

THE CREATION OF AUGUSTINIAN IDENTITY IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

The influence of Augustine of Hippo on intellectual life in the West has been omnipresent. Yet the term 'Augustinianism' has assumed such a wide variety of definitions that in and of itself it does not say much at all about the actual adherence to the teachings of St. Augustine. The definitional quagmire resulting from attempts to determine the legitimate uses of the adjective 'Augustinian' is exemplified in the historiographical debates surrounding Augustine's influence on the emergence of Reformation theology, and on the theology of Martin Luther in particular. There is, nevertheless, little dispute among scholars that the fourteenth century witnessed a renaissance of Augustinianism, though there is considerable disagreement concerning what that renaissance entailed, and even moreso over its origin and impact.¹ While modern scholars can continue to debate the validity of various references for the label 'Augustinian', or the requirements for 'being an Augustinian', the late medieval Augustinian Hermits clearly articulated their own understanding of their religious identity as the true sons and heirs of their father Augustine. The ongoing endeavor by members of the Order to prove that St. Augustine was the unique father and founder of the *Ordo Eremitarum Sancti Augustini* culminated in the *Collectanea Augustiniana* and the *Liber Vitasfratrum* of the fourteenth-century Augustinian friar, Jordan of Quedlinburg (d. 1380). The creation of the Augustinian identity, however, was a campaign that had begun virtually simultaneously with the institution of the Order itself. The present article traces the creation of the Augustinian Order's narrative identity, which was based on the emergence of the Augustinian myth, constructed in the early decades of the fourteenth century.²

¹ See E.L. Saak, "The Reception of Augustine in the Later Middle Ages," in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, ed. Irena Backus, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1997), 1: 367-404; *idem*, "Late Scholasticism: Augustine's Influence on." In: *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan Fitzgerald, OSA, et al., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1999: 750-755; see also my forthcoming study, *Spiritual Knowledge. Jordan of Quedlinburg and the Theological Program of the Augustinian 'Studia' in the Later Middle Ages.*

² A narrative identity is the "...circular relation between what we may call a 'character'—which may be that of an individual as well as that of a people—and the narratives that both express and shape this character." Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 3 vols. (Chicago, 1984-1988), 3: 248; *cf.* Paul Ricoeur, *The Conflict of Interpretations*

I. MYTHIC ORIGINS

On July 15, 1255, Pope Alexander IV summoned representatives from the Orders of St. Augustine and St. William, from the followers of Friar John Bonus, the Brethren of Favali, and the Bricinenses to convene at Sancta Maria del Popolo in Rome.³ The result of the discussions was the foundation and first General Chapter of a new Order, which "...legitimized for the first time the imposition of a certain rule on diverse religious groups and the change from rules already approved."⁴ From this time forward, the diverse members constituting the union were to be brought, "into a single observance of the way of life and a uniform regulation of living."⁵ Thus the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine came into existence, confirmed by the bull *Licet Ecclesiae Catholicae*, issued by Alexander IV on April 9, 1256.⁶

The new Order grew quickly and spread throughout Europe, consisting of four provinces in Germany alone by the end of the thirteenth century.⁷ Yet with such expansion the problem of definition soon arose. The Hermits had to defend their right to be called the sons of Augustine as no other religious Order, following in the footsteps of Augustine himself. Their claim to a unique relationship with the Bishop of Hippo did not go unchallenged. At the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, the foundation of new Orders was forbidden, a prohibition which was repeated at the Second Council of Lyon (1274). At the later council, Pope Gregory X gave indication of future plans for the hermits of Augustine and the Carmelites

(Evanston, Ill, 1974), 46; and *idem*, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans. Denis Savange (New Haven, 1970), 513f and 538-543.

³ See R. Kuiters, "'Licet Ecclesiae Catholicae. Commentary,'" *Augustiniana* 6 (1956): 14-36; Kaspar Elm, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Wilhelmitenordens*, Münstersche Forschungen 14 (Köln, 1962), 108-119; and Balbino Rano, "San Agustín y los orígenes de su Orden. Regla, Monasterio de Tagaste y Sermones ad fratres in eremo," in *San Agustín en el XVI Centenario de su Conversion 386/87-1987, La Ciudad de Dios, Revista Augustiniana* CC (1987) (El Escorial, 1987), 649-727.

⁴ Kuiters, "Licet Ecclesiae Catholicae," 14.

⁵ "...in unam ordinis observantiam, et vivendi formulam uniformem." *Licet Ecclesiae Catholicae*, ed. Albericus de Meijer, *Augustiniana* 6 (1956): 9-13; 12 (hereafter cited as *LEC*).

⁶ For an analysis of *Licet Ecclesiae* and a discussion of the historical developments leading up to and stemming from the Great Union, see Kuiters, "Licet Ecclesiae," (as in note 3 above).

⁷ The German provinces were: 1. Rheinland-Swabia; 2. Bavaria; 3. Thuringia-Saxony; and 4. Cologne-Belgium.

by allowing them to remain in their current state until future notice.⁸ It is possible, however, that it was only the intervention of Cardinal Richard Annibaldi, the protector of the OESA, that persuaded the Pope to follow these lines; according to the Franciscan chronicler Salimbene, Gregory was planning to suppress the OESA until Annibaldi stepped in.⁹ The original draft of the decree at Lyon seems to give more validity to Salimbene than one might expect from a member of an Order in competition with the OESA, since it contains a qualifying phrase, later removed, referring to the Carmelites and the OESA as Orders, "claiming to have been established before the said council (i.e. Lateran IV)."¹⁰ Whether or not Annibaldi played the seminal role in the OESA's survival, not only was the Order not disbanded, but it also flourished in the later thirteenth century, before receiving official and firm confirmation from Pope Boniface VIII.¹¹ These early legal challenges to the Order's legitimacy made most evident the need for firm documentation that the historicity of the Augustinian Hermits was beyond question. The support of Boniface VIII was not sufficient, as was soon to become clear.

In 1327 Pope John XXII granted the petition of the Prior General of the OESA, William of Cremona, for the Hermits of St. Augustine to establish a monastery large enough to house twenty-five to thirty friars adjoining the basilica of St. Peter in Ciel d'Oro in Pavia, where according to tradition, King Luitbrand had brought Augustine's body.¹² The Augustinian Hermits were also given permission to celebrate the divine office in the basilica together with the Augustinian Canons, who previously had been the sole custodians of Augustine's relics. This privilege, on the one hand, gave official recognition to the Order as the true heirs of St. Augustine,¹³ but on the other initiated a long dispute

⁸ Rudolphus Arbesmann, "Henry of Friemar's 'Treatise on the Origin and Development of the Order of the Hermit Friars and its True and Real Title.'" *Augustiniana* 6 (1956): 37-145; 77, n. 159 (hereafter cited as Arbesmann, *HFT*; the text of Henry's *Tractatus* is found on pages 90-145, which will hereafter be cited as *Hen. Tract.*).

⁹ *Ibid.*, 78, n. 161.

¹⁰ "...Carmelitarum et Eremitarum s. Augustini ordines, qui se asserunt ante dictum concilium institutos..." as cited by Arbesmann, *HFT*, 77, n. 159.

¹¹ See *ibid.*, 77, n. 160.

¹² See *ibid.*, 41; and *Jordani de Saxonia Liber Vitasfratrum* 1,18, ed. Winfridus Hümpfner and Rudolph Arbesmann, *Cassiciacum* 1 (New York, 1943): 62,3-67,135 (hereafter Hümpfner's introduction will be cited as Hümpfner, intro. and the text of Jordan's *Liber Vitasfratrum* as *VF*).

¹³ Jordan of Quedlinburg would use the OESA's custody of Augustine's tomb as such evidence in his *Liber Vitasfratrum*; see *VF* 1,17 (61,63-70). Regarding John XXII's donation to the OESA of St. Augustine's tomb, Jordan states this act was revealed to a

between the Hermits of St. Augustine and the Augustinian Canons regarding which was the real *Ordo Sancti Augustini*. It was only four years later, after extensive negotiations with the Canons, that the OESA was actually able to begin residency at St. Peter in Ciel d'Oro. The early negotiations did not, however, put an end to the controversy. The conflict evoked a series of treatises from both sides arguing for historical priority.¹⁴ In the fifteenth century it became a *cause célèbre* until Pope Sixtus IV prohibited all further discussions of the issue on May 13, 1484.¹⁵ Already in the 1330's, a Canon wrote a treatise against the privileged state of the Hermits, brashly stating his intent to demonstrate that,

...blessed Augustine is neither the unique father nor patron of the aforesaid brother hermits, nor are the hermits the special sons of blessed Augustine in any sense other than are the friar preachers or other religious whatsoever who are bound by the Rule of blessed Augustine, such as the Regular Canons. In short, the hermits were founded neither uniquely nor especially by blessed Augustine. Further, I will show that blessed Augustine never wore the habit of the hermits, nor that he wrote their Rule or gave them their way of life, nor that he lived with them personally, but rather, he lived with the Regular Canons, for whom he principally and uniquely handed down a way of life and wrote a Rule based on their living together, from which the Regular Canons get their name.¹⁶

fratri nominato in Ordine; see VF 1,18 (65-67). Hümpfner argued that this *frater nominatus* was Jordan himself (Hümpfner, intro., li). Although Jordan does not clearly state that it was he who had this vision, it became accepted in the Order that he did; the seventeenth-century Augustinian bibliographer, P. Elssius, for example, in his entry on Jordan wrote: "An. 1327. visionem mirabilem habuit, qua protendebatur corpus S.P.N. Augustini esse Ordini Eremitico redonandum." P. Elssius, *Encomiasticon Augustinianum*, (Bruxellis, 1654; reprint: Westmead, Farnborough, Hants, England, 1970). 411; cf. Hümpfner, intro., li.

¹⁴ See Arbesmann, *HFT*, 58f; Kaspar Elm, "Augustinus Canonicus-Augustinus Eremita: A Quattrocento Cause Célèbre," in *Christianity and the Renaissance. Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, ed. Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (New York, 1990), 83-107; 86.

¹⁵ See K. Elm, "Augustinus Canonicus-Augustinus Eremita." Cf. Alberic de Meijer, O.S.A., "Saint Augustine and the Conversation with the Child on the Shore. The History Behind the Legend," *Augustinian Heritage* 39 (1993): 21-34.

¹⁶ "Intendo in hoc opusculo clare ac lucide demonstrare....quod beatus Augustinus non est praedictorum fratrum heremitarum singularis pater nec patronus, nec ipsi fratres heremitae ipsius beati Augustini filii speciales nec singulares aliter quam sunt fratres praedicatores vel alii religiosi quicumque, qui regula beati Augustini innituntur, alii tamen a canonicis regularibus. Ita quod, breviter, ab ipso beato Augustino nec specialiter nec singulariter sunt instituti. Item quod ipse beatus Augustinus habitum istorum fratrum heremitarum numquam detulit nec portavit nec eorum regulam nec modum vivendi eis tradidit nec conscripsit nec cum eis personaliter convixit, sed potius cum regularibus canonicis, quibus principaliter et singulariter convivendo certum vivendi modum et certam

The ban on new religious Orders at the Fourth Lateran and the Second Council of Lyon, combined with the challenge from the Canons, necessitated a defense from the Hermits. The Hermits needed to show that they were an established Order previous to the Fourth Lateran on the one hand, and on the other, that they, and they alone, were the singular heirs of Augustine. They needed to prove their antiquity, their legitimacy, and their authenticity. In short, they needed their own history to establish, for themselves and for all detractors, that only the Hermits had the right to refer to Augustine as *pater noster*. This was the context in which, in the course of the first half of the fourteenth century, the Augustinian Hermits created the Augustinian myth.

To call the early fourteenth-century Augustinian Hermits 'myth makers' may sound both unhistorical and counter to their own understanding of what they were doing. Nevertheless, the appellation describes their use of language and argumentation. There is no reason to doubt that in the minds of the authors of the texts to be discussed shortly it was the historical Augustine who effected the institution of the OESA, yet on the linguistic level a mythic shift occurred. The term 'Augustinus' no longer signified the historical individual, but rather the 'founder of the Order'. 'Augustinus' became a term in a second-order semiological system. The language became mythic when 'Augustinus' assumed the signification of *pater noster*.¹⁷

Pointing to the mythic language used to recount the biography of Augustine, however, is in itself insufficient for discerning the Augustinian myth. Looking beyond the function of the language to the function of the mythic one discerns that the myth created was a myth of origins and foundations, an etiological micro-myth.¹⁸ Mythic foundational accounts, William Doty has explained, "...may be emphasized strongly during periods when fragmentation or attenuation threaten social structures. A period of cultural breakup may produce a conservative reaction, leading to an almost magical reaffirmation of the normative breakthrough of order

regulam, a qua regulares canonici nuncupantur, tradidit et conscripsit." Vat., Bib. Apost., MS Vat. Reg. 565, fol. 1", as quoted by Arbesmann, *HFT*, 59. Arbesmann notes that "the manuscript was written in 1354 by the Canon Regular Durandus de Aln (Ahlen in Westphalia?)." *Ibid.*, 58, n. 57.

¹⁷ See Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. by Annette Lavers (New York, 1972), 114-117; cf. James Liszka's theory of transvaluation as presented in his study, *The Semiotic of Myth. A Critical Study of the Symbol* (Bloomington, Ind., 1989).

¹⁸ For a classification of myths, as well as an excellent introduction to the study of myths, see William G. Doty, *Mythography. The Study and Myths and Rituals* (Alabama, 1986).

into chaos in the primeval era.”¹⁹ The situation the Order faced in the first half of the fourteenth century may not have been one of cosmic chaos, but it was one that threatened its legitimacy and indeed, its very existence. In this context Augustinians appealed to the mythic origins of the OESA when Augustine re-established order from the chaos of his dispersed heirs. Myth creates and explains reality. The Augustinian myth provided the meaning for the Order’s way of life.²⁰ The early fourteenth-century hermits constructed a biography of Augustine which gave historical proof of their Order’s historical primacy. In so doing, the hermits drew from the medieval biographies of Augustine, yet transformed the accounts to form the Order’s narrative identity as the true sons of their father Augustine.

II. THE MEDIEVAL AUGUSTINE

The Middle Ages were not lacking for eulogies to Augustine. In the twelfth century, Peter Comestor compared Augustine to Abraham, claiming that by his expositing holy scriptures and by his being the wise architect of the apostolic life in providing his Rule, Augustine became an Abraham, the father of many.²¹ When in the early fourteenth century members of the OESA wrote Augustine’s biography anew, they had ample material upon which to draw that lauded Augustine’s life, teaching, and influence. The *vitae* of Augustine written by Possidius, Philip of Harvengt, and Jacobus

¹⁹ Doty, *Mythography*, 26.

²⁰ Cf. M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* (New York, 1957), 97.

²¹ Petrus Comestor *Sermo in festo S. Augustini*, 32 (PL 198,1707). Sermo 32 presents a lengthy analogy between Augustine and Abraham. The typology of Augustine as an *alter Abraham* continued, as we find in a sermon of the Bishop of Avignon, Fernandus de Hispania, preached in 1352: “[Augustinus est] gloriosus Christi confessor velut alter Abraham...”. This sermon is embedded in Jordan of Quedlinburg’s *Opus Dan [Sermones de sanctis]* (Strassburg, 1484) as sermo 150 (hereafter Jordan’s *Opus Dan* will be cited as *Jor. OD*). It appears in the midst of a series of Jordan’s sermons on Augustine (*sermones* 129-151). The rubric reads: “Sermo de sancto Augustino, factus a magistro Fernando de Hispania persona saeculari et episcopo in Avinione, praesentibus omnibus cardinalibus, anno domini Mccclij.” Josef Kürzinger has also pointed to a manuscript of this sermon, Munich, BStB MS Clm. 18223, which gives the same rubric on fol. 233^v; see J. Kürzinger, *Alfonso Vargas Toletanus und seine theologische Einleitungslehre, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters*. 22 (Münster, 1930), 98-99. Cf. “Sancti Augustini commendationes diversorum doctorum: Augustinus est alter magnus Abraham...”, Simon de Bruna, OESA (d. 1448), *Collectanea*, Brünn, UB, MS A. 87 (IV. Z. e. 11), fol. 24^v; as cited by A. Zumkeller, *Manuskripte von Werken der Autoren des Augustiner-Eremitenordens in mitteleuropäischen Bibliotheken, Cassiciacum* 20 (Würzburg, 1966), nr. 776 (p. 357)(hereafter cited as *MSS*).

de Voragine formed the base upon which the late medieval Augustinians built their own mythic accounts. Two elements of Augustine's *curriculum vitae* were of particular importance: first, when and where he first established a monastery; and second, when he composed his Rule, and for whom. Minute alterations of the details could have enormous consequences for representations of Augustine as having originally been the father of the Hermits, or the founder of the Regular Canons. To perceive the importance of the shifts in emplotments central to the emergence of the Hermits' account, one must have the traditional rendering of the 'Medieval Augustine' clearly in mind. Thus before turning to the creation of the Augustinian myth, I begin with brief descriptions of the three medieval lives of Augustine that served as the textual substratum for the later medieval reinscription of Augustine's biography.

