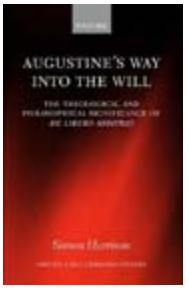

Augustine's Way into the Will

The Theological and Philosophical Significance of De libero arbitrio

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Abstract: Augustine is a pivotal figure in the history of the concept of will, but what is his 'theory of will'? This book investigates Augustine's use of 'will' in one particular context, his dialogue On Free Choice of the Will, taking seriously its historical and philosophical form. First, it finds that the dialogical nature of On Free Choice of the Will has been missed, as exemplified by the unhistorical and misleading modern attributions of names to the speakers. Secondly, the commonplace that Augustine changed his mind in the course of its composition is shown to be unfounded, and a case is made for its argumentative coherence. Thirdly, it is shown that it is the form and structure of On Free Choice of the Will that give philosophical content to Augustine's theory of will. The dialogue constitutes a 'way in to the will' that itself instantiates a concept of will. At the heart of this structure is a particular argument that depends on an appeal to a first-person perspective, which ties the vocabulary of will to a concept of freedom and responsibility. This appeal is significantly similar to other arguments deployed by Augustine which are significantly similar to Descartes' 'cogito ergo sum', 'I think therefore I am'. The book goes on to investigate how Augustine's 'way in' relates to these cogito-like arguments as they occur in Augustine's major and most read works, the Confessions, the City of God, and On the Trinity. The relationship of Augustine's to Descartes' 'cogito' is also discussed. Augustine elucidates, within a particular Platonic theory of knowledge, a 'theory of will' that is grounded in a 'way in', which takes the conditions and limits of knowledge seriously.

Keywords: **Augustine**, **free will**, **On Free Choice of the Will**, **Confessions**, **City of God**, **On the Trinity**, **Descartes**, **cogito**, **first-person perspective**
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overarching narrative of their development, this book is an enquiry into the way Augustine uses such terms and ideas in the context of this particular text. A related methodological minimalism consists in the leaving out of detailed references to Augustine's relationship to other historical figures and movements (Manichaeanism, Stoicism, Neoplatonism).

ABSTRACT FULL TEXT

2. Dissecting de libero arbitrio

This chapter discusses the evidence for the claim that On Free Choice is internally inconsistent because Augustine changed his mind in the course of writing it. These are: Augustine's account of its composition in the Retractations; the perceived change from an optimistic, classical emphasis on the 'facilitas' (easiness) of doing good in book one to a pessimistic, Pauline account of the 'difficultas' (difficulty, impossibility) of doing good in book three; and the use of On Free Choice by Augustine and his opponents in the later Pelagian controversy.

ABSTRACT FULL TEXT

3. The Integrity of de libero arbitrio

This chapter sets out a positive case for regarding On Free Choice as a text to be read as a coherent and consistent whole. On Free Choice is a single unified piece of work. The case for reading it as such is one of elucidating something that is self-evident; it is a dialogue. The manuscript evidence and what is known of ancient literary practice suggests that the interlocutors should not be identified as 'Augustine' and 'Evodius', an identification that has obscured the significance of the role of the reader as part of the argumentative strategy of the work as a whole. It consists of three books, the argument, subject matter, and style of which are developed in a programmatic and interrelated progression. This progression is illustrated in the deployment of some technical theological terms and the overall architecture of the argument.

ABSTRACT FULL TEXT

4. Approaching the Will

This chapter sets out the argument (or 'way in') that is fundamental to On Free Choice. Augustine's 'way in' to the will is to call the concept itself into question: 'Do we have a will?', and the possibility of denying that we do is explored. The way 'will' is called into question instantiates a concept of freedom and responsibility. Moreover, it acts as a 'starting point' for the rest of the enquiry. Augustine's argument is further explored by comparing it with similar arguments in the Confessions (7.3) and On the Trinity (10.10.14).

ABSTRACT FULL TEXT

5. Understanding, Knowledge, and Responsibility

This chapter sets out Augustine's theory of knowledge that is manifested and deployed in On Free Choice of the Will. Augustine's epistemology provides the philosophical context for his 'way in', and the rationale for the structure of the dialogue. Its understanding and acquisition require the ability to see logical connections and attain a synoptic overview by proceeding in the right order from foundational starting points. The 'way in' argument is itself one of these starting points in the dialogue. The ideas of freedom and responsibility are illustrated and instantiated in the acquisition of knowledge: one is free not to know, not to want to know, and no one else can do your learning for you. Other texts where Augustine sets out, discusses, and uses this epistemology are discussed: the dialogue De Magistro and the Confessions.

ABSTRACT FULL TEXT

6. Facilitas, Difficultas, and Voluntas

This chapter addresses the issue, raised in chapter 2, of the supposed contradiction in the text between an 'early' and 'late' view on the will and its role in doing good. The two crucial passages (1.12.25-1.14.30 on 'facilitas' and 3.18.51ff. on 'difficultas' and original sin) are discussed in detail. Their coherence is demonstrated in terms of their

relationship to the fundamental ‘way in’ argument.

ABSTRACT FULL TEXT

7. A Cogito-Like Argument?

When Descartes published his Meditations, the similarity of his arguments to some found in Augustine was immediately pointed out to him. The most frequently cited and most similar is Augustine’s claim that ‘If I doubt, I am’ (City of God 11.26). This chapter discusses this text in detail, and suggests that the relationship with Descartes is illuminating. It identifies three cogito-like arguments in On Free Choice, all of which act as starting points, involve revealing the self-evidence of certain undeniable truths, include an analysis of what is to know something, and incorporate an idea of value.

ABSTRACT FULL TEXT

8. Conclusion

For Augustine, one’s freedom and responsibility is elucidated by means of a process of calling the notion of will into question (‘I don’t know’). This process gives rise to an understanding of will, freedom, and responsibility as the condition for the possibility of knowledge. It is this process that is most cogito-like. However, it is significantly cogito-unlike in that the argument depends on the very possibility of denying that one has will. Augustine’s account of freedom and responsibility is grounded in a deep notion of subjectivity, and the epistemological significance of the first-person perspective.

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Preface and Acknowledgements

Augustine's dialogue *De libero arbitrio* (*On Free Choice*) has always been, with his *Confessions* and the *City of God,* one of his most important and widely read works. It was written between AD 387 and 396, between his conversion to Christianity and his ordination as a bishop. 'Laicus coepi, presbyter explicavi' he was later to say of it: 'I was a layman when I began it, but a presbyter when I finished it.' The *Confessions* were written in 397. Like the *Confessions*, *de libero arbitrio* was a work that was read widely in his lifetime, and Augustine is still referring to it towards the end of his life.

One of the main difficulties in reading Augustine is the sheer volume of writing that he produced. *De libero arbitrio* is often read by virtue of its being of a manageable size. It is usually found helpful to think of the bulk of his work as grouped into three major controversies: writing against the Manichees, the Donatists, and the Pelagians. *De libero arbitrio*, by contrast is not written 'against' any particular ideas. It is also usually found helpful to think of his opus as divided into 'early' and 'late' works—with the *Confessions* as the first major work of the 'late' period. As such *de libero arbitri*o is often viewed as an uneasy mixture of early and late elements, as somewhere that the process of conversion to Christianity can be seen being worked out.

Above all *de libero arbitrio* has been read from a desire to understand what Augustine means by free choice, and by will. It has some claims to being the first text in the history of philosophy to use the phrase 'free will' ('libera voluntas'), and Augustine has often been credited with—or blamed for—the discovery—or invention—of 'the will'. Where ancient philosophy discussed problems of freedom and determinism without much use for the vocabulary of 'will', it was, it is argued, Augustine who makes such a psychological and moral faculty central to our freedom, and to our responsibility.

Perhaps given the importance of the topic of 'Augustine's theory of will' and the extent of Augustine's writings on it, very little attention has been paid to *de libero arbitrio* as a philosophical work in its own

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right. It has been treated rather as a source for quotations for producing a coherent (or incoherent) construct called ‘Augustine's theory of will’. What this book offers is a reading that takes the work seriously as it was written, as an artistic and philosophical unity, as a book, as indeed a dialogue.

This approach to the text leads me to argue for a reading of Augustine on the will that is significantly different in kind to that usually found in the secondary literature. Most accounts start from the assumption that there should be in Augustine something like a single, monolithic ‘theory of will’. These approaches take what I suggest is something like an ‘objective’ view of what a theory of will, or free will, should look like: there is a fact of the matter as to whether the will is free, despite the omnipotence of God, and the prevenience of grace (or indeed any form of determinism). When it comes to how Augustine approaches the problem all these approaches miss out what I argue is the core idea of Augustine's theory of will. It is this that I call ‘Augustine's way into the will’. What is philosophically important is Augustine's method, his way of approaching the problem. Augustine approaches the problem of free will as a problem of knowledge: how do I know that I am free? It turns out that, for Augustine, the fact of the matter about free will is subjective, rather than objective. This subjective knowledge is epistemologically fundamental. It is not simply an illusory belief that may be undercut by a third-person, objective, account, nor an appearance that can be undermined by a deeper reality. Augustine's ‘way into the will’ therefore is the essence of this ‘theory of will’. Augustine's approach to the will through the questions of subjectivity and knowledge—so dramatically displayed elsewhere in his use of the autobiographical form of the *Confessions*—is essential to understanding what he might mean by ‘will’ and by ‘free will’. And this approach is most clearly seen in the *de libero arbitrio*. This book began as a dissertation under the supervision of Myles Burnyeat. *Quid autem habes quod non accepisti*? What do you have that you have not received?

I am indebted to the Master and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, where this dissertation began, and the Master and Fellows of St John's College, Cambridge, where I was made very welcome as a Research Fellow. The B Caucus of the Faculty of Classics

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S.J.H.

Oxford

14 August 2005

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1 Introduction

Simon Harrison

Abstract: This chapter sets out the structure and method of this book. Will, evil, and predestination are all problems which have a history, and whose history is relevant to Augustine's *On Free Choice of the Will*. This book adopts a rather parsimonious approach to these contexts by focusing upon *On Free Choice* itself. Rather than attempting to map Augustine's text onto a contemporary account of these concepts or locating it in an overarching narrative of their development, this book is an enquiry into the way Augustine uses such terms and ideas in the context of this particular text. A related methodological minimalism consists in the leaving out of detailed references to Augustine's relationship to other historical figures and movements (Manichaeanism, Stoicism, Neoplatonism).

Keywords: **will**, **evil**, **predestination**, **grace**, **Manichaeanism**, **Stoicism**, **Neoplatonism**, **Descartes**

About two thirds of the way through the first book of *de libero arbitrio* (On Free Choice) Augustine, rather abruptly, asks his interlocutor, Evodius, the following question. 'Do we have a will?' (*sitne aliqua nobis uoluntas*). Evodius replies 'I do not know' (*nescio*; 1.12.25). This is still a question worth asking. It is still not at all clear what the will is, whether it is a useful concept, whether, indeed, there is such a thing as 'the will' at all. Evodius' answer remains a good answer. This book is an attempt to take Augustine's question—and Evodius' answer—seriously. This means taking *lib.arb*. seriously. What I shall show is that Augustine's concept of will is carefully developed in the course of *lib.arb*. The word will—*voluntas*—is given philosophical content as we work through the text. Augustine's question and the ensuing exchange that begins with 'I don't know' form what I call his 'way into the will'. From it he develops his concept of will.

This book offers two important reinterpretations of *lib.arb*. First I put forward a case for reading it as an integrated and unified work. This is important as it is usually read as a self-contradictory mixture of the 'early' and the 'late' Augustine's ideas. Secondly I put forward a case for reading Augustine's argument for the self-evident nature of the existence of the will as a philosophically sophisticated and significant form of argument. In short, Augustine adopts a philosophical 'way in' to the concept of the will which

involves calling into question the ordinary idea of willing employed in everyday use. This ‘way in’, this calling into question is related to a series of arguments Augustine uses elsewhere that are significantly and intriguingly related to Descartes' use of doubt in his famous ‘*cogito ergo sum*’, ‘I think therefore I am.’

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I offer this book, then, as a fresh approach to the text, and hence a fresh contribution to the study of Augustine's thinking about the will. This book does not set out to be a study of all Augustine's assertions about the will, or of how they all fit together to form a theory (or fail to), or about the problems and origins of such a theory. Nor is it an account of the history of Augustine's intellectual development. There is plenty of very helpful scholarship taking these kinds of approaches. Rather I have tried to do something which I have not found in the secondary literature. I have tried to see how Augustine goes about thinking (and writing) about the will. I have done this by attempting to understand what he means by ‘will’ (whatever, indeed, a will is) by looking at his deployment of it in one particularly fundamental work. This means paying attention to the form of the work, its self-presentation, and the structure and function of the arguments and of the vocabulary within it. I have tried to understand *lib.arb*. first and foremost on its own terms. Surprisingly, I have found myself assisted in this attempt by the text itself, which, as I shall demonstrate, invites and requires this kind of attention from its readers. Obstacles to an ancient text are, of course, many and varied. Had we been reading the dialogue quoted above before, say, 1506, we would not have read it quite as I printed it. Since 1679 it has been usual to print, in the margin, the names of its two speakers as ‘Augustine’ and ‘Evodius’, i.e. the names of two historical individuals. The name ‘Evodius’, however, is not found in any of the manuscripts, and was first printed in Amerbach's edition of 1506.[1]

[1] 1679 is the date of the Maurist edition of *lib.arb*. This remained the standard edition until 1956.

This identification with Augustine's fellow townsman, fellow convert, friend and fellow bishop, is, I argue, no more than the intrusion of renaissance scholarship. It was not, I suggest, put there by Augustine when he published the work. This is significant because it shows how modern readers have used information external to the text to interpret *lib.arb*. at the expense of internal information. Many scholars have been interested in this dialogue as the remains of an historical conversation, and hence as a source for the history of Augustine's ideas, rather than as a carefully constructed and, on its own terms, accomplished work of art.

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That Augustine tells us that *lib.arb*. was written over a long and intellectually significant period (387–396), has led to the common opinion that *lib.arb*. is both ‘early’ and ‘late’. Scholars have been interested in finding evidence

within it of the development of Augustine's thought. They have looked for signs of Augustine changing his mind in the course of its composition—and hence looked for contradictions within the text. I discuss these attempts to dismember the text in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 presents my account of the unity and integrity of *lib.arb*. as a dialogue in three books. This account includes taking seriously the very idea of identifying the speakers in the dialogue. Most importantly, the work is written as an invitation to its readers to work out for themselves how to read the text. No previous or external knowledge is required by the dialogue, few clues are given as to its genre, and all its terms of reference are built up over the course of the dialogue. This is particularly important for the term that is the main focus of this book—will. Chapter 4 looks in detail at how this term is developed in the text. The approach that Augustine develops in *lib.arb*. is further illustrated in the *Confessions* and *On the Trinity*. The epistemology that grounds Augustine's way of approaching the concept of will is the subject of Chapter 5. Augustine has a considered theory of knowledge, which assimilates knowledge to understanding. The dialogue instantiates this theory. Indeed it is a central claim of this study that *lib.arb*. is written as an instantiation of its own arguments. In so doing, Augustine's understanding of understanding produces a concept of will that is based on one's own reponsibility for one's own understanding.

Having developed this philosophical background and this reading of the argumentative strategy of the text I am able then, in Chapter 6, to discuss the problems and contradictions that have been located in the difference between the 'early' and 'late' Augustine. In Chapter 7 I return to the exchange at *lib.arb*. 1.12.25, that is central to my reading of the text. It is my contention that the interest that scholars have shown in looking for contradictions and divisions in the text has meant that this argument has been virtually ignored in discussion of Augustine's theory of will.

It has also been ignored in discussions of Augustine's thinking about knowledge and about philosophy. I discuss it in terms of similar arguments found within *lib.arb*. and elsewhere in Augustine's

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works—in particular the '*si fallor, sum*' of *civ*. 11.26. I argue that 1.12.25 should be admitted into this fascinating family of Augustine's so called '*cogito*-like arguments'. Here, I will argue, Augustine adopts a philosophical 'way in' to the concept of the will which involves calling into question the ordinary idea of willing employed in everyday use. This is a procedure which is related to the doubt later deployed by Descartes in his 'I think therefore I am'. When Augustine asks about the 'will', he asks about what he *knows*, and he asks in terms of the *first person singular*. In so doing Augustine constructs an account of autonomy and freedom in terms of the will.

INTERPRETATIVE CONTEXTS

A reading of *lib.arb*. will also bear upon at least three wider discussions in the history of which this text can be said to occupy a pivotal position. These are the concept of will, the problem of evil, and the problem of grace and

predestination. In each case I would like to stress that this book is itself an historical inquiry. It does not claim that Augustine, if only read correctly, would give us the solution to some contemporary philosophical (or theological) problem. It does, however, base itself upon the claim that contemporary problems have histories, and that historical research plays an important part in understanding them.

THE WILL

How is one to investigate a concept as hard to get a grasp on as 'will'—especially in an author of whom it is often claimed that he 'invented' or 'discovered' it? What after all is 'will', what should a theory of will look like, or try to achieve?

> We do not know in daily life how to use it, for we do not use it in daily life and do not, consequently, learn by practice how to apply it, and how not to misapply it. It is an artificial concept. We have to study certain specialist theories in order to find out how it is to be manipulated. It does not, of

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> course, follow from its being a technical concept, that it is an illegitimate or useless concept. 'Ionization' and 'off-side' are technical concepts, but both are legitimate and useful. 'Phlogiston' and 'animal spirits' were technical concepts, though they have now no utility. I hope to show that the concept of volition belongs to the latter tribe.

So Gilbert Ryle on 'the concept of volition' in the *Concept of Mind* (1949, 61). I set this quotation from Ryle at the head of this discussion of interpretative method because it sets out two very important points about method in research of the kind that this book represents. First, the 'will' is a much disputed concept in philosophy, and secondly, it has a history. We should not assume that 'will' is a natural kind, that it is a stable item easily identifiable and distinguishable. We should not assume that it is something out there waiting to be 'discovered'.

It is generally agreed that Augustine did use some sort of concept of will. Indeed more than this, it is generally agreed that he used it as no one had before. He plays an important role in the history of will. Quite what this role is, though, or indeed what Augustine's theory of will is is harder to say. Thus Rist writing in 1969 can say that 'there is still no consensus of opinion on Augustine's view of each man's responsibility for his moral behaviour', and Stump in 2001 can still concur: 'Rist is surely right here.'[2]

[2] Cf. Pink's summary in his *Free Will: A Very Short Introduction* 'One fundamental figure in late antiquity is St Augustine. His writings on freedom and will are extensive, but their precise interpretation is much disputed. A central text is *De Libero Arbitrio*' (2004: 126).

It is often claimed that he is the inventor (or discoverer) of the will, that it is in large part due to him that 'we' in the modern and Christianized world have something which the ancients did not.[3]

[3] So, for instance, *lib.arb*. offers, after the single occurrence in Lucretius, what appears to be the first occurrence of the phrase 'free will' (*libera voluntas*) in philosophy. *Libera voluntas* occurs at first at 2.1.3 (and then another 19 times in the rest of bk 2, and another 13 times in bk 3.). This is generally taken as a shorthand form of the *liberum voluntatis arbitrium* of the title (which occurs × 9), and the related expressions *liberum arbitrium* (× 5) and *voluntatis arbitrium* (× 1). It occurs at Lucretius 2.256 f. (reading *voluntas* instead of '*voluptas*').
On Lucretius see Kahn (1988: 248 ff.). An older account of 'will' before and including Augustine is that of Gilbert (1963). Cf. Irwin (1992: 454 f.): 'If we compare [Augustine's] remarks…about the will with Plato, or Aristotle, or the Stoics, we find no earlier parallels for this pervasive and explicit appeal to the will. We ought not to infer however, that the earlier philosophers have no concept of will.'
Judgements vary, of course, as to whether Augustine's role in history was a 'good' or a 'bad thing': Ryle fingers Augustine on p.'63. (But see Kahn (1988: 236): Ryle is really attacking what Kahn here distinguishes as the 'post-Cartesian notion of will').

A very positive assessment of Augustine's contribution can be found in Clark (1958); the foreword by Vernon Bourke is particularly enthusiastic. A very influential account of Augustine as 'discoverer' is that of Arendt (1978: 84–110, and see 5–7).

Albrecht Dihle's Sather Lectures provide an impressive account of this view (Dihle 1982). Dihle has, however,

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been justly criticized for assuming that 'we' moderns do have a clear concept of will, or at least think that we do.[4]

[4] To be more accurate, Dihle assumes that by the time we have worked through his book we will have grasped what it is that we have, i.e. 'sheer volition' and 'pure will' (1982: 143). Constructive criticisms, and accounts of Dihle's thesis, from Kahn (1988: 236 ff.), Mansfeld (1991: 107 ff.), Kirwan (1984). Dihle's will is one that is distinct from and independent of intellect and emotion, and his story of its attainment is based upon a contrast between Hellenistic and Hebrew conceptions of the universe (the Hebrew responds to an arbitrary creator, the Greek works in a rational cosmos). This 'will' is given by Augustine through his Neoplatonic reflection on the Divine triads, and his self-reflective approach to mental conflict (1982: 124 f.).

One approach that attempts to remedy this weakness is that taken by Charles Kahn. He begins his highly informative article 'Discovering the will: From Aristotle to Augustine' from the problem of the lack of clarity of 'our' concept of the will (1988: 235). He goes on, 'as a first step', to propose 'four different perspectives on the concept of the will': these are the 'theological concept of will', which 'begins with Augustine and culminates in Aquinas', 'the post-Cartesian notion of the will', a 'post-Kantian' will, and the 'special topic of free will versus determinism' (1988: 235 f.). Kahn's procedure is to note six points of contrast between Aristotle and Aquinas, and then to 'mark four major stages or landmarks in the emergence of this concept of the will as an essentially spiritual power exercising decisive control over our voluntary actions' (245).[5]

[5] Cf. Kahn (1988: 237 f.): 'From the point of view of the history of philosophy, there is a serious disadvantage in stopping, as Dihle does, with Augustine. For Augustine begins but does not complete the task of working out a Christian theory of the will....Augustine's concept of the will does not get a fully philosophical development until it is integrated within a theoretical model for the psyche, namely, Aristotle's. This synthesis of Augustinian will with Aristotelian philosophy of mind is the work of Thomas Aquinas.' For an approach to Aristotle through Aquinas see Irwin (1992).

The fourth landmark is Augustine's narrative of his conversion to Christianity in the garden at Milan, in the eighth book of the *Confessions* (255–8). Kahn does mention *lib.arb*. (258):

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Augustine's own doctrine of the will is profoundly marked by this theological orientation, in two respects. On the one hand, the will of man, with its freedom of choice, provides the explanatory cause for

> evil and sin. (That is the theme of *De libero arbitrio*.) On the other hand, the will of man is the stage on which the drama of God's grace is to be acted out, as the *Confessions* aim to show us.

That is to say he does agree with Dihle's account of what Kahn calls the 'theological concept'. Augustine and Aquinas, he says, work from that Judaeo-Christian tradition from which 'a view of human will (as distinct from reason or desire) [emerges] as an overall attitude of obedience or disobedience to the will of God on the part of the whole person' [ibid.].

Another approach is that taken recently by Mansfeld (1991). Again he begins from the question: 'Do we moderns…really have a clear-cut concept of the will which the ancients did not have?' (107 f.). He contrasts his own approach in the article with that of '*Wortphilologie*, a term which I propose to translate "dictionary philology". Classical philologists and historians of ancient thought have taken our word "will"…as their starting point, they have looked for Greek equivalents of this term and of its relatives…and concluded that in Greek thought nothing corresponds to what they somewhat cavalierly call our idea of will' (111). By contrast Mansfeld takes an 'immediately obvious' association of the term 'will': 'That we are able to move our limbs and most of our muscles if we want to…is the intuitively obvious instance of an act of will and its instantaneous consequence' (111 f.).

There are other ways of going about the history of will. Kenny in the introduction to his *Aristotle's Theory of the Will*, gives a check list for the historical researcher (1978: p. viii):

> A satisfactory philosophical account of the will must relate human action to ability, desire and belief. It must therefore contain three major elements, which may be combined in different ways according to different theoretical assumptions: it must contain a treatment of voluntariness, a treatment of intentionality, and a treatment of rationality.

Another is that of Holmström-Hintikka (1991). She undertakes to set out a 'formal theory' of will. This 'axiomatic-deductive rather than… semantical (model-theoretical)' approach (1991: 11) is designed first

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for the purposes of the analysis of the historical discussion of 'free will' (7 f.) in authors such as Luther and Erasmus, but also is intended to be usable in contemporary fields (8). The bulk of the work is given over to the setting out of this theory (13–153), which is then applied to Augustine (154–77). Her exposition of Augustine, however, suffers somewhat from its reliance on Dihle.

Again, one might take a particular philosophical problem to do with 'will', such as that of 'weakness of will', and the extent to which Augustine plays a role in the history of this problem. Indeed it is claimed that Augustine's 'will' enabled the Christian philosophers of the middle ages to circumvent the problem of *akrasia* (weakness of will), and that it is precisely because both 'we' and the Greeks lack this that *akrasia* has become an interesting

problem.[6]

[6] Cf. Dihle (1982: 129). For a sophisticated discussion see Saarinen (1994). 'Weakness of will' is most often discussed with respect to Augustine's account of mental conflict in the garden at Milan (*conf*. 8) and his interpretation of the thought of St Paul (Rom.: 7); the latter appears in *lib.arb*. 3.18.51.

Stump (2001) provides an excellent example of a reading of Augustine on 'free will' that aims to bring 'more philosophical complexity and nuance than scholars have generally brought to bear on his texts' (124). She starts from contemporary accounts of the free will debate. 'Historical scholars familiar with contemporary philosophical discussions of free will thus tend to ask whether Augustine is a compatibilist or a libertarian. In fact, however, these two positions don't exhaust the possibilities' (125). Stump also locates a third position: 'modified libertariansim' which she finds more helpful for reading Augustine.[7]

[7] Not that this rescues Augustine. He finds himself on the horns of another dilemma: 'I think, then, that there is a stronger line of defence available to Augustine than he recognized. Whether he would have been happy to take it or not is not clear. If he is really wedded to the claims he sometimes makes, that God knows what a human being would freely will in any circumstances and that it is within God's power to produce or not produce those circumstances, then God is the ultimate controller (whether or not he is the ultimate cause) of the human will, and his giving of grace is not response to anything in the human will. In that case, I don't see how Augustine can suppose that his view of the will in the Pelagian controversy is already contained in his *De libero arbitrio*. On the contrary, unless Augustine is willing to accept that God's giving of grace is responsive to something in human beings, even if that something is not good or worthy of merit, I don't see how he can be saved from the imputation of theological determinism with all its infelicitous consequences.' (2001: 142)

end p.8

This book takes a different starting point: it aims to follow Augustine as he works with his vocabulary of will and philosophical problems in this particular text. It will turn out that, for Augustine, as against Ryle, the 'concept of volition' is both a concept of ordinary life, and a technical concept, and that Augustine will develop his technical concept from his calling of the ordinary concept into question. In order to see this, however, we will need to keep in mind the scepticism about the concept of will expressed in the quotation from Ryle with which this section started.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

A second context in which historically minded readers of *lib.arb*. find themselves is that of the problem of evil, that is to say, the difficulty of reconciling the existence and nature of God with the existence of evil.[8]

[8] It is usual to refer the reader to Leibniz's use of the word 'theodicy', and the appropriateness of his title to Augustine's work: '*Essais de théodicée sur la bonté de Dieu, la liberté de l'homme, et l'origine du mal*' (cited by Madec (*BA* 6: 184) and also by De Capitani (1987: 17)). If one may distinguish 'theodicy' from 'defence'—theodicy being the giving the 'actual purposes, rationales, etc that explain and justify the divine actions, and inactions, with respect to evil', and defence being

the refutation of 'atheistic arguments from evil without committing to a positive claim about the divine reasons' (Honderich, ed. 1995: 870)—then *lib.arb*. might be said to contain elements of both. Leibniz cites *lib.arb*. in part 3 (§§ 284 ff.) (Huggard 1951: 300 ff.). His remarks on 'truths of fact' and 'truths of reason' with reference to Augustine and Descartes are also relevant (Huggard 1951: 409).

This is the context most directly relevant to the intention of the work as a whole, and although it is not generally cited in contemporary discussions of the problem,[9]

[9] But see Plantinga's (1975) recent and influential version of the 'Free Will Defence', in which he refers to *lib.arb*. on pp.'26 f. Augustine is found wanting by Hick (1966).

lib.arb. is part of the history of this problem. And again we should not be surprised to find that Augustine's problem is not phrased precisely as *we* might phrase it. I note for instance that the word 'omnipotence' is hardly used, let'alone discussed, in *lib.arb*. Compare for instance the opening chapter of *lib.arb*. (1.1.1) and the statement of the 'problem' at 1.2.4 with the 'Problem of Evil' as set out by Mackie and by Kirwan in his discussion of Augustine:

end p.9

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> *lib.arb*. 1.1.1:
> E.: I would like to ask you to tell me whether God is not the author of evil. […]
> A.: If you know, or believe, that God is good—and it is not lawful to know or believe otherwise—then he does not do evil. Again, if we confess that God is just—for to deny this also is sacrilege—then as he distributes rewards to the good so he distributes punishments to the bad. And these punishments are, of course, evils for those who suffer them. Therefore if no one is punished unjustly—which it is necessary that we believe, given that we believe that this universe is ruled by Divine *Providence*—then, God is in no way the author of the former kind of evils, but of the latter, God is the author.
> *lib.arb*. 1.2.4:
> [A.:] But we believe that all things which exist are *from the one God*, and yet God is not the author of sins. But the soul is troubled by this question: if sins are from souls which God has created, and those souls are from God, how is it that the sins are not, pretty much directly, blamed on God?

Mackie (1955):[10]

> [10] Reprinted in Adams, M. M., and R. M., eds. (1990: 25). Note the further observation made by Adams and Adams in their 'Introduction' that: 'It is often seen as the *logical* problem whether the theistic belief (1) God exists, and is omnipotent, omniscient, and perfectly good, is logically consistent with (2) Evils exist.… Such reasoning may be taken in two ways, however. On the one hand, it may be construed *aporetically*, as generating a puzzle.…In the modern period however, there has been a trend of using such considerations *atheologically* to mount an argument from evil to *disprove* the existence of God' (1990, 2 f., italics theirs).

> In its simplest form the problem is this: God is omnipotent; God is wholly good; and yet evil exists. There seems to be some contradiction between these three propositions, so that if any two of them were true the third would be false.

Kirwan (1989: 63) quoting Bayle (1697):[11]

> [11] Bayle is himself here quoting Lactantius' presentation of an argument from Epicurus. The quotation comes not, as Kirwan says, from the article on Manichaeanism, but from the (closely related) article on the Paulicians (Remark E). Note the date of publication of Bayle's dictionary. It is some 18 years after the publication of the first volume of the Maurist edition of Augustine's works. This is discussed by Bayle in his article on Augustine, but I can find no explicit reference to *lib.arb*. Bayle should, of course, be read in conjunction with Leibniz.
> The argument quoted by Lactantius, *De Ira Dei,* 13.20 f. also has a sceptical history. See the commentary ad.loc. of Ingremeau (1982).

I should also note that Flew (1955) gives a similar version of this dilemma as 'Augustine's formulation'.

> Either God is willing to remove evils, and not able, or able and not willing, or neither able nor willing, or both able and willing. If he be willing and not

end p.10

> able, he is impotent, which cannot be applied to the Deity. If he be able and not willing, he is envious, which is generally inconsistent with the nature of God. If he be neither willing nor able, he is both envious and impotent, and consequently no God. If he be both willing and able, which is the only thing that answers to the notion of a God, from whence come evils? Or why does he not remove them?

I do not mean to suggest that Augustine does not use the idea of omnipotence. Indeed it occurs in the list of the things one ought to believe about God in *lib.arb*. 1.2.5, and several times in the third book.[12]

[12] 3.9.24 (× 2); 3.9.28; 3.12.36; 3.15.44; 3.18.51; 3.20.57.

Moreover it is discussed in similar contexts in other works. Nor do I mean to set down a chronology of the problem of evil. I want merely to point out, first, Augustine's use of non-technical language (e.g. the use of the vague idea of being 'from God' in 1.2.4) and secondly that where we might expect 'omnipotence' to occur in the text we find a term far less familiar to modern discussions, namely 'providence'. This simply serves to indicate, first, that we should be prepared for something that may not contribute directly to an argument in a modern journal, and that thus it may be unfair to *lib.arb*. to approach it looking for it to do so. The problem has a history and its formulations a context.

I would also like to draw attention to another similar indication of difference in the first passage quoted above (1.1.1). In contemporary discussions it is common to distinguish 'moral' and 'natural' evils, natural evils being those that result from non-human agency, such as earthquakes.[13]

[13] Cf. Leibniz (e.g. Huggard 1951: 411) 'dividing [evil] as we do into metaphysical, physical and moral. Metaphysical evil consists in imperfections, physical evil in suffering and other like troubles, and moral evil in sin.'

This is not the distinction that Augustine is making in *lib.arb*. 1.1.1. The distinction he draws is that between the evil that someone does, and the evil that someone suffers (i.e. that happens to someone). That is to say a distinction is made between whether the relation between the evil and the person is described in terms of the active or the passive. While it is true that 'evil-done' is always moral evil, and that 'evil-suffered' *can* be natural evil, it is clear that one can also *suffer* evil that someone else has *done*. We shall see that this is significant from the point of view of the will.

end p.11

PREDESTINATION AND GRACE

Whereas the chief threat to the freedom of the will is thought of today as a physical determinism, for Augustine's contemporary, Pelagius, the threat was God's overpowering grace, and certainty of predestination. Does God's grace mean that we have no choice in whether we are saved or not? Are some predestined to salvation or damnation whether they like it or not? No work on Augustine can escape the effects of the Pelagian controversy on the mind of the Christian West. Predestination and grace signal some of the most complex and deeply felt theological controversies in western Christianity, controversies inseparable from the interpretation of Augustine.[14]

[14] Cf. Brown (1967: 345) on the view that 'Pelagianism as we know it, that consistent body of ideas of momentous consequences' came into existence 'in the mind of Augustine, not of Pelagius'.
One of the distinctive features of Eastern Christianity, which is far less influenced by Augustine, is that it has done without the kind of debates found in the Reformation and Counter-reformation over justification, predestination, and so forth. (Indeed, passing over Baius, and Jansen, one might recall Charlotte Brontë's novel, *Jane Eyre*, in which there is a fundamental contrast between a Pelagian and an anti-Pelagian attitude to beatitude. The first is exemplified by St John Rivers who wants to take Jane off to an early grave as a missionary, and the other by life with Mr Rochester.)

Indeed Pelagianism is, to an important extent, Augustine's creation.[15]

[15] And as J.'Patout Burns (1980: 10 f.) neatly sets out, there are twentieth-century interpretations of Augustine which still run in the lines set down in the sixteenth century, even down to the religious orders associated with the various positions: 'Eugène Portalié [a Jesuit] uses the Molinist principle of *scientia media* to elaborate an Augustinian explanation of God's determination and control of a person's choice in a way which does not violate his proper autonomy. In the sixteenth-century controversy *de auxiliis,* the Jesuit Luis de Molina proposed that three different forms of divine knowledge be distinguished according to their objects…A M. Jaquin [a Dominican]…proposed an interpretation inspired by the principles of Molina's Dominican opponent, Domingo Bañez.'

Although this controversy has to do with the 'late' Augustine, the reader of *lib.arb*. is not immune from its influence. Already in his lifetime Augustine had to defend *lib.arb*., not against attack, but to protect it from those, such as Pelagius, who sought to appropriate it as an account of human freedom over against Augustine's teaching on predestination. When modern scholars contrast the late with the early Augustine they are repeating the kind of

end p.12

allegations made against Augustine during his life time, and in the great theological debates of the West. Indeed they are working from Augustine's express change of mind over the prevenience of grace.[16]

[16] *retr*. 1.23; 2.1; *praed.sanct*. 3.7. See further below.

It is with the late, rather than the early, Augustine that most find fault.[17]

[17] Bonner (1986: 389 f.): 'Once, however, a reader has embarked upon [his doctrine of grace] his feelings are likely to be those of mingled admiration and repulsion—of admiration for religious insight of the highest genius and of repulsion for a

theological system which, despite its greatness, is too legalistic and lacking in charity…Such an attitude is…in the opinion of the present writer, justified.' Rist (1994: 286): 'We conclude that Augustine lacks the conceptual resources to distinguish omnipotence from arbitrariness in God and thereby compromises the workings of the power of God's love, itself a peculiarly Augustinian divine attribute. With his inadequate account of omnipotence he combines an ingenious but incomplete account of baptism to produce…the ultimately incoherent account of salvation which "Augustinianism" designates.'

Any attempt at a definitive statement of something that might be called 'Augustine's theory of (free will)' has to take the arguments and issues of this period into account.[18]

[18] For a cautious approach that makes some tentative suggestions, but which nonetheless is unable to find a comfortable position for Augustine, see Djuth (1999: 882): 'Still, many of Augustine's observations regarding the will center on the notion of free choice of the will. Sometimes Augustine's use of language suggests that this term refers to reason's ability to discriminate between one course of action and another (*lib.arb*. 3.5.16, *civ*. 13.20; *c.ep.Pel*. 1.3.7). But at other times, Augustine clearly implies that free choice is voluntary in nature. His commentary on Paul's statement at Romans 7: 18, "Velle nam adiacet mihi, perficere autem bonum non" in *Ad Simplicianum* 1.1.11 explicitly links the notion of will with free choice. In order to allay the fear that Paul's statement removes free choice from human nature, Augustine insists that *velle* implies the presence of *liberum arbitrium* in the soul despite the fact that the will is powerless to accomplish goodness. Nevertheless, Augustine suggests elsewhere that *voluntas* includes the notion of free choice within its scope at the same time as he distinguishes choice and will. (*lib.arb*. 1.111.21).' For an account that is sympathetic but which fails to save Augustine see Stump (2001) quoted above.

For our purposes the most relevant issue is the question as to whether Augustine's account of grace and predestination does away with human free will.[19]

[19] For the use of the word 'puppet' of man in Augustine's system see Rist (1969: 440). See also his comments on this article in (1994: 133).

I shall show how these issues relate to the interpretation of *lib.arb*. below. I have no intention of entering here into the highly complex controversies over the late Augustine, but I will have something to say about how Augustine seems to be approaching the problems of God's absolute control in *lib.arb*.

end p.13

MANICHEES, STOICS, NEOPLATONISTS, AND DESCARTES

As a study of *lib.arb*. this may seem rather short on discussions of what is often taken to be its most immediate context. As Augustine tells us in the *Retractations*, Manichaeanism is the immediate context of this work, or at least a context much more relevant to its interpretation than the Pelagian (*retr*. 1.9.2; 1.9.6). The Manichees, a sect of which Augustine had for a considerable period been a member, offered a dualist solution to the problem of evil. Evil in the universe is due to an evil principle, independent of the good principle. Against this, Augustine defends a monist view of the universe: God is the one and only principle. It is in this context that the problem of evil itself arises. If God is responsible for everything, how is he not responsible for evil?[20]

[20] Thus at 1.2.4 '[A.:] But we believe that all things which exist are from God, and yet God is not the author of sins. But the mind is troubled by this question: if sins come from souls which God has created, and those souls come from God, how is it that the sins are not, pretty much directly, to be blamed on God?'

Augustine stresses this as an interpretative context in order to remind his readers that it is not an anti-Pelagian work. Anti-Manichaeanism is, however, not a sufficient explanation of Augustine's procedure in this work. There are other works directed explicitly against Manichees, and there is no need simply to reduce *lib.arb*. to their number. The *Bibliothèque Augustinienne* edition divides Augustine's works into different sections. The anti-Manichaean works are collected in the '*deuxième série: Dieu et son oeuvre*'. They are given a dark red brown colour. *Lib.arb*., however, is printed as a '*Dialogue Philosophique*' in the first series '*Opuscules*'—a suitably open category. It is printed in the same volume as the *de magistro*, with a dark blue jacket. This, I'm sure, is its correct place.

A second reason for my apparent lack of references to Augustine's other anti-Manichaean works, and to, say, Cicero and Plotinus is the fact that both Madec's *BA* edition and more recently De Capitani (1987) have plenty of them. I do not say one can do without them altogether, nor that there is no room for further work in this area, but, and this is one of my most important claims, such work is

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posterior to the work done in this book.[21]

[21] The same applies to all other works of Augustine, including, in particular the commentaries on Paul and the *de diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum*.

Lib.arb. is meant to be read on its own terms. No reference is made in it to other philosophical works or authors, or indeed to other works by Augustine.[22]

[22] See further Harrison (1999).

The Manichees are invoked, but not by name, let'alone quotation. The dialogue presupposes no previous acquaintance with other philosophical works. This is not to say that we moderns can do without the kind of research embodied in references to Plotinus' *Enneads* and labels like 'Stoic' and 'voluntarist', but, they can be left aside for the moment. These labels and references are most useful for helping to refine and modify our reading of *lib.arb*. They must not be allowed to do our reading for us.

These same considerations apply to the question of Descartes. Much of the literature on the 'Augustinian-*cogito*' is concerned with its relation to Descartes, even at times to the extent of appearing to take sides.[23]

[23] Cf. for instance Mourant (1979): 'Augustinian commentators…have usually endeavoured to show the indebtedness of Descartes' use of the *cogito* to Augustine.…Abercrombie [(1938)] minimises or denies any possible indebtedness the Cartesian philosophy may have with respect to the Augustinian uses of the *cogito*' (27 f.). 'In conclusion, the seventeenth century witnessed a strong revival of Augustinianism, and Descartes, despute [*sic*] the fact that he may justly be termed the founder of modern philosophy, never wholly escaped his Augustinian background. His *cogito* must remain a symbol at least of his indebtedness to Augustine' (41 f.). The topic is much discussed and investigated. It broadens out into the history of seventeenth-century thought. Contributions include Gilson (1912; 1951), Blanchet (1920), Lewis (1954), and Gouhier (1978). For a detailed account of this debate see Menn (1998).

It is, of course, risky to talk of arguments from doubt, scepticism, and epistemology without being absolutely specific about how Descartes (and indeed all the intervening centuries) have affected the way we think about these things. To explain, in terms of Descartes, what Augustine's arguments are *not,* is not, however, always immediately illuminating. I offer my reading of Augustine as one that is open to refinement and modification with further research in Augustine's other works, but I offer it as a reading of *lib.arb*. itself. There is further, and finally, a tendency to begin a work by apologizing for Augustine as a philosopher. Thus Gareth Matthews calls Augustine 'a major "minor" philosopher, even if

end p.15

someone still worthy of philosophical study' (1992: p. x). Similarly Kahn (1988: 237 f.) writes 'Augustine was a religious genius, but he was not a professionally trained philosopher: he had neither the inclination nor the technical equipment to formulate his conception of the will within the framework of a systematic theory of human action.' It would be just as fair to say that Augustine was a philosophical genius, but also a professional religious. There is no need to dismiss Augustine as a thinker before we have read his work. I have no intention of giving Augustine a world ranking (let'alone worrying about the difference between theology and philosophy in late antiquity),[24]

[24] For some helpful remarks on this question see Rist (1994) in his chapter 'Approaching Augustine'.

but the Augustine who emerges from this interpretation can look after himself.

end p.16

2 Dissecting *de libero arbitrio*

Simon Harrison

Abstract: This chapter discusses the evidence for the claim that *On Free Choice* is internally inconsistent because Augustine changed his mind in the course of writing it. These are: Augustine's account of its composition in the *Retractations*; the perceived change from an optimistic, classical emphasis on the 'facilitas' (easiness) of doing good in book one to a pessimistic, Pauline account of the 'difficultas' (difficulty, impossibility) of doing good in book three; and the use of *On Free Choice* by Augustine and his opponents in the later Pelagian controversy.

Keywords: **Retractations**, **Pelagian controversy**, **On Free Choice**

> J'ai l'impression … qu'il y a, en ces deux premiers chapitres—deux paragraphes qui sont les témoins d'une seconde … édition. Mais, c'est entendu, ne disséquons pas in vivo.[1]
>
> [1] Séjourné (1951: 248 n. 4) on *lib.arb*. 1.2.4.

Séjourné here stays his hand over the first book of *lib.arb*. The work as a whole, however, has not been so fortunate. In general, scholars have approached *lib.arb*. with a scalpel in one hand. That is to say, they have claimed that Augustine changed his mind either in the course of or after writing *lib.arb*. or, usually, both. Those who argue for disunity tend to see within *lib.arb*. the discordant presence of 'early' and 'late' elements in Augustine's thought.[2]

[2] There are, of course, accounts which do treat *lib.arb*. as a unity. Of these I know only two which address this as a question of interpretation. Both Madec (1976) and De Capitani (1987), in their introductions do so, and both provide critical accounts of

most of the works which I will be discussing in this section. Madec (1976: 180) thrusts the burden of proof on those who would deny its unity: 'Augustin a jugé bon de le poursuivre et de l'achever en trois livres; il faudrait de sérieux motifs pour douter de la cohérence que cet ensemble devait avoir dans son esprit.' He provides a concise and helpful account of 'the stucture of the three books' (162–70). De Capitani finds a focus for the coherence of the work in its role as an anti-Manichaean argument.

'BEGUN AS A LAYMAN, COMPLETED AS A BISHOP'

One reason that readers have looked for disunity in *lib.arb*. derives from Augustine's account of its composition in the *Retractations*. There Augustine tells us that there was a hiatus in its writing:

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> Cum adhuc Romae demoraremur, uoluimus disputando quaerere unde sit malum. Et eo modo disputauimus, ut si possemus, id quod de hac re diuinae auctoritati subditi credebamus, etiam ad intelligentiam nostram, quantum disserendo opitulante Deo agere possemus ratio considerata et tractata perduceret. Et quoniam constitit inter nos, diligenter ratione discussa, malum non exortum nisi ex libero uoluntatis arbitrio; tres libri quos eadem disputatio peperit, appellati sunt De libero arbitrio. Quorum secundum et tertium in Africa, iam etiam Hippone Regio presbyter ordinatus, sicut tunc potui, terminaui. (1.9.1)

While we[3]

[3] Usually in the *retr*. Augustine uses the first person singular for his own compositional activity (as with '*scripsi*', quoted below). Although this is not always the case (cf. e.g. 1.9.4 below: '*diximus quippe in secundo libro…itemque alio loco dixi*.') this first person plural can and, especially in conjunction with Augustine's words to Evodius (*ep*. 162.2), should be taken to refer to his circle of friends.
Augustine's companions would include his son Adeodatus, Alypius (*conf*. 9.6.14), Evodius (*conf*. 9.8.17; 9.12.20; *ep*. 162.2), and his brother Navigius (*conf*. 9.11.27). This list agrees with that given by Othmar Perler, *Les voyages de saint Augustin* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1969), p. 86.
For a similar contribution from Augustine's entourage, cf. *retr*. 1.6.1.: 'Per idem tempus, quo Mediolani fui baptismum percepturus, etiam disciplinarum libros conatus sum scribere interrogans eos, qui mecum erant atque huiusmodi studiis non abhorrebant per corporalia cupiens ad incorporalia quibusdam quasi passibus certis vel pervenire vel ducere.'
Notice also, with reference to Evodius, the use of the first persons plural and singular in the account of the composition of the *quant.an*. (*retr*. 1.8 (7).1): 'In eadem urbe *scripsi* dialogum in quo de anima multa quaeruntur ac disseruntur; id est, unde sit, qualis sit, quanta sit, cur corpori fuerit data, cum ad corpus venerit qualis efficiatur, qualis cum abscesserit. Sed quoniam quanta sit diligentissime ac subtilissime disputatum est, ut eam, si possemus, ostenderemus corporalis quantitatis non esse, et tamen magnum aliquid esse; ex hac una inquisitione totus liber nomen accepit ut appellaretur *De animae quantitate*.'

