

DID AUGUSTINE LOSE THE PHILOSOPHICAL BATTLE IN THE DEBATE WITH JULIAN OF ECLANUM ON *CONCUPISCENTIA CARNIS* AND *VOLUNTAS*?¹

I. Introduction

Concupiscentia carnis (carnal concupiscence or carnal desire)² is one of the most significant themes that occupied the mind of the old bishop of Hippo, especially in his bitter debates with Julian of Eclanum, the most vehement antagonist in his old age.³ Right at the beginning of *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* of 418-421 that initiated their controversy, Augustine claims that his purpose is to distinguish “the goodness of marriage from the evil of *concupiscentia carnis*, on account of which a human being who is born through it contracts original

¹ This article originates from a chapter of my doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Professor Carlos Steel. I have benefited from his valuable comments and suggestions. I am especially grateful to Professor Gerd Van Riel for his incisive comments which saved me from many mistakes. I also learned a lot from Professor Martin Stone in the discussion on the relevant chapter in my dissertation. An earlier draft of this article has been presented at the Doctors and Post-doctors Meeting of De Wulf-Mansion Centre for Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy at Leuven, Belgium. I would like to express my deep gratitude for the comments from David Butorac and Dr. Marco Forlivesi among other participants of that meeting. I am also indebted to the helpful comments from my friend, Dr. Dongqi Xia in China. Last but not the least, special thanks are due to Professor Mathijs Lamberigts for his kindness of permitting me to cite from his article on Julian of Eclanum that is coming to be published by Freiburg University.

² In this paper, *Concupiscentia carnis* will be left in its original form in order to avoid the strong sexual connotation of the English expressions like carnal desire or carnal concupiscence, which will be revealed problematic to render Augustine's original reflections on *concupiscentia*.

³ PETER BROWN, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography (A New Edition with an Epilogue)*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press), 2000, 374. For a superb presentation of the theological and philosophical context of Julian's conception of *concupiscentia*, see MATHIJS LAMBERIGTS, “The Philosophical and Theological Background of Julian of Aeclanum's Concept of Concupiscence” (forthcoming). For the significance of this topic in the Pelagian controversy, see GERALD BONNER *St. Augustine of Hippo: Life and Controversies* (third edition) (Norwich: Canterbury Press) 2002, 374ff. and JOSEF LÖSSL *Julian von Aeclanum. Studien zu seinem Leben, seinem Werk, seiner Lehre und ihrer Überlieferung* (Leiden/Boston/Köln: Brill) 2001, 250-318. For a general account of Augustine's controversy with Julian, see MATHIJS LAMBERIGTS, “Recent Research into Pelagianism with Particular Emphasis on the Role of Julian of Aeclanum”, *Augustiniana* 52 (2002):175-198.

sin".⁴ In book XIV of *De ciuitate Dei*, which was composed almost during the same period, Augustine's account of Adam's sin and its punishment revolves around *concupiscentia carnis* and its effects.⁵ This theme is further developed to the length of a book in his later work *Contra Julianum*.⁶ However, this did not stop Julian and Augustine from quibbling over this issue tediously in the last work of the older bishop, who was prevented by death to bring it to completion.⁷ In modern scholarship *concupiscentia carnis* also ranks among the most interpreted or over-interpreted terms in Augustinian studies.⁸ Due to this somewhat misleading term, Augustine has been frequently accused by his unsympathetic commentators of a pessimistic view regarding sex and marriage, which profoundly influenced the Christian tradition for centuries. This assumption has been rightly questioned in recent years and the richness of Augustine's insights into sexuality

⁴ *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* (later as *nupt. et conc.*), I, 1, 1 (CSEL 42). "Intentio igitur huius libri haec est, ut, quantum nos Dominus adiuuare dignatur, carnalis concupiscentiae malum, propter quod homo, qui per illam nascitur, trahit originale peccatum, discernamus a bonitate nuptiarum." For the English translation of Augustine's anti-Pelagian works, I cite with slight moderation from the superb rendition by ROLAND TESKE in the series of *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century*, ed. J. E. Rotelle (New York: New City Press, 1990- , later as **WSA**). See also *Retractationes* (*retr.*), II, 53, 80.

⁵ For the dating of this book, see *Bibliothèque Augustinienne*, *Oeuvres de Saint Augustin* (Paris: Desclée; De Brouwer, 1949-) 33, 29, "Le livre XIV, de son côté, est signalé dans le *Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum* qui date des environs de 420 et pourrait être un peu postérieur." See also PETER BROWN 2000, 283 and GERALD O'DALY, *Augustine's City of God: A Reader's Guide* (Oxford: Clarendon), 1999, 34-35. For the theme of this book, cf. O'DALY 1999, 153.

⁶ That is the Book IV of this polemical work written in 421-422, which is a line-by-line refutation of Julian's work of *Ad Turbantium*. The latter now only exists in fragments.

⁷ In this unfinished work *Contra Julianum opus imperfectum* (c. *Jul. imp.* six books), Augustine always cites Julian's work *Ad Florum* completely in its original form before criticizing it. Due to this unusual effort, six books out of eight of Julian's text have been completely preserved.

⁸ For specific research on the term of *concupiscentia*, see the classic article of FRANÇOIS-JOSEPH THONNARD, "La notion de concupiscentia en philosophie augustiniennne", *Recherches Augustiniennes* 3 (1965): 59-105. Also see GERALD BONNER, "Libido and *concupiscentia* in St. Augustine", *Studia Patristica* 6 (1962): 303-314; id. "Concupiscentia", in *Augustinus-Lexikon*, ed. C. Mayer (Basel: Schwabe & Co. 1986-) 1: 1113-1122; UGO BIANCHI, "Augustine on Concupiscentia", *Studia Patristica* 22: 202-212; J.T. BEANE, *The Development of the notion of concupiscentia in Saint Augustine. A dissertation submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Notre Dame*, (Notre Dame, Indiana) 1993; PETER BURNELL, "Concupiscentia and Moral Freedom in Augustine and before Augustine," *Augustinian Studies* 26 (1995): 49-63, and MARLEEN VERSCHOREN, "The Appearance of the Concept Concupiscentia in Augustine's Early Antimanichean Writings (388-391)", *Augustiniana* 52 (2002): 199-240.

has been brought into scene.⁹ Nevertheless, it is still believed that Augustine's interpretation of sexual lust is too closely connected with his problematic conception of original sin and has little independent value from a philosophical point of view. By contrast, Julian's more refined naturalistic conception of concupiscence has found more favor with scholars of history of philosophy. This position is well represented in Richard Sorabji's recent work *Emotion and Peace of Mind*, which offers a clear and vivid depiction of emotion in late ancient thought. Its main theme is the fate of the Stoic philosophy of emotion in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. This fine exposition ends with a comparative study of Augustine and Julian on lust and the will, where Sorabji asserts,

"Augustine's case against lust centred on the idea of the will. I believe Julian won the philosophical argument and showed that Augustine's objections failed. But he lost the political battle."¹⁰

The political battle, or the history of reception, is not our concern here.¹¹ In this study, I will examine Sorabji's evaluation of this debate in detail to see if Augustine's account of sexual lust and its relation to the will is philosophically indefensible. First we shall take a closer look at Augustine's notion of *concupiscentia carnis*. Then Augustine's reflections on sexual lust and its essential relation to the

⁹ For recent studies dealing with Augustine's viewpoint on sexuality, cf. PETER BROWN "Sexuality and Society in the Fifth Century A.D.: Augustine and Julian of Eclanum", in Tria Corda: Scritti in onore di Arnaldo Momigliano, ed. by E. Gabba, (Como: Edizioni New Press), 1983, 49-70; id. *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press), 1988, 387-447; ELIZABETH CLARK, "Adam's Only Companion: Augustine and the Early Christian Debate on Marriage", *Recherches Augustiniennes* 21 (1986): 139-162; ea. "Sex, Shame, and Rhetoric: Engendering Early Christian Ethics", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 59 (1992): 221-45 DAVID HUNTER, "Augustinian Pessimism? A New Look at Augustine's Teaching on Sex, Marriage and Celibacy" *Augustinian Studies* 25 (1994): 153-177; LAMBERIGTS, "A Critical Evaluation of Critiques of Augustine's View of Sexuality", in *Augustine and His Critics*, ed. by Robert Dodaro and George Lawless (London: Routledge), 2000, 176-197, and JOHN C. CAVADINI "Feeling Right: Augustine on the Passions and Sexual Desire", in *Augustinian Studies* 36/1 (2005): 195-217.

