

## THE EPISTLE OF JAMES IN AUGUSTINE AND HIS PELAGIAN ADVERSARIES: (/ SOME PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS<sup>1</sup>

In 1954, Jean Daniélou, in the opening line of a brief survey on the relationship between the Fathers of the Church and the Scriptures, lamented that "[t]he most neglected aspect of the immense corpus of writings, which the Fathers have bequeathed to us, is their exegesis of Holy Scripture."<sup>2</sup> I would contend that this statement, in spite of the fact that it is fifty years old and in spite of the recent popularity of the history of Patristic exegesis as a field for comment and for research,<sup>3</sup> still contains much truth. I would also contend that this statement remains true in the particular case of Augustine and, moreover, that it remains precisely on point with respect to Augustine's (as well as his Pelagian adversaries') relationship to the Epistle of James.

Obviously, space does not permit me to address either of the first two of these contentions. In this paper, however, I will attempt to show how our current lack of knowledge regarding the third contention has impoverished and confused us with regard to both the reception of James and, more broadly, the history of the exegesis of

<sup>1</sup> This paper reflects, in part, research performed for a S.T.L. thesis which was successfully defended in the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven's *Faculteit Godgeleerdheid* in September of 2001. Note well that since that project was limited to the single pericope of James 2:14-26, I am presently unable to offer thoroughly detailed comments with regard to evidence gleaned from the presence of other portions of James in Augustine or to offer definitive conclusions regarding the presence of James in either Augustine's predecessors or contemporaries.

<sup>2</sup> Jean DANIÉLOU, S.J., "The Fathers and the Scriptures," *Theology* LVII (February, 1954) : 83.

<sup>3</sup> For examples of the recent popularity of this trend, note that two separate English-language projects specifically addressing the Fathers' relationship to the Scriptures are underway. The first, the series *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*, has already issued a handful of its projected 27 volumes. It is under the general editorship of Thomas Oden. The second is simultaneously less well-known and targeted more toward academicians and specialists. It is under the editorial direction of Robert Wilken and expects to publish a volume on *The Song of Songs* by January of 2003, with volumes on *1 Corinthians* and *Isaiah* soon to follow. While it has not confined itself to the realm of Patristics, it is also interesting to see that a journal has emerged which, by its very existence, demonstrates the rising importance of the history of exegesis for contemporary scholars. The first volume of *Annali di storia dell' esegesi* appeared in 1984.

the “lesser”<sup>4</sup> New Testament books. I will first show how more and more detailed research into the reception history of James can and has provided data which calls for a rethinking of several of the current conclusions about the date of James’ reception in the West. And, second, I will show how research into the way Augustine himself used James can both shed light on some of the central issues of the Pelagian Controversy as well as raise several questions which would doubtlessly reward further inquiry and evaluation.

### **Relative Paucity of Published Materials on Augustine’s Relationship to both the Bible and the Letter of James**

I contend that the relative paucity of published works which have addressed Augustine’s exegesis of Scripture has compromised modern scholarship’s understanding of both the man and his thought. I base this on the fact that even a cursory reading of the works of Augustine makes it clear that he both thoroughly knew and diligently employed the Scriptures.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, in the opinion of Leuven professor *emeritus* T.J. Van Bavel, the Scriptures were so interwoven into Augustine’s literary style and mode of expression that one’s capacity for discovering quotations and allusions to them are often only limited by the investigator’s general knowledge of the Scriptures and of their wording in the translations employed by Augustine.<sup>6</sup>

Worse still is the fact that studies which address Augustine’s use of the book of James remain practically non-existent.<sup>7</sup> In fact, up to

<sup>4</sup> Of course, this is not to imply that James is *in se* insignificant or that it was regarded as insignificant by Augustine. Instead, here the word “lesser” is used merely to remind the reader of the *relatively* insignificant role the letter of James plays today and has played in the past when compared with other biblical books, e.g., Paul’s letter to the Romans.

<sup>5</sup> Hubertus Drobner has written: “As with all the Fathers of the Church, Augustine knew and quoted most of the Bible by heart ... his texts ... are impregnated with biblical vocabulary, allusions and images that are often recognizable only if one knows precisely with which words he quoted different biblical phrases.” See Hubertus R. DROBNER, *Studying Augustine: An Overview of Recent Research, in Augustine and His Critics*, eds. Robert DODARO and George LAWLESS (London: Routledge, 2000), 24. Similar sentiments have also been espoused by Joseph Trigg. He writes: “Like Tertullian, Augustine was a brilliant polemicist who employed scriptural interpretation incessantly in his writing.” See Joseph W. TRIGG, *Message of the Fathers of the Church: Biblical Interpretation*, *Message of the Fathers of the Church Series*, gen. ed. Thomas Halton, vol. 9 (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1988), 43.

<sup>6</sup> T.J. Van Bavel, private discussion with author, Fall 1999, Augustijns Historisch Instituut, Heverlee, Belgium.

<sup>7</sup> Note the relatively recent observation of Scannerini on this question: “Qui ac-

today, there exist less than a dozen publications which deal in any substantial way with Augustine's relationship to the letter (or to parts of the letter) or to the letter's (or to part of the letter's) acceptance and use by Augustine in comparison with other Patristic authors.<sup>8</sup> Of

cenniamo solo a qualche linea generale della interpretazione agostiniana, perché manca finora uno spoglio completo di tutti i passi che trattano del nostro brano." See Stefano SCANNERINI, *Giustificazione per la fede, giustificazione per le opere. Linee di storia dell'esegesi di Giacomo 2:20-24 e 26*, in: *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 6 (1989): 181.