> were still delayed in Rome, we wanted to find, by arguing it out, the origin of evil. And we conducted our discussion in such a way that the

> explanatory account, when examined thoroughly should bring us to understand what we already believed, in submission to divine authority, about this question, if we were able, and as much as we, with God's help, were able by discussion, to do this. And since we came to the conclusion, having carefully examined the account, that evil had no point of origin other than the free choice of the will, the three books which that discussion produced were called 'On Free Choice'. I completed the second and the third books in Africa, as best I could at the time, having already been ordained a Presbyter at Hippo Regius.

To paraphrase the account of the *retractationes*, *lib.arb*. was written out of discussion held by Augustine and his companions in Rome.

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The second and third books were completed after Augustine's return to Africa during his period as a presbyter.[4]

[4] According to the *retr*. the other works written in Rome are the *de morib*. and the *de quant. anim*. (Note that although the *retr*. does not say so, there are indications that the *de morib*. was completed, or revised after Augustine's return to Africa. For these indications see e.g. Bardy's edition (1950: 566). The *retr*. records four works written in Africa, before ordination, *de genesi adversus manichaeos, de musica, de magistro,* and *de vera religione,* and a further 14 works written as a priest. (*retr*. 1.14 (13)–1.27 (26)).

Augustine's stay in Rome can be dated to the winter of 387/388, his return to Africa to the summer of 388, and his ordination to the priesthood at Hippo to before Easter 391. He was in Rome while the winter, and possibly also the political situation (the fleet of Maximus, the usurper, controlled the sea) made navigation impossible (Perler 1969:145–59). There is some controversy over the date of Augustine's episcopal ordination, which, since he completed it a presbyter, provides a *terminus ante quem* for the composition of *lib.arb*. However the date can be narrowed down to either 395 or 396.[5]

[5] Perler (1969: 145–178, 197) argues for 395. A persuasive argument for 396 is advanced by Trout (1991: 237–60). The chronology of Augustine and Paulinus is interconnected. (Thus Trout should also be consulted for the date of *epp*. 27 and 31). The problem is to find a fixed point to anchor it to. Trout finds such a point in Paulinus' chronology.

Some further evidence for the date of completion is given by Augustine's *ep*. 31 (to Paulinus). This letter, usually dated to late 395, or early 396, was accompanied by a copy of *lib.arb*. (*ep*. 31.7). This might suggest that one should push the date of completion closer to the date of Augustine's ordination if one assumes that the date of the letter is close to the date of *lib.arb*.'s completion.[6]

[6] In *ep*. 31.7. he writes:
tres libros, atque utinam tam grandis quaestionis ita explicatores ut grandes, tanto minus metuens in te laborem legendi, quanto ardorem perspicio diligendi, misi Sanctitati et Caritati tuae; nam quaestio eorum De libero arbitrio est. Hos autem non habere, aut omnes non habere fratrem Romanianum scio, per quem prope omnia,

quae quibuslibet auribus accommodate scribere potui, studio in nos tuo non apportanda dedi, sed legenda indicavi. Habebat enim iam ille, secumque gestabat: per eum autem prima rescripta transmisi.
Perceiving the warmth of your love for me, and encouraged thereby to believe that you will not grudge the labour of reading what I have written, I send to your Holiness and Charity three books: would that the size of the volumes were an index of the completeness of the discussion of so great a subject; for the question of free will is handled in them [*nam quaestio eorum De libero arbitrio est*]! I know that these books, or at least some of them, are not in the possession of our brother Romanianus; but almost everything which I have been able for the benefit of any readers to write is, as I have intimated, accessible to your perusal through him, because of your love for me, although I did not charge him to carry them to you. For he already had them all, and was carrying them with him: moreover it was by him that my answer to your first letter was sent [i.e. *ep*. 27]. (tr. Cunningham 1872)

One might also want to suggest that *lib.arb*. remains incomplete

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until this, as at the date of this letter Romanianus only had an incomplete copy:[7]

[7] An earlier letter (*ep*. 27.4) (usually dated to 395) to Paulinus informs us that Romanianus possesses all the works of Augustine: 'Librorum autem nostrorum copiam faciet [sic: Romanianus] venerabili studio tuo: nam nescio me aliquid, sive ad eorum qui extra Ecclesiam Dei sunt, sive ad aures fratrum scripsisse, quod ipse non habebat.' '[Romanianus] will submit to your esteemed attention, and review all my treatises; for I am not aware of having written anything, either addressed to those who are beyond the pale of the Church, or to the brethren, which is not in his possession.' (tr. Cunningham).
It would appear possible that Romanianus might have had an incomplete version of *lib.arb*. ('or at least some of them' (*ep*. 31). I note not only that Romanianus gets a copy of everything, but also that Augustine is concerned to make sure that Paulinus has the complete set of three books himself. (Romanianus, a wealthy citizen of Thagaste and a patron of Augustine, is the addressee of the *c.acad*. and the *vera rel*.)

Lib.arb. then was written over a long period of time, and in at least two 'goes'. It would seem that in 388 book 1 was complete in a way that books 2 and 3 were not. However it is not clear what form this 'termination' took. 'I began it as a layman, I completed it as a presbyter' ('*Laicus coepi, presbyter explicavi*'), Augustine wrote of this work at the end of his life (in *persev*. 12.30—dated to 429). Scholars have been particularly interested in this period of Augustine's life. Undoubtedly the period between Augustine's baptism and episcopal ordination is a comparatively early stage in Augustine's life, and a transitional one. The Professor of Rhetoric at Milan had given up a high-powered career to return to live quietly in Africa, but then been pressed into the service of the church as a priest and then a bishop. In the period he became increasingly enveloped in the Bible as a reader, preacher, and interpreter. Scholars interested in conversion and Christianization have been interested in the change from professor to bishop, and have sought in *lib.arb*. to drive a wedge between the *laicus* and the *presbyter*.[8]

[8] For the moment let me point out that in the *De Dono Perseverantiae* Augustine is not contrasting the *laicus* with the *presbyter*, but both with himself in 429, or rather with the intellectual context he finds himself in. *Persev*. 11.26–12.30 repeats the account of *lib.arb*. given in the *Retractations*. The argumentative strategy adopted reflects the argumentative context. That of *lib.arb*. is no longer relevant. 'Frustra itaque mihi de illius libri mei vetustate praescribitur…' (12.30) The Pelagian approach to *lib.arb*.—that of expecting the wrong kind of answers from it—has been inherited by most of the secondary literature.

end p.20

Thus for instance TeSelle (1970: 135) speaks of *lib.arb*. as a 'stratigraphic record'. Séjourné (1951) and O'Connell (1970) both claim that the second book is a 'retractation' of the first. Alfaric (1918), who in fact gives three layers of redaction, locates the break between the first and the second at 2.15.40. Finaert (1939) and Du Roy (1966) find the hiatus at 2.16.43.[9]

[9] For Séjourné the interest lies in enumerating Augustine's conversions: he finds evidence for three in *lib.arb*. 1: 'à la foi', 'à l'intelligence', and finally 'du coeur'. For O'Connell (1970) the main problem is the origin of the soul. O'Connell is, as he admits, at heart concerned to defend his own thesis that Augustine 'was inclined to think of man as a "fallen soul", much as Plotinus had envisaged our human situation.' However, according to O'Connell, book 1 is an 'experiment with Stoicism' which, by the end 'has failed.'

FACILITAS: BOOK 1 AS OPTIMISTIC AND EARLY

The essential inconsistency that is found is a change of mind between an 'early' and a 'late' Augustine. There is a feeling that the first book is 'early' and overly optimistic, while the third book is 'late' and pessimistic. Whereas, it is claimed, Augustine makes too much of *facilitas* in book 1, the end of book 3 is dominated by *difficultas*. In book 1 Augustine is optimistic—too optimistic—about what humans can achieve unaided. By the time he comes to finish the book he has changed his mind. He is now concerned with *difficultas*.

Perhaps the most influential statement of this view is in Peter Brown's *Biography* (1967: 146–57). Chapter 15 is entitled 'The Lost Future'. In it Brown contrasts two worlds, the 'old' and the 'new'. *Lib.arb.,* or at least book one, belongs to the old.[10]

[10] Book 2 appears to be somewhere in the middle: 'For some years, he remained perched between the two worlds…a new image will make its appearance, that of a long highway, an iter'. Brown refers to *lib.arb*. 2.16.41, and also to 3.19.53 'Nevertheless, there is a heroic refusal to countenance despair that "gnaws at men"…' (152).

To this old,

end p.21

classical world belongs the optimistic Augustine, who thinks that humans could achieve, in this life, and by themselves, complete happiness. However for the more mature Augustine 'this great hope had vanished'.[11]

[11] Brown continues: 'Augustine, indeed, had decided that he would never reach the fulfilment that he first thought was promised to him by a Christian Platonism: he would never impose a victory of mind over body in himself, he would never achieve the wrapt contemplation of the ideal philosopher. It is the most drastic change that a man may have to accept: it involved nothing less than the surrender of the bright future he thought he had gained at Cassiciacum' (147). Burnaby (1938) is an acknowledged source for, and Markus (1989) provides an elaboration of, this idea. To illustrate the two worlds Brown contrasts two passages. One from the *De sermone Domini in Monte*, and the other from the *De Consensu Evangelistarum*:
Blessed are the peacemakers. For those are peacemakers in themselves who, in

conquering and subjecting to reason…all the motions of their souls, and having their carnal desires tamed, have become, in themselves, A Kingdom of God.…They enjoy the life of the consummate and perfect man of wisdom. …All this can reach fulfilment in this present life, as we believe it was reached by the Apostles. (*S.dom.m*. 1.2.9)

Whoever thinks that in this mortal life a man may so disperse the mists of bodily and carnal imaginings as to possess the unclouded light of changeless truth, and to cleave to it with the unswerving constancy of a spirit wholly estranged from the common ways of life—he understands neither What he seeks nor who he is who seeks it.' (*cons.ev*. 4.10.20)

I give these as quoted by Brown; the omissions are his. What Brown also omits is to note that the last sentence is not from 1.2.9, but from Augustine's summary of this summary of his interpretation of the beatitudes, at 1.4.12 (quite a bit further on, in other words). I note further, that the fulfilment refers to the promises of the beatitudes, not to Beatitude. Perhaps the fulfilment is rather being *qualified* by the comparison with the Apostles. I note further that the passage continues as follows:

For that all-embracing change into the angelic form, which is promised *after this life*, cannot be explained in words at all. 'Blessed, therefore are they which are *persecuted* for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' This eighth sentence, which goes back to the starting-point, and makes manifest the perfect man, is perhaps set forth in its meaning both by the circumcision on the eighth day in the Old Testament, and by the resurrection of the Lord on the Sabbath, on the day which is certainly the eighth, and at the same time the first day; and by the celebration of the eight festival days which we celebrate in the case of the regeneration of the new man; and by the very number of Pentecost. For to the number seven seven times multiplied, by which we make forty-nine, as it were an eighth is added, so that fifty is made up, and we as it were, return to the starting point: on which day the Holy Spirit was sent, by whom we are led into the kingdom of heaving and received inheritance, and are comforted; and are fed and obtain mercy, and are purified and are made peacemakers; and *being thus perfect, we bear all troubles brought upon us from without for the sake of truth and righteousness*. (tr. Findlay 1873)

Complete happiness, perhaps, but not so complete as to be without external troubles, and persecution in this life! I notice further, that these passages are mentioned in the *Retractations* (1.19.1–2). However, they are not retracted, but rather the sense in which they are to be taken is clarified.

Brown continues:

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For, previously, he had taken up his stand on the freedom of the will; his criticism of Manichaeism had been a typical philosopher's criticism of determinism generally. It was a matter of common sense that men were responsible for their actions; they could not be held responsible if their wills were not free; therefore, their wills could not be thought of as being determined by some external forces, in this case, by a Manichaean 'Power of Darkness'. This is, of course, a dangerous line of argument: for it committed Augustine, in theory at least, to the absolute self-determination of the will; it implied an 'ease of action', a facilitas, that would hardly convince such sombre observers of the human condition as the Manichees. At this time, indeed, Augustine was, on paper, more Pelagian that Pelagius. (148) [12]

[12] In the footnote to the word *facilitas* Brown refers to *lib.arb*. 1.13.29—where Evodius says 'Vere tibi dico, uix me contineo quin exclamem laetitia, repente mihi oborto tam magno et tam in facili constituto bono'—and remarks: 'This is the obvious conclusion drawn by Augustine's interlocutor;

already Augustine answers by reminding him that the matter is more complex.' A meaningless and inaccurate qualification. What does Brown mean by 'already'? And where does Augustine make such a reply? It is Augustine who uses the word *facilitas*, and Evodius echoes it with adjective *facili*. Most importantly of all, however, no 'ease of action' is implied; what is 'easy' is having a good will, not doing a good action (although good-willing is itself a good thing to be doing) when you want it.

Note Brown's combination of 'facility' with the idea of a later rejection, and Brown's equation of 'facility' with non-Christian thought.

DIFFICULTAS: BOOK 3 AS PESSIMISTIC AND LATE

At *lib.arb*. 3.18.52 Augustine uses the word *difficultas*, along with *ignorantia*, to characterize our present condition, and both our present difficulty and ignorance are contrasted with Adam's 'free will to act rightly' (*libera uoluntate recte faciendi*).[13]

[13] Further on *difficultas* as a technical term in Augustine's anthropology, opposed to 'facilitas agendi/actionis': Hensellek (1991: §17).

Babcock (1988: 40) gives a typical account of what is felt to be different in Augustine's 'late' thought. 'The critical feature of

end p.23

Augustine's new position is, then, that he has now restricted the free exercise of the will to the first instance, the first sin of the first human being. The whole weight of his view of moral agency in evil must now rest on that narrow point. After the first sin, we sin involuntarily and are the moral agents of the evil that we do only in the sense that we are ourselves the authors of the condition in which we cannot help but sin.'

The notion of 'involuntary sin' as an inconsistent concept that can be read into *lib.arb*. can be traced to a pair of articles by Alflatt (1974 and 1975). However despite O'Connell's refutation of this interpretation—and his demonstration that it is based on the use of a faulty English translation (1991)—it has found its way into further readings of *lib.arb*.[14]

[14] Wetzel (1992: 88–98) discusses 'involuntary sin'. Chappell (1995) provides a variant on it, promising to show 'how, for Augustine's "late" and "early" doctrines on the issue of culpable ignorance and compulsion, we need look no further than the [*lib.arb*.], where nearly all of them can be found jumbled together'.

PELAGIANISM AND THE LATER AUGUSTINE

The evidence given by Augustine's account in the *Retractations* quoted above, has allowed scholars to stretch the work out on the dissection table of the pre-episcopal years. There are two further ways in which the *Retractations* have moved readers to look for disunity within the work and related it to the episcopal Augustine. Both have to do with the Augustine of the Pelagian controversy. The first has to do with Augustine's remarks on his

div.qu.Simp. at *Retractations*. 2.1.1. These remarks are taken up and repeated in the *praed.sanct*. 3.7–4.8 (dated to 429). I quote from the latter:

> Quo praecipue testimonio [1 Cor. 4:7] etiam ipse convictus sum, cum similiter errarem, putans fidem qua in Deum credimus, non esse donum Dei, sed a nobis esse in nobis, et per illam nos impetrare Dei dona quibus 'temperanter et iuste et pie vivamus in hoc saeculo' [*Titus*. 2: 12]. Neque enim fidem putabam Dei gratia praeveniri, ut per illam nobis daretur quod posceremus utiliter; nisi quia credere non possemus, si non praecederet praeconium veritatis: ut autem praedicato nobis Evangelio consentiremus, nostrum esse

end p.24

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> proprium, et nobis ex nobis esse arbitrabar. Quem meum errorem nonnulla opuscula mea satis indicant, ante episcopatum meum scripta. And it was chiefly by this testimony that I myself also was convinced when I was in a similar error, thinking that faith whereby we believe in God is not God's gift, but that it is in us from ourselves, and that by it we obtain the gifts of God, whereby we may live temperately and righteously and piously in this world. For I did not think that faith was preceded by God's grace, so that by its means would be given to us what we might profitably ask, except that we could not believe if the proclamation of truth did not precede; but that we should consent when the gospel was preached to us I thought was our own doing, and came to us from ourselves. And this my error is sufficiently indicated in some small works of mine written before my episcopate.

He specifies among these the *exp.prop.Rom*., and goes on to quote from it, its notice in *retr*. 1.23, and then from his notice of *div.qu. Simp*. (the work which marks the change of mind) in *retr*. 2.1.1—which includes the notorious phrase where Augustine claims that he fought for free will, but God's grace won: ‘laboratum est quidem pro libero arbitrio uoluntatis humanae uitae, sed uicit Dei gratia.’ Is *lib.arb*. to be counted among the erroneous works? Is one to drive a wedge not just between the *laicus* and the *presbyter*, but also between them both and the *episcopus*? I suggest not. The questions which motivate the *div.qu.Simp*. and the *praed.sanct*. go beyond the scope of *lib.arb*.

The second piece of information is that provided by the *retr*. account of the content and argument of *lib.arb*. itself. In his work *de natura*, Pelagius appended in support of his arguments a list of quotations from other writers, the last and most recent being Augustine's *lib.arb*. Again, does the young Augustine contradict the old? Augustine answered Pelagius' book with his *de natura et gratia*.[15]

[15] Pelagius' *De Natura* is not extant, and is only known from Augustine's reply, *de natura et gratia* (usually dated to 415). Augustine discusses *lib.arb*. at 67, 80–1. This is mentioned in the *retr*. passage (1.9.3). *Lib.arb*. is also referred to in Augustine's later correspondence on the question of the origin of souls (*epp*. 143 and 166).

His answer is taken up again in the *Retractations*, where it forms the bulk of chapter 1. Burnaby succinctly summarizes the passage:

> [This] long chapter […] is unique in the *Retractationes*. Instead of dwelling with each questionable passage in turn, and introducing his *defensio* with the favourite ‘*non sic accipiendum est*’, the writer lists without comment some

> 14 texts which admit of misunderstanding, and proceeds to quote passages from the same work in which (a) all good things, and therefore the good use of free will, are acknowledged as God-given, and (b) the decisive distinction between *peccatum* and *poena peccati* is laid down. No single text either in the *De Libero Arbitrio* or in the *De Duabus Animabus,* where his formal Pelagian-sounding definitions of will and sin are passed in review suffers *reprehensio*. And when St Augustine writes, in the famous phrase—*laboratum est quidem pro libero arbitrio uoluntatis humanae, sed uicit Dei gratia*—he means that he laboured vainly to establish, not the reality of man's free-will—that was for him never in doubt—but its pretensions. (1954, 89) [16]
>
> [16] For a contrary view see the opinion of G. Bardy, in the second edition of *BA* 6, which is quoted by Madec in his, third, edition (p. 181 f.): 'Si saint Augustin s'efforce de trouver dans le *De libero arbitrio* quelques passages qui mettent en relief la nécessité de la grâce, ne serait-ce pas parce qu'il n'a pas la conscience tout à fait tranquille à cet égard et que les disciples de Pélage n'ont pas absolument tort d'utiliser contre lui des expressions inadéquates?' Madec also quotes Bardy's more generous assessment given in *BA* 12.

The retractation, then, allows us to see something of how the text was, or could be, misread by Augustine's contemporaries. However, is it sufficient grounds for asserting a change of mind between the 'early Augustine' and the 'late'?

Augustine's *defensio* in the *retr*. has several parts. Most of the chapter is taken up with long quotations from *lib.arb*. itself (1.9.3–5). First Augustine lists a number of passages in which he speaks 'pro libero arbitrio' (1.9.3). [17]

[17] These passages are taken from *lib.arb*. 1.1.1; 1.12.26; 1.13.28; 1.13.29; 1.14.30; 1.16.34; 2.1.2; 2.18.47; 3.1.2; 3.3.7; 3.16.46; 3.17.49; 3.18.50.

Then (*retr*. 1.9.4) Augustine lists a number of passages in which 'non omni modo de ista Dei gratia reticuimus' ('I wasn't exactly silent on the subject of God's grace'). These are taken from *lib.arb*. 2.19.50 and *lib.arb*. 2.20.54. As Burnaby notes, these passages are taken from the argument which demonstrates that free will is a good thing, and is therefore from God—Burnaby's '(a)'. *Retr*. 1.9.5 then gives, as the correct response to Pelagius' citation of *lib.arb*. 3.18.50, the complete text of *lib.arb*. 3.18.51 and some of the following chapter (*lib.arb*. 3.18.52). Surrounding these quotations is an explanation (*retr*. 1.9.2 and 6) of his 'strategy' in *lib.arb*. Augustine specifies that the 'argumentative strategy' [18]

[18] This phrase I take from O'Connell (1987: 47).

of arguing that 'even if [*etiamsi*] ignorance and difficulty belong to man's original nature'

(1.9.6) is one that is to be used against the Manichees, since they do not even accept the narrative account of original sin in the Old Testament. A different approach is, however, appropriate to the Pelagians, who, unlike the Manichees, accept the authority of the Scriptures.[19]

[19] The argument of the *de gratia et libero arbitrio* (dated to 418) is, unlike that of *lib.arb*., virtually dedicated to the interpretation of scriptural texts.

There are three points to note here. First, Augustine makes no mention of any 'change of mind' about the priority of grace over free will (which is the issue of the *praed.sanct*. passage quoted above). Secondly, the distribution of quotations cited in the *Retractations* falls into two groups either side of an 'early' and 'late' division in the composition of *lib.arb*. On the one hand, there we have quotations on 'freedom' from the 'early' parts of the work (up to *lib.arb*. 3.18.50). These are quotations which Pelagius finds congenial. On the other hand, we have quotations which qualify this freedom—which are taken from the 'late' parts of the book (from *lib.arb*. 3.18.51). Thirdly, there is the notice about the argumentative strategy and the question of 'original nature'. Just as the narrative of *retr*. 1.9.1 gave us the beginnings of our first category of dismemberment (the break in book 2), so Augustine's quotations from *lib.arb*. could be said to set out dotted lines for those who want to cut along them. Can Augustine really hold these things together? Do Augustine's arguments 'pro libero arbitrio' survive his later accounts of the sovereignty of God? I raise these questions here because they have exerted pressure on the interpretation of *lib.arb*. This book aims to address these questions by beginning not from the later controversies, but from *lib.arb*. itself.

Our appreciation of the unity of Augustine's dialogue has also suffered from the projection onto the text of later problems. For example there is the 'pure nature' controversy of the 1950s, and O'Connell's attempts to determine Augustine's preference for a particular theory of the soul's origin.[20]

[20] For a summary of the first see Thonnard (1959) and Madec (*BA* 6: 578–580), where Madec also criticizes O'Connell's works. For the latter see O'Connell (1987).

For O'Connell 'there are joints where the argumentative strategy of *De libero arbitrio* 3 seems to creak' (1987: 47). The metaphors are telling. We began this chapter dissecting a dead body, we end it with a halt and lame patient. What a carve up.

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3 The Integrity of *de libero arbitrio*

Simon Harrison

Abstract: This chapter sets out a positive case for regarding *On Free Choice* as a text to be read as a coherent and consistent whole. *On Free Choice* is a single unified piece of work. The case for reading it as such is one of elucidating something that is self-evident; it is a dialogue. The manuscript evidence and what is known of ancient literary practice suggests that the interlocutors should not be identified as 'Augustine' and 'Evodius', an identification that has obscured the significance of the role of the reader as

part of the argumentative strategy of the work as a whole. It consists of three books, the argument, subject matter, and style of which are developed in a programmatic and interrelated progression. This progression is illustrated in the deployment of some technical theological terms and the overall architecture of the argument.

Keywords: **dialogue**, **manuscript tradition**, **On Free Choice**

> Les choses esquelles il y a de la perfection ne se doivent pas voir à la hâte, mais avec temps, jugement et intelligence. Il faut user des mêmes moyens à les bien juger comme à les bien faire.
> Nicolas Poussin to Paul Fréart de Chantelou, 20 March 1642

How is one to argue for the integrity of this work which reaches us as a unity? [1]

[1] Further there is good reason to believe that the work reaches us as Augustine 'published' (*edisse*) it. For a definite idea of 'publishing' a work, cf. Augustine *ep*. 162 (quoted below, under 'Evodius of Uzalis') and *ep*. 31 (quoted chapter 1.4). Further Marrou (1949). I do not mean to suggest that there are no works from antiquity for which one cannot make a decent interpretative case for taking them apart: Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is a good example.

This unity is, I claim, self-evident. The self-evident requires, however, some elucidation. The form of the work, as a dialogue in three books could be described as 'pedagogical'. In other words the terms of reference of the discussion are introduced gradually and carefully. We might think of those exercises which take the pianist from 'elementary', through 'virtuoso', to 'transcendental'. [2]

[2] There is a more seriously historical point to be investigated about *lib.arb*.'s relationship to the Platonic curriculum with its ascending sequence of Platonic dialogues. See n. 21 below.

THREE BOOKS

I begin with the most obvious material feature of *lib.arb*. It is divided into three books. This division is attested in the *retr*. (1.9.1). Moreover it is clearly marked within the text. The word *liber* is used twice

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to refer to the books of which *lib.arb*. is composed, at 2.1.1. and 3.25.77, that is, in the introduction to the second and in the conclusion of the third. [3]

[3] 2.1.1: [E.:] As far as I think I have understood in the previous book [*in superiori libro*], I have understood both that we have free choice of the will, and that we sin only by free choice of the will.
3.25.77: [A.:] I have replied to your questions as far as the Lord has thought fit to provide, and I do not know if I have missed anything out. However, even if something occurs to you, the limits of this book [*modus libri*] compel us to come to an end now and take some rest from this discussion.

Further, each book has an introduction and a concluding passage. In each introduction an original question is knocked around and given shape, and a

procedure for dealing with it is discussed and set out. Book 3, however, has a slightly different introduction, and its structure is consequently much harder to discern. Although there is no scene setting, nor indication of place or time, each book is presented as a continuous conversation.[4]

[4] Thus, at the end of book 1 (1.16.35): 'Do not be anxious about this [problem] but if we are to look into it more carefully we must take it up again at another time. For this conversation [*sermocinatio*] is in need of a limit and an end.' And at the end of book 2 (2.20.54): 'but if you think that there is still something to be investigated, more carefully, on the subject of the origin of sin, and indeed I think that there is absolutely no need to do so, but if you think that there is something, then it must be postponed to another discussion [*in aliam disputationem*].'

At first sight the end of *lib.arb*. seems a long way from the beginning. Each book differs from its predecessor by an increase in length, an increase in (average) sentence length, a decrease in the proportion of words Evodius has to say, an increase in use of direct and indirect quotes from Holy Scripture, and, in my opinion, an increase in the level of difficulty and in the complexity of the subject matter. All of these increases can be seen as functions of the last—complexity. As for the complexity of the subject matter, I offer, for the moment, the following considerations.

In the first place we should consider Augustine's words at the end of book 1:

> Nullo modo istuc timueris, sed ut diligentius requiratur, aliud tempus sumendum est. Nam haec iam sermocinatio modum terminumque desiderat, qua uelim credas magnarum abditarumque rerum inquirendarum quasi fores esse pulsatas. In quarum penetralia cum Deo duce uenire coeperimus, iudicabis profecto quantum inter hanc disputationem et eas quae sequuntur intersit quantumque illa praestent non modo inuestigationis

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> sagacitate, sed etiam maiestate rerum et clarissima luce ueritatis. Pietas tantum adsit, ut nos diuina prouidentia cursum quem instituimus tenere et perficere permittat. (1.16.35)
> Do not be anxious about this [sc. the problem of God's responsibility for free will and hence for evil], but if we are to look into it more carefully we must take it up again at another time. For this conversation is in need of a limit and an end. By this I want you to believe that we have knocked, as it were, on the door of great and hidden questions. When, with God leading us, we have begun to enter the inner chambers of these questions, then you will judge for yourself how much difference there is between this discussion and those that follow, and how superior the latter are not just in terms of the discernment needed for the inquiry, but also in terms of the majesty of the subject and the shining clear light of truth. Only let piety be with us, that Divine Providence may allow us to hold to and complete the course on which we have begun. (1.16.35)

Secondly, most of the third book is composed of a discussion which is deferred from the first book. 3.19.53 ff. goes over the same ground as 1.11.23 ff. Evodius, at 1.11.23 ff. raises the problem of the relationship between the first sin, and 'we' who suffer its punishment. Augustine gives an answer to Evodius' problem which is satisfactory (cf. 1.13.29) for the case in hand ('quod nunc habemus in manibus' (1.12.24)).[5]

[5] 'You speak as if you have it clearly ascertained that we have never been wise; this is because you are thinking about the time from the moment we were born into this life. But wisdom is in the mind, and there is a great question as to whether before its partnership with the body the mind lived some other life, and whether it at some other time lived wisely, this is a great mystery and must be considered in its proper place. However, we are not prevented by this from bringing, as far as is possible, to light the problem that we now have on our hands.' (1.12.24. Cf. 3.22.63)

In book 3 the question is raised again. This time the discussion is more complicated and more sophisticated. Whereas in book 1 Augustine had referred to the question of the origin of the soul as 'a great question, a great mystery, and one to be considered in its proper place' (1.12.24), in book 3 he is able to set out the four possible options (while still not opting for any one)[6]

[6] *Pace* O'Connell (1987), etc.

and discuss how they relate to the problem.

Thirdly, consider the fact that the first book begins from everyday examples of evil (murder, adultery, and sacrilege) and proceeds from them to find a definition of evil; the second book gives a proof for God's existence from

consideration of perception and judgement, and the third kicks off with a discussion of God's foreknowledge and its relation to human freedom, and ends with a discussion of the devil's fall.

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The increase in sentence length is primarily a result of Augustine's speeches becoming more expansive. Where Finaert (1939) saw evidence of the passing of seven years within Augustine's life, I see the manifestation of the increasing complexity of thought (in the text)—of the increasing need to put things in a carefully balanced and comprehensive way within the dialogue. My claim is that each book forms a further stage in an ascending ladder of difficulty. Book 1 is 'beginner's level'. In this book no (philosophical) knowledge is presupposed.[7]

[7] Scholars may find implicit references (although they have found very few). Even such as are apparent, however, do not depend for their force upon the authority of their source. *Lib.arb*. is self-sufficient; it relies on no 'outside authority' to get the reader to see its arguments. There is a rather fine example of this kind of self sufficiency in the *c.acad*. (a text which *does* make reference to other philosophers). At 2.7.17 Licentius who is advocating an Academic position, complains: ' "But have I," he returned, "either read the writings of the Academics, or have I been instructed in as varied knowledge as you, who come thus prepared against me?" I replied: "Neither had those who first defended your case read the Academics…" '

The argument begins from consideration of ordinary everyday examples (murder and adultery) and simple concepts (law and order). The second book is intermediate. Only what has gone before is presupposed, but we are already in the heady area of 'wisdom' and number. The third is 'advanced'. Only at this stage are we able to tackle such difficult and distressing questions as the kind of 'necessity' entailed by God's foreknowledge, and the suffering of animals and of children. Even the increase in the use of biblical quotation is part of the increase in the complexity of the terms of reference of the discussion. They are not required to get from one step to another, but the steps taken lead us into the difficult territory where we must seriously consider the biblical terminology.

A DIALOGUE

Lib.arb. is a dialogue with two parts in direct speech. While there is little difficulty in distinguishing the two speakers,[8]

[8] All *MSS* and editions have only two speakers. There is some slight disagreement about the division of some of the words between them, at 1.4.9; 1.5.11–13; 1.9.19; 3.15.42; 3.18.50.

there is, however, a problem about their labelling. The dialogue begins *ex abrupto*, it has

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no introduction, and there is no scene setting. No name is given for either speaker within the text of the dialogue.[9]

[9] We might compare the one Ciceronian dialogue which also has two speakers and begins without introduction: the *Partitiones Oratoriae*. The identities of the two participants, however, are given right at the opening, with two vocatives: 'CICERO. Studeo, mi pater, Latine ex te audire ea quae mihi tu de ratione dicendi Graece tradidisti, si modo tibi est otium et si vis. PATER. An est, mi Cicero, quod ego malim quam te quam doctissimum esse?...'

Modern editions print the names of the interlocutors as Augustine and Evodius. This is a symptom of the tendency to read the dialogue as the record of a historical conversation, rather than as a work of art and thought. When first published by Augustine the dialogue carried no names in the margin. I offer this suggestion for three reasons. First this is in accordance with the practice in the ancient world in plays and dialogues, and secondly on the basis of the lack of unanimity among the manuscripts.[10]

[10] In doing so I note that I am merely repeating the view of Hörmann in his edition of the *quant.an*. (*CSEL* 89, pp.'x–xi). This is the other dialogue with which Evodius has been associated, again on the same grounds (*ep*. 162). I am also following up the observations of Folliet (1959).

My third reason for this suggestion is the claim that the nature of the relationship between the two interlocutors is part of the economy of the work and its relation to its intended readership. This relationship is made clear over the course of the dialogue and it is part of the readers' task to be attentive both to the relations between the participants and to the process of their being made apparent. Further I offer two considerations which back this claim up. First, I ask what would the attribution of the name 'Evodius' have meant to Augustine's contemporaries anyway, and secondly (and again thinking of contemporary readers) I point to the difficulty of pinning the work down to a recognizable genre.

THE MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE

No manuscript gives the minor part to Evodius. Nor indeed do all identify Augustine as the major. The earliest labelling of the voices as Augustine and Evodius would appear to be Amerbach's edition (1506).[11]

[11] Or, perhaps, that made by a later hand on the second oldest manuscript which Green (*CSEL*, *praef*.) dates to the fifteenth or sixteenth century.

The first attribution with explicit justification—we are referred to *ep*. 162.2. (see below)—is that of the Maurists' edition (1679).

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1. *Signs used for the interlocutors*

Sigla	Green's suggestion	MSS	Date	Consensus
↑ ↓	[*spicula* [1]]	M, B, F [2]	9th, 9th, 11th	(F=γ)
•I• •R•	[Inquisitor et Responsor]	A, T	11th, 9th	α
Ad. Aug.	[Adeodatus et Augustinus]	C, (& T, 1st p.)	9th	α
→ ←	[*iacula* [3]]	G	11th	α

•**D**• •**M**•	[discipulus et magister]	X, L	10th, 10th	β
•**D**• •**A**•	[discipulus et Augustinus]	K	12th	β
•**C**• • ω•	—	V	12th	γ
A R	[Augustinus et Ratio]	R	12th	γ
•ω• •**A**•	[Orosius et Augustinus] [4]	Y, S	12th, 12th	δ

[1] The arrow looking up standing for Augustine's part. 'Spicula' is Green's term. These signs (as with the 'iacula' below) have their origins as critical signs. See e.g. Bischoff (1990: 172).

[2] These would appear also to be the signs which are used in a ninth-century fragment of *lib.arb*. in the library of University College London (Römer 1972), as described to me (under the term 'ancora') by Professor Handley (personal communication).

[3] The one pointing to the left designates Augustine (Green, *CSEL*, p.'ix).

[4] This is also the attribution of the *editio princeps* (Parma, 1491), and of those that derive from it (Venice, 1491 and Paris, 1520). It is of course impossible as an historical attribution, in view of the fact that Augustine did not meet Orosius until AD 414.

I give in Table 1 the various manuscript readings (taking the information from Green (*CSEL*) where further information can be found). The name of Evodius does not appear in any of the manuscripts. No other is consistently given. Indeed one manuscript (*R*) even has Augustine as the minor interlocutor, with Reason as the major. The manuscripts provide a range of attributions, most of which appear to follow attributions made in Augustine's other dialogues. It looks as if there is no single tradition for the naming of our characters and the copyists are just guessing.

Augustine wrote eight (extant) dialogues.[12]

[12] As for non-extant works, it is possible that Augustine's first work, the *de pulchro et apto* (known from *conf*. 4.13.20 ff.) was a dialogue. This tentative suggestion is made by Chadwick (his translation, p.'67). It is based on an interpretation of a sentence in *conf*. 4.14.23, 'libenter animo versabam', which is vaguely reminiscent of the opening of the *sol*. ('volventi mihi multa…'). These lines in the *sol*., likewise, recall the opening of Cicero's *de Orat*. and *Inv*. See Watson's translation of *sol*. (1990: 165).
The *imm.an*. would appear to be the notes for a sequel to the *sol*. which have not been worked up into dialogue form. (*retr*. 1.5.1, Watson 1990: 198). It is also possible that some of the 'libros disciplinarum' (*retr*. 1.6.) which were begun in Milan, but never finished, were to be in dialogue form, as is the *de musica*.
There are also a number of other works which have 'parts'. The *contra Julianum opus imperfectum* is published with two speakers: Julian is quoted, and Augustine gives his reply. Further there are the published records of debates, such as the *acta contra Fortunatum manichaeum*. This is a record of a public debate between Augustine and a Manichee, which was recorded by a stenographer (*retr*. 1.16.1). A full account of the palaeographical evidence for the practice of labelling would want to take account of these texts, and similar documents, such as the *acta* of the Councils.

They may conveniently be divided into two kinds, the 'scenic' and 'non

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-scenic'.[13]

[13] This is the terminology used by Voss (1970: 197). This distinction is, of course,

one that can be used for all non-dramatic dialogues. Thus Andrieu (1954: 283) speaks of 'dialogues en récit' and 'dialogues narratifs'. Some literary dialogues employ a mixed form. Plato's *Phaedo* is a good example.

To the scenic belong the three interconnected Cassiciacum dialogues, *contra academicos, de beata vita,* and *de ordine*.[14]

[14] I should also mention the *de divinatione daemonum* (usually dated to 406–8), which is presented as the report of a conversation (in the third person).

These are narrated and so have no bearing on the question of identification. The remaining five are all direct speech, and have very little in the way of identification and scene setting: the *de magistro*, *soliloquia*, *de musica*, *de quantitate animae*, and *lib.arb*. The evidence for the identity of the speakers in the *quant.an.* is no different from that for *lib.arb*. The other three demonstrate the process of identification at work.

In the *de magistro*, Augustine's interlocutor is taken to be his son, Adeodatus. (Likewise *lib.arb. MSS C* and the first page of *T*). The (only) evidence for this attribution is his reference to the amazing intellectual powers of his son, *conf*. 9.6.14:

> I gratefully acknowledge before you [God] your gifts. One of my books is entitled *The Teacher*. There Adeodatus is in dialogue with me. You know that he was responsible for all the ideas there attributed to him in the role of my partner in the conversation [*illius esse sensa omnia quae inseruntur ibi ex persona conlocutoris mei*]. He was 16 at the time.

It is sometimes wrongly assumed that Augustine means that the dialogue reports his every word. Chadwick's translation (1991: 164), and Burnyeat (1987: 5), however, are clear: Adeodatus is 'responsible for all the *ideas* attributed to him'. But did Augustine publish the dialogue with Adeodatus named as the interlocutor? This is not conclusive evidence that he did. In the *soliloquia*, (as with *ms R*) Augustine is in conversation with, and defers to, the greater authority of Reason. This identification is, again, disputed

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among the *mss*: Some have *R(atio)* and *A(ugustinus)*, other *R(atio)* and *H(omo)*, and others have no indications (Hörmann, *CSEL* 89, p.'x). I quote the opening words:

> Volventi mihi multa ac varia mecum diu ac per multos dies sedulo quaerenti memetipsum ac bonum meum, quidve mali evitandum esset, ait mihi subito sive ego ipse, sive alius quis, extrinsecus sive intrinsecus, nescio; nam hoc ipsum est quod magnopere scire molior, ait ergo mihi …
> When I had been pondering many different things to myself for a long time, and had for many days been seeking my own self and what my own good was, and what evil was to be avoided, there suddenly spoke to me—what was it? I myself or someone else, inside me or outside me? (this is the very thing I would love to know but don't [more literally: what I am making such efforts to know])—at any rate, Reason said to me: … (tr. Watson 1990)

There is no reason for Watson to add the word 'Reason' here. It is not given in the Latin (unless one reads, as Watson appears to do, as the subject of 'ait' the marginal attribution 'Ratio' (as printed in Hörmann's text). Ratio is indeed what Augustine is trying to grasp. The name of Reason is not given until 1.6.12:

> R. Bene moveris. Promittit enim Ratio, quae tecum loquitur, ita se demonstraturam deum tuae menti, ut oculis sol demonstratur.
> R. You are right to be impressed. For Reason who is talking with you promises that she will display God as clearly to your mind as the sun appears to the eyes.

If this is the first place where the other interlocutor is given a name, then we should not expect an identification be given earlier. Augustine ('ego') comes to know reason, and to know it as that which makes knowledge possible: 'hoc ipsum est quod magnopere scire molior'. As I shall claim with *lib.arb*., there may be reasons why an identification is delayed, or not made explicit at all.

The dialogue partners of the *de musica* are given as 'disciple' and 'master' (as *MS K*). There is no modern critical edition of this text. *BA* 7, following the Maurists (reprinted in Migne), prints the parts as 'Magister' and 'Discipulus'. However, as is noted at the beginning of the Maurist edition, some manuscripts attribute the minor part to *Licentius*. Again this attribution is based on historical and extra-textual information. Licentius, who is one of the young men present at Cassiciacum, was the son of Augustine's African patron,

Romanianus. He had been a pupil of Augustine's for some time, and was very keen on poetry. This forms a theme of the Cassiciacum dialogues (e.g. *c.acad*. 2.4.10; 3.4.7). A poem of his is preserved in a letter to Augustine (Aug. *ep*. 26). As with *lib.arb*. the books of the liberal arts began with conversations held with his entourage (*retr*. 1.6). In *ep*. 26.3 Licentius asks Augustine to send him the books on music. (See also Finaert, *BA* 7: 483.) This makes Licentius a good guess if you want a name, but there is no reason why you should want a name.

Further I note that in 1641 (while the Maurists were working on their edition) Antoine Arnauld quotes *lib.arb*. 2.3.7 in his *Fourth Set of Objections* to Descartes' *Meditations*.[15]

[15] Arnauld is a significant figure in seventeenth-century philosophy and theology (see e.g. Gouhier 1978). The *Objections and Replies* were printed, with the *Meditations*, in 1641, 1642, and 1647.

He introduces his quotation thus: '*Alipius*, when he is disputing with Euodius and is about to prove the existence of God says…' (*CSM* ii. 139; *AT* vii. 197). Even if this is a slip of the pen, as scholars who have noticed this identification have suggested, it is a significant one. Alypius is another important historical and literary character in Augustine's writings. One suggestion I can make for Arnauld's 'slip' is that the dialogue is being thought of in terms of, say, the *contra academicos*. This dialogue also has three books, three stages of discussion, but it is Alypius who plays an important role in the second. Clearly there is as much a history of the attribution of the parts as there is a history of the interpretation of the text.

ANCIENT PRACTICE

There is no compelling evidence for any of these dialogues to suggest that Augustine actually specified the identity of the interlocutors by some marginal, extratextual sign. The earliest manuscript of *lib.arb*. dates from the ninth century, and indeed no dialogue is found in manuscript before the ninth century, or at least, none is recorded by Lowe (1931). The situation as regards Augustine's dialogues is thus

the same as that of earlier Latin and Greek authors.[16]

[16] The standard account remains Andrieu (1954) who does not refer to Augustine at all.

The standard conclusion for these is 'that in texts of drama or prose dialogue changes of speaker were not usually marked by the name of the new speaker. Instead the ancient reader had a colon, sometimes combined with a paragraphus or stroke in the margin, to guide him.' So Wilson (1970) of Greek texts. Latin texts have a slightly more complicated history.[17]

[17] I quote from Andrieu's concluding remarks to his chapter on 'L'interlocution dans le dialogue philosophique' (1954, 303): 'En latin au contraire, les sigles ont comme au théatre étroitement enserré les textes, si bien qu'au moyen âge nous possédons des éditions de lecture soigneusement préparées dans le cas des Bucoliques de Virgile et de quelques dialogues de Cicéron. Mais la critique interne, le témoignage de Porphyrion nous laissent partout deviner un état primitif, analogue à celui des textes grecs.' One example of an intervention in a text of Augustine is found in a sixth-century manuscript of the *civ*. which makes 'a clear attempt to distinguish quotations from Christian and pagan authors by different marks' (Bischoff 1990, 172 n. 60).