¹⁰ RICHARD SORABJI *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press) 2000, 400; 416.

¹¹ In his review to Sorabji's book, Peter Brown provides a masterly account of Augustine's so-called victory in the political battle. Brown locates Augustine's thoughts in their cultural and social contexts and convincingly clarified that Augustine's insights into sexuality did not dominate the subsequent periods as Sorabji implicitly indicates. It deserves notice that Brown does not question Sorabji's judgment regarding the philosophical battle. Brown's review can be found in *Philosophical Books*, 43 (2002): 185-208.

will are to be examined by analyzing some key passages. After this careful reading of the text, we will treat in details Sorabji's criticism which is in favor of Julian's conception of the will and lust.

II. Augustine's concept of *concupiscentia carnis*.

In Augustine's writings, the terms referring to sexual lust are *libido* and *concupiscentia carnis*, sometimes simply *concupiscentia*. *Libido* is a classical word which can be used as a general name of all desires (*cupiditates*); however, *concupiscentia* is a biblical term which translates the Greek word *epithumia*.¹² For the latter, Augustine often refers to the Johannine triad of *concupiscentia* in 1 John 2:15-16. "*Nolite diligere mundum: quia omnia quae in mundo sunt, concupiscentia carnis est, et concupiscentia oculorum, et ambitio saeculi.*" ("Do not love the world, for all that is in the world is the concupiscence of flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life.")¹³ In contrast to the other two spiritual disorders, *concupiscentia carnis* seems closely connected with sensual pleasure. Moreover, when the object of the lust or the concupiscence is not specified, it refers to the lust that arouses our sexual organs.¹⁴ In that case, *libido* and *concupiscentia* can be virtually interchanged.¹⁵

Nevertheless, it should be stressed from the outset that *concupiscentia carnis* cannot be identified with sexual lust. This point is even emphasized by his adversary Julian in his own exegesis of Johanne triple *concupiscentia*:

"This *concupiscentia carnis*, of course, contains absolutely no reference to the sex organs. I shall say, then, that by this term the apostle John strikes at ears thirsting for various songs; I shall say that by this term he chastises the palate of gluttons; I shall say that he blames the

¹² BONNER 1986-1994b, 1114.

¹³ The rendition of this verse is cited from HENRY CHADWICK's translation of *confessions*. It is first quoted by AUGUSTINE in *De musica*. VI, 14, 44, cf. VERSCHOREN 2002, 221. See also, *De uera religione* 3, 4; 38, 70-71; 55, 107; *Confessiones*. X, 30, 41ff. For a good survey of Augustine's discussion about this verse, check JAMES O'DONNELL, *Augustine: Confessions*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press) 1992, iii. 203-208.

¹⁴ *De ciuitate Dei* XIV, 16, (CCL 48) "tamen cum libido dicitur neque cuius rei libido sit additur, non fere adsolet animo occurrere nisi illa, qua obscenae partes corporis excitantur."

¹⁵ See for instance, *nupt. et conc.* II, 7, 17, "sed inter tot nomina bonarum rerum, id est corporum, sexuum, coniunctionum, libidinem uel concupiscentiam carnis iste non nominat (Julian)." Cf. Bonner 1962, 303-314.

noses who die amid scents, and ultimately everything except what you think."¹⁶

Here Julian aims to argue that Augustine's condemnation of sexual desire as *concupiscentia carnis* is without scriptural foundation. In the response to this accusation, Augustine confirms definitely that he never restricts this biblical term to a sexual connotation.

"You say this, as if we say that *concupiscentia carnis* surges up only into the pleasure of the genital organs. This concupiscence is, of course, recognized in whichever sense of the body the flesh has desires opposed to the spirit. And because, if the spirit does not have stronger desires opposed to it, it drags one off to evil actions, it is proved to be an evil."¹⁷

¹⁶ *c. Jul. imp.* IV, 28 (CSEL 85/2) Jul. "Hac quippe concupiscentia carnis nullum absolute genitalium tenetur indicium. Dicam ergo aures hoc uocabulo uariorum sitientes carminum uerberari, dicam castigari a sancto Iohanne helluonum palatum, dicam culpari immorientes odoribus nares, totum postremo praeter id quod tu arbitraris."

¹⁷ *ibid.* "Ita hoc dicis, quasi nos concupiscentiam carnis in solam uoluptatem genitalium dicamus aestuare, prorsus in quocumque corporis sensu caro contra spiritum concupiscit ipsa cognoscitur, et quoniam si non aduersus eam spiritus fortius concupiscat, ad mala pertrahit, malum esse conuincitur."

¹⁸ For the concupiscence of spirit and of wisdom, see *nupt. et conc.* II, 10, 23, "in concupiscentiae autem nomine aliquando gloriandum est, quia est et concupiscentia spiritus aduersus carnem, est et concupiscentia sapientiae." See also *ciu. Dei* XIV, 7; *c. Jul.* VI, 16, 50; This positive conception of the concupiscentia has already occurred in AUGUSTINE's early anti-Manichaean work *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum*, I, 17, 32. Cf. VERSCHOREN 2002, 210. For *concupiscentia naturalis*, it needs to be emphasized that Julian uses this term to refer to "a means necessary for the sexes", however, Augustine conceives it as the universal desire toward happiness. See *C. Jul. imp.* IV, 67 Julian: "Igitur quia concupiscentia naturalis nec pudoris opprobrio potuit coargui et conditoris sui dignitate defensa est, ad hoc solum, ut non quasi magnum bonum, quippe quod sit hominibus pecoribusque commune, sed quasi necessarius sexibus instrumentum ..." Augustine: "Cur enim non dicis concupiscentia carnis, sed dicis 'concupiscentia naturalis'? nonne concupiscentia beatitudinis concupiscentia est naturalis? Cur ambigue loqueris?" For the illuminating distinction between *concupiscentia carnis* and *concupiscentia nuptiarum*, see *ep.* 6*, 5 (BA 46B) "Ex hoc errore concupiscentiam nuptiarum, hoc est concupiscentiam pudicitiae coniugalis, concupiscentiam legitime propagandae prolis, concupiscentiam uinculi socialis, quo uterque inter se sexus obstringitur, non discernunt a concupiscentia carnis, quae licitis atque illicitis indifferenter ardescit et per concupiscentiam nuptiarum, quae hac bene utitur, frenatur ab illicitis et ad sola licita relaxatur, contra cuius impetum repugnantem legi mentis omnis castitas pugnat et coniugatorum, ut ea bene utantur, et continentium uirginumque sanctarum, ut ea melius et gloriosius non utantur. Hanc ergo concupiscentiam carnis, in qua est solum desiderium concumbendi, non discernentes a concupiscentia nuptiarum, in qua est officium generandi, impudentissime laudant, de qua primi homines erubuerunt, quando foliis ficulneis illa membra texerunt quae ante peccatum pudenda non fuerant; nudi quippe erant et non confundebantur, ut intellegamus istum motum, de quo confusi sunt, in natura humana cum morte fuisse conceptum." Cf. BONNER 1982; BROWN, 1983, 50-51.