<sup>8</sup> Of these publications (and excepting the short monograph of Bergauer), only a few of the shortest devote their entirety to both Augustine and to the letter of James. The list that I have thus far been able to compile includes the following: Paul ALTHAUS, 'Bekenne einer dem andern seine Sünden.' *Zur Geschichte von Jak. 5,16 seit Augustin*, in *Zur Geschichte von Jakobus 5,16 seit Augustinus*, (Leipzig: D. Werner. Scholl, 1928), 165-194; Paulus BERGAUER, *Der Jakobusbrief bei Augustinus und die damit verbunden Probleme der Rechtfertigungslehre* (Wien: Verlag Herder, 1962); Johannes BEUMER, *et daemones credunt (Iac. 2,19) Ein Beitrag zur positiven Bewertung der fides informis*, *Gregorianum* 22 (1941): 231-251; Jean-Paul BOUHOT, *La lecture liturgique des Épîtres Catholiques d'après les sermons d'Augustin*, in *La lecture liturgique des Épîtres Catholiques dans l'Église ancienne*, eds. Ch.B. AMPHOUX and J.-P. BUHOUT (Lausanne: Editiones du Zèbre, 1996), 269-281; Robert ENO, *Some Patristic Views on the Relationship of Faith and Works in Justification*, in *Recherches augustiniennes* 19 (1984): 3-27; Georg PFLIGERSDORFFER, *Demut und Genade zu Jakobus 4,6 bei Augustinus*, in *Chartulae Festschrift für Wolfgang Speyer Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*, vol. 28 (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1998), 244-252; Stefano SCANNERINI, *Giustificazione per la fede, giustificazione per le opere. Linee di storia dell'esegesi di Giacomo 2:20-24 e 26*, in *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 6 (1989): 169-187; Vittorio SUBILIA, *La giustificazione per fide*, *Biblioteca di cultura religiosa* 27 (Brescia: Paideia Editrice, 1976); and Walter THIELE, *Augustinus zum lateinischen Text des Jakobusbriefes*, in *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 46 (1955): 255-258. Note that this list does not include any of a number of articles and monographs which deal with either the correspondence or the debates between Augustine and Jerome. These works, when they address Augustine's letter 167 to Jerome and/or Jerome's brief response in his letter number 134, of necessity must address Augustine's exegesis of James 2:10. For an article which addresses this issue, see Giovanni Menestrina, "L'Epistola 167 'de sententia Iacobi apostoli' (Giac. 2,10) di Sant'Agostino," *Bibbia e Oriente* 20 (1978): 43-49. For two examples of recent monographs which engage these questions (albeit with different conclusions), see Ralph HENNINGS *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus und ihr Streit um den Kanon des alten Testaments und die Auslegung von Gal. 2,11-14*, *Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae* series, 21 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994) and Alfons FÜRST, *Augustins Briefwechsel mit Hieronymus*, *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* series, 29 (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1999).

these,<sup>9</sup> the majority deal explicitly with aspects of James 2, and almost half of the total deal specifically with aspects of James 2:14-26. Interestingly, with so few publications spread over the other four and one-half chapters of the letter, it would seem that the field is literally wide open for studies which deal with Augustine's use of and relationship to James.

### **The Relevance of Researching James' Reception for Contemporary Scholars**

At five chapters and slightly over one hundred verses, James' length and content are nothing when compared with that of any of the four gospels or with that of a lengthy tract such as Paul's letter to the Romans. Moreover, unlike either of the Gospels or the major portions of the Pauline corpus, James was not immediately recognized as having stemmed from an apostle or a direct associate of an apostle.<sup>10</sup> Given the two facts of its relatively small size and late acceptance, close study of the letter's *Überlieferungsgeschichte* would seem to hold the promise of substantial (and relatively easily obtainable) benefits with respect to questions such as canon formation, canon criteria, and textual transmission and translation. Furthermore, its small size is an advantage in making the amount of citation and allusion data more manageable,<sup>11</sup> as is also its late reception in so far as it limits the number of writers who certainly made reference to it. Oddly, however, and as equally distressing as the paucity of publications on Augustine and James mentioned above, is the degree to which this doubt and confusion continues to linger among modern

<sup>9</sup> This list of works was compiled through a check of the following sources: the card catalogue of the Augustijns Historisch Instituut in Heverlee, Belgium; the 6 vols. (i.e. literature published through 1993) of the *Bulletin d'ancienne littérature chrétienne latine*; the "Bulletin" of the *Revue des études augustinienes*; the Italian journal *Annali di storia dell'esegesi*; Sieben's *Exegesis Patrum* and the allied publication of the *Bibliographia Patristica* (for the years 1956-1990); and, finally, the electronic bibliography known as the *Corpus Augustinianum Gissense* or CAG. Searches performed using the CAG's database included searching the "Title" heading for occurrences of the following key words: "Giacomo"; "Iacobi"; "Jacobo"; "Jacobum"; "Jacobus"; "Jacobusbrief"; "Jacques"; "Jakobus"; "Jakobusbrief"; and "James."

<sup>10</sup> Indeed, Eusebius, writing in the early part of the fourth century, noted the difficulties that the letter experienced in becoming recognized. On this, cf. *Historia ecclesiastica* III, 25, where he uses the term "disputed" (τῶν ἀντιλεγομένων) to describe the book of James as well as those of 2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude.

<sup>11</sup> E.g., combing through all the references by every Patristic author to all 28 chapters of the Gospel of Matthew would probably amount to a life's work, even with the help of CD-ROM's and reference tools such as *Biblia Patristica*.

exegetes and commentators regarding this rather fundamental question.<sup>12</sup> They simply do not agree on the answers to questions such as which authors in the tradition knew of the existence of the letter, which ones actually cited the letter and, even more specifically, which ones regarded the letter as authoritative, i.e., as Holy Scripture.<sup>13</sup>

### Reception of James according to Commentators

Perhaps the only thing on which commentators can agree is that the epistle of James is absent from the *Canon Muratori*.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, even

<sup>12</sup> For assessments of the data relevant to the reception and use of the Letter, in various levels of detail and complete with various conclusions and interpretations, see, e.g., Joseph B. MAYOR, *The Epistle of St. James* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1897; reprint Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1978), xlviii-lxviii; James Hardy ROPES, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of Saint James*, ICC series (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1916; reprint 1968), 84-103; R.V.G. TASKER, *The General Epistle of James* (London: The Tyndale Press, 1956; reprint 1957), 16-19; Franz MUBNER, *Der Jakobusbrief*, HthKNT series (Freiburg: Herder, 1975), 33-42; Bruce M. METZGER, *The Canon of the New Testament. Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1987) *passim*; James B. ADAMSON, *James The Man and His Message* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 147-162 and John PAINTER, *Just James. The Brother of Jesus in History and Tradition* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2000), 234-236.

<sup>13</sup> For example, cf. the list of citations and allusions to the letter in *Biblia Patristica* to that of commentators such as Ropes and Adamson. The former, although even its subtitle indicates the compilers' intention to include all relevant evidence (i.e., even what many would label as "allusions" or mere "verbal similarities"), lists more than 575 uses of the letter, with more than 40 included in vol. 6, a vol. dedicated exclusively to the fourth century Western writers Hilary, Ambrose and Ambrosiaster. See, *Biblia Patristica: Index des citations et allusions bibliques dans la littérature patristique*, vols. 1-7 (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1975-2000), various pp. The latter, on the other hand, both largely downplay the evidence and seem intent on concluding that James played only a minimal role in the church generally and the Western church particularly.