However, it remains the case that the ancient reader and the ancient author did not expect the identity of the speakers to be given by the author extratextually. I mention two cases of evidence, both of which concern the use of extratextual authorial indications of identity. The first is Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*. After an introduction Cicero presents a condensed account of what he claims is an actual discussion as a direct dialogue in two voices:

> Ponere iubebam de quo quis audire vellet: ad id aut sedens aut ambulans disputabam. Itaque dierum quinque scholas, ut Graeci appellant, in totidem libros contuli. Fiebat autem ita, ut, cum is, qui audire vellet, dixisset quid sibi videretur, tum ego contra dicerem.…Sed quo commodius disputationes nostrae explicentur, sic eas exponam, quasi agatur res, non quasi narretur. Ergo ita nascetur exordium. *A*. Malum mihi videtur esse mors. *M*. Iisne qui mortui sunt, an iis, quibus moriendum est? *A*. Utriusque.
> I called upon my friends to put forward any subject which any of them wished to hear discussed, and this I debated either as I sat or walked about. The result is that I have put together into five books the dissertations, as the Greeks term them, of as many days. The procedure was that, after the would-be listener had expressed his view, I opposed it.…but in order that the course of our discussions may be more conveniently followed I shall put them before you in the form of a debate and not in narrative form. This will be the manner of its opening: A. To my thinking death is an evil. M. To the dead or to those who have to die? A. To both. [*Tusc*. 1.iv.8–v.9; tr. King 1945]

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As with our dialogue the signs given here (*A*. and *M*.) are found in modern editions, but not in all the manuscripts. The lack of uniformity is described by Andrieu (1954: 297). Following Pohlenz (1911), Andrieu traces the origin of the letters M. and A. back to the sixth century. They derive from the use of the Greek capitals Mu and Delta (M, Δ) by Iunilius Africanus in a Latin translation of a catechism made for Bishop Primasius of Hadrumetum in AD 551.[18]

[18] In his dedication to Primasius, he writes: 'Haec tu, pater, nescio qua ratione omnibus christianis erudiri volentibus necessaria iudicasti excusantemque me diu usque ad editionis inpudentiam conpulisti, unde in duos brevissimos libellos regularia haec instituta collegi, addens ipsius dictionis, quantum potui, utilem formam, ut velut discipulis interrogantibus et magistro respondente breviter singula et perlucide dicerentur. Et ne aliqua confusio per antiquariorum, ut adsolet, neglegentiam proveniret, magistro *M* graecam litteram, discipulis praeposui, ut ex peregrinis

characteribus et quibus latina scriptura non utitur, error omnis penitus auferatur'. Texts quoted by Pohlenz (1911: 629). (This differs from Migne solely in having 'editionis' (in the second line) for 'defensionis'.) There is still confusion in the manuscript tradition—the Mu can be taken as the first letter of *magister*, or as the first letter of the Greek *mathêtês,* the Delta as the first letter of *discipulus* or *didaskalos*, and the student can be presented as asking the questions ('a press conference style…') or answering them ('…the catechism that the work was originally intended to be') (O'Donnell 1979: 248).

The readings 'M.' and 'A.' would thus appear to derive from the application of these Greek letters used in an elementary guide to reading the bible, to help with Cicero. As Andrieu notes (298) this text attests that there was some confusion in the reading of dialogues in editions of the sixth century. Andrieu also notes that Iunilius Africanus presents his procedure as an innovation. An earlier example of innovation is presented by Wilson (1970) in the prologue of the fifth-century dialogue *Eranistes* by Theodoret of Cyrus. Theodoret's *Eranistes* is a dialogue between two characters named 'Orthodoxus' and 'Eranistes'. The former, as his name suggests, is a defender of orthodoxy, the latter, a Monophysite. The names themselves, as Theodoret spells out in his prologue, convey information: the name *Eranistes*—usually translated as 'beggar', or better 'collector' is used to suggest that the heretic has a somewhat rag-bag collection of doctrines. In his prologue Theodoret explains the form of the work. I quote from Wilson's paraphrase:

> Theodoret contrasts his own practice with that of the ancient writers of dialogue…Whereas they wrote for a highly cultivated public, he wished to

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> be readily intelligible to the ordinary man, and to help the reader who is not experienced in facing the difficulties presented by ancient books. This will be done by indicating the speakers' name in the margin at each point of change.[19]

[19] '*exôthen paragrapsô tais tôn stichôn archais*'. Wilson quotes from Migne (*PG* 83, 29b).

Note further that the *Eranistes* is a polemical work of Christology. It is usually dated to AD 447, written in the controversies preceding the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451), not a time for a bishop to be misquoted or misunderstood on such controversial and highly politically charged matters. Although there are only some fifty years between them, *lib.arb*. and the *Eranistes* are worlds apart. Theodoret has to go out of his way to indicate which are the right and which the wrong opinions to hold.

I add two final and important considerations about ancient readers. Had Augustine written Evodius in the margin as, say, Green does, what would his audiences have made of it anyway? Take Pelagius, not one of Augustine's circle of friends, but a good example of Augustine's wider contemporary and intelligent readership.[20]

[20] Pelagius quotes *lib.arb*. in his *De Natura* (see Chapter 2 above). The *De Natura* is usually dated to 413 (See *BA* 21: 224). Unfortunately it is only preserved through

quotations in Augustine's works.

What would the name Evodius mean to him? There is no reason to think it would have meant anything. Certainly we cannot assume that it would have meant the same thing to him as it does to us. We have too much information. We have, for instance, Mandouze's *Prosopographie Chrétienne du Bas-Empire, i. Prosopographie de l'Afrique Chrétienne (303–533)* (1982). We can, as De Capitani does, write an introduction to *lib.arb*. which refers to Evodius' subsequent career as a writer of tracts against the Manichees (1987: 26 ff.). This, however, is information external to the text; its author has not given it to us within it.

Of course, this does not mean that ancient readers could not use their own intelligence and information, and make identifications. As Pohlenz (1911: 629) notes, Lactantius (*Inst. Div*. 1.15) takes M's speech '*reminiscere, quoniam es initiatus, quae tradantur mysteriis*' (*Tusc*. 1.13.29) as an address to Atticus, because in Cicero's *Leg*. 2.14.36 Atticus says '*excipis credo illa* [*sc*. mysteria] *quibus ipsi initiati sumus*'. This may be a stupid mistake—'törichte Irrtum'—as Pohlenz

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calls it, but it does at least show that Lactantius was making interpretative connections. My point is that it was open to Lactantius to make this connection. In the case of *lib.arb*. it is also open to the readers to make connections. Indeed it is part of the interpretative task imposed by the text. Understanding the identity of the interlocutors is up to us.

A further consideration might be that of genre. Are there different kinds of dialogue which would help the reader see from the form what was going on? [21]

[21] O'Meara (1951: 160 ff.) goes into this question from the point of view of the light it sheds on the historicity of the Cassiciacum dialogues. Although he assembles a wealth of useful information, I am not sure that his account is entirely successful. For instance, his identification of a 'school-room' atmosphere which, he tells us, is used in plenty of non-historical dialogues, among which he counts the *Theaetetus*. The *Theaetetus!*? 'in that work Socrates plays the rôle adopted by Augustine in the *Contra Academicos;* Theodorus that of Alypius; Theaetetus that of Licentius; and other boys that of Trygetius' (166 n. 66)! The division of dialogues into kinds, or perhaps 'genres' (if this is not too strong a term), does have a history. One of the great differences between 'middle' and 'neo-' platonism is marked, for instance, by the approach they take to, say, Plato's *Parmenides*. For the former this is simply a repository of arguments. For the latter it is the great textbook and summit of Platonic thought ('theology'). Contrast, for example, Alcinoos, *Didaskalikos* 6 (H. 159) with the massive commentary by Proclus. O'Meara (163 n. 55) refers to the 'classification' of dialogues in Albinus' *Eisagôgê*. Note the purpose for which such classification is undertaken: with a view to which dialogues are suitable starting points for which kind of person (Albinus, ch. 6, 7). On this analogy perhaps we should compare *lib.arb*. with what by Augustine's time had become the first dialogue in the Platonic curriculum: the *First Alcibiades*. (On this last point, see e.g. Dillon and Morrow's *Proclus* (1987: p. xii). The *First Alcibiades*, like the first book of *lib.arb*. is relatively simple and clear. There is plenty more work to be done on relation of *lib.arb*. to these traditions of approaching dialogues as philosophical texts. Marrou (1938) pays some attention to the form of Augustine's dialogues. He has nothing, however, to say about *lib.arb*.

But, again, I can think of no other dialogue which so completely divests itself of all obvious guides as to how it should be approached. Rather it would seem that we have to work out what kind of a work it is by reading it.

THE IDENTIFICATION WITH AUGUSTINE AND WITH EVODIUS OF UZALIS

There is no reason to take the opinions of the major interlocutor to be different from those of the historical Augustine. (But remember

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Arnauld's ‘Alypius’, and the possible way of reading the text that I suggested as a reason for it.) In addition, there is the brief autobiographical sketch at 1.2.4 (which I have already touched upon in Chapter 2). Not, however, that we have to take this sketch as evidence for Augustine's historical biography.[22]

[22] There is, for instance, a slight discrepancy between this passage and the narrative of the *Confessions*. Here the question ‘unde male faciamus’ is presented as the cause, or occasion, of Augustine joining the Manichees. In *conf*. 3.4.7 ff., however, the process is rather different. The problem of evil is put to Augustine when he is already a Manichee (3.7.12). He has become a Manichee from reading the *Hortensius* and the Bible. Unlike the *Hortensius*, the Bible had ‘the name of Christ’, but it appeared too simple. Manichaeism laboured under neither of these disadvantages (3.4.8–3.6.10). This difference between the two narratives, if indeed it is a difference, need not prevent us identifying the overall views of the dialogue as expressed by the major interlocutor with its author.

The case as regards the minor interlocutor and his relation to the major is, however, somewhat more complicated. The reason for thinking that Evodius should be taken to be the interlocutor is found in Augustine's *ep*. 162.2. Evodius was a fellow North African; indeed he came, like Augustine, from Thagaste, and, like Augustine, had given up his career and converted to Christianity. He joins Augustine, and his entourage, in Milan after Augustine's baptism, and remains with Augustine, travelling with him back to Africa (*conf*. 9.8.17). He is with Augustine at Rome and we can assume that he takes part in the conversations from which *lib.arb*. arises. He is one of the large number of Augustine's friends who ‘graduated’ from his seminary in Thagaste and Hippo to a bishopric (at Uzalis, which is not far from Carthage). He turns up in various letters, and indeed is involved in all the crucial stages of Augustine's life.[23]

[23] Brown (1967: 126, 130, 136, 201, 273, 303 n. 7, 307, 399, 402).

Ep. 162 forms part of a small collection of correspondence on theological and philosophical topics (*epp*. 158–64 and 169) between Augustine and Evodius, which is usually dated to AD 414–15. Augustine replies to Evodius' questions that he is a busy man, and that Evodius could find the answers (or at least the source (‘unde’) of the answers) in works of Augustine which he already possesses. He then goes on to give answers to Evodius' questions. I give the relevant passage:

> iam etiam ex his quaestionibus, quas modo misisti, multa soluta sunt in eis libris, quos nondum edidi, siue de trinitate siue de genesi. quamquam et illa

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> si relegas, quae tibi iam diu nota sunt uel, nisi fallor, fuerunt, quia ea fortasse oblitus es, quae te conferente mecum ac sermocinante conscripsi, siue de animae quantititate siue de libero arbitrio, inuenies, unde dissoluas etiam sine mea opera dubitationes tuas adhibito scilicet

nonnullo labore cogitationis, ut his, quae ibi ad intellectum liquidum certumque perducta sunt, consequentia nectantur; habes etiam in libro de religione, quae si recoleres atque perspiceres, numquam tibi uideretur ratione cogi deum esse uel ratiocinando effici deum esse debere. (*Ep*.162.2)

Indeed many of the questions which you have just sent me are already resolved in those books which I have not yet published, On the Trinity and On Genesis. Although if you re-read those books which have been known to you for some time (or, unless I am mistaken, *were* known to you, since you have perhaps forgotten them), those books which I composed when you were in conversation and discussion with me, On the Greatness of the Soul, and On Free Choice, if you re-read them you will find how to resolve your doubts without my help. With, of course, some effort of thought brought to bear on your part, in order to connect what is there brought to a clear and certain understanding consequentially to these matters. You have also in the book On Religion things which if you were to think over and look into, it would never seem to you that God should be forced to be by reason, or by thinking it be effected that God ought to be. (translation my own).

The attribution will turn upon the phrase *quae te conferente mecum ac sermocinante conscripsi*. I take it to mean that *lib.arb*. arose from the discussions held in Rome as described in the *Retractations*.[24]

[24] *Retr*. 1.9 (8).1. Parsons, *FC*—the only translation of *ep*. 162 in English—translates the phrase in this sense: 'If you will recall points which you know well, or, if I mistake not, you once did know well, although you may have forgotten them, which I wrote *after conferring and discussing with you* in my treatises on the greatness of the soul or on free will, you will find therein the answers to your problems, without help from me…' [emphasis added].

Cf. O'Meara (1951: 153 n.8): 'It is unthinkable from the nature of the book itself, and the words here [*ep*. 162.2] used that Augustine meant that the De libero arbitrio was the written report of a debate actually held, and in which Evodius took part. Therefore we are entitled to regard [this] phrase…as a way of saying that he had composed a Dialogue in which Evodius was an interlocutor.'

Sermocinatio can be used as a technical term in rhetoric, for the Greek *dialogos*, where the speaker gives words in the mouths of other people, or even inanimate objects or forces. Cf. Quint. 9.2.31 and Auct. Her. 4.52.65.

Further evidence is Augustine's description of his Cassiciacum dialogues in *conf*. 9.4.7:

ibi quid egerim in litteris iam quidem servientibus tibi, sed adhuc superbiae scholam tamquam in pausatione anhelantibus, testantur *libri disputati cum praesentibus et cum ipso me solo coram te*; quae autem cum absente Nebridio, testantur epistulae. *Cum ipso me solo coram te* is usually taken to refer to the *sol*. Those *cum praesentibus* to the three 'scenic' dialogues (*c.acad., beata v., ord*.) These are written in the first person singular, and the speeches introduced by 'Licentius said', etc. Because of their claim to be historical records of conversations (e.g. *c.acad* 1.1.4: 'adhibito notario'), and in particular because of their relationship to the account of Augustine's development given in the *Confessions*, the historicity of these dialogues has been much discussed. See O'Meara (1951) and more recently (and critically of O'Meara) O'Donnell (1992: iii. 85–8).

It is of course possible that the phrase could be taken to mean that Evodius is *conferens* and *sermocinans* in the dialogue itself, and this is, presumably, how the Maurists took it. However, even if Evodius

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was the chief interlocutor of the Roman conversations it does not follow that Augustine wrote them up with 'Evodius' and 'Augustinus' in the margin. It is more probable that Augustine composed the three books out of, and in view of, the discussions he had with his circle of friends who were with him in Rome, one of whom was Evodius. These conversations would have helped him see what he needed to write to be of assistance to his intended readers. Augustine was writing for earnest and serious students: he portrays the minor interlocutor as a disciple, who genuinely wants to learn from the teacher, and this is the audience which he envisaged. In this sense, 'Evodius' is an entirely appropriate name to use. I will continue to give the interlocutors their now traditional names, simply for ease of reference.

One final remark on *ep*. 162. Note Augustine's directions for reading *lib.arb*.: 'if you re-read them you will find how to resolve your doubts without my help. With, of course, some effort of thought brought to bear on your part, in order to connect what is there brought to a clear and certain understanding consequentially to these matters.' The reader (in this case the real Evodius) is invited to think for himself. There is no need to go outside the text one already holds in one's hands for an answer. Note moreover the description of the work in terms of clarity and connections. There is, I suggest, a small irony in the fact that those who have gone to *ep*. 162 for illumination about *lib.arb*. have noticed the bit about Evodius, rather than the directions about the *labor cogitationis*.

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Evodius as disciple, and the reader as Evodius

There is, indeed, plenty of relevant information that the author has put in the text. It has not always been read as such however. In his introduction Madec contrasts two descriptions of Evodius as an interlocutor. The first he takes from Marrou. It is in fact, Marrou's description of the Evodius of the *quant.an*., but it is still worth quoting in view of the similar circumstances of both the attribution and role of the interlocutor of the two dialogues:

> l'Evodius du De quantitate animae n'a d'autre charactéristique que d'être bête à plaisir et de tomber dans tous les traquenards que lui tend Augustin. Comme le confident du détective dans les romans policiers il n'est là que pour donner au maître l'occasion de déployer toute sa science. (Marrou, 1938: 309; quoted Madec, *BA* 6: 158) [25]

[25] The second image is not far off, but not for the reason that Marrou gives. Evodius does not fall into any traps. The failures of Evodius to understand are, rather, an acute grasp of what, and of the fact that, he does not understand, and it is this which occasions the deployment of Augustine's superior knowledge. Madec also quotes (158) Thonnard's opinion, from an earlier edition of *BA* 6: Evodius' demands, he says, 'contribuent à donner au dialogue plus de vie, plus de rigueur dans les preuves, parfois aussi plus de complexité dans le développement.' Again Thonnard is, it would appear, still thinking in terms of an historical personality and a conversation that owes less to art than to stenography (cf. his remarks quoted below on Evodius'

silence). Madec himself suggests a compromise: 'Peut-être convient-il également de faire la part de la connivence ou de la convention établie entre les interlocuteurs: assumant le rôle du disciple, Evodius se ferait plus ignorant et plus borné qu'il ne l'est, pour obliger le maître à aller au fond des choses' (*BA* 6: 159). In support and a footnote Madec cites 1.9.10. 'où Evodius semble dire: à chacun son rôle: "Utinam tuas ista partes facere uelles…" ' One begins to hear the distant crying of Lady Macbeth's children.

However, once we are free of thinking that Evodius need have a 'personnalité' (*BA* 6: 158) independent of the author's creation, his role as disciple becomes very clear.[26]

[26] According to Voss (1970: 197) the 'Lehrer–Schüler–Verhältnis' is characteristic of all the 'nicht-szenische' dialogues, the 'scenic' being those set in Cassiciacum (*c.acad., beata v., ord.*).
I would like to add to this the remark that the teacher–disciple is also clearly a feature of the Cassiciacum dialogues. A clear example of this is the *contra academicos*. Divided, like *lib.arb.* into three books, in the first Augustine gets the two philosophical novices (Licentius and Trygetius) to argue about truth and happiness. The second book takes the discussion up a level of difficulty as Alypius puts forward his account of the doctrine of the New Academy. In the third book Augustine, concluding with a virtual monologue, gives his refutation of the New Academy's scepticism, and finally his account of what the New Academy was really up to in advocating scepticism. Cf. my remarks about Arnauld's Alypius above.
I give a quotation from the end of the first book. Augustine has just given a summary of the argument. He then concludes:
Sed, ne longum faciamus, iam, si placet, sermo iste claudatur, in quo immorari etiam superfluum puto. Tractata enim res est pro suscepto negotio satis; quae post pauca omnino posset uerba finiri, nisi exercere uos uellem neruosque uestros et studia, quae mihi magna cura est, explorare. Nam cum instituissem uos ad quaerendam ueritatem magnopere hortari, coeperam ex uobis quaerere, quantum in ea momenti poneretis; omnes autem posuistis tantum, ut plus non desiderem. Nam cum beati esse cupiamus, siue id fieri non potest nisi inuenta siue non nisi diligenter quaesita ueritate, postpositis ceteris omnis rebus nobis, si beati esse uolumus, perquirenda est. (1.9.25)

He is presented as a sincere believer with genuine questions and worries about what he believes.

end p.44

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However, even these questions need to be made clear to him by the master who has already been through them and can now guide the disciple to understanding.[27]

[27] Cf. 1.2.5. [E.:] 'Now you have clearly expressed the problem which I have thought about and which has quite tormented me, and has dragged me forcibly to this inquisition.'

Evodius does not take up a position which Augustine attacks, nor is he examined by Augustine to show up the inconsistencies in what he puts forward. Rather Augustine guides him to each new step, even at times helping him to see what he should be doing.[28]

[28] Thus at 1.3.7. Evodius, having given several wrong answers to the question 'unde adulterium malum', gives up: 'I can think of no answer'. Augustine (1.3.8.) gives him the answer, 'perhaps, then, lust is what is evil in adultery', and goes on to explain why it is the answer.
At 1.9.19 Augustine says: 'I would very much like to hear from you the proof by which you can recognize that man has a mind, when it is not exercising its commanding function.'
Evodius replies: 'I would rather you took on this task which you impose on me. It is too difficult for me to undertake.' Augustine not only provides the proof, but shows him how it is already contained in what has already been said. Evodius takes the point well. The task was not too difficult in the first place, since it simply turned on a consideration of the intellect (*mens*) which is something he indeed possesses: 'How amazing that this was already a conclusion of our earlier discussion, and no reply came to my mind.'

When Evodius has understood something he repeats the conclusion in his own words. Further as this guidance proceeds there is indeed some development. Evodius gains in understanding: he does not repeat the abdication of responsibility for the argument (made at 1.9.19), but by the introduction to book 2 has grasped the importance of the method.[29]

[29] Thus at 2.2.5 Evodius can say 'But we want to know and understand what we believe.'

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Most importantly of all, as the dialogue progresses, he says less and less, so that by the end he has entirely dropped out. Why does Evodius say less and less, so that by the end even the objections are given by Augustine?[30]

[30] Evodius only has one speech after 3.5.12 (3.16.46 (end)–3.17.47). From 3.6.18–3.9.26 Augustine raises a series of seven objections to the 'rule of piety'

(3.5.12 ff.).
From 3.19.53 he raises an objection to his account of our present unhappy condition as punitive: why are we punished for Adam and Eve's sin? Part of his reply to this question is to consider the possibility that this condition is not punitive but natural. He gives answers to problems raised by this hypothesis (3.23.66–8 (the death and suffering of children); 3.23.67 (the point of infant baptism); 3.23.69 (the suffering of non-human animals).
He then goes on to discuss the condition of the first man, and discusses two problems to do with the mechanics of the fall: how could an originally good and wise man choose to lose the benefits of wisdom and goodness (3.24.71)? and, another formulation of this problem as a dilemma: is lack of wisdom the cause or effect of the fall? (3.24.73).

Thonnard suggests that it is due to Evodius' absence, by which he appears to mean that Augustine wrote these parts of *lib.arb*. when Evodius was not around.[31]

[31] Thonnard in the first edition of *BA* 6, cited by Bardy in his introduction to *BA* 12, p.'128 n.4.

Bardy points out that Evodius is still present at 3.17.47, and goes on to say that it is 'une sorte de règle dans les Dialogues que le principal interlocuteur parle longtemps seul pour développer'ses idées et formuler les conclusions.'[32]

[32] Bardy, loc.cit. De Capitani (1987: 29) cites this opinion with approval. He also points out that in the objections which are not raised by Evodius, still 'abbiamo alla base le discussioni con Evodio, specie per il fatto che spesso esse suppongono di avere a che fare con una mentalità che difende tesi manichee.' De Capitani's Augustine is not the *magister* of the Cassiciacum dialogues, but is an equal giving Evodius the benefit of his experience (29 f.).

Another approach is that taken by Voss, according to whom this feature of *lib.arb*. marks the end of the dialogue as a viable form for Augustine (and, of course, is a sign of its compositional discontinuity).[33]

[33] Voss (1970: 266): 'Es ist nicht sicher, wenn auch wahrscheinlich, daß die Abkehr vom Dialog mit der Forsetzung des liegengebliebenen Werkes zusammenfällt. Augustin war an eine Grenze gestoßen, jenseits derer das philosophische Gespräch für ihn nicht mehr sinnvol war. Bei dem Versuch, nicht mehr nur Grundwahrheiten der christlichen Lehre einsichtig zu machen, sondern auch Einzelheiten des Inhalts der Heiligen Schrift, war mit der Vernunft nicht mehr auszukommen. Dann war auch das auf den Gebrauch der Vernunft gegründete Gespräch sinnlos. Die Grenze, an der der Dialog prinzipiell nicht mehr möglich ist, ist in dieser Schrift dort erreicht, wo der Begriff der Versündigung aus Unkenntnis ins Gespräch kommt.'
Note, yet again, the equation of the process of composition with its content. For a similar kind of account see Mourant (1970: 88)—and cf. the same author's remark (1979: 32): 'His interlocutors in the dialogues have little to say, a reflection more upon Augustine's inability to write convincing dialogue.' Cf. Thimme's remark in his Introduction to his translation (1962: 10): 'Während die Partner der früheren Dialoge lebendig und anschaulich charakterisiert werden, bleibt die Gestalt des Evodius ohne individuelle Züge. Dem Verfasser unseres Dialogs ist es diesmal nur um die Probleme zu tun.' (This remark is referred by Brix (1965) to Folliet's (1959) remarks on the manuscript evidence for the interlocutor.) For another view of Augustine's abandonment of dialogue form see De Plinval (1951). He finds that in *lib.arb*. Evodius 'n'est plus qu'une "utilité", un répondant, nullement un instigateur' (309), and that this is a stage in Augustine's growing preference for personal, solitary meditation, without exterior intervention. It is true that Augustine wrote no more dialogues after *lib.arb*. However, the pedagogical motive behind his use of the dialogue persists in later works. Thus in *trin*. (a work which is almost unique in Augustine's later life in that it was occasioned by no immediate controversy) in the opening chapters of the first book (1.1.1–1.3.6; cf. also the opening chapters of each of the fifteen books) he asks the reader to enter into a relationship with the author which is very similar to that we find between Augustine and Evodius (and indeed the 'fool' of *lib.arb*. 2.2.5):

> Nec pigebit autem me, sicubi haesito, quaerere; nec pudebit, sicubi erro, discere. Proinde quisquis haec legit ubi pariter certus est, pergat mecum; ubi pariter haesitat, quaerat mecum; ubi errorem suum cognoscit, redeat ad me; ubi meum, reuocet me. Ita ingrediamur simul caritatis uiam tendentes ad eum de quo dictum est: Quaerite faciem eius semper. Et hoc placitum pium atque tutum coram domino deo nostro cum omnibus inierim qui ea quae scribo legunt et in omnibus scriptis meis maximeque in his ubi quaeritur unitas trinitatis…(*trin*. 1.2.4–3.5)
> Nor will I for my part, wherever I stick fast be loath to seek, nor wherever I go wrong be ashamed to learn. Accordingly, dear reader, whenever you are as certain about something as I am go forward with me; whenever you stick equally fast seek with me; whenever you notice that you have gone wrong come back to me; or that I have, call me back to you. In this way let us set out along Charity Street together, making for him of whom it is said, *Seek his face always* (Ps. 105: 4). This covenant, both prudent and pious, I would wish to enter into in the sight of the Lord God with all who read what I write, and with respect to all my writings, especially such as these where we are seeking the unity of the three…

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Lib.arb., however, is, of course, not the only dialogue of Augustine's to end in virtual monologue. What of the *de magistro*, or of the *contra academicos,* to name but two? Voss is, however, right to associate Evodius' silence with the nature of Augustine's discussion after 3.5.12. My suggestion is, however, that each book constitutes a higher level or grade of difficulty. Whereas book 1 is for absolute beginners, by book 3 we are in advanced and difficult territory. However, by this stage we already have the necessary philosophical

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knowledge, and we have acquired it in the previous two books.[34]

[34] Voss (1970: 263) writes that ‘der Verzicht auf Dialog ist verbunden mit dem Verzicht auf Untersuchung. An ihre Stelle ist der Lobpreis getreten.’ In no sense, however, has *lib.arb*. been for Augustine, as teacher, an investigation. He, as we know (*lib.arb*. 1.2.4), has been through it all before. The ‘Lobpreis’ (by which is meant the ‘rule of piety’ which is first given at 3.5.12: ‘we owe a debt of thanks to our creator’) is no replacement or substitute for ‘Vernunft’ (or even Evodius' ‘Untersuchung’); it is reached as the conclusion of the teaching process. In book 2 Evodius has come to learn that God exists and that all good things are from God, by learning that God is the standard by which we judge, and not something over which we can pronounce judgement. By book 3 Evodius, and the reader, is in a position to appreciate why we should adopt the ‘rule of piety’, precisely because of what has gone before in book 2. Gratitude, and praise, are the correct attitudes to take to the creator, the source of all that is good, even in cases where we are not entirely sure of what is going on.

What is it about the difficulty of the discussion after 3.5.12 that requires Evodius' silence? There are two parts to my answer to this.

First of all, as Voss sees, there is a connection with the ‘rule of piety’ which is introduced at 3.5.12. We should notice that Augustine (both the character and the author) does not associate Evodius with the attitude of the objections discussed. This should, however, not blind us to the obvious fact

that they are discussed. A good example is the objection of 3.19.53:

> This is the point at which there arises that question which men—the kind of men who are ready to blame anything for sin but themselves—usually harp on at, and mutter among themselves. 'If Adam and Eve', they say, 'sinned, what have we, unhappy men that we are, done, that we should be born with the blindness of ignorance and the torments of difficulty? So that first we should be in error, not knowing what we ought to do, and secondly, when the precepts of justice do begin to be made clear to us, we should will to do them but, being held back by carnal concupiscence we should, by some sort of necessity, be unable to do them?'

Evodius does not ask this question here, but he has already asked it, only in a slightly different way (at 1.12.24). Why does he not ask it here? Notice first that Augustine associates this question with questioners who do not 'believe'. The questioners simply are not part of the dialogue in the way that Evodius is. To them there is a short answer which can be given: 'To such the short answer is that they should be quiet and stop grumbling against God' (3.19.53). Evodius, and the reader, however, want to understand (cf. 2.2.6). Part of what

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it means to have understood something, is to be able to repeat it, not simply parrot-fashion, but to be able to apply it with understanding. How, the question is here, does what Evodius has understood relate to the kind of worries and objections brought by even the most unfriendly examiner? There is not just a short answer, but also a long one. Above all we should notice how Augustine has built up the distinction and relationship between Evodius and the unbelieving objectors, gradually over the course of the dialogue. There is the difference between proving that someone ought to believe that God exists, and proving that God does exist (2.2.6). There is, for example, the difference between asking about God's foreknowledge in piety and doing so in order to try and discredit the divine providence (3.2.5). But just because some people do the latter, does not mean Evodius cannot do the former.[35]

> [35] 'You have knocked with zeal at the gates of God's mercy. May he be present and open to those who knock. Yet the majority of men are tormented by this question, for no other reason, I believe, than that they do not seek in piety, but are more eager to excuse than to confess their sins. For there are those who are of the opinion that there is no Divine Providence over human affairs…And there are others who, although they do not dare to deny that God's Providence governs the life of man, prefer, none the less, to believe (by pernicious error) that it is weak, or unjust, or evil, rather than to confess their sins in suppliant piety…(3.2.5). But you, indeed, are troubled, and astounded by this question. How is it that these two assertions—that God foreknows all future things, and that we sin, not by necessity, but by free will—do not contradict each other?' (3.3.6).

Secondly it is the role of Evodius to stand for the reader. The reader is meant to come to identify with Evodius, or at least with the process that Evodius himself must go through. We too must follow the chain of reasoning that begins in book 1, and submit ourselves to the discipline of education.

The less Evodius has to say, the more the burden is on the readers to make sure that they really do understand what the master is telling them. Evodius gains an identity as a disciple, only to pass it on to the reader.

This brings me back to my insistence on Evodius' real anonymity. Modern editors have, by printing this name, and referring to all the historical knowledge about the man, distracted attention away from Augustine's construction of the dialogue. The characters' lack of names means that the author is leaving it up to the reader to work out the relationship for themselves. In this way the form of the work

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instantiates the central thrust of the work as a whole: our *knowledge* of our responsibility.[36]

[36] Very helpful on the significance of naming in literature is Barton (1990). Chapter 1 deals with ancient texts, and the different ways in which Comedy, unlike Tragedy (which is tied to 'Oedipus' etc.), can exploit its freedom to invent names. Cf. esp. pp.'23 ff.: Tragic dramatists give their characters their names very quickly (as does Cicero in *Part*. quoted above); in comedy, however, the name can be deployed to give information (as Theodoret)—or withhold it.

THE ARGUMENT OF *LIB.ARB*.

One way of describing the integrity of the text is to set out a summary of its argument. I do this below in the form of a map (Figure 1). I then describe the structure of this argument, and look at the development of the terminology used within it.

The first two books have what we can call introductions. These are the sections which open each book and in which Evodius' original questions and concerns become modified and set out as a procedural series of distinct questions (1.1.1–1.3.6; 2.1.1.–2.3.7). So in book 1 'is God not the author of evil' (1.1.1) becomes 'what is the source of our doing evil' (1.2.4). This is given a context by Augustine's formulation (I paraphrase) 'if sins are from souls and souls from God, how is it that sins are not from God' (1.2.4). Augustine then gives a procedure for giving the answer to 'unde male faciamus': we must first know '*what* doing evil is' (1.3.6). In order for Evodius to find this out, Augustine says, if, that is, he can't give a definition of evil action already, they should begin from examples of evil actions (1.3.6). A definition of evil action (i.e. what it is about an action that makes it evil) is arrived at, at the end of the first book (1.16.34), by which time it has become clear that in the process of giving this definition, the answer to the 'unde' question has also been given (1.16.35).

Book 2 resumes the discussion with the question which Evodius raised at the end of the first. Is God not responsible for evil in creating us with the wherewithal to commit evil (1.16.35)? The overall problem of the relationship between God and evil (1.1.1; 1.2.4) has not yet

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Book 1

Overall problem (i) Is God responsible for evil? (1.1.1)

specific question (ii) whence do we do evil? (1.2.4)

answered via prior question (iii) what is evil? (1.3.6)

answer to (iii) turning from divine to temporal things (1.16.34)

answer to (ii) by free choice of the will (1.16.35)

This raises a further problem

(iv) is God responsible for evil in virtue of giving us the means to do evil? (1.16.35)

Book 2

Question **(iv)** *is answered via three prior proofs* (2.3.7)

that **(v)** God exists
(vi) all good things are from God
(vii) free choice of the will is a good thing

hence answer to **(iv)** God is responsible for will being a good thing, we are responsible for using it for evil

Resulting problem **(viii)** but whence the bad will? (2.19.54)

answer to **(viii)** There is no 'answer', as what is not from God has no being and is unknowable. 'Sciri enim non potest quod nihil est': (2.19.54)

Enough has been said…

Book 3

… but now that the overall answer is in place, other problems can easily be dealt with.

Further problems **(ix)** Necessity and nature (3.1.1)

answer to **(ix)** difference between the natural and the voluntary (3.1.3)

Further problems **(x)** Necessity and God's foreknowledge (3.2.4)

answer to **(x)** God foreknows the will (3.4.11)

General problem **(xi)** All Necessity and God's responsibility

general method of answer **(xi)** The Rule of Piety: attitude of gratitude and praise (3.5.12)

Further problems **(xii)** Necessity and our condition (3.19.51)

answer to **(xii)** whatever the truth about the human condition and how we got here, we can be more certain that we have free will

Figure 1 A map of *lib.arb*.

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been resolved. In the introduction to the first book it was made clear that Evodius had this problem because he already believed certain things. It is a problem because of what Evodius believed. The problem of evil is, of course, a problem for the theist. In this second introduction much more time is spent on the relationship between what one believes and what one understands; this makes it clear that Evodius is after understanding, which is something more than belief. It also makes it clear that there can also be a question about what one *ought* to believe. Further the introduction subjects Evodius' formulation of the problem to examination. What Evodius actually asks is first '*why*' God gave us free choice of the will ('quare'), and then '*whether*' God did in fact give it us ('utrum') (2.1.1), and then this becomes the question of whether God '*ought*' to have given it us ('debuisse' 2.2.4). This formulation of the question is the one fundamental to the rest of the book (and as we shall see to the rest of the work as well). Augustine sets out a procedure ('ordo') for answering the question 'was it right of God to give man free choice of the will': it is to be answered as the conclusion of (let us say) a syllogism, the premises of which are given by the propositions each of which will first be shown to be true:

(1) God exists
(2) All good things have their existence from God
(3) Free choice of the will is a good thing (2.3.7)

Now for a syllogism (1) is not essential. The conclusion

(4) Free choice of the will has its existence from God

completes a valid syllogism from (2) and (3). Why then does Augustine spend so much time on (1)? The answer has to do with the way (1) is demonstrated. What Augustine puts as the first step in the order ('ordine' 2.3.7) is the question 'how it is manifest that God exists' (2.3.7). The proof that God exists of 2.3.7–2.15.40 is designed to make it clear that God's existence is presupposed by the very ability to ask questions about how things '*ought*' to be. Hence the importance in the introduction of the time spent on questions of what God ought to have done. Note, moreover, that, as in book 1, the answer to the overall problem is found to be already contained in the answer to the intermediary questions. God is not the author of evil, because in

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ascertaining that he has given us free will, we have thereby ascertained that the nature of this free will is such that it absolves God from this responsibility.

Book 2 ends with Augustine's account of the unintelligibility of sin. The will is something we can know, and we can understand how it is the 'cause' of sin. But 'why' we will to sin (or why, at least, the first sinner willed to sin in a perfect universe) is, he says, an unanswerable question. It is unanswerable because it is the antithesis of everything an intelligible answer should be: it is without order and structure, and it is a movement away from God, who is responsible for all intelligibility. Again the way God's existence has been proved is of the first importance for understanding this claim.

The trajectory of the first two books here has completed its rather elegant curve. Yet a third book remains. What we have here is a series of exercises. We take the conclusions that we have gained from the first two books and by elaborating upon them we come to understand them in ever increasing depth. The word ‘necessity’ can be used to characterize all the further problems upon which our hard won gains are brought to bear. First of all Augustine argues that while nature may imply necessity, we can distinguish our will from the natural. The next problem raised is that of God's foreknowledge. Does not this determine our actions? Augustine argues that if God foreknows a will, then what he foreknows is thereby (jolly well) going to be a will. This problem then turns into a general question about all necessity. Up to now we have been dealing with the idea of the necessary as being opposed to the voluntary. But there are plenty of things in the universe which do happen of necessity. Here Augustine brings in a different kind of answer: the ‘rule of piety’ (perhaps better translated as ‘attitude of gratitude’). Again this can be seen to derive from the *quomodo* of book 2 (‘quomodo manifestum est Deum esse’, 2.3.7). Because God is the source of all intelligibility and goodness, whatever he is responsible for must be good and (ultimately) intelligible. Augustine deals with a number of objections to this rule. He then gives a succinct summary from first principles (3.13.36–3.16.46). Again Evodius raises the basic fundamental question, not because he is stupid, but in order to bring up a fourth challenge from necessity, the necessity of the condition we are born into. Here we return to the territory of book 1. As at 1.11.22 our punitive condition is described

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under two headings, which are here titled ‘ignorance’ and ‘difficulty’. This time round, however, we are in a position to give a really sophisticated set of answers to the problems raised. Augustine first shows that our present condition is punitive. He then goes on to show how the question of the Soul's origin is strictly irrelevant to the problem, as all its possible answers are perfectly compatible with God's goodness and justice. (At 1.11.24 he had merely told us that it was not relevant.) He is able to show that God's goodness and justice would not be compromised ‘even if’ our present condition were ‘natural’ as opposed to punitive. He then returns to the problem of the intelligibility of the account of the very first entry of sin into the universe in terms which are both philosophical (‘appearances’, and ‘middle states’, ‘envy’) and biblical (the devil, pride). The book, he concludes, could go on forever, but must come to an end at some point.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

I have claimed that philosophically important terminology is given content and definition as the dialogue progresses. Crucially this is the case for *voluntas*, and for the terms of Augustine's epistemology. Here I wish to give a brief description of how this process works for two other items of vocabulary, and one example of how it works on the large scale of the dialogue as a whole.

Libido

Libido, which will become a very important term of art, is hardly noticed when it first occurs. Augustine offers a counter-example to Evodius' use of the 'golden rule' to define what is bad about adultery.

> Quid? si cuiuspiam libido ea sit, ut uxorem suam praebeat alteri libenterque ab eo corrumpi patiatur, in cuius uxorem uicissim cupit parem habere licentiam, nihilne male facere tibi uidetur? (1.3.6)
> What of someone whose lust [*libido*] it is to offer his wife to another man and willingly to suffer her seduction at his hands, and who in turn desires to

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> have the same licence with the other man's wife? Does he not seem to you to have done something that is wrong?

But here, of course, we have *libido* in its usual sexual meaning. We should compare what Augustine says of the word elsewhere:

> Cum igitur sint multarum libidines rerum, tamen, cum libido dicitur neque cuius rei libido sit additur, non fere adsolet animo occurrere nisi illa qua obscenae partes corporis excitantur. (*civ*. 14.16)
> Therefore, although there are lusts for many things, yet when the term lust is employed without the mention of any object, nothing comes to mind usually but the lust that excites the shameful parts of the body. (tr. Levine 1966)

I quote this passage because it gives a 'pre-theoretical' sense of the word, and shows Augustine aware of it.[37]

[37] As the terminology of lust is very important for the later Pelagian debates it has been much discussed. See especially Bonner (1962), who includes a very useful account of the history of the word before Augustine, which need not detain us here.

Libido will next be used as the definition of what is evil about adultery. Here Augustine can build on the sexual associations of the word already used:

> Fortassis ergo libido in adulterio malum est; sed dum tu foris in ipso facto quod iam uideri potest malum quaeris, pateris angustias. Nam ut intellegas libidinem in adulterio malum esse, si cui etiam non contingat facultas concumbendi cum coniuge aliena, planum tamen aliquo modo sit id eum cupere et si potestas detur esse facturum, non minus reus est quam si in ipso facto deprehenderetur. (1.3.8)
> Perhaps, then, it is the lust [*libido*] in adultery that is evil. As long as you look for the evil in the outward and visible action itself, you will encounter difficulties. In order, then, to understand that it is the lust which is evil in adultery, consider this: If someone does not have the opportunity to sleep with the wife of another man, but it is clear, in some way, that he desires to do so, and that, given the chance, he would, then he is no less guilty, than if he were caught in the deed itself.

At 1.4.10, *libido* will receive a definition:

> E.: Resipisco et admodum gaudeo tam me plane cognouisse, quid sit etiam illa culpabilis cupiditas, quae libido nominatur. Quam esse iam apparet earum rerum amorem, quas potest quisque inuitus amittere.

> E.: I have regained my senses and I now rejoice to have seen so clearly what this culpable desire, which is called lust, really is. It is now clear that it is the love of things which a man can lose against his will [*inuitus*].

This has been reached through a process of considering it in terms of 'desire' and 'fear', desire's opposite (*cupiditas* and *metus*). The word and its theoretical content now play an important role in the rest of the first book. Interestingly the word *libido* hardly plays any role in the second and third books. It occurs once in book 2, and four times in book 3 (five times if you include the adjective *libidinosus* at 3.18.52).[38]

[38] 2.18.48: 'yet many people use their eyes to do many shameful acts, and they force them into the service of lust [*et eos cogunt militare libidini*], and yet you see how much good is missing from the countenance that lacks its eyes.'
3.1.2: 'I believe that you remember what was sufficiently discovered in the first discussion, namely that nothing can make the mind the slave of lust [*seruam libidinis*] except its own will.'
3.2.5: 'For some people are willing to think that there is no divine providence over human affairs, and commit their bodies and souls to chance and accident, they hand themselves over to be battered and torn apart by lusts [*feriendos et dilaniandos libidinibus*]…'
3.10.31: 'not only because he [the Son of God] was killed, being innocent of any crime but also because he was born without any lust [*sine crimine…sine libidine*].'
3.18.52: 'But to take false things for true, so that one errs against one's will, and to be unable to restrain oneself from the deeds of lust [*a libidinosis operibus temperare*], because of the resisting and torturing pain of the carnal bonds, this is not the nature of man as created, but the punishment of man as condemned.'
3.19.53: 'They would be right to complain if there did not exist a man who had conquered error and lust [*erroris et libidinis nullus hominum uictor*].'

This is because what becomes important is not the word, but its definition in terms of will. It is the *invitus* of 1.4.10 which turns out to be most important. Significantly, in *lib.arb*. Augustine is not interested in working out a theory of the passions. Rather he uses the word *libido* with its pre-theoretical associations to achieve the definition of a concept, which will do the necessary intellectual work for the task in hand.

Providentia

Another very concise example is that of 'providence'. This is employed (as is *voluntas*) in the first section (1.1.1), where it is

used as one of the three premises in the argument that God is the author of evil-suffered only ('since we believe that this universe is governed by divine providence'). It occurs again as one of the terms of reference in which the 'temporal' and 'eternal laws' are discussed (1.5.13–1.6.14), and then again

at the end of book 1, in the context of piety: 'Only let piety be with us, that Divine Providence may permit us to keep on the course we have begun, and to finish it' (1.16.35). In book 2, however, (2.16.41–2.17.43; 2.19.53) the word again reoccurs with particular content, content which has been provided by what has been going on in book 2:

> Hinc etiam comprehenditur omnia prouidentia gubernari. Si enim omnia quae sunt forma penitus subtracta nulla erunt, forma ipsa incommutabilis per quam mutabilia cuncta subsistunt, ut formarum suarum numeris impleantur et agantur, ipsa est eorum prouidentia. Non enim ista essent si illa non esset. (2.17.45)
> This is how one can understand that Providence governs all things. For if anything that exists were to have its form completely taken away, then it would be nothing. The form itself, which is immutable and through which all mutable things have their existence, (such that they are given activity and shape by the numbers of their forms), the form itself is their Providence. For they would not exist, if form did not exist.

Whereas before we *thought* we knew what we meant by providence, now in book 2 we have acquired a deep philosophical grasp of what it is. We are consequently now in a position to understand the sheer extent of the folly of those who deny either God's providence or its efficacy (3.2.5).

Books 1 and 3

At 1.11.21 we reached the conclusion that 'nothing can make something the client of cupidity other than its own will and free choice'. Augustine described our present condition as punitive. He appealed to Evodius to assent to this. In book 3 he will show that it must be punitive. His description falls into two parts. The first part is what will later be called 'ignorance' for short, the second 'difficulty'. The

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first half of 1.11.21 describes our punitive condition in terms of our intellect, and its ignorance:

> Quid ergo? Num ista ipsa poena parua existimanda est, quod ei libido dominatur, expoliatamque uirtutis opulentia per diuersa inopem atque indigentem trahit, nunc falsa pro ueris adprobantem, nunc etiam defensitantem, nunc improbantem quae antea probauisset et nihilominus in alia falsa inruentem, nunc adsensionem suspendentem suam et plerumque perspicuas ratiocinationes formidantem, nunc desperantem de tota inuentione ueritatis et stultitiae tenebris penitus inhaerentem, nunc conantem in lucem intellegendi rursusque fatigatione decidentem;
> What then? Should one think this a light punishment: that lust dominates the mind, and drags it, stripped of the wealth of virtue, helpless and in need, in all different directions; now assenting to, now even defending, the false as though it were true, now disapproving of

what it had earlier approved, but none the less rushing into other falsehoods, now suspending judgement and fearing to trust many crystal clear arguments, now despairing of finding the whole truth and sticking deep within the depths of unwisdom, now striving into the light of understanding, and again, from weariness, falling back down?

The second in terms of the passions and their difficulty:

cum interea cupiditatum illud regnum tyrannice saeuiat et uariis contrariisque tempestatibus totum hominis animum uitamque perturbet, hinc timore inde desiderio, hinc anxietate inde inani falsaque laetitia, hinc cruciatu rei amissae quae diligebatur inde ardore adipiscendae quae non habebatur, hinc acceptae iniuriae doloribus, inde facibus uindicandae; quaquauersum potest coartare auaritia, dissipare luxuria, addicere ambitio, inflare superbia, torquere inuidia, desidia sepelire, peruicacia concitare, adflictare subiectio et quaecumque alia innumerabilia regnum illius libidinis frequentant et exercent? Possumusne tandem nullam istam poenam putare quam, ut cernis, omnes qui non inhaerent sapientiae necesse est perpeti?
While at the same time this rule of lust rages like a tyrant and disturbs the whole mind and life of the man with diverse and contrary storms, fear on one side, longing on the other, anxiety here, inane and false joy there, here the torture of something lost which was loved, there the passion for obtaining what is not possessed, here the pains of wounds received, there the fire of revenge, howsoever avarice can constrain, luxury dissipate,

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ambition enslave, pride inflate, envy torment, idleness entomb, obstinacy goad, subjection afflict, and whatever other innumerable things which make up and carry out the rule of lust. Can we, in sum, think that this is no punishment, which, as you see, all who do not cleave to wisdom suffer of necessity?