It is evident here that *concupiscentia carnis* can be applied to nearly all kinds of sensual pleasure. Furthermore, in contrast to the blameworthy *concupiscentia carnis*, Augustine also acknowledges some laudable forms of *concupiscentia*, such as *concupiscentia spiritalis*, *concupiscentia sapientiae*, *concupiscentia naturalis*, *concupiscentia nuptiarum*.¹⁸ In Book XIV of *De ciuitate Dei*, Augustine enumerates many different kinds of blameworthy *libido* (equivalent to *concupiscentia*) which are evidently beyond the region of sex: *libido* for vengeance (anger), *libido* for money (avarice), *libido* for victory at any price (obstinacy), *libido* for glory (vanity), *libido* for mastery, etc.¹⁹ Therefore there is a more profound disorder that justifies the condemnation of *concupiscentia carnis* in sexual activities. It is blameworthy not because of its recurrent connection with sexual activities but its essential opposition to *spiritus*, the spiritual dimension of human beings. Here we can easily detect the influence from Saint Paul's conception of the fight between flesh and spirit, "*caro enim concupiscit aduersus spiritum* (flesh lusts against the spirit)". This theological background underlies Augustine's categorization of this lust as a moral evil. What matters in our philosophical analysis of this biblical term, however, is the exact denotation of this theological conception of flesh (*caro*), especially its subtle relation to the body (*corpus*).

First it should be emphasized that the flesh under consideration is not the substance of the body, which essentially belongs to the human nature.²⁰ This point is explicitly confirmed in Augustine's exegesis of *caro* in Rom 7: 18:

"Here he called the flesh (*caro*) that in which there is found the morbid affection of the flesh (*morbidus quidam carnis adfectus*), not the structure of the body (*corporis conformatio*) whose members are not to be offered as weapons to sin, that is, to that concupiscence which holds captive this carnal part of us (*hoc carnale nostrum*). For, with regard to the very substance and nature of the body (*ad ipsam corporalem substantiam atque naturam*) in the faithful, whether married or living in continence, it is already the temple of god."²¹

¹⁹ *ciu. Dei*, XIV, 15. "Est igitur libido ulciscendi, quae ira dicitur; est libido habendi pecuniam, quae auaritia; est libido quomodocumque uincendi, quae peruicacia; est libido gloriandi, quae iactantia nuncupatur....Quis enim facile dixerit, quid uocetur libido dominandi..."

²⁰ For AUGUSTINE's emphasis on the body as an integral partner of the soul, see *De beata uita* 2, 7; *De ordine* II, 19, 50; *mor.* I, 4, 6; *conf.* X, 6, 9; *Sermones* 150, 4-5 etc.

²¹ *nupt. et conc.* I, 31, 35 "Carnem autem nunc appellauit, ubi est morbidus quidam carnis adfectus, non ipsam corporis conformationem, cuius membra non adhibenda sunt arma peccato, id est eidem ipsi concupiscentiae, quae hoc carnale nostrum

In this text, the dignity of the body is unambiguously distinguished from the blameworthy *caro*. The latter is recognized as a symbol of the region where a disordered affection (*adfectus*) manifests itself. Evidently it is this unhealthy inclination of the flesh that enslaves the body as an instrument for the fulfillment of a sinful end. Nevertheless, what remains obscure in this distinction is whether this perverted affection is only the corruption of the body or the defect of the whole human nature. For, it is quite tempting to reduce Augustine's subtle distinction into the substantial dualism by interpreting *caro* as the flawed body, the origin of all sinful lusts in opposition to the purity of the soul or spirit. In other words, it still needs to be explicated why the distinction in question is not only a play with terms.

Augustine responds to this possible criticism by stressing that the flesh as a morbid affection is primarily a defect of the soul. For no affection can be felt without the participation of the soul. In Augustine's ontological hierarchy, the soul possesses an absolute superiority over the body and therefore cannot be passively affected by the body.²² The bodily affection always presupposes the active participation of the soul.

"It is certainly as true and trustworthy as can be, the text that runs: *The flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh* (Gal 5: 17); but still everyone, I think, would agree, educated and uneducated, that the flesh cannot lust (*concupiscere*) after anything without the soul (*anima*). And thus the cause of *concupiscentia carnis* is not to be found in the soul alone, but much less in the flesh alone. It arises, after all, from both; from the soul, that is, because without it no pleasure (*dilectatio*) can be felt, and from the flesh because without it there cannot be felt any specifically carnal pleasure."²³

captium tenet. Nam quantum ad ipsam corporalem substantiam atque naturam, in uiris fidelibus, siue coniugatis siue continentibus, iam templum Dei est." See also *ciu. Dei* XIV, 2. The differentiation between *caro* and *corpus* can be traced back to his early work *De fide et symbol* 10, 24, though in a different context concerning of the resurrection of the flesh.

²² See for instance *De Genesi ad litteram* XII, 16, 33 (CSEL 28). "Nec sane putandum est facere aliquid corpus in spiritu." This point is well summarized by ETIENNE GILSON, "*Le corps ne peut pas agir en aucune manière sur l'âme, le supérieur*". See ETIENNE GILSON *Introduction à l'étude de saint Augustin* 4ed. (Paris: Vrin) 1949, 76.

²³ *Gn. litt.* X, 12, 20 "Verissime quippe ac ueracissime scriptum est: *Caro concupiscit aduersus spiritum, et spiritus aduersus carnem*: sed tamen carnem sine anima concupiscere nihil posse puto quod omnis doctus indoctusque non dubitet. Ac per hoc ipsius concupiscentiae carnalis causa non est in anima sola, sed multo minus est in carne sola. Ex utroque enim fit: ex anima scilicet, quod sine illa delectatio nulla sentitur; ex carne autem, quod sine illa carnalis delectatio non sentitur." I rendered *dilectatio* as "pleasure" instead of "enjoyment" as is found in Hill's translation. (WSA I/13)

In this exegesis the tension between flesh and spirit is not treated as a substantial division between body and soul, but rather as an opposition between different manners of pursuing pleasure. The pleasure is called carnal not because it originates from the body or the flesh only, but because the soul perceives such a disturbing pleasure from the urge of the flesh and with the flesh in contrast to the spiritual longing that only originates from the spirit.²⁴ In Augustine's terms, "we say that the flesh lusts because the soul lusts in a carnal manner (*carnaliter*)."²⁵

Now *concupiscentia carnis* is revealed as the perverted manner of the soul's disposition. In book XIV of *De ciuitate Dei*, by appealing to scriptural testimonies, Augustine takes one step further to interpret *caro* as a special reference to man and consequently *concupiscentia carnis* as the sinful desire to live according to man than according to God.²⁶ As is well known, this refers definitely to "*amor sui*" which serves as the foundation for the earthly city in contrast to "*amor Dei*" for the city of God.²⁷

III. Augustine on sexual lust and the impotence of the will

Bearing this conception of carnal concupiscence in mind, we advance to Augustine's phenomenological description of sexual lust in *De ciuitate Dei* XIV, 16.

"This lust triumphs not only over the whole body, and not only outwardly, but inwardly also. When the affection (*affectio*) of the mind is united or mixed with the appetite of the flesh (*appetitus carnis*), it convulses the whole man, so that there follows a pleasure greater than any other: a bodily pleasure (*corporis uoluptas*) so great that, at that moment of time when he achieves his climax, the alertness and, so to speak, vigilance of a man's thought (*uigilia cogitationis*) is almost entirely overwhelmed.For the parts created for this purpose (to beget children) would then be the servants of his mind even in the task of procreation, just as his other members serve it in the various tasks distributed to them. They would act at the approval of his will (*nutus uoluntatis*), and not because incited by the urging of lust.

²⁴ Ibid. "carnem itaque concupiscentem aduersus spiritum dicit apostolus carnalem procul dubio delectationem, quam de carne et cum carne spiritus habet aduersus delectationem, quam solus habet."

²⁵ *De perfectione iustitiae hominis*. 8, 19 (CSEL 42) "Non enim caro sine anima concupiscit, quamuis caro concupiscere dicatur, quia carnaliter anima concupiscit."

²⁶ *ciu. Dei* XIV, 3-4.

²⁷ See *ciu. Dei*, XIV, 28.