A. *Possidius*

The foundational account of Augustine's life for the Middle Ages was the *Vita Sancti Aurelii Augustini* of Possidius (d. c. 437), the bishop of Calama, who had spent many years as Augustine's companion. Possidius set out to present the origin, development, and final end of his hero Augustine, based on his own personal experience.²²

In Possidius' biography, the overwhelming image of Augustine that emerges is that of the Church Father. Possidius first treated the period from Augustine's conversion to his ordination and founding a monastery in Hippo. He then turned to Augustine's campaign against the Manicheans, Donatists, Arians and Pelagians. Augustine's daily life as bishop follows, and Possidius continued by relating Augustine's last days, from the writing of the *Retractationes* to his death and burial. The theme stressed is the triumph of the Church effected by Augustine; day by day the unity of

²² *Vita S. Augustini Episcopi Auctore Possidio*. Possidio, *Vita di S. Agostino*, ed. Michele Pellegrino, Verba Seniorum 4 (Alba, 1955), Praef, 38,22-26; PL 32,33 (hereafter cited as: Possid. vita Aug., with the page and line numbers of the reference in Pellegrino's edition given in parenthesis, followed by the PL reference). The most recent critical edition is *Vita di Cipriano, Vita di Ambrogio, Vita di Agostino*, ed. A.A.R. Bastiaensen, Scrittori greci e latini, Vite dei santi 3 (Fondazione Lorenzo Valla 1975). Possidius' *Vita* also formed the basis for miscellaneous anonymous *Vitae Sancti Augustini* in medieval collections of saints lives, such as the *Vitae Sancti Augustini* contained in Paris, BnF MS lat. 11750, fol. 148^r-151^v (11th cent.), Paris, BnF MS lat. 11753, fol. 122^{vb}-128^{ab} (12th cent.), and Paris, BnF MS lat 11758, fol. 163^{va}-188^{ra} (13th cent.).

peace and the brotherly love of God's Church increased, achieved by Augustine's work.²³

In comparison with later *vitae*, the space given to Augustine's early life by Possidius is notably meager. Augustine's birth, early education and conversion are all treated by Possidius in the first chapter, which is not of exceptional length. In chapter two Possidius presented a brief discussion of Augustine's abandoning his position as *retor* and his decision to become a *servus dei* at the age of thirty.²⁴ Chapter three continues with Augustine's return to Africa and in chapter four, Possidius recounts how Augustine was made presbyter by acclamation, orchestrated by Valerius, the Bishop of Hippo.²⁵ Then follows what would become the central issue for the Augustinian myth: Augustine's establishment of a monastery. "Directly upon being made presbyter," chapter five begins,

...Augustine founded a monastery within the church compound, and began to live with the servants of God according to the custom and way of life established by the holy apostles: essentially, that no one in that society would possess anything of their own, but everything would be held in common, and that [goods] would be distributed to each on the basis of need; which he had previously done when he returned from across the sea to his homeland.²⁶

Possidius continued to emphasize Augustine's monasticism and its influence on the growth of the Church. Augustine having been made bishop, and with the progress of true doctrine increasingly winning out over heresy, "serving God in the monastery under and with St. Augustine, clergy of the Church of Hippo began to be ordained....from that monastery, which began and grew through that memorable man, the peace and unity of the Church first asked with great desire and then received clergy and bishops, which continued thereafter."²⁷ Possidius himself knew of at least ten monks whom Augustine sent forth to various Churches, and these in

²³ Possid. *vita Aug.* 13 (82,1-6; *PL* 32,44).

²⁴ Possid. *vita Aug.* 2 (44,1-46,4; *PL* 32, 34-36).

²⁵ Possid. *vita Aug.* 3-4 (48,1-52,25; *PL* 32,36-37).

²⁶ "Factus ergo presbyter monasterium intra ecclesiam mox instituit et cum Dei servis vivere coepit secundum modum et regulam sub sanctis apostolis constitutam: maxime ut nemo quicquam proprium in illa societate haberet, sed eis essent omnia communia, et distribueretur unicuique sicut opus est, quod iam ipse prior fecerat, dum de transmarinis ad sua remeasset." Possid. *vita Aug.* 5 (52,1-8; *PL* 32,37).

²⁷ "Proficiente porro doctrina divina, sub sancto et cum sancto Augustino in monasterio Deo servientes ecclesiae Hipponensi clerici ordinari coeperunt....ex monasterio quod per illum memorabilem virum et esse et crescere coeperat magno desiderio poscere atque accipere episcopos et clericos pax Ecclesiae atque unitas et coepit primo et postea consecuta est." Possid. *vita Aug.* 11 (72,1-11; *PL* 32,42).

turn founded monasteries. Thus, Augustine's influence, way of life and teaching spread throughout Africa and beyond.²⁸

Possidius gave a detailed description of Augustine's daily life as a monk, including information on his dress, eating habits—noting especially his view on the healthiness of drinking wine in moderation²⁹—and admonitions against associations with women, all of which became standard in later medieval accounts. Yet on two points Possidius gave less than clear cut answers, which opened the door to imagination, manipulation and creation when these two issues became the center of heated controversy: the foundation of Augustine's *first* monastery and the composition of his Rule. As mentioned above, Possidius expressly tells of Augustine founding a monastery upon becoming presbyter. He does not, however, indicate that this was Augustine's first such foundation. Although he writes that in this monastery Augustine, "began to live with the servants of God according to the custom and way of life established by the holy apostles," the verb 'began' is ambiguous, since after expositing just what such a life entailed based on Acts 4:32-35, Possidius adds the phrase, "which he had previously done when he returned from across the sea to his homeland."³⁰ Such a formulation gave later authors the leeway to claim, at least implicitly, that Augustine had previously lived as a monk, if not having already established a monastery himself well before having been made presbyter.³¹ Such ambiguity could have been avoided had Possidius mentioned Augustine's authorship of a monastic Rule, which was to become the second major pillar in the later debates. Indeed, Possidius' silence on this issue has contributed to the controversies surrounding the authenticity of the Augustinian Rule to the present day.³²

²⁸ Possid. vita Aug. 11 (74,12-26; PL 32,42).

²⁹ Possid. vita Aug. 22 (120,8-11; PL 32,51-52).

³⁰ Possid. vita Aug. 5 (52,7-8; PL 32,37).

³¹ For discussion on the importance of this phrase in later accounts, see B. Rano, "San Agustín y los orígenes de su Orden. Regla, Monasterio de Tagaste y Sermones ad fratres in eremo," in *San Agustín en el XVI Centenario de su Conversion 386/87-1987, La Ciudad de Dios, Revista Agustiniana* CC (El Escorial, 1987): 649-727; 679-710.

³² For the Augustinian Rule and its complex textual and historiographical traditions, see L. Verheijen, *La Règle de saint Augustin*, I, *Tradition manuscrite*; II, *Recherches historiques* (Paris, 1967); see also *idem*, *Nouvelle Approche de la Règle de saint Augustin* (Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1980). Cf. George Lawless, OSA, *Augustine of Hippo and His Monastic Rule* (Oxford, 1987), and especially pages 127-135. Thirty years after the publication of Verheijen's exhaustive study, erroneous comments concerning the Rule are still made, and made as assertions without taking into account the state of the scholarship on the Rule, or offering evidence to the contrary. Thus Marcia Colish can still claim that the Augustinian Rule was originally a letter to nuns; see Marcia L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400-1499* (New Haven, 1997), 52.

Much of the late medieval controversy between the Augustinian Canons and Augustinian Hermits over which Order was most authentically Augustine's true heir, revolved around the issue of which Order was the first to have received the Rule from Augustine. Had Possidius been explicit on this point, perhaps by the fourteenth century it would have been moot. Yet nowhere in his *Vita* did Possidius even allude to the *Regula Sancti Augustini*. There is, perhaps, an indirect reference. The passage in question is Possidius' explication of Augustine having lived "according to the custom and way of life established by the holy apostles." Possidius takes his exposition from Acts 4:32-35, which is also to be found in the Rule. Luc Verheijen has pointed out that the particular sequence of Acts 4:32 and 4:35 is found only twice in all patristic literature: in Possidius' *Vita* and in the *Regula Sancti Augustini*.³³ This is at least suggestive evidence that Possidius knew the Rule, even though he did not explicitly attribute such a work to Augustine. In any event, later authors were not content to leave the matter as seemingly open as did Possidius. Although basing their accounts to a large extent on Possidius, both Augustinian Canons and Hermits went considerably beyond their source regarding the details of Augustine's early monastic experience, while at the same time taking over from Possidius the centrality of the monastic life to Augustine's biography and paternity.

B. Philip of Harvengt

In the mid twelfth century, the Premonstratensian abbot of the monastery of Bonne Espérance near Cambrai, Philip of Harvengt (d. c. 1182), composed his *Vita Sancti Augustini*, which Jordan would later refer to as the *legenda famosa*. The Premonstratensians, according to Jacques de Vitry, himself an Augustinian canon at Oignies beginning in 1211, had been founded by Norbert of Xanten as a reform of the Regular Canons living under the Augustinian Rule.³⁴ That Philip was deeply concerned with fostering the truly religious life is evidenced by his treatise *De institutione clericorum*, which, although written for clerics in general, "is nevertheless a discussion of the clerical and cloistered life which is addressed by a regular canon to members of his own order."³⁵ According

³³ L. Verheijen, *Règle*, 2: 89-95.

³⁴ Jacques de Vitry, *Historia Occidentalis*, 22; *The Historia Occidentalis of Jacques de Vitry. A Critical Edition*, ed. John Frederick Hinnebusch, O.P., Spicilegium Friburgense 17 (Fribourg, 1972), 133,3-12.

³⁵ Caroline Walker Bynum, *Docere verbo et exemplo. A Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality*, Harvard Theological Studies 31 (Missoula, Montana, 1979), 13.

to Carolyn Bynum, the canonical movement of the twelfth century, to which the Premonstratensians belonged, in its renewed search for following the apostolic life represents "a fundamental turning point in the history of Christianity, a change perhaps as deep and as lasting as the fragmentation of the church in the sixteenth century or the spread of Christianity in the second to fourth centuries A.D."³⁶ The defining characteristic of the new spirituality was the emphasis on teaching and edifying within the context of the 'mixed life', whereby the *vita activa* is given equal weight with the *vita contemplativa*, signified by the exhortation 'to teach by word and example' (*docere verbo et exemplo*, and its equivalents). In summing up the different orientations of monks and canons, Bynum notes that "canonical authors see regular canons as teachers and learners, whereas monastic authors see monks only as learners."³⁷ In his sermons on St. Augustine, Peter Comestor, an Augustinian Canon in the abbey of Saint-Loup at Troyes as early as 1135/36, who later retired to St. Victor, was clear that Augustine was more than 'just' the giver of the Rule: Augustine was the renewer of the apostolic life, providing the Canons with their lives' simplicity, chastity and humility, leading them from his own table to that of Christ. Thus, Augustine served as a new Abraham.³⁸ In this context Philip of Harvenge wrote his life of Augustine, who was, in Philip's words, "the perfect imitator of the apostles."³⁹

Philip's life of Augustine differs from that of Possidius most notably in the former's attention to Augustine's early life. Of the thirty-three chapters comprising Philip's biography, the first fourteen cover the period from Augustine's birth to his baptism, as compared with the single chapter devoted to the same material in Possidius' *Vita*.⁴⁰ Philip drew his material from the *Confessions*, including the account of Augustine's conversion experience, omitted by Possidius. Philip then narrated Augustine's decision to become a *servus dei*, his return to Africa and becoming presbyter, before recounting his election to the episcopacy and daily life as bishop. Augustine's old age follows, including the election of Augustine's successor, Heraclius, the invasion of the Vandals and Goths into Africa, and the miracles Augustine performed before his death,

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.

³⁸ Petrus Comestor, *Sermo* 30 (PL 198,1790-1792), and note 21 above.

³⁹ "...[Augustinus] qui perfectus fuit imitator eorum [scil. apostolorum]..." *Philippi de Harveng Abbatis Bonae Spei Vita Beati Augustini Hipponensis Episcopi*, 33 (PL 203,1205-1234; 1234); hereafter cited as: Phil. vita Aug.

⁴⁰ Phil. vita Aug. 1-14 (PL 203,1205-1215); cf. Possid. vita Aug. 1 (42-44; PL 32,34-35).

expanding those related by Possidius.⁴¹ Philip followed the same procedure for his treatment of Augustine's death and burial, before turning in his final chapter to the translations of Augustine's body, the first being from Hippo to Sardinia, which Philip simply relates with the comment that how this occurred, when it occurred, or by whom, he could not say, since he was not able to find a source.⁴² Philip does, however, give a rather lengthy account of the *translatio secunda*, brought about by Luitbrandus, king of the Lombards, who brought Augustine's body back to Pavia and built St. Peter in Ciel d'Oro to house the relics, for which Philip expresses his deep admiration and envy.⁴³ Augustine, for Philip, was not simply the legislator of the Augustinian Canons, but was their model and teacher: Augustine "is the splendor and embodiment of our profession, he is the mirror and measure of our religion."⁴⁴

After Augustine renounced his position as *rhetor* and was baptized by Ambrose, he returned to Africa and first came to Carthage, where he enjoyed the hospitality of Innocentius.⁴⁵ He then returned to Thagaste, where he lived as a layman for a period of three years together with his friends, passing his time with study, teaching and writing.⁴⁶ When Augustine visited Hippo, he was conscripted by the congregation and Bishop Valerius for their new presbyter, which he accepted, as both Possidius and Philip relate, only with tears for having to leave his contemplative life. Most aware of Augustine's disposition to the monastic life, Valerius gave him a garden in which he could establish a monastery, and live in community according to the rule of the apostles, "as he had already done," Philip affirms, "when he had returned from across the sea to his homeland."⁴⁷

⁴¹ Phil. vita Aug. 30 (PL 203,1227-1228); cf. Possid. vita Aug. 29 (156,11-158,30; PL 32,39).

⁴² Phil. vita Aug. 33 (PL 203,1230-1231).

⁴³ Phil. vita Aug. 33 (PL 203,1234).

⁴⁴ "...non mediocriter arguendus est culpae qui se clericum profitetur, nisi Augustinum praeceptorem suum tenere diligit, devote recolat, sedulo veneretur. Ipse quippe est decus et forma hujus nostrae professionis, ipse speculum et regula nostrae religionis." Phil. vita Aug. 31 (PL 203,1229).

⁴⁵ Phil. vita Aug. 17 (PL 203,1217).

⁴⁶ Phil. vita Aug. 18 (PL 203,1218).

⁴⁷ "Tandem flentem et frustra renitentem B. Valerius de turba segregavit, et, licet invitum presbyterum ordinavit. Sciens vero desiderium ejus propositum, quod scilicet cum clericis nihil habentibus, nihil habens optabat vivere, dedit hortum in quo mox aedificato monasterio coepit ejusdem propositi fratres colligere, et cum eis secundum modum et regulam sanctorum vivere apostolorum, ut omnia scilicet essent eis communia et nullus diceret sibi aliquid proprium, et distribueretur unicuique quod esset necessarium. Quod quidem ipse prior jam fecerat, quando de transmarini ad sua redierat." Phil. vita Aug. 18 (PL 203,1219).

Here Philip simply borrowed from Possidius, often word for word, except for the addition of Valerius' donation of a garden for Augustine's first monastery. This is Philip's first mention of Augustine's formal foundation of a monastery, although, as Possidius, he seems to infer that Augustine lived a monastic life already in Thagaste, with his repetition of the phrase, *which he had previously done when he returned from across the sea to his homeland*. And as Possidius, Philip did not mention here Augustine having composed a monastic Rule for his monastery. Three chapters later, however, Philip relates Augustine's election to the episcopacy, followed by his battle against heresy and, having been made bishop, his founding a monastery in the episcopal residency, where he lived in common with his priests. From this monastery, Philip relates echoing Possidius, the apostolic life spread and flourished throughout Africa and overseas, following the canonical model as instituted by Augustine.⁴⁸ After describing Augustine's daily life as bishop rather briefly, Philip explicitly tells of Augustine's authorship of a monastic Rule. Bringing together the servants of God into a regulated community, Augustine taught his brothers the way of living in poverty, chastity and obedience, so that his group of clerics might truly live a common life. Yet to provide for the continuation of such a life in perpetuity, Augustine composed a monastic Rule, which proclaimed the obligations of an inferior in the community, a superior, and the community as a whole. To ensure that such regulations be well-known and followed, he prescribed the reading of the Rule each week, and he himself lived by its precepts as an example.⁴⁹ Thus, whereas Possidius had been silent, Philip was explicit that Augustine founded his first monastery in the garden given him by Valerius, and then a second monastery within the bishop's residence. Only thereafter as bishop did he compose a Rule for his clergy, with whom he lived a common life. In Philip's account, Augustine composed his Rule for his Canons, and was indeed, the founder of the canonical life, for which he was the mirror and measure. For the twelfth-century Canons, there was no question—the Bishop of Hippo was their founding father.

The canonical tone of Philip's *Vita* is evident not only from his chronology of Augustine's monastic foundations and composing his Rule. Philip rewrites Possidius' narrative, giving it a definite canonical color, and gloss, whereby it becomes clear that Augustine's episcopal monastery was the beginning of the Regular Canons:

⁴⁸ Phil. vita Aug. 22 (PL 203,1221).

⁴⁹ Phil. vita Aug. 27 (PL 203,1225).

Possid. vita Aug. 11
(72,1-74,26; *PL* 32,42)

Proficiente porro doctrina divina, sub sancto et cum sancto Augustino in monasterio Deo servientes ecclesiae Hipponensi clerici ordinari coeperunt...

Similiterque et ipsi ex illorum sanctorum proposito venientes Domini ecclesiis propagati et monasteria instituerunt et studio crescente aedificationis verbi Dei ceteris ecclesiis promotos fratres ad suscipiendum sacerdotium praestiterunt. Unde per multos et in multis salubris fidei, spei et charitatis ecclesiae innotescente doctrina, non solum per omnes Africae partes, verum etiam in transmarinis, et per libros editos atque in Graecum sermonem translatis, ab illo uno homine et per illum multis favente Deo, cuncta innotescere meruerunt.