Evodius agrees that this condition in which we find ourselves is punitive. But he does not yet understand how a perfectly ordered creature in a perfectly ordered universe would choose a course of action which would entail this state. How did the first evil-doer will to act thus, against his own interests? This is of course the great question for a monist account of evil in the universe, and it has a long history.[39]

[39] Cf. e.g *suntuchia* at Plato, *Phaedrus* 248C: 'And this is a law of Destiny, that the soul which follows after God and obtains a view of any of the truths is free from harm until the next period, and if it can always attain this, is always unharmed; but when, through inability to follow, it fails to see, and through some mischance [*tini suntuchia*] is filled with forgetfulness and evil and grows heavy, and when it has grown heavy, loses its wings and falls to earth,...'
Cf. Cherniss (1971: 253 f.) 'What the ultimate cause of such error is, why soul should ever lapse from complete and accurate knowledge of the ideas, to this question Plato can, of course, give no adequate answer. He can only clothe in mythical language the assumption that this is so or argue that epistemological

considerations necessitate and justify the assumption.'
It is also related to the Socratic paradox 'No one does wrong willingly' (*Protagoras* 352A ff.); cf. Dihle (1982: 129).

Augustine does not address this question in book 1. Instead he tackles Evodius' second question: Why are *we* punished? And he tackles it with an 'even if' answer. When we get to book 3 we find exactly the same questions, and the same strategy for answering them. Again he does not answer the problem of the first sin directly. But he shows, again, that there is no explanation possible, and what the correct attitude is that one should take. The only difference between books 1 and 3 is that the terms of reference have become much more complicated. I set out below a rough diagram (Figure 2) showing how the sections 3.17.47–3.23.70 map onto the sections 1.11.21–1.12.24 (and following).

Not only does each discussion expand into a greater area of text, but the vocabulary itself has changed. What was described so vividly at 1.11.22 is soon given the shorthand formula 'ignorance and

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difficulty'.[40]

[40] First used together at 3.18.52: 'Nam sunt re uera omni peccanti animae duo ista poenalia, ignorantia et difficultas.'

Compare for instance Evodius' question of 1.12.24 with its formulation and presentation at 3.19.53:

> Verum illud quod me maxime mouet, cur huiuscemodi acerbissimas poenas patiamur nos qui certe stulti sumus nec sapientes umquam fuimus, ut merito haec dicamur perpeti propter desertam uirtutis arcem, et electam sub libidine seruitutem, quin aperias disputando, si uales, nullo modo tibi differendum esse concesserim. (1.12.24)

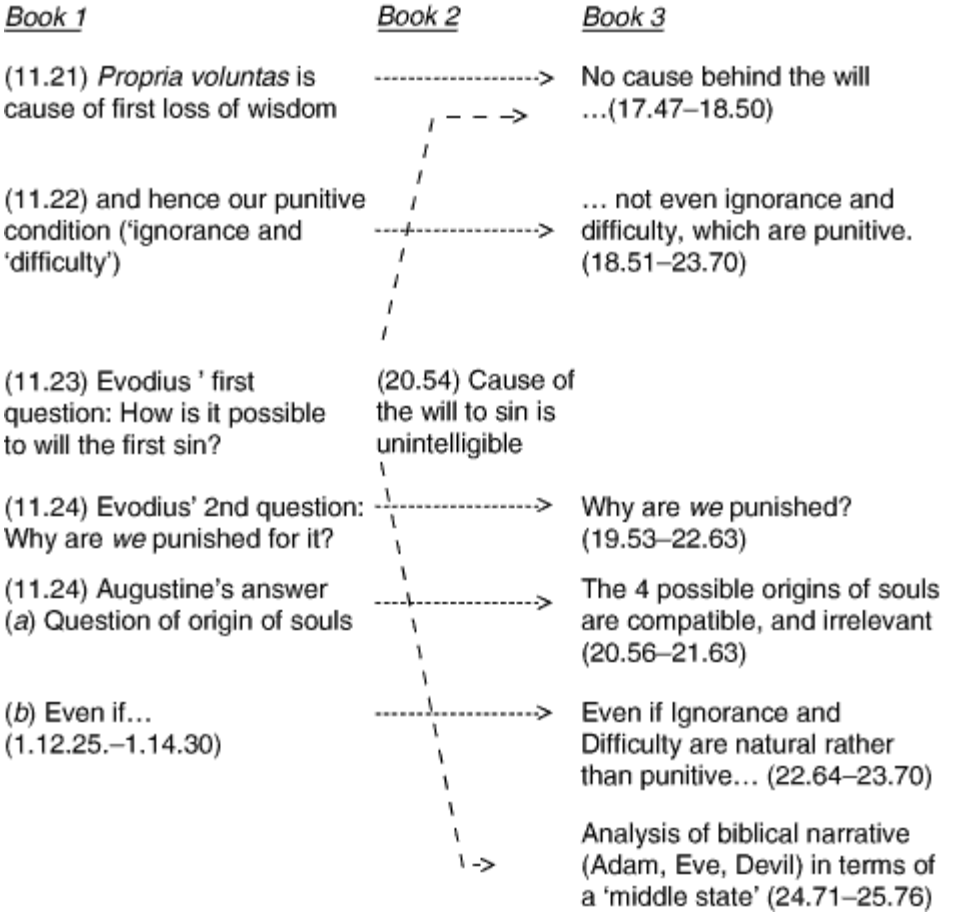

Figure 2. Books 1 and 3

> But this is what worries me most of all: why do we suffer this kind of severe punishment—we who are certainly fools and have never been wise? How is it that we could be said to suffer these things deservedly—for having deserted the citadel of virtue and having opted for slavery to lust? In no way would I allow you to put off bringing this to light, if you are able to.
> Hic occurrit illa quaestio quam inter se murmurantes homines rodere consuerunt, qui quodlibet'aliud in peccando quam se accusare parati sunt. Dicunt enim: 'si Adam et Eua peccauerunt, quid nos miseri fecimus, ut cum ignorantiae caecitate et difficultatis cruciatibus nasceremur et primo erraremus nescientes quid nobis esset faciendum, deinde ubi nobis inciperent aperiri praecepta iustitiae, uellemus ea facere et retinente carnalis concupiscentiae nescio qua necessitate non ualeremus?' (3.19.53)
> This is the point at which there arises that question which men—the kind of men who are ready to blame anything for sin but themselves—usually harp on at, and mutter among themselves. 'If Adam and Eve,' they say, 'sinned, what have we, unhappy men that we are, done, that we should be born with the blindness of ignorance and the torments of difficulty? So that first we should be in error, not knowing what we ought to do, and secondly, when the precepts of justice do begin to be made clear to us, we should will to do them but, being held back by carnal concupiscence we should, by some sort of necessity, be unable to do them?'

The question is now approached in terms of the biblical narrative (Adam and Eve),[41]

[41] Adam and Eve are mentioned by name only here. But cf. 3.20.54, and 3.24.71 ('ipse primus homo'). The devil appears in book 3, without name at 3.5.15, and then named at 3.9.28, 3.10.29, 3.10.31, and then in 3.20.57, 3.26.75–76 (with the serpent of *Genesis* 2). One could also examine how the name *Christus* is used: in the prologues of the first two books (1.3.7 and 2.2.6), in the discussion of wisdom (2.15.39), and the end of book 2 (2.20.54), and in book 3: 3.9.28, 3.23.67, 3.23.58, 3.25.76 (and as *uerbum Dei* at 3.10.30–31).

and it is now seen in its proper perspective—as one that can be used as a question not only of genuine inquiry, but also as an excuse. There are therefore several ways of asking such questions, and some, indeed, are better than others. The structure and development of the work as a whole has led Evodius, and the reader, gradually into the subject matter. Vocabulary and questions have been gradually expanded in terms of depth and breadth of reference, but they have been expanded carefully and on the dialogue's own terms. We have

worked to get to where we are. This does not mean that Augustine's first

answer to Evodius' question ‘why us?’ has been left behind, rejected, or retractated. On the contrary it is presupposed by the answer to the question ‘why us?’ at 3.19.53. To show precisely how it is presupposed, I turn now to the central threads of the dialogue: knowledge and responsibility.

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4 Approaching the Will

Simon Harrison

Abstract: This chapter sets out the argument (or ‘way in’) that is fundamental to *On Free Choice*. Augustine’s ‘way in’ to the will is to call the concept itself into question: ‘Do we have a will?’, and the possibility of denying that we do is explored. The way ‘will’ is called into question instantiates a concept of freedom and responsibility. Moreover, it acts as a ‘starting point’ for the rest of the enquiry. Augustine’s argument is further explored by comparing it with similar arguments in the *Confessions* (7.3) and *On the Trinity* (10.10.14).

Keywords: **will**, **Confessions**, **On the Trinity**

EVODIUS' APPROACH TO THE WILL

Having set out an account of how the three books of the text fit together, we are now in a position to appreciate Augustine's deployment of the vocabulary of volition within it. Before Augustine asks Evodius whether he has will at 1.12.25, the word *uoluntas* has occurred only four times in the preceding 24 sections (1.1.1; 1.7.16; 1.11.21; 1.11.23). After, and including, this section it occurs some 49 times in the first book alone. The word *uoluntas* is given philosophical content, it takes on a technical character as it is taken up into the text of the dialogue. Indeed the same can be said of all the major thematic concepts used in the course of the text. I will now go through each of these first four uses of the term *uoluntas*, and see how they build up to Augustine's question ‘*sitne aliqua nobis uoluntas*’ at 1.12.25. I shall then suggest that this ‘argument’ is itself an ‘approach’, or ‘way in’. In order to demonstrate its character as an approach I shall discuss two related ‘approaches’, one from the *Confessions*, and one from the *De Trinitate*.

The first *uoluntas* occurs as the final stage of Augustine's answer to Evodius' opening question given right at the beginning of the work.

> 1.1.1. *Euodius*: Dic mihi, quaeso te, utrum Deus non sit auctor mali.
>
> *Augustinus*: Dicam, si planum feceris de quo malo quaeras. Duobus enim modis appellare malum solemus: uno cum male quemque fecisse dicimus, alio cum mali aliquid esse perpessum.

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E.: De utroque scire cupio.

A.: At si Deum bonum esse nosti uel credis—neque enim aliter fas est—male non facit. Rursus, si Deum iustum fatemur—nam et hoc negare sacrilegium est—ut bonis praemia, ita supplicia malis tribuit; quae utique supplicia patientibus mala sunt. Quamobrem si nemo iniuste poenas luit, quod necesse est credamus, quandoquidem diuina prouidentia hoc uniuersum regi credimus, illius primi generis malorum nullo modo, huius autem secundi auctor est Deus.

E.: Est ergo alius auctor illius mali, cuius Deum non esse compertum est?

A.: Est certe; non enim nullo auctore fieri posset. Si autem quaeris, quisnam iste sit, dici non potest; non enim unus aliquis est, sed quisque malus sui malefacti auctor est. Vnde si dubitas, illud attende quod supra dictum est, malefacta iustitia Dei uindicari. Non enim iuste uindicarentur, nisi fierent uoluntate

1.1.1. *E.*: Tell me, is God not ultimately responsible for evil?

A.: I will, if you make clear what kind of evil you are asking about. For we usually talk about evil in two ways, the active and the passive: one, when we say that someone has acted in an evil way, and the other when we say that someone has suffered something evil.

E.: I want to know about both.

A.: If you know, or believe, that God is good—and it is not lawful to know or believe otherwise—then he does not do evil. Again, if we confess that God is just—for to deny this also is sacrilege—, then it is the case that as he distributes rewards to the good so he distributes punishments to the bad. And these punishments are, of course, evils from the point of view of those who suffer them. Therefore if no one is punished unjustly—which it is necessary that we believe, given that we believe that this universe is ruled by Divine Providence—then, there is no way that God is responsible for the former kind of evils. However, of the latter kind, God is responsible.

E.: Somebody else then is responsible for this kind of evil?

A.: Certainly there is for it could not happen without an author. But if you ask who this is, I cannot tell you. For it is not some one person, but each evil person is the author of his own evil deed. If you doubt this think about what has just been said: Evil deeds are punished by the Justice of God. But the punishment would not be just unless they were done voluntarily.

To paraphrase the argument, Augustine distinguishes two ways we have of talking about evil: ‘Evil-done’ (or perhaps better put as ‘evil-doing’) and ‘evil-suffered’. This distinguishes evil as if it were a verb, into an active and a passive voice. He then gives a very swift argument with the double conclusion:

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(1) God is the author (responsible agent) of evil-suffered
(2) God is not the author of evil-done

The premises for this argument are all taken from Christian belief:

(3) God is good
(4) God is just (distributively)
(5) God's providence governs the whole universe

Now (2) is derived from (3). (1) is derived from a combination of (3) and (4): God's distributive justice distributes rewards and punishments. Punishments are perceived as evil-suffered by evil people (a good and just person, however, is able to see them as punitive and hence just).[1]

[1] This is, of course, very close to the kind of Stoicism found in Seneca. Although Seneca's *De Providentia* (note the title) does not think in terms of justice, here we find the idea that evil is, in the last analysis, a false perspective on the good. For Seneca '*adversa*' are '*exercitationes*': 'Nihil accidere bono viro mali potest … Non quid sed quemadmodum feras interest' (*De Providentia* 2.1–5) 'No evil *can* befall a good man … Not what you endure, but how you endure, is important' [1928] Cf. ibid. 3.1:

> Sed iam, procedente oratione ostendam, quam non sint quae videntur mala. Nunc illud dico, ista quae tu vocas aspera, quae adversa et abominanda, primum pro ipsis esse quibus accidunt, deinde pro universis, quorum maior diis cura quam singulorum est, post hoc volentibus accidere ac dignos malo esse, si nolint.'
> But as the discussion progresses, I shall show how the things that seem to be evils are not really so. This much I now say, that those things which you call hardships, which you call adversities and accursed, are, in the first place, for the good of the persons themselves to whom they come; in the second place, that they are for the good of the whole human family, for which the gods have a greater concern than for any single persons; again I say that good men are willing that these things should happen and, if they are unwilling, that they deserve misfortune.

Because of (5) all evil-suffered is just punishment. But does this leave evil-done without an author? This would, of course, be a contradiction in terms. Augustine appends a second argument, the conclusion of which is

(6) Each person who does evil is the author of his own evil-done.

The argument works from (4): God's just punishments are just. They are just because they punish sins for which the punished are responsible. For this idea of individual responsibility Augustine uses the word *uoluntas* (*nisi fierent uoluntate*).

This is, of course, not just the answer to the immediate question, but the answer given by the whole work. The whole task of *lib.arb*. is

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to put forward what is known as a 'free will defence'. Only it cannot, at this stage in the dialogue, be recognized *as* the answer. Evodius goes on to suggest that the responsibility for evil could be pushed back to a teacher (1.1.2–1.1.3). The use of *uoluntate* here is perfectly 'ordinary', and, indeed, it almost slips by without our noticing it. *Voluntate* here simply signals a perfectly everyday conception of responsibility, or rather it relies on this ordinary usage. Of course there are deep and serious problems about such an ordinary conception and its use here. They will be addressed by the text, but not yet. The task at hand at the beginning of the whole dialogue is not so much bludgeoning Evodius into accepting this argument, as getting him to see what kind of question he is asking.

The second time the word turns up it is, again, not signalled, and no fuss is made of it. Indeed it is likewise a perfectly ordinary use of the word. At 1.7.16 Augustine is arguing that non-human animals lack reason [*ratio*] because they can be tamed. A tame animal does what the animal-tamer wants it to do:

> Dic itaque mihi, cum saepe uiderimus bestias ab hominibus domitas, id est, non corpus bestiae tantum, sed et animam ita homini subiugatam, ut uoluntati eius sensu quodam et consuetudine seruiat, utrum tibi ullo modo fieri posse uideatur, ut bestia quaelibet inmanis uel feritate uel corpore uel etiam sensu quolibet accerima pari uice sibi hominem subiugare conetur, cum corpus eius seu ui seu clam multae interimere ualeant.
>
> So then, given that we have seen many beasts tamed by men, (that is, not merely a beast's body, but also its soul), subjugated to a man in such a way, that it is (through some sense and habituation) a slave to his will, tell me, then, whether it seems to you to be possible that a beast, however monstrous it is, either by the use of its ferocity, or its body or even by the extreme acuteness of one of its senses, should try to subjugate, in turn, a man even though beasts are able—by force or by stealth—to destroy a man's body.

Augustine argues that the only thing an animal-tamer has that his tamed animal does not is 'reason' ('ratio'; he is also happy to call it 'mens' or 'spiritus' (1.8.18)). At least some beast is superior to a human in some sub-rational capacity, but every man is always superior to any beast by virtue of being rational. The perfectly ordered man is like an animal-tamer, only what he controls are the

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'animal passions' within himself (1.8.18).[2]

[2] The really dangerous constituents of a man are not shared by the non-human animals. These things peculiar to humans are not only laughter and joking, but 'amor laudis et gloriae et adfectatio dominandi'. These are described as 'libidines', which if not subdued to reason make man unhappy (1.8.18). *Libido* and all these words of

passion will be related to the terminology of *uoluntas* after 1.12.25. This too is part of the gradual 'approach'.

It is not *uoluntas* that enables a man to tame his lion, or herd his sheep. Nor does *uoluntas* play a role in the description of these faculties of men and animals. Again this is what we might call an 'innocent' use of the word. A specialized theory is not presupposed, only ordinary linguistic competence. Cicero provides a useful parallel. When, in the *De Republica*, Cicero's Scipio wishes to illustrate the *prudens,* the 'man of good sense', a very similar image comes to mind—the African on his elephant:

> sed tamen est ille prudens, qui, ut saepe in Africa vidimus, immani et vastae insidens beluae coercet et regit beluam *quocumque vult*, et levi admonitu aut tactu inflectit illam feram…Ergo ille Indus aut Poenus unam coercet beluam, et eam docilem et humanis moribus adsuetam; at vero ea, quae latet in animis hominum quaeque pars animi mens vocatur, non unam aut facilem ad subigendum frenat et domat, si quando id efficit, quod perraro potest. namque et illa tenenda est ferox.
>
> However, that is also a man of good sense who rides upon a huge and monstrous beast (a sight we have often met with in Africa) and guides this animal in whatever direction he wishes by a gentle word or touch. …Well, that Indian or Carthaginian governs a single animal which is gentle and accustomed to the ways of man; but that power which is hidden in men's minds and forms a part of them, and is called reason, controls and subdues not merely one animal, or one which is easily mastered—that is, if it ever does accomplish that which is rarely possible; for that fierce [beast] also must be held in check… (*Rep*. 2.40.67; text and tr. Keyes 1928)

The third and fourth occurrences belong together (1.11.21, 1.11.23). They are highly significant and presented as such. But they do not give *uoluntas* a content. Rather they use it to mark an idea, or 'space' which has been philosophically defined and marked off. They mark the site of a conclusion which has been reached by a process of elimination. There are several similarities with *uoluntate* at 1.1.1. Again the word is part of the answer, and again it is suddenly presented to us at the end of an argument, as if we already knew what we meant by it. Augustine asks Evodius to imagine a perfect

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world. In this world, which is entirely without evil, nothing is able to cause anything else to become evil. In order for evil to happen, then, the only option is (*relinquitur*) that something makes itself become evil. This option we label as '*propria uoluntas*':

> *A.*: Ergo relinquitur ut, quoniam regnanti menti compotique uirtutis quidquid par aut praelatum est non eam facit seruam libidinis propter iustitiam, quidquid autem inferius est non possit hoc facere propter infirmitatem, sicut ea quae inter nos constiterunt docent, nulla res alia mentem cupiditatis comitem faciat quam propria uoluntas et liberum

arbitrium…. *E.*: Quamquam enim credamus hominem tam perfecte conditum a Deo et in beata uita constitutum, ut ad aerumnas mortalis uitae ipse inde propria uoluntate delapsus sit, tamen hoc cum firmissima fide teneam, intellegentia nondum adsecutus sum; cuius rei diligentem inquisitionem si nunc differendam putas, me inuito facis. (1.11.21…1.11.23)

A.: Therefore it remains that, given that whatever is equal, or superior, to the ruling and virtuous mind simply does not make that mind the slave of lust, for reasons of justice, and that whatever is lower than it simply cannot do this, for reasons of weakness (as what we have concluded tells us), it remains therefore that nothing makes the mind join cupidity's gang, other than its own will and free choice…*E.*: For, although we believe that man was created by God and established in the happy life so perfectly, that he himself has fallen from there to the troubles of this mortal life by his own will, yet'although I hold to this with absolutely firm faith, I have not yet grasped it with understanding. And if you think we ought to delay our investigation into this question, then you do so against my will.

Note that all the important terms of reference (order, superiority, justice, and so forth) have already been gradually developed in the preceding sections. And now at the end of the argument we are suddenly presented with this phrase which gives 'the answer' to the question of the origin of evil. Of course we know what Augustine means. Basic linguistic ability in Latin is not at issue. But what is *uoluntas*, and (and this is Evodius' question at 1.11.23) how does it help us understand the first sinner acting voluntarily against his own interests? We might recall Augustine's celebrated saying about time in the *Confessions* (11.14.17): 'What then is time? Provided that no one asks me, I know.' Certainly we usually say in everyday language that someone is responsible if they acted *uoluntate*, and if no one else could possibly have made someone act, then, if they did act, they

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must have acted by their '*propria uoluntas*'. But all this only makes more urgent the question: What *is uoluntas*?

This question is answered, or at least an answer is approached with the next occurrence of the word. And this is the key passage for my reading of Augustine's understanding of will. At 1.12.25 the term is deployed in such a way that it is given content. It is subjected to a process of what we might call 'interrogation', or 'scrutiny'. We are given an argumentative account of it. 'Do we', Augustine asks, 'have a will?'

A.: Nam quaero abs te, sitne aliqua nobis uoluntas.

E.: Nescio.

A.: Visne hoc scire?

E.: Et hoc nescio.

A.: Nihil ergo deinceps me interroges.

E.: Quare?

A.: Quia roganti tibi respondere non debeo nisi uolenti scire quod rogas. Deinde nisi uelis ad sapientiam peruenire, sermo tecum de huiuscemodi rebus non est habendus. Postremo amicus meus esse non poteris nisi uelis ut bene sit mihi. Iam uero de te tu ipse uideris, utrum tibi uoluntas nulla sit beatae uitae tuae.

E.: Fateor, negari non potest habere nos uoluntatem. Perge, iam uideamus quid hinc conficias.

A.: So I ask you, do we have a will?

E.: I don't know.

A.: Do you want to know?

E.: I do not know this either

A.: Then ask me nothing more.

E.: Why not?

A.: Because I ought not to give you an answer to your question unless you want to know the answer. And secondly because, if you don't want to attain to wisdom, I ought not to discuss such things with you. And finally because we cannot be friends unless you want things to go well for me. But look to yourself and see whether you, as regards yourself, do not want to be happy.

E.: I admit that it cannot be denied that we have a will. Go on, let us now see what follows from this.[3]

[3] This exchange is not easy to translate into English without losing the coherence of the vocabulary. Where I have translated 'will', to 'want' and to 'wish' the Latin has the noun *voluntas*, and its verb, *volo*. In particular I have taken the liberty here of translating the antepenultimate sentence with a verb ('want') where Augustine speaks of a 'will to be happy' ('uoluntas … beatae uitae'). I suggest, however, that this is not a serious problem, the content of both *volo* and *voluntas*, and their relationship is made clear by Augustine's four examples of 'willing'. For evidence on the meanings of *volo* and *voluntas* see Dihle (1982: 132 ff.).

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This argument is usually taken as a statement that the will is simply and trivially obvious. Thus Bonner (1986: 384) writes: 'In one sense, the problem of free will does not exist for Augustine; it is self-evident....The fact that we have a will is as obvious as the fact that we live; we feel ourselves will and not will.' [4]

[4] Cf. Gilson (1961: 198): 'It is literally true to say that, for St. Augustine's point of view, the problem does not exist. … If we would understand Augustine's solutions to his own problems, we should avoid confusing his problems with our own. What does Augustine want to know? Surely, not whether we have a will; he knows we have one. Nor whether we have free choice; he identifies free choice with the will.' For other, similarly shallow accounts see Clark (1958: 46) and Portalié (1960: 196 ff.). All these accounts take the trivial claim that we have a will and attempt to build up an account of what Augustine really means by free will upon it.

Bonner is correct to see that the will is self-evident, but the problem for Augustine is that this self-evidence still needs to be uncovered and made clear. Rather than relying on some notion of feeling or the obvious, the term *uoluntas* is given substance by the epistemological approach that is adopted here. By *epistemological* approach I mean that Augustine does not simply give a definition of 'will', or of voluntary action, or whatever. He does not lay down a proposition. Rather, he asks Evodius about what he *knows*, and through this interrogation an idea of will emerges. At the beginning of the argument, I suggest, Evodius does not (or claims not to) *know* 'that he has a will', but by the end he does—or is, at least in a position to—know. In Chapter 5 I shall discuss Augustine's theory of knowledge as expounded, introduced, and instantiated in this text. For the moment I wish to draw attention to several features of this passage.

(1) The argument is about knowledge, it involves a concept of knowledge, and it produces knowledge. I discuss the kind of knowledge involved in Chapter 5.

(2) The argument involves what we might call a first-person perspective. Although Augustine's opening question is expressed in the first person plural (*sitne nobis*), the 'proof' works in terms of the first (or perhaps I should say 'second') person singular. Notice the number of second person singulars used

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in the passage above. It is Augustine's interlocutor, it is Evodius, who knows (or does not know) that he has a will. [5]

[5] Note further that there are two kinds of argument used in the last passage quoted. The first three (‘*quia… deinde…. postremo*’) are interpersonal. They involve both Augustine and Evodius. The fourth (‘*iam uero*’), however, is purely personal, it involves no reference to anyone else. I would go even further and suggest that there is something of a crescendo of second person singulars.

(3) The argument allows us to get a hold on a concept of responsibility.

(4) This particular argument is part of a wider context. It forms the beginning of a longer argument. Conclusions do follow from this undeniable will. Firstly there follows the ‘good will’, and finally: ‘Therefore it is just and deserved that men are afflicted with unhappiness’(1.12.26; repeated after further elaboration at 1.13.28).

We have here what Augustine might call the beginnings, the starting point, the ‘*inchoatio*’, or even the ‘*exordium*’ of a considered concept of the will.[6]

[6] *inchoatio*: at 1.5.13 Augustine has already praised Evodius for his ‘quamuis *inchoatam* minusque perfectam, tamen fidentem sublimia quaedam petentem distinctionem’ (between the two laws, the human, and that of divine providence). At 2.20.54 he uses the noun to evoke the idea of some substratum which would remain if all ‘form’ were taken away from something that exists. Even this, he says, would be good in that it is the beginnings of a form. (The word is also used in 3.21.60 and 3.22.65 in the context of the discussion of the relevance of one's end (where one is going) over against one's beginning (where one came from), and hence, the relevance of the question of the soul's origin.
exordium. This, as I shall argue, is the more relevant word. It is used of the actual beginning of the discussion (i.e. of the text) at 1.7.16; 1.16.34. It is also used in the context of the question of the soul's origin (as above) (3.20.56; 3.22.65), and of the starting point of a procedure (1.2.5 ‘pietatis exordium’; 3.7.21) and above all, of the ‘cogito’ as a starting point at 2.3.7: ‘Quare prius abs te quaero, ut de manifestissimis capiamus exordium, utrum tu ipse sis.’

Voluntas has been through some sort of a process here. I shall return to this process in Chapter 6. In the next two sections of this chapter I wish briefly to discuss two passages from other works by Augustine which are closely related to this argument. They should help to point up the significance of the approach adopted in *lib.arb*. The first is from the *Confessions*, and the second from the *De Trinitate*. These works were both written after *lib.arb*. The *Confessions* is usually dated to 397, or the years 397–401 (O'Donnell 1992: i. p. xli), and the tenth book of the *De Trinitate*

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to, perhaps, 416 (Rist 1994: 65). In the *Confessions* we meet a similar argument told as a narrative in an autobiography, and in the *De Trinitate* we meet another related argument as part of a mature, massive, and intricate work of theology.

AUGUSTINE'S APPROACH TO THE WILL IN THE *CONFESSIONS*

One important connection between *lib.arb*. and the *Confessions* is that they both make use of autobiography. After he has brought Evodius to formulate the fundamental question of the work (*unde male faciamus* (1.2.4)), Augustine says:

Eam quaestionem moues, quae me admodum adulescentem uehementer exercuit et fatigatum in haereticos inpulit atque deiecit. Quo casu ita sum adflictus et tantis obrutus aceruis inanium fabularum, ut, nisi mihi amor inueniendi ueri opem diuinam inpetrauisset, emergere inde atque in ipsam primam quaerendi libertatem respirare non possem. Et quoniam mecum sedulo actum est, ut ista quaestione liberarer, eo tecum agam ordine, quem secutus euasi. (*lib.arb*. 1.2.4)

You raise precisely that question which, when I was a young man, worked me so very hard and which wore me out and cast me down among heretics. And I was so wounded by this fall, and so suffocated under heaps of empty myths, that, had love of finding out the truth not obtained divine assistance for me, I would not have been able to get out of there into that first freedom to seek, and to breathe again. And since my case was so carefully proceeded with, that I was delivered from that inquisition, I will proceed with you following the same order as that which I followed and so escaped.

I do not propose to use this text for historical reconstruction of Augustine's life. What is significant, and legitimate, for our purposes is to note the autobiographical presentation. In both *lib. arb*. and the *Confessions* the reader is being taken along a course which the author tells us he has already travelled. Towards the beginning of the seventh book we read the following story and argument:

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Et intendebam ut cernerem quod audiebam, liberum voluntatis arbitrium causam esse ut male faceremus et rectum iudicium tuum ut pateremur, et eam liquidam cernere non valebam. itaque aciem mentis de profundo educere conatus mergebar iterum, et saepe conatus mergebar iterum atque iterum. sublevabat enim me in lucem tuam quod tam sciebam me habere voluntatem quam me vivere. itaque cum aliquid vellem aut nollem, non alium quam me velle ac nolle certissimus eram, et ibi esse causam peccati mei iam iamque animadvertebam. quod autem invitus facerem, pati me potius quam facere videbam, et id non culpam sed poenam esse iudicabam, qua me non iniuste plecti te iustum cogitans cito fatebar. (*conf*. 7.3.5; text O'Donnell 1992).

I directed my mind to understand what I was being told, namely that free choice of the will is the reason why we do wrong and suffer your just judgement; but I could not get a clear grasp of it. I made an effort to lift my mind's eye out of the abyss, but again plunged back. I tried several times, but again and again sank back. I was brought up into your light by the fact that I knew myself both to have a will and to be alive. Therefore when I willed or did not will something, I was utterly certain that none other than myself was willing or not willing. That there lay the cause of my sin I was now coming to recognise. I

saw that when I acted against my wishes I was passive rather than active; and this condition I judged to be not guilt but punishment. It was an effortless step to grant that, since I conceived you to be just, it was not unjust that I was chastised. (tr. Chadwick 1991: 113 f.)

Chadwick's translation would give the two propositions:

(1) Free choice of the will is the cause of our doing evil
(2) Free choice of the will is the cause of our suffering evil (i.e. 'liberum voluntatis arbitrium [causam esse] rectum iudicium tuum ut pateremur')

I suggest that the clause could be taken as follows:

(1) Free choice of the will is the cause of our doing evil
(2*a*) Your just judgement is the cause of our suffering evil (i.e. 'rectum iudicium tuum [causam esse] ut [aliquid mali] pateremur')

As I said, (2*a*) is entirely compatible with (2). Free choice of the will is the cause of our suffering God's judgement, and hence of our suffering evil. The benefit, however, of my translation is that it brings out

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the parallel contrast between 'doing' and 'suffering' which we will encounter in the final sentence, and which we find at the beginning of *lib.arb*. and elsewhere.[7]

[7] *lib.arb*. 1.1.1: 'Duobus enim modis appellare malum solemus: uno cum male quemque fecisse dicimus, alio cum mali aliquid perpessum. … Si Deum iustum fatemur … supplicia malis tribuit; quae utique supplicia patientibus mala sunt.' Cf. *C.Adim*. 26: 'dupliciter enim appellatur malum: unum quod homo facit, alterum quod patitur; quod facit peccatum est; quod patitur, poena.' *C.Fort*. 15: 'Nam omnia Deus et bona fecit et bene ordinavit; peccatum autem non fecit; et hoc est solum quod dicitur malum, voluntarium nostrum peccatum. Est aliud genus mali, quod est poena peccati, peccatum ad Deum non pertinet, poena peccati ad vindicem pertinet. Etenim ut bonus est Deus, qui omnia constituit, sic iustus est, ut vindicet in peccatum.'

A second point of difference, again one that is relatively minor, concerns the main clause: 'et intendebam ut cernerem quod audiebam…et eam liquidam cernere non valebam.' Why is the object of the first *cernere* (*cernerem*) neuter (*quod*), and of the second, feminine (*eam*)? Chadwick's translation does not make this distinction. The second *cernere* would appear to have *causam* as its object. I suggest that what Augustine says he failed to grasp here was the sense in which free choice of the will could be such a cause. For Chadwick's 'but I could not get a clear grasp of it', I would offer the gloss, 'but I could not get a clear grasp of this as a cause'. The benefit of this translation is that it will give more precision to what exactly Augustine claims to have understood in this passage.

My third suggestion is more serious, and on it I rest the weight of my reading of this passage. I am not sure why Chadwick translates the '*tam…quam*' as 'both…and'. In its place I offer 'just as much as'. So I would read 'I was brought up into your light by the fact that I knew myself to have a will *just as much as* I knew myself to be alive'. This is, for Augustine, the moment of liberation and of realization. In what does it consist? I suggest that the '*tam…quam*' supplies two pieces of information about the

relationship between ‘knowing that I am alive’ and ‘knowing that I have a will’. The first piece of information is about the manner of knowing: ‘I know that I have a will *in the same way as* I know that I am alive’. We might expect, say, an ‘*ita…ut*’ for this sense. But there is more to this relation than this. The second piece of information is derived from the particular

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vocabulary used: 'I know that I have a will *as certainly as* I know that I am alive'. I overtranslate a little, of course. But the *quantity and quality* of the knowledge derives from the *manner* in which that knowledge is known.

I know of one other place in Augustine's works where a similar '*tam…quam*' relation is evoked. This is a close parallel to the *conf*. text. It is from the *De Duabus Animabus* 10.13, a work which is very close to *lib.arb*. in date:

> liceat mihi me scire uiuere, liceat mihi scire me uelle uiuere: in quae si consentit genus humanum, tam nobis cognita est uoluntas nostra quam uita. neque cum istam scientiam profitemur, metuendum est, ne nos quisquam falli posse conuincat; hoc ipsum enim falli nemo potest, si aut non uiuat aut nihil uelit. non me arbitror quicquam obscurum adtulisse et uereor, ne cuiquam magis, quod haec nimium manifesta sint, uidear esse culpandus; sed quorsum tendant, consederemus.
>
> Permit me to know that I live, permit me to know that I will to live. If in this the human race agrees, as our life is known to us, so also is our will. Nor when we become possessed of this knowledge, is there any occasion to fear lest any one should convince us that we may be deceived; for no one can be deceived as to whether he does not live, or wishes nothing. I do not think that I have adduced anything obscure, and my concern is rather lest some should find fault with me for dwelling on things that are too manifest. But let us consider the bearing of these things.

'As [tam] our life is known to us, so also [quam] is our will.' And how is our will known? This passage shows there is some sort of procedure to the knowledge that I am alive. This knowledge is here defended by the argument that my knowledge that I exist is immune from deception. The knowledge of my being alive is here given by an argument which belongs to that family of arguments which are usually referred to as the 'Augustinian cogito'. The most famous example of this family of arguments is found at *civ*. 11.26. There it is given the formulation 'if I am deceived I am'. I shall discuss these arguments further in Chapter 7. For the moment I merely want to indicate that the knowledge that I have a will is to be counted among them. Note, however, that I use the word 'family'. I do not expect that all the many forms of this argument are going to turn out to be exactly the same. Whatever the form taken by the knowledge about the will that is

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arrived at here, and however it is arrived at, what is important at this stage is to see that it has certain consequences. In the *Confessions*, as in *lib.arb*., Augustine does not stop at saying he has a will. The will that he knows he has enables him there to understand 'what he is being told'. He comes, in this passage, to understand exactly how it is that the will could be the cause of our doing evil, and suffering judgement. Let us then accept this piece of knowledge as a premise:

(3) I have a will

Now, Augustine derives from this what we might call the exclusion of external agency:

(4) 'when I willed or did not will something…none other than myself was willing or not willing'

This allows the gradual appreciation of the first statement (1): free choice of the will is the cause of our doing evil. The fact that this willing and not willing is proper to me would lead me to see that I can blame no one else for the evil that I do. The peculiarity of one's own will (as revealed in the peculiarity of one's cognitive access to this will) means that my will is really *my* will and my sin is really *my* sin. I am not saying that (1) has been proved by an argument. The terms of reference (evil, sin) are still too vague. Statements (1) and (3) offer, as I said of *lib.arb*. passage, the *inchoatio*, the beginnings of an understanding. This idea of gradualness is what I take the words 'iam iamque' to imply.

Now, the procedure continues. Augustine also sees (*videbam*) something else that redefines action and passion:

(5) 'when I acted against my wishes I was passive rather than active'

Important to notice here are two things. Firstly a distinction is made here between the will (here given by *invitus*) and action. It appears to be possible to act against one's will. Secondly there is a clear distinction between being active and being passive, between doing things, and their happening to you. This was implicit in the propositions to be understood (1) and (2) ('*faceremus…pateremur*'), and indeed at the beginning of *lib.arb*. (see above on 1.1.1). It appears that the knowledge that Augustine has reached with great effort allows him to be sure about a perfectly ordinary distinction which is embedded in

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our everyday language. But it is not just that some things happen to us, while other things are done by us. Rather Augustine can now securely distinguish when he is 'done to' even if he appears to be 'doing'. Even something that could appear to belong to the category of *facere*, doing, comes, in fact, under the category of *pati*, being done to. Augustine is therefore now able to judge that when he is 'done to' he is being punished.

(6) 'and this condition I judged to be not guilt but punishment'

Again the terms of reference here are by no means simple propositions.

God's justice and the idea of punishment are very complex. Let us say, for the moment, that for (6) Augustine brings in an external premise from outside the argument:

(7) God is just

Augustine now finds himself able to grasp (2) free choice of the will is the cause of our suffering God's just judgement or, perhaps better, (2*a*) God's just judgement is the cause of our suffering evil. As at the end of *lib.arb*.1 all the difficulties have not yet been sorted out, so too here in the *Confessions* there is plenty more work to do.[8]

[8] *Conf*. 7.3.5 continues: 'But again I said; "Who made me? Is not my God not only good but the supreme Good? Why then have I the power to will evil and to reject good? Is it to provide a reason why it is just for me to undergo punishments? Who put this power in me and implanted in me this seed of bitterness, when all of me was created by my very kind God? If the devil was responsible, where did the devil come from? And if even he began as a good angel and became devil by a perversion of the will, how does the evil will by which he became devil originate in him, when an angel is wholly made by a Creator who is pure goodness?" These reflections depressed me once more and suffocated me. But I was not brought down to that hell of error where no one confesses to you because people suppose that evil is something that you suffer rather than an act by humanity.' (tr. Chadwick 1991: 114).
With this compare the end of *lib.arb*. 1.16.35. Evodius says: 'But I ask whether he who created us ought to have given us this free choice in virtue of which, as we have proved, we have the ability to sin. For it would seem that we would not sin if we did not have this thing, and one ought to worry that in this way God may also be thought to be the author of our evil deeds.'

However I want to stress one thing that, as far as I can see, has never been appreciated, the work done in this argument is not presented as being easy. Augustine struggled hard for it *iterum atque iterum*,

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again and again. The results are hard won. But Augustine has won them, and won them for himself and by himself.

Augustine describes what he is trying to 'see clearly' as something that he 'was hearing'. Chadwick's translation keeps the vagueness of the word. '*Audiebam*' could of course refer to any kind of reception of the information. Scholars have generally supposed that Augustine is here referring to what he heard in Ambrose's sermons. They have, of course, disagreed over precisely which sermons Augustine heard (O'Donnell 1992: ii. 400). I am not going to disagree with this inference. More important, however, is to note the fact that Augustine does not tell us. As with the famously vague reference to the 'books of the Platonists' (*conf*. 7.20.26) the emphasis is not on the particular source of information, but on its externality. What he signals by this word is that the information reaches him from outside, at second-hand, as it were. This is contrasted with process of thought described in the narrative by which he comes to see it for himself, at first-hand. In Chapter 5 I shall show how this pattern of 'thinking for oneself' runs right through the *Confessions*, and is a major component of the description of Augustine's conversion in the garden in Milan. There I shall show that his conversion has more to do with Ambrose's silence than his sermons.

DOUBT IN *DE TRINITATE* 10.10.14

So far I have illustrated several senses of the words ‘approach’ and ‘way in’ which I have used in my titles. In *lib.arb*. the use of *uoluntas* was approached gradually through the deployment of the word in the text. At one point in this deployment—neither the beginning or the end—there was a section of the text in which *voluntas* was subjected to some sort of scrutiny. I then used the autobiographical presentation of the order of the text to move the discussion to the *Confessions*. Again a related discussion of the will was found at a certain stage in Augustine's life—as presented in the text. Again this discussion itself represented an approach or procedure. Augustine began with something he had received, and tried with difficulty to understand. He succeeded in doing so thanks to a form of argumentation for which he

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is well known. I now want to offer another presentation of this form of argumentation. Again it forms part of a text which follows an order or sequence. In book 10 of the *de trinitate* Augustine gives a list of things which the mind knows for certain about itself. This a part of an exercise by which the mind can come to know itself by distinguishing what it knows itself to be from what it knows itself *not* to be:

> Sed quoniam de natura mentis agitur, remoueamus a consideratione nostra omnes notitias quae capiuntur extrinsecus per’sensus corporis, et ea quae posuimus omnes mentes de se ipsis nosse certasque esse diligentius attendamus.
>
> Vtrum enim aeris sit uis uiuendi, reminiscendi, intellegendi, uolendi, cogitandi, sciendi, iudicandi; an ignis, an cerebri, an sanguinis, an atomorum, an praeter usitata quattuor elementa quinti nescio cuius corporis, an ipsius carnis nostrae compago uel temperamentum haec efficere ualeat dubitauerunt homines.
>
> Viuere se tamen et meminisse et intellegere et uelle et cogitare et scire et iudicare quis dubitet? Quandoquidem etiam si dubitat, uiuit; si dubitat, unde dubitet meminit; si dubitat, dubitare se intellegit; si dubitat, certus esse uult; 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 essent, de ulla re dubitare non posset. (*de trinitate* 10.10.14)
>
> But we are surely concerned now with the nature of mind; so let us put aside all consideration of things we know outwardly through the senses of the body, and concentrate our attention on what we have stated that all minds know for certain about themselves.
>
> Whether the power of living, remembering, understanding, willing, thinking, knowing, judging comes from air, or fire, or brain, or blood,

or atoms, of heaven knows what fifth kind of body besides the four common elements; or whether the very structure or organization of our flesh can produce these things; people have hesitated about all this, and some have tried to establish one answer, others another.

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. (tr. Hill 1991; my italics)

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I quote this passage because it again couples the knowledge of my will with the knowledge of my being alive. Again they share a common procedure, and a common force. What in connection with *lib.arb*. I called 'scrutiny' and 'interrogation', and what in the *conf*. passage was a great effort to raise oneself into the light of understanding, is here given the word *doubt*. It is often claimed that the 'Augustinian cogito' is simply a negative argument against a sceptic. This passage clearly shows that there is more to the procedure than the immediate refutation of the sceptic. The procedure, or rather let us just call it the possibility, of doubt reveals something about the structure of mind, the way we know things. As in *lib.arb*. and as in the *conf*., this passage occurs as part of a longer argument. In 10.11.17, Augustine selects three of these constituent acts of the mind, *memoriam*, *intelligentiam*, *voluntatem*, and works with them to investigate the image of the Trinity in the human mind.

Doubt and knowledge form the philosophical context for Augustine's approach to the will. These are the subject of my next chapter.

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5 Understanding, Knowledge, and Responsibility

Simon Harrison

Abstract: This chapter sets out Augustine's theory of knowledge that is manifested and deployed in *On Free Choice of the Will*. Augustine's epistemology provides the philosophical context for his 'way in', and the rationale for the structure of the dialogue. Its understanding and acquisition require the ability to see logical connections and attain a synoptic overview by proceeding in the right order from foundational starting points. The 'way in' argument is itself one of these starting points in the dialogue. The ideas of freedom and responsibility are illustrated and instantiated in the acquisition of knowledge: one is free not to know, not to want to know, and no one else can do your learning for you. Other texts where Augustine sets out, discusses, and uses this epistemology are discussed: the dialogue *De Magistro* and the *Confessions*.

Keywords: **epistemology**, **freedom**, **De Magistro**, **Confessions**

I now turn to what we might call 'Augustine's theory of knowledge'. This is important both for the formal unity of the dialogue, and for the philosophical

force of the argument at 1.12.25. The theory is not subjected to examination in *lib.arb*. Such scrutiny occurs elsewhere in Augustine's writings—chiefly in the dialogue *De Magistro*, and in *De Trinitate*. In *lib.arb*. it is, however, explained and above all, instantiated. It is put into practice. In the process of the dialogue Evodius is portrayed as coming to understand, coming to know, and, it is to be hoped, the reader does so too. The most important feature, for the purposes of *lib.arb*., of Augustine's understanding of understanding is his emphasis on the responsibility of the one who would understand. The teacher, nevertheless, can go quite a long way towards presenting his material in such a way as to help the learner understand. Part of this practical rhetorical task can be seen in *lib.arb*. in the way it develops its own definitions and terms of reference. This process of gradual presentation, of weaving the terminological threads into the figure in the carpet, can be seen in the case of the central epistemological terms of the dialogue.