"But not even those who love this kind of pleasure are moved either to marital intercourse or to impure vice only when they so wish. Sometimes the urge arises unwanted; sometimes, on the other hand, it forsakes the eager lover, and concupiscence grows cold in the body even while burning in the mind. Thus strangely, then, does lust refuse to serve not only the will to beget (*generandi uoluntas*), but even the lust for lewd enjoyment. Although it is for the most part wholly opposed to the mind's control, it is not seldom divided against itself: it arouses the mind, but it does not follow through what it has begun and arouse the body also."²⁸

In this vivid depiction, three characteristics of the sexual lust can be instantly identified: First is the violent power of lust that definitely changes the status not only of the body but also of the mind, even to such a degree that the intellectual faculty of the mind can be obstructed by this sensual force. Second is the rebellion of the bodily members, i.e. sexual organs against the control of the will. Last but not the least, is that the concupiscence as an uncontrollable power, disobeys not only the command of the will, but even the lust itself, the lust for wallowing in the sensual pleasure.

What grounds these features of lust is obviously their disobedience. This disobedience has already been mentioned together with other kinds of emotional turbulence, such as grief and pain in *De ciuitate Dei* XIV, 15, where they are claimed as the punishment for the first couple's failure to abide by God's commandment. "To state it briefly, then: in the punishment of that sin, what is the retribution for disobedience if not disobedience itself?"²⁹ It deserves notice again

²⁸ *ciu.Dei*, XIV, 16 "Haec autem sibi non solum totum corpus nec solum extrinsecus, uerum etiam intrinsecus uindicat totumque commouet hominem animi simul affectu cum carnis appetitu coniuncto atque permixto, ut ea uoluptas sequatur, quae maior in corporis uoluptatibus nulla est; ita ut momento ipso temporis, quo ad eius peruenitur extremum, paene omnis acies et quasi uigilia cogitationis obruatur. ...ut etiam in hoc serenade prolis officio sic eius menti ea, quae ad hoc opus create sunt, quem ad modum cetera suis quaeque operibus distribute membra seruient, nutu uoluntatis acta, non aestu libidinis incitata? Sed neque ipsi amatores huius uoluptatis siue ad concubitus coniugales siue ad inmunditias flagitiorum cum uoluerint commouentur; sed aliquando inopportunos est ille motus poscente nullo, aliquando autem destituit inhiantem, et cum in animo concupiscentia ferueat, friget in corpore; atque ita mirum in modum non solum generandi uoluntati, uerum etiam lasciuiendi libidini libido non seruit, et cum tota plerumque menti cohibenti aduersetur, nonnumquam et aduersus se ipsa diuiditur commotoque animo in commouendo corpore se ipsa non sequitur." I cited Dyson's translation with some changes to emphasize some crucial psychological terms, and also for the sake of consistency. See *The City of God against the Pagans*, ed. and trans. by R.W. DYSON (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1998.

²⁹ *Ibid.* XIV, 15 "Denique, ut breuiter dicatur, in illius peccati poena quid inobedientiae nisi inobedientia retributa est?"

that various forms of *libido* are enumerated in this chapter and sexual lust is not singled out as the sole consequence of the first sin.³⁰ Nevertheless, in the context of the first sin committed by Adam and Eve, Augustine has good reason to focus on the sexual lust, for it is written in Genesis 3:7: "The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons." There must be something new in their bodies recognized by their eyes. However, this novelty that disturbed their eyes or souls could not be the body itself, though it occurred externally there. For the body had been in its nudity before their transgression as it is explicitly written in Genesis: "And they were naked, and were not ashamed."³¹ Moreover, the body in its natural status as created by God should not embarrass the soul, which had lived a blessed life in harmonious relation to the body. In Augustine's eyes, what changed after the Fall of human beings is the force that drives or motivates the original blameless movement of the bodily members. In Augustine's terms, it is a new stirring of their flesh. This new urge is named 'lust' (*libido*), as it inflamed the flesh regardless of the decision of will.³² In the meantime, Augustine recognizes the act of covering themselves as a natural expression of their embarrassment and shame after becoming aware of their nudity. This feeling of shame makes the lust involved in sexuality distinct from other turbulent emotions, such as anger.³³

"Again, chastity (*verecundia*) does not conceal the acts of anger and the words and deeds associated with the other affections (*affectiones*) in the same way that it conceals the acts of lust (*opera libidinis*) which are performed by the sexual organs. But is this not simply because, in the case of the other passions, the body's members are not set in motion by the passions themselves, but by the will, after it has consented to the passions? For the will has mastery over the use of such members. For no one who utters a word in anger, or, indeed, strikes another, could do so if his tongue or hand were not in some way set in motion by the will (*uoluntate*); and those members are set in motion by the same will even when there is no anger. But the sexual organs have somehow fallen so completely under the sway of lust that they

³⁰ Cf. note 19.

³¹ Genesis 2: 25 "Nudi errant, et non confundebantur." Cited from *ciu. Dei* XIV, 17.

³² *ciu. Dei* XIV, 17, "Quod itaque aduersus damnatam culpa inoboedientiae uoluntatem libido inoboedenter mouebat, uerecundia pudenter tegebat."

³³ For a detailed discussion of AUGUSTINE's conception of shame (*pudor*) in *De ciuitate Dei*, see my article, "Shame in the Context of Sin: Augustine on the Feeling of Shame in *De ciuitate Dei*", *Les Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales*, 74 (2007), 1. (forthcoming)

have no power of movement at all if this passion is absent, and unless it has either arisen of its own accord or been aroused by another. It is this that makes us ashamed; it is this that causes us to avoid the eye of onlookers, blushing."³⁴

What is at issue here is clearly the role of the will. In the case of anger, the will keeps its full control over the body. It functions as the decisive factor of bodily movements such as uttering words, striking others etc, which are closely connected with the expression of emotions or passions.³⁵ In stark contrast to this, even when we have a strong will to have a child, this will by itself cannot control the necessary movement of sexual organs for its fulfillment. This bodily movement is dominated solely by lust or carnal concupiscence, which has no respect for the authority of the will. Here the impotence of the will is stressed as the essential characteristic of acts of *libido* (*opera libidinis*). The will has to defend its dignity by concealing the shameful parts of the body. This defensive reaction also confirms the original powerlessness of the mind in the face of lust. For if the will was strong enough to control the sexual lust, it would have no need to conceal our natural body.

In Augustine's eyes, the impotence of the will only happened upon Adam and Eve after their fall. And this fact reveals the fundamental change of their mental state. Throughout his life, Augustine insists that *libido* or *concupiscentia carnis* does not exist in Paradise or at least is obedient to the will before the Fall, even though we cannot prove it by our experience.³⁶ In Paradise, the soul lived in perfect

³⁴ *ciu. Dei*. XIV, 19, "Quod autem irae opera aliarumque affectionum in quibusque dictis atque factis non sic abscondit uerecundia, ut opera libidinis, quae fiunt genitalibus membris, quid causae est, nisi quia in ceteris membra corporis non ipsae affectiones, sed, cum eis consenserit, uoluntas mouet, quae in usu eorum omnino dominatur? Nam quisquis uerbum emittit iratus uel etiam quemquam percutit, non posset hoc facere, nisi lingua et manus iubente quodam modo uoluntate mouerentur; quae membra, etiam cum ira nulla est, mouentur eadem uoluntate. At uero genitales corporis partes ita libido suo iuri quodam modo mancipauit, ut moueri non ualeant, si ipsa defuerit et nisi ipsa uel ultro uel excitata surrexerit. Hoc est quod pudet, hoc est quod intuentium oculos erubescendo deuitat."

³⁵ For the terminology of emotion in AUGUSTINE's writings, see *ciu. Dei* IX, 4, "... his animi motibus, quae Graeci πάθη, nostri autem quidam, sicut Cicero, perturbationes, quidam affectiones uel affectus, quidam uero, sicut iste (sc. Apuleius) de Graeco expressius, passiones uocant." Cf. *Ibid.*, VIII, 17; XIV, 5; *conf.*, X, 21ff. See also GERARD J.P. O'DALY's and ADOLAR ZUMKELLER's excellent essay on these terms, "Affectus (passio, perturbatio)" *AugLex* 1: 166-180, esp. 166-7.

