

good in the wrong places, through which it became clear what could have been the reason for his unhappiness. With the adoration of temporary pleasure in earthly goods the searcher of happiness wanted to be a god and at the same time he repeated the primal sin from which all later misery stemmed. The return to happiness lies on the road of Christological humility, which wishes to be a victory of pride as cause of all misery on earth. Not philosophy holds the key of therapy, but Christian faith (pp. 290-303).

Confessiones is certainly not a book which one should present to someone as a first introduction to Augustine. Taking up Brachtendorf's study as preparation for reading this classic from Christian Antiquity certainly is highly recommended, but it will not be easy for beginners. Nevertheless, this work has to its merit the fact that it guides the reader into the philosophical setting of those days and allows the aftereffects to be felt right up to the present day. To grasp the full bearing of *Confessiones*, Brachtendorf has opted for a twofold movement in his commentary: a movement backwards in Antiquity, where the great master of Western thinking obtained his philosophizing tools, which he in turn adapted to working tools at the service of his newly won insights. This movement backwards the author repeated when he sought connection with Augustine's earlier works, and after that a movement forwards to the later works, which confirm or alter what until then Augustine had claimed. This movement forwards the author implements beyond the limits of Augustine, finding himself in the history of ideas, in which some intuitions of this Church father are fruitfully continued or altered. Needless to say that the author has to be widely-read in the subject matter in order to be able to present such a study, of which the results could be termed impressive. Brachtendorf clearly did not have the intention to render a very specialized analysis of the texts, but he certainly has succeeded in making more manifest the purpose of this classic.

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Annemaré KOTZÉ, *Augustine's Confessions. Communicative Purpose and Audience*. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2004 (Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 71)

It is now generally agreed among scholars that characterizing *Confessiones* as an autobiography, hinders rather than facilitates the understanding of this high point in literary history. Annemaré Kotzé manages to underpin this insight in an exciting and interesting study,

in which she offers a comprehensive analysis of *Confessiones* as a 'protreptic' work. She does this by taking into account the reciprocity between Augustine's communicative purpose and his audience, whilst recognizing the fact that literary genres are at times interwoven in *Confessiones*. A paraenetic text aims at a change in behaviour of people who already share the author's world view. The writer of a protreptic text not only seeks from his audience a change in conduct, he also aims for a correction or adaptation of their world view (cf. p. 58). Kotzé's choice to examine the protreptic aspect of *Confessiones* is closely connected with her focus on the Manicheans as Augustine's intended audience. It should be here already noted: Kotzé manages to make conceivable the idea that *Confessiones* is a fine example of the protreptic genre, and that Augustine, even more so than hitherto assumed, had the intention to reach the Manicheans when composing his masterpiece.

The book is structured into five disproportionate chapters: the relatively short third chapter serves as a hinge between the first and the last two, more elaborate, chapters. The first two chapters focus on the audience. In the first chapter Kotzé evaluates in a kind of historiographical survey research done on *Confessiones* by an 'academic audience'. She deals with studies relating mainly to her own subject matter, i.e. those which have as central theme the purpose, intended audience ('fellow Christians', and above all Manichees), and literary aspects, as well as the historical, autobiographical or protreptic quality of *Confessiones*. She specifically pays attention to research that has identified a common denominator in the thirteen books of *Confessiones*. The reason for this approach becomes clear in the next chapter. In chapter two Kotzé offers an insight into the original readers of *Confessiones*. Mindful of the fact that protreptic and paraenetic texts have certain characteristics in common, she analyses literary antecedents of *Confessiones*, such as Cicero's *Hortensius* and Augustine's own *Contra academicos*. Her conclusion is that Augustine has consciously written down the autobiographical narrative of books I-IX for the education of his audience, and that he has intertwined these, as is common in protreptic literature, with a philosophical discourse exegesis, mainly in books X-XIII, for a protreptic communicative purpose (cf. p. 72; p. 249). The unity of the thirteen books can thus be discerned if one understands these books as protreptic. The idea that *Confessiones* was written with a protreptic purpose in mind is according to Kotzé inextricably linked to the notion that 'the potential Manichean reader constitutes an important segment of Augustine's target audience' (p. 88). Consequently, she gives in this second chapter

an overview of recent insights into the Manichean perception of friendship, their structure of organization, their set of beliefs, their awareness of sin, and their ideas on creation.

