possunt, rebus quae signicantur similia sint. Sed quia multis modis simile aliquid alicui potest esse, non constant talia signa inter homines nisi consensus accedat* (DC 2.25.38).

cuts through the cultural veil, penetrating to the things themselves. The objects of the sciences of signs are human-made and merely subjective. The objects of the sciences of things like, for instance, geography, astronomy, dialectics (in the sense of syllogistics), and mathematics are, on the contrary, from God.[41] The actual primacy of those sciences directed at the nature of things results from this last point. As the works of God, their objects enable the intellectual ascension to the creator. They depart from their subject matter, namely changeable things, about which the truth can be expressed, and ascend to truth itself; or, in another schematization, they ascend from the form of bodies to the human mind, to God. This movement marks the wisdom that is the goal of all sciences.[42]

Natural things and objective lawfulness directly make the activity of God recognizable and refer to their creator (cf. Romans 1:20). In contrast, the things that have been produced by humans do not lead thought to God but only to humans. The fact that a system of signs, like language, is based on convention means that it is constructed and instituted by humans. It consequently does not refer to God. Everything that is based on convention is metaphysically and thus also ethically inconsequential. Although signs are ultimately things and accordingly should have a relation to God, Augustine cuts the cord between God and human-made signs with his criterion of derivation. On account of what they perceive as an internal relation of the sign to the thing, a natural understanding of language hardly would allow such a devaluation of language as a human work. So even though Augustine operates with more subtle means in *De doctrina christiana*, his overall tendency is the same as in *De magistro* and in Plato's *Cratylus*: Language does not have any relevance for salvation.

Due to their definite content, linguistic signs are subject, however, to the difference between right and wrong usage. Bad use of language can be found, for example, in poetical works that mediate a false image of God. The right usage of conventional

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[41] Cf. DC 2.29.49 for geography; DC 2.32.50 for dialectics; and DC 2.38.56f for mathematics.

[42] *Quae tamen omnia quisquis ita dilexerit ut iactare se inter imperitos velit et non potius quaerere unde sint vera quae tantummodo vera esse persenserit, et unde quaedam non solum vera, sed etiam incommutabilia, quae incommutablilia esse comprehenderit, ac sic a specie corporum usque ad humanam mentem perveniens – cum et ipsam mutabilem invenerit, quod nunc docta, nunc indocta sit, constituta tamen inter incommutabilem supra se veritatem et mutabilia infra se caetera – ad unius dei laudem atque dilectionem cuncta convertere a quo cuncta esse cognoscit, doctus videri potest, esse autem sapiens nullo modo* (DC 2.38.57).

systems of signs consists, first and foremost, in applying them to the regulation of necessary every-day activities. Beings that live in society are dependent on communication. In particular, a good—that is, happiness-promoting—usage of language takes place where it, as in scripture, informs about the metaphysical hierarchy of all beings, erects the double-command to love God and one's neighbor, and reports of salutary events. The signifying force of language is as such metaphysically and ethically inconsequential. For humans' relation to reality and for their striving for happiness it is not *that* language is capable of saying something but alone *what* it says that is meaningful. It is negatively meaningful if, through language, temporal things are put forth as the goal of human striving; it is positively meaningful, however, if language is used to teach that created things are themselves signs that point to God as the highest good.

The passage through Augustine's linguistic tractates from *De dialectica* through *De doctrina christiana* has shown how elements of a conventionalistic understanding of language emerge ever more clearly. In *De dialectica*, Augustine rejects etymology insofar as it is rooted in an imitation of the thing through the sound. The word does not obtain its signifying force through the sound. According to *De magistro*, signs as such and the sciences directed at them are without reality and therefore are metaphysically and ethically without meaning. Only objects and the science of objects are relevant to salvation. Augustine expresses the typical separation of signs and objects for a conventionalistic understanding of language in his thesis: signs do not teach. In and of themselves, signs have no relation to reality. This relation first must be established, which is only possible if the object that it is supposed to be signified is already known. The knowledge of objects is principally antecedent to the understanding of signs. In his discussion of language-acquirement (Conf. 1), Augustine reflects on the question of how the connection between the knowledge of objects acquired by perception and certain tonal events is learned. His response takes recourse to a natural understanding of gestures that establishes this connection. In *De doctrina christiana*, Augustine explicitly formulates a consensus-theory of language. Since the relation of language to reality is artificial, language belongs to those systems of signs that do not have any universal but only a private validity—that is, a validity reduced to the participants in the consensus.

The objects (*res*) of creation ultimately refer to God, and the sciences of these objects explicate the relation to God. On the contrary, the sciences of conventional signs lead only to humans as the creators of this convention. Language can lead humans to knowledge of reality only in its definite content, not in its sign-ness as such.

In his works before *De Trinitate*, Augustine does not exhibit any tendencies that, in Gadamer's sense, could challenge both the conventionalistic and the naturalistic interpretations of language. His comments demonstrate instead an increasingly decisive partisanship for one of these two models, namely the conventionalistic one.

6. The Inner Word and the Relation of Thought and Speech

With what right and with which consequences does Augustine call thought (*cogitatio*) an inner word in *De Trinitate*?[43] If one seeks reasons beyond the motif to find a *verbum* in the human mind parallel to the *verbum dei* (cf. John 1), then a comparison with the naturalistic understanding of language suggests itself in several respects. Topics like the "truth of the word," for example, could be inherited from such language theories. Just as such theories postulate an original language that is prior either temporally or normatively to the many individual languages, Augustine's inner word also represents a level of language before the languages of the nations. For only the audible utterance is bound to a single language, whereas the *locutio interior* precedes every individual language. Augustine writes of the human word (*verbum hominis*) that it expresses "the word which is neither uttered in sound nor thought in the likeness of sound which necessarily belongs to some language, but which precedes all the signs that signify it."[44] Like an original language, the *verbum intimum* is beyond conventionality. This originality is the prerequisite for even being able to ask about the truth or falsity of the inner word.