<sup>14</sup> Assumed here are both an early date and a Roman provenance for the *Canon Muratori*. For a defense of the early date of the fragment, see, respectively, an article and book review (of the 1992 book by HAHNEMAN, cf. this same n: *infra*) by Everett FERGUSON *Canon Muratori. Date and Provenance*, in *Studia Patristica* 17,2, ed. Elizabeth A. LIVINGSTONE (Leuven: Peeters Press, 1982), 677-682 and *Journal of Theological Studies* 44 (1993): 691-697. For an earlier claim that the fragment is actually of a 4<sup>th</sup> century provenance see A.C. SUNDBERG, Jr., *Canon Muratori: A Fourth Century Document*, in *Harvard Theological Review* 66 (1973): 1-41, or, more recently, Geoffrey M. HAHNEMAN, *The Muratorian Fragment and the Development of the Canon* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1992), esp. pp. 215-218 for his conclusion. Now, for a masterful rebuttal of Hahneman's theses, see J. VERHEYDEN, *The Canon Muratori: A Matter of Dispute*, forthcoming in the published proceedings of the 2001 Jubilee Meeting of the *Colloquium Biblicum Louaniense*. In his conclusion (p. 27 in my copy) to this paper Verheyden succinctly writes: "None of the arguments that have been put forward by Sundberg and Hahneman in favor of a fourth-century Eastern origin of the Fragment carries weight." Allow me to express my thanks here to Prof. Verheyden for pre-publication access to this work.

the work of Irenaeus generates problems for them. They cannot agree on either the frequency of his references<sup>15</sup> or on his opinion of the letter's authority.<sup>16</sup> Tertullian, in spite of being listed as referring to

<sup>15</sup> In his commentary, Mußner lists some 4 references to the letter by Irenaeus while the *Biblia Patristica* lists 8. Of these, that of *Adversus Haereses* IV,16,2 (cf. *Sources Chrétiennes* vol. 100, p.562) with its reference to James 2:23 and the phrase "*Abraham ... credidit Deo et reputatem est illi ad iustitiam et amicus dei vocatus est*" seems to me, in spite of its slightly altered wording, to qualify as citation, especially when it is compared to the generally uniform *Vetus Latina* text as given in the Beuron edition (for the full bibliographical information, see p. 7, n. 26 *infra*). There, for the so-called "F" *Texttyp* we read "... *credidit Abraham domino ... et amicus dei vocatus est.*" For dissenting opinions as to the significance of this phrase note the words of Ropes and Adamson. Ropes, after having dismissed this evidence as a probable "coincidence" (p. 90) sweepingly concludes (p. 100) by remarking that "Before the middle of the fourth century there is no clear trace of any acquaintance with James [in the Western church]. The *Canon of Muratori* omits it; Irenaeus makes no certain use of it" (italics added). Adamson on p. 148 declares that the words of IV,16,2 are "clearly a verbatim quotation from Jas. 2:23," while going on to note (p. 149) that: "We conclude that neither the African or Roman Church up to the time of Augustine knew the Epistle of James or ascribed any importance to it." Note that the blanket nature of this observation, besides assuming that the work of Irenaeus was either lost or remained unread in both Rome and North Africa down to c. 400, is further brought into question by the presence of citations and exegesis of the letter of James in the works of Pelagius. *Contra* the first part of this observation, it is manifest that Tertullian (and many other Western writers) knew and used the work of Irenaeus. In fact, in the early decades of the last century, there a considerable debate was waged *not* over the question of whether Tertullian knew Irenaeus, but whether he knew him in Greek or in Latin. For highlights of the debate, see A. Souter, "The Date and Place of the Latin Translator of Irenaeus," in *Nouum Testamentum Sancti Irenaei Episcopi Lugdunensis*, eds. William SANDAY, Cuthbert HAMILTON TURNER et al., Old-Latin Biblical Texts Series, no. VII (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1923), lxx-lxx. For examples of more recent, if less detailed, comments on this subject, see J.H. WASZINK, *Tertullian's Principles and Methods of Exegesis*, in *Early Christian Literature and the Classical Intellectual Tradition in Honorem Robert M. Grant*, eds. William R. SCHOEDEL and Robert L. WILKEN (Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 1979), 21 and W.H.C. FRENDS, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 350. (Though familiar with both of these works, I was helpfully reminded of these particular contents in an endnote of Maureen A. Tilley's *The Bible in Christian North Africa: The Donatist World* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1997), 185 n. 11. (n.b., the references given here have been altered and corrected due to the facts that different editions of Friends' work were consulted and an error exists in the aforementioned note.)) For more on the evidence of the presence of James in the work of Pelagius, cf. pp. 8-10 *infra*.

<sup>16</sup> I.e., Did Irenaeus regard James as Scripture in the same sense as he did with the Old Testament and other, soon-to-become "canonical," portions of the New Testament, e.g., Matthew? Cf. the words of Mußner from p. 41: "... ob er ihn aber als γραφή wertete, lässt sich nicht erkennen." For more details regarding Irenaeus' cita-

James six times in *Biblia Patristica*,<sup>17</sup> is excluded from having had any knowledge of the Epistle by Ropes, Mußner, Bruce and Adamson. Further, after a careful scrutiny of the commentators that even bother to mention Cyprian,<sup>18</sup> Hippolytus,<sup>19</sup> Novatian<sup>20</sup> or Lactantius,<sup>21</sup> one is left with the impression that the possibility that any of these four writers knew and used James is somewhere between slim and none.

With Hilary of Poitiers, however, the evidence becomes less debatable. Of the six uses of James that have been attributed to Hilary by *Biblia Patristica*, by far the clearest is the use of James 1:17 found

tion techniques and the closely related issues of his view of the canon and authority, see *Der Hirt des Hermas*, trans. Norbert Brox, Kommentar zu den Apostolischen Vätern, eds. N. BROX, G. KRETSCHMAR and K. NIEDERWIMMER, vol. 7 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 57-61, along with the accompanying nn.

<sup>17</sup> *Biblia Patristica*'s editors note one use each for James 1:12; 2:23; 4:10; 5:11; 5:12; and 5:17. For the locations of these uses, which, interestingly, all occur in different works, see *Biblia Patristica Index des citations et allusions bibliques dans la littérature patristique*, vol. 1, (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1975), 524-525.

<sup>18</sup> Note that the possibility of the letter of James having been used or recognized as authoritative by Cyprian was ruled out by von Soden long ago. See his *Das lateinische Neue Testament in Afrika zur Zeit Cyprians* Texte und Untersuchungen 33, gen. eds. Adolf HARNACK and Carl SCHMIDT (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1909), 13, where he writes: "Fraglos ist dagegen, daß 2 P[etrus] und Jak[obus] keinesfalls im Cyprianischen Kanon Platz gefunden haben" and note that no references to the letter appear in an otherwise copious collection of indices found on pp. 618-637.

<sup>19</sup> For Hippolytus, Mußner is non-committal and uses his nn. to send the reader to articles both pro and contra while Adamson (p. 149) and Ropes (p. 101 excursus text), in spite of giving fuller treatments of the issues, both come down against the possibility that Hippolytus used our letter.

