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THE RELATION OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY LIFE TO RATIONALITY IN AUGUSTINE

William J. Collinge

This paper argues that in Augustine rationality in religion depends in important respects on religious social practice. This point is developed in reference to the questions of the reasonableness of a commitment to a particular religion, the meaningfulness of religious terms and concepts, and the truth and falsity of religious claims. In a concluding section, I contend that Augustine, while giving rationality in religion a basis in religious practice, succeeds in avoiding the tendency, found in some otherwise similar contemporary positions, to sever rationality in religion from rationality in other domains of inquiry.

I

Richard Bernstein's recent book, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis*,¹ describes and advances what its author refers to as a "conversation" about rationality. A "conversation," in Bernstein's terms, is "an extended and open dialogue which presupposes a background of intersubjective agreements and a tacit sense of relevance."² The present conversation about rationality is a dialogue, or rather an intersecting set of dialogues and debates, about meaning and truth. In Bernstein's view, this conversation is moving toward "a more historically situated, nonalgorithmic, flexible understanding of human rationality" than was characteristic of an earlier emphasis on "Method," with "fixed rational criteria."³ One important feature of the conversation is an increasing, though scarcely unanimous, tendency to see meaning and truth as rooted in, and unintelligible apart from social practice.

Bernstein's points of reference are debates about rationality which are current in the philosophy of the natural and social sciences, hermeneutics, and political theory. Though Bernstein has little to say about theology, there have been trends in that field, largely independent of the trends he discusses, which have also led to a renewed emphasis on the grounding of discourse in practice. One such trend is the movement to reintegrate systematic and doctrinal theology with liturgy and spirituality, as represented in the recovery of the patristic⁴ and monastic⁵ ideals of theology among European Catholic theologians in the middle of this century. Another is the liberation theology of the third world, which arises out of the practice of Christian communities and looks for verification to the liberating



practice of the Christian Church, its “active, effective participation in the struggle which the exploited social classes have undertaken against their oppressors.”⁶

The present paper is an effort to bring one of the greatest patristic and monastic theologians, Augustine, into relation with the contemporary conversation. To view Augustine from within the context of this conversation illuminates Augustine’s thought, particularly on the relationship of “faith and reason.” In Augustine, one finds elements of a view of rationality in religion in which meaning and truth are grounded in the social life of the religious community. These elements exist in Augustine’s thought alongside a non-historical Platonic ideal of rationality, which in Bernstein’s terms would be a form of “objectivism,” that is, “the basic conviction that there is or must be some permanent, ahistorical matrix or framework to which we can ultimately appeal in determining the nature of rationality, knowledge, truth, reality, goodness, or rightness.”⁷ Augustine certainly had such a conviction: the ultimate standard was the timeless Word of God which illuminates our minds—yet the more historical ideal I am about to sketch corresponds to Augustine’s conviction that that timeless Word was also incarnate in history; thus, in Augustine’s eyes, these two ideals are not contradictory. (It is worth remembering that even in Plato’s Platonism rational discourse proceeds through the shared search for insight on the part of concrete, historical dialogue participants, not through the application of a timeless, inflexible Method.)

In the treatment of Augustine which occupies the main body of this paper, I will consider, first, the role of practice in warranting the rationality of an initial faith commitment, then the role of religious community life in grounding the meaningfulness of religious terms and propositions, and finally the role of religious community life in warranting the truth claims made by the religion in question. Among religions, my scope is restricted to Catholic Christianity and Manichaeism, as these are the only religions to which Augustine gives serious consideration. Augustine thus presented has, I contend, something to contribute to the present conversation, particularly as the latter treats of rationality in religion. In some contemporary thinkers who relate religious rationality to social practice, there is a corresponding tendency to isolate religion from the rest of rational discourse. This paper will conclude by contrasting Augustine’s approach to one such presentation of rationality in religion.

II

As, in the case of science, we can distinguish between the rationality of theory choice and of argumentation within the confines of a theory, so in religion we can distinguish the rationality of making an initial faith commitment from that of seeking understanding within such a commitment. For Augustine, communal

life plays a role in both, and these roles are related, though distinct.

Those who are in a position to deliberate whether to become Catholic Christians are addressed in Augustine's apologetic arguments, which appear in their fullest form (outside the *City of God*) in two treatises from 390-1, *De vera religione* (DVR) and *De utilitate credendi* (DUC).⁸ In these arguments, I would like to focus on three related themes, namely situatedness, trust, and authority.