Phil. vita Aug. 22
(*PL* 203,1221)

Factus vero episcopus...

et per totam Africam hactenus emortuam apostolicae religionis insignia redivivo virore diffudit. Unde nonnulli episcopi tantae sanctitatis aemulatores effecti, multos de eodem monasterio fratres sibi donari petierunt, sub quorum cura et custodia multas Ecclesias ad serviendum Deo commiserunt. Illis vero propositi sui non immemores, et doctrinam salutarem quam a sancto voto acceperant, redolentes, monasteria etiam collectis clericis instituerunt, e quibus postmodum multos, proficiente eorum religione et fidelium devotione, ad instruenda alia monasteria emancipaverunt. Sic non solum in Africa, verum etiam in transmarinis partibus hujus propositum religionis et canonica norma professionis multos Dei famulos congregavit, multas Ecclesias ordinavit.

Even when Augustine was living a contemplative life in Thagaste before his ordination as presbyter, he fulfilled the office of Mary and Martha,⁵⁰ an image not found in Possidius. Moreover, Philip referred to Augustine as teaching *verbo et exemplo*, the hallmark of the canonical ideal:

Possid. vita Aug. 7
(60,1-62,26; *PL* 32,38-39)

Et docebat ac praedicabat ille privatim et publice in domo et in

Phil. vita Aug. 21
(*PL* 203,1220)

Praedicabat autem passim et publice, loquens verbum Dei cum omni fidu-

⁵⁰ Phil. vita Aug. 18 (*PL* 203,1218).

ecclesia salutis verbum cum omni fiducia adversus Africanas haereses, maximeque contra Donatistas, Manichaeos et paganos, libris confectis et repentinis sermonibus, ineffabiliter admirantibus Christianis et collaudantibus et hoc ipsum ubi poterant non tacentibus sed diffamantibus...

Et inde iam per totum Africae corpus praeclara doctrina odorque suavissimus Christi diffusus et manifestatus est, congaudente quoque id comperto ecclesia Dei transmarina. Quoniam sicut dum patitur unum membrum, compatiuntur omnia membra, ita cum glorificatur unum membrum congaudent omnia membra.

cia, omnem haereticum destruens, catholicos instruens, infundente ei Spiritu sancto ineffabilem gratiam, mirantibus cunctis discretam ejus facundiam.

Cujus famam nominis non solum Africana, verum etiam transmarina jam noverat Ecclesia, ineffabiliter gaudens quod talem ei Deus incernam contulerat, cujus verbo et exemplo illuminari meruerat.

Augustine, for Philip, was not only the great church father and legislator of the Regular Canons; he was also their teacher and exemplar, who taught as much by his outward deeds, as by his spoken and written words—in *vultu et habitu, in sermone et moribus*.⁵¹ If Possidius' biography of Augustine idealized Augustine the Bishop, Philip presented a narrative representing Augustine as the founding father of the Regular Canons. Yet just as Philip 'rewrote' Possidius, so in the early fourteenth century would Jordan of Quedlinburg and his fellow Augustinians 'rewrite' Philip, using his *legenda famosa* as a major source for a new emplotment whereby Augustine was first and foremost the founder and father of the hermits.

C. *The Legenda Aurea*

The third major source contributing to the image of the historical Augustine in the later Middle Ages, was the life of Augustine included in Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*. Born c. 1229, Jacobus entered the Dominican Order in 1244, and having studied in Bologna and Genoa, became subprior in Genoa and later prior in Como. After fulfilling various other offices within the Order, Jacobus was named archbishop of Genoa in 1292, an office he held until his death six years later. He is best known as

⁵¹ Phil. vita Aug. 24 (PL 203,1222).

the author, or compiler, of the *Legenda Aurea*, completed during the years 1252-1260.

The *Legenda Aurea* was one of the most widely spread texts in the Middle Ages, extant in various forms in more than 900 manuscripts.⁵² The critical edition of the collection consists of 178 chapters, which provided the Order of Preachers with substantial material for its pastoral mission. Chapter 120 is *De Sancto Augustino*.⁵³ Jacobus' account begins with a general introduction, praising Augustine as excelling all other doctors of the Church, just as the Roman Augustus surpasses all other kings, and thus Augustine alone is worthy of comparison with the sun.⁵⁴ Jacobus then traced Augustine's life, beginning with his birth to Monica and Patricius. As Philip of Harvengt, Jacobus recounted from the *Confessions* Augustine's own recollections of his youth, from his involvement with the Manichees, to his conversion to philosophy, becoming a *rhetor* in Milan and his increasing adherence to Ambrose.⁵⁵ Jacobus then treated Augustine's conversion at some length, drawing from the *Confessions* the major events leading up to the *tolle, lege* scene.⁵⁶ The *Vita* continues with Augustine's baptism, immediately after which Ambrose and Augustine together composed the hymn, *Te Deum Laudamus*,⁵⁷ followed by his return to Africa with Nebridius and Evodius. In Thagaste Augustine began living a communal life, based on fasting, prayer, study and teaching, though Jacobus does not claim that Augustine and his community became *servi dei*.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, from that community Augustine's fame spread and he was soon made presbyter in Hippo by Valerius, whereupon he founded a monastery of clerics.⁵⁹ Jacobus' account continues with brief descriptions of Augustine's service

⁵² See Barbara Fleith, *Studien zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der Lateinischen Legenda Aurea*, Subsidia Hagiographica, n. 72. Société des Bollandistes (Bruxelles, 1991), 9-16; and *idem*, "The Patristic Sources of the *Legenda Aurea*. A Research Report," in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, ed. Irena Backus, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1997): 1:231-287; cf. Sherry L. Reames, *The Legenda aurea. A Reexamination of Its Paradoxical History* (Madison, WI, 1985), 135-163.

⁵³ For the use of the *Legenda Aurea* as a 'handbook' for preachers, see Fleith, *Studien*, 37-42. The *Legenda Aurea* also played a role in the Dominican educational system; see *ibid.*, 406-413.

⁵⁴ Iacopo da Varasse *Legenda Aurea*. Ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni. Millennio Medievale 6, Testi 3. 2 vols. Firenze, 1998, c. 120, p. 841,3; hereafter cited as *LA*, with page and line references given in parenthesis.

⁵⁵ *LA*, 120 (842,22-844,49).

⁵⁶ *LA*, 120 (844,51-847,100).

⁵⁷ *LA*, 120 (847,101-104).

⁵⁸ *LA*, 120 (848,121).

⁵⁹ *LA*, 120 (848,123-849,129).

to the Church and elevation to the episcopacy, his daily life and household, and his campaigns against heretics, before relating his last days and death while the Vandals were ravaging Africa, in the year 440, according to Jacobus.⁶⁰ The final third of Jacobus' biography is devoted to praises of Augustine by Jerome, Ambrose, Gregory the Great, Prosper, Remigius and Bernard, to the two translations described as well by Philip of Harvengt, and to twelve distinct accounts of the miracles Augustine performed after his death.⁶¹ Jacobus concluded by emphasizing Augustine's ascetic life of shunning riches and honors, and recounting the works he composed.⁶²

Jacobus' *legenda de Sancto Augustino* draws from the *vitae* of Possidius and Philip of Harvengt, but is markedly different from the two primary biographies. Although throughout the Middle Ages biography and hagiography were closely related genres and often indistinguishable, Jacobus' treatment fits more squarely within the latter genre than the former. If Possidius' Augustine was the celebrated Bishop of Hippo, and Philip's Augustine's was the exemplary founder of the canonical life, Jacobus' Augustine was the outstanding catholic saint. Whereas both Possidius and Philip introduced their *vitae* with personal statements of humility before the task of trying to portray the life of such a man of God,⁶³ Jacobus began directly by singing Augustine's praises, noting how Augustine "was magnificent in his life, famous in his teaching, blessed (*felix*) in his glory."⁶⁴ Not only did Jacobus compare Augustine with the Roman Augustus, but also analyzed the etymology of Augustine's name, claiming that it derived from *augeo* and *astin*, which mean 'city', and *ana*, which is that which is above (*sursum*). Thus, Augustine is as a heavenly city, the city of God.⁶⁵

In this light, it may not be surprising that Jacobus did not devote much space to the details of Augustine's life, aside from his conversion and death. His purpose was not so much to recount the historical Augustine as it was to reveal the Church's saint.⁶⁶ Yet it is noteworthy that in Jacobus' account, Augustine's life is stripped of its monastic

⁶⁰ *LA*, 120 (849,130-856,230).

⁶¹ *LA*, 120 (857,254-866,396).

⁶² *LA*, 120 (866,397-872,521).

⁶³ Possid. *vita Aug.*, Praef. (38,19-40,42; *PL* 32,33-34); Phil. *vita Aug.*, Prol. (*PL* 203,1205).

⁶⁴ "...Augustinus dicitur magnificus, felix, praeclarus. Fuit enim magnificus in vita, praeclarus in doctrina, felix in gloria." *LA*, 120 (842,19-20).

⁶⁵ *LA*, 120 (841,10-14).

⁶⁶ Reames writes: "The saint's involvement in the ecclesiastical affairs of his day...goes almost unmentioned in the *Legenda*. Nor does Jacobus preserve many glimpses of Augustine's care for his own flock." Reames, *The Legenda Aurea*, 150-151.

components. As mentioned above, Jacobus did not apply the appellation *servus dei* to Augustine when telling of his return to Thagaste, a term that carried monastic connotations, even if somewhat vague, and one that both Possidius and Philip of Harvengt used for Augustine and his followers at that time. Moreover, Jacobus nowhere mentioned Augustine having composed a Rule. Even though Jacobus' own Order followed the *Regula Sancti Augustini*,⁶⁷ the only reference or allusion to Augustine's monastic life in Jacobus' account, aside from lauding Augustine's ascetic daily life albeit not placed in a monastic setting, is the narrative of Augustine's founding a monastery of clerics upon being ordained presbyter. Immediately upon becoming presbyter, Jacobus writes, Augustine "founded a monastery of clerics and began to live according to the way of life (*regulam*) established by the holy apostles; from this monastery approximately ten monks became bishops."⁶⁸ Jacobus, however, omitted the qualifying phrase found both in Possidius' and Philip's *vitae*, namely, *which he had previously done when he returned from across the sea to his homeland*. Jacobus' text gives no basis whatsoever, even for pure speculation, to assert that Augustine had lived a monastic life, even in a non-technical sense, at any time before he was made presbyter. One cannot explain this omission away by suggesting that perhaps Jacobus was unaware of the earlier treatments. Not only does he explicitly mention Possidius' *vita* in the introduction to his *legenda*,⁶⁹ but this very account is drawn from Possidius, as is evidenced by the number of monks who became bishops. Possidius mentioned that he personally knew of approximately ten holy, venerable, continent and learned servants of God, whom Augustine sent out to other Churches when asked. Philip of Harvengt gave no such number. Yet Jacobus' truncated account of Possidius is not limited to the omission of the phrase, *which he had previously done when he returned from across the sea to his homeland*. The account of Augustine's monks being sent out from his monastery to serve other Churches, thereby spreading Augustine's doctrine throughout Africa and beyond, is found in the *vitae* of both Possidius and Philip when they narrate Augustine's founding of his *second* monastery, namely, the one he established upon being elevated to the episcopate. Based on the relationship between Jacobus' text and that of Possidius, whereby Jacobus' phrase, ... *de cujus monasterio fere X episcopi sunt electi* ... echoes

⁶⁷ Cf. Rano, "San Agustín y los orígenes de su Orden," 670-673.

⁶⁸ "Qui statim monasterium clericorum instituit et coepit vivere secundum regulam a sanctis apostolis constitutam, de cujus monasterio fere X episcopi sunt electi." *LA*, 120 (849,128-129).

⁶⁹ *LA*, 120 (842,21).

Possidius' ... *nam ferme decem, quos ipse novi ... beatus Augustinus diversis ecclesiis...rogatus dedit...*⁷⁰ Jacobus compressed Augustine's presbyterial and episcopal monastic foundations into a single event, and divested that institution of its importance to the African Church and Augustine's influence attributed to it by Possidius and Philip of Harvengt. In sum, whereas for Possidius and Philip Augustine's true miracle was his life as a monk-bishop, for Jacobus, Augustine's monasticism was incidental at best; Augustine's saintly life was witnessed most of all by the miracles he performed long after his earthly existence. With Jacobus, Augustine's life itself became translated from the genre of hagiographical-biography, to biographical-hagiography. The biographical and hagiographical components of the 'medieval' Augustine, would in the early fourteenth century be combined anew by Jordan of Quedlinburg in his attempt to recover and reconstruct the 'historical' Augustine, conscripted for his own Order's foundation, legitimation, and program.

III. THE CREATION OF THE AUGUSTINIAN MYTH

In his *Sermones de sanctis*, composed after 1365, Jordan of Quedlinburg gave a preeminent place to Augustine.⁷¹ Whereas all other doctors of the Church could be compared to stars, Jordan eulogized echoing Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*, only Augustine was worthy of comparison with the sun.⁷² Jordan's estimation of Augustine was so great that he claimed: "...blessed Augustine can be called the city of God...just as whatever is necessary for life can be had in a city, so in blessed Augustine

⁷⁰ *LA*, 120 (849,120); cf. Possid. vita Aug. 11 (74,12-15; *PL* 32,42).

⁷¹ Jordan devoted sermons 129-151 of the 271 sermons of the *Opus Dan* to Augustine; in addition, sermons 59 and 185 are *De translatione Sancti Augustini*.

⁷² "...[Augustinus] ceteros ecclesie doctores tam ingenio quam scientia vicit incomparabiliter. Unde cum aliis doctores assimilentur stellis, ipse soli comparatur." Jor. *OD*, sermo 59D. This image Jordan quoted from *LA*, 120 (841,3-4). Jordan did not, however, simply repeat previous praise. For Jordan, Augustine had renewed the apostolic life after the time of the apostles, see *VF* 3,2 (326ff); and he displayed the same perfections as St. Paul: "Et he sex perfectiones accipiuntur penes sex que contigerunt circa apostolum Paulum cum esset in via versus Damascum, que etiam invenimus in beato Augustino. Prima perfectio est divine gratie preveniens illustratio. Secunda est suiipsius omnimodo delectio. Tertio est divini nutus inspiratio. Quarta est voluntatis in deum totalis transformatio. Quinta est mentis in seipsa ascensio. Sexta est naturalium virium relictio." Jor. *OD*, sermo 135A.

can be found whatever is necessary for salvation.”⁷³ Jordan even went so far as to assert that Augustine’s teaching held such weight “that nothing in divine scriptures is secure that is not confirmed by his authority.”⁷⁴ Augustine was the lord and head of all doctors of the church; he was the *sapiens architector ecclesie*, having restored the foundation of the apostolic life after the time of the apostles.⁷⁵ Augustine was the city on the hill, letting his light shine on all people.⁷⁶ As such, Augustine founded his Order of hermits, his true heirs and sons, who were to be the *imitatores Patris nostri Augustini*; as Jordan insisted in his *Liber Vitasfratrum*, the hermits were to follow Augustine as “the exemplar and rule of all our actions.”⁷⁷ Thus, as Augustine, so was his Order to be the ‘city of God’.⁷⁸

Jordan’s praise of his Order’s founder was echoed within the Order throughout the later Middle Ages. The late fourteenth-century Augustinian, Augustinus Novellus de Padua, extolled Augustine’s works as exceeding those of all other authors in richness, order, and eloquence.⁷⁹ A contemporary, Simon of Cremona (d. after 1390)—the *recollector Hugolini*⁸⁰ — uniformly began each of his sermons with a quotation from

⁷³ “...beatus Augustinus civitas dei dici potest...sicut reperitur in civitate quicquid est necessarium vite, sic in beato Augustino quicquid est necessarium saluti invenitur.” Jor. OD, sermo 130B.

⁷⁴ “Tante enim autoritatis est eius doctrina, ut nihil in divinis scripturis sit solidum quod non sit eius autoritate confirmatum.” Jor. OD, sermo 131A.

⁷⁵ “Beatissimus Augustinus dominus et caput est omnium doctorum. Nam sicut lux inter corpora habet locum primum, sic et hic inter omnes doctores obtinet principatum. Hic est sanctissimus Augustinus, qui tam sapiens architector ecclesiae fundamentum post sanctissimos apostolos construxit et reparavit.” Jor. OD, sermo 130A; cf. VF 3,3 (330,3-332,54).

⁷⁶ “...beatus Augustinus fuit civitas non abscondita sed manifesta cunctibus gentibus.” Jor. OD, sermo 130B; “Nam sicut sol est fontale principium luminis ipsam lunam et stellas illustrans et ad omnem partem suos radios diffundens, sic beatus Augustinus lumen sue sapientie in omnes alios diffundens, quia revera hodie omnes doctores palpitarent in tenebris ignorantie nisi haurirent de fonte sapientie...alii doctores comparantur stellis, Augustinus autem soli, quia sicut sol illuminat totum mundum, sic Augustinus totam ecclesiam perfudit lumine sue sapientie et doctrine.” Jor. OD, sermo 185C.

⁷⁷ “...beatissimus Pater noster Augustinus, qui debet esse omnis nostrae actionis exemplar et regula...” VF 1,11 (36,32-33).

⁷⁸ Cf. LA, 120 (841,12-15).

⁷⁹ “[Augustinus] omnes formae scriptores, qui de rebus sanctis sive in ipsis gentilium sive in nostris litteris ediderint, ubertate, ordine et elegantia superavit.” Augustinus Novellus de Padua, *Sermo ad clerum in honorem S. Augustini*, Basel, UB, MS A.N. IV. 13, fol. 221^r-224^r; 223^r.

⁸⁰ See D. Trapp, “Augustinian Theology of the Fourteenth Century. Notes on Editions, Marginalia, Opinions and Booklore.” *Augustiniana* 6 (1956): 146-274; 255-263.