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[43] For a philosophical-historical classification of the doctrine of the inner word, see the relevant passages in U. Duchrow and G. Watson, "St. Augustine and the Inner Word: the Philosophical Background," in: Irish Theological Quarterly 54 (1988), 81-92. For this present topic, see also J. Kreuzer, "Die Sprachlichkeit der Erinnerung. Überlegungen zum *verbum intimum* in Buch XV *von De Trinitate*," in: Brachtendorf 2000.

[44] […] *neque cogitativum in similitudine soni quod alicuius linguae esse necesse sit, sed quod omnia quibus significatur signa praecedit* […] (Trin. 15.20). Of the word that is spoken in the heart, Augustine writes: […] *quod nec graecum est nec latinum nec linguae alicuius alterius, sed cum id opus est in eorum quibus loquimur perferre notitiam aliquod signum quo significetur assumitur. Et plerumque sonus, aliquando etiam nutus* […] *exhibetur* […] (Trin. 15.19).

Furthermore, the *verbum intimum* depicts an accurate account of reality. "It is the thought formed from the thing we know that is the word which we utter in the heart."[45] The inner word is formed from the reality to which it is related, namely from the particular content of knowledge that it actualizes. When we think, we single out a datum of knowledge from the available storage in memory, and the thought is nothing other than this content in the mode of actuality. The relation of thought and content is so close that one hardly can speak of a relation of imaged-ness, for the thought is the content itself. The difference solely consists in the modality of the content—that is, in whether the content is either a potential or an actual object of attention. The inner word presents its object, the *notitia*, immediately. One could say that the *locutio interior* takes up, in a certain manner, the language ideal advocated by Cratylus in which the word allows the object to be known immediately because it is related to it not in an artificial but in a natural relation. With the characterization of thought as *locutio*, one would traverse beyond the conception of language as a human work to a conception according to which language shows the nature of things.

The parallelization of the theory of the *verbum intimum* with the naturalistic interpretation of language reaches its limits when it comes to language's function of communication. Inner speech is not communicable. Even if all humans were equipped with nearly the same base stock of *notitiae* (and therefore potential cogitations), namely in as much as they rest on self-knowledge or are impressed into our nature, the inner word would remain private because it, as such, is incommunicable. For the purpose of communication, it must be translated into external speech and is thus subject to all of the rules that ensue from its conventionality. The immediacy to the object gets lost in this translation. Formulated differently: the benefit of the immediacy of the inner word to its object comes at the price of a loss of communicability, which is, however, an essential and defining trait of language in general.

Augustine's answer to the question of the truth and falsity of the inner word goes beyond the interpretation of Cratylus. Words, according to Cratylus' position, also can be false. It is indeed to be assumed that the νομοθέτης factually formed all words well

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[45] *Formata quippe cogitatio ab ea re quam scimus verbum est quod in corde dicimus* […] (Trin. 15.19).

and correctly, but it nonetheless would be principally possible that a word did not imitate the object it is supposed to signify or that it imitates it only inadequately such that ambiguities emerge. But inner words, according to Augustine, are not only factually true but are necessarily true by their very definition. Falsehood is hence impossible.

These differences converge into the main difference of the inner word both from individual languages and from a natural language (providing there is one). The *verbum intimum* does not signify its object, but rather presents it. For both the naturalistic and the conventionalistic theories of language, the word is a sign for the object it signifies. It itself differs essentially from this object. Therefore, special measures are required in order to establish a stable and definite relation between the word and the object. If such measures are missing, then a relation of signification cannot emerge. The analysis of language-acquisition in *Confessiones* 1 clearly demonstrates which learning steps are required so that the vocal utterance, which in itself is only a sounding-event, can be apprehended as signifying. Even according to the naturalistic understanding of language, a difference in essence obtains between the vocal sound and the signified object, for audible utterances do not refer per se to what is designated but first have to be implemented by a language-creator (like Plato's νομοθέτης) in order to signify correctly. The fact that mistakes are possible shows that even within the naturalistic interpretation, signifying relations do not exist of themselves, but rather first must be established. In any case, an act of translation is necessary, which requires a *tertium comparationis* between the word and the object, for the imitation of the thing by the word always has to occur in a specific respect. It could be, as for Plato, the quality of motion so that everything that is designated must be probed for its character of motion (even if what is designated does not suggest it) in order afterward to observe the vocal sound in the same respect and to locate similarities in this medium. Or it could be, as for the Stoics, the sensible perception that an object can evoke to which the sound is adapted. Word and object always have to be examined in a very narrow, mostly too narrow, respect in order to establish comparability. The establishment of comparability is necessary because words are always heard but objects are mostly seen. It is therefore a task of making different sources of sensible perception commensurable.

None of these limitations apply to Augustine's concept of the inner word, however. Inner speech is not heard but seen: "While, outwardly speaking, utterance is not seen but rather heard, the holy gospel says that inward utterances, that is thoughts, were seen by the Lord, not heard."[46] Just as the *cogitatio* always has the character of an intellectual vision for Augustine, inner speech, too, involves the object of seeing. "Just because we say that thoughts are utterances of the heart, it does not mean that they are not also seeings [….] When these things happen outwardly through the body, speech is one thing, sight another, but when we think inwardly they are both one and the same."[47] Because inner speech is performed in the medium of seeing, facial perception and vocal utterance do not have to be made commensurable in the speech of the heart. A mediation between different types of perception is as unnecessary as the establishment of a medium in which comparability first becomes possible. For the *cogitatio* never falsely renders its actual object, the *notitia*, but, in the sense of the principle of congruence, is always in agreement with it.

The inner word does not possess any of the characteristics of indirectness by which a relation of signification differs from a presentation. The inner word presents the *notitia* immediately as it is. Mediation between entities of different essences, as is typical for the relation of sign and signified, does not take place. Rather, the *cogitatio* is nothing other than an actualized *notitia*. The doubled-ness of *notitia* and *cogitatio* occurs because, due to the discursiveness of human understanding, not all contents of knowledge can be simultaneously an object of attention, but rather must be presented successively. The *cogitatio* presents successively what is simultaneous but inactually present in the *memoria*. Therefore, the *cogitatio* does not signify a *notitia* but presents it. Its relation to a *notitia* is not like a sign to a signified but like an actual object of attention to a potential one.