Situatedness. Unlike the rational apologetics of later centuries, which sought to demonstrate first that God exists, then that he revealed himself in Jesus (as proven by the resurrection), then that he founded a church,⁹ Augustine's arguments presuppose a certain situatedness on the part of their audience, a context of shared beliefs and values that do not have to be established by argument. The main figures studied by Bernstein tend to hold that this is true of all rational arguments, though they would stipulate that these beliefs and values are not immune to possible challenge in another context. A statement such as the following from *De vera religione*, which could seem cavalier on a first reading, could also be seen as legitimately indicating the situatedness of the argument: "Those who think it a vain or even a wicked thing to despise the world of sense and to subject the soul to God most high that he may purge it with virtue must be refuted with a different argument; if indeed they are worth disputing with" (DVR 4.6).

Trust. Primary among factors which situate an individual inquirer is a framework of belief based on trust. In DUC, Augustine argues that "nothing would remain stable in human society" if we did not believe some things simply on the basis of trust in others; as an illustration, he cites "dutifulness, the most sacred bond of the human race," which relies on trust that one's parents *are* one's parents (DUC 12.26). Friendship, likewise, is impossible without belief based in trust (DUC 10.23-11.24), and so also is education, which cannot begin without a mutual trust between teacher and student (DUC 10.23, 12.27-13.28, cf. 6.13). The later treatise, *De fide rerum invisibilium* (DFRI)¹⁰ develops this line of argument further, in particular to include all beliefs about the past (1.1-2.4).

Authority. Thus the prospective religious believer is faced with the choice of whom to trust. "We have got to consider whom we have to believe" (DVR 24.45). This is a question of authority: "Authority—*auctoritas*—for the Roman is a non-coercive force, founded upon tradition and social position, . . . an essentially moral influence . . ." ¹¹Lacking "wisdom," one must judge as best one can which teacher has wisdom and can lead one to it (DUC 12.27-13.28), and the need for authority in religion is heightened when, as in DVR, the question becomes that of what is God's "temporal dispensation" for leading the soul wisdom.

Augustine's often-misunderstood epigram, "I would not believe the gospel except as moved by the authority of the Catholic Church"¹² uses "authority" in

the sense discussed above, more or less equivalent to “stature” in regard to credibility or trustworthiness. This claim to authority is backed up in numerous ways, notably by reference to the general acceptance of Christianity (DUC 7.15, 14.31), miracles (DUC 16.34), the antiquity and continuity of the Church, as shown in the succession of bishops from apostolic times (CEM 4.5), and not least by the lives of Christians. Christianity’s power to transform the human race morally is the final consideration brought forward in DUC to support the authority of the Church. There the emphasis is primarily on the ascetic actions of Christians (abstinence, fasts, celibacy, etc.). The two-part treatise, *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum* (DME and DMM, A.D. 388),¹³ which likewise extols Christians’ asceticism, goes further in stressing the fact that the Christians’ asceticism, unlike that of the Manichaeans, is based on love of God and neighbor (DME 33.71, 73, in contrast to DMM 14.31-35). The first part of DME is concerned to show that what reason tells us about the good for human beings is that it consists in love of God and neighbor, and the second part argues for the authority of the Catholic Church as the teacher of this love (especially in ch. 30), in that it provides a communal atmosphere in which people are trained in its exercise (chs. 30-33). Acknowledging that not every Christian abides perfectly in this love, (ch. 34), Augustine singles out specific communities which are distinguished in the practice of love, as in the following excerpts from a description of monastic communities in Milan and Rome:

In these communities, no one is urged to undertake austerities beyond his tolerance, and nothing is imposed upon an individual against his will. Nor is he looked down upon by the others because he confesses himself unable to imitate them All of their efforts are . . . directed, not to rejecting certain kinds of food as corrupt, but to overcoming concupiscence and preserving brotherly love Charity is safeguarded above all. It rules their eating, their speech, their dress, their countenance. It is charity that brings them together and unites them. To violate charity is considered an offense against God. Anything that opposes charity is immediately attacked and cast out; it is not permitted to continue a single day. They know that charity is so esteemed by Christ and the apostles that if it be lacking, everything is done in vain, but if it be present all is fulfilled (DME 33.71.73).