BELIEF AND UNDERSTANDING IN BOOK 1(1.1.1–1.4.10)

Evodius' opening question is given an immediate and swift answer. God is the author of the evil that we suffer, but not of the evil that we do. This answer is given by way of an argument whose premises are given by the

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Christian faith: God's goodness and justice, and the complete jurisdiction of divine providence. Its conclusions then are only available, or persuasive, to one who already believes the tenets of the Christian Faith. Evodius goes on to offer a different suggestion which appears to compete with Augustine's 'voluntate' conclusion (1.1.2–3). Now it will become clear that Evodius does already believe the Christian Faith. Why does the dialogue not stop at the end of 1.1.1? The answer to this question is, I suggest, that Evodius has yet to appreciate that Augustine's 'voluntate' really is the answer; he has not yet taken it on board. Persuaded that 'education' is not a possible explanation or reason for our doing evil things (1.1.2–3), Evodius asks Augustine to tell him what is. He puts the question implicit behind his previous suggestion: what is the source of our doing evil (1.2.4)? Augustine replies to this by setting out a procedure (1.2.4–1.3.6). This procedure is (1.2.4)

(1) presented as that through which Augustine has already been led by 'love of finding out the truth' and 'divine assistance' and
(2) is set out in terms of belief and understanding: 'Unless you believe, you will not understand'. Augustine then sets out the two apparently contradictory propositions that he and Evodius believe, which, as Evodius acknowledges, give the basic problem. Augustine then (1.2.5)
(3) sets out further what they already believe, and
(4) presents these beliefs as the 'beginning of piety', and the starting point for understanding.

Thus far, then, we have

(5) a set of (orthodox Christian) beliefs about God which are shared by Evodius and Augustine, but which for Evodius, and for Augustine when he was younger, contain an apparent contradiction,
(6) a desired end state, here called 'understanding'. This, it is suggested, will be a state of knowledge in which the contradiction is resolved.

(7) Further, the declaration that 'belief' is necessary for understanding, in a quotation which is itself signalled as taken from a text which is (to be) believed.

Why is 'belief' necessary for 'understanding'? Is Augustine asking us to give up our better judgement even before we have begun, and only

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on the basis of a Greek version of an ancient Hebrew text?[1]

[1] 'Nisi credideritis, non intellegetis' is a Latin version of the Septuagint version of Isaiah 7: 9. A modern English version has 'If you do not stand firm in faith, you shall not stand at all' (*NRSV*).

Interestingly, Evodius is presented as having already signed the contract ('we are well agreed to hold to the course…' (1.2.4)). But notice that what Evodius is asked to believe is not just any old thing, but a set of statements about God. In 1.1.1 we had God's benevolence, justice, and all-encompassing providence as regards his creatures. In 1.2.4 Evodius subscribes to a set of beliefs about God: complete self-sufficiency and control over the activity of creation itself; God is omnipotent, immutable, and the source of everything good. He is superior to what he has created and (again) he controls it with absolute justice. He is self-sufficient and has created everything from nothing. All these beliefs are described as 'thinking the best of God':

> nihil enim creditur melius, etiamsi causa lateat cur ita sit. optime namque de Deo existimare uerissimum est pietatis exordium. (1.2.5)
> For even if the reason why is not apparent, there is nothing it is better to believe than this. For to think the best of God is most truly piety's most true point of departure.

'Piety's most true point of departure' is not the acceptance of anything that sounds strange, but to give God the benefit of the doubt, to assume that God is the best thing one can think.[2]

[2] Later, at 2.6.14, Evodius will say that 'God is that than which nothing superior exists'. Such a definition of God has clear links with Anselm's ontological argument ('aliquid quo maius nihil cogitari potest' *Prosl*. 2). Related reasoning is found in Stoic thought, e.g. Cicero, *N.D*. 2.16 (Chrysippus); Sextus Empiricus, *AM* 9.10 (Zeno). On this see also Rist (1994: 69 n. 43), who quotes Du Roy's suggestion that this passage is an echo of Cicero, *Tusc*. 1.26.65 ('id quo ne in deo quidem quidquam maius intellegi potest'), via Plotinus, *Enn*. 5.3.15.8–9, though Rist is more doubtful about the latter. Leibniz (Huggard 1951: 187) quotes Augustine's formulation of this at *doctr.chr*. 1.7.7.

It is unfortunate that the English word 'piety' has lost the sense of 'respect' so basic to the Latin *pietas*. In a work of the same period which advocated the *Usefulness of Belief*, Augustine takes an example from education:

> quis enim sibi umquam libros Aristotelis reconditos et obscuros ab eius inimico exponendos putauit?…quis denique geometricas litteras Archimedis legere magistro Epicuro aut discere uoluit, contra quas ille multum pertinaciter nihil earum, quantum arbitror, intellegens disserebat?…si Vergilium odissemus, immo si non eum, priusquam

intellectus esset, maiorum

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> nostrorum commendatione diligeremus, numquam nobis satis fieret de illis eius quaestionibus innumerabilibus, quibus grammatici agitari et perturbari solent; nec audiremus libenter, qui cum eius laude illas expediret, sed ei faueremus, qui per eas illum errasse ac delirasse conaretur ostendere. nunc uero cum eas multi ac uarie pro suo quisque captu aperire conentur, his potissimum plauditur, per quorum expositionem melior inuenitur poeta, qui non solum nihil peccasse, sed nihil non laudabiliter cecinisse ab eis etiam, qui illum non intellegunt, creditur. itaque in quaestiuncula magistro deficienti et quid respondeat non habenti suscensemus potius quam illum mutum uitio Maronis putamus. iam si ad defensionem suam peccatum tanti auctoris adserere uoluit, uix apud eum discipuli uel datis mercedibus remanebunt. (*util.cred*. 6.13)
>
> Who ever thought of having the obscure and recondite works of Aristotle expounded to him by an enemy of Aristotle?…Who ever wished to read or learn the geometrical treatises of Archimedes with Epicurus as his master, who, understanding nothing of them so far as I can judge, nevertheless pertinaciously attacked them in his discourses?…If we hated Vergil, indeed if we did not love him, before we knew anything about him, because our seniors praised him, we should never derive any satisfaction from the innumerable Vergilian questions that are wont to excite and agitate teachers of literature. We should not be willing to listen to anyone who discussed these questions and praised the poet. We should be favourably impressed by anyone who tried to show that he was wrong or mad. But now, many teachers try to explain these questions variously according to the capacity of each; and those obtain the greatest applause by whose exposition the poet appears in the best light, so that even those who do not understand him at least believe that he was guilty of no error and that his poems are admirable in all respects. So if in any question the teacher fails to give an answer, we are angry with him, and do not attribute his dullness to the fault of Vergil. If he tried to defend himself by blaming so famous an author he would soon be without pupils or fees. (tr. Burleigh 1953)

We ought to believe that Virgil is a very good poet. But this ‘ought’ derives from reason, not arbitrary *fiat*. The consequences of not taking Virgil's genius *on trust* will lead to one's own failure in education; one will be prepared to think that one is right, and Virgil wrong, and, hence, learn nothing. The model that concerns Augustine here is an educative, pedagogical model, and this is true of *lib.arb*. as well.[3]

[3] For a slightly different pedagogical use (and context) see Law (1990: 202).

In this context what appears to many the manifesto

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of the dark ages can be seen to be no more than a counsel of prudence and good sense. This will again become relevant when we come to look at the literature on Augustine's '*cogito*-like' arguments (Chapter 7) where we will see that at least one author has gone wrong in failing to appreciate the nature of Augustine's 'unless you believe'.

But let us return to the text. Augustine goes on to set out another procedure: 'So you are asking why we do evil. First, then, we must discuss, what it is to do evil' (1.3.6). Thus far, then, we have several procedures, or orders, proposed

(1) the 'order' which Augustine followed and by which he escaped ('*eo tecum agam ordine, quem secutus euasi*' (1.2.4))
(2) the 'course' of belief before understanding ('*praescriptum…per prophetam gradum, qui ait: nisi credideritis, non intellegetis*' (1.2.4))
(3) the sequence '*quid sit*' before '*unde*'.

This last is, again, perfectly sensible. If we are to understand the answer to the question, we should understand what we are talking about.[4]

[4] Again while it is not irrelevant that, as is always pointed out in this context, Plotinus in his treatise on evil (*Enn*. 1.8 'On What Are and Whence Come Evils') adopts a similar policy, this by no means explains Augustine's use of the procedure here. Plotinus begins his treatise thus: 'Those who enquire whence evils come, either into reality as a whole or to a particular kind of reality, would make an appropriate beginning of their enquiry if they proposed the question first, what evil is and what is its nature.'
One should also remember the importance of definition in rhetoric, both as exact description, and as argument based upon it. (See Quint. 7.3; 9.3.91; Auct.Her. 1.11.19; 1.12.21; 2.12.17; 4.25.35.)

Lib.arb.1 is therefore an attempt to get to a definition of evil (or, more precisely, of evil action). Augustine proposes that in the event that Evodius cannot give a definition he should begin by giving some examples. Evodius does so, and Augustine tries to get him to say what it is about these examples of evil actions that makes them evil. They begin with adultery.[5]

[5] Evodius lists them in the order: adultery, murder, sacrilege. Adultery is discussed in 1.3.6–1.3.8. Thereafter murder is used as the example. This is because they each bring to the fore a particular aspect of evil action. The sequence of examples is thus pedagogically useful. By means of adultery it is easy to see the internal aspect of evil action, and by means of murder it is easy to make the connections between justice and punishment. The third example, sacrilege, is not used. (Cf. 1.5.11, where Evodius asks to go on to look at sacrilege. Augustine tells us not to be hasty ('praeproperum')). I suggest that the example is not used, and that Evodius' question at 1.5.11 is too early, because the final definition of evil (reached at 1.16.34) is itself expressed in terms which are closely related to sacrilege (temple robbing, etc): evil is the turning away from the divine (1.16.34). The example is therefore left hanging in the air in order to help us to this conclusion.
The same point is noted, with a slightly different kind of explanation, by Neumann

(1986: 107 n. 247): the question of sacrilege is 'methodisch hier…nicht am Platz.…Denn zeitliches und ewiges Gesetz sind noch nicht unterschieden; auch ist noch offen, ob das überhaupt Frevel sind, weil noch nicht klar ist, ob Gott nicht selbst böse ist. Nach dem Gottesbeweis ist ohne weitere Darlegung von selbst offenkundig: Religionsfrevel sind das entschieden höchste Vergehen. In der Folge der Beispiele liegt also eine Steigerung des male facere.'

One also should bear in mind the problems that have been raised about the use of examples in questions of definition. In, for example, the *Theaetetus*, Socrates does not accept that the cases of knowledge given by Theaetetus (geometry, cobbling) help answer the question 'what is knowledge' (146C ff.). On this issue see Burnyeat (1977, esp. p.'384): 'What is problematic is not the use of examples but their status.' It is the question of the status of the examples (between knowledge and belief) that Augustine is playing on here. What will turn a case of sex, or killing, into an acknowledgeable instance of evil action? The gap between generally agreed examples and defined cases will also be exploited to work to the idea of eternal law: we find that, really, killing in self defence is not justified (1.5.12).

Through the process of extracting a

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definition from examples Augustine is here going to illustrate the difference between belief and understanding. Why is adultery an evil act?[6]

[6] The question itself is phrased in different ways, that is, there is some ambiguity in the phrasing between 'reasons for thinking that evil is bad' and 'reasons for evil being bad'. The important move is from the first to the second.

Three wrong answers are suggested, and one correct one. The first suggestion is the law. Is it evil because the law forbids it, or is it forbidden by the law because it is evil? This is, of course, a version of the Euthyphro dilemma: 'Is that which is holy loved by the gods because it is holy, or is it holy because it is loved by the gods?' (Plato, *Euthyphro* 10A). This dilemma has a long history.[7]

[7] Guthrie (1975: 110 f.) gives some introductory references. Note that I do not say that it is the *Euthyphro* dilemma, but a version of it. Augustine's conception of God (as that than which there is nothing better—cf. n. 2 above) must make a difference.

And indeed, it will turn out to be the backbone of the theodicy of *lib.arb*. After the discussion of murder and divine law (which provide the context of the *Euthyphro*) book 2 will give a proof of God's existence whereby what is shown is that there is a source of objective standards for moral judgement (that is, 'all goods are from God'). For the moment, however, we are concerned with ordinary everyday laws, and belief and understanding. Augustine explains why 'law' is not a sufficient answer. It is because the attitude that one takes to law (and here he introduces another piece of vocabulary, 'authority') is belief. The attitude of 'understanding', on the other hand, requires a reason,

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'*ratio*'. This is not yet made completely explicit. But already Augustine does two things in this speech (1.3.6). First he introduces the vocabulary of belief and understanding into a speech structured by contrasts: on the one hand

we have *lex*, *auctoritas*, *credere*, *fidem*, and on the other *intellegere*, *scire ac tenere firmissimum* and *ratio*. The second thing he does is to introduce a new character. This is the person who does not even believe, who is not satisfied with belief, but wants to be given a reason:

> Quid? si quispiam nos exagitet, exaggerans delectationes adulterii et quaerens a nobis, cur hoc malum et damnatione dignum iudicemus, num ad auctoritatem legis confugiendum censes hominibus iam non tantum credere sed intellegere cupientibus? Nam et ego tecum credo et inconcusse credo omnibusque populis atque gentibus credendum esse clamo malum esse adulterium. Sed nunc molimur id, quod in fidem recepimus, etiam intellegendo scire ac tenere firmissimum. Considera itaque quantum potes et renuntia mihi, quanam ratione adulterium malum esse cognoueris. (1.3.6)
> So suppose some one were to taunt us by playing up the delights of adultery, and asking us why we thought it bad and worthy of condemnation. Do you think we should run and take shelter under the law's authority, we who are men now, who desire not only to believe but also to understand? I too believe what you believe, and I believe it unshakeably, and I declare that all peoples and nations should believe it, namely that adultery is bad. What we are attempting now, however, is to take what we have received in faith, and by understanding it, hold to it as secure knowledge as well. So think, then, as hard as you can, and tell me what reason you have for recognising adultery to be evil.

I have heard it said that people who have studied Greats at Oxford always ask two questions ‘what do you mean?’, and ‘how do you know?’ Working out why adultery is evil here is a case of the latter.

Evodius then attempts two further answers, first the ‘golden rule’ (1.3.6), and secondly evidence from the fact of condemnation (1.3.7). The first gives an instance of acting against authority,[8]

[8] It is described by Augustine as a *regula*. As such it is related to the *leges* of the previous wrong answer. The ‘golden rule’ is included because it is an informatively wrong answer. It reintroduces the distinction between activity and passivity first given in 1.1.1, and it is a wrong answer, I suggest, at least in part, because it focuses on the action as passive (‘quod hoc ipse in uxore mea *pati* nollem’). More importantly it is wrong, as Augustine says, because it is overly dependent on the external action. Note further that the rule also allows Augustine to introduce the word *libido*, which will be picked up in 1.3.8.
The Golden Rule: Familiar from the Bible (Mt. 7: 12; Luke 6: 31; Tobias 4: 16 (Vulg.)), it has a very long history, on which see Dihle (1962). Dihle notes three occurrences of the rule in Augustine. La Bonnardière (1964) adds another seven. (Our passage is not included in the list.) It is for Augustine, according to La Bonnardière, a ‘précepte fondamental de la loi naturelle’ (p. 305). Augustine's use of the ‘golden rule’ receives a much fuller treatment from Glorie (1967–8: 451–71), who lists 23 occurrences of the rule before and after Augustine. Glorie lists a large number of occurrences in Augustine, but omits our text. Its negative formulation would seem to fit best into his second category, ‘la loi naturelle’ (p. 460). Perhaps the ignorance of our text in the literature is due to the fact that it is here not so much put forward by Augustine, as used to make a philosophical point. It plays no further role in the dialogue.

and the second

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an example of the kind of authority and law that really one shouldn't 'believe'.[9]

[9] One should trust rather the story as told in the Acts of the Apostles which 'diuina auctoritate praecellit' (1.3.7).

Augustine then gives Evodius the right answer (1.3.8) and the discussion moves on to a consideration of this answer, in terms of the second example, murder (1.4.9 ff.). Once again the question of law and authority comes up in this discussion. A distinction is made between killing which is lawful (or not unlawful)—the soldier, judicial executioner, and accident—and the case under discussion, a slave who kills his master out of fear. Evodius makes this distinction in terms of law (1.4.9). This, however, is, again, the wrong kind of answer. Augustine says:

> Rursus me ad auctoritatem reuocas, sed meminisse te oportet id nunc a nobis esse susceptum, ut intellegamus quod credimus; legibus autem credimus; temptandum itaque est, si quo modo possumus, id ipsum intellegere, utrum lex quae punit hoc factum non perperam puniat. (1.4.10)
> Again you bring me back to authority. You must, however, remember that we have undertaken now to understand what we believe. But we believe the laws, and so we must try (if we are in any way able) to understand this point: the law which punishes this deed [sc. that of the slave], does it not punish it wrongly?

'*Legibus autem credimus*'.[10]

[10] For another example of this relationship cf. 2.5.12, where Augustine rejects Evodius' suggestion as 'non…regulam qua fidere possumus'.

Augustine makes sure the point has been taken. He then sets Evodius on the right track so that a definition of *libido* is reached (1.4.10). The discussion then continues exploiting the gap between our sense of what is really just and justice as it is administered by ordinary laws.

I suggest that one of the things that Augustine has been doing in these first ten sections of *lib.arb*. is to introduce Evodius to the basic

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concepts of belief and understanding. Thus far we have seen the concept of belief elaborated. Further on in *lib.arb*. the other arm of the balance, understanding, will also be given definition (1.7.16–17).

A NOTE ON THE VOCABULARY

Book 1 has so far distinguished 'belief' and 'understanding': they are two ways of knowing something, but they differ by their mode of justification.[11]

[11] Cf. Burnyeat's terminology of 'epistemic categories' (1987: 18): Augustine 'sorts all knowable truths into two classes: (1) truths such that if *x* knows that *p*, then *x* has perceived by sense that *p*, (2) truths such that if *x* knows that *p*, then *x* has

perceived by the mind that *p*.'If *x* has not perceived that *p* in either way, he can only believe that *p*, not know it.' Burnyeat goes on to illustrate this with *mag*. 12.39–40.

When we believe something we have it on authority (and it may be very good authority), but we do not really 'know' or 'understand' it until we, ourselves, can give a *ratio*. For these two categories a wide range of vocabulary is used. Recall, for instance, a sentence already quoted above: 'But what we are attempting now, however, is to take what we have received in faith, and by understanding it, hold to it as secure knowledge as well' [*Sed nunc molimur id, quod in fidem recepimus, etiam intellegendo scire ac tenere firmissimum*] (1.3.6).

For the category of 'understanding' in particular a wide range of terms are used; here we have 'to know and to hold as something absolutely firm'. What I suggest is that Augustine uses this wide range of terms in order to help illustrate what he means by 'understanding'. He uses words which bring to mind ideas of clear vision, of grasp, security, and certainty.[12]

[12] To take some examples from 2.1.1: *certum tibi atque cognitum*, *factum esse perspicuum*, *manifestum*, *liquido noveris*.

All these words and phrases help us to see what 'understanding' is. They approach it from different angles. It is not that Augustine is careless in his use, or simply varying his terms; rather he uses the term appropriate to the task of helping the reader along. There is, however, one basic concept that underlies all this vocabulary, and this I shall refer to as 'knowledge' and also as 'understanding'. The important distinction to be made here, which is the distinction that Augustine makes, is between the 'proper' use of

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a word, and an improper or derived sense. Augustine gives a clear, and often quoted, statement of the proper use of epistemological vocabulary in his *Retractations*. Commenting on his statement, in the *util.cred*. 11.25, '*Quod scimus igitur, debemus rationi; quod credimus, auctoritati*', he writes:

> …non sic accipiendum est, ut in sermone usitatiore vereamur nos dicere scire quod idoneis testibus credimus. Proprie quippe cum loquimur, id solum scire dicimus quod mentis firma ratione comprehendimus. Cum vero loquimur verbis consuetudini aptioribus, sicut loquitur etiam divina Scriptura, non dubitemus dicere scire nos et quod percipimus nostri corporis sensibus et quod fide dignis credimus testibus, dum tamen inter haec et illud quid distet intelligamus. (*retr*. 1.14.3)
>
> And when I said…"What we know, therefore, we owe to reason, what we believe, to authority", this is not to be taken in such a way as to make us frightened in more ordinary conversation of saying that we know [*scire*] what we believe on adequate testimony. It is true that when we speak properly [*proprie*] we say that we know [*scire*] only that which we grasp by firm reasoning of the mind. But when we speak in language more suited to common use, as even the Holy Scripture speaks, we should not hesitate to say that we know both what we perceive by our bodily senses and what we believe on the authority of trustworthy witnesses, while nevertheless understanding the distance between these and that. (tr. from Burnyeat 1987: 6)

This passage is significant here for two reasons. First it makes a distinction between knowledge properly so called, and knowledge ordinarily so called. To the latter epistemic category belong both belief and sense-perception. There is some question as to the consistency of Augustine's views on sense-perception, but this need not detain us in a discussion of *lib.arb*.[13]

[13] But see below on the significance of sense perception as an analogy. For a more positive view see *trin*. 15.12.21 (and the account of it in Coady (1992: 19 f.)). See also Burnyeat (1987: 18 ff.), where Burnyeat points out that this is something of a problem in Plato as well. On Augustine on sense perception in general, and the related issues of the perception of the past, see Rist (1994: 45 ff.).

The second significant feature of this passage is that Augustine misquotes himself. As Burnyeat points out, the statement in the *util.cred*. 11.25 in fact reads, ' "What we understand [*intellegimus*], we owe to reason". If Augustine feels that it makes no odds whether he writes *scire* or *intellegere*, that implies that in his view the proper meaning of *scire* is *intellegere*.' (Burnyeat

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1987: 7). In this dissertation, therefore, I shall use both ‘knowledge’ and ‘understanding’ as interchangeable terms of art.

BELIEVING AND UNDERSTANDING IN BOOK 2(2.1.1–2.3.7)

The introduction to the second book goes through the distinction once again. For a second time Isaiah 7: 9 is quoted (2.2.6). As in the first book, Evodius begins with a question which is shifted around until it becomes another question. Further, the introduction proceeds through various ‘wrong’ answers. In 2.1.1 Evodius fails to answer Augustine's ‘how do you know’ question.[14]

[14] *lib.arb*. 1.1.2 ‘A.: I make no objection to this, but I am asking you a different question. How do you know that we have our existence from him? For you haven't explained this yet, but the fact that we earn reward and punishment from him.’

In 2.2.5 an argument which aims to show that we should *believe* in God's existence is seen to be insufficient for the present project of understanding. The concept of ‘belief’ is here given extended treatment because of the importance of order. The uncertainty about one proposition entails the uncertainty of another (2.2.4–5). Evodius suggests that they seek ‘as if all these things were uncertain’ (2.2.5) and it becomes clear that the most basic proposition for these arguments is not ‘known’ by Evodius: that God exists (2.2.5). Augustine repeats the quotation from Isaiah 7: 9, relates it to Christ's practice in the New Testament (2.2.6), and then, as in 1.3.6, proposes an order of inquiry (2.3.7).

Belief, then, is not knowledge. What then, is knowledge? To begin to answer this question I turn back to the first book.

UNDERSTANDING AND THE *CONEXIO RATIONIS* (1.7.16)

Augustine does give a definition of knowledge at 1.7.16. According to this, to know [*scire*] is ‘to have perceived something with reason’ [*ratione habere perceptum*]. As at 1.3.6, knowledge is related to reason. As with all of Augustine's definitions in *lib.arb*. this occurs

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in a context in which the definition itself is being instantiated. At 1.7.16, Augustine asks the question ‘how is man perfectly ordered in himself’. The idea of order has been reached through the consideration of law.[15]

[15] And through an appeal to innate ideas: ‘To put in words a brief definition of the notion that is impressed in us, of eternal law, as far as I am able to, it is that by which it is just that everything is perfectly ordered.’ (and cf. 1.13.27: *‘iustitiae notio’*; 2.9.26: ‘*sapientiae notio*’; 2.15.40: ‘*notio sapientiae*’).
This is a philosophical conception which has a very interesting history. Rist says that

'it was a commonplace among those philosophically…inclined' (1994: 51). Certainly it is not problematized in *lib.arb*. However, as with the concept of God mentioned above, Augustine seems to be thinking in terms of the very structure of our rational capacities: it is hard to conceive how a rational creature could not have some idea that justice involves right order. Cf. perhaps also Augustine's analysis of the suicide: the desire for death is really the desire for rest—i.e. a better life (3.8.23). The desire of all men to be happy is said by Augustine to be an impressed idea (cf. Rist, 1994: 50 ff.). As Rist notes, the theory of 'impressed ideas' needs no theory of knowledge as recollection of a past life. Rather what we see here will find shape in the massive *trin*. where Augustine finds a Trinitarian structure in the way we know things (in our rational cognitive capacities, and activities). See further below in my discussion of *civ*. 11.26 and the 'Augustinian *cogito*' (Chapter 7).

At this point there follows what appears to be a sudden change in the sequence of ideas:

> Age nunc uideamus homo ipse quomodo in se ipso sit ordinatissimus. Nam ex hominibus una lege sociatis populus constat, quae lex, ut dictum est, temporalis est. Et dic mihi utrum certissimum tibi sit uiuere te. (1.7.16)
> Now then, let us see how a man himself may be perfectly ordered in himself. For a people consists of men associated by one law (the law which, as was said, is temporal). Tell me, then, whether you are completely certain that you are alive.

Augustine sets a question, and (again) asks an intermediary one. (This second question is answered by an Augustinian '*cogito*-like argument', but I will return to this label later.) Evodius replies that he is certain. Augustine then asks him if he can distinguish 'being alive' from 'knowing that one is alive'. Evodius answers that although he knows ('*scio*') that the latter entails the former, he does not know ('*ignoro*') whether the former entails the latter.[16]

[16] 'I know indeed that nothing knows that it is alive unless it is alive, but I do not know whether everything alive knows that it is alive.'
In the second book the idea of an 'interior sense' which exists between the bodily senses and reason is introduced. This forms the 'self-consciousness' of non-rational animals. It enables them to know they should open their eyes when they are shut; it does not, of course, provide *knowledge* (2.3.8 ff.).

He will learn, of course, that the former does not entail the latter. At this point Augustine says:

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> Quam uellem, ut credis, ita etiam scires pecora carere ratione; cito nostra disputatio ab ista quaestione transiret. Sed quoniam nescire te dicis, longam sermocinationem moues. Neque enim talis res est, qua praetermissa pergere in ea quae intendimus, tanta conexione rationis, quanta opus esse sentio, sinamur. Dic itaque mihi…. (ibid)
> The beasts lack reason, this you believe. How I wish that you would know it as well. Then our discussion would pass swiftly on from this question. But since you say that you do not know, you have instigated a long discourse. For it is not the kind of question which we can pass over and still be allowed to go on to the things which we want to get

to, with as much logical connection, as, I think, we need [*tanta conexione rationis, quanta opus esse sentio*]. So then, tell me …

It is the phrase '*conexio rationis*' that I wish to single out.[17]

[17] Augustine gives a very concise and very clear account of logical consequence in *doctr.chr*. 2.31.48 ff.

Augustine is here trying to answer the question 'how is a man in perfect order'. He builds up to his answer in stages. The first stage is the certainty of one's existence. The second stage is the distinction between knowledge and life. The third stage is found at 1.7.17:

E.: Non mihi est iam dubium. Perge quo intenderas; aliud enim esse uiuere, aliud scire se uiuere satis didici.
A.: Quid ergo tibi horum duorum uidetur esse praestantius?
E.: Quid putas nisi scientiam uitae?
E.: Now I do not doubt. Go on where you want to go; I have now sufficiently learned that being alive is one thing, and knowing that one is alive is another.
A.: Which of the two seems to you to be superior?
E.: Which do you think? The knowledge of life.

Stage three is getting these two things in the right order. Between these stages there is a *conexio rationis*. But since Evodius is not clear about stage two, they cannot proceed to stage three. It is not a question of Evodius' having been asked to concede a proposition, or be persuaded. It is a question of Evodius having been brought to see and to understand what is involved in this distinction between knowledge and life. Any one with a basic linguistic ability could tell the two apart. But what is at stake here is not linguistic competence, but 'knowledge' and 'life' as technical terms. In one sense Augustine

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goes about providing the *conexio rationis* by giving an argument for thinking that non-human animals lack reason. We should not simply look here for Augustine's grand answer to this highly controversial question in ancient philosophy.[18]

[18] On this question see most recently Sorabji (1993). The question was a popular topic for debates in rhetorical schools; see Kidd (1992: 375 ff.).

More important, from the point of the dialogue, is to appreciate the way it introduces the terms of the discussion (knowledge and understanding) and of the *conexio rationis* itself. Knowledge we learn, is 'ratione habere perceptum' (1.7.16) and indeed involves understanding:

A.: Meliorne tibi uidetur uitae scientia quam ipsa uita? An forte intellegis superiorem quamdam et sinceriorem uitam esse scientiam, quoniam scire nemo potest nisi qui intellegit? Intellegere autem quid est nisi ipsa luce mentis inlustrius perfectiusque uiuere? Quare tu mihi, nisi fallor, non uitae aliud aliquid, sed cuidam uitae meliorem uitam praeposuisti.

E.: Optime omnino et cognouisti et explicasti sententiam meam, si tamen scientia mala esse numquam potest.
A.: Nullo modo arbitror, nisi cum translato uerbo scientiam pro experientia dicimus. Experiri enim non semper bonum est, sicut experiri supplicia. Illa uero quae proprie ac pure scientia nominatur, quia ratione atque intellegentia paratur, mala esse qui potest? (1.7.17)
A.: Knowledge of life seems better to you than life itself? Or perhaps do you understand knowledge as some sort of superior and purer kind of life, since no one can know unless he understands? And what is understanding but living more perfectly and more enlightened by the very light of mind? So then what you have set above life, it seems to me, is not something other than life, but a better kind of life.
E.: You could not have understood and expressed my opinion better, if, that is, knowledge can never be bad.
A.: Absolutely not, I think, except when we use the word in a transferred sense for ‘experience’. For experience is not always good, the experience of punishment, for example. But can that which is properly and simply named ‘knowledge’, given that it is acquired by reason and understanding, be bad?

But understanding and knowing are not only here described, they are here instantiated. Evodius has been acquiring knowledge, and gaining understanding. I would argue then, that we can take this passage itself as an indication of ‘Augustine's theory of knowledge’. One condition, then, for knowledge (as opposed to belief) is the *conexio*

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rationis. I paraphrase this as seeing the (explanatory and logical) *connections* between the items of one's knowledge. Knowledge is not something one simply does or does not have; rather it admits of degrees. As I increase my comprehension of the connections between what I know, I come to know it more deeply and securely. As a definition, of course, this is circular, but it is not offered as a definition, rather as a condition. Knowledge involves reason (*ratione habere perceptum*) and the *conexio rationis*. This leads us to another condition: order.

In 1.7.16 the first stage was described as something '*certissimum*'. After the first stage came the second, of which, eventually Evodius was to say he had no '*dubium*' ('doubt' or 'hesitation'). Logical connection follows an order, and if we are to *understand* we must get our knowledge in the right order. I wish to illustrate this at greater length from the introduction to the second book.

GETTING THINGS IN THE RIGHT ORDER (2.1.1–2.3.7)

The sections 2.1.1–2.2.5 take us very quickly through a series of arguments. They are not easy to follow, and are not always entirely clearly expressed. This is, of course, the point. In the course of the introduction Augustine is reducing Evodius' original question to a manageable size and structure. I summarize the procedure here.

Evodius' opening question is this: Why did God give man free choice of the will (FCW)? Let us call this a question about proposition (1):

(1) God gave us FCW.

The question is caused by the worry that because

(2) we have FCW

we sin, and hence God's creation of man as a creature which can sin makes God in some way responsible for that sin. The point that Augustine continually makes is the need to be clear about what is and what is not certain. It is a question of understanding. Evodius says that, thanks to the first book, he is certain that

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(2) we have FCW

and that

(3) we sin with FCW

He then gives two reasons for the claim that

(4) no one other than God gave it us.

Namely,

(5) we are from God

(6) we are punished by God

and elaborates them into an argument:

(7) every good is from God

(8) justice is a good

(9) punishment for sin is just

(therefore, as Augustine points out)

(6) we are punished by God.

Augustine, however, wants an argument for (5), Evodius gives two, first

(6) we are punished by God

(10) justice only punishes within its jurisdiction

therefore

(5) we are from God

and secondly

(7) every good is from God

(11) man is good

therefore

(5) we are from God.

As at the end of 2.1.2 we find that the question is already solved. Evodius' statement (11) requires that man have FCW (proposition (2)), i.e. FCW is a necessary condition of right action. This is, Augustine says, sufficient reason ('*satis…causae*') for God giving

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FCW. He illustrates [19]

[19] Here Augustine uses the word *intellegi*: 'Ad hoc autem datam uel hinc *intellegi* potest, quia…' This is related to the *synoptic* aspect of knowledge: Augustine is showing Evodius the connections between the complex of propositions, rather than structuring them as a syllogism.

this by pointing out that misuse of FCW is punished by God (cf. prop. (6)), and the FCW means that the punishment is just (cf. prop. (9), and of course, *lib.arb*. 1.1.1).

Evodius concedes (1). But, importantly, he still hasn't understood it fully. Why, he asks, did God give us FCW which could be misused? Other good things given by God, such as justice, are necessary for right action, but cannot be misused for wrong action.

In order fully to understand, we have to be clear about the right order of certainty. The uncertainty of one proposition entails the uncertainty of another. This Evodius understands, and he repeats Augustine's meaning back to him:

If the proposition

(12) FCW was given for right action

is uncertain, then,

(13) FCW ought to have been given (God was right to have given it)

is also uncertain, and if this is uncertain, then

(1) God gave us FCW

is uncertain.

It is at this point that he asks that the investigation be carried out '*quasi omnia incerta sunt*'. And this *omnia* includes the proposition that God exists. Augustine sets out the running order. They will show that

(i) God exists
(ii) all goods are from God
(iii) FCW is a good

which, he says, will show

(13) God was right to give us FCW.

What I suggest is going on here is an educative exercise in getting things in the right order. The aim is to see what follows from what,

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and to see what is more certain than what. This leads Augustine to set up an order ('*ordine*'), and to take as the starting point of that order a *cogito*-like argument (2.3.7). Not only does knowledge require order, but the order of knowledge requires a starting point, what is here called an '*exordium*'. But before I discuss the various starting points in *lib.arb*., I wish to discuss a third condition for knowledge as it is presented in *lib.arb*.: the synoptic.

SYNOPTIC VISION (BOOK 3)

This I suggest, is best illustrated by the third book itself. The third book is different from the other two for a number of reasons: it does not have an introduction, Evodius is almost completely silent, and so forth. Most importantly it differs from the previous two because it lies outside, or rather, after, the arc of the argument of the first two. At the end of the second book, Augustine declares the discussion to be at an end:

> Si quid autem de origine peccati diligentius quaerendum adhuc putas—nam omnino ego iam opus esse non arbitror—si quid tamen putas, in aliam disputationem differendum est. (2.20.54)
> If however, you think that there is something still to be further investigated on this subject of the origin of sin—and I for my part think that there is absolutely no need—but if you think there is, then it must be put off for another discussion.

Augustine concludes book 2 with a final answer to the problem, beyond which it is impossible to go. There can be no further explanation of evil beyond, or rather, behind the will. Augustine puts it thus:

> Sed tu fortasse quaesiturus es, quoniam mouetur uoluntas cum se auertit ab incommutabili bono ad mutabile bonum, unde iste motus existat. Qui profecto malus est, tametsi uoluntas libera, quia sine illa nec recte uiui potest, in bonis numeranda sit. Si enim motus iste, id est auersio uoluntatis a Domino Deo, sine dubitatione peccatum est, num possumus auctorem peccati Deum dicere? Non erit ergo iste motus ex Deo. Vnde igitur erit? Ita quaerenti tibi si respondeam nescire me, fortasse eris tristior, sed tamen uera responderim. Sciri enim non potest quod nihil est. (2.20.54)

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> But perhaps you are going to ask where, since the will is set in motion when it turns itself away from immutable to mutable good, where this motion comes from. The motion is, of course, bad, although the free will is, because without it we cannot live rightly, reckoned a good thing. For if this motion, that is the aversion of the will from the Lord God, is without doubt sin, can we say that God is the author of sin? The movement, then, is not from God. But where then does it come from? If you were to ask this question, and I were to reply that I don't know, you would, perhaps be disappointed, but I would be telling the truth. This is because what is nothing cannot be known.

This is not just a metaphysical claim, it is also *epistemological*. The first evil is, on principle, incomprehensible. This again has a long history in Platonic thought. Augustine's position here is quite clear: the will can act as an explanation for evil. It does so first in that it is merely a cipher for the absence of any other explanation (1.11.21). It can also do so because, as we will see, the will itself is something knowable (for rational animals). There can, however, be no explanation of *why* anyone *willed* to abandon the perfect universe. This is because nothing can add up to a complete explanation or good reason, for such a will. Like goodness, explanation (or, if you prefer, adequate reason for action and intelligibility) derives from God.[20]

[20] The clearest example of this, as is seen by Wetzel (1992: 211 ff.) is in the *Confessions*. In book 2 the paradigmatic act of evil, the theft of the pears (*conf*. 2.4.9), is something inexplicable. By contrast, the paradigmatic act of right action (and divine grace, of course) is Augustine's conversion in the Garden at Milan. In this his will is described as being made whole. The process of conversion turns out (in retrospect) to be fully intelligible.

Evodius, however, still has questions,[21]

[21] 'E.: I let myself be guided, of course, by your will to put off until another time what still from this point on troubles me. For I won't allow you to think that we have investigated these subsequent problems sufficiently.'

and there remain many difficulties to clear up. These we can conveniently include under four headings, all related to ideas of necessity. There is first of all the question of necessity and the natural (3.1.1–3.1.3), then of necessity and God's foreknowledge (3.2.4–3.4.11), then of necessity and God's overall control (3.5.12–3.16.46), and finally also that of necessity and the

constraints of our condition (3.17.47–3.25.77). All of these are simply elaborations on the conclusion reached at the end of book 2: there is no cause (of evil) 'behind' the will. Book 3 takes this conclusion which has been reached, and the method that has been

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explained, and shows how they can be applied to the large number of very difficult problems which belong to the 'problem of evil'. Books 1 and 2 achieve the substantial results of proving that free choice of the will is the cause of evil, that God exists, that all good things are from God, and so forth. In order to understand them fully, we must see how they connect with all the many and complex things one has to say on the whole subject, and the many different contexts in which one has to say it. This task is, essentially, endless, and there is no reason to stop anywhere in particular. Understanding, as I said earlier, is something that admits of degrees.[22]

[22] Cf. in particular how Augustine qualifies his proof of God's existence at 2.15.39: 'Indeed God exists, and he exists truly and supremely. What we previously held in faith, as something indubitable, now also I think we have attained it by a certain—although still slender—form of knowledge [*quamuis adhuc tenuissima forma cognitionis*].' Not only will our knowledge of God be that much better after this life, but, I suggest, the *adhuc* could be taken to refer to what we might call the 'thickening up' of such knowledge as we now have, as we proceed with our investigation in *lib.arb*.

And, further, understanding is retrospective. It is not as if at, say, 1.7.16 Evodius has fully appreciated all the implications of the difference between life and knowledge, or that at, say, 1.12.25 the undeniable will is suddenly 'known', where before we were in a state of doubt. It is only by the end of the third book that we can look back and see how significant the undeniability of this will has been.

STARTING POINTS (1.7.16; 2.3.7; 1.12.25)

By 'starting points' I mean to refer to three points in the first two books where the argument makes what we might call a new beginning.[23]

[23] There is also a starting point in book 3 (at 3.12.36), where Augustine begins from the principle that our ability to value something as 'bad' always implies the notion of something better. This principle is 'set at the head of our reasoning in a summary [*tamquam in capite ratiocinationis*].' This is clearly related to the starting points of the first two books, but for simplicity's sake I omit a full discussion of it here.

These are visible even on a cursory reading. At 1.7.16, Augustine, as we have already seen, says 'Now then, let us see how a man himself may be perfectly ordered in himself. For a people consists of men associated by one law (the law which, as was said, is

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temporal). Tell me, then, whether you are completely certain that you are alive.' He sets one question, and starts answering it with another. One thinks here, perhaps, of the questions a doctor asks a patient when making a diagnosis, or perhaps, of Sherlock Holmes—or indeed Marrou's above quoted 'détective dans les romans policiers' questioning a witness. To the patient, and to Dr Watson, the questions may appear unconnected and without direction. There is something of that sense of a leap here. Again at 1.12.24, Evodius has asked why it is that we suffer for an act of evil which we could not have committed. Augustine begins his answer to this with another question: 'Now I ask you, do we have a will?'

A third 'fresh start' is made at the end of the introduction to book 2:

> Quaeramus autem hoc ordine, si placet: primum quomodo manifestum est Deum esse; deinde utrum ab illo sint quaecumque in quantumcumque sunt bona; postremo utrum in bonis numeranda sit uoluntas libera. Quibus compertis satis adparebit, ut opinor, utrum recte homini data sit. Quare prius abs te quaero, ut de manifestissimis capiamus exordium, utrum tu ipse sis. An fortasse tu metuis ne in hac interrogatione fallaris, cum utique si non esses falli omnino non posses? (2.3.7)
> Let us, then, if you agree, seek in this order: First, how it is manifest that God exists, second whether all things in so far as they are good things have their existence from him, and finally, whether free will is to be counted as one of the good things. When we have got through these things, it will be sufficiently clear, I think, whether free will was rightly given to men. Therefore in order to use the most evident as our starting point [*exordium*], I ask you whether you yourself exist. Are you perhaps afraid that you will be deceived by this question, although if you did not exist you could not be deceived at all?

In what we might call the 'procedural' or sequential order of *lib.arb*. these three share a similar function as 'fresh starts'. More than this, however, they share a similar function in what we might call the order of knowledge. They all begin from the self-evident: 1.7.16 from something 'certissimum', 1.12.25 from something undeniable, and 2.3.7 from 'manifestissimis'. They are all '*cogito*-like arguments', and as such they act as starting points, or first principles in the order of knowledge, beginning from what is indubitable, and they achieve this indubitability by a process of reflection upon it. The

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third (2.3.7) has long been recognized as an adumbration of Descartes' 'je pense donc je suis'. This is because it suggests a process of reflection by the use of the idea of deception ('are you perhaps afraid that you will be deceived by this question, although if you did not exist you could not be deceived at all?'). Few scholars, I am sure, would disagree with including the first (1.7.16) in a list of what we might call the underdeveloped *cogito*s, although in practice I have not seen it so included. The recognition of the second (1.12.25), however, is the subject of this book. I am here making at least two claims unfamiliar in literature on Augustine: first the inclusion of 1.12.25 in a list of '*cogito*-like arguments', and secondly that Augustine uses *cogito*-like arguments as first principles, or the foundations (if this is not too

strong a term) of knowledge. Not all three arguments in *lib.arb*. are one and the same argument, but they all share a common feature, that of being a starting point in an argument. I shall say a little more about the first and the third now, before discussing the second in my next chapter, and the general category in Chapter 7.

lib.arb. 1.7.16

The question is 'how is man himself perfectly ordered in himself'? This is given an answer at 1.8.18:

> Illud est quod uolo dicere: hoc quidquid est quo pecoribus homo praeponitur, siue mens siue spiritus siue utrumque rectius appellatur—nam utrumque in diuinis libris inuenimus—si dominetur atque imperet ceteris, quibuscumque homo constat, tunc esse hominem ordinatissimum.
> This is what I want to say: Whatever that thing is by which a man is placed above the beasts—whether it is more correct to call it 'spirit' or 'mind', since we find both terms in the divine books—whatever this thing is, if it dominates and controls the other things of which man is made, then a man is perfectly ordered.

Augustine begins the answer with what I called the 'first stage' (p. 93):

(1) It is absolutely certain that you are alive

Augustine then asks Evodius to distinguish 'being alive' from 'knowing that one is alive'. This would constitute stage (2)

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(2) Being alive is not the same thing as knowing that one is alive.

From (2) one would be in a position to assent to stage (3)

(3) Knowing that one is alive is better than being alive.

Evodius is clear that 'knowing that one is alive' entails 'being alive', but is not sure if 'being alive' entails 'knowing that one is alive'. Important to remember here is that Evodius himself knows that he is alive (it is 'certissimum'). However, (2) does not follow from (1). It requires some outside help. This comes in the form of a consideration from one's experience with non-human animals. Sufficient for the moment is that there is something self-evident about (1) which makes it prior to (2), and indeed prior to (3). This argument takes a form which is already familiar to us, what we might call the 'adumbrative'. It contains the same kind of elements, form, and structure as at 2.3.7, yet it is much more sketchy. Let me turn immediately to the latter.

lib.arb. 2.3.7

Again this forms the beginning of an argument, this time of a proof of God's existence. Again it works by beginning from something superlatively known (*manifestissimis*). So, stage (1)

(1) it is manifest to you that you exist

Which proceeds to give two more steps:

(2) it is manifest to you that you are alive

(3) it is manifest to you that you understand.

And a fourth stage asks, as stage (3) did at 1.7.16, which is the best? And again, the answer is given in terms of what entails what. Note that the 'life' (2), and 'knowledge' (3) here, are, in this case related to the 'life' (1) and 'knowledge' (2) of 1.7.16. Again it is important that the stages are reached because they are said of a subject who is doing the understanding (and living and existing). And it is the one who is doing the understanding (and living and thinking) who in this case is building up the *conexio rationis*.

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KNOWLEDGE AND RESPONSIBILITY

We have yet to reach a definition of knowledge, as opposed to belief. What exactly is it about knowledge that makes it knowledge? This is not just Augustine's problem. The distinction between 'knowledge' and 'belief' is familiar and traditional within ancient (Platonic) philosophy. It is what Rist calls:

> the most basic principle of Platonic epistemology…the distinction between first-hand experience which gives "knowledge" (*epistêmê*) and second- (or other-) hand experience which gives various sorts of more or less justified "belief" (*doxa*). In the *Meno* (91A –C) Socrates argues that if we travel from Athens to Larissa, we "know" the road, whereas, if we learn how to get there from someone else we have a true (or false) belief; similarly in the *Theaetetus* (201 BC) the spectator of a crime has knowledge of that crime, while the jury to whom he reports his knowledge have only belief. (1994: 45, following Burnyeat 1987)

First-handedness is a condition for knowledge, it is something that differentiates knowledge from belief. But what *is* first-handedness? The examples quoted here, from Plato, are taken from sense-perception. As I have said, there is a question as to whether, for Augustine, sense perception does yield knowledge (properly so called). In the *mag*. it does, whereas in the passage from the *retr*. quoted on p. 90 above, it does not. This is also, as I have already said, a question for Plato.