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[46] *Ac per hoc locution foris non videatur sed potius audiatur, locutiones tamen interiores, hoc est cogitationes, visas dixit a Domino sanctum Evangelium, non auditas* (Trin. 15.18). A reference to Matthew 9:3f. follows.

[47] *Nec tamen quia dicimus locutiones cordis esse cogitationes ideo non sunt etiam visiones [...]. Foris enim cum per corpus haec fiunt aliud est locutio, aliud visio; intus autem cum cogitamus utrumque unum est* (Trin. 15.18).

When Augustine depicts the *cogitatio* as inner word (*verbum intimum*) or as inner speech (*locutio cordis*), he seems to be addressing semantic problems. But, as we have seen, the inner word, as *cogitatio*, lacks every characteristic of a sign. The inner word is not a linguistic phenomenon; it rather stands juxtaposed to language like the *cogitatio* to the outer word. It indeed appears as if Augustine wants to upgrade language with the inner word by integrating it into the thought-act and placing it in a direct relation to the object so that the thought of the object would be always already linguistically bound. If *De Trinitate* was in fact shaped by this effort, then Augustine would have abandoned the clear separation of thought and language found in his earlier works like *De magistro* and *De doctrina christiana*. He would have cast language as such—instead of language with a specific content, like that of the Bible—as the way to reality and therefore to salvation. But Augustine's idea is not reflected in a modified concept of thought or speech; it remains rather on the terminological plane. Without assuming the characteristics of signs in any respect, the thought is simply called *word*. Objectively, the teaching of the inner word does not represent a theory of language in the sense of *De dialectica*, *De magistro*, or *De doctrina christiana*, for it is not concerned with the relation between a signifying word and a signified thought. Its only subject is the relation of an actual thought to the entire reserve of knowledge. Consequently, the teaching of the inner word does not affect the results of those other texts. In sum, Augustine's depiction of the *cogitatio* as inner word does not change his devaluation of language in comparison with thought at all.

7. A New Philosophy of Language in Augustine's Later Works? – Two Modern Interpretations of the Doctrine of the Inner Word (R.A. Markus; H.G. Gadamer)

Measured by both of the aforementioned language-interpretations—the naturalistic and the conventionalistic—and in comparison with Augustine's early explanations of the word, it may be responded to this critique that the *verbum intimum* does not have any semantic character but that this circumstance does not provide an occasion for critique because these theories miss the essence of language anyway. The fact that Augustine does not conceive the inner word as a sign, it could be claimed, should be received

positively, for he thus demonstrates that he is on the path of overcoming those inadequate understandings and penetrating into a closer relation of word and object than that of sign and signified. This view holds that with the last Book of *De Trinitate* Augustine finally understood, or at least had the possibility of understanding, that words are more than signs.

Two modern encompassing appraisals of the philosophy of language in *De Trinitate* are based on this position, namely the interpretations of R.A. Markus and H.G. Gadamer.[48] These two standpoints stem, however, from different interests. Markus offers a historically orientated analysis of the Augustinian theory of signs, while Gadamer attempts to establish a philosophical foundation of hermeneutics and values Augustine's doctrine of the inner word as an important step away from the Greek understanding of language toward a hermeneutically fruitful conception of language.[49] Markus's analysis is not restricted to an immanent representation either but is carried by theses about what language is and is not.

Already in his assessment of *De magistro*, Markus detects a barrier in Augustine between signs and signified objects. Language and experience remain removed from each other, he states, because Augustine sees them as being only connected through conventional rules of signification (70). The theory of the inner teacher fastens this barrier more than it calls it into question. Markus witnesses the same externality in the ordering of various types of signs in *De doctrina christiana*. Augustine distinguishes indicating phenomena like smoke or the footprint of an animal from signs that are given with the intention of communication like, for example, words. In this way, he surely could integrate both possibilities under the name *signs*, the former being a matter of *signa naturalia* and the latter *signa data*. But, Markus insists, Augustine fails to use this possibility of modifying his conventionalistic-externalistic interpretation of the relation between signs and objects through the inclusion of a natural element. Instead, he affixes the *signa naturalia* to non-linguistic processes and reserves for the sphere of language

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[48] R.A. Markus, "St. Augustine on Signs," in: *Phronesis. A Journal for Ancient Philosophy* 2 (1957), 60-83.

[49] W. Beierwaltes also emphasizes that Augustine opens up a new dimension with his trinitarian concept of language juxtaposed to Greek thought (Beierwaltes 1971, 189f.).

solely conventionally anchored signs.[50] Astonishingly, Markus remarks, Augustine does not recognize the simple objection against a conventionalistic theory of signs, namely that an arrangement on the usage of words only could occur in the medium of language. The conventionalistic theory thus presupposes what it is supposed to explain.

The inner word of *De Trinitate*, in Markus' view, appears to break through the rigid schema of conventionalism, for since it immediately presents what it intends, it does not first become significant due to the knowledge of the rules of its usage but is in itself essentially meaningful.[51] Furthermore, in the case of the inner word, the creative act of thought is no longer separated from the act of translating thought into a conventional system of signs. "There are not two separate activities here, a process we may call 'creative' and a subsequent one of 'translation' but just one process which we may call 'expressive' (79)." According to Markus, the advantages of the idea of the inner word, with which Augustine approaches a maintainable concept of language, are foiled by the chasm between the *verbum mentis*, which never becomes audible and is located entirely in the realm of the mind, and the *verbum vocis*, for which everything Augustine claimed in his early works about a conventionally bound sign remains valid. "Had he [Augustine] thought of the *verbum mentis* as a sensuous reality endowed with meaning, or to put this in an equivalent way, of the *verbum vocis* as not a mere symbol correlated with its meaning by conventional rules, then he would have been in a position to close this gap (79)." Markus laments that even in *De Trinitate* 15, Augustine does not arrive at such an understanding. In a Platonic manner, the sensibly audible, outer word remains inferior to the ideality of the thought in the inner word. Augustine did not seize the opportunity presented by the concept of the *inner word* to come to an understanding of language that is no longer external. In this respect, he is still bound to the model of speech as a translation into a language of signs of that which one beforehand had thought free of language.