Such examples enhance the *auctoritas*, the trustworthiness of the Catholic Church for Augustine’s prospective readers in the same manner as testimony to an individual’s good character increases his or her credibility as a witness. They also induce the reader to share to some extent in the love which binds the community together. Moreover, if a religious community’s ideals are in keeping with those of the most respected philosophy, and if it can succeed where others

have failed in getting people actually to live by those ideals, as both DME and DVR argue, then the case for at least trying this religion first is very strong indeed. Again, the “situatedness” of the argument is clear—Augustine could reasonably assume his audience would value the ideals of asceticism and communal love, as even now we can reasonably assume a Western audience will value the second.¹⁴ More generally, any use of moral considerations in religious apologetic must either promote the religion in question on the basis of moral values already acknowledged by the argument’s audience or challenge the audience’s values on the basis of *some* ground the audience can be led to accept. In either case, it is difficult to think of a stronger basis of support than the example of the community life which the religion engenders.

The epistemic role of authority in religion differs from that in the other areas mentioned in DUC and DFRI, such as history and much of education, and this difference points to another way in which religious community life can figure in apologetics. Augustine writes in *De diversis quaestionibus* 83, question 48 (conjectured by the English translator as having been written in 391):

Three classes of things are objects of belief. First, there are those things which always are believed and never understood, e.g., history, which deals with events both temporal and human. Second, there are those things which are understood as soon as they are believed, e.g., all human reasonings either in mathematics or in any of the sciences. Third, there are those things which are first believed and afterwards understood. Of such a character is that which cannot be understood of divine things except by those who are pure in heart. This understanding is achieved through observing those commandments which concern virtuous living.¹⁵

If one can see, in the life of the Church, the “observation of those commandments which concern virtuous living,” then one might hope, by embracing this way of life, to come to understand what one initially could only believe on the authority of others. In this way, a portrait of Christian community life, such as that given in DME, could hold out a prospect of experiential validation of the meaning and truth of Christian teaching.¹⁶

III

As Augustine says in DME and elsewhere, following Matthew 22:40, the commandments reduce ultimately to the commandments of the love of God and neighbor, and those two in turn are really one (*De Trinitate* [DT] 8.8.12).¹⁷ Living in love of God and neighbor in the Christian community, can one come to understand what that community believes? Augustine comes to identify the gift of the Holy Spirit as the love which binds the community together, from

which it follows that the experience of this love is an experience of God.

Let none say: "I do not know what I am to love." Let him love his brother, and he will love that same love: he knows the love whereby he loves better than the brother whom he loves. God can be more known to him than his brother—really more known, because more present; more known because more inward; more known, because more sure. Embrace the love that is God: through love embrace God. He is the very love that links together in holy bond all good angels and all God's servants, and unites them and us to one another and in obedience to himself (DT 8.8.12).

We can know that what we call "love" of self or others is genuine *love* if it is caused by or aimed toward our or their "righteousness" (*iustitia*) (DT 8.6.9-8.7.10), which in turn is identified by reference to a "pattern" which we possess inwardly, which in Augustine's Platonic metaphysics¹⁸ is itself a participation by our minds in the Word of God (DT 8.6.9). Scriptural and philosophical considerations here combine to warrant something like a mysticism of the community, whereby our will is united with the third person of the Trinity and our intellect with the second.

How can this experience lead to *understanding*? The idea of mysticism provides a clue—a mystical experience leads to understanding only through being articulated in language and in concrete practice. David Burrell writes of the *Confessions*:

It is as though Augustine realizes that mere insight must be filled out by expression before we can possess what we have seen. And since experience demands language and language brings with it a structure of consequences, those entailments must reach into the organization of one's life before he can be said to understand in a way that gives him facility with a new language.¹⁹

The practices of the Christian community, the community made one through the gift of love in the Holy Spirit, would be the way that unity is articulated visibly and historically. Augustine singles out the sacraments in this regard, noting, "There can be no religious society, whether the religion be true or false, without some sacrament or visible symbol to serve as a bond of union."²⁰ So if the bond of unity in the Christian community is the gift of love in the Holy Spirit, then by shaping one's life according to the practices of that community, especially its sacramental practices, one would be enabled to grow in understanding of what that love means in the concrete. This is analogous to the way in which friends, through their interactions, learn to understand one another and to understand friendship.