³⁶ *Ciu. Dei* XIV, 24. ÉMILE SCHMITT, as referred by Sorabji 2000, has distinguished 3 stages in the evolution of Augustine's viewpoint concerning the existence of *concupiscentia carnis* in Paradise before their eating the forbidden fruits. 1. In *De Genesi*

harmony with the body. There was not the rebellion of the sexual lust, not even other kinds of affections of the soul, such as desire (*cupiditas*), fear (*timor*), sadness (*tristitia*) and empty joy (*inaniter laetum*).³⁷ The sovereignty of the will is so ubiquitous that even sleep did not come upon them against their will (*inuitus*).³⁸ This idealistic depiction of Paradise makes it quite natural for Augustine to believe that the genital organs were impelled by the same approval of the will (*nutus uoluntati*) as other bodily members.³⁹ It was due to the loss of the power of the will that Adam and Eve experienced the embarrassment for the first time. From then on, the disobedient sexual lust became the most reprehensible affection of the soul.

IV. The disobedience to the will and the blameworthiness of *libido*

Now we return to Julian's and Sorabji's severe criticisms of Augustine's condemnation of sexual lust. Both of them believe that sexual lust is a natural affection (*affectio naturalis*), which should not be distinguished from other affections, either of the body such as hunger, or of the soul such as anger.⁴⁰

Augustine's condemnation of sexual lust, Sorabji argues, is philosophically based upon its disobedience to the will, which manifests itself in two different manners. First is the phenomenon that the male's sexual organs are solely aroused by the lust, not under the control of

contra Manichaeos of 388-9, Augustine rejects the idea of procreation in Paradise. (*Gn. adu. Man.* II, 21, 32); 2. in *De Genesi ad litteram*, published in 416 and in *De ciuitate Dei* XIV, written in 418-20. Augustine recognizes the purpose of procreation for the bodies of Adam and Eve but the sexual movements must have been following the approval of the will. (*Gn. litt.* IX, 10, 16-18; *ciu. Dei* XIV, 24 etc.) 3. In letter 6* of probably 420, Augustine concedes the possibility of *concupiscentia carnis* by adding an "if", namely if it did exist in Paradise, it should have been under the control of the will. (*Ep.* 6*, 8; *c. Jul.* IV, 11, 57) See SCHMITT 1983; SORABJI 2000, 406-409. For a recent study on the original status of human beings, see Bouton-touboulic, "Origines de l'homme, origins des homes chez saint Augustin" in *Vita Latina* 172: 41-525. 2005.

³⁷ *Ciu. Dei* XIV, 26 "Sicut in paradise nullus aestus aut frigus, sic in eius habitatore nulla ex cupiditate uel timore accidebat bonae uoluntatis offensio. Nihil omnino triste, nihil erat inaniter laetum."

³⁸ Ibid. "Non lassitude fatigabat otiosum, non somnus premebat inuitum."

³⁹ Ibid. "In tanta facilitate rerum et felicitate hominum absit ut suspicemur non potuisse prolem seri sine libidinis morbo, sed eo uoluntatis nutu mouerentur membra illa quo cetera, et sine ardoris inlecebrosi stimulo cum tranquillitate animi et corporis nulla corruptione integritatis infunderetur gremio maritus uxoris."

⁴⁰ See for instance *c. Jul.* V, 5, 2; *c. Jul. imp.* I, 71; IV, 29; IV, 67.

the will.⁴¹ The other is that this sensual pleasure can obstruct the intellectual faculty of the soul. Both points have been mentioned earlier in our analysis of the passage from *De ciuitate Dei* XIV, 16.⁴² As to the first point, Sorabji claims that Augustine fails to notice that the physical reactions in other emotions are also involuntary, and can be disobedient to the command of the will as well. These reactions are interpreted by the Stoics as 'first movements' of the soul that should be distinguished from the genuine affective expressions based upon the consent of the mind. As was argued earlier in Sorabji's book, Augustine's failure to appreciate this Stoic idea made his distinction between sexual lust and other emotions, e.g. in *De ciuitate Dei* XIV, 19, philosophically untenable.⁴³ Accordingly the condemnation of lust solely for its disobedience to the will is only a theological prejudice, not competent from a philosophical view of point. For Augustine's second complaint against lust, Sorabji simply dismisses them as "symptoms of the central fact of its disobedience to the will".⁴⁴

In addition to this criticism mainly based upon a Stoic theory of emotion, Sorabji calls into question the idea that the lust is bad because it is not under the control of the will. He argues instead that this opposition presupposes the will's judgment of lust as bad, not vice versa. The lust is regarded as a moral evil not primarily for its disobedience but for some further reasons that ground the evaluation of the will. Furthermore, these reasons are revealed by Sorabji to be subjective, only belonging to Augustine's own history, not universally applicable to every case.⁴⁵ Lastly, Sorabji refers to Augustine's explanation of sexual dreams to show that lust is not in any case evil just because of its resistance to the will. It could be the illegal object of sexual lust, namely, someone other than one's legal partner that makes it reprehensible.⁴⁶

⁴¹ e.g. *ciu. Dei* XIV, 16ff; *c. Jul.* IV, 11, 57; IV, 13, 62; V, 5, 20. Brown rightly points out that Sorabji was misled by recent feminist literature to believe that Augustine's reflection on sexuality is essentially a male view. See BROWN 2002, 199ff. For Augustine's discussion of the presence of *concupiscentia carnis* in women, see for instance, *c. Jul.* IV, 13, 62.

⁴² See note 27.

⁴³ SORABJI 2000, 372-384. chapter 24 "First Movements in Augustine: Adaptation and Misunderstanding", esp. 380-383. For a criticism of Sorabji's argument and an analytical presentation of Augustine's thoughts on the will and the preliminary emotional movements, see my article, "Augustine on the Will and First Movements of emotion" (forthcoming).

⁴⁴ Ibid. 405.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 412-413.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 2000, 415.

To defend Augustine's position against Sorabji's criticism, it is useful to recapitulate the most significant points we have reached at the beginning of our analysis: First, the implication of *concupiscentia carnis* is much broader than sexual lust; second, the pejorative connotation of this term has no indispensable reference to sexuality though they are frequently related to each other. We have to say that Sorabji's implicit identification of *libido* or *concupiscentia carnis* with sexual lust distorts Augustine's reflections from the right beginning. What matters in Augustine's conception of *concupiscentia carnis* is a general disorder inherent in the soul, which goes definitely beyond the realm of sexuality. It is for certain that in his discussions, *concupiscentia carnis* manifests itself primarily and mostly in sexual activities. In addition, Augustine does believe that the original sin is transmitted through this deformed manner of sexuality that is necessary for procreation.⁴⁷ However, these cannot justify the confusion of the inherited *concupiscentia carnis* with the sexual lust. For the latter is only an illustrative form of this general disorder.

The second point that should be questioned is Sorabji's claim that Augustine's denunciation of sexual lust is based upon its disobedience to the will. In the discussion regarding the meaning of *caro*, we have clarified that Augustine identifies *concupiscentia carnis* as a moral evil because it tempts us to live according to the needs of the flesh rather than the longing of the spirit. It is blameworthy because it deprives the human person of his or her spiritual value and degrades him or her into the level of animals. We know that *libido* also exists in animals but is not an evil since it does not resist reason there⁴⁸. In short, what makes *concupiscentia carnis* problematic is the menace of this disposition to the spiritual dimension of human personality. In light of this, it should be more appropriate to interpret the disobedience to the will as a significant sign rather than as the ground for the moral badness of sexual lust.

Moreover, this disobedience can serve as a good indicator only when the will in question is a good will. This point is implied in Augustine's emphasis upon the absence of sexual lust and other turbulent emotions in Paradise: "Just as there was no extreme of heat or cold in Paradise, so there arose in him who dwelt there no desire or fear to hinder his good will (*bona uoluntas*)."⁴⁹ It is not pointless that

⁴⁷ Cf. SAGE "Le péché originel dans la pensée de saint Augustin, de 412 à 430", *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 15 (1969): 75-112; HUNTER 1994, 167-170.

⁴⁸ *c. Jul.* IV, 5, 35 (PL 44) "Haec autem libido ideo malum non est in belluis, quoniam non repugnat rationi, qua carent."