In *lib.arb*., however, this question does not arise. This is because sense-perception and its problems play a particular role in the dialogue (in the course of the proof of God's existence (2.3.8 ff.)). The absence of both sense-perception and eyewitness-type illustrations are connected. Burnyeat makes a suggestion about the role of sense perception as knowledge in the *mag*.:

> Augustine needs the analogy of sense-perception precisely in order to enforce the point that knowledge requires first-hand appreciation, and that it is for the same reason that Plato in the *Meno* and *Theaetetus*

needs to be able to appeal to the knowledge of the eyewitness or of the man who has made the journey to Larissa. The need is the need of advocacy. For Augustine has no *argument* for the thesis that knowledge requires first-hand learning. There is no such argument in Plato either. What there is, in both Plato and Augustine, is the attempt to make the thesis persuasive to us by

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> calling upon our sense of a great gap between the epistemic position of an eyewitness who watches an event with his own eyes and that of the jury later, or in Augustine's example the position of present day readers of the Book of Daniel. (1987: 19 f.)

Burnyeat goes on to suggest why the eyewitness is a ‘useful analogy for a philosopher who wants in the end to assimilate knowledge to rational understanding’ (20). This is because the eyewitness ‘saw the whole thing’. The eyewitness has the ‘synoptic grasp’. Plato and Aristotle, he continues, make the synoptic grasp (in the strong sense of seeing the connections between the proposition known and other propositions, and seeing these connections as explanatory) a ‘condition on knowing’ and understanding. (He does not, however, find anything about ‘explanation’ in Augustine's *mag*.):

> But the important point [about the *mag*.] for our purposes is that the emphasis on connecting one item with another is enough by itself to yield the conclusion that knowledge, in the sense of understanding, cannot be taught or conveyed by words from one person to another. Knowledge must be first-hand if it is essentially of connections.…Every schoolboy is familiar with the fact that it is one thing to know in that external way *that* the connection holds…and quite another to understand the connection, to see how the elements hang together. That is something one can only do for oneself. (1987: 21)

Lib.arb. puts into practice the epistemological theories we can find examined in the *mag*.[24]

[24] Cf. *lib.arb*. 2.2.4: ‘God will grant me, I hope, the ability to answer you, or rather, he will grant that you yourself give the answer, being taught inwardly by the same truth which is the supreme teacher of everything.’

I wish to take up Burnyeat's suggestion about sense-perception as analogy. I suggest that in *lib.arb*. there is no need to ‘appeal to the knowledge of the eyewitness’, even though there is ‘no argument for the thesis that knowledge requires first-hand learning’. This is because the acquisition of knowledge at first hand is itself instantiated in the text. It is instantiated in such a way that it is made clear that understanding is ‘something one can only do for oneself’. In other words Augustine uses this kind of Platonic epistemology to provide an account, or what I have preferred to call a ‘way in’ to an account, of responsibility. I take a couple of references from the *mag*., and I italicize their use of the words ‘*uolo*’ and ‘*uoluntas*’:

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> Hactenus uerba ualuerunt; quibus ut plurimum tribuam, admonent tantum, ut quaeramus res, non exhibent ut norimus. Is me autem aliquid docet, qui uel oculis uel ulli corporis sensui uel ipsi etiam menti praebet ea quae cognoscere *uolo*. (*mag*. 11.36)
> This much can words do, to attribute to them as much as possible. They merely prompt us to look for things. They do not show them to us so that we know them. He teaches me who puts before my eyes, or any bodily sense, or even my mind itself, those things which I *want* to know.

And secondly a passage which comes slightly later, in which the same idea is given in what we might call more theological terms:

> De uniuersis autem quae intellegimus, non loquentem qui personat foris, sed intus ipsi menti praesidentem consulimus Veritatem, uerbis fortasse ut consulamus admoniti. Ille autem qui consulitur docet, qui in interiore homine habitare dictus est Christus, id est incommutabilis Dei atque sempiterna sapientia. Quam quidem omnis rationalis anima consulit, sed tantum cuique panditur, quantum capere propter propriam siue malam siue bonam *uoluntatem* potest. (*mag*. 11.38)
> But as for all the things which we understand, we do not consult someone speaking externally, but inwardly the Truth which presides over the mind, prompted, perhaps by the words. And it is he who is consulted that teaches, that is, Christ who is said to dwell inside a man, who is the immutable and eternal Wisdom of God. It is Wisdom that every rational soul consults, but Wisdom is available to each soul only as much as each soul is able—on account of its own good or bad will—to receive.

As Burnyeat says, ‘Augustine has no argument for the thesis that knowledge requires first-hand learning’. In *lib.arb*. he builds up a picture of what knowledge consists in, by means of what I have called ‘conditions’. It is not so much that something must pass a test to become knowledge. Rather the conditions have to do with me, the reader. There is something that I have to do to make it my knowledge. I have to see it. But precisely this requirement applies to the definition of knowledge itself. We just have to see the difference between the eyewitness and the jury, between the man who ‘understands’ that, say God exists, and the one who merely ‘believes’ it. But more than this, this requirement, once appreciated, imposes upon the would-be ‘understander’ a responsibility. This is the immediate context of Augustine's use of *voluntas* at 1.12.25, to which after the following final section on the *Confessions*, I will return.

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KNOWLEDGE AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE *CONFESSIONS*

The principle at work in the *de magistro* can be found at work elsewhere.

Earlier I discussed a passage from the *Confessions* (7.3.5), which is a restatement of *lib.arb*. 1.12.25. One of the characteristics it shares with the latter is what we might call this 'epistemological responsibility'—my responsibility for my understanding. Part of the contrast between 'belief' and 'understanding' was drawn in terms of the contrast between 'audiebam' and 'cernerem'. The personal task of 'understanding' was contrasted with the anonymity of the source of the information. What in *mag*. takes the form of an appeal to first-hand sense perception, and in *lib.arb*. takes the form of a pedagogical dialogue, in the *Confessions* assumes narrative form. In fact, in the *conf*., two related narrative forms can be found; the first we might call 'episcopal silence', the second 'reading as if'.

Episcopal silence

When Monnica asks a bishop (who is moreover a former Manichee), to talk to her Manichee son (and future bishop) and talk him out of his heresy ('for he used to do this for those whom perhaps he found suitably disposed'), the bishop, to Monnica's distress declines (*conf*. 3.12.21). Now, at first sight, this anonymous bishop may appear to be doing the opposite of Augustine in *lib.arb*. (cf. 1.2.4). Their reasons, however, are precisely the same. I give the story in full:

> You gave her another answer through one of your priests, a bishop brought up in the Church and well trained in your books. When that woman asked him to make time to talk to me and refute my errors and correct my evil doctrines and teach me good ones—for he used to do this for those whom perhaps he found suitably disposed—he declined, wisely indeed as I later perceived. For he answered that I was still unready to learn, because I was conceited about the novel excitements of that heresy, and because, as she had informed him, I had already disturbed many untrained minds with many trivial questions. 'Let him be where he is', he said; 'only pray the Lord for him. By his reading he will discover what an error and how vast an impiety it all is.' At the same time he told her how he himself as a small boy had been

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> handed over to the Manichees by his mother, whom they had led astray. He had not only read nearly all their books but had even copied them. Although he had no one disputing with him and providing a refutation, it had become clear to him that that sect ought to be avoided, and therefore he had left it. When he had said this to her, she was unwilling to take No for an answer. She pressed him with more begging and with floods of tears, asking him to see me and debate with me. He was now irritated and a little vexed and said: 'Go away from me: as you live, it cannot be that the son of these tears should perish.' In her conversations with me she often used to recall that she had taken these words as if they had sounded from heaven. (3.12.21; tr. Chadwick 1991)

The bishop is merely applying the epistemological principle that is familiar to us from *mag*.: no one can teach another to know, and the learner only learns when he *wants* to learn. A similar philosophical point lies behind the well-known account of Augustine's failure to converse with Ambrose. At *conf*. 6.3.3 Augustine tells us that he never got the chance to talk with Ambrose:

> He for his part did not know of my emotional crisis nor the abyss of danger threatening me. I could not put the questions I wanted to put to him as I wished to do. I was excluded from his ear and from his mouth by crowds of men with arbitrations to submit to him, to whose frailties he ministered. When he was not with them, which was a very brief period of time, he restored either his body with necessary food or his mind by reading. When he was reading, his eyes ran over the page and his heart perceived the sense, but his voice and his tongue were silent. He did not restrict access to anyone coming in, nor was it customary even for a visitor to be announced. Very often when we were there, we saw him silently reading and never otherwise. After sitting for a long time in silence (for who would dare to burden him in such intent concentration?) we used to go away. We supposed that in the brief time he could find for his mind's refreshment, free from the hubbub of other people's troubles, he would not want to be invited to consider another problem. We wondered if he read silently perhaps to protect himself in case he had a hearer interested and intent on the matter, to whom he might have to expound the text being read if it contained difficulties, or who might wish to debate some difficult questions. If his time were used up in that way, he would get through fewer books than he wished. Besides, the need to preserve his voice, which used easily to become hoarse, could have been a very fair reason for silent reading. Whatever motive he had for his habit, this man had a good reason for what he did. (6.3.3; tr. Chadwick 1991)

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This passage is interesting for several reasons. First it invites our own suggestions for Ambrose's reasons, and secondly because it is another case of episcopal silence. The dullest of such modern explanations has to be the use of this passage as evidence that ancients usually read aloud when they read.[25]

[25] This explanation is brilliantly demolished by Gavrilov (1997), who discusses both this passage and the silent reading in the garden (*conf*. 8.12.29) and shows that they cannot be used to support the claim that the Ancients usually read aloud when they read a book. Mazzeo (1962: 190 ff.) comes close in linking this passage with *conf*. 8.12.29, and with the 'inner teacher'. O'Donnell's whole discussion of this passage (1992: ii. 339–46) should be consulted.

One 'good reason' (in terms of the *Confessions* narrative at least) is to invite his audience to listen to the instruction of the inner teacher. The lesson that readers of the *Confessions* are invited to draw is that one has to work these things out for oneself. As with the unnamed bishop's silence in book 3, so here, the burden is thrust upon Augustine. (Note, however, that there is one major difference between the Augustine of book 3 and the Augustine of book 6: the older Augustine is coming increasingly to *want* instruction.) Newman's view, I think, is nearest the mark: 'Rogers well suggests that St. Aug.'s

account of St. Ambrose's conduct to him, (sitting still and reading a book) is a remarkable and happy specimen by way of contrast of the Catholic mode of effecting conversions.' [26]

[26] As quoted by O'Donnell (1992: ii. 339).

Reading as if

Newman's linking of this passage to the idea of conversion brings me to my second narrative form, 'reading as if'. In the story from book 3 the anonymous bishop said two things. The first was his invitation to Augustine to work it out for himself. The second his rather tetchy words of reassurance to Monnica: 'It cannot be that the son of these tears should perish.' These words provide the climax of the third book, or rather, these words and the final sentence: 'In her conversations with me she often used to recall that she had taken these words as if they had sounded from heaven [*accepisse…ac si de caelo sonuisset*].'

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Part of what is required in order to understand an answer to a question is to grasp that it is the answer. This requires a lot of work on the questioner's part. In this passage Augustine's conceitedness is cited as a reason for not bothering to argue with him; in *lib.arb*. 1.12.25 Augustine will say 'I oughtn't to give you an answer to your questions unless you want to know the answer.' Monnica, however, shows how to take the bishop's second saying—how indeed we the readers should take it: '*ac si de caelo sonuisset*'. This figure is, however, particularly associated with conversion. There are a large number of times when quite apart from the intention of the speaker, the listener takes something to heart and a change is effected. One such example is Alypius being cured of his addiction to the circus (*conf*. 6.7.12). There are other examples of this narrative figure in the *Confessions* (such as Monnica's rebuke at 9.8.18), but I wish to mention the most significant: Augustine's conversion in book 8. There, in the garden scene, the moment of conversion (of grace) is marked as the moment of what I have called 'reading as if' (8.12.29). There the one reason given for Augustine's decision to do as he did is: 'For I had heard how Antony happened to be present at the gospel reading, and took it as an admonition addressed to himself when the words were read [*tamquam sibi diceretur quod legebatur*]' (8.12.29). And it is this form which his own conversion takes. All other intentional explanations are excluded (the voice is anonymous, and quite unconnected with Augustine's presence), and indeed Augustine reads silently. He takes the command 'tolle, lege' as if it is addressed to him, and he takes the words of St Paul as a command addressed directly to himself: 'Put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in its lusts.' He takes them 'as if they were addressed to him'. There is, of course, no small dramatic irony, in that they *are* addressed to him. The exclusion, however, of all other possible external agency, shows how the conversion is both entirely 'up to' Augustine (and at the same time, fully the work of God).

But Augustine's is not the only conversion recorded in *conf*. 8. There is also, of course, that of Alypius ('the continuation [of the text] was "receive the person who is weak in faith" (Romans 14:1). Alypius applied this to himself' (8.12.30)). And there are more, six in total: those of Marius Victorinus, of the two friends of Ponticianus (and their fiancées), as well as that of St Antony himself. All are

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linked by this common act of reading something *tamquam sibi diceretur*, all

by this moment of personal vision.[27]

[27] Victorinus (*conf*. 8.2.3–5) becomes a Christian privately, and only decides to overcome his fears (as Augustine has to overcome his reluctance in book 8) to convert publicly when he becomes 'afraid he would be "denied" by Christ "before the holy angels" ' (8.2.4). As Chadwick notes, this is a quotation from Luke 12: 9. The whole sentence in the Bible reads: 'And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God; but whoever denies me before others will be denied before the angels of God' (*NRSV*). Marius Victorinus is taking this saying of Jesus as addressed directly to him in his situation. The friends of Ponticianus (8.6.14–7.16) wander one day into a church, or kind of monastery at Trier and reading the Life of Antony …

Now in these cases, the 'taking to heart' is, admittedly, not quite, or not simply, the same thing as the acquisition of knowledge. But they are not merely inexplicable epiphanies, nor are they simply emotional about-turns, or intellectual decisions. They describe in narrative form a perfectly ordinary and familiar process, that of recognizing the answer to a question to be the answer to the question. The process so dramatically portrayed in narrative in book 8 is the same process as that which is portrayed in different ways elsewhere in the *Confessions*: (i.e. the infant Augustine's acquisition of language (1.6.8; 1.8.13)[28]

[28] On this much discussed passage, for a clear view of its textual problems, and its philosophical sense, see Burnyeat (1987: 1–5).

and his success in understanding will (7.3.5)), and elsewhere in Augustine's writings, such as *lib.arb*. 1.12.25. In *conf*. Augustine tells a story about coming to know, to learn and understand, a story which reveals the conditions required. In *lib.arb*. he sets out these conditions by means of an argumentative process which aims to help his readers understand their responsibility and freedom. It is to this 'argumentative process' that I now wish to turn.[29]

[29] As an epilogue to this section there is also the eleventh-century 'conversion' of Odo of Orleans, a teacher in Tournai (who 'magis delectabatur lectione Platonis quam Augustini') from reading *lib.arb*. and esp. 3.9.27 ('acsi propter nos solummodo fuerit scripta'). Herimannus, *Liber de Restauratione* (*MGH* ss XIV. 276). Not only is this an interesting vignette in the history of the reading of *lib.arb*., but Odo once converted was also responsible for the Abbey of St Martin at Tournai becoming a major library and scriptorium, to which, probably, we owe a significant part of our knowledge of the manuscript tradition of the text (Green 1954*a*: 531 f.; Boutémy, 1949). Odo also wrote on original sin, remembered chiefly for its use of universals (Migne, *PL* 160; see Gregory 1958: 31–51; Tweedale 1988: 210).

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6 *Facilitas*, *Difficultas*, and *Voluntas*

Simon Harrison

Abstract: This chapter addresses the issue, raised in chapter 2, of the supposed contradiction in the text between an 'early' and 'late' view on the will and its role in doing good. The two crucial passages (1.12.25-1.14.30 on 'facilitas' and 3.18.51ff. on 'difficultas' and original sin) are discussed in detail. Their coherence is demonstrated in terms of their relationship to the fundamental 'way in' argument.

Keywords: **original sin**, **will**, **facilitas**, **difficultas**

I hope that it now begins to be clear why, when Evodius says 'nescio', and when Augustine threatens to end the dialogue we do well to take them seriously. I wish now to return to this argument and to discuss it at greater length. In doing so I shall also discuss the two outstanding problems from Chapter 2, the problems about the 'ease of action' and 'optimism' of Book 1, and the problems of the constraints put upon our action by God's punishment of Adam and Eve ('difficulty'). The solution to these problems will not only help clear the way to the unity of *lib.arb*., but will also help determine the nature of 1.12.25. This is because an appreciation of 1.12.25 is fundamental to, and necessary for, an appreciation of how Augustine goes about solving these problems.

VOLUNTAS (1.12.25)

In Chapter 4 I drew the reader's attention to four features of 1.12.25. First, the use of the first person perspective. The argument (the procedure) does not generalize beyond the claim that I know that I have a will. It must be 'appropriated' in the first person singular. Evodius is invited to see for himself. [1]

[1] I take the term 'appropriation' from Anscombe (1975: 45). Further: Matthews (1992: esp. 1–10).

Secondly, the 'epistemological' context, or situation, of the argument. The argument is about knowledge, it involves a concept of knowledge, and it produces knowledge. Thirdly it uses the words

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uoluntas and *uolo* to shed light upon concepts of responsibility and freedom. Fourthly the low key, non-technical language and style.

What 1.12.25 gives is not a complete theory of volition, but the *inchoatio*, the starting point for one. This was due to the process which the (non-technical) words *uoluntas* and *uolo* underwent in this passage. This process works by what we might call a '*cogito*-like' argument: it subjects our ordinary notion of 'will' to a process of 'calling into question', to a process of doubt. This then produces knowledge (of the will) which is more certain than any theory that could be used to impugn it.

That Augustine approaches the will in terms of epistemology will by now, I hope, be clear. At the start of the argument Evodius does not (or rather does not claim to) *know* that he has will, but by the end, he does. Evodius begins by denying that he knows he has will, and finds that he is unable to deny it. He knows that he has a will, not because it is self-evident knowledge which one cannot fail to have, but because it is self-evident knowledge which one *can* fail to have. [2]

[2] Will is 'self-evident' in that it is known *per'se*, and not through anything else. It is not the case that it is 'self-evident' in the (rather more contemporary and looser) sense of being simply obvious.

Precisely in my ability to fail to know that I have a will, and to fail to want to know, I can see the self-evidence of my responsibility. Evodius stands, as it were, at a crossroads, or perhaps we might say on the edge of an abyss. To one side no questions, no answers, no dialogue, no wisdom, no friendship, no happiness; to the other at least the desire for these things. Whatever one may think about this passage in the history of the 'will', it is, I suggest, helpful to think of it as part of the history of 'ennui', or 'boredom'. As such it would seem to be related, but not necessarily identical, to the theological tradition of 'accidie' (or sloth).[3]

[3] The term 'accidie' [*acedia*] itself does not occur in Augustine. It enters Western Christianity as a technical term for one of the difficulties that face an ascetic, via Augustine's contemporary John Cassian (*Instit*. X) and from the Eastern ascetic tradition (and in particular Evagrius Ponticus). It occurs as a concept in Aquinas (*S.Th*. 1a2ae 84.4; 2a2ae 35) where it is defined as 'the despair of a spiritual good, on account of the bodily effort that goes with it [*quae tristatur de bono spirituali propter laborem corporalem adjunctum*]' (*S.Th*. 1a2ae 84.4). See Wenzel (1967). There is also an illuminating discussion (under 'temperance') in Casey (1990: 107–10).

A more dramatic episode in this history is, I would suggest, that experience of Henry James Snr, one evening

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in May 1844, which he was afterwards to name 'vastation'.[4]

[4] Edel (1953: 31 ff.): 'He retained the notes he had taken for the rest of his life but never again looked at them. He became convinced that he had never really wanted to discover Scriptural truth, "but only to ventilate my own ability in discovering it". He experienced a sense of "my downright intellectual poverty and dishonesty" and wondered that he could have even pretended to an ability to ferret out the word of God. "Truth must reveal itself if it would be known." He mentions also that his depression and despair were such that to go for a walk or to sleep in strange surroundings called forth an effort such as might be required to plan a military campaign or write an epic.'

The threat, and indeed the challenge, for Augustine, of scepticism lies in its capacity to induce *desperatio veri,* the despair of finding the truth.[5]

[5] Cf. *conf*. 6.1.1 'desperabam de inventione veri'; *ep*. 1.3; *trin*. 15.12.21; *retr*. 1.1.1; and, of course, *c.acad*. 2.1.1. Further, Augustine's discussion of suicide at *lib.arb*. 3.6.18–8.23.

The will is self-evident and immediately known in that no prior piece of knowledge is required to make it known. It is, however, *neither* self-evident *nor* immediately known in that in order to know it (in Augustine's strict sense of knowledge), first, a prior act of will itself, and secondly, a process are required. In order to command *uoluntas* as a philosophical concept (in addition to merely commanding it as an ordinary term in language) Evodius must *want* to do so, and must call it into question. He must ask himself whether he really knows what he means by 'will'. Why does Evodius reply '*nescio*' twice? Is it because he is stupid (or even 'wilfully' obstructive)? One suggestion might be that he is worried by the way the question is put: '*aliqua uoluntas*'? To this Augustine's answer is that to have a *uoluntas* is no more than—and as much as—to *uelle*. I suggest first, that this equivalence between *uoluntas* and *uelle* is simply that of ordinary linguistic ability.

‘Having a will’ may (and does) look quite deceptive and tricky as a question, but in fact, it is a quite unthreatening usage. Secondly, this ordinary linguistic equivalence is here confirmed, or at least deepened, as a philosophical equivalence. Another suggestion for Evodius' reasons for his answer is that perhaps if he were to assent to it straightaway he would be assenting to something else as well (a theory of faculties, for instance).

The argument uses a first person perspective. It is Evodius who must think it through. Indeed it is *up to* Evodius to look to himself and see whether he has a will, and the willing itself is up to Evodius.

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Augustine can do neither for him. From this deployment of will, Augustine evokes a notion of responsibility, of what is inalienably up to me alone. According to Augustine's argument at 1.12.25, I can come to see that there is a choice, an option, inalienably mine and that no one can make for me. This corresponds to the move that I labelled the 'exclusion of external agency' in *conf*. 7.3.5 (p. 76): Augustine there finds that he can become 'utterly certain that none other than myself was willing or not willing'. Denying that I have a will is, we might say, self-refuting, in the sense that it does away with a condition for my further participation in the conversation and for my learning: *my* will to know.

On the other hand Evodius *could* (that is to say, it is open to him to) persist in denying the will. In this sense denying that I have a will is, also, clearly *not* self-refuting in the way that, for Augustine (at *lib.arb*. 2.3.7) denying that I exist is. It is simply open to the interlocutor to persist in this denial. This, however, would entail his giving up on knowledge, on the search for knowledge, and indeed, on the dialogue. Evodius is not constrained to the choice of knowledge over continued denial. In this sense Augustine evokes a concept of freedom. *Voluntas* is revealed as a condition for knowledge. Unless Evodius wants to know, he is just not going to know. Satisfying this necessary condition, however, is in the control of no one, and nothing, other than Evodius himself.

Augustine's argument here is couched in ordinary language. This is significant for two reasons. First, his argument depends on ordinary language. He works from the everyday sense of *uoluntas* and *uolo*, invoking the wide range of associations, such as willing, wanting, wishing, desiring, etc. The concepts of ordinary language are subjected to a process which reveals our freedom and responsibility. Secondly, Augustine's terminology remains flexible and unsystematized. Compare, for instance, the interchangeability of 'animus' and 'anima' in our text.[6]

[6] Further O'Daly (1987: 7 f.).

The result of this is that my elucidation of 1.12.25 and of the role of 'will' in *lib.arb*. is constrained likewise by this flexibility. Augustine simply does not give a once and for all definitive and systematic account of a theory of volition. He does not say whether he commits himself to an account of will as a faculty.

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As I have already argued, this is part of the strategy of *lib.arb*. as a whole. It builds up its own terms of reference as it develops, and its readers are drawn into its approach to philosophy as they read (and, importantly, as they reread). At the end of 1.12.25 Evodius has come to know the 'undeniable will'. This undeniability (unimpugnability) will hold for the will throughout *lib.arb*. and, I suggest, throughout the rest of Augustine's writings (although the substantiation of this latter claim would require the kind of detailed study of later texts which I have here made of *lib.arb*.). Perhaps I could put it this way. The 'will' is now known as a condition for knowledge. Without it I am not going to know anything. There can be, then, no theory (nothing knowable) that can take away this fundamental knowledge of my will. No theory of volitions, mental causation, no theory of rational choice, of sub-rational drive, no theory of action, liberty, or determinism can cancel out this knowledge of the will reached at 1.12.25.

This is best illustrated by seeing how this 'undeniable will' functions in the rest of *lib.arb*. as a whole. In this context the *voluntas* of 1.12.25 can be seen to be a basic constituent of the unity and integrity of *lib.arb*. What threatened this unity most of all were the two complementary passages in the first and last books which were felt to have contradictory accounts of volition. The first was felt to argue for a *facilitas*—'ease of action' to use Peter Brown's phrase—which Augustine would later 'retractate'—to use O'Connell's and Séjourné's term. The last was felt either to argue for an account of *difficultas* as 'involuntary sin' (Alflatt's (1974) term), or at least to have an argument which 'creaked' (O'Connell's (1987) word). I turn next to these issues. In the following chapter (7) I shall have more to say about the nature and character of the 'scepticism' which reaches the will as a foundational first principle, than which nothing is more certain.

FACILITAS (1.12.25–1.14.30)

'I admit that it cannot be denied that we have a will. Go on, let us see what follows from this.' So Evodius. And indeed, he is right, something does follow from this, namely that there is such a thing as a

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good will. But how does it follow? Augustine gives Evodius a definition: 'the will by which we seek to live rightly and honestly, and to attain to supreme wisdom'. Evodius thinks he does have one of these. But where does this definition, and Evodius' acceptance of it come from? I do not ask here about its Stoic provenance. I ask whether it shares some *connection* with the preceding *uoluntas*. And indeed it does.

Previously Augustine issued four reasons for his challenge '*nihil ergo deinceps me interroges*':

(1) Because I ought not to give you an answer to your questions unless you want to know the answer,
(2) and secondly because, unless you want to attain to wisdom, I ought not to have a discussion with you about such things,
(3) and finally because you cannot be my friend unless you want things to go well for me,

(4) but look to yourself and see whether you, as regards yourself, do not want to be happy.

Strictly only the first is required to explain the challenge, and only the first is required for the 'undeniable will'. The others give colour, raise the stakes, and draw attention to the first-personal nature of Evodius' knowledge and responsibility. Reason (2), however, reappears here, in the definition of the good will:

(5) Just look and see, whether you do not seek the right and honest life, or whether you do not earnestly want to be wise, or whether, at least, you do not dare deny that when we will these things then we have a good will.

In the arguments of 1.7.16 and 2.3.7 there comes a stage when Augustine asks about comparative value. Thus at 1.7.17: 'Which of the two seems to you to be superior [*esse praestantius*]?'; and at 2.3.7: 'Which of these three things seems to you to be pre-eminent [*excellere*]?' So too here, in 1.12.25, he is using the idea of comparative value. According to the 'undeniable' will it is open to Evodius to ask no more questions, to withdraw from the search for wisdom, to give up on friendship, and to give up on being happy. He has two options. One, I suggest, is immediately perceived as better than the other. The option is not between two things equal in value, but between wanting

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and, to put it strongly, nothing. This value is built up through the progression of the four reasons.

Reason (1) gives what I have called the basic 'option'. Reason (2) involves the idea of wisdom. Now whatever we might mean by wisdom, it is clear that it has something to do with knowledge. Wisdom, for Augustine, without knowledge is unthinkable. Knowledge is already included in reason (1). Wisdom, however, is not just any old knowledge, but it is, at the very least, a *valuable* kind of knowledge. Evodius would find it hard to think that knowledge and wisdom were things lacking in value.[7]

[7] Cf. 1.1.2–3 (on education and the teacher) and 1.7.17 (on experience).

Reasons (3) and (4) offer two concepts, the analysis of which implies 'will'. Friendship and happiness require will in the sense that, as Augustine implies elsewhere in *lib.arb*., being happy against one's will is a contradiction in terms.[8]

[8] 3.3.7 'tu itaque inuitus beatus eris' ('So you are going to be happy against your will?').

The idea of wanting something that is of no value is, likewise, a contradiction in terms. The idea of a *good* will—wanting an (objectively) good thing—then, is already implicit in the structure of our way of knowing, and of our responsibility as they are both revealed by this particular approach that Augustine takes here.[9]

[9] Objectively good, as opposed to subjectively good: wanting something implies that the desirer values the object. What Augustine is working with, here, however, is an object that is objectively good, the desire for which is therefore good. Augustine will give an objective account of wisdom and the good in the second book (esp. 2.9.26–27).

Again, I do not claim, and I do not need to claim, that all this is made absolutely explicit here. Understanding requires, as I have said, a synoptic vision. It admits of degrees, and is retrospective. The more I come to know, the more I can appreciate what I already know. The significance of value, and of comparative value, will be made clear over the course of the subsequent argument.

Notice further the distinction that Augustine makes between the 'will' and the 'good will':

> Modo tu uide, utrum rectam honestamque uitam non adpetas aut esse sapiens non uehementer uelis aut certe negare audeas, cum haec uolumus, nos habere uoluntatem bonam. (1.11.25)

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> Just look and see, whether you do not seek the right and honest life, or whether you do not earnestly want to be wise or whether, at least, you do not dare deny that when we will these things, then we have a good will.

It is perfectly possible for someone not to have a good will. Indeed it is perfectly possible that Evodius does not have a good will.[10]

[10] Cf. 2.3.5 (Evodius' proof from good will that one really ought to believe that God exists, if one expects trust from anyone else). Here good will ('bono animo', etc) makes all the difference.

Fortunately, at least for Evodius, he admits that he does. It is, however, not a requirement of the argument that he does. Its conclusion (see immediately below) is formulated in the third person plural.

The next move that Augustine makes is absolutely crucial for this '*facilitas*' argument. The undeniable will has been used as a starting point for an argument the conclusion of which is:

> Iure igitur ac merito stulti homines, tametsi numquam sapientes fuerunt—hoc enim dubium et occultissimum est—huiuscemodi adficiuntur miseria. (1.12.26)[11]
>
> [11] Repeated (after further elaboration) at 1.13.28: 'even if we were never wise, voluntarily we deserve and live a praiseworthy and happy life, and voluntarily we deserve and live a shameful and unhappy life.'
>
> Therefore it is just and deserved that men are afflicted with unhappiness of this kind, even if they are fools who (and this is a doubtful and very obscure matter) never have been wise.

The crucial move is already familiar to those who have read from the beginning of 1.12.25:

> Quanti pendis, oro te, hanc uoluntatem? Numquidnam ei ulla ex parte diuitias aut honores aut uoluptates corporis aut haec simul omnia conferenda arbitraris? (1.12.25)
> My question is this: What value do you set on this will? Do you

consider that honours, or pleasures of the bodies, or all such things together can be compared with it in any respect?

Wanting, which usually is considered to relate to an object's value, is here considered as valuable itself, and comparable with other things of value. This is the essential step in the argument. What is here deniable is the evaluation of the will. Deny that the good will is better than the other goods, and Augustine's overall '*etiamsi*'

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argument will not work for you. But, on the other hand, this is all that one has to accept. We are not asked to accept that ‘good will’ is all there is to a definition of the good that beatifies. We are not asked to subscribe to the view that it is sufficient. We are, however, asked to subscribe to the view that the good will is necessary, and to the view that no other good is either necessary or even sufficient. (The other goods mentioned are all goods which Augustine has described as ‘those things which one can lose against one's will’.) [12]

[12] e.g. at 1.4.10 ‘libido’ is ‘earum rerum amorem, quas potest quisque inuitus amittere’. They are also described as ‘temporalia’ and contrasted with ‘aeterna’ (1.15.32)—and see the list there.

Nor is there any idea involved here of actually doing something good without God's help. Indeed Augustine has no need to appeal to the idea of *doing* at all. Augustine appeals to the value of the good will itself. I said just now that the correct evaluation of the good will is not sufficient for complete happiness. One need only think of Augustine's description of the punitive miseries of this life at 1.11.22. Even, however, given the terrible constraints of ‘ignorance’ and ‘difficulty’ set out in that passage, the love of good will is sufficient for quite a lot. It is quite sufficient for ‘joy’ (1.12.25), for the beginnings of the four virtues (1.13.27), and indeed for a life that can be called happy (1.13.28):

> A.: Hanc igitur uoluntatem si bona itidem uoluntate diligamus atque amplectamur rebusque omnibus, quas retinere non quia uolumus possumus, anteponamus, consequenter illae uirtutes, ut ratio docuit, animum nostrum incolent, quas habere id ipsum est recte honesteque uiuere. Ex quo conficitur ut, quisquis recte honesteque uult uiuere, si id se uelle prae fugacibus bonis uelit, adsequatur tantam rem tanta facilitate, ut nihil aliud ei quam ipsum uelle sit habere quod uoluit.
> E.: Vere tibi dico, uix me contineo quin exclamem laetitia, repente mihi oborto tam magno et tam in facili constituto bono.
> A.: Atqui hoc ipsum gaudium quod huius boni adeptione gignitur, cum tranquille et quiete atque constanter erigit animum, beata uita dicitur; nisi tu putas aliud esse beate uiuere quam ueris bonis certisque gaudere. (1.13.29)
> A.: If, therefore we love and embrace this will with, again, good will and prefer it to all those things which we cannot hold on just by wanting to, then consequently the virtues, as reason demonstrates, dwell in our soul. And to possess the virtues is to live rightly and honestly. From this it follows that whoever wants to live rightly, if he wants it more than goods which pass away, may attain so great a possession with such facility [*tanta facilitate*]. For him, to possess

what he wants is nothing other than simply to want.

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> E.: Truly I tell you, I can scarcely contain myself from crying out with joy at the sight of such a great and so easily [*tam in facili*] established a good rising up before me.
> A.: And this very joy that is born of the attainment of this good, when it raises up the mind tranquilly, restfully and with constancy, is called the happy life. Or do you think that to live happily is anything other than to rejoice in true and secure goods?

'Facility' and 'happiness'. Readers have seized on these words. But they have not seen that these words are qualified. They are comparative, and they are temporary. The good will is better than goods which lie outside of the will—*in cuius comparatione abiectissima sint ea quae commemorauimus* 'in comparison with which those things which I have mentioned are completely worthless' (1.12.25). 'When a man has a good will, then he certainly has that which is priced far above all earthly power, and all bodily pleasure (*quod terrenis omnibus regnis uoluptatibusque omnibus corporis longe anteponendum sit)*. But whoever does not have a good will immediately lacks that thing which is superior to all the goods which are not placed in our power, and which the will alone gives to him through itself (*quam praestantiorem omnibus bonis in potestate nostra non constitutis … quae nec comparanda est cum istis*)' (1.12.26).

The good will is the best thing we can have—for the time being:

> Quisquis ergo habens bonam uoluntatem, de cuius excellentia iam diu loquimur, hanc unam dilectione amplexetur qua *interim* melius nihil habet, hac sese oblectet, hac denique perfruatur et gaudeat, considerans eam et iudicans, quanta sit quamque inuito illi eripi uel subripi nequeat, num dubitare poterimus istum aduersari rebus omnibus quae huic uni bono inimicae sunt? (1.13.27)
> A man who has good will (and we've been talking about the excellence of this for a long time now), suppose he embraces this one thing in love—and he has *for the moment* nothing better than this—and suppose he lets it be his delight, and in short thoroughly enjoys it and rejoices; he considers it and makes a judgement as to its worth and how it cannot be taken from him against his will either by force or by stealth. Is it possible to doubt that this man is opposed to all the things which are inimical to this one good?

This is one point at which I wish to propose a translation of the text which is significantly different from other versions. Augustine is explicit that this beatitude here is not true happiness. I am not sure

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that other English translations catch the sense.[13]

[13] Thus, 'with all the love he is capable of' (Burleigh 1953), 'with a love that knows nothing better' (Russell 1968), 'they lovingly embrace this one unsurpassable good' (Williams 1993), 'with a devotion which considers that there is nothing better' (Benjamin and Hackstaff 1964). Madec, *BA* 6, I think, is correct: 'il l'entoure, elle seule, de son amour, ne trouvant pour l'heure rien de meilleur', and so is De Capitani (1987): 'non possedendo nel frattempo nulla di migliore'.
I suggest that '*qua interim melius nihil habet*' qualifies '*hanc unam*' rather than '*dilectione*'. Indeed, the '*bonam uoluntatem*' remains the object of the whole sentence ('*hac … hac … eam … huic uni bono*'). Even, however, if it doesn't, I note that '*dilectio*' is itself identical with the good will.

The all-important word is '*interim*'. This refers, I suggest, to this life, as opposed to the one to come.[14]

[14] Cf. 2.16.41: 'While we are doing this [devoting ourselves to becoming wise] and as long as we have yet to complete the task, we are on the way [*Quod dum agimus, donec peragamus, in uia sumus*]. And since we have been allowed to rejoice in these true and certain goods, although they are yet glimmerings in this darkness, see whether this is what is meant, when it is written of Wisdom, and how it behaves towards those who love it, when they journey towards it, and seek it out. "It will show itself with cheerfulness to them on the highways, and come to meet them with every providence." ' This could, of course, be retractation, but I prefer to see it as elaboration: notice how in this passage *every* concept (and even the syntax) has become more elaborate.

The good will as an object of value is only temporarily the best thing we can have. It is not all there is to beatitude. However, the life of good will is indeed happy, at least compared to a life without it. So you can see, Augustine concludes, that to reject even this good thing, to reject even the will not to be complicit in the evils of this world, is something that merits punishment, even if we were never able to avoid the evils of this world in the first place.

There is a second way in which this argument has been seriously misconstrued. This discussion of *uoluntas* and *facilitas* occurs in what we might call an *etiamsi* ('even if') argument. At 1.12.24 Augustine left undecided the difficult question of the origin of soul. He will leave it open again in book 3, and indeed will leave it open for the rest of his life. What Augustine undertakes to do in this argument in book 1 is to argue that we can be justly punished by God, 'even if we were never wise before'. That is to say that not only does Augustine *not* avail himself of some piece of theory (or perhaps 'authority') which claims that this our present life is punishment for one lived previously with full knowledge and ability in good and evil, but that he takes it upon himself to work with the worst case scenario: the

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scenario that the life we are born into, described so abundantly at 1.11.22, is the life that God has given us through no fault of our own. Even in this case, Augustine argues, God has grounds for holding us responsible. He argues this by thinking through from our present perspective what it is for us to have responsibility and freedom ('will'). But this form of argument, this strategy, is not confined to this section of *lib.arb*. It is reproduced at the end of book 3 when Augustine returns to the same territory. From 3.20.56 he shows that each of the four possible hypotheses for the origin of the soul is

compatible with his account of human and divine responsibility for happiness.[15]

[15] Cf. the use of 'etiam si' at 3.20.58 'nullo modo creatorem hinc esse creandum, quandoquidem, *etiam si* eas ipse misisset…'; 3.21.60 '*etiam si* quid hinc certi quisquam et liquidi comprehenderit'; 3.24.71 'ut ergo infans nec stultus nec sapiens dici potest … ita *etiam si* quisquam tali adfectione animatus esset, qualem habent illi qui per neglegentiam sapientia carent, nemo eum stultum recte diceret…'; 3.24.72 'Ex quo intellegitur, *etiam si* sapiens primus homo factus est, potuisse tamen seduci.'

Indeed Augustine uses the thought 'even if' all over *lib.arb*.[16]

[16] Some references:
etiam si (also printed as *etiamsi*) 1.2.5; 1.12.26; 1.13.28; 2.5.12; 2.7.17; 2.7.19; 2.9.27; 2.14.38; 3.1.2; 3.2.5; 3.5.12; 3.5.13; 3.8.22; 3.11.33; 3.12.33; 3.12.35; 3.20.58; 3.21.62; 3.24.71; 3.24.72; 3.25.77.
etsi: 2.7.17; 2.11.32; 2.10.54.
tametsi: 1.8.18; 1.11.21; 1.12.26; 2.9.26; 2.10.28; 2.20.54; 3.8.23. (*Tametsi* may of course simply mean 'although (something is the case)'—as at 1.8.18; 2.20.54; 3.8.23.

In other words he frequently uses the concessive not only to argue 'although *x* is the case', but also 'even if *x* were to be the case' without prejudice as to the truth or falsity of *x*. Note the use of this form of argument at 2.9.27, where the conclusion is stated by Evodius as:

> Fateor fieri posse nec inpedire aliquid ut non sit omnibus communis una sapientia, *etiam si* multa et diuersa sint summa bona. Sed uellem scire an ita sit. Quod enim concedimus fieri posse ut ita sit, non continuo ita esse concedimus.
> I admit that it is possible, and that nothing prevents it being the case that there is one wisdom common to all, even if [*etiam si*] there are many and different supreme goods. But I want to know whether this is the case. For when we concede that something is possible, we do not thereby immediately concede that it is the case.

Note also the use of the concessive in the 'rule of piety (*regula pietatis*)' at 3.5.12:

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> regulam illam pietatis facile non mouebit, quam meminisse nos conuenit, gratiarum actionem nos debere creatori nostro. Cuius profecto largissima bonitas iustissime laudaretur, *etiamsi* aliquo inferiore creaturae gradu nos condidisset.
> the rule of piety which we ought to remember, namely that we ought to give thanks to our Creator. It would still be absolutely just to praise His most generous goodness, even if [*etiamsi*] he had put us on a lower level of creation than we are on now.[17]

[17] Cf. 3.2.5 '*etiam si* aliquid inferius uoluisset esse quam sunt'.

The concession *etiamsi* occurs also in that other form of argument with which this book is concerned: the '*cogito*-like argument'. Thus it is phrased at *trin*. 10.10.14 (quoted earlier in Chapter 4):

> Viuere se tamen et meminisse et intellegere et uelle et cogitare et scire et iudicare quis dubitet? Quandoquidem *etiam si* dubitat, uiuit; si dubitat, unde dubitet meminit; si dubitat, dubitare se intellegit; si dubitat, certus esse uult; si dubitat, cogitat; si dubitat, scit se nescire; si dubitat, iudicat non se temere consentire oportere.
> 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. (tr. Hill 1991)

It occurs also at *civ*. 11.26:

> Quia igitur essem qui fallerer, *etiamsi* fallerer, procul dubio in eo quod me novi esse, non fallor. Consequens est autem ut etiam in eo quod me novi nosse, non fallar.
> Since therefore I must exist in order to be mistaken, then *even if* I am mistaken, there can be no doubt that I am not mistaken in my knowledge that I exist. (tr. Bettenson 1972)

What these occurrences of the word *etiamsi* and its relatives reveal is that Augustine uses the concessive as an argumentative strategy. It allows him to work securely by bracketing off questions that are not strictly relevant, or whose relevance cannot yet be determined. This means that Augustine can work with what we might again call the ‘worst case scenario’. His arguments aim to be secure even were

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the most hostile hypothesis to turn out to be true. To misunderstand this strategy is to miss the precision of his arguments in *lib.arb*. Moreoever, the 'worst case scenario' argument sheds some light on the nature of the scepticism involved in Augustine's '*cogito*-like arguments'. Augustine asks what our understanding of God would look like if he really did create the world as it is (if 'ignorance' and 'difficulty' are 'natural', if 'we were never wise'). What would it look like, he also asks, if I did not exist, live, have a will, and so forth?

Again, once we are clear about the precision of Augustine's argument here, we need not be troubled as some readers have been by the later sections of *lib.arb*. 3. When, for instance, Augustine says 'but when we speak of free will to act rightly [*libera uoluntate recte faciendi*], we are, of course, speaking of the free will with which man was created' (3.18.52) we need not think that Augustine is suddenly taking the argument of book one away from 'us' and readdressing it to Adam. Augustine, in book 1, however, was not discussing action. The will on which his argument turns is not that *recte faciendi*, it is a will prior to and independent of the actual execution of good deeds. This brings me to my next section: difficulty.

DIFFICULTAS (3.18.51 ff.)

'For I do not do the good that I want, but the evil which I hate, that I do.' [18]

[18] Rom. 7: 19 quoted at 3.18.51.

In Chapter 3 I discussed two interpretations which found fault with Augustine at the end of book 3. The first was the 'involuntary sin' interpretation. This claimed that Augustine gave a new account of our responsibility for evil from 3.18.51. The second interpretation arose from O'Connell's perceptive and careful criticisms of the first. O'Connell did not find 'involuntary sin', but he did find 'assumptions' and 'creaks' in Augustine's argument.

Both these interpretations can be seen to be unhelpful from the perspective of my reading of 1.12.25. As I claimed at the beginning of this chapter this knowledge (of the undeniable will) is more certain

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than any theory which could be used to impugn it. Let me put it this way:

the understanding I have of my experience of my responsibility is epistemologically prior to the understanding I can have of my experience of action. In book 1, I argue, there is a difference between the 'undeniable will' and action. The argument in book 1 did not require that we could actually achieve any external action, it required only that we did not want to be part of the evil external actions in which we find ourselves. We did not want to be complicit in the misery described at 1.11.22. This distinction between 'action' and 'volition' is not made by Augustine in terms of vocabulary, but in terms of the structure of his argument. I repeat what I have already said, there is no need to find here a complete theory of will and action. We have something much more interesting to read first.[19]

[19] But cf. Augustine's third quote from St Paul (Rom. 7: 18): 'Velle adiacet mihi, perficere autem bonum non inuenio.' Compare it, perhaps, with *lib.arb*. 2.16.41 (quoted above): 'Quod dum agimus, donec peragamus, in uia sumus.'

Now, in book 3, at 3.18.51, Augustine does discuss actions. There are, he says, and I paraphrase, actions which occur through 'ignorance' and 'necessity' which are objectively bad. We should distinguish an individual's responsibility from an objective assessment of the badness of their actions. Sin, properly so called, is an evil action for which the agent can be held responsible. But an evil action for which the agent can claim certain mitigating factors (ignorance, necessity) is only improperly called sin. Ignorance and difficulty are indeed excuses. But it is not the presence or absence of the exculpating factors that makes the difference between sin and not-sin. The difference between sin-properly-so-called and sin-improperly-so-called is the will. It is by means of the will that we can tell the difference between two kinds of evil: the evil that I want, and the evil that I don't want (to paraphrase St Paul). Indeed, we can tell the difference between two kinds of actions: There are actions which I want, and those which I don't want. This distinction of actions in terms of '*quod uolo*' / '*quod odi*' (St Paul) is what makes the difference between an action being active and an action being passive, when it is *done by*, and when it is *done to* us. The '*quod uolo*' / '*quod odi*' criterion cuts across all other ways of distinguishing agency. Responsible agency is revealed by the ability to say 'nolo', even to something one is physically doing.