<sup>20</sup> Novatian's use of Scripture is (at least to my knowledge) yet to be substantially treated in any publication. Still, note that Diercks in his critical edition of Novatian's extant works does see a reference to James 1:17 in *De trinitate* IV (cf. CCL 4, p.17). In my judgement, however, this is at best an allusion given the facts that (1) there is so little verbatim textual correspondence and, (2) the idea of God's immutability could have come from any number of sources. He writes: "nec se umquam in aliquas formas uertit aut mutat, . . ."; cf. the relevant portion of James 1:17 taken from the Beuron edition with the "F's" and "V's" representing variant readings from 2 different *Text-typen* for the same term: "apud quem non est (F) permutatio/ (V) transmutatio (F) vel/ (V)nec (F) modicum/ (V) uicissitudinis (F) obumbrationis/ (V) obumbratio."

<sup>21</sup> For what is quite possibly a use of James by Lactantius, see Pierre MONAT, *Lactance et la Bible: Une propédeutique latine à la lecture de la Bible dans l'Occident constantinien. Tome II: Notes* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1982), 125 n.2 where he writes: "Mais, dans bien des passages, l'*Épitomé* semble préciser ou ajouter une référence à l'Écriture (... *epist.* 57,3 p. 740,8 qui semble ajouter le souvenir de Jac. 1,15 à une remarque sur la mort que provoque la concupiscence; ...)."

in *De trinitate* IV, 8.<sup>22</sup> Here, Hilary removes all doubt regarding his knowledge of James by using the introductory formula “*et Iacobus apostolus dixerit.*” However, two things regarding this citation are well worthy of note. First, the wording of these lines are not free from textual difficulties: while it is certainly a highly probable reading, it is not unanimously supported by all the extant manuscripts.<sup>23</sup> Second, and even more damaging, is the external evidence we possess regarding Hilary’s biography. In a word, it is all but certain that he composed books IV–XII of *De trinitate* and probably books I to III as well – after he had been exiled to the East.<sup>24</sup> Obviously, this is significant in so far as he might have become familiar with, or even introduced to, the book of James as authoritative Scripture only *after* he left Latin territory. If this is true, it somewhat undermines the implication/claim that he was the first (post-Irenaeus? cf. pp. 5–6 and nn. 15–16 *supra*) Western author to make substantial use of the letter.

After Hilary, although scholarly opinion is still far from unanimous, some find evidence for asserting that Ambrosiaster,<sup>25</sup> Ambrose<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> For Hilary, *Biblia Patristica* notes the following for uses of James: James 1:2–3 (1x); 1:17 (3x); and 2:23 (2x). For the complete information on these, see *Biblia Patristica Index des citations et allusions bibliques dans la littérature patristique*, vol. 6, (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1995), 366–367.

<sup>23</sup> For the data, see CCL 62, p. 109 and the n. for lines 28/29.

<sup>24</sup> For a relatively recent discussion, see E.P. MEIJERING, *Hilary of Poitiers on the Trinity: De Trinitate 1, 1–19, 2, 3* Philosophia Patrum Series, vol. 6 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1982), 1–11, esp. p. 10 and the bibliographical notes which accompany these pages. On p. 10, Meijering writes: “So we are inclined to agree with M. Simonetti that the whole of *De Trinitate* was written in exile with knowledge of the Greek Fathers, especially Athanasius.”

<sup>25</sup> While Ropes, Mußner and Adamson all refer to 1 use of James by Ambrosiaster, i.e., a reference to 5:20 in the *Ad Galatas* 5:10 section of his *Commentarius in Pauli epistulas*, the compilers of *Biblia Patristica* believe that they have located no less than 12 uses of the letter in this author’s limited corpus. For their list, see the same pages of vol. 6 mentioned for uses of James by Hilary in n. 22 *supra*.

<sup>26</sup> Confusion also exists regarding Ambrose’s relationship to our Epistle. Note that vol. 6 of *Biblia Patristica* lists some 26 instances where Ambrose employed the Epistle in some fashion and compare this with Ropes’ assertion (p. 100) that “it is worthy of note that even Ambrose never directly quotes from it,” with Adamson’s claim (p. 150) that “Ambrose does not quote it,” and with Thiele’s assessment that “[Zitate] aus Ambrosius genannten Stellen reichen für eine Beurteilung nicht aus.” For this last quotation, see the brief discussion of the evidence for the citation of James by Patristic authors in *Vetus Latina: Die Reste der altlateinischen Bible nach Petrus Sabatier neu gesammelt und herausgegeben von der Erzabtei Beuron, 26/1 Epistulae Catholicae*, ed. Walter THIELE (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1969), 58\*. While the scope of this study has not allowed me the time for a full analysis of the *Biblia Patristica*

and Priscillian<sup>27</sup> all made use of the letter.

Interestingly, this tangle of data is at least partially responsible for some commentators assigning the ultimate acceptance of James in the Roman church to the relatively late date of 405.<sup>28</sup> However, there exists evidence which indicates that the letter of James was accepted as authoritative and even that it had been closely studied (if not memorized) by members of that community several years prior to this date. In fact, although the evidence has been routinely overlooked, it remains true that Pelagius made substantial use of James and, more importantly, that he did so in a way which indicates that the letter was rather well-known among the Christians of Rome before 400. This evidence for Rome is significant in that it allows us to assert that the three most influential sections of the Western and Latin speaking church were all on the same page regarding the book of James probably as early as the 380's. This assertion may be made in light of the facts that (1) Hilary probably (re-) introduced the letter to Gaul upon his return from exile, (2) Augustine made occasional allusions to it in his early works,<sup>29</sup> and (3) it was included in the official (catholic) North African canonical lists of 393/397.<sup>30</sup>

list, it would seem highly unlikely that all 26 instances from their research would turn out to be mere allusions. Once again, for *Biblia Patristica*'s list, see the same pages of vol. 6 mentioned for uses of James by Hilary in n. 22 *supra*.

<sup>27</sup> Adamson (p. 151; cf. Ropes p. 102) is the primary source for the claim of Priscillian's usage of our Epistle. Note well, however, that he very vaguely summarizes the data he has collected with the phrase "numerous quotations in the tractates of the heretic Priscillian."

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Mußner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 42 where he writes "Papst Innozenz I. nennt in seiner Liste der kanonischen Schriften des NT in seinem Brief an Bischof Exuperius von Toulouse vom Jahre 405 auch den Jak-Brief. Damit hatte sich das kanonische Ansehen unseres Briefes in der römischen Kirche für immer durchgesetzt." Of course, it should be noted that the wording of this comment does not specifically *exclude* that the letter was regarded as canonical and therefore authoritative before c. 405.

<sup>29</sup> Indeed, in *De moribus eccl.*, a work which is normally dated to 387/388, Bauer, the CSEL (vol. XC) edition editor, points to 4 uses of James. Although none of these qualify as citations, that which is found at XXVI, 51 is a reasonably clear allusion to James 1:17 (cf. p. 55). Here, Augustine writes: "Non enim ad haec satis est uoluntas bona, sed opus est magna quadam ratione atque prudentia, qua nemo uti potest, nisi deus ille fons omnium bonorum id tribuerit." Cf. the "F" *Texttyp* of the *Vetus Latina* for the first ? of James 1:17: "omnis datio bona et omne donum perfectum desursum descendit a patre luminum..."