Augustine, the *lux doctorum*.⁸¹ And the later fifteenth-century General of the Order, Ambrosius de Cora (d. 1485), not only repeated and expanded Jordan's arguments for the primacy of the OESA as the only true heirs of the historical Augustine, but also claimed that the hermits were the first *fratres* to have preached the Gospel to the people.⁸² Singing Augustine's praises was certainly not unique to members of the *Ordo Eremitarum Sancti Augustini*. Yet such hyperbole assumed additional shades of meaning in the writings of the friars. It was not just Augustine who was lauded, but Augustine as the historical founder of the Order.

The creation of the Augustinian myth can be detected and illustrated in four texts, all written between 1322 and 1334. The first is an anonymous *Vita* of Augustine; the second, an anonymous treatise on the origins of the OESA; the third, is Nicholas of Alessandria's *Sermo de Beato Augustino*; and the fourth is Henry of Friemar's *Tractatus de origine et progressu ordinis fratrum heremitarum et vero ac proprio titulo eiusdem*. When read in light of the 'Medieval Augustine', these texts evidence the creation of the mythic Augustine, the appropriation of Augustine for the OESA.⁸³

⁸¹ Simon of Cremona, *Opus epistolarum dominicalium*, Tübingen, UB, MS Mc 329, 125 fols.; e.g.: "...quia ut ait lux doctorum Augustinus de trinitate..." (fol. 1^r); "...doctorum lux Augustinus libro de sancta virginitate capitulo 42..." (fol. 7^r); "...lux doctorum Augustinus in sermone..." (fol. 211^r); "...lux doctorum Augustinus libro de oratione dominica..." (fol. 222^r). Simon's sermons are extant in thirty-two manuscripts and were printed in Reutlingen in 1484; see Zumkeller, *MSS*, nr. 787 (366-368). Zumkeller gives the title as *Sermones super epistolas dominicales*; in the Tübingen MS Simon refers to his work as "...opus epistolarum dominicalium totius anni..." fol. 1^r. The appellation of Augustine as the *lux doctorum* is seen already in a hymn on Augustine from the later thirteenth century: "Salve lux et dux doctorum/ malleus haereticorum/ conterens perfidiam." F.J. Mone, *Lateinische Hymnen des Mittelalters aus Handschriften herausgegeben und erklärt*, 3 vols. (Freiburg, 1853-1855), 3: 205, nr. 815.

⁸² "Ubi nota, quod primi fratres, qui praedicaverunt evangelium populo, fuerunt fratres heremitarum Sancti Augustini." Ambrosius de Cora, *Chronica sacratissimi Ordinis fratrum heremitarum sancti Augustini*, (Rome, 1481), 742; Ambrosius de Cora, *Defensorium Ordinis fratrum heremitarum Sancti Augustini*, (Rome, 1481), 499-616; see also Balbino Rano, "San Agustín y su Orden en Algunos Sermones de Agustinos del Primer Siglo (1244-1344)," *Analecta Augustiniana* 53 (1990): 7-93.

⁸³ For the entire discussion that follows, cf. Rano, "San Agustín y los orígenes de su Orden." For my interpretation of the historical narratives here discussed, I have drawn from Arthur C. Danto, *Narration and Knowledge* (New York, 1985); Adam Zachary Newton, *Narrative Ethics* (Cambridge, MA, 1995); Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, esp. vol. 3 (Chicago, 1988); Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *The Past as Text. The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore, 1997); and Hayden White, *The Content of the Form. Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore, 1987).

A. *The Vita Aurelii Augustini Hipponensis Episcopi*

Manuscript Plut. 90 sup. 48 of the Biblioteca Laurenziana in Florence begins with an anonymous *Vita Aurelii Augustini Hipponensis Episcopi*.⁸⁴ Though the manuscript was written in 1470, the *Vita* was originally composed between 1322 and 1331.⁸⁵ The codex contains a number of saints' lives, as well as the treatise on the origins of the Order and the *Sermo* to be discussed below. The author of the *Vita* was the prior of Santo Spirito, the Augustinian house in Florence. In the later thirteenth century Santo Spirito flourished, benefitting from the commercial growth of the city, becoming, as Arbesmann states, "the religious and cultural center of the *Oltrarno*. As a matter of fact, soon the whole urban district across the Arno was called after Santo Spirito."⁸⁶ From 1287 Santo Spirito was also the site of Order's *studium generale in Curia Romana*.⁸⁷ Thus, Arbesmann concludes that the author of the *Vita* "was a man of administrative skill, experienced in the spiritual guidance of a religious community, and possessed of a keen sense for the needs of the time."⁸⁸ The manuscript as such is an "organic whole," whereby the anonymous compiler put together a "long line of holy ancestors the Augustinian Hermits of his day could claim for their institute."⁸⁹ The Life of Augustine,

...may well be called the cornerstone of the entire series. For, in it, Augustine is pictured as the great successor of the two founders and fathers of eremitical monasticism, St. Anthony and St. Paul the first Hermit. The *Vitae* that follow tell us about the virtues and miracles of holy men who distinguished themselves by their common devotion to the eremitical mode of monastic life which St. Augustine is said to have first organized in the western Church.⁹⁰

The author of the *Vita*, which is rather brief, strung together portions of texts from Augustine's *Confessiones*, though Arbesmann posits an older Life, no longer extant, that served as the direct source.⁹¹ For present purposes the three interpolations Arbesmann identifies as providing an

⁸⁴ For a description of the manuscript, and for an analysis of the *Vita*, see R. Arbesmann, "The 'Vita Aurelii Augustini Hipponensis Episcopi' in Cod. Laurent. Plut. 90 Sup. 48." *Traditio* 18 (1962): 319-355.

⁸⁵ Arbesmann, "Vita," 331-332.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 326-327.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 328.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 329.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 322. For a listing of the contents of the ms. see *ibid.*, 320-321.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 322.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 336ff.

'eremitical gloss' on the text are of greatest importance. The first is the account of Augustine's baptism. Repeating the inherited lore that after his baptism Augustine and Ambrose composed the hymn *Te deum laudamus* spontaneously in alternating phrases, the *Vita* proceeds to claim that Ambrose then invested Augustine in the habit of a hermit, based on the pseudo-Ambrosian *Sermo de baptismo et conversione S. Augustini*.⁹² The second interpolation in the *Vita* Arbesmann points to is the account of Augustine, together with Alipius, Nebridius and Adeodatus, seeking a suitable place for living the monastic life. Finding a group of hermits in Tuscany following the traditions of Paul, the first Hermit, and St. Anthony, Augustine stayed with the Tuscan hermits for some time, and, quoting the *Vita*, "gave to them a way of life (*modus vivendi*), which later he widely established among the clerics and hermits in Africa."⁹³ The third piece of evidence Arbesmann brings forth is the account drawn from Possidius of Augustine's foundation of a monastery within the Church compound after having been made presbyter. Noting that Augustine had been granted both the permission and land for doing so by Bishop Valerius, the author of the *Vita* then comments as follows: "Likewise he established other monasteries in deserted and wooded places."⁹⁴ Taken together, Arbesmann claims:

The aetiological character of the three interpolations we have discussed is obvious. In the first place, they serve to explain the Order's full title: 'ordo fratrum heremitarum sancti Augustini.' Moreover, in our author's time most of the information available concerning the origin of the Order overwhelmingly pointed to Tuscany and the Tuscan Hermits of the thirteenth century. The three legends provided the connecting links between St. Augustine and the Order of the Hermit Friars of St. Augustine as recognized by the popes in the course of that century. They soon became a fixed part in the Order's tradition.⁹⁵

Though the author of the *Vita* gives Augustine's biography a eremitical flavor, he is still rather vague regarding the connections between Augustine's eremiticism, and that of the OESA. In the story of Ambrose investing Augustine in a habit upon his baptism, not found in the previous

⁹² *Ibid.*, 340.

⁹³ "Cum quibus Augustinus aliquo tempore habitans modum vivendi, quem latius postea in Africa clericis et eremitis constituit, eis dedit." Anonymous, *Vita Aurelii Augustini Hipponensis Episcopi*, Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, MS Plut. 90. Sup. 48, fol 1^r-13^r; fol. 7^r (hereafter cited as: Anon. *Vita*); as quoted by Arbesmann, "Vita," 341.

⁹⁴ "Sic ipse alia monasteria construxit in locis desertis et nemorosis." Anon. *Vita*, fol. 8^r; as quoted by Arbesmann, "Vita," 348.

⁹⁵ Arbesmann, "Vita," 349.

lives of Augustine, the phrase included in the *Vita* does not describe the habit Augustine assumed as the habit of the Order.⁹⁶ The second interpolation is inconclusive as well. While emphasizing the eremitical desires of Augustine and his associates, realized, according to the *Vita*, in Tuscany among the group of hermits following Paul and Anthony, there is no explicit connection between the *modus vivendi* Augustine provided for the group, and the *Regula Sancti Augustini*;⁹⁷ the *Vita* only confirms that Augustine gave the Tuscan hermits the same *modus vivendi* that he later established among the clerics and hermits in Africa.⁹⁸ The same ambiguity applies to the account of Augustine's establishing a monastery within the Church compound after his ordination. Arbesmann seemingly tries to make more of the passage than perhaps is warranted, when he states that after the story found in Possidius, the author of the *Vita* "then rather abruptly adds (fol. 8'): 'Sic ipse alia monasteria construxit in locis desertis et nemorosis.'" Arbesmann then presents the lengthier account of Augustine's monastic foundations as present in the treatise on the Order's origins, using the fuller version to explain the one line of the *Vita*. The line in question, however, does not appear as abrupt when read as the conclusion of the passage and in parallel with Possidius:

Possid. vita Aug. 5
(52,1-8; PL 32,37)

Factus ergo presbyter monasterium intra ecclesiam mox instituit et cum Dei servis vivere coepit secundum modum et regulam sub sanctis apostolis constitutam: maxime ut nemo quicquam proprium in illa societate haberet, sed eis essent omnia communia, et distribueretur unicuique

Anon. *Vita*, fol. 8'

Factus ergo presbyter monasterium in illa ecclesia mox instituit et cum dei servis vivere cepit secundum modum et regulam sub sanctis apostolis constitutam.

⁹⁶ "...Ambrosio eum cucullam induente et habitum servorum dei...", Anon. *Vita*, fol. 7r.

⁹⁷ In analyzing Possidius' statement that Augustine upon being made presbyter *cum dei servis vivere coepit secundum modum et regulam sub sanctis apostolis constitutam*, Verheijen dismisses the association of the terms *modus* and *regula* with a monastic Rule in a technical sense: "Mais dans la séquence *secundum modum et regulam*, le terme de *regula* ne peut pas avoir le sens technique de 'règle monastique'. Il doit être plus ou moins identique à celui de *modus*, si bien qu'il faut comprendre 'selon la façon de vivre...'" Verheijen, *Règle*, 2: 183.

⁹⁸ See Arbesmann, "Vita," 341.

sicut opus erat, quod iam ipse prior
fecerat, dum de transmarinis ad sua
remeasset.

Sic ipse alia monasteria construxit in
locis desertis et nemorosis.

The line, *Sic ipse alia monasteria construxit in locis desertis et nemorosis* of the *Vita*, interprets Possidius' *quod iam ipse prior fecerat, dum de transmarinis ad sua remeasset*, yet in so doing leaves the temporal sequence ambiguous: the author does not specify whether Augustine had established "other monasteries" before or after the monastery he founded as presbyter, whereas Possidius' account is clear regarding Augustine's prior monastic life. Though the phrase *in locis desertis et nemorosis* puts an eremitical spin on the account, the *Vita*, in its rewriting of Possidius, refrains from suggesting an unambiguous relationship between Augustine's early monastic life and the OESA.

The clearest association of Augustine's eremiticism with that of the OESA is found in a section which Arbesmann considers to be appendices to the *Vita*,⁹⁹ the third of which,

...is a brief note on the religious Orders which follow the Augustinian Rule (fol. 11^v-12^r). It reflects the beginning of a long-drawn dispute between the Augustinian Hermits and Canons, both claiming for themselves the privilege of being the first religious Order founded by St. Augustine. Showing himself not averse to scholastic reasoning, our author makes the following subtle distinction. The *ordo fratrum heremitarum sancti Augustini* professes the Augustinian Rule *ex institutione*, that is, on the basis of its foundation by St. Augustine, their institute 'having proceeded from those who had received the said Rule from the same father Augustine and had carried his venerable body to Italy.' The *ordo canonicorum regularium*, on the other hand, professes the Augustinian Rule *ex devotione* only, its beginning dating no further back than 'to St. Ruf, bishop in a region of France about the year 1104 from the Incarnation of Our Lord.' Apparently satisfied with having disposed of the difficulty by his clever argument, the author quickly concludes the note with a short reference to the Order of St. Dominic 'and many other Orders of men as well as women.'¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Arbesmann considers the *Vita* to have three appendices, the first consisting of verses in praise of Augustine, the second, an account of the two translations of Augustine's body, and the third, a discussion of the Orders which follow the Augustinian Rule. See Arbesmann, "Vita," 349-353.

¹⁰⁰ Arbesmann, "Vita," 351-352. Arbesmann does not cite the manuscript for his discussion quoted here, though he translates passages therefrom. For the attribution of St. Ruf as the founder of the canons, see Arbesmann, "Vita," 352.

There is, however, nothing in the text that states that Augustine *founded* the OESA. In the manuscript the section of text in question is given the title: *Instituit regulam canonicis*. The text begins by affirming that Augustine 'rewrote' the canonical rule which had been handed down by the apostles after Christ's ascension, but had been neglected for a long time. A multitude of religious follow this Rule and it is avowed by the church of God.¹⁰¹ The author then proceeds to mention the Orders that follow the Rule:

From its institution: the Order which is now called [the Order] of hermit brothers of Saint Augustine, which came about from those having received the said Rule from the same Father Augustine, and from those having carried his venerable body to Italy. From devotion: the Order of Regular Canons, which was begun by Rufus, bishop in a region of France in the year of our Lord's Incarnation 1110; and the Order of Friar Preachers, which was begun by blessed Dominic in the region of Tolouse approximately in the year of our Lord's Incarnation 1200; and many other Orders of men as well as of women.¹⁰²

There is no question that the OESA is given a special status, following the Rule *ex institutione* whereas all others follow the Rule *ex devotione*. Yet though the OESA arose from those who received the Rule from Augustine himself, Augustine did not write his Rule *for* the hermits. Earlier in the *Vita*, as noted above, the author claimed that Augustine provided the Tuscan hermits with a *modus vivendi*, without, however, explicitly designating such as the Rule. Nor is there explicit mention of the Rule in the author's discussion of Augustine's written works.¹⁰³ Leaving no doubt that the OESA has a special status following the Rule *ex institutione*, and providing an eremitical gloss to Augustine's biography not to be found in previous accounts, the author of the *Vita* is indeterminate with regard both to the composition of the Rule and to Augustine's monastic foundations. Moreover, he distances the OESA from Augustine's original

¹⁰¹ "*Instituit regulam canonicis*. Hic denique canonicam regulam ab apostolis post ascensionem domini primo traditam, sed longo tempore post neglectam, luculento sermone rescripsit, quam innumerabilis perfecta sequitur multitudo religiosorum et dei ecclesia multiplici illustrantium virtute profitetur." Anon. *Vita*, fol. 11^v-12^r.

¹⁰² "Ex institutione ordo qui nunc fratrum heremitarum sancti Augustini nuncupatur, qui ex recipientibus ab eodem patro Augustino dictam regulam ac portantibus Italiam eius venerabile corpus evenit. Ex devotione ordo canonicorum regularium, qui ordo Rufo episcopo in partibus Gallie orta annos dominice incarnationis M.CX. [sic] incepit. Et ordo fratrum predicatorum, qui a beato Dominico in partibus Tolosanais circa annos dominice incarnationis M.CC. initium habuit. Multique alii ordines tam marium quam mulierum." Anon. *Vita*, fol. 12^r.

¹⁰³ Anon. *Vita*, fol. 9^v

group of hermits by referring to Augustine's Order as that Order "which is now called the [Order] of Hermits of Saint Augustine [emphasis mine]." ¹⁰⁴ The relationship between Augustine's eremiticism and the OESA had not been firmly established. That would be the accomplishment of the prior of Santo Spirito's contemporaries.

B. *The Initium sive Processus Ordinis Heremitarum Sancti Augustini*

The same manuscript that contains the anonymous *Vita* includes as well a treatise on the origins of the OESA with the title *Initium sive Processus Ordinis Heremitarum Sancti Augustini*. ¹⁰⁵ The author of the *Initium*, as the *Vita*, is not known, though the two works originated in the same general circles. Balbino Rano, the editor of the *Initium*, dates the work approximately to 1330. ¹⁰⁶

The *Initium* places the origins of the OESA within the historical development of western monasticism, with a special focus on the eremitical traditions. Taking Jerome's *Vita sancti Pauli primi eremita* as his point of departure, the author argues that from the early anchorites, namely, Elias, John the Baptist, Anthony and Paul the first Hermit, "every Order and religion of the modern religious takes its origin and beginning." ¹⁰⁷ Following these first hermits, Basil and Pachomius established the apostolic life in the East, ¹⁰⁸ whereas Augustine then did so in the West. After treating Augustine's monastic foundations, the author proceeds to discuss briefly the origins of the other religions, namely, the Benedictines, the Cistercians, the Regular Canons, the Carthusians, the Franciscans and the Dominicans. ¹⁰⁹ He then turns to listing the General priors and the papal approbations of the OESA, beginning in the later twelfth century, and culminating in the Great Union under Alexander IV. His desire to emphasize the antiquity of his Order is clear, when, for example, he begins his discussion of the OESA, having first treated the

¹⁰⁴ See note 102 above.

¹⁰⁵ Anon. *Vita*, fols. 57^v-62^v.