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This point is made clearly in the argument at *conf*. 7.3.5 (discussed above, pp. 72–8). It is the move that I there described as the 'redefinition of action and passion'. Augustine finds that the will he 'discovers' there is such that it allows him to see his own responsibility ('*non alium quam me velle ac nolle certissimus eram*') and it allows him to redefine 'action' and 'passion': '*quod autem invitus facerem, pati me potius quam facere videbam, et id non culpam sed poenam esse iudicabam*'. This appears at first a puzzling sentence. It seems that by qualifying the verb *facio* with either *volens* or *invitus* I can redefine the action as *patior*, as something that happens to me. I can then go on to redefine this 'passion' as punitive, and not something for which I can be blamed.

But this is also the point on which the argument of 1.12.25 ff. turns: I can always say (even if I can only say) 'volo' or 'nolo', and it is precisely this

ability which allows God justly to punish me. The ability to *velle* and *nolle* is, as St Paul says ‘present to me’. But more than this, because of the argument at 1.12.25 I know that *velle adiacet mihi* as something that is inalienably present to me. It is absolutely certain and undeniable.

So much Augustine has been saying all along. Both the immediacy of the will (1.12.25) and the punitive condition in which we find ourselves (1.11.22) have been stressed. The latter was given in a highly rhetorical and very impressive passage, in which Augustine described a life without wisdom. This life was described in terms which will later be reduced to the shorthand ‘ignorance’ and ‘difficulty’. In this passage, Augustine describes what can be taken to be the human condition, the condition we find ourselves in (compare O'Donnell's appropriation of it as Augustine's life story (1992: i, pp. xlvii ff.). He asks Evodius to agree that this condition is punitive, and Evodius does so (1.11.23). It is punitive because it is life without wisdom; the loss of wisdom is itself a punishment. Now, from the perspective of 1.12.25, we are able to make sense of the punitive character of our condition. It is revealed precisely in the difficulties of *acting* well in this life that have so impressed the readers of book 3, and so eluded readers of book 1.

This brings me to my second point: the consequences of this ordering of knowledge. Understanding moves from the immediate certainty of the undeniable will of 1.12.25, through the ‘exclusion of

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external agency’ and the ‘redefinition of action and passion’, to a greater understanding of the world as it happens to me. But why is the world as it is? This is where the doctrine of ‘original sin’ enters the picture. In Chapter 3 I raised a quibble about O'Connell's use of the word ‘assumption’, or rather about two uses of the word.

> The identity between the one who sinned and the one who suffers is vital for the case Augustine is making. However surprising it may seem, that assumption of identity has undergirded Augustine's theodicy of free will from the opening paragraphs of lib. III. (O'Connell 1991: 30)

O'Connell is here thinking of the identity of Adam and Eve (the sinners) and us (the punished). I am not sure what O'Connell really means by ‘assumption’, but I think Augustine's argument (and his strategy) become a lot clearer if we do not use a word which seems to suggest that this identity was simply the kind of thing someone ‘as familiar as Augustine was with Neo-platonic modes of thought’ [ibid.] could just take for granted. On the contrary this identity is demanded by what we have ‘known’ since 1.12.25. It comes some way down in the ‘order of knowledge’ from the undeniable will. The undeniable will, as I have argued, allows us to distinguish between things which happen to us and things which we do. We are responsible for the latter. It has also allowed us to distinguish between ‘good’ and ‘evil’, to give value to things. Let Augustine then understand that God controls everything (as proved in book 2), and he is able to see divine agency in

everything that happens to him, even what happens to him against his will. Let him also understand that God is just (as proved in book 2), and it must appear that what happens against one's will is punishment. But it must be punishment for something that Augustine has already done (given that God is just). It is God's providential justice that implies the identity between the sinner and the punished. It is my ability to understand my experience of things that happen to me against my will as punishment that allows me to 'assume' an identity between myself and the first two humans.

Quite what this identity consists in is of less importance than the postulation of the identity. The identity is given by working from the first principles of knowledge, that I exist (2.3.7, live (1.7.16; 2.3.7), understand (1.7.16; 2.3.7; 1.12.25), and will (1.12.25). Evodius need,

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as I have been claiming all along, assume nothing. Augustine here, and throughout *lib.arb*., follows the *conexio rationis*. He is very careful to sort out the order of certainties in what he knows, and what follows from what. The 'doctrine' of 'original sin' comes some way down the line from the knowledge of will. It is to be approached only after the way into the will made at 1.12.25. And equally, there is no *need* to give a further account of the identity between us and Adam and Eve. We simply do not have the necessary epistemological access—or, rather, we have all the epistemological access that we need to make sense of our place and role in the universe. Now I said above that, according to *lib.arb*., the knowledge that I will is more certain than any theory which could be used to impugn it. By this I mean that there is no account that can be given of why we do evil that can deny the 'undeniable will': not an account of will in terms of its being 'natural' to us (3.1.1–3.1.3),[20]

[20] Notice how careful is Evodius' statement of the *conexio rationis* at 3.1.3: he starts from the undeniable will of 1.12.25 ('*non enim quidquam tam firme atque intime sentio quam me habere uoluntatem…*'), via the 'exclusion of external agency ('*cui tribuendum est si quid per illam male facio nisi mihi…*'), via the arguments of book two ('*cum enim bonus Deus me fecerit…*') to the argument that Augustine has just given from blame ('*nisi uoluntarius esset … neque laudandus esset*'). The premise that there *is* praise and blame is backed up by the following claim: 'But whoever thinks that a man is not to be exhorted [*monendum*] is not to be counted a man [*de hominum numero exterminandus est*].' I suggest that this evokes the threatened 'abyss' of 1.12.25.

nor an account of will as something that God foreknows (3.2.4–3.4.11),[21]

[21] A much discussed passage. Rowe's interpretation (1964) has been closely refuted by Hopkins (1977); see further for instance, Craig (1984), Kondoleon (1987). Kondoleon notes Rowe's assertion that Augustine muddles *necessitas consequentiae* with *necessitas consequentis* is wrong. Kondoleon could have referred to Augustine's crystalline discussion of logical consequence in *doctr.chr*. 2.31.48. Again note the clarity and the careful pedagogic procedure of the argument and the way it is linked to the work already done. The 'exclusion of external agency', for instance, is expanded into the vocabulary of '*in potestate*' (also in 3.1.3).

Note also, for a later theological argument, Augustine's *ep*. 2* (written after AD 426). In this letter Augustine replies to three objections given by his correspondent, Firmus, for putting off his baptism. The third masquerades as account of the need for grace: 'in his rebus eius maxime expectanda uoluntas est, cuius in appetitus omnes uoluntate compellimur' ('in these matters we must above all await the good pleasure

of Him by whose will we are compelled to all desires' (2*.7)). Augustine replies that God does not do your willing for you: '*Praeuenit quidem te misericordia eius, ut uelis, sed cum uoles, tu utique* uoles' ('Indeed his mercy has gone before you so that you may will it; but when you shall will it, it will indeed be you who are willing it').

nor an account of will as part of

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the whole order of the universe which is under God's complete control (3.5.12–3.13.36), nor, least of all, an account of actions as 'caused' by what are really only constraints upon the will, imposed as punishment for freely willed evil (3.18.47–end: 'ignorance and difficulty'). All these accounts are posterior to the approach to the will made at 1.12.25. In these four kinds of 'necessity' I have broadly summarized the content of book 3.

The strength, then, of this dialogue, consists in the way it approaches its problems carefully from the point of view of epistemology. Augustine asks about what he knows and can know. He does so by considering what knowledge is, what my knowledge is, or might be. He investigates the conditions (e.g. 1.12.25), limits (e.g. 2.20.54), and consequences (e.g. 3.5.12) of knowledge. Once we see this we are in a position to appreciate the dialogue as a whole, and the place of *uoluntas* within it.

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7 A *Cogito*-Like Argument?

Simon Harrison

Abstract: When Descartes published his *Meditations*, the similarity of his arguments to some found in Augustine was immediately pointed out to him. The most frequently cited and most similar is Augustine's claim that 'If I doubt, I am' (*City of God* 11.26). This chapter discusses this text in detail, and suggests that the relationship with Descartes is illuminating. It identifies three *cogito*-like arguments in *On Free Choice*, all of which act as starting points, involve revealing the self-evidence of certain undeniable truths, include an analysis of what is to know something, and incorporate an idea of value.

Keywords: **Descartes**, **cogito**, **City of God**

Augustine and Evodius' exchange at *lib.arb*. 1.12.25 is what we might call a '*cogito*-like argument'. This term is the recognized designation in the secondary literature for this set of arguments in Augustine—even if not all of them involve either 'I think' or 'I am'. It is difficult to find a term for this collection of arguments which does not refer to Descartes. Difficult, but not impossible: Wohlfarth (1969), building on the epistemology of Isaye (1954), identifies both *lib.arb*. 2.3.7 and 1.12.25 as examples of 'Retorsion', or 'redarguitio elenchia' (1969: 94 f.)—i.e. as arguments from self-refutation.

Wohlfarth is, to my knowledge, the only reader of *lib.arb*. to have made anything of 1.12.25. He is the only reader to have suggested that 1.12.25 has something to do with Augustine's '*cogito*' arguments (1969, 58).[1]

[1] Wohlfarth is able to identify something of the significance of 1.12.25 because he is approaching Augustine from the point of view of the 'transzendentalen Erkenntnismetaphysik in der Scholastik der Gegenwart' (1969: 178)—'la philosophie transcendentale néoscolastique' (Madec 1970). His discussion avoids mention of Descartes, taking his philosophical point of reference from Kantian thought. Jordan (1995) provides a brief and helpful account. Isaye's article is best read in Isaye (1987). Further on self-refutation compare Burnyeat (1976).

The figure of Descartes, however, looms large.

Some time in 1637 Mersenne wrote to Descartes mentioning a passage from Augustine. We know this from Descartes' reply.[2]

[2] 25 May 1637 [*AT* i. 376]. Descartes wrote again, 15 November 1638: 'I looked for the letter in which you quote the passage from St Augustine, but I have not yet been able to find it; nor have I managed to obtain the works of the Saint, so that I could look up what you told me, for which I am grateful…' (*CSM* iii. 129; *AT* ii. 435).

Mersenne's opening letter is assumed to have referred to *civ*. 11.26, the most commonly discussed of the arguments. One passage from *lib.arb*. was cited by Arnauld in the *Fourth Set of Objections*:

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> The first thing that I find remarkable is that our distinguished author has laid down as the basis for his entire philosophy exactly the same principle as that laid down by St Augustine—a man of the sharpest intellect and a remarkable thinker, not only on theological topics but also on philosophical ones. In Book II chapter 3 of *De Libero Arbitrio*, Alipius, when he is disputing with Euodius, and is about to prove the existence of God, says the following: 'First, if we are to take as our starting point what is most evident, I ask you to tell me whether you yourself exist. Or are you perhaps afraid of making a mistake in your answer, given that, if you did not exist, it would be quite impossible for you to make a mistake?' This is like what M. Descartes says: 'But there is a deceiver of supreme power and cunning who is deliberately and constantly deceiving me. In that case I too undoubtedly exist, if he is deceiving me.' But let us go on from here and, more to the point, see how this principle can be used to derive the result that our mind is separate from our body. (*CSM* ii. 139; *AT* vii. 198)

I quote from Descartes' *Reply*:

> I shall not waste time here by thanking my distinguished critic for bringing in the authority of St Augustine to support me, and for setting out my arguments so vigorously that he seems to fear that their strength may not be sufficiently apparent to anyone else. (*CSM* ii. 154; *AT* vii. 219)[3]

[3] Cf. his Letter to Mersenne, 21 January 1641: 'But, to follow the passage from St Augustine which you sent me, I cannot open the eyes of my readers

> or force them to attend to the things which must be examined to ensure a clear knowledge of the truth; all I can do is, as it were, to point my finger and show them where the truth lies' (*CSM* iii. 168 f.; *AT* iii. 283).

I quote this because Descartes is, of course, right. Another philosopher's name counts only as authority; the point is to think about Descartes' own arguments. The same can be said for Augustine's arguments. In another passage Descartes refers to Augustine:

> I am obliged to you for drawing my attention to the passage of St Augustine relevant to my *I am thinking, therefore I exist*. I went today to the library of this town to read it, and I do indeed find that he does use it to prove the certainty of our existence. He goes on to show that there is a certain likeness of the Trinity in us, in that we exist, we know that we exist, and we love the existence and the knowledge we have. I, on the other hand, use the argument to show that this *I*, which is thinking is *an immaterial substance* with no bodily element. These are two very different things. In itself it is such a simple and natural thing to infer that one exists from the fact that one is doubting that it could have occurred to any writer. But I am very glad to find

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> myself in agreement with St Augustine, if only to hush the little minds who have tried to find fault with the principle. (Letter to Colvius, 14 November 1640: *CSM* iii. 159; *AT* iii. 247–8)

As Jean Luc Marion points out, Descartes is here claiming agreement with Augustine over the *cogito*, agreement but also difference of use.[4]

[4] Marion (1991: 384 n. 22): 'Le *cogito* ne surprend pas les lecteurs de Descartes, qui y retrouvent maintes formules de saint Augustin; l'étonnement nous vient de la réponse, si peu étonnée, de Descartes: la même formule peut changer de fonction, sans changer d'énoncé.' (I note that Marion's references to the letters are here slightly misleading). (Need one mention Borges' Pierre Menard (1964)? Menard rewrites Cervantes' work by using exactly the same words, only over the intervening centuries the 'fonction' (as one might say) of the 'énoncé' has changed.)

What then is Augustine's 'use' of this simple and natural thing? Gareth Matthews provides a useful assessment of the difference between the Augustinian and the Cartesian *cogitos*:

> According to Augustine's general position, however, knowledge and understanding, especially about 'deep and hidden things', presuppose belief…He simply has no project, as Descartes does, of providing, on its own foundations, a rational reconstruction of knowledge.
> Descartes uses skepticism to provide an independent foundation for reconstructing knowledge. Having adopted the method of systematic doubt, I can, according to Descartes, take the failure of the skeptic to call my existence successfully into question as a certification of 'I am' (or 'I think, therefore I am') as my first principle. In Descartes it is not just that skepticism undermines itself and so discredits itself; nor is it that skepticism must break down somewhere. It is rather that

skepticism can itself be used, methodologically, in reconstructing knowledge. Descartes turns a defensive action into an offensive tactic in the battle to acquire, or at least to reconstruct, knowledge. (1992: 36 f.) [5]

[5] For a comprehensive account of the relationship of Augustine to Descartes see Menn (1998). Menn claims that 'Descartes uses [the] Plotinian and Augustinian discipline of contemplating the soul and God to give the foundation for a science that (he hopes) will satisfy seventeenth-century expectations of wisdom' (65).

In contrast to this view, I want to make three positive claims about Augustine. First Augustine does not exactly 'presuppose' belief, secondly he does make use of scepticism—or at least sceptical doubt—and indeed, thirdly, he uses it for a reconstruction of knowledge. In *lib.arb*. I have claimed, there is a pedagogical project. This project is for Evodius, and for the reader, to examine what they believe without relying on authority, and to restructure their world according to

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rational principles, and above all, to do it for themselves. I must stress the significance of the strategy of 'thinking for oneself', of doing without authority. It is of the first importance for understanding the way the text and its arguments work as a whole. As for 'belief', Matthews has, in the passage quoted above, misunderstood its role. Discussing *lib.arb*. he writes: 'Augustine and his interlocutor seek together, drawing on outside authority to "learn to know" (II.2.6) what they already believe.' [6]

[6] Matthews (1992: 150). This is the concluding page of his chapter on 'Augustine on Outside Authority'. On the same page he seems to think that the dialogue form of *lib.arb*. is itself something that marks the difference: 'Given his acceptance of "outside" authority, Augustine is never driven to thought's ego as an epistemological stronghold. Although in his *Soliloquies* he certainly does reason in the epistemological privacy of a dialogue with Reason rather systematically through what he considers himself to believe, he has no philosophical ground for preferring that mode of discourse to the dialogue with Evodius in *On Free Choice of the Will,* where he also reasons systematically through some of what he believes. Although a version of the cogito appears in that dialogue, it too appears in a conversational exchange. [Matthews quotes from 2.3.7.] There is here no effort to structure the inquiry as a whole from the point of view of thought's ego. How could there be, since it is put in dialogue form?' Without discussing here what Matthews means by 'thought's ego', I wish merely to note that when Matthews thinks 'dialogue' he thinks conversation, and not Soliloquy. I hope that I said enough, in Chapter 4, to suggest that such distinctions are not necessarily valid here.

The reader should need no persuasion that no 'outside authority' is drawn on in *lib.arb*. As for sceptism, what I mean is this. At 1.12.25 when Evodius says '*nescio*' twice (and implicitly he could have said it at 1.7.16 and 2.3.7), there is a process of thought which, to adopt Matthews' words, takes a *defensive* tactic, and turns it into an *offensive* one. Say Augustine and Evodius were to have met again at 1.12.25 the kind of sceptical character they encountered at 1.3.6, the man whom they imagine 'taunting us by playing up the delights of adultery, and asking us why we thought it bad and worthy of condemnation'. Ah, this man might say, but how do you know you have a will? How do you know? As in 1.3.6, the possibility of scepticism (no

matter how mild) can be exploited to alter one's perception of the world. Thirdly, when I say a reconstruction of knowledge, I am thinking of the knowledge inside Evodius' head. In *lib.arb*. Evodius is being helped by Augustine to sort out what he knows and what he can know, from what he doesn't and can't. He is ordering his knowledge in terms of logical priority, and consequence; he is seeing how it all fits together. I permit

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myself the term *re*construction (or *re*structuring) because Augustine presents his project in an autobiographical context.[7]

[7] *lib.arb*. 1.2.4. and *conf*. 7.3.5. (As, indeed, does Descartes, cf. the opening of the *First Meditation* (*CSM* ii. 12; *AT* vii. 17).

I am not claiming that Augustine is more like Descartes than Matthews allows. However Augustine's arguments are far more interesting than the conventional comparison with Descartes leads people to believe.[8]

[8] Thus for instance Menn (1998: 66 n. 42) can describe *civ*. 11.26 as 'a not very interesting instance of the standard Augustinian argument that my conviction cannot be deceptive, since, if I am deceived I exist'.

As I have already suggested by using the term 'family', not all the arguments are the same, or have exactly the same use. Thus importantly where *civ*. 11.26 'si fallor sum' relies on the threat of self-refutation—I cannot both be deceived and not exist—in *lib.arb*. 1.12.25 there is no contradiction involved, indeed the argument relies on the very possibility of denying the will. However, this does not mean that *lib.arb*. 1.12.25 should not be allowed into the club.[9]

[9] It would also be of interest to relate the *cogito*-like arguments to other arguments put forward by Augustine that involve a certain kind of reflection. There is, for example, Augustine's argument that there is such a thing as evil, *conf*. 7.5.7: 'an [malum] omnino non est? cur ergo timemus et cavemus quod non est? aut si inaniter timemus, certe vel timor ipse malum est.' There is also the argument that evil is parasitic upon goodness at *lib.arb*. 3.13.36: '…let us run through this great question with a very concise summary. [36] Every nature which can be made less good is good.…[37] These things being firmly set at the head, as it were, of our reasoning listen to what I say…'

A helpful and concise discussion of the arguments is given by Rist (1994: 63–7). He divides them into 'more' and 'less developed', with *lib.arb*. 2.3.7 as a crucial text in the middle (1994: 64). The late, and most developed forms are to be found in *civ*. 11.26 and in *trin*. 15.12.21. There is a somewhat earlier form in *trin*. 10.10.14 (quoted above, p. 79). As for early forms, there is the faintest shadow of an adumbration in the *c.acad*. (3.9.19).[10]

[10] 'All we have is the brief remark that it is absurd to suppose that the wise man does not know whether he is living…That seems to be part of an analysis of what it is to be wise' (Rist 1994: 65). It is very interesting that the argument is not found in the *c.acad*. especially as the general consensus is that it is 'primarily' an anti-sceptical argument. See below. 'Perhaps', suggests Rist (1994: 63 f.), 'he had not yet thought of it, or at least not developed it. In any case its absence…makes good sense in that there is no trace of it in the Ciceronian texts on which *Against the Sceptics* particularly depends.'

Otherwise there are the *beata v*. 2.7, *sol*. 2.1.1, and (not mentioned by Rist)

vera rel. 39.73 and *duab.an*. 10.13 (quoted above, p. 75). In Table 2

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2. Table *Cogito-like arguments*

Text	Thing Known	Method
lib.arb. 1.7.16	uiuere—scire se uiuere	~
lib.arb. 2.3.7	esse—uiuere—intellegere	falli
beata v. 2.7	uitam habere (& corpus habere)	~
sol. 2.1.1	esse—vivere—intellegere	(analysis of will to be happy)
vera rel. 39.73	uerum (at least one true thing)	(knowledge that one doubts)
duab. an. 10.13	uiuere & uelle uiuere	falli
civ. 11.26	esse—nosse—amare	falli (Academici)
trin. 10.10.14	uiuere, meminisse, intellegere, uelle, cogitare, scire, iudicare	etiamsi dubitat
trin. 15.12.21	uiuere, scio me scire me uiuere (ad infin.) scio me…uelle	falli (Academici)
conf. 13.11.12	esse, nosse, uelle	certe coram se est

I give a small (and merely suggestive) list of the resemblances between these arguments.

Central to this book is the claim that 1.12.25 should be included in the above list. This claim is made on the basis of 'family resemblances'. I summarize:

(1) Within the movement of the argument of *lib.arb*. I find three points ('starting points'), 1.7.16, 1.12.25, and 2.3.7, where an argument was deliberately marked as beginning.

(2) All these three starting points involve calling into question, and thereby revealing the self-evidence of certain 'undeniable' truths.[11]

[11] Note that I argue that they produce knowledge which is more certain than any other that could be used to impugn it. I do not argue that they enable Augustine to leap suddenly from uncertainty and the terror of doubt to certainty. The arguments help strip away false notions which prevent us seeing the status of our knowledge of our existence and of our will. One might, as for instance I think Rist does, want to tell a story about the development of Augustine's *cogito* over a period of time. I ask the reader to consider how the arguments develop over the course of *lib.arb*. itself. It moves from the least (1.7.16) to the most explicit (2.3.7), so that by 2.3.7 we have a much more secure and profound grasp of what we assented to at 1.7.16.

(3) All three involve an analysis of what it is to know (understand).

(4) All three involve an idea of value.

Of the three only the third, 2.3.7, has been considered a '*cogito*-like argument'. This is because it most closely resembles that of *civ*. 11.26. In the rest of this chapter I discuss 'si fallor sum' from the point of view of the approach that I have already taken to 1.12.25.

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civ. 11.26

> Nulla in his veris Academicorum argumenta formido dicentium, Quid si falleris? Si enim fallor, sum. Nam qui non est, utique nec falli potest; ac per hoc sum, si fallor. Quia ergo sum si fallor, quo modo esse me fallor, quando certum est me esse, si fallor?
> In respect of those truths I have no fear of the arguments of the Academics. They say, 'Suppose you are mistaken?' I reply, 'If I am mistaken, I exist.' A non-existent being cannot be mistaken; therefore I must exist, if I am mistaken. Then since my being mistaken proves that I exist, how can I be mistaken in thinking that I exist, seeing that my mistake establishes my existence? [12]
>
> [12] Translations from *civ*. taken from Bettenson (1972).

It is, as I have said, not easy to say what Augustine's use of the *'cogito'* is. This is partly because the literature approaches the subject with a set of questions about Descartes and Augustine, and partly because it is generally thought to be a merely negative argument. This view was most cogently put forward by Matthews (1972), and he has recently expanded his account of the argument (1992). I take this 'negative' view to be a majority opinion. Rist repeats it with approval:

> I…follow Matthews…in thinking that Augustine's primary use of this argument is negative: not to establish a firm ground from which doubt is excluded and which can be used as a foundation for some philosophical edifice, but to knock down 'Academic' objections to the non-philosophical and 'obvious' truth that I exist. (1994: 64 n. 35) [13]
>
> [13] Cf. Rist's placing of 'scepticism' in his account of Augustine's development (1994: 91): 'With his confidence that scepticism is no longer a serious problem came a greater determination to find solutions to dilemmas which no sceptical slothfulness could now license him to leave in abeyance.'

Rist's report of Matthews is accurate (and his qualifications suggestive). [14]

> [14] Rist continues (64 n. 36): 'But, as we shall see, in *De Trin*. (and by implication elsewhere) Augustine wants to establish an important positive claim about God's existence if it can be determined that I know and think.' This 'important positive claim' is sketched a couple of pages later when Rist discusses *lib.arb*. 2.3.7 (p. 67): 'There is no direct reference to the Academics in *On Human Responsibility* [*lib.arb*.], and Augustine's main point is not that a *cogito*-style argument might in some broad sense fulfil Zeno's conditions for the knowledge and understanding of certain truths. Rather he seeks to build on a truth self-evident to the plain man—who is satisfied, as is Augustine himself by this time, that there are at least some certain and knowable truths—to show how the existence of God both is and is not a truth of that kind. For…at this time Augustine's overriding philosophical interests are God and the Soul. [Rist refers us to the *sol*.] What he wants to consider in *On Human Responsibility* is whether if (or rather since) there are souls, God also exists: a truth which can be shown both as knowable by reason and as the object of that belief which reason needs as its necessary condition in matters of religion, if not in philosophical theology.'

In his recent book Matthews likewise repeats his judgement that the *cogito* is an anti-sceptical argument:

> In "*Si Fallor, sum*" I suggested a reading of [*civ*. 11.26] according to which Augustine's aim is not to establish 'I exist' as the conclusion of a sound argument, but rather to undermine a threat to his claim to know that he exists. According to that reading, Augustine supposes that one knows immediately and directly that one exists. But then one may wish to take note of skepticism….I still think that that analysis is correct. (1992: 32 f.)

He also qualifies this by saying, that 'Augustine anticipates Descartes, not only in presenting cogito-like reasoning, but also in developing reasoning about the *nature* of the mind that is revealed to exist by that cogito-type reasoning' (38).[15]

[15] He goes on to elaborate this statement in the following chapter, in which he discusses the *cogito*-like argument of *trin*. 10 (part of which I quoted above, p. 79).

Both of these writers give very helpful accounts of the *cogito*-like arguments. I would, however, like to offer my own further contribution to understanding what is going on here. I begin with *civ*. 11.26 because this is the text which gives those who wish to make a case for the *cogito* being 'primarily' anti-sceptical their best evidence. I am going to argue against this by starting at the other end of the stick. I am going to work inwards, from the context to the *si fallor* itself. Matthews quotes, quite understandably, only the central section of the passage. He omits the opening sentence—which I quote below (p. 145) and also the elaboration of the third thing, 'amare me':

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> Neque enim fallor amare me, cum in his quae amo non fallar; quamquam etsi illa falsa essent, falsa me amare verum esset. Nam quo pacto recte reprehenderer et recte prohiberer ab amore falsorum, si me illa amare falsum esset? Cum vero et illa vera atque certa sint, quis dubitet quod eorum, cum amantur, et ipse amor verus et certus est? Tam porro nemo est qui esse se nolit quam nemo est qui non esse beatus velit. Quo modo enim potest beatus esse, si nihil sit? For I am not mistaken about the fact of my gladness [*amare me*], since I am not mistaken about the things which I love. Even if they were illusory, it would still be a fact that I love the illusions. For how could I be rightly blamed and forbidden to love illusions, if it were an illusion that I loved them? But since in fact their truth is established, who can doubt that, when they are loved, that love is an established truth? Moreover, it is as certain that no one would wish himself not to exist as it is that no one would wish himself not to be happy. For existence is a necessary condition for happiness.

Of course, Matthews has to draw the line somewhere: one could really extend these quotations to the beginning and end of the *civ*. This, however, is my point. If *lib.arb*. has been considered a mere repository of doctrinal

assertions, how much more the vast and discursive *City of God*. Let us at least, consider book 11. Book 11 is the beginning of the second part of *civ*. The remaining twelve books of *civ*. will tell of the 'beginning, course, and end' of the 'two cities' (the earthly and the heavenly). And when Augustine says beginning he means the beginning. Book 11 is yet another interpretation of Genesis 1, the seven days of creation. It is an interpretation of creation from the point of view of the two cities, and so is chiefly concerned with the creation of the angels and their division into the good and the bad. Why, the readers may ask, am I telling them all this? What, I would ask in return, are the Academics doing in a passage of scriptural exegesis about angels? The answer will not surprise readers of *lib.arb*.: it is the problem of evil. The division of angels into the two parties from which the two cities take their origin is a division of angels into good and bad. We are back in familiar territory. How could a good angel fall? The structure of book 11 is, as we might expect from the author of *lib.arb*., extremely complex. Nevertheless book 11 and its 34 chapters can be mapped thus:

1. Introduction: Now for the origins, courses, and ends of the two cities.

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2. (The Necessity of the Mediator, Jesus Christ, for getting to the knowledge of God).
3. The Authority of the Holy Scriptures, and the importance of Faith (trust).
4–6. The Creation of the Universe and Time.
7. The significance of the 6 days.
8. God's rest on the 7th day signifies the eternal rest promised to man.
9. The creation of angels. Not explicitly mentioned, but interpretable from *fiat lux*.
10. The *Trinity* in creation.
11. Some angels fell.
12–15. How happy were the angels, given that some were going to fall (and so could not be fully happy, as full happiness depends on the certainty of remaining eternally happy).
16. The difference between ‘ratio’ and ‘usus’ in judgements of value. (cf. the same distinction at *lib.arb*. 3.5.17)
17. God is good, and creates good natures, evil is caused by Will.
18. The beauty of the universe is improved by contrasts, as is rhetoric.
19–20. God foreknows both that the angels will fall, and that he will use them for good. Hence the division between light and dark [Gen. 1.4–6] signifies God distinguishing between the good and bad angels. Although God does not approve of bad angels, he is able to include them in his plan.
21. God's goodness, and the interpretation of ‘And God saw that it was good’: The *Trinitarian* structure of creation.
22. On those who think that there is ‘substantial evil’.
23. On those who think that the world is created as a prison for evil things.
24. Answer: the *Trinitarian* structure of creation.
25. The *Trinitarian* structure of philosophy.
26–28. The *Trinitarian* structure of our knowledge.
29. The knowledge of angels is structured like God's knowledge, not like ours.
30. On the number 6.
31. The seventh day.
32–34. Alternative, compatible interpretations of Genesis.

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In omitting the opening sentence, Matthews omits the clue to the significance of Augustine's discussion of knowledge in *civ*. 11.26: the Trinity. Creation is structured according to the Trinitarian structure of its maker,

God. It is God's creating that makes the universe good.[16]

[16] Cf. the equation of Providence with Form, *lib.arb*. 2.17.45—quoted above, p. 57).

Augustine finds the Trinity not only at work in the act of creation (in the Genesis account), but also in Creation itself, the product of the Trinity. He does so rather as one finds the letters BLACKPOOL right the way through the stick of rock. But we are part of creation. It turns out that all our access to knowledge of ourselves and of creation is structured according to the Trinity. Philosophy itself has a Trinitarian structure, as indeed does all human craftsmanship. At first sight this might all appear to be doctrinal mumbo-jumbo. What, after all is a Trinitarian structure? The suggestion that philosophy has a Trinitarian structure because it was a commonplace of ancient thought to divide it into Physics, Logic, and Ethics (11.25), should make sense to readers of *lib.arb*. In *lib.arb*., Augustine argues that our ability to make evaluative judgements (better, worse) requires that there be a standard of judgement. It was found that we simply could not criticize God, because God either *is* the standard by which we are able to criticize, or is above it.

Here, in *civ*. 11, Augustine gives a more elaborate account of this approach to the goodness of the universe. The account of Genesis can be read so as to show the Trinity at work. The Father is read as 'God', the Son as the word (as in 'Deus dixit'), and the Spirit as the goodness (as in 'And God saw that it was good' (11.21). There are, Augustine tells us, three questions which we must always ask about something. Who made it, how, and why:

> Quia vero tria quaedam maxime scienda de creatura modis oportuit intimari, quis eam fecerit, per quid fecerit, quare fecerit. *Dixit Deus*, inquit: *Fiat lux, et facta est lux*. *Et vidit Deus lucem quia bona est*. Si ergo quaerimus, quis fecerit: *Deus est*; si per quid fecerit: *Dixit: Fiat, et facta est*; si quare fecerit: *Quia bona est*. (11.21; repeated at 11.23)
>
> But there are three things above all which we need to know about a created thing, three things which we should be told: who made it, how he made it, and why he made it. That is why Scripture says, 'God said: "Let there be

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> light": and light was created. And God saw that the light was good.'
> So the answer to our question 'Who' is 'God'. To the question 'How?' the answer is, 'He said: "Let it be"; and it was created.' And to 'Why?' we get the reply, 'It was good.'

Augustine mentions Plato in this chapter (cf. 11.25), and it is along the lines of the craftsman image that Augustine is working. The Father, the first person of the Trinity is the '*auctor*'. The Word of God, the second person of the Trinity, is the 'Wisdom' or '*ars*', and the third person of the Trinity, the Spirit, is the *causa,* the reason why something is done. (Note that here, as elsewhere 'causa' is a *final* cause for Augustine.) Chapters 22 and 23 are concerned with the goodness of creation. They are brief refutations of those

who suggest that the universe is not good, or that there is substantial evil. Chapter 22 is concerned with the Manichees who assert the existence of substantial evil, and chapter 23 with an opinion associated with Origen, that the world was created as a prison for evil things.

The job, then, of this 'excursus' into the Trinity (11.21–9) is to expound the goodness of creation by uncovering its Trinitarian structure. The goodness of the Creator is expounded in terms of his Trinitarian structure, and the goodness of his work derives from his own goodness. Note that the *cogito* is not going to prove to us the goodness in creation, but we shall see that the *cogito* provides a means for us to bootstrap ourselves up into the appreciation of the goodness of creation, and of God.

Chapter 24 resumes the account of the Trinity: 'Quae bonitas si Spiritus sanctus recte intellegitur, universa nobis trinitas in suis operibus intimatur' ('Now if this goodness is rightly interpreted as the Holy Spirit, then the whole united Trinity is revealed to us in its works'). The next sentence, (which concludes this, 24th, chapter), gives us not creation as such, but the City of God as the work of the Trinity. (The difference between creation as such and the City of God is that the City of God is creation minus those elements of creation which have 'opted out'.) Notice the Trinitarian structure:

> Inde est civitatis sanctae quae in sanctis angelis sursum est, et origo et informatio et beatitudo. Nam si quaeratur unde sit: Deus eam condidit; si unde sit sapiens: A Deo inluminatur; si unde sit felix: Deo fruitur; subsistens modificatur, contemplans inlustratur, inhaerens iucundatur; est, vidit, amat, in aeternitate Dei viget, in veritate Dei lucet, in bonitate Dei gaudet. (11.24)

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> Hence comes the origin, the enlightenment, and the felicity of the Holy City constituted by the holy angels on high. If we ask whence it arises, God founded it; if whence comes its wisdom, it receives light from God; if whence comes its bliss, it rejoices in God. It receives its mode of being by subsisting in God, its enlightenment by beholding him, its joy from cleaving to him. It exists; it sees; it loves. It is strong with God's eternity; it shines with God's truth; it rejoices in God's goodness. (11.24)

Augustine now, in chapter 25, moves on to discuss a further Trinitarian structure in the world, that of 'sapientiae disciplinam tripertitam', the threefold division of philosophy into Physics, Logic, and Ethics. This is shared by all philosophers, no matter what their opinions. 'Ita cum in unaquaque earum quid quisque sectetur multiplex discrepantia sit opinionum, esse tamen aliquam naturae causam, scientiae formam, vitae summam nemo cunctator' ('And so, although in each subject there is a wide variety of opinions entertained by individual thinkers, there is no doubt in anyone's mind on three points: that there is some cause underlying nature, some form of knowledge, some supreme principle of life').[17]

[17] Note here that *causam* is used of the Father.

Physics corresponds to the Father, Logic to the Son, and Ethics to the Spirit. Continuing the artisan model already used, we are now given the threefold distinction *natura, doctrina, usus* ('ability', 'training', 'practice'). These are the three things which are necessary for an artist. Hence the philosophers, who seek to be (we might say) 'artists of the happy life' get their threefold philosophical division. The objects of these divisions are, respectively *natura, doctrina, usus*. God has given us natural being, he gives us wisdom, and will give us happiness:

> Si ergo natura nostra esset a nobis, profecto et nostram nos genuissemus sapientiam nec eam doctrina, id est aliunde discendo, percipere curaremus; et noster amor a nobis profectus et ad nos relatus et ad beate vivendum sufficeret nec bono alio quo frueremur ullo indigeret; nunc vero quia natura nostra ut esset Deus habet auctorem, procul dubio ut vera sapiamus ipsum debemus habere doctorem, ipsum etiam ut beati simus suavitatis intimae largitorem. (11.25)
> Now if our nature derived from ourselves we should clearly have produced our own wisdom; we should not be at pains to acquire it by training, which means learning it from some other source. And our love would start from

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> ourselves and be related to ourselves [and be sufficient for the happy life]; and thus we should not need any other good to enjoy. But as it is, our nature [our existence]—has God as its author; and so without doubt we must have him as our teacher, if we are to attain true wisdom; and for our happiness we require him as the bestower of the delight in our hearts which only he can give.

We share in the Trinitarian structure of creation, because we are part of God's creation. This structure is, however, available to us because it is as much a cognitive structure as a 'real' structure. In fact there is no difference between the two. It is not so much that the universe is a cognitively friendly place (in the sense that we exist and just happen to impose, or not, order on our experience) as that our very knowing is dependent upon the creator of the universe. The question of priority between the two (cognitive and 'real' structure) is answered by the acknowledgement that we are completely dependent upon God.

> Quoniam Deus non aliquid nesciens fecit, quod nec de quolibet homine artifice recte dici potest; porro si sciens fecit omnia, ea utique fecit quae noverat. Ex quo occurrit animo quiddam mirum, sed tamen verum, quod iste mundus nobis notus esset non posset, nisi esset; Deo autem nisi notus esset, esse non posset. (11.10)
> Now God created nothing in ignorance, in fact the same could truly be said of any human craftsman. Then it is evident that if God created knowingly, he created things he already knew. This suggests a thought which is surprising, but true; that this world could not be

known to us, if it did not exist, whereas it could not have existed if it had not been known to God.

Thus when Augustine brings in the tripartite division of philosophy this is not simply a static analogy of something being both one and three. Augustine is bringing us to see that our highest form of inquiry and knowledge is itself part of the goodness of creation. And when he brings in this, again, at first sight apparently arbitrary enumeration of the three things to be looked for in 'homine artifice', he is showing the coherence of the idea of God as *artifex*, and ourselves as *artifices* as regards our own lives: creators of value. More than this, we now discover in chapter 26 (and 27) that our minds, that is, what we most fundamentally are, share in this Trinitarian structure and are defined by this structure as to their beginning, course, and end:

Et nos quidem in nobis, tametsi non aequalem, immo valde longeque distantem, neque coaeternam et, quo brevius totum dicitur, non eiusdem

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> substantiae cuius Deus est, tamen qua Deo nihil sit in rebus ab eo factis natura propinquius, imaginem Dei, hoc est illius summae trinitatis, agnoscimus, adhuc reformatione perficiendam ut sit etiam similitudine proxima. (11.26)
> We do indeed recognize in ourselves an image of God, that is of the Supreme Trinity. It is not an adequate image, but a very distant parallel. It is not co-eternal and, in brief, it is not of the same substance as God. For all that, there is nothing in the whole of God's creation so near to him in nature; but the image now needs to be refashioned and brought to perfection, so to become close to him in resemblance.

And we have reached (at last) the first paragraph of our passage. Knowledge, and in particular knowledge of God is a good thing, indeed it is our *telos*. And this knowing has a Trinitarian structure because it is what we really are. So now in 11.26 we learn that we are ourselves an image of the Trinity in that we *are*, we *know* (that we are), and we *love* (this knowing and being). It is on this love that Augustine concentrates in *civ*., because it marks the teleological goodness of God and the good *telos* of his creation. Thus chapters 27 and 28 are devoted to the discussion of this double love (of being and knowing) of which we are certain, and which can be found even among creatures which are ranked below us in the scale of creation.[18]

[18] 11.27: Quid? Animalia omnia etiam inrationalia, quibus datum non est ita cogitare, ab immensis draconibus usque ad exiguos vermiculos nonne se esse velle atque ob hoc interitum fugere omnibus quibus possunt motibus indicant? Quid? Arbusta omnesque frutices, quibus nullus est sensus ad vitandam manifesta motione perniciem, nonne ut in auras tutum cacuminis germen emittant, aliud terrae radicis adfigunt quo alimentum trahant atque ita suum quodam modo esse conservent? Ipsa postremo corpora, quibus non solum sensus, sed nec ulla saltem seminalis est vita, ita tamen vel exiliunt in superna vel in ima descendunt vel librantur in mediis ut essentiam suam, ubi secundum naturam possunt esse, custodiant....Verum tamen inest in sensibus inrationalium animantium, etsi scientia nullo modo, at certe quaedam scientiae similitudo; cetera autem rerum corporalium, non quia sentiunt, sed quia sentiuntur, sensibilia nuncupata sunt. Quorum in arbustis hoc simile est sensibus, quod aluntur et gignunt. Verum tamen et haec et omnia corporalia latentes in natura causas habent; sed formas suas, quibus mundi huius visibilis structura formosa est, sentiendas sensibus praebent, ut pro eo quod nosse non possunt quasi innotescere velle videantur.
Why, even the irrational animals, from the immense dragons down to the tiniest worms, who are not endowed with the capacity to think on those matters, show that they wish to exist and to avoid extinction. They show this by taking every possible action to escape destruction. And then there are the trees and the shrubs. They have no perception to enable them to avoid danger by any immediately visible movement; but they send up one shoot into the air to form their crown, and to safeguard this they fix another shoot into the earth to form their root, so that they may draw their

nourishment thereby, and thus in some way preserve their existence. Even material objects which are not only bereft of sense-perception, but lack even reproductive life, shoot up aloft or sink down to the depths or hang suspended in between, so as to secure their existence in the situation to which they are by nature adapted.…Nevertheless, although there is no kind of real knowledge in the senses of irrational creatures, there is at least something parallel to knowledge, whereas all other material things are called 'sensible', not because they have senses, but because they are perceived by the senses. In the case of trees and plants there is something like sensitivity in their powers of taking nutriment and of reproduction. Yet these and all other material things have their causes hidden in nature; but they offer their forms to the perception of our senses, those forms which give loveliness to the structure of this visible world.

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There is still, even below us, in creatures which cannot participate in the *cogito*, a Trinitarian structure. All participate in *esse*, and although only humans (I shall deal with angels in a moment) properly have *nosse*[19]

[19] Cf. *lib.arb*. 1.7.16 ff.

and *amare*,[20]

[20] This analogous 'amare' of non-rational creation here should shed light on the non-triviality of Augustine's answer to the objections about the suffering of non-rational animals in *lib.arb*. 3.23.69–70.

yet'all creation below us has an analogous structural component. What marks humans off from the rest of (corporeal) creation is the possession of *ratio*. Chapter 27 continues:

> Sed nos ea sensu corporis ita capimus ut de his non sensu corporis iudicetur. Habemus enim alium interioris hominis sensum isto longe praestantiorem quo iusta et iniusta sentimus, iusta per intellegibilem speciem, iniusta per eius privationem. Ad huius sensus officium non acies pupulae, non foramen auriculae, non spiramenta narium, non gustus faucium non ullus corporeus tactus accedit. Ibi me et esse et hoc nosse certus sum, et haec amo atque amare me similiter certus sum.
>
> We apprehend them by our bodily senses, but it is not by our bodily senses that we form a judgement on them. For we have another sense, far more important than any bodily sense, the sense of the inner man, by which we apprehend what is just and what is unjust, the just by means of the 'idea' which is presented to the intellect, the unjust by the absence of it. The working of this sense has nothing to do with the mechanism of eye, ear, smell, taste, or touch. It is through this sense that I am assured of my existence; and through this I love both existence and knowledge, and am sure that I love them.[21]

[21] Again we see that we are not very far off from the second book of *lib.arb*., where Augustine makes use of this idea of interior sense. I omit here discussion of ch. 28 where Augustine discusses the love of the love which loves the *esse* and *nosse*. This is working the same ground as the first book of *lib.arb*. (esp. 1.12.25–1.13.29).

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This is as far as the *cogito* takes us in *civ*. At 11.29 we return to the angels, the first members of the City of God. But this does not mean that the *cogito* is simply left behind as a ladder thrown away (not in this way at least). There are two points to make. First, the *cogito* has been identified as that which helps us to grasp the Trinitarian structure of our knowledge, and hence of our journey to God (full knowledge). This role will be further explored in *trin*.[22]

[22] The chronology should be compared, but there is no reason to suppose that *civ.* 11 is any earlier than the second half of the *trin*.—or, more importantly that there is any significance in the comparative chronologies of the two works. See *conf*. 13.11.12 for an outline of the project of *trin*.

Secondly, what Augustine goes on to say in *civ*. 11.29 about the knowledge of angels sheds light on the role of the '*cogito*' in human knowledge (and salvation).

'Multum enim differt utrum in ea ratione cognoscatur aliquid secundum quam factum est, an in se ipso' ('For there is a wide difference between knowing something in the cause of its creation, and knowing it as it is in itself'). Angels have a different mode of knowledge from ours. They have knowledge of things via knowledge of the truth, or the art (or wisdom) of God, the *artifex*. We do not have this direct access to the knowledge of God. At best we can only know the things themselves. Hence Augustine can say 'ita noverunt ut eis magis ista quam nos ipsi nobis cogniti simus'('They know this with more certainty than we know ourselves'). The *cogito* of 11.26 is a mode of knowledge peculiar, or rather, proper to humans. It is our way of thinking for ourselves. It is a way in, not to some philosophical edifice but to the philosophical edifice that is the universe.