<sup>30</sup> For more on these synods and on Augustine's involvement therein, see pp. 16-17 (along with appropriate nn.) *infra*.

### Pelagius and His Writings

Pelagius, who was clearly active in Rome from the 380's on,<sup>31</sup> employed our letter multiple times in his (undisputed) literary productions.<sup>32</sup> The majority can be found in his *Expositio ad Romanos*, a work which, it must be remembered, was penned between 405 and 410, well before the beginning of the controversy and well before there had been any serious questioning of his (or his followers') orthodoxy.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Note the pithy, if slightly imprecise, summary of what is known regarding the first decades of Pelagius' life by de Bruyn: "Pelagius was active in Rome during the last two decades of the fourth century and the first decade of the fifth. We know little of his life prior to his arrival in Rome in the early 380's." See Theodore DE BRUYN, *Pelagius's Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1993), 10. The best critical edition of the Latin text remains that of A. SOUTER. See his *Pelagius's Expositions of Thirteen Epistles of St. Paul. II Text and Apparatus Criticus*, Texts and Studies Series, IX, gen. ed. J. Armitage ROBINSON (Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1926). For more detailed comments about the life and chronology of Pelagius and his activity, see, among a plethora of possible sources, B.R. REES, *Pelagius: Life and Letters* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: The Boydell Press, 1998), xii-xv and, though older, George DE PLINVAL, *Pélage: Ses écrits, sa vie, et sa réforme* (Lausanne: Librairie Payot, 1943), 13-71, of which pp. 13-15 comprise a chronological table. On the date of the commentary, cf. de Bruyn, *Pelagius's Commentary*, p. 11 along with the relevant literature listed in n. 64. Note well, however, that some of the data which scholars rely upon for the biography of Pelagius is either questioned or refuted by Duval. See Yves-Marie DUVAL, *Pélage est-il le censeur inconnu de l'adversus Iovinianum à Rome en 393?*, in *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 75 (July-December, 1980) : 525-557, esp. 526-530; 536; 540-542; and 551-552.

<sup>32</sup> The question of which works may be justifiably attributed to Pelagius is too complicated to be addressed here. While virtually no one would question his authorship of the Pauline commentary attributed to him or of the so-called letter to Demetrius, compositions such as *De uirginitate*, *De diuina lege*, and *De uita christiana* (all of which contain uses of James) are variously more suspect. The places where Pelagius cites or alludes to James in these 2 undisputed works are as follows: *Ad Demetriadem*, 19,3 (James 3:2); 25,3 (James 4:7); and *Expositio in Romanos* 1:11; 2:2; 3:28; 5:4; 5:10; 12:12; 13:10; 13:13 and 14:4. These passages of the commentary include uses of James 4:15; 2:23; 2:26 (cf. 2:17); 1:2; 4:4; 1:2; 2:15-16; 3:14 and 4:11, respectively. It goes without saying that a more careful perusal of Pelagius' authentic writings combined with a thorough search of these works with a CD-ROM research tool would probably yield still more examples of instances where our letter was used by him.

<sup>33</sup> In fact, during the period in which he wrote his Pauline Commentary, Pelagius was almost universally held in high regard. Indeed, to use Augustine's own attitude as an example, it was approximately 415 before he had lost his sense of general respect for the Pelagians and their associates. It even seems fair to say that he was reluctant to engage them polemically. For support of this idea, cf., e.g., Allan D. FITZGERALD, ed. *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B.

### The Significance of James in and for Pelagius

Given the scope of this paper, it is probably better to omit a detailed discussion of the content of Pelagius' comments which involve the letter of James. In fact, my primary point can be made just as well by observing the *form* by which he introduces his uses of James.

In addition to the implicit authority he assigns to the Epistle by assuming Jacobean authorship of the letter and by labeling this James as "blessed" (*beatus*), Pelagius betrays concern that some among his circles of contact have claimed that an internal contradiction existed within Paul's writings specifically and within the New Testament more generally.<sup>34</sup> Surely he would not have done the latter had he possessed serious qualms about the epistle's status. Even more significantly, it would seem justifiable to conclude that Pelagius and, by extension, his intended readers, must have known the Epistle of James quite well. Evidence for this assertion is provided by the quotes of James found in his remarks on Romans 5:4 and 13:13. In his comments on 5:4 he writes: "... *sicut Iacobus ait: 'omne gaudium existimate, fratres,' et reliqua* (cf. James 1:2)," while at 13:13 he writes: "... *dicente Iacobo: 'si enim zelum amarum habetis,' et cetera.*

Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1999), s.v. "Pelagius, Pelagianism," by Eugene TeSelle, where TeSelle notes that "Augustine seemed reluctant to attack Pelagius himself. He was aware of Pelagius's reputation for piety and the support that he had in the clergy and among powerful Roman families." It is also worth noting that TeSelle's remarks seem to be reflections and assimilations of conclusions expressed by Gerald Bonner several years ago. Compare the second remark above with this observation made by G. BONNER, *Pelagianism and Augustine*\*, in *Augustinian Studies* 23 (1993): 40-42, viz., "As late as 412, ... Augustine knew Pelagius only by repute, as a holy man of no small spiritual advancement," "With Pelagius himself he remained on civil terms, ...," and, most notably, "Augustine, in Africa, still at this time preoccupied [with other duties and writings], ... had far less motive than Jerome to embark upon a campaign against Pelagius, a man with a reputation for piety, as Augustine himself recognized, and who enjoyed the friendship of many of Augustine's friends. Perhaps by 415 Augustine's views were changing" (italics added). Finally, see also Bonner's 1970 Villanova Lectures, published as *Saint Augustine and Modern Research on Pelagianism*, The Saint Augustine Lecture Series, ed. Robert P. RUSSELL (Villanova: Villanova University Press, 1972), pp. 38 and 40 respectively. Here, Bonner writes: "... up to the year 416 [Augustine's role in the Pelagian Controversy] is marked by a curious reserve," and "thus far [i.e. to 414], Augustine still considered the Pelagians as brothers not heretics."

<sup>34</sup> Indeed, his words "Now if these verses seem to contradict the sense of the other verses, ... (quod si haec eorum sensui videntur esse contraria ...)" disclose his own intention to demonstrate that no such contradiction existed.

(cf. James 3:14; emphases added)”<sup>35</sup> The very fact that Pelagius was comfortable with stopping off his quotations of James with phrases like “*et reliqua*” and “*et cetera*” indicate that, in all probability, Pelagius expected his audience to know James well enough to be able to call to mind the lines that followed his explicit quotation and to apply them to his larger point. In short, Pelagius’ use of these phrases offers indirect proof that the Epistle of James was accepted, carefully studied and, perhaps, even memorized in the Christian communities of Rome prior to 405. Although precisely how much earlier remains difficult to determine, it is certain that Pelagius’ audience could not have come to know the Epistle of James this well overnight.<sup>36</sup> *Prima facie*, this would seem to amount to a significant piece of evidence for what may fairly be called a rediscovery, if not an outright discovery, of the epistle of James in the Rome of the late fourth century.