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[50] "His [Augustine's] unified treatment of signs of all kinds seems to have been purchased at the cost of oversimplifying the problem of linguistic meaning: the distinction between alternative foundations for meaning within language became identified, in his mind, with the distinction between linguistic and extra-linguistic meaning (75)."

[51] "A 'word' in this sense, is essentially meaningful and presents to the mind what it means, unlike a sign, which is meaningful only to an interpreter who knows the convention of its use. Its coming into existence is the same as its being known (78)."

In contrast to Markus, Gadamer believes that Augustine did indeed overcome the representation of the word as a sign. Gadamer endeavors to establish a systematically adequate determination of the relation of word and object. Corresponding to his project of making explicit the ontological meaning of hermeneutics through the leitmotiv of language, he is concerned with removing the secondary character of language with regard to thought and knowledge. Language is, for Gadamer, the manner in which humans have a world. The world is only world insofar as it comes to language, and language has its existence alone in the fact that it represents the world.[52] Having-a-world—and therefore the human capacity of language—is the enabling condition for objects in the world to be scientifically apprehended. "Language and thinking abut things are so bound together that it is an abstraction to conceive of the system of truths as a pregiven system of possibilities of being for which the signifying subject selects corresponding signs (417)." Therefore, an "original connection between speaking and thinking" has to be taken into view. This connection is perverted into an "instrumental relationship" wherever the word is attributed "a mere sign function (433)." This instrumentalization occurs in particular in the concept-formation of science, which orders things according to their essential attributes and classifies them in a genus-species construction. The logical order of concepts renders inexact and in need of reform natural language with its ambiguities, its interest in accidents instead of essentials, and its metaphorical, not classificatory, arrangements. Gadamer witnesses at the end of this process the rejection of natural language in favor of an artificially constructed calculation.

This topic is, for Gadamer, not only a systematic problem but also a drama in the historical development of Occidental thinking. The negative beginning of this development can be found Plato's *Cratylus*. Both of the rivaling theories—the naturalistic and the conventionalistic understandings of language—exhibit, according to Gadamer, the same flaw. In both cases, objects are assumed to be known beforehand without language so that the question concerning the application of words to the objects first arises secondarily. It is first at this point that one has to choose between imitation and convention (408). In truth, however, the linguistic word is neither a sign that one

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[52] Cf. 443

selects nor one that one makes. It is, for Gadamer, no existing thing at all, but rather always already meaning. Inversely, experience is not first of all wordless and then subsequently named but has to be thought of as genuinely and essentially linguistic (417). Seen historically, beginning with Plato's *Cratylus* the being of language is already coerced into the false alternative of image and sign (418). Although, as Gadamer points out, Plato never completely failed to recognize the language boundness of the logos, the anti-linguistic interpretation of dialectic in the *Seventh Letter* goes to great lengths to declass language in favor of pure thought.[53]

Aristotle, according to Gadamer, was conscious of the achievement of language preceding the logic of categories. This awareness can be witnessed in his *Topics*, his theory of concept-formation (epagoge) and in his doctrine of categories, which is in constant referral to language (431f.). But he related the scientific ideal of proofs entirely to a system consisting in the hierarchically ordered arrangement of concepts. As a result, the "living metaphoricity of language, on which all natural concept formation depends," only has its place as linguistic figure in rhetoric (432).

Gadamer claims, however, that an ungreek movement in the history of Occidental thought hindered the complete forgetfulness of language—the Christian notions of incarnation and the Trinity.[54] "When the Greek idea of logic is penetrated by Christian theology, something new is born: the medium of language, in which the mediation of the incarnation event achieves its full truth (428)." For Gadamer, it is the doctrine of the inner word as an image of the Trinity established by Augustine, cultivated by Thomas Aquinas, and finally conformed to modern patterns of thought by Nicholas of Cusa that has resisted the degradation of the word to a sign and maintained its unity with thought.

Through the theological task of thinking the Trinity, philosophy has received a new dimension beyond the Greek way of thinking. What is decisive for Gadamer is that the mystery of the unity of God the Father and God the Son in the old church's speculation on the Trinity is reflected in the phenomenon of language (cf. 419). The church's doctrine that the word is with God "situates the problem of language, too, entirely within

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[53] Cf. 342a – 344d.

[54] Gadamer initially speaks of the incarnation but shifts soon thereafter to what he sees as the more pivotal idea, the trinity. At times, he blurs the difference between the inner-trinitarian generation of the Son from the Father and the becoming-flesh of the word.

inner thought (420)." This occurs explicitly, Gadamer claims, in Augustine's teaching of the inner word.[55] Just as the Son is consubstantial with the Father, the inner word is of the same kind as thought. Just as the Son does not want to be anything for himself but has his being in the revelation of the Father, the word only intends to state how the thing is without adding anything of itself to it (421). And just as the birth of the Son from the Father is a *generatio*, the *verbum intimum* emerges through a *generatio* (424). The processuality is common to both the divine and the human word. Although God speaks his whole being out at one time and such a procedure is beyond all analogy for us, the unity of the divine word eventuates in a multiplicity in salvation history, that is, in the act of salvation, sacrament, and proclamation. For Gadamer, the human word's specific event-character consists, first of all, in that a content of memory first has to be treated and thought through along the avenues of thought before the word can be a perfect reflection of the thing (425). And secondly, our word is merely an accident of the mind. Since it could never contain in itself the thing as a whole, it proceeds to ever new conceptions and has therein its infinity.

Strikingly, Gadamer does not attribute any fundamental significance to the objection Markus focuses on, namely that the inner word is not a real word but only the thought itself and that there cannot be a language of reason that can be neither spoken nor heard (421). Despite what Gadamer also sees as a lamentable split between the inner and outer word, the fruits of Augustinian thinking remain perceptible in (1) the estimation of language as equally originary to thought; (2) its original role in the disclosure of the thing, that is, its immediate relation to being; and (3) its essential processuality in the formation of concepts and in the finding of ever new conceptions.