What then are the *Academici* doing in *civ*. 11.26? Why does Augustine evoke them, and their arguments, by name? Note that he does not do so in *lib.arb*. The Academics have some presence in the writings of Augustine, in addition to the other '*cogito*-like' arguments mentioned (*trin*. 15.12.21; cf. 13.4.7, 14.19.26). Academic scepticism is presented as an intellectual option that Augustine took seriously in *conf*. 5.10.19; 5.14.24; 6.9.18; *util.cred*. 8.20; *beata v*. 1.4. They are an important presence at Cassiciacum, where, as well as *beata v*. 2.26, a whole dialogue is set *contra academicos*.[23]

[23] Other mentions of the Academics can be found in *civ*. 4.30; 6.2 (Cicero); 19.1–3 (Varro's classification of possible philosophical opinions); *c.cresc*. 1.19.24; *c.litt.petil*. 3.21.24; 3.22.26; *c.Iul.imp*. 4 (PL45, 1410); 6 (1566); *cons. ev*. 1.23.33; *ep*. 118; *sol*. 1.4.9.
An important theme of Augustine's reading of Academic scepticism is his belief that their scepticism was merely a front for a 'secret doctrine'. This he expounds in the final book of the *c.acad* (3.17.37–19.42) and *ep*. 1. (cf. *conf*. 5.10.19). Those philosophers who gave Plato's school a sceptical turn were, in fact, doing so in order to protect the pure Platonic doctrine of immaterialism from the gross doctrines of materialism popularized by Stoics. By trying to prevent people thinking that they could get anything right, they were trying to prevent people thinking that their senses told them all they needed to know. (Chadwick (1991: 84) gives Porphyry as Augustine's source for this opinion. Similar ideas can be found in other texts, cf. Sextus Empiricus, *P.*, 1.232–4 (on Arcesilaus)). Perhaps this opinion can be seen in terms of a positive assessment: as well as threatening despair of finding the truth (cf. *c.acad*. 2.1.1; *retr*. 1.1.1; *conf*. 6.1.1; *ep*. 1.3; *trin*. 15.12.21), Academic arguments can be seen as a liberating stage to be worked through, and as an invitation to philosophy (cf. *lib.arb*. 1.2.4: 'in ipsam primam quaerendi libertatem

respirare'; cf. *c.acad*. 1.1.1: '…nihil pro te nobis aliud quam uota restant, quibus ab illo cui haec curae sunt deo, si possumus, *impetremus*, ut te tibi reddat…sinatque mentem illam tuam, quae *respirationem* iam diu parturit, aliquando *in auras uerae libertatis emergere'*; 2.2.3: 'adgredere mecum philosophiam.'

Is this evidence of a resurgence of interest in scepticism in the fourth century AD (cf. Annas and Barnes 1985: 18)? For a different contemporary approach to a kind of 'scepticism' in the context of rhetoric, cf. Marius Victorinus, *In Cic. Rhet*. 1.29 (discussed by Hadot 1970: 47 ff.).

But what has Academic scepticism to do with the argument *si fallor, sum*? The suggestion that

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I might be deceived in thinking that I exist was not one made by the Academics.[24]

[24] On Academic scepticism see Sedley (1980), Striker (1980), Frede (1983), as well as Augustine's summary at *c.acad*. 2.5.11; 2.6.14.

The closest thing to a suggestion of a textual relation between Cartesian doubt and Cicero's *Academica* is Curley's (1978: 68–9) tentative suggestion that the Descartes doubt based on God's omnipotence might be related to an argument from dreams in Cicero, *Ac*. 2.16.

It has also been suggested (Kneale and Kneale 1962: 172–4) that Augustine's argument is influenced by the argument which came to be known as the 'consequentia mirabilis' ('if the first then the first; if not the first then the first; therefore the first'). Further in this line of thought: Wohlfarth (1969). On the ancient history of self-refutation see Burnyeat (1976). For a discussion of Augustine as an innovator in the *c.acad*. see Burnyeat (1982: 28; 33).

I have already noted the fact that no '*cogito*-like' argument is found in the *c.acad*.

Perhaps Augustine had not yet thought of it, or at least not developed it. In any case its absence from *Against the Sceptics* makes good sense in that there is no trace of it in the Ciceronian texts on which *Against the Sceptics* particularly depends (Rist, 1994: 63 f.).[25]

[25] Rist goes on to make a suggestion as to its origin and provenance: 'It appears that the argument is embedded in a Neoplatonic account of the relationship between existence, living and thinking…' (1994: 64, with references). Further see Kälin (1921).

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The 'Academicorum argumenta' of *civ*. 11.26 is given as 'Quid si falleris?' Augustine has already ruled out the possibility of false *impressions* with respect to *esse, scire*, and *diligere*: 'Non enim ea sicut illa quae foris sunt…sed sine ulla phantasiarum vel phantasmatum imaginatione ludificatoria mihi…certissimum est'. ('For we do not apprehend those truths by the bodily senses by which we are in contact with the world outside us…But the certainty…is independent of any imaginary and deceptive fantasies').[26]

[26] *phantasiarum vel phantasmatum*: Augustine lumps these two together, and contrasts them with our knowledge of unity, in *lib.arb*. 2.8.23 (a passage which formed part of Du Roy's case for division of *lib.arb*. (1966: 237)).

Thus similarly at *trin*. 15.12.21:

> 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 [Academici] garrierunt contra corporis sensus; animi autem quasdam firmissimas per'se ipsum perceptiones rerum uerarum, quale illud est quod dixi: 'Scio me uiuere', nequaquam in dubium uocare potuerunt.
> 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. Now these philosophers were constantly prating against bodily sensation, but as regards certain absolutely solid perceptions of the consciousness about true things through itself, such as the one I mentioned, 'I know that I am alive', they were not able in the least to call them in question. (tr. Hill 1991)

Augustine claims that Academic doubt cannot touch things that are known without the mediation of the senses (and sense-dependent imagination). As such 'scio me uiuere' and 'scio me uelle' (discussed in *trin*. 15.12.21) can, according to Augustine form an answer to the Academics.[27]

[27] Or at least part of an answer: 'et'alia reperiuntur quae adversus academicos ualeant qui nihil ab homine sciri posse contendunt' (*trin*. 15.12.21).

One can and one should ask (as does Kirwan 1989: 30 ff.) whether Augustine is correct in thinking his arguments would refute an ancient sceptic, and whether 'si fallor, sum' is indeed a satisfying contribution to the Hellenistic debate.[28]

[28] Burnyeat (1982: 33): 'Augustine claims knowledge of his own subjective states, because they are subjective states, but he does not give that knowledge a privileged status. The claim sits side by side with the claim that he knows simple logical and mathematical truths (*Contr. Acad*. III 21, 23, 25, 29), to which his ancient sceptical opponents had a ready reply (e.g. Cicero, *Academica* II 91–98 ['Quid est quod ratione percipi possit?...'])...'

However, as Augustine says:

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> sed modus adhibendus est praesertim quia opere isto non hoc suscepimus. Sunt inde libri tres nostri primo nostrae conuersionis tempore scripti, quos qui potuerit et uoluerit legere lectosque intellexerit, nihil eum profecto quae ab eis contra perceptionem ueritatis argumenta multa inuenta sunt permouebunt. (*trin*. 15.12.21)
> But we must set a limit to this discussion, especially as this is not the task we have undertaken in this work. There are, however, the three books of mine on the subject written at the time of my conversion, and anyone who wishes and is able to read them, and understands them when he has read them, will certainly find that none of the many arguments the Academics have brought up against the perception of truth will be able to move him.

This leads me to make a second suggestion: the Academic invoked at *civ*. 11.26 is an ahistorical Academic (cf. Burnyeat 1983: 1–3).[29]

[29] Again this forms perhaps another positive element of the approach taken by Wohlfarth, in working more from a perspective defined by Kant than one defined by Descartes. On Kant and scepticism, Stroud (1983).

He is invoked here purely for the purposes of the argument in hand, which is not simply that of refuting the sceptic, but with getting the reader to think carefully for himself. Augustine does not simply answer the Academic but also goes beyond this to lay the foundations of a project of knowledge. This project is, of course, not that of Descartes, but that of Augustine *de civitate dei*, *de trinitate*, and above all, *de libero arbitrio*.

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8 Conclusion

Simon Harrison

Abstract: For Augustine, one's freedom and responsibility is elucidated by means of a process of calling the notion of will into question ('I don't know'). This process gives rise to an understanding of will, freedom, and responsibility as the condition for the possibility of knowledge. It is this process that is most *cogito*-like. However, it is significantly *cogito*-unlike in that the argument depends on the very *possibility* of denying that one has will. Augustine's account of freedom and responsibility is grounded in a deep notion of subjectivity, and the epistemological significance of the first-person

perspective.

Keywords: **first-person perspective**, **will**, **freedom**, **responsibility**, **cogito**

> To see what is in front of one's nose needs a constant struggle George Orwell, *Tribune*, 22 March 1946

This work is intended as a contribution to the understanding of *lib.arb*. and thereby also to the understanding of Augustine's thinking about the will. I hope that I have shown that some things that might have appeared obvious (such as 'Evodius') are not so obvious, and that some things whose self-evidence may have been obscured (the unity of the text) are self-evident, and that they are all the less trivial for being so. Indeed what began as a study of what might be thought to be less than obvious—*uoluntas* in a text from late antiquity—has become something of a study in the self-evident, or rather, a study in the struggle to see the self-evident.

For Augustine, one's freedom and responsibility is, indeed, if only one could see it, in front of one's nose. It is elucidated by means of a process of calling the notion of *uoluntas* into question ('I don't know'). This process gives rise to an understanding of *uoluntas*, freedom, and responsibility, as the condition for the possibility of knowledge. From this starting point, agency, internal and external, action, and passion are redefined. No further knowledge, it is claimed, is, therefore, going to be able to do away with this *uoluntas*. It is this process that is most *like* the *cogito*-like arguments found elsewhere in Augustine.

However, the argument that reveals *uoluntas* is also *un*like a *cogito*: whereas the *cogito* reveals something simply undeniable, my existence, the argument of *lib.arb*. 1.12.25, depends on the very *possibility* of denying that I have will. It is the choice, the choice between what I called 'the abyss' and the desire to know, that is inescapable. One's

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desire at 1.12.25 is not simply 'given' in the sense that, at 2.3.7, one's existence is. On the contrary it is the possibility of choosing the 'abyss' which gives the sense of freedom and responsibility carried by Augustine's *uoluntas*. Where the *cogito* of *lib.arb*. 2.3.7 relies on self-refutation ('si fallor, sum' (*civ*. 11.26)), the interlocutor of 1.12.25 could simply persist in his denial, and bring the conversation to an end. What Augustine's 'way in' to the will reveals is an account of human freedom and responsibility that is grounded in a deep notion of subjectivity. Thinking about (free) will is not like deciding a contest between, say, 'compatibilism' and 'libertarianism', or between 'God's grace' and 'free choice of the will'—as if we were privy to the perspective of an umpire on a tennis court. It is an exploration of what it is to think about and to understand anything at all, given the only point of view that is open to us as our starting point—that of the first-person singular.

As for the question of Augustine's part in the 'discovery' of the will, I would offer two suggestions. First, the story told at *conf*. 7.3.5 should be read as Augustine's discovery of *his* will, a discovery that can be made for

themselves by every reader of *lib.arb*. Secondly, and above all, this ‘undeniable’ will, and indeed the task of giving it philosophical form, are ideas that Augustine has undeniably made his own. When Augustine begins to think about the problem he asks himself ‘do we have a will?’ and his first answer is ‘I do not know’. What is essential to Augustine's ‘theory’ is precisely his ‘way in’ to the will.

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APPENDIX 1

Outline of Books 1–3

Book 1

1.1.1–1.2.5 Introduction: finding the right question to ask, and the right way to answer it

1.1.1 Setting the problem, its range and terms: the ultimate responsibility for evil

Distinction made between evil-done and evil-suffered

God (good, just, provident) does not do evil-done,

but does do evil-suffered (as punishment for evil-done)

evil-done is done by each individual voluntarily [*uoluntate*]

1.1.2–3 Teaching and responsibility: teaching (*disciplina, intellegentia*) does not make evil-done involuntary

1.2.4–5 The right question and method of answer: whence do we do evil?

A. has already answered this question and will lead E. to the answer by the same route (*ordo*) that he followed

This route involves being clear about the objective in terms of belief and understanding. Although E. already has an answer available for belief, the aim is to understand (the nature of understanding will be made clear over the course of the dialogue). Belief (thinking the best of God) is the correct starting point

1.3.6–1.16.35 Main Argument: unde male faciamus

1.3.6 To be answered in two steps:

(i) What evil is

(ii) Whence it arises

Failing a definition, E. gives examples: adultery, murder, and sacrilege

Adultery: why is adultery bad?

First suggestion: because the law forbids it

Wrong answer, because law (authority) is something we believe. We want

understanding. This requires *ratio*, not *regula*

Second suggestion: the golden rule

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Wrong answer, because mutually agreed adultery is possible [counter-example]. The rule does not explain what it is that is bad about adultery

1.3.7 *Third suggestion: common condemnation*

Wrong answer, because people are often condemned for doing right (martyrs). [counter-example; and genuine authority (Bible)]

(None of the above explains what it is that is bad about adultery. All rely on a rule, not a reason)

1.3.8 *Fourth suggestion: libido*

Right answer, because even the desire to commit adultery is sufficient for guilt (responsibility)

(What is bad about adultery must be more than something accidental (the act))

1.4.9–10 *What is libido?*

ensp;(Murder)

ensp;Desires can be good or bad. Libido = bad desire. What makes a desire bad?

ensp;(various cases of homicide considered, reminder that reason, not authority (law) at issue)

ensp;Answer: depends on what is desired as final end:

ensp;the bad do evil-done, in order to protect their goods-of-fortune

ensp;*Libido* = love of things one can lose against one's will

1.5.11–13 *The two laws*

(*Sacrilege* postponed) Murder in self-defence considered

Ordinary laws allowing some killing in self-defence, but since even life is a good-of-fortune, the desire to preserve it is, strictly, *libido*

This discrepancy between real justice and ordinary laws suggests that we should distinguish divine and human (temporal) laws

Temporal laws: only keep the peace

Divine law: only wisdom provides liberation from its punishments

1.6.14–1.16.32 *Questions:*

emsp; (i) The extent of the jurisdiction of ordinary law

(ii) The extent of the jurisdiction of providence

1.6.14 *Defining the two laws*. In terms of the eternal/temporal distinction

emsp; Peoples change in their morals. The temporal laws which govern them are judged in need of alteration by the eternal law. There can, thus, be two temporal laws at different times which are contradictory

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1.6.15 The eternal law = *summa ratio*

emsp; some things are always just (and, via a *notio inpressa*)

emsp; The eternal law commands that ‘all things be perfectly ordered’

1.7.16–8.18 *This gives an intermediary question: how is man* ordinatissimus?

Answer: man is ordered when the superior (Reason) dominates the inferior

(the answer begins with a *cogito* (the certainty that I exist)). Augustine then proves that non-human animals lack reason, since this is the only candidate for the constituent of our superiority, as manifested by the phenomenon of animal-tamers. Knowledge involves reason

1.9.19 Reason does not dominate of necessity. There are many non-ordered humans (fools). It is possible that reason does not dominate, and so a man can be disordered

1.10.20–11.21 *Argument that only ‘propria uoluntas et liberum arbitrium’ can make the ordered mind disordered*

Only the individual creature can allow itself to become disordered

An inferior creature is by virtue of its inferiority too weak

An equal and a superior creature would, by virtue of trying to cause the individual to fall, thereby become inferior

Therefore: *propria uoluntas et liberum arbitrium*

1.11.22 *The just punishment of abandoning order*: ignorance and difficulty

emsp; The human condition is described firstly in terms of the difficulty of finding truth, and secondly in terms of the disorder of the emotions

emsp; This condition is agreed to be punitive, and justly punitive

1.11.23 Evodius' Questions: E. wants to understand:

emsp; (i) how is it possible for order to abandon order?

emsp; (ii) I did not abandon disorder, so why am I punished?

emsp; Augustine does not reply to (i) (but see the end of book 2, and 3: the question is unanswerable)

emsp; Augustine replies to (ii): he thinks it can be answered without recourse to knowledge of the origin of the soul.

1.12.25–1.14.30 A.'s *reply to* (ii)*: argument that even if we were never wise still we suffer punishment reward uoluntate*

1.12.25 *I cannot deny that I have a will*

emsp; I can (and here and now do) have a good will

emsp; Good will is a good, and better than goods-of-fortune, because

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1.12.26 You cannot lose good will against your will

emsp; Therefore (you can see why) it is just to punish someone for not possessing a good will

1.13.27 *Good will in terms of the four virtues*

1.13.28 *Good will in terms of happiness, and unhappiness*

1.13.29 *Summary. the joy of having a good will is (the best) happiness (pro tem.)*

1.14.30 *Problem: everyone wants to be happy, but not all attain it*

Answer: one needs the will to live rightly

1.15.31 *Return to question of the two laws*

Slaves to temporal law are not free from Eternal law

But those who stick to Eternal law do not need Temporal law

1.15.32 *Eternal law: orders to avert love from temporal things to eternal*

temporal laws: order temporal things for purposes of temporal peace

emsp; (and work by sanction of removing temporal things)

Now we have answered the questions raised at (1.6.14)

1.15.33 *The difference between objects and their use*

Moral value of an object is neutral. Moral value has to do with the use made by an agent of an object

1.16.34–5 *Summary of intermediary conclusions and answer*

We have found:

(i) the jurisdiction and power [*quid ualeat*] of eternal law

(ii) the jurisdiction of Temporal law

(iii) that there are two kinds of things: eternal and temporal

(iv) two kinds of men: lovers of eternal things, lovers of temporal things

(v) the choice of which to follow is *in uoluntate positum*

(vi) nothing but *uoluntas* casts the mind down from right order

(vii) responsibility attaches not to the object used, but to the user

First answer: evil is:

to neglect eternal things (which the mind enjoys and perceives through itself and cannot lose as long as it loves them), and to follow temporal things as if they were great and admirable (which are perceived through the body—the most worthless part of man—and which can never be certain).

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1.16.35 Second answer: the Source of evil doing is:

free Choice of the Will (FCW)

But this leaves the *Question*:

if there is no sin without FCW, then ought God to have given it to his creatures?

Book 2

2.1.1–2.2.6 *Introduction: the Problem (given by, or remaining from, book 1), and the method (understanding, moral values ('good', 'ought') are restated:*

2.1.1 *why did God give FCW? (basic problem still: is God responsible?)*

2.1.2–3 Arguments to show that *God should have given us FCW*

2.2.4 Question becomes: *why did he give us FCW which can be used wrongly?*

Sorting out the order of certainties

2.2.5 *Understanding: search as if not know that God exists*

emsp; (Proof from trust that ought to believe that God exists)

emsp; Statement of Procedure: three intermediary questions:

emsp; (i) how it is manifest that God exists

emsp; (ii) whether all goods (qua good) are from God

emsp; (iii) whether FCW is a good

emsp; which will answer: (iv) whether it was right of God to give FCW

2.3.7–2.19.53 *Main Argument*

2.3.7–2.15.39 *(i) How it is manifest that God exists*

2.3.7 *Hierarchy: esse, vivere, intellegere*

(*Cogito* argument from deception)

2.3.8–6.14 Hierarchy: (sense object, perception, interior sense, reason)

2.6.14 Note on the argument: *sufficient to show that there is something (eternal) superior to our reason. Either this is God, or this implies God as its superior*

2.7.15 *The Distinction between common (communal) and proper (peculiar), as regards sense faculties and objects*

Perception and reason are proper (to us as individuals)

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2.7.16–19 *Objects of sight and hearing are common, other sense objects are not*

2.8.20 *Objects of reason are common (e.g. number)*

2.8.21–4 *Refutation of theory that knowledge of numbers arises from corporal perceptions*.

(i) One cannot be perceived, and so is prior to perception of unity

(ii) the *ratio* of numbers is infinite, and therefore known only by reason

2.9.25 Wisdom: *is it common?*

ensp;Problem: there are various ideas about what wisdom is

2.9.26 *Definition of wisdom (given): 'Truth in which the supreme good is seen and possessed'*

ensp;All men seek the good

2.9.27 *Even if the supreme good is peculiar (to individuals), it does not follow that wisdom is peculiar*

2.10.28 *List of certainties, which are true (and hence also common). Which are the rules of virtue*

2.10.29 *The virtuous man is wise, and so the rules of virtue belong to wisdom*

2.11.30–2 *Questions of the relation between wisdom and number*

2.12.33 *The existence of eternal, communal, truth has been proved*

2.12.34 *Proof that eternal truth is superior to our minds (it is not object of judgement)*

2.12.35 *QED: there is something superior to our minds*

2.13.35–15.39 *Exposition of truth, and its relation to will, freedom, and God*

2.13.36 *Happiness = enjoyment of truth*

2.14.37 *Freedom = subjection to truth*

Truth cannot be lost against will

Truth is common, beautiful

2.15.39 *God = truth (or is what is more excellent)*

2.15.40–2.18.47 *(ii) That all goods are from God*

2.15.40 *We have a* notion *of wisdom. (i.e. we can have some knowledge of wisdom, although we are not yet wise)*

2.16.41 Wisdom *and* providence. *It is possible to gain some knowledge of wisdom, via the signs of wisdom in creation: i.e. form and number*

2.16.42 *Everything has form, because it has number, because of wisdom*

Thus without any of these three, everything would not exist at all

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2.16.43 *The error of mistaking the signs, and missing the content*

2.16.44–5 *Eternal* Form: *its existence proved*

Which is identical with Providence (that without which there would be nothing)

2.17.46 *Everything depends on Form-Providence, i.e. on God*

Therefore all goods are from God (only). QED

2.18.47–2.19.51 (iii) *Whether free will is a good*

2.18.47 *This question has already been answered. (FCW is a good, as without it no good can be done, so FCW is from God)*

2.18.48 *An argument from body: we can live rightly without a hand, and it can be used for evil, but it is a good*

2.18.49 *FCW is a good because that without which we cannot live rightly is better than that without which we can live rightly*

2.18.50 *FCW, virtue, and other goods:*

emsp; the hierarchy of goods:

emsp; (i) great goods (cannot live wrongly with them), i.e. virtues

emsp; (ii) medium goods (cannot live rightly without them)

emsp; (iii) lesser goods (can live rightly without them)

emsp; Analysis in terms of *use*

2.19.51 *(Question of the use of FCW (by which we use other goods): As reason is known by reason, and memory remembered by memory)*

2.19.52–3 *Summary*

2.19.52 Will, truth and happiness, virtue

2.19.53 Sin, the negation

2.19.54 *Final problem* The source of the motion from the good which is sin is unknowable, because it is not from God, but is ‘defective’

Book 3

Various problems remain. How do we answer them in terms of what has gone before?

3.1.1–3 *Necessity and nature*

3.1.1 *E.'s question is still 'the origin of the motion' (as at 2.19.54; cf. 3.17.47 ff.)*

If the motion is *natural*, it is necessary. If so, it is not reprehensible

A.: But it is reprehensible.

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3.1.2 *But is the soul to be blamed? The natural motion of a stone is proper to it*

ensp;But (1.11.21) our voluntary motion is proper to us

The voluntary is voluntary (*dum non uult* not *ita mouetur*)

3.1.3 *Evodius summarizes argument starting from 1.12.25, via book 2*

3.2.4–3.4.11 *Necessity and God's foreknowledge*

ensp;Does God's foreknowledge necessitate (the sinful motion of) the will?

3.2.5 *Wrong way of asking the question: deny Providence*

3.3.6–8 *God's foreknowledge of his own will and acts*

ensp;Will you be *beatus inuitus*? *uolumus non uoluntate*?

ensp;Answer: Necessarily (If what God foreknows is a will, then it is a will)

ensp;(What appeared at first sight to be the negation of the voluntary turns out to be its guarantee '*mihi certior aderit*')

3.4.9 Foreknowledge and necessity continued

emsp; E. puts his problem as three questions:

emsp; (i) by what Justice are 'necessary' sins punished?

emsp; (ii) or how is it that what God foreknows is not necessary?

emsp; (iii) or how is it that what happens of necessity is not to attributed to the Creator?

3.4.10–11 A.'s answer to the first two

(ii) Foreknowledge (is knowledge) does not imply a compulsion that negates voluntariness

(i) Therefore the punishment is just

3.5.12–3.12.35 *Answer to the third: the Rule of Piety*

Having got this far, we can now see what is the right attitude to take to all cases of necessity. This takes the form of a 'rule of thumb' (it is not an arbitrary command)

The Rule of Piety: we must always give thanks (and praise) to our Creator

3.5.12 *We should not say that a sinful soul* 'would be better not to exist'

emsp; Sinning souls are blamed with respect to their non-sinning condition

emsp; God is to be praised for punishing them justly

emsp; God is to be praised for creating them such that even qua sinful they are better than non-ensouled things

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3.5.13–17 *Nor should we say that anything* 'should have been created otherwise'

There always is something better in existence

Error: looking in wrong place (e.g. for perfect roundness in a nut)

Not say: 'God should have made us such that we didn't want to sin'

will to sin is in our power

There are creatures who never sin (which are better)

A non-sinning creature has happiness

A sinning creature, still can recover its happiness

An always-sinning creature still has existence

A runaway horse is still better than a stone

So a creature with FCW (even sinning) is better than one without

Soul is always better than body

which is reason enough to praise God

(the distinction between 'Reason' and 'Use' in value judgements)

3.6.18–3.12.35 *Series of objections to the rule of piety*

3.6.18 (i) 'I would prefer non-existence to unhappiness'

You *do* want to be

3.6.19 (ii) 'I do not want to die, lest after death I am more unhappy'

If this is unjust, you will not be unhappy

(iii) 'Whence may I presume this?'

Because: either (i) your happiness is in your own power

or (ii) it is in an inferior's power (hence = (i))

or (iii) it is in a superior's power. Then not unjust

3.7.20 (iv) 'Had I been asked before I existed, then I would have chosen not to exist. My current fear of non-existence is merely part of my unhappy condition'

emsp;But happy and unhappy you do want to exist

You are unhappy in as far as are distant from existence itself

3.7.21 Therefore love your will to exist.

3.8.22 (i) is absurd as you cannot choose nothing (non-existence)

3.8.23 Diagnosis of (i) in terms of *sensus* and *opinio*: (the desire for oblivion is really the desire for rest)

3.9.24 (v) 'An Omnipotent God could have made all things such that none became unhappy'

Everything as it is, is perfect, no need to add or take away

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3.9.25 (vi) ‘but objection refers to souls, not sun and moon’

Perfect universe contains better and less good

3.9.26 (vii) ‘If unhappiness is part of the perfection of the universe, then our becoming happy detracts from it. Sins are necessary for perfection of universe’

Necessary for the perfection of the universe are the souls which are able to sin

(neither sin, nor its punishment is natural)

3.9.27 Illustration of the slave, the sewer, and the household. (The sinning slave cleans the sewer. But other provision for cleaning drains if no one sin). Superior creatures are punished by inferior

3.9.28 Corporeal world is thus sphere of punishment. But it contains images and signs. Example of the burning of a man at the stake

(i) of a just man, this is an example of his virtue

(ii) of a criminal, this is an example of justice

So Adam and Christ embellish the flesh

3.10.29 Two origins of sin: (i) spontaneous thought, and (ii) the persuasion of another. But both are voluntary

The case of the Devil who does the persuading (worse than being persuaded)

3.10.30–1 Christ and the Devil. The story of redemption

3.11.32–4 God made all natures: The hierarchy: Those which will never sin, and those which do sin

3.12.35 Conclusion: Always praise God. God created and rules everything justly

3.13.36–3.16.46 *Brief Summary from first principles*

3.13.36 Goodness and corruption. Corruption proves the goodness of the corruptible. therefore everything is from God, as every good is from God. This is a first principle

3.13.37 Second: praise and blame. On the basis of free will

3.13.38 Third: blame is blame of vice (which implies a praise of the corresponding non-corrupted state)

3.14.39 Can a nature be corrupted simply by the vice of another?

Corruption is always voluntary (inferior, equal, superior, cannot effect it) (as in 1.11.21)

3.14.40 When corruption is not vice: e.g. eating food

3.14.41 Corruption based on praiseworthiness of the corruptible

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3.15.42–3 Therefore blame implies praise of creator

Blameworthy failure is voluntary. Necessary failure is not blameworthy (e.g. temporal succession)

3.15.44–16.46 Analysis in terms of debt and use

3.17.47–50 Evodius' last question: The cause of the will?

3.17.48 There is no ‘cause’ (root) beyond ‘will’

Analysis of terminology taken from Bible: *Avaritia*

3.17.49 The cause of the will is either (i) will or (ii) not will. If it is (ii) then the will caused is not sin

The cause of the will is either (i) just or (ii) unjust. If (ii) then obedience to it is not sin

3.18.50 The cause of the will compels one against the will?

Then it is not sin that is caused

3.18.51–2 *Necessity and our condition of ignorance and difficulty (cf. 1.11.22)*

There are things which are done through ignorance and difficulty which are bad

(biblical illustrations)

But, because they are ‘against the will’

these actions are (suffered) punitive consequences of the first sin

3.19.53–3.22.63 *Objection: Adam and Eve: if they sinned, why are we punished?*

Short answer: since there is a victor (Christ), no right to complain

God helps

God only blames you for your own sins (i.e. not ignorance but unwillingness to learn)

3.19.54 Proper sin: ‘willingly and knowingly’

Proper meaning of nature: original creation, not our fallen condition

proper use of tongue (muscle), and improper use (language)

3.20.55 Our condition allows God to show his Justice (punishment) and

Mercy in liberating us

There is equity in our punishment

3.20.56–21.63 *The (Ir)relevance of the question of the origin of souls to this question (The origin of souls is relevant to the question of our precise relation to Adam)*

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3.20.56–8 All four possible opinions are discussed, and shown to be compatible

(i) There is only one created soul, from which individual ‘souls’ are taken

(ii) Souls are created individually at birth

(iii) Souls exist before birth, and God sends them to bodies

(iv) Souls pre-exist and choose to go

3.21.59 The question is undecidable

3.21.60–2 but not relevant. The future is relevant, not the past

3.22.63 Restatement of the answer: there is no further cause of sin than one's own will

3.22.64–3.23.70 *The possibility that ignorance and difficulty are natural is entertained Objections to the rule of piety are shown to fail even on this hypothesis (As in 1.12.25 ff. this is an ‘even if’ argument)*

3.22.64–5 Even if Ignorance and Difficulty are natural (and not punitive), then this is simply the point of departure for progress

God is to be praised for capacity to progress, etc

3.23.66 *Objection*: the death and suffering of children. They have no chance to earn merit in progress. They have had no time in which do their own sins and good deeds

Reply: there is nothing superfluous. There is possibly a middle state between reward and punishment

3.23.67 *Objection*: what is the benefit of the baptism of infants, when they die after it and are unconscious of it?

Reply: it is of benefit to the adults

3.23.68 *Objection*: why do children suffer, who are too young to sin?

Reply: as if innocence before ability to harm has merit!

Who knows what compensations God has, etc.

3.23.69–70 *Objection*: the suffering of animals?

Reply: shows the value of unity

3.23.70 The possibility that ignorance and difficulty are not natural:

in which case they are punitive

3.24.71–6 *Important Question: The state of the first man*

Wisdom, folly and the *intermediary state*

3.24.71–2 *Problem*: how could a wise man fall from wisdom or a foolish man not mean that God is responsible for the fall?

Answer: the intermediary state: the first man was not wise, but was able to receive the commandment. Hence possibility of sin

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3.24.73 *Problem*: is folly the cause or result of the fall?

Answer: intermediary state

3.25.74 Analysis of decision to sin in terms of ‘appearance’. Acceptance or rejection is up to us. Although the appearance isn't

In paradise there were two appearances (suggestions): from God and from the Devil. But man was free to choose between them

3.25.75–6 *Question*: who suggested to the Devil that he fall?

Can still be explained in terms of will

Analysis of the two kinds of ‘appearances’:

(i) from outside (from the will of the persuader)

(ii) from things which are objects of our minds (i.e. from soul and sense objects)

Contemplation involves the vision of one's own soul

Pride happens when the soul gets in the way of its contemplation, and tries to imitate God and enjoy its own power

The devil adds envy to his pride, and so persuades man to fall

3.25.77 *Conclusion*. The beauty of justice and eternal truth. Time, eternity, and the time to come to an end.

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Appendix 2

The ‘Rule of Piety’ (a note on the text of *lib.arb*. 3.5.12)

There is one interesting and difficult textual crux in *lib.arb*. At 3.5.12 Green prints the following text:

Iam illud quod tertio loco posuisti, quo modo non creatori deputandum sit quidquid in eius creatura fieri necesse est, *regulam illam pietatis facile non mouebit,* quam [1]

[1] Two MSS (L and Y) read *quia*, instead of *quam*, but I take it that this is not a problem.

meminisse nos conuenit, gratiarum actionem nos debere creatori nostro.

At stake is the clause in italics. Most manuscripts cited in Green's apparatus read

emsp;*regula illa pietatis facile non mouebit*

Most, but not all. Three (*L*, *S*, and *Paris. 12209 (Corbeiensis)* [2]

[2] This last is only mentioned in the apparatus here by Green.

) read

emsp;*regulam illam pietatis facile non mouebit*

Other manuscript readings and editors have attempted to do something with the verb:

F m 1 reads

emsp;*regula illa pietatis facile non mouebitur*

F m 2, *R*, and *V* read

emsp;*regula illa pietatis facile non remouebitur*

Erasmus, and ‘all printed texts since his time’ read

emsp;*regula illa pietatis facile commonebit*

emsp;Green therefore, follows the reading he finds in three manuscripts. I give Green's note in full (1954*b*: 27):

> I believe that here as in 2.31, *L* preserves the correct reading. The

Clairvaux editors of *S* follow *L*, but in *Y* they return to corrupt tradition of *n* and the rest. The thought runs: “Now the third question which you posed, as to why the Creator should not be blamed for whatever is necessarily done in his creation, will not easily disturb that rule of piety which we must remember, that we owe thanksgiving to our Creator.” With the accidental loss of the

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> case ending *regulâ illâ* the Normans first attempted to restore sense by making the verb passive, then for *non mouebitur* substituted *remouebitur*. Unacquainted, I believe, with the Norman manuscripts, Erasmus proposed *commonebit*, and this has stood in all printed texts since his time. But this verb leaves *illud* above unconstrued; the Norman *remouebitur* is more readable, with *regula illa* taken as ablative. But the well attested *non mouet* is acceptable enough with *regulam illam*. The phrase reappears, with a pronoun object, in the exhortation a few lines below, “Quapropter non te iam moueat…”

Botte (1960) disagrees with Green's reading and opts for that of *F m 1*. Botte judges that Green's reading gives no sense ‘car on ne voit pas dans le contexte quel pourrait être le sujet de *movebit*’. As Green explains and as Madec translates, the subject of *mouebit* is *illud* (which is explained by *quo modo*). Not only is this particular combination found elsewhere (at 2.19.51),[3]

[3] 2.19.51: Adsentior. Sed *illud* me *mouet*, quoniam de libera uoluntate quaestio est et uidemus ipsam bene uti ceteris uel non bene, *quo modo* et ipsa inter illa quibus utimur numeranda sit.

but also there are several other instances of an indirect question as the subject of *mouere*.[4]

[4] 1.2.4: Credimus autem ex uno Deo esse omnia quae sunt, et tamen non esse peccatorum auctorem Deum. *Mouet* autem animum, si peccata ex his animabus sunt quas Deus creauit, illae autem animae ex Deo, *quomodo* non paruo interuallo peccata referantur in Deum.
1.12.2: Verum illud quod me maxime *mouet*, cur huiuscemodi acerbissimas poenas patiamur nos…
3.2.4: Quae cum ita sint, ineffabiliter me *mouet quo modo* fieri possit ut et Deus praescius sit omnium futurorum et nos nulla necessitate peccemus.
3.3.6: Certe enim hoc te *mouet* et hoc miraris, *quo modo* non sint contraria et repugnantia, ut et Deus praescius sit omnium futurorum et nos non necessitate, sed uoluntate peccemus.

Indeed in the sense of to ‘worry’ the subject of *mouere* usually is an indirect question here.[5]

[5] Two instances where it is not, but some sort of contradiction is implied:
2.15.39: Nam si te hoc *mouet* quod apud sacrosanctam disciplinam Christi in fidem recepimus, esse Patrem Sapientiae, memento nos etiam hoc in fidem accepisse, quod aeterno Patri aequalis sit quae ab ipso genita est Sapientia.
2.20.54: Sequor sane uoluntatem tuam ut in tempus aliud quod hinc *mouerit* differamus. Nam illud tibi non concesserim, ut satis iam inde quaesitum putes.
And of course one should not forget the *moueat* to which Green refers:
3.5.12: Quapropter non te iam *moueat* quod uituperantur animae peccatrices, ut dicas in corde tuo melius fuisse si non essent.

Botte also notes that Green (*CSEL*, p. xiv) thinks it unlikely that the manuscripts we have derive from a single Carolingian archetype. Both the uniformity of the text and this crux suggest to Botte the opposite

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conclusion. He also thinks that the reading (that of *F m 1*) is a correction, and so 'il me paraît clair que la tradition remonte à un archétype fautif'. He does, however, admit that the textual tradition we have is as certain as it can be, and is not particularly problematic. What I want to do here is suggest how we might make sense of the earlier manuscript reading.

We could take *regula illa* as an ablative on the model of *lege* (by law).[6]

[6] I note also that Hensellek (1981: 11) suggests that the ablative '*dispensatione*' could be taken as an 'ablativus normae' in a sentence from *vera rel*. 41.78: 'Habent enim et illae [feminae] uirile quiddam, unde femineas subiugent uoluptates. … Quod in multis uiduis et uirginibus dei, in multis etiam maritatis, sed iam fraterne coniugalia iura servantibus Christiani populi *dispensatione* manifestum est' ('women too have some virile quality whereby they can subdue feminine pleasures … This is exemplified by many godly widows and virgins, and in many too who are married but who by the dispensation of the Christian people preserve conjugal rights in the bond of fraternity').

The sense would then be:

> Now, as for your third point, how it is that the Creator is not to be blamed for what necessarily happens in his creation, this question will not worry us if we apply [or abide by] the rule of piety which we ought to remember…'

My suggestion would also require that a personal pronoun (*te* or *nos*) be understood (from the '*posuisti*' or the '*nos conuenit*'). This would then assimilate this use of *mouere* to many of the other uses of it in the work.[7]

[7] The verb *mouere* is used x 22 of motion, x 2 of starting, or raising a topic (1.2.4; 1.7.16), and once in the sense of to be influenced by (3.8.22). Otherwise it is used with a personal pronoun and *quomodo* (see quotations above).

Not that this is an argument in favour of reading it here. Rather there is some argument from the prevalence of *me mouere* throughout the work as a whole. The whole dialogue is working towards the allaying of Evodius' concerns.

Back at 3.3.8 Evodius has admitted that when God foreknows that we are going to do something willingly, our free will is not thereby taken away from us, and replaced by necessity. Augustine has argued that if God foreknows a will, then a will is jolly well going to happen. Augustine then asks him '*quid ergo te mouet*?' and asks if he remembers the conclusion of the previous discussions. Evodius replies that he does not deny any of these conclusions, but that he hasn't yet seen (understood) how God's foreknowledge of our sins and our free choice in sinning are not contradictory. He sets out his problem in a three-pronged dilemma. He wants to know:

either (1) how it is that God punishes, with justice, sins which happen of necessity

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or (2) how it is that what God foreknows does not happen of necessity

or (3) how it is that God is not to be blamed for what happens of necessity in his creation.

Augustine takes each of these three questions in turn. He does not, however, take them in this order. He begins with the second question, and then, on the basis of his answer to this, tackles the first. Since God is not the author of what he foreknows, there is justice in his punishing it. Why then does he need to address the third question? He needs to do this because there are things which happen in the universe which do happen by necessity. Indeed God is responsible for his creation, and there is plenty of necessity within it. Punishment, for instance, follows necessarily on the sin. Augustine's answer is, to put it baldly, that anything that does happen by necessity is indeed to be imputed to God, but not in the negative sense which this verb (*deputo*) can carry (and frequently, but not exclusively, does carry in this work), but in a positive sense. We can see this positive sense, because we have already established that everything that derives from God is good (book 2). I read then the *regula pietatis* not (just) as something that we might tell people to adhere to rather than ask difficult questions. Rather the *regula pietatis* is a result, and indeed the culminating result of the rational work done in the first two books. Only when we have proved that God exists, and that all things are from God in so far as they are good, are we in a position to see why we *should* give thanks and praise to God. Back at the beginning of the first book Augustine exhorted Evodius to ‘think the best of God’ (1.2.5). We have come full circle. Only this time when believing the best of God, we do so because we have begun to understand the best of God.

All the attempted emendations make *regula* the object of *mouere*. This is achieved either by making the noun accusative or the verb passive. Green finds this ‘acceptable enough’. What I want to suggest is that the ‘*ablativus normae*’ gives *regula* a slightly more *active* feel. (I do not say that it feels any less strange). The rule is a rule of thumb by which we can always keep our thinking straight when our thinking is threatened by difficult questions about why something is as it is in a universe in which nothing escapes the control of the creator. But it is a rule of thumb that we have worked towards.

I note that at 1.3.6, after Evodius has proposed the ‘golden rule’, Augustine puts a counter-example, and says ‘*at iste non illa regula peccat*.’ I take this to mean that if you apply the rule (an evil action is that which you don't want to have happen to you) to the case of the willingly-adulterous pair of men, the case is not one of evil action. They *do* want it to happen to them. So, then the reasoning goes, there is a case of sin here, which is not covered by the

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golden rule. Here we have a rule being invalidated by a counter-example. In 3.5.12, I suggest, we have a rule which no counter-example can invalidate.[8]

[8] There is another example of a rule being invalidated by a counter example at 2.5.12: 'non te credo inuenturum regulam qua fidere possimus, omne sentiens melius esse quam id quod ab eo sentitur, ne fortassis ex hoc etiam cogamur dicere omne intellegens melius esse quam id quod ab eo intellegitur. Hoc enim falsum est, quia homo intellegit sapientiam et non est melior quam ipsa sapientia.'
The rule 'that which senses is better than that which is sensed' looks as if it is in danger of being invalidated by a counter-example. The rule is extended to 'everything which understands…' and against this a counter-example is brought: man understands wisdom, but is not better than wisdom.

There is a small distinction between saying that I am not going to be disturbed by a question, because I have a trustworthy rule of thumb at the ready, and saying that the rule of thumb is not going to be invalidated by the question. In short '*quomodo non creatori deputandum sit quidquid in eius creatura fieri necesse est*' is not a counter-example to the rule of faith. Rather we now learn to apply the rule of faith when something apparently bad happens by necessity. We see that whatever happens of necessity is to be imputed to the creator. Punishment—which follows of necessity upon sin—is a good thing. In short:

> Therefore do not let it trouble you [*quapropter non te iam moueat*] that souls which sin are censured, to the point that you say in your heart that it would be better if they did not exist. For they themselves are their own standards by which they are censured, that is, when one considers what they would be if they had not wanted to sin. However, God their Creator is worthy of the most excellent praise of which humans are capable, not only because sinning souls are encompassed in his order with justice, but also because he has created them such that, even when they are stained by sins, they are still completely superior in worth to the corporeal light. And it is right to praise God for the light. (3.5.12)

The answer to the question 'quomodo non creatori… (etc)' is, first, to negate the implicit assertion: everything that happens of necessity *is* to be referred to the goodness of the creator. But this only makes sense if we answer the second 'quomodo'. How are we not to think that necessity looks bad for the creator? By applying the rule of piety, and thinking the best of God. I do not think that this makes the Latin any easier to read. The 'facile' is odd, and we have to supply a 'te'. Both *L* and *F m 1* (Green and Botte) are possible (and do not contradict my interpretation of the overall strategy), and Green provides a persuasive account of the state of the manuscripts. But the

reading offered above shows up the importance of the rule of piety in the structure of *lib.arb*. as a whole, with its rereading of the reflexive will of 1.12.25 (‘*quanti pendis… hanc uoluntatem’*) as (for instance) ‘love your very will to exist [*ama in te hoc ipsum quia esse uis*]’ (3.6.21).

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BA Bibliothèque Augustinienne, Oeuvres de saint Augustin. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer.
CCSL Corpus Christianorum Series Latina. Turnhout, Brepols.
CSEL Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum. Vienna.
FC Fathers of the Church. New York.
Loeb Loeb Classical Library. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
LCC Library of Christian Classics. Philadelphia.
NPNF A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. First series (1886–8) ed. P. Schaff. Buffalo and New York. [Repr. Eerdmans (1971–80)].
OCT Oxford Classical Texts. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
PG Migne, Patrologia Graeca. Paris.
PL Migne, Patrologia Latina. Paris.

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[*c.Adim*.] *contra Adimantum. CSEL* 25

[*c.cresc*.] *contra Cresconium grammaticum et donatistam. CSEL* 52.

[*c.ep.Pel*.] *contra duas epistulas pelagianorum. CSEL* 60.

[*c.Fort*] *acta contra Fortunatum manichaeum. CSEL* 25.

[*c.Iul.imp*.] *opus imperfectum contra Iulianum CSEL* 81 (books 1–3); *PL* 45.

[*c.litt.Petil*.] *contra litteras Petiliani. CSEL* 52.

[*civ*.] *de civitate dei* McCracken, G. E., W. M. Green, D. Wiesen, P. Levine, E. M. Sanford, W. C. Greene (1957–72) eds. & trs. *The City of God*. 7 vols. Loeb. Bettenson, Henry (1972) tr. *City of God*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

[*cons.ev*.] *de consensu evangelistarum. PL* 42.

[*de morib*.] *de moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus manichaeorum. PL* 32.

[*divin.daem*.] *de divinatione daemonum. CSEL* 41.

[*div.qu.Simp*.] *de diversis quaestionibus VII ad Simplicianum. CCSL* 44.

[*doct.chr*.] *de doctrina christiana. CCSL* 32.

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[*duab.an*.] *de duabus animabus. CSEL* 25

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[*epp*.] *epistulae. CSEL* 34.1, 34.2, 44, 57, 58

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[*exp.prop.Rom*.] *expositio quarumdam propositionum ex epistola ad Romanos. CSEL* 84.

[*gr.et lib.arb*.] *de gratia et libero arbitrio. BA* 24; *PL* 44.

[*imm.an*.] *de immortalitate animae. CSEL* 89.

[*mag*.] *de magistro. BA* 6.

[*mus*.] *de musica. BA* 7; *PL* 32.

[*ord*.] *de ordine. CCSL* 29.

[*persev*.] *de dono perseverantiae. BA* 24.

[*praed.sanct*.] *de praedestinatione sanctorum. BA* 24.

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[*quant.an*.] *de quantitate animae. CSEL* 89.

[*retr*.] *retractationes. BA* 12.

[*s.dom.m*.] *de sermoni domini in monte. CCSL* 35.

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Proclus

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