<sup>35</sup> See Souter, *Pelagius’s Expositions*, pp. 42 and 105 respectively. Although one might initially suspect that these abbreviated references to Scripture were made by the hand of a later editor or copyist and, thus, do not support the argument made here, this suspicion is put to rest by the facts that: (1) the vast majority of Pelagius’ scriptural citations in the commentary are not abbreviated, even in instances where the quotations are relatively lengthy; (2) in the case of several of the abbreviated citations, the context of Pelagius’ argument makes it clear which particular aspect of the verse(s) in question he wanted his readers to remember (cf., e.g. the comments on Romans 5:4, where the abbreviated reference to James 1:2-4 was inserted in between other references to trials and suffering); and, (3) Souter, in his highly detailed analysis of the commentary and its transmission history, offers no hint that anything might be suspect regarding the abbreviations. In fact, on p.92 and before giving a list of more than 30 places where such abbreviations occur, he notes: “When a scripture passage is not quoted in full, it is customary to add *et reliqua* or *et cetera* to the quoted words.”

<sup>36</sup> While Pelagius’ uses of James clearly represent new avenues for investigation, I have here omitted discussion of the uses other, oft-neglected, Western writers made of the letter. Are we sure that (roughly) contemporary writers such as Tyconius (ca. 330-390) and Julian of Aeclanum (ca. 380-454) did not know, accept, and use it? How about successors such as Leo the Great or John Cassian? Regarding the particular case of Tyconius, note that the Scripture Index of William S. Babcock’s edition contains no reference to James in the *Liber regularum*, the only work of Tyconius’ (apart from fragments of his commentary on the book of Revelation) which is extant. Note also that Maureen Tilley has written: “In the New Testament [Tyconius] passed over 2 and 3 John and all of the Catholic Epistles except 1 Peter.” Respectively, see William S. BABCOCK, *Tyconius: The Book of Rules*, SBL Texts and Translations series, vol. 31 (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholar’s Press, 1989), 152; Tilley, *The Bible in Christian North Africa*, 117 and n.79.

### The Role of James 2:14-26 and "Faith vs. Works" in the Pelagian Controversy

Returning to the works of Augustine, what may be said regarding his use of the letter during the period of the Pelagian Controversy? Preliminary research indicates that, overall, references to our letter may be found at least ninety times in the whole of the bishop's anti-Pelagian corpus.<sup>37</sup> Also interesting, and contrary to what one might expect, a close investigation of Augustine's use of the pericope of James 2:14-26 during that same period reveals that, within his fifteen anti-Pelagian works and in spite of multiple and repeated discussion of such Jacobean issues as the means of justification and the relationship of faith to works,<sup>38</sup> there exists only one citation and only one clear allusion of James 2:14-26 to which we may point with confidence.<sup>39</sup> Respectively, they occur in *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 7,18 and in *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* III, 5,14.

<sup>37</sup> Once again, let it be well noted that this number of 90 uses is, in all probability, not exhaustive. This number reflects a heavy reliance on critical edition indices and on personal reading. More detailed analysis, especially with a CD-ROM could increase this number significantly.

<sup>38</sup> In fact, no less than thirteen of these fifteen contain at least something substantial in this regard.

<sup>39</sup> This is *not* to say that the pericope is otherwise absent from the works of the period 411-430. In all, I have located some 21 uses of these thirteen verses, the vast majority being places where Augustine refers to James 2:19. Furthermore, though space does not permit a full discussion of the details, I believe that we can legitimately qualify Augustine's use of James 2:14-26 in the period 411-430 in three ways: (1) As more of a pastoral than a polemical text; (2) As a passage the exegetical significance of which evolved little from that which was established in earlier works; and, (3) As a passage which normally functioned as a "support" passage for other, more consequential verses. That James 2:14-26 was more of a pastoral than a polemical text is most easily demonstrated by the fact that of Augustine's twenty-one references, fourteen are found within his *sermones* while only two occur in his more polemical, i.e., specifically anti-Pelagian, writings. (Note that this is not to imply that Augustine's *sermones* do not contain significant amounts of polemical material. Note also that the references which occur in the *epistulae* are excluded from this calculation since each letter must be independently analyzed in order to determine to what extent they may be categorized as polemical.) That the Bishop of Hippo's understanding of the meaning of James 2:14-26 did not appreciably evolve during the period 411-430, may be demonstrated with a quick comparison between his exegesis as found in paragraph 6 of *Epistula* 2\*, a letter which dates from between 426 and 428, and section 15 of *De fide et operibus*, a work which almost certainly originates from late 412 or early 413. In the latter, after citing James 2:14 and several of Jesus' pronouncements as recorded in the gospels, Augustine remarked that no one "can obtain eternal life without keeping the commandments, [i.e.] by faith alone, which without works is dead," that no one should "think that faith alone, or a dead faith, that is, a faith without works, is sufficient for eternal life," and that hell will be populated by "those who neglected to do

In *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 7,18, Augustine dedicates a paragraph to the “balancing” of the position he had just argued for in 7,17, namely, that salvific faith is purely the gift of God and is in no way merited by any works that might have been performed prior to that gift having been received.<sup>40</sup> As he begins 7,18, Augustine expresses concern that some might misinterpret Paul. Specifically, he feared that some might assume that Paul was trying to convey the idea that a faith could be regarded as genuine, and thus as salvific, even if it occurred in isolation from good works or was coupled to a “bad life” (*etiamsi male uiuat et bona opera non habet*). To correct this potential misunderstanding, the Bishop of Hippo brought together Galatians 5:6 and James 2:19.<sup>41</sup> In this passage and through the subtle means of placing these two texts in close proximity, Augustine was able both to balance the two temporal aspects of justification (i.e., that, on the one hand, there could be no efficacious works *prior* to the gift of true faith and, on the other hand, that loving works are guaranteed to *follow* a genuine giving of the gift of faith) and to credibly harmonize the

good works” since it is impossible to “obtain eternal life by a faith that is dead.” (For the English see Augustine, *On Faith and Works*, Ancient Christian Writers Series, vol. 48, trans. Gregory J. Lombardo (New York: Newman Press, 1988), 32. For the Latin, see CSEL 41, p.67: *his non seruatis ad uitam ueniri potest per solam fidem, quae sine operibus mortua est. ... nam profecto ne sibi quisquam de fide, quae sine operibus mortua est, uitam promittat aeternam, ... bona operari non curauerant, tamquam de ipsa fide mortua ad uitam perueniretur aeternam.*) In *Epistula* 2\*, Augustine accepts as valid James’ assertions that “faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead, since even the demons believe and shudder,” before going on to observe that the demons’ ultimate condemnation is rooted in the fact that their deeds are unsubstantiated by a love-based belief. (For these English lines, see Augustine *Letters* 1\*-29\*, Fathers Of The Church Series vol. 81, trans. Robert B. Eno (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 22. For the Latin, see CSEL 88, p.13: *fides sine operibus mortua est in semetipsa, quia et daemones credunt et contremiscunt.*) Finally, note that passages such as Matthew 22:1-14; Matthew 16: 15-18; Romans 1:17/Habakkuk 2:4; 1 Corinthians 13; and, most especially, Galatians 5:6 are all, to various degrees and in various locations, supported by referencing James 2:14-26. Note also that, during this period, it was rare for 2:14-26 to be submitted to a sustained and independent exegesis.