¹⁰⁶ "Debío de ser en un tiempo no posterior aproximadamente al año 1330." Balbino Rano, "Los dos Primeras Obras Conocidas sobre el Origen de la Orden Agustiniiana," *Analecta Augustiniana* 45 (1982): 331-376; 335.

¹⁰⁷ "Ab istis namque anachoritis omnis Ordo et religio modernorum religiosorum sumpsit exordium et principium." Anonymous, *Initium sive Processus Ordinis Heremitarum Sancti Augustini*, ed. Balbino Rano, in "Los dos Primeras Obras Conocidas sobre," 331-351; 337 (hereafter cited as: *Initium*).

¹⁰⁸ *Initium*, 337.

¹⁰⁹ *Initium*, 341. For the treatment of the origins of the other religions, see *Initium*, 341-343.

other Orders, with the phrase, *Ante quorum tempora*.¹¹⁰ Moreover, he portrays the OESA as the genuine inheritors of the ancient eremitical tradition when he concludes that not only the OESA, "but virtually all religions have their beginning and origin from our ancient fathers."¹¹¹ The *Initium* continues with a mystical interpretation of the founders of religious Orders, associating them with Old Testament Fathers. Thus Basil is interpreted as the 'ante diluvian' Enoch, and Augustine is equated with Noah, for Noah "entered the arch of the Lord so that human kind might be saved," and Augustine "entering the Church of God, freed human kind from heretics."¹¹² Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, are then interpreted as the three branches of religious that follow Augustine: "For Shem is interpreted as the Regular Canons, who fight under Augustine's Rule. Ham is understood as those who follow Augustine's Rule and life out of love. But Japheth is interpreted as those brother hermits, who, since they came to their country, having multiplied grasp the world with the example of their holy life and the clarity of knowledge."¹¹³ The entire treatise is designed to prove the temporal and qualitative priority of OESA within the religious life of the Church, based on the example of Augustine, who was "not only the father of hermits, but even lived himself as a hermit."¹¹⁴

Whereas Augustine's eremiticism and its relationship to the OESA in the *Vita* was indistinct, it is explicit in the emplotment of the *Initium*. Based on the *Confessions* and Possidius, the *Initium* goes far beyond the anonymous *Vita* in reconstructing an account of Augustine's early monastic life and offers conclusive evidence for Augustine's composition

¹¹⁰ *Initium*, 344.

¹¹¹ "...non tantum nos, sed fere omnes religiones a nostris patribus antiquis initium et principium habuerunt." *Initium*, 345.

¹¹² "Per patres enim sanctos ante diluvium, quorum Enoch adhuc vivit, patres omnium heremitarum, monachorum, servorum Dei omnium qui ultra mare fuerunt intelligitur beatus Basilius, qui floruit anno CCCLXX, cuius vita et regula usque in presens quam plures vivunt. Per Noë, qui archam Domini, ut salveretur genus humanum, intravit, beatus Augustinus intelligitur, qui intrans Dei Ecclesiam, humanum genus ab hereticis liberavit." *Initium*, 345.

¹¹³ "Per quos triplex genus Augustinum sequentium designatur. Nam per Sen intelliguntur canonici regulares, qui sub eius regulam militant. Per Cam, qui ex amoris calore vitam et regulam Augustini sequuntur. Sed per Iaphet, fratres isti heremite, qui ex quo ad terras venerunt exemplo sancte vite et scientie claritate multiplicati mundum comprehendunt." *Initium*, 345-346.

¹¹⁴ "Et multa alia dicit, que manifestissime ostendunt eum non tantum heremitarum patrem, verum etiam ipsum heremitam fuisse." *Initium*, 340.

of the Rule for his first group of hermits, who were the forebearers of the OESA:

Possid. vita Aug.
(52,1-8; PL 32,37)

Anon. *Vita*, fol. 8^r-12^r

Initium, 338-340

Factus ergo presbyter monasterium intra ecclesiam mox instituit et cum Dei servis vivere coepit secundum modum et regulam sub sanctis apostolis constitutam: maxime ut nemo quicquam proprium in illa societate haberet, sed eis essent omnia communia, et distribueretur unicuique sicut opus erat, quod iam ipse prior fecerat, dum de transmarinis ad sua remeasset.

Factus ergo presbyter monasterium in illa ecclesia mox instituit et cum dei servis vivere cepit secundum modum et regulam sub sanctis apostolis constitutam. Sic ipse alia monasteria construxit in locis desertis et nemorosis. (fol. 8^r)...

Instituit regulam canonicis: Hic denique canonicam regulam ab apostolis post ascensionem Domini primo traditam, sed longo tempore post neglectam, luculento sermone rescripsit, quam innumerabilis perfecta sequitur multitudo religiosorum et dei ecclesia multiplici illustantium virtute proficitur. (fol. 11^v-12^r)

Circa quod tempus in Italia primo, deinde in Affrica, beatus pater Augustinus et doctor regulam apostolicam post Domini ascensionem ab apostolis traditam, sed diu neglectam, luculento sermone conscripsit ... Et in *legenda sua*, quam scripsit sanctus Possidonius episcopus, dicitur quod ordinato Augustino in iponensi ecclesia sacerdote, mox monasterium servorum Dei instituit, et cepit secundum regulam apostolicam vivere, quam ipse prius fecerat dum a transmarinis ad sua remeasset. Que omnia [probant] nedum quod ipsam regulam in Italia instituerit, immo quod ipse anacorita, dum fuit in Italia post suam conversionem, extiterit.

From the comparison of the *Initium* with the *Vita* and Possidius, a number of observations can be made. Possidius makes no mention of Augustine's composition of a monastic Rule, but simply notes his foundation of a

monastery upon being made presbyter, though Possidius comments that Augustine had previously lived a monastic life. As discussed above, the *Vita* includes this passage from Possidius, yet 'summarizes' the ending of Possidius' account without giving any temporal indication of when Augustine had founded the 'other monasteries'. The *Vita*, then, in an 'appendix', includes a discussion of Augustine's composing his Rule, an account not found in Possidius, nor the other medieval *vitae*. The *Initium* includes these two passages of text from the *Vita*, but inverts the order. The account of Augustine having composed the Rule comes first in the *Initium*, and does so in words very similar to the *Vita*. The comment that Augustine 'eloquently put together in writing the apostolic rule handed down by the apostles after the Lord's ascension, but for a long time neglected,' appears only in the *Vita* and the *Initium*, which suggests that one text either borrowed from the other, or that both had a common source. Given the textual variations of the phrase between the *Vita* and the *Initium*, it is unlikely that the author of the *Vita* drew from the *Initium*; the text in the *Initium* is far more explicit with regard to Augustine's active composition of the Rule and its relationship to the OESA. Whereas the *Vita* gives this account to begin the appendix dealing with Augustine's institution of the Rule, referring to Augustine simply in the third person, leaving him unnamed in the text (*Hic denique canonicam regulam...rescripsit*),¹¹⁵ the *Initium* designates Augustine as *beatus pater Augustinus et doctor*. Further, whereas the *Vita* has Augustine 'writing again' the canonical Rule handed down by the apostles, the *Initium* distances the Rule from all canonical connotations, and gives Augustine a far more active role in claiming that blessed father and doctor Augustine 'put together in writing the apostolic rule' (*regulam apostolicam ... conscripsit*).

The *Initium* then continues by discussing the various possible locations for Augustine's first eremitical community. Whereas the *Vita* was vague concerning the chronotopic account of Augustine's monasticism, the *Initium* is explicit: "first in Italy, then in Africa."¹¹⁶ The precise location of Augustine's first hermitage, however, is left indeterminate; the author of the *Initium* mentions the possibility of Milan, Mons Pisanus, and Centumcellae, but notes that a decisive answer cannot be given due to the length of time this occurred in the past, and the scarcity of sources (*ex longitudine temporis quam ex pigritia scriptorum*). It could even have been, the author suggests, in several places where this took place.

¹¹⁵ Anon. *Vita*, fol. 11^v.

¹¹⁶ "...in Italia primo, deinde in Affrica..." *Initium*, 338.

Nevertheless, it was most certainly in Italy, and for that first community, Augustine wrote his Rule.¹¹⁷ The author continues with a brief discussion of Monica's death, and then includes the passage from Possidius, affirming that upon being ordained presbyter by bishop Valerius, Augustine founded a monastery and lived according to the apostolic rule, "which he had previously done when he returned from across the sea to his homeland."¹¹⁸ Whereas the *Vita* summarized this line from Possidius with the nebulous reference to "other monasteries in desert and wooded places," the *Initium* used Possidius' testimony as proof of the Italian origins of Augustine's eremiticism: "All these things show no doubt that [Augustine] instituted his own Rule in Italy, and even more so, that he himself lived as an anchorite in Italy after his conversion."¹¹⁹ In contrast to the narratives of the medieval tradition, as well as that of the Florentine *Vita*, which employed Possidius' remark *which he had previously done when he returned from across the sea to his homeland*, as a vague conclusion, or even afterthought, to the account of Augustine's establishing a monastery after having been made presbyter, the *Initium* gives the phrase content by having first established Augustine's composition of the Rule for his first eremitical community in Italy, to which then Possidius' phrase, *...which he had previously done... (iam ipse prior fecerat)* refers back in the emplotment of the *Initium*. As if to leave no doubt, the author of the *Initium* changed Possidius' "[Augustine] began to live...according to the custom and way of life established by the holy apostles," simply repeated by the author of the *Vita*, to "[Augustine] began to live according to the apostolic Rule," whereby in place of the somewhat vague "according to the custom and way of life constituted by the apostles," (*secundum modum et regulam sub sanctis apostolis constitutam*), the author of the *Initium* referred back to the 'apostolic rule' (*regulam apostolicam*) which "blessed father and doctor Augustine put together in writing," (*beatus pater Augustinus et doctor...conscripsit*).

The author of the *Initium* did not stop here with his rewriting of Possidius. Having sufficiently dealt with Augustine's eremitical origins in Italy, the author then turned to Africa. Whereas Possidius simply reported Augustine's establishing a monastery within the Church compound after having been made presbyter, the *Initium* claimed that Augustine lived an eremitical life, "according to the apostolic Rule," with blessed Valerius in

¹¹⁷ *Initium*, 338-339.

¹¹⁸ *Initium*, 339-340.

¹¹⁹ "Que omnia [probant] nedum quod ipsam regulam in Italia instituerit, immo quod ipse anacrita, dum fuit in Italia post suam conversionem, extiterit." *Initium*, 340.

a villa.¹²⁰ For this passage the author might have been taking his inspiration from Philip of Harvengt's *Vita*, rather than from Possidius. As seen above, Philip claimed that Valerius gave Augustine a garden in which to establish a monastery after having ordained him as presbyter, which seems more closely related to a villa than does Possidius' wording, *intra ecclesiam*. The point to be made is that the *Initium* is clear that Augustine's second eremitical community was that in Hippo, together with Valerius. After his ordination as bishop, the author continued, Augustine then "founded many monasteries in solitary places, in which he stayed, as the father of many, teaching, correcting and regulating his very own anchoritic sons, so that they might serve God worthily in keeping with the apostolic Rule."¹²¹ Taken all together, the author concluded, it is manifestly clear that Augustine "was not only the father of the hermits, but even was himself a hermit."¹²²

Such a statement was not without political implications in 1330. It was made precisely when the OESA was in negotiations with the Regular Canons concerning custody of Augustine's tomb in St. Peter in Ciel d'Oro in Pavia, having been granted such privilege in 1327, yet unable to establish themselves as custodians until 1331.¹²³ The *Initium* was not written simply for the edification of members of the OESA. After asserting Augustine's eremitical foundations and life, the author then launched a frontal attack against his opponents:

Nor does it matter that the Regular Canons say that they received the Rule from blessed Augustine in Africa, whereby they call themselves Canons of St. Augustine. Wherefore they would have cause, some say, because in Africa Augustine gave his Rule and founded monasteries as much to and for the Canons as to and for hermits, and that we did not come about from the said hermits. This does not seem to be true with regard to the Canons, since Abbot

¹²⁰ "In Affrica vero, ut ipse dicit in *sermone de vita clericorum*, quod cum beato Valentino [*sic*] in villa habitabat, et secundum regulam apostolicam vivebant." *Initium*, 340.

¹²¹ "Et postquam episcopus fuit yponensis, quam plurima monasteria in solitudine construxit, in quibus sicut pater plurimum morabatur, ipsos suos filios anacortas instruendo, corrigendo et ordinando, ut Deo digne et secundum regulam apostolicam servirent." *Initium*, 340.

¹²² After citing an apocryphal phrase from Augustine's *In Iohannis Evangelium*, and from the pseudo-Augustinian *sermo de passione Domini Nostri Iesu Christi*, the author concludes: "Et multa alia dicit, que manifestissime ostendunt eum non tantum heremitarum patrem, verum etiam ipsum heremitam fuisse." *Initium*, 340.

¹²³ See Arbesmann, "Vita," 332; cf. Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, (Cambridge, MA, 1991), 180 and *passim*.

Ioachim said that the Regular Canons had their beginning from blessed Rufus, bishop in parts of France.¹²⁴

The author established both the antiquity of the OESA and its continuity with Augustine's original eremitical communities by then briefly discussing the origins of the various religious Orders, and the manifestation and approbation of the OESA in the context of that development.¹²⁵ Under the papacies of Alexander III, Innocent III, Gregory IX and Alexander IV, the prior generals of the Order received special privileges. Alexander IV, however, played a special role:

Pope Alexander, from his love of blessed Augustine, [who] appeared to him in a vision with a large head, but small body, in the first year of his pontificate increased the Order as much in members as in privileges, bringing together into this Order the Bricinenses, the Brethern of Favali, the followers of Friar John Bonus, and the Williamites, granting the Order privileges as never before to any other religion.¹²⁶

This is the earliest account of Alexander's vision of Augustine in association with the Great Union. As we will see, it would be repeated by Nicholas of Alessandria, Henry of Friemar and Jordan of Quedlinburg.¹²⁷ With this account, the *Initium* established a connection between Augustine's original foundation of hermits in Italy, and his role in Alexander's establishing the OESA in the Great Union. There is a continuity between Augustine's eremiticism, and the eremiticism of the Augustinian Order, emphasized by the *Initium's* concluding by returning to Jerome's discussion of the early desert fathers, to which Augustine and his hermits are added.¹²⁸ With the *Initium*, Augustine was not simply the

¹²⁴ "Nec obstat quod canonici regulares dicunt quod a beato Augustino in Affrica regulam receperint, ex quo dicunt se canonicos beati Augustini. Unde motivum habuerint, quidam dicunt, quod tam canonicis quam ipsis heremitis in Affrica regulam dedit et monasteria construxit, et a dictis heremitis non evenimus. De canonicis non videtur verum, quoniam abbas Iohachyn dicit quod canonici regulares initium habuerunt a beato Rufo episcopo in partibus Galliae." *Initium*, 341.

¹²⁵ *Initium*, 341. For the discussion of the origins of the various Orders, see *Initium*, 342-343.

¹²⁶ "... predictus papa Alexander ab amore beati Augustini, ei in visione magnus capite et parvus membris apparens, primo anno sui pontificatus predictum Ordinem tam in personis quam in gratiis augmentavit, huic Ordini brictones, fabarios, iambonitas, atque guglielmitas iungendo, gratias numquam similes alicui religioni traditas [condonando]..." *Initium*, 345.

¹²⁷ Arbesmann argued that Henry's account of the vision in his *Tractatus* was the first Augustinian mention of the vision; see Arbesmann, *HFT*, 131. Henry's and Jordan's treatments of the vision will be discussed below.

¹²⁸ *Initium*, 349.

historical bishop of Hippo and author of the apostolic Rule; for the OESA he had become *pater noster*.

C. Nicholas of Alessandria's Sermo de beato Augustino

The third text in the Laurenziana manuscript that pertains to the creation of the Augustinian myth is a sermon on Augustine, preached in Paris in 1332 by Nicholas of Alessandria, edited together with the *Initium* by Rano. Nicholas of Alessandria became master of theology at Paris in 1333, and attended the General Chapter at Grasse in 1335, where the negotiations with the Regular Canons over the custody of Augustine's tomb were confirmed. Three years later he was also present in Siena at the General Chapter which renewed affirmation of the agreement. He may be the same Nicolas de Alessandria designated as 'lector in the Curia' on 19 May 1327, who together with the Prior General William of Cremona and three others entered negotiations with the Canons and the commune of Pavia regarding Augustine's tomb.¹²⁹ His *Sermo de beato Augustino* in any event clearly testifies to his commitment to and skill in presenting the Hermits' case.

The sermon is divided into two distinct parts. The first consists of praises of Augustine's learning, character, and service to the Church, taking the pericope from 1 Maccabees 2:17: *Magnus es in hac civitate et ornatus fratribus et filiis*. In part two Nicholas turned to the history and development of western monasticism, beginning with Paul the first Hermit and Anthony. He continued by tracing the dispersals of the earliest eremitical groups, some of whom settled in Italy. Nicholas then treated Augustine's conversion and early monastic experiences, his composition of the Rule for the Tuscan Hermits, his return to Africa and his establishment of monasteries there. Virtually skipping over Augustine's life after his monastic foundations, Nicholas moved rather quickly to a brief mention of Augustine's death and the translations of his body, before finally arriving at the development of the Augustinian Hermits, placed chronologically well before the origins of the other Orders, namely, the Regular Canons, the Franciscans, and the Dominicans. He proceeded with his account by listing the earliest known Priors General of the Order, pointing to the papal privileges they received, and the papal approbations of the Order culminating in Alexander IV's Great Union, concluding with a list of the Priors General of the Order through William of Cremona and the OESA assuming custody of Augustine's tomb. The sermon closes with what could

¹²⁹ Rano, "Las Dos Primeras Obras Conocidas," 353-354.

be seen as a third section, though which functions as a final *determinatio* of the matter at hand: Nicholas offered eight arguments and three proofs from authority to establish once and for all that Augustine not only was the founder of the Hermits, but also lived himself as one, thereby authenticating the historical continuity between Augustine's eremitical life, and that of the OESA.