⁴⁹ *ciu. Dei* XIV, 26. Cf. cited in note 36.

the righteousness of the will is overtly indicated here. For instance, if the movements of sexual organs fail to obey the command of the will to commit adultery, this disobedience is obviously not reprehensible at all. In this case, we can imagine that Augustine would still treat the sexual lust as a typical form of *concupiscentia carnis* that is blame-worthy. For it inclines one to enjoy temporal things in this mortal world, which will weigh down one's dignity as a spiritual being. The failure of sexual lust in this particular case does not signify that this morbid disposition of the soul has been fully eradicated. However, the will to have illicit sex is more reprehensible even though it was not fulfilled because of the resistance from lust or *concupiscentia carnis*. For this disposition of the soul is based upon a voluntary decision that discloses the maliciousness of the soul, however, lust or *concupiscentia carnis* is just a spontaneous motion that falls upon the soul, preceding and exceeding the command of the autonomous will.⁵⁰ If the lawful sex with one's partner for the purpose of procreation is a good use of this inherited evil of *concupiscentia carnis*, an adulterer makes a greater evil from this innate evil. In both cases this inherited feature of the soul remains in opposition to the command of the will.⁵¹ This distinction makes it evident that for Augustine the disobedience to the will itself does not serve as the grounding reason for the badness of sexual lust.

Finally, *concupiscentia carnis* is not only resistant to the command of the will, but even to the "lust for lewd enjoyment (*lasciuiendi libido*)".⁵² If the disobedience could be counted as the essential ground for the condemnation of a desire or lust, the division within the lust itself would be more convincing!

To conclude, overlooking the Pauline tension between *caro* and *spiritus* in Augustine's conception of *concupiscentia carnis*, Sorabji fails to recognize that there is a more profound disorder than the disobedience to the will or the personal experiences that justify Augustine's denunciation of sexual lust.

⁵⁰ *c. Jul. imp.* III, 187. "Si enim talis esset ista concupiscentia, quae carnali suo motu nec praecederet nec excederet hominis uoluntatem, sed eius semper sequeretur arbitrium, profecto nec Manicheus, quid in ea iuste reprehenderet, inueniret nec eam quispiam nostrum in paradise coniugatos habere non potuisse contenderet nec Ambrosius de praeuaricatione primi hominis eam traxisse nos diceret, quia concupiscere contra spiritum non uideret."

⁵¹ *c. Jul.* IV, 7, 39 "Aliud quippe est malo bene uti, quod iam inerat; et aliud est malum perpetrare, quod non erat: illud enim est de malo tracto ex parentibus uoluntarium bonum facere; hoc uero malum a parentibus tractum aliis malis iam propriis et uoluntariis aggerare."

⁵² *c. Dei* XIV, 16, see note 27. Cf. also *c. Jul.* III, 13, 26.

V. Sexual lust and other affection of the soul

Sorabji's general criticism uproots Augustine's viewpoint on sexual lust from its theological contexts concerning the opposition between flesh and spirit, between self-love and love of God. In the following discussion, I want to demonstrate that this blind-spot also taints his concrete arguments against Augustine, especially his firm refutation of Augustine's distinction between sexual lust and other affections. As mentioned earlier, Sorabji's discussions are centered on the Stoic conception of pre-passion (*propatheia*) or 'first movements' (*primus motus*) of the mind. In Stoic psychology, unlike the full-blown emotion that is based upon the consent of the will, this pre-passion is involuntary and natural. Sorabji believes that this conception is adapted and misinterpreted by Augustine in his discussions of affections.⁵³ A fuller treatment of the 'first movements' in Augustine's theory of affection deserves another study. Here I will restrict our discussion to the problem whether the uncontrollable movements of genital organs can be identified with the involuntary 'first movements'.

The most relevant passage has been cited earlier in section III.⁵⁴ In that context, the impotence of the will in face of genital movements, is juxtaposed with the control of the will over the bodily members in voicing the emotion of anger by uttering words, striking one's fist etc. Sorabji accuses that Augustine does not compare like with like. For the reactions of genital organs should be treated as the first movements for the fulfillment of sexual lust, however, the movements commanded by the will in the case of anger are already explicit expressions of the emotion. Following Seneca's suggestion, Sorabji conceives the male movements as an example of first movements just like physical reactions of reddening or bristling in the case of anger.⁵⁵ These initial physical shocks are believed to be directly produced by the appearance of good or bad and have no essential relation to one's morality.⁵⁶

Here we just focus our discussion on the case of genital organs' movements. It has been stressed earlier that *concupiscentia carnis* is primarily a perverted manner of the soul's disposition. For Augustine,

⁵³ SORABJI 2000, 372-384.

⁵⁴ *Ciu. Dei* XIV, 16, see note 28.

⁵⁵ SENECA, *De ira*, II, 3, 2. "Nam si quis pallorem et lacrimas procidentis et iritationem umoris obsceni altumue suspirium et oculos subito aciores aut quid his simile indicium adfectus animique signum putat, fallitur nec intellegit corporis hos esse pulsus." Cf. SORABJI 2000, 66-75 for an excellent exposition of first movements in Seneca's thoughts.

⁵⁶ Cf. SORABJI 2000, 73.

this statement can be applied to sexual lust as a particular form of *concupiscentia carnis*. Therefore the phenomenon of sexual irritation is not simply a physiological fact, but an external and determinate movement prompted by a hidden and indeterminate psychic force. What is more important, this force is not morally neutral for Augustine, because it opposes to our spiritual dimension. This position is definitely distanced from Julian's essentially physiological view of sexuality as driven by *calor genitalis* (the heat of genitals).⁵⁷

As mentioned earlier, Augustine never believes that the body can have a direct effect upon the soul without the active involvement of the soul. Sexual lust is no exception. For this reason, in his distinction between sexual lust and other affections in *De ciuitate Dei* XIV, 16, Augustine must have implicitly granted that the soul is involved in the movements of genital organs, even though in an involuntary way. For these movements cannot occur without being preceded by a suggestion in the soul. In Augustine's philosophy of psychology, this suggestion is no longer a purely mental impression that intrudes into the mind regardless of the disposition of the will. In Augustine's exegesis of Genesis, it is explicitly identified with the dangerous temptation from the serpent in Augustine's exegesis of Genesis.⁵⁸ A careful reading of the relevant texts will reveal that Augustine recognizes a 'pleasure of cognition' (*cogitationis delectatio*) in this temptation.⁵⁹ This pleasure is already a response of the soul to the initial mental impression. In order to feel this pleasure, the soul is affected in the sense that a hidden assent of the will has been granted to the suggestion from the mental impression. For Augustine, it is this implicit pleasure that underlies the genital movements and other initial affective reactions of the mind. As mentioned earlier, Augustine believes that in the pre-lapsarian state, human beings were able to control even this hidden and implicit consent of the will. Therefore, *concupiscentia carnis* is not an incurable disease of the mind, but an immanent weakness of the soul in this mortal life that should be overcome by the divine

⁵⁷ JULIAN apud *c. Jul.* IV, 2, 7 "Si calor genitalis coniugalibus honestatis minister ab immoderatis procursibus tam studio fidelium, quam doni uirtute retinetur, nec exstinguitur per gratiam, sed frenatur: probabilis est in genere suo et in modo suo, et solis accusatur excessibus" PETER BROWN has rightly commented, "Augustine's notion of *concupiscentia carnis*" and Julian's *calor genitalis* belong to two entirely different worlds." See PETER BROWN 1983, 63. Julian's idea of *calor genitalis* is probably influenced by the Stoic notion of 'vital fire' (*ignis uitalis*). For the literature regarding this, check Lamberigts forthcoming.

⁵⁸ Cf. *Gn. adu. Man.* II, 14, 21; *De sermone domini in monte.* I, 12, 34; *De Trinitate.* XII, 12, 17

⁵⁹ *Trin.* XII, 12, 17.

grace in the life to come. What underlies these theological statements is Augustine's realistic sensitivity to the innate impotence of human nature and his optimistic belief that this infirmity can be remedied. Sorabji rightly recognizes the change of standpoint from Stoic's prepassion to Augustine's temptation but interprets it simply as a distortion resulting from some Christian prejudices.⁶⁰ He neglects Augustine's profound understanding of human nature, especially the health and infirmity of human will that lies behind the so-called theological prejudice.