Gadamer apparently strives for an interpretation of the Scholastic doctrine of the *verbum* that corresponds to his own conception of language. Therefore, the motive according to which the theologumenon of the inner-trinitarian unity is supposed to be made explicit by means of the unity of thought and inner speech is of particular significance for him.[56] And Augustine does in fact call the *cogitatio* a word. It remains

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[55] Gadamer only references Trin. 15 on this point.
[56] U. Duchrow accuses Gadamer of not recognizing the genuinely ethical significance of the inner word, which in responding to God is either mendacious or truthful. Gadamer indeed does not consider this aspect

to be asked, however, whether, over and beyond this terminological act, which may have accrued its own meaning in light of the history of reception of Augustine's thinking, such an understanding of language is actually to be found in Augustine—an understanding that, according to Gadamer, leads beyond the Greek logos-philosophy and indicates a concept of language as having-a-world. The following thus needs to be kept in mind: Gadamer characterizes the doctrine of the *verbum* with the words: "The word is not formed only after the act of knowledge has been completed—in Scholastic terms, after the intellect has been informed by the species; it is the act of knowledge itself (424)." This understanding cannot be in any way attributed to Augustine, however. For Augustine, it is precisely the finished conceptual knowledge that is deposited in memory. The *verbum intimum* is not a source for the acquisition of concepts but solely an actualization of the results of knowledge acquisition. Moreover, it is Gadamer's position that "in developing the doctrine of the verbum, Scholastic thought is not content with viewing concept formation as simply the reflection of the order of things (428)." The "process of concept formation," he maintains, thus becomes visible and "brings out the character of language as event (427)." But, according to Augustine's doctrine of the *verbum*, the inner word is precisely this—a reflection of the order of things. For in the knowledge of definitions that the *memoria* contains, things are ordered according to *genus* and *species*. As inner word, the *cogitatio* actualizes this knowledge of the thing that is schematized according to logic's structure of being. The inner word, therefore, does not compete with logical-scientific thinking reflected in the genus-species-classifications; it is, rather, nothing other than a reflex of the knowledge of definitions. Augustine hardly could have had a positive notion of an independently existing metaphoric of language upon which a natural formation of concepts could be built that is richer, more flexible, and more fundamental than the definitional-logical schematization. Instead, he considers the multiplicity of linguistic vocabulary at disposal for a uniformly

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of the inner word, discussing instead its connection with conceptual thinking. In my opinion, Gadamer's position is right. Significantly, in his critique of Gadamer, Duchrow does not even carry through his own thesis on the primacy of the ethical significance. He writes: "God *shows* the truth of an object (*inluminatio*) and my will reacts positively or negatively on the basis of this *occurrence* […] (Duchrow, 146f.—transl. A.L.)." Knowledge is always the precondition of praxis.

thought concept an unfortunate consequence of humanity's plunge into the sphere of sensuality.[57]

Therefore, none of the prophetic elements that Gadamer discovers in the Scholastic doctrine of the *verbum* truly stem from Augustine. Language, for Augustine, neither is equally original to thought nor does it have an immediate relation to being. The existent is rather manifest and present in thought. The inner word merely raises the result of the thought process from memory and makes it an object of attention without performing a preceding activity or an activity of its own. Its relation to being is never originary, but rather always only mediated by the thought that antecedes it. Augustine, furthermore, does not recognize any potential positivity in a processuality of the inner word. The discursiveness that is proper to it and its concomitant mutability belong much more to the negative conditions of being human. Such conditions, he believes, will be left behind in death and will no longer be able to impair the redeemed in heaven.

Since the doctrine of the inner word ultimately is not concerned with the relation of language and world, it does not entail the overcoming of the alternative between conventionalism and naturalism. It is rather compatible with both options. In Augustine's case, the doctrine of the inner word in *De Trinitate* does not correct the conventionalistic understanding of language from his earlier works but exists alongside of it.

All in all, the attempt to cast Augustine's doctrine of the *verbum* as a testimony of a Christian corrective that adds a new dimension to the Greek logos-philosophy and directs it toward a relevant understanding of language in the sense of fundamental philosophy has to be considered a failure. In light of our results that the *cogitatio* is indeed called *word* but exhibits none of the characteristics of a word—neither in the sense of a sign nor in the sense of a natural metaphoric—it appears more appropriate to interpret Augustine's conception in the opposite direction within intellectual history, namely as a theory that integrated the Christian Trinity-dogma into Greek thought on language without requiring the latter to change. The doctrine of the *verbum* in the Gospel of John does not in any way break the dominion of thought over language. Rather, through Augustine's

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[57] Cf. Conf. 13.23.34—24.37

development of the doctrine of the inner word and, in particular, through his identification of it with the *cogitatio*, it is neutralized to the extent that it fits into the structures of traditional philosophizing.

Conclusion

Augustine undertook *De Trinitate* in a time when he was distancing himself from Plotinus. This severance can be observed both in his doctrine of God and in his interpretation of the human mind. Since the threefold-ness is not to be conceived subordinately, he rejects the concept of the hypostases-hierarchy for the interpretation of his doctrine of principles. Nonetheless, Augustine makes use of Plotinus' theory of the noûs, anchoring the threefold-ness upon its ontological plane. Within the parameters of the idea of a perfect self-relation of the noûs, Plotinus had already worked out the concept of a unity in multiplicity. He invoked a similar figure of thought for the description of the inner connectedness of the world of ideas. Augustine does not accept, however, Plotinus' postulate of a pure unity for which even the noûs has to be transcended. Consequently, he can interpret the structure of the divine Trinity with the aid of structural features of the noûs and the world of ideas. In this appropriation, the notion of ἕν πολλά plays a significant role. According to it, a single member of a constellation represents all the other members and the totality. It is remarkable that Augustine does not connect this structure with the idea of a perfect self-relation in his doctrine of God as Plotinus does. Plotinus' concept of noûs basically can be depicted as the apex in the history of antique idealism's notion of reflection, which maintains that true self-knowledge is only possible in the divine mind encompassing all knowledge of principles. It is all the more striking that Augustine separates the structure of the divine Trinity from the idea of reflection, preferring instead to ground it in a discussion of the Aristotelian doctrine of categories.