In Nicholas' sermon the representation is intensified in three respects: first, the detail given regarding Augustine's composition of the Rule and foundation of monasteries; second, the argument against the Canons; and third, the mythic elements of the historical account.

In Nicholas' historical reconstruction there is no longer a question regarding Augustine's composition of the Rule for his first eremitical community in Italy, nor where that first community was located. As stated above, the second part of the sermon begins with an account of the origins of eremitical monasticism with Paul the first Hermit and Anthony. From these origins, the eremitical life had three branches, founded by Basil and Pachomius in the East, and by Augustine in the West.¹³⁰ The followers of Paul and Anthony were dispersed by a combination of persecutions and divine providence. As a result, some of these early hermits came to Italy. There, they heard of a group of hermits living between Rome and Viterbo, who had originated from two groups: one around a hermit named Anthony, who lived on Mons Pisanus, and the other, the group of hermits led by blessed Mamilianus, who lived near Sardinia.¹³¹ The new arrivals joined the group in the hermitage between Rome and Viterbo, and there the community grew and prospered, and built one hundred cells, in the place called Centumcellae. The inhabitants of the region built for the hermits a church dedicated to the Holy Trinity, and there, Nicholas affirmed, "in the course of time, was the first location of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine."¹³² The reason for this Nicholas gave a little later on in the sermon. Turning to Augustine's conversion and baptism, Nicholas repeated the story of Augustine and Ambrose composing the *Te deum laudamus*. He

¹³⁰ Nicolas de Alessandria, *Sermo de Beato Augustino*, ed. Balbino Rano, in "Los dos Primeras Obras Conocidas," 353-364 (hereafter cited as: Nic.Al. *Sermo*); cf. *Initium*, 337-338.

¹³¹ Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 364. In the Laurenziana manuscript a short *Vita* of Mamilianus follows directly that of Augustine; Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, MS Plut. 90 Sup. 48, fol. 13^r-15^v.

¹³² "Dicti autem heremite in prefata heremo inter Romam et Viterbium in tantum numero et merito satis cito creverunt, quod ibidem C cellas construxerunt iuxta locum qui Centum cellis dicitur et habitatores illius regionis in dicta heremo ecclesiam in honorem Sancte Trinitatis ipsis fratribus edificarunt et ibi in processu temporis fuit primus locus Ordinis heremitarum sancti Augustini..." Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 365.

then relates how for more than a year Augustine lived in the hermitage of Ambrose and Simplicianus outside Milan to be taught by his two seniors, who had been so instrumental in his conversion. Augustine did not at that time compose his Rule, since, Nicholas affirmed, he lived with Ambrose and Simplicianus as their student, not as their master.¹³³ During this period Augustine was persuaded by his mother to return to Africa, and on their way, they came upon the community of hermits in Centumcellae and stayed with them for a period of approximately two years. Asked by the community, Augustine composed his Rule for the group, "and from that time on they were called the hermit brothers of Augustine by reason of the Rule given to them, whereas previously they were only called hermits."¹³⁴ Moreover, Nicholas also gives a precise date for the Rule's composition. In the first section of the sermon, in praising Augustine's administrative abilities, Nicholas used Augustine's providing a Rule as an example, which "he composed," Nicholas affirmed, "940 years ago."¹³⁵ Since the sermon is explicitly dated in 1332,¹³⁶ Nicholas assigned the composition of the *Regula Sancti Augustini* to the year 392.¹³⁷

Nicholas continued to build an argument from biographical details. At the time of his baptism Augustine was thirty years old and he was thirty-three when Monica died at Ostia. Thus, Nicholas argued, he spent

¹³³ Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 366-367.

¹³⁴ "Instigante autem pia matre que affectabat eodem sepulcro cum viro suo in propria civitate recondi, ut ipse dicit 9 *Confess.*, ad Affricam...remeabat querens cottidie locum sibi aptum ad serviendum Deo. Cum vero ad introitum Tussie percinxit, plures servos Dei heremiticam vitam ducentes tam in monte Pisano quam in locis aliis ad predictam vitam aptis in dicta provincia invenit, et tandem ad locum Centumcellarum applicuit. Cum quibus fratribus diu commoratus, rogatus ab eis ut regulam et normam vivendi [traderet], ipsis composuit in loco sancte Trinitatis de Centumcellis. Et ex tunc vocati sunt fratres heremite Augustini ratione regule date qui prius heremite tantummodo dicebantur." Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 367. Nicholas continues by noting the aptness of Augustine's composing the Rule for the hermits in the church of the Holy Trinity; *ibid.*

¹³⁵ "Tertio, requiritur in prelato bono regularitas familie. Opus enim laudat opificem. Qualis enim est rex talis lex et talis grex. Quomodo autem beatus Augustinus regularem familiam statuerit patet satis ex ordinatissima regula sua, sub qua quasi infiniti regulariter et sancte vivunt et vixerunt. Iam iam sunt anni 940 quam composuit modo qui in fine narrabitur." Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 361.

¹³⁶ The explicit states: "Hec Magister Nicolaus de Allexandria, anno Domini M CCC XXXII, Parisiis." Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 376.

¹³⁷ For contemporary scholarship's dating of the Rule, see Lawless, *Augustine of Hippo and his Monastic Rule*, 148-154; Lawless reviews the various scholarly opinions and then concludes: "Barring more convincing evidence to the contrary, c. 397 seems to be a more likely time of composition for Augustine's Rule." *Ibid.*, 153. Nicholas seems not to have recognized the problem his dating posed for his argument, since at least by contemporary reconstructions, Augustine was ordained presbyter in 391.

approximately two years with the Tuscan hermits and one in the hermitage at Milan.¹³⁸ Nicholas then brought in Possidius as proof text, citing the passage: "having been ordained presbyter, Augustine established a monastery and began to live with the servants of God according to the custom and way of life established by the holy apostles."¹³⁹ This clinches the argument for Nicholas: "From this it is perfectly clear that Augustine instituted and lived by the said Rule first in Italy."¹⁴⁰ Above I have stressed the ambiguity to which this phrase in Possidius gave rise. Even the author of the *Initium* was vague regarding the precise location of Augustine's first eremitical community for which he composed the Rule, affirming only, and using this line of Possidius as proof, that it was first in Italy. With Nicholas clarity was achieved. Possidius' *which he had previously done when he returned from across the sea to his homeland*, refers to Augustine's composing the Rule in 392 for the Tuscan hermits in Centumcellae, which was the first location of the *Ordo Eremitarum Sancti Augustini*.

Nicholas was just as precise with regard to Augustine's monastic foundations. The first was that in Centumcellae. Nicholas then proceeded to Augustine's arrival in Africa, where together with his friends, he was received by Bishop Valerius. Regarding the African theater of Augustine's monastic operations, in the *Initium* only explicit mention is made of the villa which Valerius gave to Augustine, together with the further comment that Augustine founded many monasteries after he was ordained bishop, though the author of the *Initium* used Possidius' account of Augustine's monastic foundation upon being made presbyter as proof of the Italian priority of Augustine's eremiticism.¹⁴¹ In comparison, Nicholas restored the proper order, as well as having combined Philip of Harvengt's garden with the *Initium*'s villa: after Augustine was received by Valerius, "Valerius gave him a certain garden in a certain wooded villa, so that together with his associates who followed him, they could live an eremitical and solitary life."¹⁴² Thereafter, having been ordained presbyter, Augustine founded another monastery adjoined to the church in

¹³⁸ Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 367-368.

¹³⁹ "...factus presbyter instituit monasterium et cepit vivere secundum regulam sub sanctis apostolis constitutam, quod ipse [*scripsi*; ipsum ed. Rano] prior fecerat, cum a transmarinis ad propria remeasset." Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 368.

¹⁴⁰ "Ex quo manifeste patet quod dictam regulam instituit et servavit primo in Ytalia." Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 368.

¹⁴¹ See note 119 above.

¹⁴² "Defuncta igitur matre Augustini apud Hostia tyberina, in Affricam cum sociis profectus est, quem sanctus Valerius yponensis episcopus paterne suscepit et ei quemdam hortulum in quadam villa silvestri dedit, ut ibidem cum sociis qui ei adherebant solitariam et solitam agerent vitam." Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 368.

Hippo, repeating the account of Possidius.¹⁴³ Finally as bishop, Augustine founded many monasteries and hermitages "in which the servants of God, in keeping with the way of life and habit which he had seen in Italy, might live according to the Rule which he had composed."¹⁴⁴ Nicholas thus clearly distinguished four stages of Augustine's monastic foundations. The first was in Centumcellae; the second was in Valerius' garden/villa; the third was in the church compound in Hippo after having been made presbyter; and the fourth was multiple foundations after having been ordained bishop. Such clarity was called for in 1332 precisely due to the on-going debates having been initiated over whether Augustine originally wrote his Rule for the Canons or for the Hermits. Nicholas left no doubt.

With his precision of detail and dating concerning the development of Augustine's eremiticism, Nicholas was clear that Augustine *first* founded his Order of Hermits. Moreover, in Nicholas' representation a new argument for the OESA's priority over against the Regular Canons is advanced: the Order's habit. After delineating the four stages of Augustine's monastic foundations, Nicholas then argued:

Some however believe that the friars, because they were hermit friars only lived in the said place and in other similar places outside the city, and in Augustine's monastery adjoined to the Church in Hippo, lived the Regular Canons. But if truth be known this was not the case, as much because all religious overseas are clothed with a black tunic girded with a belt, as the friars of St. Basil, as because at that time no one in that region had seen such a habit as that which the Regular Canons now wear, and because Abbot Joachim in his *Exposition on the Apocalypse* clearly said that the Regular Canons had their origin from blessed Rufus, bishop in parts of France, approximately in the year of our Lord 1090. The Canons were called the Canons of St. Augustine, because Rufus gave them Augustine's Rule. From these Canons in time came blessed Dominic.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 368.

¹⁴⁴ "Quando autem fuit in dicta ecclesia yponensis episcopus ordinatus, quam plura monasteria solitaria et heremitica construxit, in quibus servi Dei iuxta morem et habitum quem in Ytalia viderat regulam ab eo conditam servabant..." Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 369.

¹⁴⁵ "Quidam autem quod fratres credunt quod fratres heremite solum in dicto loco et similibus extra civitatem habitarent et in illo monasterio, iuxta ecclesiam Canonici regulares, sed, salva veritate, hoc non videtur, tum quia omnes religiosi ultramarini tunica nigra desuper cincta zona induuntur, ut fratres sancti Basilii, tum quia illo tempore nullus ibi talem habitum vidit qualem nunc portant Canonici regulares, tum quia abbas Joachim in *expositione super apokalisim* [sic] expresse dicit quod Canonici regulares ortum habuerunt a beato Rufo episcopo in partibus Gallie circa annos Domini M^oXC. Dicuntur tamen Canonici sancti Augustini, quia beatus Rufus eis regulam beati Augustini dedit. Ex quibus Canonis in processu temporis fuit beatus Dominicus." Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 369-370.

Nicholas had previously concluded the first part of his sermon with the same argument, placed in context of his exposition of the pericope, making the distinction between Augustine's brothers (*fratres*) and sons (*filii*). Augustine's brothers are all those who founded Orders based on his Rule, such as the Regular Canons, founded by Rufus, the Order of Preachers, founded by Dominic, and many others.¹⁴⁶ "But we," Nicholas continued,

are Augustine's sons, born immediately from him, and therefore we clearly carry his sign, namely the habit which he used directly after his baptism. For never overseas had such a habit been seen as that which the Regular Canons wear, but all religious were clothed in black, and girded with a belt over the tunic.¹⁴⁷

For Nicholas the habit itself differentiated the OESA from the Regular Canons, and was a sign of the primacy of Augustine's foundation. The habit of the OESA was that of Augustine, from the time of his baptism, and was one that only his true sons were entitled to share. It is only in light of the force of his argument that Nicholas can then make such conciliatory comments as the one with which he concluded his proof of the Hermits' priority: "The issue, however, is not to be greatly disputed, especially because if Augustine founded that Order and ours, it all goes to the praise of that glorious father, how very many sons in Christ he bore."¹⁴⁸

Nicholas' historical evidence and arguments were designed to present convincing proof of Augustine's original foundation of the OESA. Embedded within the fictive narrative of the historical facts, however, were mythic elements. As the author of the *Initium*, Nicholas included the account of Augustine appearing to Alexander IV as catalyst for the Great Union:

Initium, 344-345

Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 372

Insuper tempore Alessandri pape
III^{ti} erat prior predicti Ordinis frater
Phylippus de Parrana, supernorum

Tempore Allexandri quarti, frater
Philippus de Parana [prior generalis
fuit]. Quo tempore beatus Augusti-

¹⁴⁶ Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 363.

¹⁴⁷ "Sed nos sumus filii immediate ab eo geniti, ideo plene portamus signum ipsius, scilicet habitum quo usus fuit statim post conversionem. Nunquam enim ultra mare talis habitus visus est qualem portant Canonici regulares, sed omnes religiosi induuntur de nigro et super latam tunicam corrigia cinguntur." Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 363.

¹⁴⁸ "Non est autem in hoc disputandum, maxime quia, et si illum Ordinem et nostrum instituit, totum ad laudem ipsius gloriosi patris cedit quanto plures filios in Christo genuit." Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 370.

amator et lampas luminis virtutum. Cuius tempore predictus papa Alexander ab amore beati Augustini, ei in visione magnus capite et parvus membris apparens, primo anno sui pontificatus predictum Ordinem tam in personis quam in gratiis augmentavit, huic Ordini brictones, fabarios, iambonitas, atque guglielmitas iungendo, gratias numquam similes alicui religioni traditas [condonando], ut in suis privilegiis continetur, predictum fratrem Phylippum volens, ut antea erat, priorem dicti Ordinis preficere, qui obmissis huius gratia multis lacrimis fere recusare obtinuit. Et tunc fratrem Lanfranchum de Mediolano, virum prudentem, eis priorem instituit generalem, ut per se suosque, fideles a vitiis et a peccatis franchos faceret, quod plene usque in hodiernum diem faciunt et facient de bono in melius in agro Domini mirifice fructificantes, ipso auxiliante, qui est unus in substantia, trinus in personis. Qui est laudabilis et benedictus in secula seculorum. Amen.

nus dicto pape Allexandro in visione apparuit grandis capite, sed membris exilis, ut ipse Papa testatus est, ex quo motus fuit dicto nostro Ordini unire plures alios Ordines qui erant aqualiter heremite, scilicet britones et sabarios, inter quos multi sic uniti erant in marchia Anconitana, guillemmitas et iambonitas.

Tunc autem adimpleta fuit prophetia abbatis Joachim in *expositione* quam fecit *super apokalypsim*, ubi dicit: Surgit [sic] ordo novus qui videtur novus et non est, induti nigris vestibus et accincti desuper zona. Hii crescent et fama divulgabitur ipsorum et predicabunt fidem quam defendent usque in finem mundi. Per angelos enim istos intelliguntur aliqui ordinis iustorum, quorum unus erit fervens et ardens ad secandam vineam reproborum ac si spiritu Elye. Qui erit ordo heremitarum emulantium vitam angelorum, quorum vita erit quasi ignis ardens in amore et zelo Dei ad comburendum tribulos et spinas, ne mali abutantur amplius patientiae Dei. Surgent enim equi nigri et hii defendent Ecclesiam et fides singulariter erit in eis et predicabunt veritatem et resistent filio iniquitatis et usque in finem fortiter stabunt. Gaudeant ergo heremitarum duces, quorum pater Paulus primus heremita. Hec ille.

Facta autem unione omnium predictorum heremitarum sancti Augustini generalis prior fuit frater Lanfranchus de Mediolano per ecclesiam Romanam institutus.

In the *Initium*, Alexander is moved by his own love for Augustine, who then appeared to him with a large head but small body, whereupon Alexander effected the Union. With Nicholas there is a change, which can be seen as an intensification of the mythic. Nicholas nowhere mentions Alexander's love for Augustine. Augustine assumes a more active role with Nicholas, whereby based on Augustine's appearing to Alexander, Alexander was moved to act, whereas in the *Initium*, Alexander's love for Augustine preceded the vision, which then prompted his action. The author of the *Initium* makes Alexander the subject of the verb, performing the activity, adding the vision in a dependent clause — *Alexander ... augmentavit* — whereas Nicholas places the verbal action with Augustine — *Augustinus ... apparuit* — attributing to Alexander a passive role — *ex quo motus fuit ... unire*.¹⁴⁹ Such re-employment would then later become even more definite in Jordan's narration, when Jordan claimed that Augustine appeared to Alexander, as a divine oracle, wanting to end the dispersion of his own religion.¹⁵⁰ There is a marked shift in the attribution of the initiative for the Great Union from Alexander to Augustine.¹⁵¹ Nicholas goes even further when he then associates for the first time the foundation of the OESA in the Great Union with the *novus ordo* prophesied by Joachim.

All the evidence taken together, Nicholas claimed, proves that "blessed Augustine was the leader, teacher, head and father of the hermits."¹⁵² Nicholas concluded by arguing that the Church's approbation of the Order did not occur by chance, but that the Church declared the OESA to be the true sons of Augustine with good reason, and had from ancient times. Thus the Order merits its unique title, even if other orders as well follow Augustine's Rule.¹⁵³ Nicholas' intensifications of the

¹⁴⁹ Nicolas continued with a list of the Order's prior generals, extending to and including William of Cremona; see Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 372-373.