Certainly we have to concede that in the text under discussion Augustine fails to emphasize that in the emotion of anger there is also such an involuntary manifestation of the affected soul, which is treated by Seneca and his contemporary commentator as a simple reaction without the involvement of genuine emotions. In other occasions, Augustine does reflect on this involuntary reaction, both physical and mental, as an evidence of the sinful affection of the soul.⁶¹ This uncontrolled reaction is common to all passions as a disturbing agitation falling upon the soul. Even under such concession, Augustine's insistence on the particularity of sexual lust can be defended as follows: the affection concerning our sexuality is open only to the involuntary manner of expression and cannot be fulfilled in the absence of this uncontrollable affective response to sensual stimulations; however, other emotions can find another more controllable way to express themselves. Although in the initial phase of their formation, these emotions appear as involuntary reactions, both mental and physical, such as pallor, falling tears, deep sighing etc. their completion does not presuppose the presence of these involuntary movements. It will be made more explicit in the analysis of the relation between shame-feeling and *concupiscentia carnis*, how this particularity makes sexual lust more shameful than other affections, though the latter can be more evil and more compulsive.⁶²

VI. *Libido* and hunger, thirst, digestion

In his criticism of Augustine's objection to sexual lust, Sorabji also appeals to Julian's comparison of lust to hunger, thirst, digestion, and sleep, to argue that sexual lust cannot be singled out from these

⁶⁰ Sorabji believes that this change originates from Origen and culminates in Augustine. See id. 2000, 346-51.

⁶¹ e.g. *trin* XII, 12, 17; *ciu. Dei* XIV, 4-6.

⁶² See my article on shame. Wu 2007 (forthcoming).

bodily needs. Julian is believed to have made a significant differentiation between the command (*imperium*) and the consent (*consensus*) of the will.⁶³ Sorabji argues with Julian that hunger, thirst, and digestion, as well as genital movements, “do not require the command, but only the consent of the will”.⁶⁴

First it should be mentioned that this distinction has been reported by Augustine as inconsistent in Julian’s argumentation⁶⁵, which is unjustly ignored in Sorabji’s account. In some cases, Julian declares that genital members also obey the command of the mind; in other contexts, he insists that they “are not moved by the command of the mind, but rather await its consent”⁶⁶. This inconsistency at least shows the ambiguity of Julian’s conception of sexual lust in its relation to the will, and the difficulty of maintaining such an artificial distinction. Certainly it can be explained as if the genital members obey the command of the will in the normal condition as not “prevented either by illness or by lack of control”, and become rebellious only under some morbid conditions.⁶⁷ Even granting that the disobedience of these genital movements to the command of the will is only occasional, Augustine might still argue that it is this exception that reveals the genuine nature of sexuality. For this occasional disobedience implies that there must be some independent force distinct from the will, which underlies the genital movements. Here Augustine can defend his position by stressing that these bodily movements and their driving force precede the explicit consent of the will, which is also conceded by Julian in his phrase “await its consent” (*expectare consensum*, my italics). The difference lies in Augustine’s emphasis that these pre-consensual movements reflect the condition of the will as well, though in an implicit way. In this context, Augustine comments on one example from Cicero’s *De consiliis suis* as cited by Julian that sexual arousal can be influenced by music as follows:

⁶³ Julian apud c. *Jul.* V, 5, 20-22.

⁶⁴ Ibid. V, 5, 20. “hoc genus motus in his habendum putasti, quae multa in nostro corpore ordine suo ac dispensatione secreta, uoluntatis non imperium, sed consensum requirunt”. See SORABJI 2000, 409.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid. V, 5, 22. “Non moueri haec ad animi imperium, sed potius expectare consensum”.

⁶⁷ Ibid. V, 5, 20. “ubi primum dixisti: ‘Cum uentum fuerit ut filii seminentur, ad uoluntatis prorsus nutum membra in hoc opus creata famulari; et nisi eorum impedimenta, aut de infirmitate, aut de immoderatione proueniant, seruire animi imperio’; postea uero, ‘hoc genus motus in his habendum putasti, quae multa in nostro corpore ordine suo ac dispensatione secreta, uoluntatis non imperium, sed consensum requirunt’”.

"You see, then, that my statement was quite appropriate that this desire which the other senses serve is in a sense their master so that it lets them be aroused for its activity or quiet down from its turmoil. I said this, after all, because, as you yourself admit, 'we consent to it rather than command it.' For the fact that 'it is aroused by other stimuli or is broken and quieted down by a melody,' as you go on to say, would certainly not be the case, if it obeyed the human will."⁶⁸

In other words, the command of the will, both for Augustine and for Julian, cannot be accepted as the direct driving force at issue. For Julian, it is a physiological force of *calor genitalis*, for Augustine, *libido* or *concupiscentia carnis*, which primarily belongs to the soul. However, in Julian's differentiation between the command and the consent of the will, this more profound divergence between Augustine and Julian on the driving force for the genital movements is ignored and concealed. For this reason, this distinction does not touch the central point of their controversy, namely the impotence of the will in confrontation with the sexual urge.

Secondly, Julian's appeal to the comparison of lust with other bodily needs cannot invalidate Augustine's condemnation of lust either. It is argued that hunger and thirst also occur with no respect to the command of the will like sexual lust, but we do not blame these natural appetites. As is rightly emphasized by Sorabji, hunger and thirst in this comparison should be thought of "not merely as needs of the body, but as actual wants".⁶⁹ This is a significant clarification in response to Augustine's argument against Julian:

"You should not, in any case, compare this lust (*libido*) to hunger or other of our discomforts. None of us, after all, are hungry or thirsty or digest food when we will to do so. These are needs (*indigentia*) of a body that must be refreshed or relieved, and we must attend to them so that the body does not suffer injury or die. But does the body suffer injury or die if we do not give our assent (*assensus*) to lust? Distinguish, then, the evils which we endure with patience from those evils which we rein in with continence."⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Ibid. V, 5, 23 "Vides ergo quam congruentius ego dixerim, sui iuris hanc esse quodam modo, cui seruitur ab aliis sensibus, ut in opus suum dignetur assurgere, uel a sua commotione requiescere. Hoc enim ego ideo dixi, quia, sicut ipse confessus es, „consentitur ei potius quam imperatur“. Nam, et quod „aliis concitatur stimulis, uel modulamine frangitur et sedatur“, sicut ipse prosequeris, profecto non fieret, si seruiret hominis uoluntati."

⁶⁹ SORABJI 2000, 409.

⁷⁰ C. Jul. V, 5, 22. "Nec tamen ideo debes istam libidinem fami uel aliis molestiis nostris comparare. Quod enim nemo cum uult esurit, aut sitit, aut digerit; indigentiae sunt istae reficiendi uel exonerandi corporis, quibus subueniendum est, ne laedatur, aut

It is quite evident that for Augustine the bodily discomforts or bodily needs are not reprehensible because they are necessary for our existence in this world. Although sexual lust is also required for the procreation, it does involve the unruly disposition of the soul to treasure the mortal things more than one's immortal life. This makes sexual lust distinguished from hunger and thirst as bodily needs, which can be explained as a pure physiological phenomenon and be satisfied by obtaining the needed material.

In place of lust and hunger or lust and thirst as bodily needs, Sorabji proposes other two comparisons: 1. of the genital movements with the salivation and the subsequent digestion; 2. of lust and the desire to eat and drink.⁷¹ The result is taken for granted that in either case sexual lust is just like other bodily desires, which makes Augustine's condemnation of sexuality unsustainable.

For the first comparison, Augustine would say that both are bodily movements and should be free of reprehension. As is emphasized previously, Augustine never blames the body and its motion in general. For instance, the genital movements obeying the command of the will as believed to exist in Paradise before the Fall are certainly without any evil. Augustine insists that he only condemns the sexual arousal urged by *concupiscentia carnis* which threatens the spiritual value of human beings.⁷² In short, what makes sexuality problematic for Augustine is its driving force, not the motion itself.