As one's friend's state of mind cannot be directly seen but must be understood

on the basis of his or her outward actions (DFRI 1.2), so the outward practice of the Church, as the community bound by the Holy Spirit, becomes in Augustine's later writings a source for "reading off" what God is in relation to his people. In this respect, the practice of the Church would play a role somewhat like that of Scripture. Augustine in fact speaks of the collective life of the Church as like God's body:

Let us purge the eye by which God can be seen There is something you may imagine, if you would see God; "God is love." What sort of face has love? What form has it? What stature? What feet? What hands has it? No man can say. And yet it has feet, for these carry men to church; it has hands, for these reach forth to the poor; it has eyes, for thereby we consider the needy²¹

Thus the collective sacramental and ethical practice of the Church would ground its collective understanding, as expressed verbally in doctrine and prayer, of what "love" means.

IV

Does anything like this apply to individuals within the Church? Augustine's later writings are in general less concerned with individuals' quests for understanding than are his earlier works, but *De Trinitate* is an exception. Apart from the passage quoted above on fraternal love, DT contains little direct reference to Christian social life, but the latter lies in the background of the argument of Books 8-15 to some extent. Those books aim to provide some imperfect analogy of the divine Trinity in the structure of human consciousness. The experience of love, as described in Book 8, is meant to provide a starting point, but Augustine eventually arrives at the mental triad of memory, understanding (*intelligentia*), and will or love as the most promising of the various analogies of the Trinity he explores.

It should not be overlooked that these books are works of spirituality as well as of systematic theology. To arrive at the kind of understanding of the Trinity which is sought in them requires not simply an effort of intellect but a conversion that reshapes one's manner of living.²² The theological principle which governs the succession of analogies is that human minds are an image of God. This image is most perfectly realized when we remember, understand and love God (DT 14.12.15). To the extent that we fail to do so, the image of God is de-formed in us (DT 14.16.22). Thus, to reflect the Trinity most fully, our inner life must be re-formed, and this is a matter of "daily advances whereby the image is made anew":

He who is thus renewed by daily advancing in the knowledge of God,

in righteousness and holiness of truth, is changing the direction of his love from the temporal to the eternal, from the visible to the intelligible, from the carnal to the spiritual; diligently endeavouring to curb and abate all lust for the one, and to bind himself in charity to the other (DT 14.17.23).

Thus to understand the Trinity by means of the analogy of our inner life, we must *become* more fully in the image of the Trinity; a moral and religious transformation is required for the success of intellectual effort, and DT aims to promote both. It is not accidental that the tone of DT becomes more homiletic and scriptural as the argument moves from Book 9 to Book 14.

Augustine notes in Book 15 that a reader might be able to follow the progression of his argument yet regard it as no more than a hypothetical construction. But what matters is to be able to experience one's own subjectivity *as* an image of the Trinity (DT 15.23.44-15.24.44). One arrives at the ability to see God's nature reflected in one's own inner life through "the faith that purifies hearts" (DT 15.24.44), that is, through believing and reshaping one's life in accordance with that belief. Therefore, the proper method is first to "believe what the holy Books contain concerning the supreme Trinity that is God," then to "go on by prayer and enquiry and right living [*orando et quaerendo et bene vivendo*] to the pursuit of understanding—which means the seeing with the mind (as far as seeing is possible) of what is firmly held by faith" (DT 15.27.49).

As in other areas of life, practice and inquiry must go together if we are to recognize the significance of our experience and broaden the possibilities for further experience. One might say that Christian life provides a *training* for the sensitivity to, and assessment of the significance of, aspects of experience, similar to the training provided by experience in medicine for recognizing and diagnosing symptoms. Ideally, reflective and prayerful Christian living would enable Christians to discern in their own knowledge and love a reflection of and indeed a participation in the divine Trinity. Likewise, one might hope to come through reflective Christian practice to learn to apply with confidence, as Augustine does in the *Confessions*, such Christian terms as "sin" and "grace" to one's own experience.

V

So much for meaning, but what about truth? If I can learn to see myself as an image of a trinitarian God, is there a trinitarian God? Obviously, to go directly from the one to the other would not be a valid inference, but it certainly bolsters the reasonableness of my Christian commitment if I can, through believing what Christians believe and living accordingly, come to a better understanding simul-

taneously of my own experience and of the language in which the Christian Church expresses its faith.