¹⁵⁰ VF 1,14 (47,80-85).

¹⁵¹ The shift is from the *Initium*'s *Alexander ab amore beati Augustini, ei in visione...apparens...augmentavit*.; to Nicolas' *beatus Augustinus dicto pape Allexandro in visione apparuit...ex quo motus fuit dicto nostro Ordini unire*.; and then to Jordan's *beatus Augustinus, volens dispersionem suae Religionis congregari...in visione apparuit...ex qua visione velut divino oraculo papa commonitus unionem...consummavit*. See also Rano, "San Agustín y los orígenes de su Orden," 658-667; and esp. 658-659, where Rano also presents these three versions, together with Henry of Friemar's, in chronological succession, without, however, commenting on the relationship between them and construction of the myth.

¹⁵² "Sic ergo apparet quod beatus Augustinus dux, magister, caput et pater fuit heremitarum." Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 373.

¹⁵³ Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 375-376.

historical details combined with mythic elements and his campaign against the Regular Canons, heightened as well the security of his co-religious listening to his sermon in Paris in 1332; as the true sons of Augustine they and they alone were entitled to call Augustine *pater noster*. The same essential argumentation and strategy would two years later be formulated anew in the first treatise explicitly written in defense of the Order, the *Tractatus* of Henry of Friemar.

D. Henry of Friemar's *Tractatus*

In 1334, as he was nearing the end of his career, Henry of Friemar composed his *Tractatus de origine et progressu ordinis fratrum heremitarum et vero ac proprio titulo eiusdem*. Henry began his treatise with a statement of purpose:

Because some, being ignorant of the path of conversion and comportment of the most glorious doctor, blessed Augustine, our unique father and patron, are able to question by what reason the brothers of our religion are especially said to be the brothers of the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine in comparison with the other religious professing his Rule, the above stated truth, namely, wherefore justly and rationally such a title is attributed especially to us by the holy Roman church, is therefore able to be made know in three ways.¹⁵⁴

Henry then notes that such a truth is evident from Augustine's conversion, from his comportment, and from various statements and deeds concerning the Order's approbation.¹⁵⁵ These he treated in chapters one through three respectively, before summarizing the evidence in chapter four. Chapter five then continues with an enumeration of the Priors General of the Order, both before and after the Great Union. The treatise concludes with a short chapter highlighting the Order's brothers of famous sanctity. Throughout Henry was clear that his purpose was to offer conclusive proof that only the OESA had the right to be called the true sons of Augustine, whose origins can be traced from the time of Augustine himself. In so doing, Henry also contributed to the creation of the Augustinian myth.

¹⁵⁴ "Quia nonnulli ignorantes modum conversionis et actum conversationis gloriosissimi doctoris beati Augustini, singularis patris nostri et patroni, possent dubitare, ex qua ratione fratres nostrae religionis prae ceteris religiosis suam regulam profitentibus fratres ordinis eremitarum sancti Augustini specialiter dicerentur: ideo praedicta veritas, quare videlicet iuste et rationabiliter nobis per sanctam Romanam ecclesiam sit talis titulus specialiter attributus, potest via triplici declarari." Hen. *Tract.* 1 (90,1-8). I have translated *actus conversationis* as comportment, to distinguish this term from *modus vivendi*.

¹⁵⁵ Hen. *Tract.* 1 (90,9-11).

In chapter one Henry addressed Augustine's conversion and baptism. The catalysts for his baptism were divine inspiration, and the erudition of St. Ambrose. Yet in conjunction with these, was the influence of Simplicianus. According to Henry, Simplicianus was a hermit, "who first in Rome served God most devoutly from his youth following the example of Paul, the first Hermit, and blessed Anthony, and afterwards, coming to Milan, fervently lead a solitary and eremitical life with many associates."¹⁵⁶ Augustine visited Simplicianus, confessing to him the errors of his life, whereupon Simplicianus read him the lives of blessed Anthony and other desert fathers, and told him of the example of Victorinus, who publically confessed his faith. Upon hearing such accounts, Augustine was set on fire for the catholic faith, leading eventually to his conversion and baptism.¹⁵⁷ Though Arbesmann claimed that Henry was the first Augustinian to have made Simplicianus into a hermit,¹⁵⁸ the first mention of Simplicianus as a hermit is actually found in the *Sermo de beato Augustino* of Nicholas of Alessandria:

Nic.Al. *Sermo*; 364-365

Hen. *Tract.* 1 (90,15-19)

Sanctum autem Simplicianus, quem sepe nominat pater Augustinus in libro *Confessionum*, existens Rome, exemplo predictorum heremitarum a iuventute sua devotissime vivere et Deo servire cepit, qui, Mediolanum veniens, vitam solitariam et heremiticam cum multis sociis devotissime duxit.

...[beatus Simplicianus eremita] qui primo Romae exemplo Pauli primi eremitaie et beati Antonii a sua iuventute deo devotissime serviebat et postmodum veniens Mediolanum vitam solitariam et eremiticam cum multis sociis ferventissime duxit.

Furthermore, the close parallels between this passage in the texts of Henry and Nicholas, suggest that either they had a common source, or that Henry used Nicholas' *Sermo*. Henry mentions that he drew from *antiquae legendae non abbreviatae*, yet such sources are no long extent, if they ever

¹⁵⁶ "Nam licet primarium motivum suae conversionis habuerit per divinam inspirationem et per beati Ambrosii salutarem eruditionem, complementum tamen suae conversionis habuit per beatum Simplicianum eremitam, qui primo Romae exemplo Pauli primi eremitaie et beati Antonii a sua iuventute deo devotissime serviebat et postmodum veniens Mediolanum vitam solitariam et eremiticam cum multis sociis ferventissime duxit." Hen. *Tract.* 1 (90,12-19).

¹⁵⁷ Hen. *Tract.* 1 (90,19-91,29).

¹⁵⁸ Arbesmann, *HFT*, 45-49.

were. As Arbesmann notes, Jordan referred to Philip of Harvengt's *Vita Sancti Augustini* as *legenda famosa, solemnis et antiqua*, which should caution against giving too much weight to the adjective *antiqua*.¹⁵⁹ If such legends were common knowledge to the members of the Order, it does cause one to question why earlier texts such as the anonymous Florentine *Vita* and the *Initium* were completely silent in this regard. In any case, Henry did not restrict his account to that given by Nicholas. Henry attributed to Simplicianus the story in the *Confessions* of Ponticianus having read Augustine the *Vita* of Anthony, which served as a major stimulus for his continued path toward conversion.¹⁶⁰ In Henry's account, after his encounter with Simplicianus, Augustine became a catechumen and together "with Alipius and Adeodatus began to live with blessed Simplicianus and his associates according to the way of life of those friars, by whose examples he was converted to the catholic faith."¹⁶¹ Henry continued by repeating the story of Augustine's baptism and his composition together with Ambrosius of the *Te deum laudamus*, leaving Augustine's investment with the monastic habit to the following chapter. Making sure that no one would miss the import, Henry concluded the first chapter by arguing:

From these things it is evidently clear, that since blessed Augustine, from the example of the hermit saints, who were the first founders of our religion, was ultimately converted to the faith of Christ by blessed Simplicianus and for a certain time stayed with him and his associates [dressed] in their habit and afterwards handed down the rule of living to our brothers following this eremitical life (as will be discussed below), that justly and reasonably the holy Roman Church called our brothers the friars of the Order of hermits of St. Augustine; for even though our brothers before being given the Rule by blessed Augustine were simply called hermits, nevertheless, based on the Rule given them by blessed Augustine that title for the Order was approved by the Roman Church, and from that time on they were appropriately called the friars of the Order of hermits of St. Augustine, whose unique and true father was Augustine, not only through his taking on the habit, but even from his living with them for a long time and his giving of the Rule, as will clearly be seen below.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ See Arbesmann, *HFT*, 51ff.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ "Et ex tunc beatus Augustinus, factus catechumenus a beato Ambrosio, cum Alipio et puero Adeodato coepit vivere cum beato Simpliciano et sociis eius secundum modum illorum fratrum, quorum exemplis est conversus ad fidem catholicam." Hen. *Tract.* 1 (91,36-39).

¹⁶² "Ex quibus evidenter patet, quod cum beatus Augustinus exemplo sanctorum eremitarum, qui fuerunt primarii nostrae religionis fundatores, per beatus Simplicianus ad fidem Christi ultimate conversus fuerit et cum eodem et sociis suis in ipsorum habitu per

In chapter two Henry then begins with Augustine's baptism and assuming the habit of a hermit, given him by Ambrose and Simplicianus, together with an explication of the symbolic meaning of the habit.¹⁶³ He then turns to Augustine's journey back to Africa. On the way, Augustine happened upon the hermits in Centumcellae, and stayed with them for a period of two years. For these he composed his Rule, and the hermitage in Centumcellae became the first location of the Order.¹⁶⁴ Finally arriving in Africa, Augustine was received by bishop Valerius. Knowing of Augustine's monastic desires, Valerius gave him a garden in a wooded villa where he could devote himself to contemplation, prayer and study.¹⁶⁵ Henry then brought in Possidius, to prove that Augustine's first monastery was that in the garden of Valerius: "In which place, as Possidius said, having directly built a monastery, he began to gather brothers of the same mind and with them to live according to the way of life and rule of the holy apostles, which he had already done even earlier when he returned from across the sea to his homeland."¹⁶⁶ Henry apparently here inverted the temporal sequence, because he continued with Augustine's ordination as presbyter,¹⁶⁷ emphasizing that his first monastery was that in Valerius' garden. Possidius' phrase *which he had previously done when he returned from across the sea to his homeland*, is used as

tempus aliquod steterit et postea fratribus nostris hanc vitam eremiticam sectantibus regulam vivendi per se ipsum tradiderit (ut infra dicitur): quod iuste et rationabiliter sancta Romana ecclesia nostros fratres ordinis eremitarum sancti Augustini appellavit; licet enim fratres nostri prius ante dationem regulae per beatum Augustinum dicerentur simpliciter eremitae, ex regula tamen ipsis per beatum Augustinum tradita per Romanam ecclesiam iste titulus ordini approbatus fuit, ut ex tunc appropriate dicerentur fratres ordinis eremitarum sancti Augustini, quorum singulis et verus pater esset non tantum per habitus assumptionem sed etiam per suum diuturnum convictum et regulae dationem, ut infra clarius apparebit." Hen. *Tract.* 1 (92,53-68).

¹⁶³ Hen. *Tract.* 2 (92,1-95,67).

¹⁶⁴ Hen. *Tract.* 2 (95,68-96,90); cf. Nic. Al. *Sermo*, 365-367. The textual parallels between Nicolas' *sermo* and Henry's *Tractatus* again are suggestive of Henry's knowledge of Nicolas' text; whereas the author of the *Initium* claimed it most uncertain precisely where Augustine's first eremitical community in Italy had been, Nicolas is then clear that it was Centumcellae, which Henry was as well. If Centumcellae had been long established in the *legendae antiquae* as the first location of the OESA, it seems odd that the author of the *Initium*, or that of the Florentine *Vita*, apparently had no knowledge thereof.

¹⁶⁵ Hen. *Tract.* 2 (97,110-117); cf. Nic. Al. *Sermo*, 368.

¹⁶⁶ "In quo loco, ut dicit Possidius, mox aedificato monasterio coepit eiusdem propositi fratres colligere et cum eis vivere secundum modum et regulam sanctorum apostolorum, quod etiam ipse pridem iam fecerat, quando trans mare ad sua redierat." Hen. *Tract.* 2 (97,117-121).

¹⁶⁷ Hen. *Tract.* 2 (97,121-127).

evidence of Augustine's early monastic foundations, before having been ordained. In chapter three Henry mentioned Augustine's monastery in Valerius' garden as proof of Augustine's eremitical life, again citing Possidius as evidence, and then a final time in chapter four, summarizing the points made in the first three chapters. In the last reference, Possidius' emplotment is restored, whereby Augustine founded a monastery upon his ordination as presbyter, used as conclusive proof of Augustine's early foundations:

Hen. *Tract.* 2
(97,112-121)

Qui agnito suo proposito, quod orationi et devotioni et studio sacrarum litterarum ardentius insistere desideraret, in quadam villa silvestri sibi hortellum dedit, ut sic ab hominum conversatione semotus in illo loco solitario quietius studio, orationi et contemplationi vacaret. In quo loco, ut dicit Possidius, mox aedificato monasterio coepit eiusdem propositi fratres colligere et cum eis vivere secundum modum et regulam sanctorum apostolorum, quod etiam ipse pridem iam fecerat, quando transmare ad sua redierat.

Hen. *Tract.* 3
(101,87-93)

... hoc idem fecit in Africa in illo hortello sibi dato per beatum Valerium in quadam villa silvestri extra Hipponem, ubi monasterium eremiticum instituit, in quo plures fratres eiusdem propositi collegit, ut patet ex tertio articulo auctoritate Possidii; in quo etiam monasteria extra civitatem Hipponensem beatus Augustinus creditur spiritum exhalasse et coram praedictis fratribus vigilantibus et orantibus feliciter obdormisse.

Hen. *Tract.* 4
(106,19-33)

Tertia est, quod, licet de eo legatur, quod factus presbyter monasterium clericorum mox instituerit, cum quibus coepit vivere secundum regulam sub sanctis apostolis constitutam, hoc tamen non est sic intelligendum, quod tunc primo regulam et modum vivendi apostolicum instituerit, quando istud monasterium clericorum iuxta ecclesiam construxit, quia prius in Italia in loco et habitu eremitico ipsam nostris fratribus composuit, tradidit et servavit. Quod patet expresse per auctoritatem sancti Possidii, qui vitam beati Augustini conscripsit, in quo libro sic dicit, quod 'factus presbyter monasterium instituit et

coepit vivere secundum regulam sub sanctis apostolis constitutam, quod tamen ipse prius fecerat, cum a partibus transmarinis ad propria remeasset.' Ex quo verbo manifeste apparet, quod illam regulam prius in Italia instituit et servavit, antequam in Africam applicaret.

What had been a vague reference, for Henry, as for Nicholas, was explicit evidence of Augustine's early eremitical life.

Henry only treats Augustine's early monasticism, omitting discussion of Augustine's monastic foundations after having been ordained bishop. For Henry, the point to be made is that Augustine first lived as a hermit, and founded his Order accordingly; the rest is inconsequential. Thus in chapter three, Henry continued his argument "that blessed Augustine assumed the monastic habit of our fathers and held to an eremitical life with them from the time of his own conversion and also gave them a rule and way of life," by bringing forth authorities, both of words and deeds.¹⁶⁸ Henry first mentioned Ambrose and the pseudo-Ambrosian *Sermo de baptismo et conversione sancti Augustini*, which he had cited previously in chapter two. The second proof-text offered is the pseudo-Augustinian *sermo de Passione*, from which Henry then quotes.¹⁶⁹ He then claimed as his third point his overall theme, which he repeatedly hammers home, namely, that the members of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine "are the true and proper sons of blessed Augustine and he is their true father, which is clear because he wore their habit in their hermitage and gave them the Rule of living."¹⁷⁰ After

¹⁶⁸ "Nam quod beatus Augustinus habitum monasticum nostrorum patrum assumpserit et vitam eremiticam cum eis in principio suae conversionis tenuerit ac etiam regulam et modum vivendi eis tradiderit, hoc ex variis auctoritatum dictis et etiam ex variis factis ostendi potest." Hen. *Tract.* 3 (98,1-5).

¹⁶⁹ Hen. *Tract.* 3 (98,6-99,28).

¹⁷⁰ "Tertio, hoc idem patet sic. Quod enim ordo fratrum eremitarum sancti Augustini et fratres illius ordinis sint veri et proprii filii beati Augustini et ipse sit eorum verus pater, ex hoc patet, quod eorum habitum in eremo portavit et eis regulam vivendi tradidit,

citing canon law which pertained to the privileges of the OESA, Henry concluded that only the OESA has the right to be called by its title, even though other Orders might be called by Augustine's name and live according to his Rule; only the OESA is the original and true Order of Augustine and therefore "that title, *ordo eremitarum sancti Augustini* belongs only to our Order and to no other."¹⁷¹ He then repeats the three pieces of evidence to prove that Augustine lived as a hermit, namely, his living as such with Simplicianus, his stay with the Tuscan hermits at Centumcellae, and finally, his establishing a monastery in Valerius' garden, citing Possidius as proof. Directly following, Henry claimed that this was confirmed by Pope John XXII in public consistory, which he, Henry, had heard from a reliable witness. Shortly thereafter, in the same chapter, in summarizing his arguments, Henry again mentioned the same approbation.

This begs the question of who this reliable witness might have been. Above I noted the textual parallels between Henry's *Tractatus* and Nicholas of Alessandria's *Sermo*. Though not absolutely conclusive, the *quidam vir authenticus*, from whom Henry had heard this tale, seems to have been Nicholas, since Nicholas included such a discussion in his *Sermo*:

Hen. *Tract.* 3 (101,94-102,108)

Et hoc, prout audiui a quodam viro authentico, fuit in publico consistorio coram sanctissimo patre domino Johanne XXII et omnibus cardinalibus declaratum, cui sententiae etiam ipse dominus Johannes praedictus dicitur consensisse, inducens pro argumento,

Hen. *Tract.* 3 (104,164-105,174)

Hoc idem patet tertio ex gestis sanctissimi patris et domini domini Johannis papae XXII, qui ad devotam instantiam reverendi patris magistri Guillelmi de Cremona primo anno generalatus sui officii sacro approbante collegio dominorum cardinalium locum et custodiam venerabilis

Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 373

... [Guillelmus de Cremona] qui primo anno officii sui a domino Johanne papa XXII locum et custodiam corporis sacratissimi patris Augustini deinceps in perpetuum impetravit sacro approbante cardinalium collegio et hoc quia tam domino Pape quam collegio cardina-

ut patet ex supradictis." Hen. *Tract.* 3 (99,29-33).