In the text interrogated by Sorabji, Augustine does simply dismiss hunger or thirst as pure bodily needs; however, he is not blind to the distinction between bodily needs and sensual desire or lust (*sentiendi libido*). In *Contra Julianum* IV, 14, 67, Augustine clearly distinguishes hunger or thirst from the love of food:

"When nature, then, demands in some way some sustenance which is lacking, this is not called desire (*libido*), but hunger or thirst. but when the need has been satisfied and the love of food (*amor edendi*) entices the mind further, then there is desire, then there is an evil to which one must not yield, but resist."⁷³

occidat: numquid autem laeditur aut occidit corpus, si libidini non adhibeatur assensus? Discerne ergo mala quae per patientiam sustinemus, ab eis malis quae per continentiam refrenamus."

⁷¹ SORABJI 2000, 409.

⁷² *c. Jul.* IV, 13, 62 "Numquam uero ego motum genitalium reprehendi generaliter, quod tu dicis: „dedicative“; sed illum motum reprehendi, quem facit concupiscentia, qua *caro concupiscit aduersus spiritum*"

⁷³ *Ibid.* IV, 14, 67. "Cum ergo natura quodam modo poscit supplementa quae desunt, non uocatur libido, sed fames aut sitis: cum uero suppleta necessitate amor

This love of food is recognized as a form of sensual desire, which is blameworthy because it is in opposition to one's spiritual longing: (text 5.3)

"But sensual desire (*sentiendi libido*), with which we are now dealing, is what drives us to have sensations out of a love of carnal pleasure, whether we consent with our mind or fight against it. It is opposed to the love of wisdom; it is an enemy of the virtues. With respect to the part of it involved in the union of the two sexes, marriage makes good use of this evil, when the spouses procreate children by it and do nothing on account of it."⁷⁴

Obviously, this sensual desire is only another name of *concupiscentia carnis*. Here sexual lust is mentioned explicitly as a particular form of sensual desire. In the same way, if sexual lust is blamed for its opposition to the spirit, so is the love of food as a perverted desire toward worldly things. If the desire to eat or drink in the Sorabji's second comparison can be identified with this love of food or drink, it is evident that for Augustine both are reprehensible. Certainly it might be argued that the desire to eat can be a neutral disposition toward the sustenance, not an *amor edendi* which inclines the mind for carnal pleasure. However Augustine would not recognize such a distinction, because he would not accept a disposition or an affection of the soul as something neutral. A desire is either good when the object is justifiable or bad when it is unlawful. What is significant for Augustine is that the good should be preferred to the evil. Therefore if a desire is indifferent to its object, it is certainly an evil.⁷⁵ Accordingly the so-called desire to eat is either only a need for necessary nutrition or a pure greed. If the former, it is blameless and distinguished from sexual lust as shown above; if the latter, both this disordered love and sexual lust are culpable.

edendi animum sollicitat, iam libido est, iam malum est, cui cedendum non est, sed resistendum." Obviously in this text *libido* is used as a general term of all kinds of desire.

⁷⁴ Ibid. IV, 14, 65. "Libido autem sentiendi est, de qua nunc agimus, quae nos ad sentiendum, siue consentientes mente, siue repugnantes, appetitu carnalis uoluptatis impellit. Haec est contraria dilectioni sapientiae, haec uirtutibus inimica. Hoc malo, quantum attinet ad eius eam partem qua sibi sexus uterque miscetur, bene utuntur nuptiae, cum coniuges procreant filios per illam, nihilque faciunt propter illam."

⁷⁵ Ibid. IV, 2, 7. "Quod autem ipsa concupiscentia facit, siue ad licitum siue ad illicitum indifferenter ardescere, utique malum est." This sentence is certainly located in the context of AUGUSTINE's rebuttal of Julian's *calor genitalis*, however, this principle can be applied to all kinds of lust or concupiscentia. This is also evident in his careful use of more general word *concupiscentia* instead of *concupiscentia carnis*.

Thus far, we have emphasized the similarity of sexual lust to other sensual desires in response to Julian and Sorabji's criticisms. It should be stressed that even with regard to thirst and hunger, the particularity of sexual desire can still be defended as follows: the movements of salivation and digestion can move on its own way when the desire to eat or drink is absent, however, the genital movements cannot be aroused without the preceding lust. Both are not under the control of the will, but only the latter is exclusively dominated by *libido* or *concupiscentia carnis*. Therefore the latter cannot be treated as a purely physiological phenomenon, because it essentially involves the perverted disposition of the soul.

The foregoing arguments have clarified the similarity and dissimilarity of sexual lust both to other affections like anger, and to other bodily needs like hunger. By appealing to a theological conception of *concupiscentia carnis*, Augustine presents a more complicated and more polished image of sexuality quite different from Sorabji's depiction. The sexual desire is condemned as a moral evil for its opposition to the spiritual dimension of human beings, which is common to all *concupiscentia carnis*. On the other hand, this kind of lust is singled out for the reason that the concupiscence involved in sexuality is so indispensable to its manifestation in the body that the sexual movements can never be treated as neutral physical reactions like salivation and digestion. Here, the lust as an importunate psychic power usurps the control of the will over the body. The impotence of the will is here recognized as the particularity of the sexual lust, though not as the ground for its blameworthiness.

VII. Conclusion

It is not difficult to recognize that Augustine's subtle treatment of sexual lust primarily as a psychic and moral phenomenon originates from the scriptural tradition, especially from Augustine's lifelong reading of Paul's letters.⁷⁶ However as has been displayed before, this conception of *libido* is also well established within his metaphysics of soul and body, which stresses the active involvement of the soul. Moreover, it is integrated intimately in his whole system of moral psychology centered on the function of the will. Therefore if Augustine's basic conception of the tension between *caro* and *spiritus*, between

⁷⁶ Cf. THONNARD 1965, 68-79 on the relation between will and *concupiscentia* and 79-95 on its moral significance.

carnal infatuation and spiritual longing can be accepted as a standpoint, his condemnation of lust and other turbulent affections, as argued above, would be well established within the framework of his philosophical psychology.⁷⁷ To conclude, I do not think that Augustine lost the philosophical battle in his bitter debates with Julian of Eclanum. First, he offers a coherent philosophical account of sexual lust and its relation to the will. Furthermore, this interpretation takes into account the particularity of sexuality in human life and handles it in a masterly way by employing theological conceptions creatively in a philosophical manner. In this original reference of sexual lust to the innate infirmity of human nature, Augustine reveals some important characteristics of sexuality that have been neglected in the popular conception of libido as a neutral inclination of mind.

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⁷⁷ In the incisive comments on an earlier draft of this paper, professor Carlos Steel rightly emphasized that Augustine's position can be easily located in the Platonic tradition that lays a strong stress upon the tension between sensual lust and intellectual longing. This point of view is also held by SIMO KNUUTTILA, see id. *Emotion in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press) 2004, 156-7. On the other hand, Augustine never questions the Stoic conception of emotion as the consent or dissent of the will. The actual identification of Augustine's interpretation of sexual lust in particular or his theory of emotion in general is beyond the scope of this contribution. For recent account of Augustine's theory of emotions, see also O'DALY 1986-1994; JOHANNES BRACHTENDORF, "Cicero and Augustine on the Passions" *Revue des études augustiniennes* 43 (1997) 289-308; EMMANUEL BERMON, "La théorie des passions chez saint Augustin", in *Les passions antiques et médiévales* (éd. par B. Besnier/P.F. Moreau/L. Renault = *Théories et critiques des passions* 1), Paris 2003, 173-197; GERD VAN RIEL "Mens in mota mota manet: Neoplatonic Tendencies in Augustine's Theory of the Passions", *Augustiniana* 54 (2004), 507-531. It is quite interesting to notice that Julian's conception of concupiscence also shows an eclectic character. See Lössl 2001, 101; LAMBERIGTS (forthcoming).