<sup>40</sup> Interestingly, 7,17 is little more than a *catena* of Pauline texts including 1 Corinthians 7:25, Ephesians 2:8-9 and Romans 1:17.

<sup>41</sup> Indeed, the final phrase of the Galatians verse “sed fides quae per dilectionem operatur” can be demonstrated to have been consistently used by Augustine well into the final decade of his life to balance the role of faith with that of works in the true Christian life. For additional uses in the period of the Pelagian controversy see *De spiritu et littera* (written in 412) 16,28; 26,46; 32,56; 33,59; *De gestis Pelagii* (written in the end of 416 or in 417) 15,34 (2x) and *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* (written in 421) III, 5,14, a text which is discussed in more detail in the text *infra*.

prima facie discrepancy which exists between Paul and James.<sup>42</sup> He wrote:

For, after he had said in a certain passage, "For in Christ neither circumcision nor the lack of circumcision is worth anything," he immediately added, "but faith which works through love (cf. Galatians 5:6)." This is the faith which separates the faithful of God from the unclean demons. For they too, as the apostle James says, "believe and tremble (cf. James 2:19)," but they do not do good works. They, therefore, do not have this faith from which the righteous live (cf. Romans 1:17 and Habakkuk 2:4), that is, the faith which works through love (cf. Galatians 5:6), so that God gives them eternal life in accord with their works. But because we have our good works from God (cf. Ephesians 2:8-9) from whom we have both faith and love, the same teacher of the nations also called eternal life itself a grace.<sup>43</sup>

The one clear allusion to James 2:14-26 in Augustine's anti-Pelagian writings can be found in *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* III,5,14.<sup>44</sup> The allusion comes in the section's second half, after Augustine has carefully distinguished between the "sinner," who has the "correct and Catholic faith in God (in *Deum fidem rectam et catholicam*)," and the morally faultless individual who, because of his

<sup>42</sup> This harmonizing feature of Augustine's works is repeatedly observable in the anti-Pelagian corpus. See, e.g., *De spiritu et littera* 7,11-12; 9,15; 13,22; 32,56 and *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 6,15.

<sup>43</sup> The English translations used here are those of Roland J. Teske. See WSA, I/23-I/26: *An Answer to the Pelagians* (New York: New City Press, 1997-1999). The Latin for this section reads (Cf. PL 44, col. 892): qui cum dixisset quodam loco, In Christo enim Jesu neque circumcisio aliquid valet, neque praeputium; mox addidit, sed fides quae per dilectionem operatur. ipsa est fides quae fideles Dei separat ab immundis daemonibus: nam et ipsi, sicut dicit apostolus Jacobus, credunt et contremiscunt; sed non bene operatur. Non ergo habent istam fidem ex qua justus vivit, id est, quae per dilectionem operatur, ut reddat ei Deus vitam aeternam secundum opera ejus. Sed quia et ipsa bona opera nobis ex Deo sunt, a quo nobis et fides est, et dilectio, propterea idem ipse Doctor Gentium, etiam ipsam vitam aeternam gratiam nuncupavit.

<sup>44</sup> In part (for the passage in its entirety, cf. p. 14 and n. 46 *infra*), the Latin of III,5,14 reads "quae licet sine operibus neminem saluat," with "fides" being the clear referent of the pronoun. James 2:14b, according to the *Vetus Latina*, reads "opera autem non habeat numquid potest fides (sola) salvare eum," with almost this exact wording being shared by all three of the major *Texttypen* which the Beuron edition provides (i.e., the "S", "F" and "V"). James 2:20b, again according to the *Vetus Latina*, reads "quoniam fides sine operibus neminem saluat," although it should be noted that for this verse only the "F" and "V" *Texttypen* are given. In short, in addition to giving yet another example of the Bishop's "harmonizing" of Paul and James (recall the close proximity of multiple Pauline texts to the James phrase), it seems quite plausible that, here, Augustine took the idea of salvation contained in 2:14b and linked it with the "without works" phrasing of 2:20 in order to call to the mind of the (perceptive and Biblically-knowledgeable) reader, the whole of James 2:14-26 without specifically mentioning that apostle's letter.

incorrect faith, "leaves this life to face damnation (*de hac uita damnandus abscedat*)." He writes that the "sinners"<sup>45</sup>:

accuse themselves of all their sins and praise God in all their good works  
... On account of this faith they depart from this life to be set free and to be admitted into the company of those reigning with Christ. Why, if not on account of their faith? "Without works faith saves no one," (*quae licet sine operibus neminem saluat*; cf. James 2:14 and 2:20) for it is not bad faith, but "the faith which works through love" (cf. Galatians 5:6); yet even sins are forgiven through faith, because "the righteous live from faith" (cf. Romans 1:17 and Habakkuk 2:4). But without faith even those works which seem good are transformed into sins, for "everything that does not come from faith is sin" (cf. Romans 14:23).<sup>46</sup>

### The Significance of these Results for the History of the Pelagian Controversy

While these two applications of James 2:14-26 are of interest in their own right, it is also true that this dearth of uses indirectly supports the conjecture of Stephano Scannerini that the issue of "grace vs. works" must not have played a substantial role in the Pelagian Controversy.<sup>47</sup> Given the facts that James was both regarded as Scripture<sup>48</sup> and, as such, was readily accessible to both parties (here recall also that the passage was repeatedly used and thoroughly exegeted in Augustine's non-Pelagian writings, e.g., *De fide et operi-*

<sup>45</sup> Naturally, those to whom the Bishop here refers are "sinners" only in the sense that they continue to struggle with the earthly flesh and its various *concupiscentiae*. To be a "sinner" in this sense is a good thing insofar as this is a reflection of the self-deprecation and aversion to pride which is often engendered by the indwelling Holy Spirit. This concern for genuine faith is one of the foundational issues which leads Augustine to include references to James 2:14-26. Note also that there is probably an implicit reference here to several of Christ's parables in which Jesus also went to some lengths to differentiate "genuine" faith from the hypocritical faith of the Pharisees. Cf., esp., Luke 18:9-14 and the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector.