Augustine grasps the substance-accidents-schema as a grid for interpreting the changing world and it alone. In their mutability, substances and accidents coincide and thus stand together over against the immutable, divine *essentia*. This *essentia* possesses its attributes not through participation in the ideas, for such a view would be closer to the accidental character of attributes. All attributes are rather essential to it, for in it, those principles coincide in which finite beings participate. As an inevitable result, if the *essentia* is conceived as trinitarian, the three elements not only have to be equal, they must form a unity for which the law of non-addability applies. Thus, one member is not

"less" than two or three, but rather represents all of them simultaneously. The emergence of the idea of relation, according to Augustine, accounts for the ability to distinguish these members. Since the relations of the members to each other is unchanging and accidents have already been characterized as losable, one need not worry that with relationality accidents would be imported into the realm of the divine *essentia*. Augustine differentiates within the types of predication between propositions *ad se* and propositions *ad aliquid relative*. The former expresses the essence of each individual person as well as their totality, whereas the latter describes the specific attributes of each individual person, first enabling the identification of a single member within the Trinity. As in the sphere of changing things, it is also valid for God that determinations of essence have precedence over determinations of relation. The latter then cannot substitute for the former, but rather presuppose them. Augustine thus averts an interpretation according to which the notion of "Christ as the wisdom of God" could be so construed that without the Son, the Father does not possess any wisdom. For Augustine, the Son does not add anything to the Father, not even, for instance, an explication of perhaps not yet developed moments. He rather represents the Father as wisdom from wisdom. By means of the prohibition of a pluralization of *ad se*-assignations, which is a consequence of the unity of God, the divine Trinity eludes the logic of language, which Augustine understands as a logic of subsumption.

It is precisely the trinitarian structure of God that renders the human soul's ascension to a vision of the most high impossible. Ascension, as Augustine represents it in *Confessiones*, procedes through *ad se*-determinations of God like *veritas*, *bonum*, and *iustitia* and is thus principally incapable of reaching the Trinity. Augustine does not make use of the relations-potential that is found in the characterization of God as love (*caritas*). Still, faith in the threefold God and love for him require a knowledge of what is believed and loved. The question of the origin of this knowledge becomes particularly poignant since the vision of the Trinity is precluded as a source of knowledge. Just as in *Confessiones* 10, where the search for God presupposes an implicit familiarity with the meaning of the concept *God*, the knowledge of the meaning of *trinity* is presupposed for the understanding of the Trinity-dogma and hence cannot be derived from it. Augustine suggests that the immediate self-perception that essentially inheres in the human mind

provides such a source of knowledge. If it can be demonstrated that the *mens humana* possesses a threefold-structure and that it is immediately known to itself, then it can be argued that the human mind is never without an implicit understanding of the Trinity. Catechesis instruction can appeal to this natural understanding. And philosophy turns toward the phenomenon of implicit understanding in two respects. On the one hand, philosophy shows that and how such implicit understanding enables the comprehension of propositions about the divine Trinity; on the other hand, it endeavors to explicate implicit self-knowledge so that on the path of methodical self-reflection, humans can arrive at an adequate interpretation of themselves. The impossibility of a vision of the divine Trinity and the always already given-ness of the self-relation in the trinitarian-structured human mind motivate Augustine's elaborate analysis of mind in *De Trinitate* 9-15.

As was the case with the doctrine of principles, Augustine's conception of the human mind's self-relation partly follows Plotinus and partly deviates from him, though his distance to Neoplatonism grows throughout the course of his productivity. Augustine initially adopts Plotinus' conception of dianoetic self-knowledge, which takes place particularly in the free arts and enables a transcendent vision of the intelligible. In contrast to Plotinus, Augustine never defines this ecstatic vision as participation in divine self-relation. In his early years, however, Augustine, like Plotinus, does not recognize an immediate self-relation of the finite mind. Rather, the famous turn inward is, first of all, always a work of discursive understanding undertaken with the intention of answering questions like that of the immortality of the soul; and secondly, this inwardness always serves only as a basis for making the existence of God available and as a way-station on the path toward the perception of God. It is first in the later parts of the *Confessiones* that Augustine intimates the notion that reaches its full exposition in *De Trinitate* and that can be called innovative with reference to the history of antique philosophy: There is an immediate self-apprehension of the finite mind. This self-apprehension is not ecstatic but continuous; it takes place unconsciously but can be raised to consciousness by means of appropriate reflection. This self-relation cannot be linked to a natural reflexivity of the world of ideas, for the mind whose self-relation is of concern here is not the divine noûs, which can encompass all knowledge, or the *intellectus agens*, which illuminates finite

understanding. It is rather the human receptive mind dependent on illumination. To put it another way: It is not God but the image of God. Although the divine Trinity principally eludes the *mens humana*'s faculty of perception, it can attain— even if only by means of special pedagogical measures—access to the image of God that it itself is, for nothing is so present to it as itself.

Augustine's insistence on the difference of the *anima* from God does not stand in the way of the project of a knowledge of the divine Trinity in the human mind because this difference is satisfied with the difference between creator and creature and is thoroughly open for the understanding that the threefold God has created an image of itself, namely a being that exhibits the same structure as it. For Augustine, the task then is to prove that and to what extent the *mens humana* is trinitarian.

Augustine's analysis repeatedly poses the question of how the essence of the human mind relates to its task. On the one hand, the mind *is* an image of God, irrespective of its moral quality. On the other hand, it stands before the command to *become* like God. The philosophy of mind and ethics have to be aligned with each other in the proper manner. Principally, being-an-image cannot be identified with a moral condition of perfection that is first eschatologically realizable because the entire project of a knowledge of God in the image would be invalidated. For, in the eschaton, where the image is realized, there would be no longer a need for the mediation by an image; and in earthly existence, which would require such mediation, there would not be an image. Being-an-image is, therefore, to be understood as the natural character of the *mens humana*, though space needs to remain for the thought of similitude to God in the sense of a striving for moral perfection.