Starting from her study of 2001 ('Reading Psalm 4 to the Manicheans', in *Vigiliae Christianae* 55 (2001), 119-136), Kotzé delivers in the third chapter the strongest evidence for her contention that Augustine also wished to target a Manichean audience when composing *Confessiones*, and that in so doing he had a protreptic purpose in mind. It is no coincidence that it is in his emotionally coloured reflection on *psalm* 4 (*Conf.* 9.4.8-11) that Augustine refers to the Manichean dualistic cosmology by using their terminology. For Kotzé this proves that he identified himself with the Manicheans so that they in turn would identify themselves with him. Kotzé never loses sight of the fact that Augustine is directing himself to his fellow Christians. At the same time, she observes that he does not address his former co-religionists harshly or scathingly, but rather fraternally, as if this is a matter of corporate identity. Kotzé is right in recognizing herein a protreptic strategy: Augustine wishes to make credible the Incarnation, Christ's death and resurrection, particularly to Manicheans, who refuse to accept these tenets. In chapter four Kotzé deduces the protreptic-paraenetic aspiration of *Confessiones*, whether explicitly or implicitly stated, from numerous crucial passages: the *praedicator* in the opening paragraph; the alternation of the young Augustine as a character in the narrative with the older bishop Augustine, who is constantly praying in *Confessiones*, and who at times seems to be dominated by the young Augustine; the way in which *Mt.* 7:7 ('petite et dabitur vobis, quaerite et invenietis, pulsate et aperietur vobis') is repeatedly quoted; certain types of imagery; Augustine's self-reflection; finally, the conversion stories of Anthony, Alypius, and Augustine himself. According to her, in all these aspects evidence can be found that 'there is no book or lengthy section of narrative in the Confessions where protreptic-paraenetic purpose is not one of the important issues of the narrator's mind' (p. 147). Particularly well rendered is the way in which Augustine seeks to incorporate in his conversion stories elements of recognition, change, and identification with the praying man in *Confessiones*, by describing the effect of conversion in erotic terms or in metaphors derived from fire-imagery.

Although she seeks to prove in the final chapter that the Manicheans were in fact Augustine's target audience in *Confessiones*, Kotzé does not lose sight of the paraenetic function of the work. Accordingly, she understands Augustine's words on hope in difficult circumstances, the value and authority of Scripture, and the preaching

and example of the minister (*Conf.* 13.13-26) as paraenetic; the words on the unity of the Old and New Testament she recognizes as protreptic, because the Manicheans denied this concord (*Conf.* 13.32-49). Kotzé sees in Augustine's digressions on friendship reminiscences on the way in which friendship was experienced in Manichean 'cells'; his revulsion of the uninterested reader concords with the Manichean aversion to *curiositas*. Remarkably, she does not refer in her analysis of friendship to its neo-platonic conception, bearing in mind the influence it had on Augustine. Kotzé reduces the way in which Augustine develops the issue of time in book XI to his awareness of Manichean dogmatism and to his endeavour, which should be termed protreptic, to bring about a change in their thinking by attuning to their thoughts. The same she does with Augustine's examination of the goodness of creation and Creator, and of the unchangeability of God's will.

As Kotzé demonstrates in her study that Augustine applies the formal and stylistic characteristics of the protreptic genre in a virtuous way, her literary-historical research fills a gap in the research already done on *Confessiones*. Praiseworthy is that she remains conscious of the fact that Augustine's orientation is not exclusively towards the Manicheans, and that it represents 'only one line of melody in a dense polyphonic composition' (p. 208). Nevertheless, she succeeds in making conceivable – also owing to many recent studies on Manicheism – that Augustine sought to make his former co-religionists receptive to his new faith, and to his view on time and eternity by means of specific allusions and images.

Studies on book XI have already established that Augustine sought to bring about that the Manicheans would abandon their views on time and eternity and adopt his instead, and these studies find their culmination in Kotzé's work.

As Kotzé states, true readers are for Augustine those who are joined with him in the *caritas* of his church. However, she shows convincingly in her study that, as if it was no trouble at all, Augustine also sought to change his Manichean readers by persuading them to adopt his religious conviction. Her opinion can also be further corroborated by a closer analysis of the medicinal topoi, which Augustine uses in *Conf.* 4.12.8, and in his description of Monnica's end (*Conf.* 9.8.1.8). Kotzé briefly touches upon these topoi, because the Manicheans recognized these (cf. p. 132). Like some church fathers before him – the apologists of the 2nd and 3rd century straightforwardly portrayed Christ as a more powerful healer than Aesculapius – Augustine was encouraged by the healing stories in the gospels to characterize Jesus as the *medicus* of a humanity infested with sickness (cf. P.C.J. EYKENBOOM,

Het Christus-medicusmotief in de preken van Sint Augustinus, Assen, 1960). As a result of Kotzé's findings, it has once more become clear how skilfully Augustine applied this Christ-medicus motif to allow the immensity and intensity of the mystery of the Incarnation find acceptance among fellow-Christians as well as Manicheans. It is well-known that the Manicheans denied the Incarnation because it seemed impossible to them that God would lower himself to matter, and they imagined Christ merely as *patibilis*, as someone who was capable of suffering. By means of the Christ-medicus motif Augustine explains the Incarnation as an example of God's humility. Its immensity consists herein that God's descend goes hand in hand with grace as *antidotum* for the whole of humanity and its history. The intensity of the Incarnation can be experienced in Augustine's conception, if also in the life of an individual Christ's humility is interpreted as *antidotum* to a vanity which can only lead to isolation. By explaining these aspects in reciprocity with each other by means of the Christ-medicus motif, Augustine tries to convince his fellow Christians that man befits humility, and that humility brings openness and insight into the mystery of the Incarnation. Kotzé's findings once more make clear that Augustine's at times harsh words against the Manicheans – the same happened against the Donatists and later the monks of Hadrumetum – can be brought back to his connection with them, and his great concern for a correct perception of Christ, who in his quality as *medicus* bridges the gap between the Manichean perception of Christ and that of the bishop of Hippo.

To conclude, Kotzé has convincingly revealed in her study the protreptic strength of Augustine in his *Confessiones*. Thanks to her research it has to be recognized, more distinctly than before, that Augustine links his paraenetic and mystagogic aspirations with a protreptic one, and that together they do not form separate threads, but one magnificent *textura*.

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