I think this is the test of religious verification and falsification which Augustine offers: can this religion offer an intellectually coherent belief system integrated with a morally satisfactory way of life? Books 5 through 7 of the *Confessions*, read together with DMM, show how Manichaeism failed that test for Augustine. The *Confessions* lay great emphasis on Augustine's discovery that the cosmological aspects of Manichaean doctrine were falsified by the findings of astronomers in regard to eclipses, but that, all by itself, could at least as reasonably have been an impulse to proceed to develop a more satisfactory Manichaean theology (or, maybe less reasonably, to develop an alternative astronomy, analogous to contemporary scientific creationism), as a catalyst for a loss of faith in Manichaeism. The falsification of Manichaean cosmology is as decisive as it is for Augustine because Manichaeism was breaking down on other intellectual fronts at the same time, and Manichaean morality was increasingly seeming to him both impracticable and undesirable to the extent practiced.²³ On the other hand, as one can see from *De moribus*, the *Confessions*, *De Trinitate*, the letters and sermons, and many other works, Augustine, once becoming a Catholic Christian, never ceased to see the Church as the most promising context for the pursuit of understanding²⁴ and of proper human living, and found both quests satisfied there at least to some degree. It was therefore reasonable for him to respond to apparent anomalies in Christian faith not by becoming disaffected but by proceeding through reflective and prayerful Christian living (*orando et quaerendo et bene vivendo*) to try to resolve them.

If practice has a central role in warranting the truth of established doctrines of the Church for an individual believer, it plays a similar part in warranting prospective doctrines for the Church as a whole. The most prominent example of this is the custom of infant baptism. In *De baptismo* (ca. A.D. 400), Augustine defends this practice as "the firm tradition of the universal Church," but is uncertain as to its effects on infants. Nonetheless, "no Christian will say they are baptized to no purpose."²⁵ Eventually this practice becomes the principal warrant for his doctrine of an inherited original sin. "Whosoever denies this, is convicted by the truth of the Church's very sacraments, which no heretical novelty in the Church of Christ is permitted to destroy or change, so long as the Divine Head rules and helps the entire body which He owns."²⁶ Likewise he argues to the conclusion that perseverance in faith is a gift of grace from the fact that Christians pray for it. The practice of Christian asceticism is cited as evidence that concupiscence is wrong.²⁷ In such cases, the Church's practice precedes and underlies the articulation in propositions, either as put forward by an individual in theology or as put forward by the Church collectively in a doctrinal statement, of what the Church believes.

VI

I would like to conclude by returning to the present-day conversation to consider briefly a work which resembles Augustine's position in some of the aspects which I have been highlighting here, but which can be profitably supplemented by other aspects of Augustine's view. George Lindbeck, in *The Nature of Doctrine*, proposes a "cultural-linguistic" theory of religion, in which a religion is taken to be a framework of discourse and action, which shapes the entirety of its adherents' lives and thought. The truth of religious utterances "is only a function of their role in constituting a form of life, a way of being in the world,"²⁸ which conforms groups and individuals "in some measure in the various dimensions of their existence to the ultimate reality and goodness that lies at the heart of things."²⁹ "Apologetics becomes primarily a matter of appropriate communal praxis."³⁰ Theology becomes "intratextual," for instance "re-describing reality within the scriptural framework rather than translating Scripture into extra-scriptural categories."³¹

Lindbeck's work shows the hazard of any effort to tie truth to social practice: as social practices are diverse, are we left with diverse, incommensurable frameworks of "truth" based on them, and thus with a relativism in which no truth claim can be grounded when addressed to those outside the community which makes the claim, or in which the claim is made? Lindbeck does not really want this result, but in some places he comes close to it. Thus he attacks the effort to make Christian faith credible within contemporary culture, and argues that theology "should instead prepare for a future when continuing dechristianization will make greater Christian authenticity possible."³² In that future, Christian discourse would be carried on in, and grounded in the praxis of, small countercultural groups.³³

Augustine's approach escapes this sectarian trap. Communal praxis, including that of small, countercultural groups, plays an apologetic role for him, yet it is a role which he can use in rational argument directed to his Platonic- or Manichaean-inclined audience. It is the kind of argument a social critic might use: here are some values and aspirations you and I share, here is how your present way of life falls short of realizing those ideals, here is how a Christian way of life would satisfy them.

One of those aspirations is for a coherent *understanding* of all aspects of experience. Thus, Augustine can introduce its inconsistency with science as evidence for the inadequacy of Manichaeism, and can support the Christian doctrine of the Trinity by showing that on the basis of it we can come to a better understanding of our own subjectivity. Even though in the latter case he argues that a successful performance ultimately requires a religious and moral conver-

sion, still he leads up to this point from a starting point common to Christians and non-Christians, namely the experience of knowledge and love.