For an appropriate understanding of books 8-15 of *De Trinitate*, it is indispensable to observe the particularities of Augustine's method. Augustine never argues in the sense of a deductive demonstration according to which principles are first introduced and secured that enable the derivation of results. Rather, he always begins with what is more known to us and, using that as his point of departure, discloses the principles by means of a detailed process of thought. In book 9, Augustine argues for a trinitarian structure of the human mind composed of the elements *mens*, *amor sui*, and *notitia sui*. He thus has to prove for this composition the characteristics of a trinitarian structure—namely, a

substantial unity of the members, radical relationality, as well as the substantiality of the elements warranted by the possibility of *ad se*-propositions. Augustine works out the trinitarian structure of the *mens humana* by distinguishing it from ontologically similar structures like substance and accidents, whole and part, and mixture, which turn out to belong ultimately to subordinate spheres of reality. While in his doctrine of God Augustine stresses the unity of God against the Arians, he argues against a pre-understanding of the *mens* as a simple substantial unity in his analysis of the mind. He emphasizes instead the substantiality and the relationality of *amor sui* and *notitia sui*. With reference to the intentionality of *amor* and *notitia*, Augustine rejects the interpretation that these are merely a matter of accidents of the *mens*. Self-relationality, in the sense of a backward turning intentionality, accounts for the possibility of self-predications (*notitia noscens*; *amor amans*), which, as *ad se*-statements, indicate substantiality. The reflexive total-apprehension produces that radical relationality according to which every individual member represents the entirety. Therefore, in its self-relationality, the finite mind exhibits the same structures as the divine Trinity. The object of self-relation is not contingent, subjective-private states of the soul only open to the introspection of the individual having them, for such objects would concern only the side of the mind that is subject to accidents. Rather, it is a matter of seeing the "truth" of the mind that inheres in every individual with a mind as such and that can be apprehended equally by all.

Subsequent to his structural analysis, Augustine addresses genetic aspects of the *mens humana* (*De Trinitate* 9, part 2) and then proceeds to a detailed contemplation of essence (cf. *De Trinitate* 10). The *notitiae* of the *mens* are generated from the *mens* on the occasion of contemplating eternal truth. Not just any knowledge of the *mens* is expressed in the case of the *notitia sui,* but rather its essence. In its relation to the *mens*, the *notitia sui* corresponds to the Son of God and his relation to the Father. Consequently, this *notitia* can be called *imago mentis* or *verbum mentis*. Augustine's comments on the practical aspect of this generation lead to a differentiated outcome. The initial relation of *amor* and *notitia* could create the impression that Augustine is not truly interested in a general theory of knowledge that forms a foundation for the analysis of self-knowledge but instead focuses solely on a concept of morally qualified action. It

quickly becomes clear, however, that Augustine interprets the *amor* as the power that drives the generation of knowledge regardless of content. One has to distinguish, according to Augustine, between an evaluative position toward *notitiae* that can be relevant to praxis—the efficacious *amor* can be good or bad in this evaluation and is therefore itself an object of moral judgment—and that power (also called *amor*) that moves the mind to produce *notitiae* in general and a *notitia sui* in particular. This power brings those thoughts into existence, which, after they exist, can be relevant for good and evil intentions of action. The power itself, however, as an essential function of the mind, antecedes every moral evaluation.

The equality of its members belongs to the characteristics of the structure of the trinity. A true *notitia sui* is present only if it is equal to the *mens*, that is, if the *mens* is expressed purely in it; and the *amor sui* corresponds to the *mens* only if it loves itself in accordance with the metaphysical standing of its essence. Ethical demands are therefore not only placed on self-*love* but also on self-*knowledge*. For, according to Augustine, only the mind that is free from vices is in a position of seeing itself as it really is. These conditions can be fulfilled in total only eschatologically, however. Thus, the project of knowledge of the trinity in the image would be invalidated if a dimension of the *mens humana* cannot be found in which the ethical question does not play a role. The discovery of the *amor* as that power that leads to the production of *notitiae* already points in this direction.

In book 10, Augustine highlights the existence of such a dimension. A reflection on the Delphic command to know oneself and the conditions for the possibility of compliance with it is intended to show that self-knowledge always already exists. For it is only under this precondition that the striving for self-knowledge, which has as its goal the acquirement of a *notitia sui* that is equal to the *mens*, is possible. The terminological self-relation in knowledge that is characterized as *se nosse* is constant and complete—that is, it has only one possible object, namely the self, which it encompasses wholly. The self-knowledge therein composes the dimension of the *mens* in which the *mens* is unchanging and free of accidents. In this sphere, which constitutes the inner essence of the *mens* and is thus naturally attributed to it, the demand of equality is always already fulfilled. And it is in this sphere that the image of God Augustine sought is to be found.

This self-knowledge represents an actual, but merely implicit, knowledge. Such knowledge is of itself not the object of conscious, discursive thought (*cogitare*), which can be directed toward any arbitrary object. Rather, it is first through special methodological exertion that this knowledge can be raised from its latency in order to become an object of explicit self-knowledge (*se cogitare*). According to Augustine, a proposition about the mind can be considered an explication of fundamental self-knowledge only if it is indubitable because indubitability indicates a successful realization of the latent self-knowledge on the plane of conscious reflection. Material philosophies of mind are, therefore, precluded from the beginning. The trinitarian structure of the *mens humana*, according to book 10 of *De Trinitate*, contains the members *memoria sui*, *intellegentia sui*, and *voluntas sui*, which, like the triad *mens*, *notitia sui*, *amor sui*, are characterized by substantial unity, tri-substantiality, and relationality. It should be observed, however, that such designations of the members are drawn from the accident-bound sphere of the mind and are not applicable, in their proper sense, to the original self-relation. In particular, the time differential normally at hand between the attainment of an understanding and its deposition into memory (or inversely, between what is available in memory and the remembering actualization of it) has to be negated.