<sup>46</sup> The Latin of this passage reads (Cf. CSEL 60, p.503): in omnibus delictis suis se accusat, in omnibus bonis operibus deum laudat ... de hac uita liberandus et in consortium cum Christo regnatorum recipiendus emigrat, quare nisi propter fidem? quae licet sine operibus neminem saluat – ipsa est enim non reproba fides, quae per dilectionem operatur –, tamen per ipsam etiam peccata soluuntur, quia iustus ex fide uiuit, sine ipsa uero etiam quae uidentur bona opera in peccata uertuntur; omne enim quod non est ex fide, peccatum est.

<sup>47</sup> See Stefano Scannerini, "Giustificazione per la fede," 184, where he writes: "Tra pelagiani e agostinisti si discute quindi sulla lettera di Giacomo, ma non sul problema fede-opere (prova ne è che Cassiano nella *Collatio XIII* non fa cenno al nostro passo): al centro delle polemiche è il v. 10 del c. 2 di Gc."

<sup>48</sup> For more on the presence of James in the canons of the North African synods and councils from of 393, see n. 54 *infra*.

bus),<sup>49</sup> could it be a mere coincidence that it was so rarely employed? It would seem then that the issue of "faith vs. works" was one upon which the opposing sides agreed, or, although this is less likely, was one upon which they "agreed to disagree." Regardless, as there was virtually no discussion between Augustine and his opponents about the true meaning of James 2:14-26, it is difficult to believe that our pericope would *not* have been polemically employed had either side seen it to their advantage to do so.

### Important Avenues for Further Investigation

A more thorough investigation into Augustine's usage of the letter of James is warranted by both practical and theoretical considerations. Practically, such an investigation, properly performed, would fill a real *lacuna* in the field of Augustinian studies.<sup>50</sup> Theoretically, careful investigation into Augustine's relationship to the letter of James is justified for three reasons: because it was known and used by his opponents;<sup>51</sup> because Augustine was the first Western writer to make large-scale use of the letter; and, because the years of Augustine's life and ministry roughly correspond to (or comprise the first full generation after) what turned out to be a very important period for the epistle's acceptance and use within the Western church. In fact, each of these three "theoretical considerations" raises multiple questions. For example, is it possible to account for the presence of James as authoritative Scripture in the writings of Pelagius? How, i.e., via whom, did this tradition regarding James reach him? What can be done to resolve the confusion which presently reigns – as well as the overly facile picture which is so often presented – regarding the letter's reception in the West? Is an authoritative answer even possible? Who was the first Westerner to regard James as inspired Scripture? Regarding the actual use of the epistle, how does the exegesis of James by Augustine's predecessors, contemporaries and opponents differ from that of Augustine? Is there any discernable relationship between them? Further, How can we account for the fact that, all told, Augustine may

<sup>49</sup> In *De fide et operibus* see 14,21; 16,27; 21,38; 27,49 and, perhaps most interestingly, 15,24-25.

<sup>50</sup> Indeed, I have as my primary goal for the next few years the pursuit of just such an investigation and the compiling of its results into an acceptable doctoral dissertation. Such a dissertation would form a significant part of a research project recently awarded to Prof. Dr. Mathijs Lamberigts of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven by that university's *Onderzoeksraad*. For the opportunity to be employed as part of this project, allow me to express my gratitude to both Prof. Lamberigts and the members of KUL's research council.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. section on Pelagius and his use of James as found on pp. 8-10 *supra*.

have made use of James 500 (or more) times?<sup>52</sup> In addition to what he himself writes in the *Retractationes*, can anything else be known regarding his now-lost "commentary" on James? What about Augustine's role in the actual process of James' use and reception in North Africa? Was it active or passive? I.e., did Augustine make such extensive use of James because he felt compelled to integrate the (relatively recent) decisions of the North African episcopacy into his writing and preaching ministry; or, was he so genuinely affected by the contents of the letter of James that he integrated it into his productions as a partial fulfillment of what he saw as his role as a nurturing shepherd of the church? Finally, if, as seems to be likely, his role was more of the latter, could we go so far as to claim that Augustine is, at least from the human point-of-view, in some sense responsible for the canon of Scripture as we know it today?<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Though the details are too complicated to discuss here, note that I have substantial reason to believe that this number could be even higher. Also interesting is Wordsworth's remark that an unnamed and apparently contemporary "Dean of Chichester" had amassed "a long list" of some 389 "quotations" of James in Augustine's works. For the full quote, see J. Wordsworth, "The Corbey St. James (ff), and its Relation to other Latin Versions, and the Original Language of the Epistle," in *Studia Biblia-Essays in Biblical Archaeology and Criticism and Kindred Subjects* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1885), 129 and n.2. Of course, compared to the Bishop of Hippo's use of other biblical books (e.g. John, Romans, the Psalter), 500 does not seem so large. Nevertheless, the number 500, when it is compared to the number of times that Augustine's Western predecessors used the letter, becomes quite significant. As noted *supra*, even by the most "inclusive" standards, i.e., that of *Biblia Patristica*, only 26 uses of James are attributable to Ambrose, the Latin Father who seems to have most frequently cited James prior to Augustine.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. *Retract.* II, 32 (CCL 57, p. 116). Here, the Bishop provides his readers with only a tantalizingly short comment (i.e., ca. 7 lines in the aforementioned edition) about the existence of this now lost work.

<sup>54</sup> According to Bruce Metzger he was. He notes that the import of the multiple 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century North African councils (i.e., those held under the primate Aurelius beginning in 393) for the issue of the canon was that they gave the issue a sense of closure for the Western church: "The great debate of so many generations was practically over. But it remained for someone to say that it was over. It was Augustine who, in three provincial synods, cast his weight for the twenty-seven books which we know as the Christian Scriptures." See Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, 237-238. Odd though it might seem, Augustine, in spite of having not yet been ordained a bishop and in spite of having only recently been ordained a priest (in 391), apparently played a substantial role in the leadership of these gatherings from the outset. On his role, see G. Bardy, "Conciles d'Hippone au temps de saint Augustin," *Augustiniana* 4 (1955): 441-458, esp. 442-443; F.L. Cross, "History and Fiction in the African Canons," *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 12-2 (1961): 227-247; and J.E. Merdinger, *Rome and the African Church in the Time of Augustine* (New Haven, Connecticut and London: Yale University Press, 1997), esp. chapter 6 "The Council of Hippo and Clerical Appeals within Africa." Interestingly, Cross even goes so far as to give Augustine credit for having originated the idea of regular councils. Cf. his article, p. 229: "... Augustine conceived the plan of regular councils. The year was 392." For the list of books comprising the Old and the New Testaments as drafted and approved by these synods, see canon 36 of the 397 council in CCL 149, p. 43.