In these respects, as I have sought to demonstrate in this paper, there is in Augustine a basis for a view of the rationality of religious belief and commitment which grounds meaning and truth in practice, yet does not isolate religious meaning and truth, thus grounded, from the rest of human intellectual and practical life.³⁴

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NOTES

1. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983.
2. Bernstein, p. 2.
3. Bernstein, p. xi.
4. See, for instance, Hans Urs von Balthasar, "Theology and Sanctity," in *Word and Redemption* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965), pp. 49-86.
5. See especially Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1961).
6. Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, translated and edited by Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973), p. 307, cf. p. 11.
7. Bernstein, p. 8.
8. Critical text of DVR: *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* (CCSL), vol. 32; critical text of DUC: *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, vol. 25, part 1. I quote the English translations by J. H. S. Burleigh in the *Library of Christian Classics* (LCC), volume 6: *Augustine: Earlier Writings*.
9. See Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, *Foundational Theology: Jesus and the Church* (New York: Crossroad, 1984), pp. 251-64.
10. The date of this treatise is uncertain. Critical text: CCSL, vol. 46. English translation by Rev. C. L. Cornish in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (NPF), vol. 3.
11. Gerald Bonner, *St. Augustine of Hippo: Life and Controversies* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 231.
12. *Contra epistolam Manichaei quam vocant Fundamenti* (CEM), 4.5. Text: CSEL, vol. 25, 1. English translation by Rev. Richard Stothert, NPF, vol. 4.
13. Text in J. P. Migne, ed., *Patrologia Latina*, volume 32. English translation by Donald J. and Idella Gallagher, *The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation* (FC), vol. 56.
14. The (Baptist) Editor of the 1887 *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* translation grumpily footnotes: "This picture of the coenobitic life, even in its purest form, is doubtless idealized. It is certain that the monasteries very soon become hotbeds of vice, and the refuge of the scum of society" (Albert H. Newman on p. 60 of Volume 4 of the series).

15. Text CCSL, vol. 44A. Translation by David L. Mosher, FC, vol. 70.
16. The argument of this section is expanded by my article, "The Role of Christian Community Life in Augustine's Apologetics," *Augustinian Studies* 14 (1983): 63-73.
17. Text CCSL, vols. 50 and 50A. Quoted in the partial English translation by John Burnaby in *Augustine: Later Works*, LCC, vol. 8.
18. I am here treating Platonic metaphysics as a "background theory," in Francis Fiorenza's sense. See Fiorenza, pp. 310-11.
19. David B. Burrell, C.S.C., *Exercises in Religious Understanding* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1974), pp. 22-23.
20. *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* 19.11. Text: CSEL, vol. 25, 1, p. 510. English translation by Rev. Richard Stothert, NPF, vol. 4.
21. *In Epistolam Johannis ad Parthos Tractatus* 7.10. Text: PL, vol. 35, col. 2034. English translation by Rev. H. Browne, revised by Rev. Joseph H. Myers, NPF, vol. 7. Diction, capitalization, and punctuation here slightly modified.
22. The argument of this and the next two paragraphs is expanded in my "De Trinitate and the Understanding of Religious Language," accepted in 1977 for publication by *Augustinian Studies*.
23. The argument of this and the preceding two sentences is expanded in my "Augustine and Theological Falsification," *Augustinian Studies* 13 (1982): 43-54.
24. Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 270-80.
25. *De baptismo contra Donatistas* 4.23.30. Text: CSEL, vol. 51, p. 258. English translation by Rev. J. R. King, NPF, vol. 4, where this passage is found in paragraph 31.
26. *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* 1.20.22 (A.D. 419-20). Text: CSEL, vol. 42, p. 235. English translation by Peter Holmes, NPF, vol. 5. See also *In epistolam Johannis* 4.11: "For if we are born without sin, wherefore this running with infants to baptism so that they may be released?"
27. The examples in this and the previous sentence are taken from J. Patout Burns, *The Development of Augustine's Doctrine of Operative Grace* (Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1980), pp. 174 (with references to *De dono perseverantiae*) and p. 104 (with references to *Contra Iulianum Pelagianum*) respectively.
28. George Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), p. 65.
29. Lindbeck, p. 51.
30. Lindbeck, p. 12.
31. Lindbeck, p. 118.
32. Lindbeck, p. 134.
33. Lindbeck, pp. 133-34.
34. An earlier version of this paper, under a different title, was read at the Annual Meeting of the College Theology Society, at Salve Regina College, Newport, RI, May 31, 1985. I wish to thank Professor Marie Anne Mayeski of Loyola Marymount University for her response to my paper on that occasion.