With book 11, Augustine begins a taut line of thinking that extends to book 14. Augustine immediately embarks on a pedagogically motivated detour for readers who struggle to understand simultaneous structures, like the threefold *mens humana*. He leads such readers through a series of triads appearing in the soul, which are supposed to increasingly correspond in their degrees of integration to the image of God. As a guideline, Augustine uses a progression of hierarchically ordered objects of the mind, which, depending on their respective metaphysical standing, evoke different kinds of triad-configurations. He first addresses the sensory perception of corporeal objects; he then, under the title of *scientia*, observes these objects in view of their eternal grounds; and finally, he depicts the *sapientia*-triad, which emerges in the apprehension of the eternal grounds themselves. Nonetheless, none of these triads correspond to the trinitarian structure of the human mind on the basis of which it is called an image of God. For even the *sapientia*-triad (and a fortiori the triad that emerges in the act of faith) has a

temporal beginning in the mind—namely, when the human becomes wise—and could be lost again. Therefore, it does not suffice the criterion for the *imago Dei* of immutability. The originary self-relation of the *mens humana* is not a member within the metaphysically ordered series, not even its highest, but is rather one of the two conditions that have to be fulfilled so that the human can attain wisdom and therefore perfection. Because only a rational being is *capax summae naturae* (Trin. 14.6). Rational beings, however, are characterized both by an immediate self-familiarity and by the faculty of being able to intentionally apprehend objects of all kinds (intelligible objects among others).

In book 14, Augustine contrasts the inner reflection of immediate self-knowledge (*se nosse*) to the external reflection in which the mind turns away from other things by means of a self-recollection in order to relate to itself (*se cogitare*). Through the criterion of temporality, Augustine distinguishes the constant triad of inner *memoria*, inner *intellegentia*, and inner *voluntas* from the triad consisting of outer *memoria*, *cogitatio*, and outer *voluntas*. The latter is discontinuous because it emerges only if and so long as an explicit self-reflection is carried out. The ethical components in Augustine's theory—in particular the command of the "renewal of the image" and the topic of wisdom—can refer only to the *cogitatio*-reflection, for it alone is modifiable. Consequently, commandments calling for increasing perfection only can be directed at it. From the example of self-love, Augustine works out once more the difference between the fundamental, constant, and therefore natural self-relation, on the one hand, and the explicit relation of the mind to itself, which obtains in the difference between wisdom and foolishness, on the other hand. Fundamental self-love does not compete with the love of God but is rather the condition for the possibility of striving for God. Beyond this relation of condition, both planes are connected in that the vision of God in which wisdom resides is for the time being only possible in representative mediation, namely in that self-recollection (*se cogitare*) that reaches the always already existing self-knowledge (*se nosse*) and raises it into consciousness.

Augustine discusses God's Trinity at first through deliberations on the concepts of substance and relation and on their applicability to a non-finite being. In *De Trinitate* 15, Augustine confers the reflexivity in which the *trinitas* of the *mens humana* is rooted to

God. On the basis of the notion of reflection, he offers a final comparison of divine and human threefold-ness. On the one hand, he discovers grave differences between the divine Trinity and the *cogitatio*-triad, and, on the other hand, he highlights the perfect structural correspondence of the "image of God" in the triad of immediate self-relation with the divine Trinity.

With the doctrine of the inner word, Augustine turns to the question of which correspondence-relation exists between the divine threefold-ness and the structures of explicit thought. The concrete thought corresponds to the content of memory that it actualizes just as the Son of God represents the Father. Acts like the lie and error are not to be interpreted as discrepancies between *cogitatio* and *memoria* and therefore do not impair the correspondence-relation. Just as the Son is called *verbum dei*, the *cogitatio* can be called *verbum intimum*, although in both cases, *verbum* is not to be understood as a reference to language but as a metaphor for the total representation of one reality by another. A structural difference of the *cogitatio* from the word of God consists in the fact that the latter shows God in a simultaneous manner, whereas the *cogitatio* is only capable of successively actualizing the contents of memory. It is first in eternity, Augustine claims, that human thought will no longer be discursive but will encompass its entire knowledge in one glance. For the time being, only immediate self-relation represents an image of divine threefold-ness, but in the state of perfection, explicit thought, too, will assume a trinitarian structure. At that time, the entire *mens humana*, not merely its core, will be *imago dei*.

Augustine is the first in antiquity to offer an elaborate theory of the self-relation of finite subjectivity. In modernity, Descartes and the philosophers of German Idealism (the latter, however, by excluding the moment of finitude) have made use of Augustine's conception. Even beyond these thinkers, Augustine's thought proved to be efficacious even in times in which Scholastic philosophy was subjected to isolation from newly arising philosophical movements.[58] The beginnings of the phenomenological movement in the twentieth century, for example, were clearly influenced by Augustine. One will

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[58] Charles Taylor attributes to Augustine's conception of the subject a nearly paramount role in the development of modern philosophy (Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, Cambridge 1989, 127-142).

hardly find a work of Max Scheler's in which Augustine is not one of the most frequently cited authors. If one takes account of Husserl's analysis of time, Heidegger's Augustine-lecture, and Hannah Arendt's work on the concept of love in Augustine, then the role of recourse to the church Father for the self-understanding of this movement becomes immediately visible.[59] Hans-Georg Gadamer, finally, sees his fundamental-philosophical orientation toward the concept of language, which is intended both to overcome the classical border between thinking and speaking and to demonstrate the limits of modern scientism, grounded in Augustine's doctrine of the inner word.

Gadamer's usage of Augustine's philosophy of mind, however, goes too far. Augustine's achievement consists in having described and analyzed the self-relation of finite subjectivity in the will and in thought. Consequences for a new understanding of language, according to which, for example, an original language-character of transcendental acts could be anticipated, do not result from Augustine's meditations. In the course of his productivity, Augustine increasingly sides with one of the two possibilities of language-theory proposed by Plato, namely with the conventionalistic understanding, which, like its counterpart, the naturalistic interpretation, assumes the precedence of thought and a subsequent fitting of language to thoughts. Augustine's theory of a naturally given trinity-structure in the immediate self-familiarity of the human mind and of a trinity-structure that has yet to be acquired on the plane of explicit thinking emphasizes the special ontological character of human subjectivity but does not offer any space for a revolutionary understanding of language.

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[59] Martin Heidegger, "Augustine and Neoplatonism," in: *The Phenomenology of Religious* Life, trans. by Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei, Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 2004; Hannah Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1996.

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