¹⁷¹ "Ex quo patet, quod iste titulus *ordo eremitarum sancti Augustini* est solum proprius nostro ordini et nulli alii." Hen. *Tract.* 3 (100,64-66); see *ibid.*, (100,56-101,80) for Henry's discussion of the title.

quod fratres nostri sint veri et proprii filii beati Augustini et quod ipse verus et proprius pater noster est, quia nobis regulam suam prius tradidit (quam servamus) quam eam traderet canonicis regularibus ...

Et ideo ex illo motivo et aliis rationabiliter motus fuit idem papa Johannes, ut caput suis membris, magistrum suis discipulis reuniret.

corporis sanctissimi patris et patroni nostri beati Augustini in perpetuum nostro ordini commendavit, contulit et donavit, confirmans illam donationem athenitico privilegio et gratioso, in quo sic ait:

‘Dignum quidem aestimavimus,

ut pater suis filiis, caput suis membris, magister suis discipulis, dux suis militibus sub tanto patre devote militantibus uniretur.’

lium declaratum fuit per privilegia summorum pontificum superius nominatorum et per auctoritates inferius nominata [sic] quod beatus Augustinus nostrum Ordinem instituit immediate dando regulam, ut super patuit, et eundem nobiscum habitum portavit. Ex quo in privilegiis concessionis sue idem dominus Johannes papa XXII^{us} dicit: ‘Quod in loco ubi tumultatus est tantus pater dignum arbitratur et congruum quod ibi ultra id quod sibi honoris et laudis ab universali exhibetur Ecclesia singulari quadam reverentia a dilectis filiis priore generali et fratribus Ordinis heremitarum eiusdem sancti Augustini specialiter honoretur, quatenus inibi tamquam membra suo capiti, filii patri, magistro discipuli, duci milititer coherentes Deo et ipsi sancto auctoritate fulti apostolica precordialius iubilent ubi et preceptoris eorum, patris, ducis et capitis Augustini noverint reliquias fore sepultas ...’ Sic

ergo apparet quod beatus Augustinus dux, magister, caput et pater fuit heremitarum.

Henry did not cite the text of the bull, *Veneranda sanctorum patrum* verbatim; Nicholas' text is much closer to that of John XXII, though not without its own interpolations.¹⁷² It thus seems highly unlikely that Henry was using a text of the bull itself for his source. Moreover, Henry first stated that he had heard this account from a witness, rather than that he had read it, or had been present at the consistory himself. Nicholas' sermon would have served exceedingly well as his source, and Nicholas may indeed have been the witness from whom he heard the account. Further, Henry quoted the same passage from Joachim to argue that the OESA should be identified with the *novus ordo* as did Nicholas.¹⁷³ Though this last example in itself does not go far to suggest Henry's knowledge of Nicholas' *Sermo*, another parallel is more difficult to dismiss. Arbesmann considered Henry to have been the first Augustinian to have made the claim that "before founding his own Order, St. Francis of Assisi had been a member of the Augustinian hermitage of St. James of Aquaviva near Pisa."¹⁷⁴ The same account, however, is found in Nicholas' *Sermo*, word for word:

Hen. *Tract.* 5 (111,8-112,39)

Tempore vero Innocenti III frater Johannes, dictus de Cella. Circa quod tempus beatus Franciscus cum dictis fratribus habitavit; et quidam asserunt, quod fuerit frater dicti ordinis in loco sancti Jacobi de Aquaviva iuxta Pisas.

Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 371

Tempore Innocentii pape tertii frater Iohannes dictus de Cella, circa quod tempus beatus Franciscus cum dictis fratribus habitavit et quidam dicunt quod fuit frater dicti Ordinis in loco sancti Iacobi de Aqua viva iuxta Pissas.

¹⁷² For the text of the bull, see Arbesmann's notes to Hen. *Tract.* 3 (104,164-105,174; 133-134).

¹⁷³ Hen. *Tract.* 4 (108,83-109,97); cf. Nic.Al. *Sermo* (372). For Joachimist influences in the OESA, see Marjorie Reeves, "Joachimist Expectations in the Order of Augustinian Hermits," *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 25 (1958): 111-141; cf. A. Zumkeller, "Joachim von Fiore und sein angeblicher Einfluss auf den Augustiner-Eremitenorden (Kritische Bemerkungen zu einer Untersuchung M. Reeves)," *Augustiniana* 3 (1963): 382-388.

¹⁷⁴ Arbesmann, *HFT*, 62-63.

Yet, *pace* Arbesmann, neither Henry, nor Nicholas was the first to make the connection between Francis and the Augustinian hermits in Italy. In his discussion of the religious Orders that arose after the early Augustinian hermits, the author of the *Initium* then returned to the early groups of Tuscan anchorites and hermits, from whom the OESA itself originated. Among these the author mentioned blessed William and blessed Galganus.¹⁷⁵ He then commented: "Blessed Francis, visiting those said hermits, filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit in the year of our Lord 1206 began the perfect Order of friars minor."¹⁷⁶ If the version whereby Francis not only visited the Augustinian hermits in Tuscany, but also lived with them and perhaps was even one of them, had been commonly known within the Order in 1330, the author of the *Initium* surely would have reported the fact; yet he limited his account to Francis' visit to the Tuscan hermits. Only then with Nicholas do we find the account of Francis, as some say, having been a member of the Augustinian hermits in the hermitage of St. James of Aquaviva, near Pisa, which Henry copied verbatim. The author of the *Initium*, Nicholas, and Henry all composed their works within approximately four years of each other, 1330, 1332, and 1334 respectively. If the story of Francis' Augustinian origins had been common knowledge, it seems strange that the author of the *Initium* would have toned down the story to a mere visit, and have omitted the precise location thereof. It could be that both Nicholas and Henry used the same source, which perhaps was also their common source for their parallel representations of Simplicianus as a hermit, not found in the *Initium* or the earlier Florentine *Vita*. Yet even if not completely conclusive, taken together the evidence strongly suggests that Henry knew Nicholas' *Sermo*, and used it as a major source for his *Tractatus*. Henry was present in Paris in 1329 for the General Chapter, at which the negotiations with the Canons were again discussed,¹⁷⁷ and as mentioned above, Nicholas may very well have been involved with the negotiations from the very beginning. It is thus certainly possible that the two had met in Paris, or at least that they had known each other, given their respective positions in the Order. It should also be noted that Henry embellished the accounts found in Nicholas. I have already discussed this with regard to Henry's portrayal of Simplicianus. With the Francis account, in some of the manuscripts of the

¹⁷⁵ *Initium*, 343.

¹⁷⁶ "Beatus autem Franciscus dictos heremitas visitans, Sancti Spiritus gratia aff[ec]t[us], anno Domini MCCVI^o perfectum Ordinem fratrum minorum incepit." *Initium*, 343.

¹⁷⁷ Arbesmann, *HFT*, 43.

Tractatus there are additional interpolations. Arbesmann included these in his edition by printing them in smaller font and marking them as particular to a given manuscript, without having discussed the possibility of redaction.¹⁷⁸ Yet if Henry was 'rewriting' Nicholas, it could very well have been that he first included a more straight-forward account drawn from Nicholas and then later re-worked his source, thus yielding the interpolations in the other manuscripts.

Henry's rewriting of Nicholas can also be seen in the third story that Arbesmann saw as originating with Henry, namely, the vision of Alexander IV.¹⁷⁹ Above I have pointed to the development in the representations of the vision, which first appears in the *Initium*. Henry's version is far closer to Nicholas' than to that of the *Initium*, which again, in light of the evidence presented here suggests that Henry had Nicholas' *Sermo* on his desk:

Initium, 344-345

Nic.Al. *Sermo*, 372

Hen. *Tract.* 3
(103,120-134)

Insuper tempore Allessandri pape III^{ti} erat prior predicti Ordinis frater Phylippus de Parrana, supernorum amator et lampas luminis virtutum. Cuius tempore predictus papa Alexander ab amore beati Augustini, ei in visione magnus capite et parvus membris apparens, primo anno sui pontificatus predictum Ordinem tam in personis quam in gratiis augmentavit, huic Or-

Tempore Allexandri quarti, frater Philippus de Parrana. Quo tempore beatus Augustinus dicto pape Allexandro in visione apparuit grandis capite, sed membris exilis, ut ipse Papa testatus est, ex quo motus fuit dicto nostro Ordini unire plures alios Ordines qui erant aliquantulum heremite, scilicet britones et sabarios, inter quod multi sic uniti erant in marchia Ancho-

Nam tempore Alexandri papae IV, ut ipsemet testatus est, beatus Augustinus eidem in visione apparuit grandis quidem capite sed membris exilis. Ex qua visione tamquam divino oraculo ipse papa commonitus univit fratribus eremitis sancti Augustini plures alios ordines similiter in eremis habitantes, mandans ipsis ut, quicumque ex eis essent idonei ad fructificandum

¹⁷⁸ Hen. *Tract.* 5 (111-112); cf. Arbesmann, *HFT*, 81-88.

¹⁷⁹ In his notes to Henry's presentation of the vision, Arbesmann refers the reader to the note in *VF* (450, note 9), concerning Jordan's version of the vision, in which Arbesmann and Hümpfner state that Henry was the first Augustinian to have included the vision, which has a parallel at least in the Franciscan tradition regarding Francis appearing to Innocent III in a vision.

dini brictones, faba-
rios, iambonitas, atque
guglielmitas iungendo,
gratias numquam simi-
les alicui religioni
traditas [condonando]

...

nitana, guillermitas et
iambonitas.

in populo per doctri-
nam verbi divini, quod
illi deberent in civi-
tatibus habitare et
exemplari vita ac salu-
tari doctrina simulque
confessione provida
dei populum irrigare
aliis fratribus nihilo-
minus secundum dis-
positionem prioris
generalis in eremo re-
manentibus, muniens
eos privilegiis et gratiis
tali statui congruenti-
bus. In qua quidem vi-
sione beatus Augusti-
nus aperte ostendit se
esse verum caput et
verum patrem huius
ordinis et per conse-
quens ipsos fratres esse
veros filios et vera
membra ipsius.

Two points are to be noted in this regard. First, Henry followed the version of the vision as found in Nicholas more closely than he did that in the *Initium*, and thus what I said above concerning the variations between the *Initium* and Nicholas applies as well to Henry's account, namely, an emphasis on the active role given to Augustine. Second, Henry did not simply copy Nicholas' version. As he did with the story of Simplicianus, Henry embellished the text as found in his source. There are two aspects of Henry's emplotment that merit special mention. First, he increased the active role of Augustine even further by being the first to refer to Augustine's appearance to Alexander as a divine oracle. As mentioned above and as to be discussed in more detail below, Jordan would take this over from Henry, while then adding his own contribution of attributing the instigation of the Union completely to Augustine's will (*volens dispersionem suae Religionis congregari*). If Nicholas' version represents an intensification of the story as given in the *Initium*, Henry's interpolation

is an intensification of Nicholas. Second, Henry went beyond the mere repetition of the mythical account. To this vision Henry joined the mission statement of the OESA: Alexander's charging the Order with teaching and preaching, sending the hermits into the cities.

For in the time of Pope Alexander IV, as he himself testified, blessed Augustine appeared to him in a vision with a large head, but small body. From this vision, as if from a divine oracle, the Pope was moved to unite with the hermit friars of St. Augustine many other Orders living similarly in hermitages, commanding them that their members capable of doing so were to bring forth fruits among the people by teaching the divine word, because they were to live in the cities and to nourish the people of God by their exemplary life, their salutary teaching, and by hearing confessions...¹⁸⁰

The distinction in the Order's history drawn by Alexander's commissioning the sons of Augustine to teach and preach in the cities supplies proof of the OESA's antiquity and continuity. As Henry affirmed, the OESA was much older than either the Franciscan or the Dominican Order with regard to its institution by Augustine himself, although in terms of its missionary, pastoral endeavor received from Alexander, it followed the other two mendicant Orders. Thus Henry was able to meet challenges regarding the OESA's recent origins. The Order itself can be traced back to Augustine, yet its missionary presence in the cities is dated to the time after the Great Union. Henry provided a defense for the ecclesiastical and papal confirmation of the Order's legitimacy in light of Lateran IV's ban on new religious Orders.¹⁸¹ This distinction Jordan would later designate as that between the *status antiquus* and *status modernus*.

In his exposition of Augustine's vision to Alexander, Henry affirmed the Order's pastoral mission to bear fruit among the people, making provisions for the embodiment of Augustine. In his vision to Alexander, Augustine appeared with a large head but small body, which then was in need of 'filling out'. As Henry explicitly stated, the members of the Order were the members of Augustine's body: "holy mother Church recognized for our Order the most holy Augustine for our true father and unique head, and consequently the friars of this Order ought to be called

¹⁸⁰ "Nam tempore Alexandri papae IV, ut ipsemet testatus est, beatus Augustinus eidem in visione apparuit grandis quidem capite sed membris exilis. Ex qua visione tamquam divino oraculo ipse papa commonitus univit fratribus eremitis sancti Augustini plures alios ordines similiter in eremis habitantes, mandans ipsis ut, quicumque ex eis essent idonei ad fructificandum in populo per doctrinam verbi divini, quod illi deberent in civitatibus habitare et exemplari vita ac salutari doctrina simulque confessione provida dei populum irrigare..." Hen. *Tract.* 3 (103,120-128).

¹⁸¹ Hen. *Tract.* 4 (109,98-105).

his true sons and his own members."¹⁸² The OESA was to be the embodiment of Augustine. With Henry's *Tractatus*, the Augustinian myth was beginning to create the Augustinian identity.

It is certainly possible that the historical representations of the Order's origins had long been part of the Order's oral traditions, only achieving written form some sixty to seventy years after the Great Union. Yet in the earliest texts narrating the Order's foundations, first by Augustine and then by Alexander IV—or rather, first by Augustine personally, and then later by Augustine supernaturally—the story does not emerge full-blown all at once. The author of the anonymous Florentine *Vita* may have been at work before he saw the dire need for the extensive account that his co-religious shortly thereafter gave, but certainly the author of the *Initium* sought to use whatever material he could come up with as evidence. Thus the *Initium* gives the first mention of St. Francis in connection with the Tuscan hermits, and the first textualization of Augustine appearing to Alexander IV in a vision. Approximately two years later, Nicholas of Alessandria offered embellished accounts of both these events, and turned Simplicianus himself into a hermit. Apparently drawing directly from Nicholas, Henry of Friemar then composed the first treatise explicitly as a defense of the Order, in which he too then rewrote what he found in his source. The stories may have all been 'common knowledge', and they certainly would become so, but between 1330 and 1334, in Florence, Paris, and Erfurt, the accounts of the OESA's origins became increasingly mythicized as they became increasingly textualized.

It is tempting as well to see the embellishment of the myth progressing as it moved north. Having begun in Italy, most likely in Florence with the *Vita* and *Initium*, the myth of Augustine spread to Paris with Nicholas' *Sermo*, and then received its most flowery expression in the Erfurt of Henry. Such an *itinerarium* is especially compelling if I have been successful above in arguing for Henry's textual dependency on Nicholas' *Sermo*. Yet the fact remains that regardless of Henry's appeal to 'ancient legends', and regardless of the *quidam dicunt*'s offered by Henry and Nicholas as rhetorical strategies for giving their accounts plausibility, unless new sources are discovered, the earliest texts extant representing the origins of the OESA are the ones I have treated above, and the ones in which we find a development of the story, the texts in which we find the creation and embellishment of the Augustinian myth. Nicholas' *Sermo* is

¹⁸² "...quod sancta mater ecclesia sanctissimum Augustinum nostro ordini pro vero patre et singulari capite recognoscit et per consequens fratres huius ordinis eius veri filii et eius membra propria dici debent." Hen. *Tract.* 3 (105,174-177).

the earliest extant text that explicitly names Centumcellae as the first location of the OESA, Augustine having lived with the hermits there for two years, and at their request, composed his Rule, which then he later established in Africa, once having returned to his homeland. If Nicholas' *Sermo* was also the earliest textual witness available, then recognizing a development of the account would be more tenuous, being the first textualization of an oral tradition. But the fact that the *Initium* leaves the precise details vague, arguing only, though forcefully, that Augustine's first hermitage was in Italy, and there he first wrote the Rule, suggests that the tradition of Centumcellae was not so firmly established in 1330 that it was simply accepted as fact. The generally known, accepted, and repeated account of Augustine's early eremitical life was created and established in the course of the 1330's when the author of the *Initium*, Nicholas, and Henry created the Augustinian myth in answering the question of what made one an Augustinian, a question that was not simply existential, but one that demanded a clear answer in the political contest for custody of Augustine's relics and tomb. In the early fourteenth century, the Augustinian Order was transformed into a 'mythic community'.¹⁸³

(to be continued)

The Hague

Eric Leland SAAK

¹⁸³ The term, 'mythic community' bears similarities to Brian Stock's 'textual communities'; see Stock, *The Implications of Literacy. Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, 1983); *idem*, *Listening For The Text. On the Uses of the Past* (Baltimore, 1990). The difference is that the center around which the community is formed is a particular myth rather than a particular text, though acknowledging the difficulties in defining a 'text' as distinct from a 'myth'. The Augustinian myth was certainly textual, but the text of the myth was not necessarily limited by any given written text. In this light, with a broad understanding of 'text', a mythic community can be considered to be a special type of textual community. To this extent, a 'mythic community' also resembles Renaissance civic myths: see, for example, Donald Weinstein, *Savonarola and Florence. Prophecy and Patriotism in the Renaissance* (Princeton, 1970); Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton, 1981); and Richard Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (New York, 1980).