

THE *ORDO SAPIENTIAE*: AUGUSTINE'S PROGRAM FOR PHILOSOPHICAL STUDY IN HIS EARLY WORKS

Abstract

In *De Beata Vita* and *De Ordine* Augustine makes a distinction between rational knowledge of truth and rational knowledge of that upon which truth depends, and in both dialogues knowledge of that upon which truth depends is categorized as the higher form of the two. Knowledge of truth is attained through a version of the argument from judgement, that is, by reflecting on the immutable nature of reason. In regard to this argument Augustine notes that the knowledge it achieves is ambiguous because it does not establish whether the mind *is* truth or is *in* truth. The manner in which one arrives at knowledge of that upon which truth depends is left unexplained. Analysis of *De Immortalitate Animae*, however, establishes the theoretical foundation for the distinction between truth and that upon which truth depends made in *De Beata Vita* and *De Ordine*. More specifically, Augustine overcomes the ambiguous form of knowledge arrived at via the argument from judgment and arrives at definitive knowledge concerning the nature of the soul and God in *De Immortalitate Animae* through the use of the argument from dependence.

In his article *Augustine's Ascent of the Soul in book VII of the Confessions* Frederick Van Fleteren interprets Augustine's earliest works in light of his intellectual conversion described in *Confessiones* book 7 chapters 10, 17, and 20, and concludes that the dominant theme found in these early works is the ascent of the mind to Truth.¹ These

¹ See F. VAN FLETEREN, "Augustine's Ascent of the Soul in Book VII of the *Confessions*: a Reconsideration", *Augustinian Studies*, 5 (1974), p. 68, and "A Reply to Robert O'Connell", *Augustinian Studies*, 21 (1990), p. 127. Concerning the relationship between the ascents described in the *Confessions* and those found in Augustine's early dialogues Van Fleteren notes the following: "It is somewhat surprising, however, that there has been no extensive attempt to show the relationship between these ascents of the mind [in the *Confessiones*] and the early works of Saint Augustine. This lacuna is all the more surprising since Augustine recounts these experiences as the apex of his intellectual conversion." See *Augustine's Ascent of the Soul*, p. 1. Van Fleteren observes that only Solignac ventured some brief thoughts on the subject in his commentary. See A. SOLIGNAC, *Les Confessions*, Bibliothèque Augustinienne, (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1962) vol. 13, n. 28, pp. 698 ff. It is worth noting, however, that Courcelle implies a connection. See P. COURCELLE, *Recherches sur les 'Confessions' de Saint Augustin*, (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1950), pp. 165-167. More recently, Brian Dobell has addressed the relationship between the *Confessiones* and

ascents, says Van Fleteren, are based on the argument from judgment, an argument which reveals that Truth is that which is higher than the mind.² Van Fleteren is of course correct to accentuate the dominance of this argument in Augustine's early works, but his perspective can be broadened.³ In a recent article I maintain that Augustine makes a

the early dialogs. See B. DOBELL, *Augustine's Intellectual Conversion*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Although these studies do not compare the early dialogs to the *Confessiones*, several notable works analyze the early dialogs from a philosophical perspective. See N. CIPRIANI, "Le Fonti Cristiane della Dottrina Trinitaria nei Primi Dialoghi di S. Agostino", *Augustinianum*, 34 (1994); O. DUROY, *L'intelligence de la foi en la Trinité selon Saint Augustin. Genèse de sa théologie trinitaire jusqu'en 391*, (Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1966), pp. 82-8; E. ZUM BRUNN, *St. Augustine: Being and Nothingness*, trans. R. Namad (New York: Paragon House Publishers, 1998), pp. 9-34; E. GILSON, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, trans. L. Lynch, (London: Gollancz, 1961), pp. 1-15. For a helpful survey of other topics see "Cassiciacum Dialogues" in *Augustine Through the Ages: an Encyclopedia*, ed. A. Fitzgerald, O.S.A., (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), and *Augustinus-Lexikon*, eds. Mayer and Chelius, (Basel: Schwabe, 1986).

² According to Van Fleteren "in both places [the *Confessiones* and the Cassiciacum dialogues], but especially in the dialogues, we find an ascent to Truth. Truth unites men to the Supreme Measure; true lovers desire to embrace the Truth. Augustine even strives to prove the immortality of the soul in the *Soliloquia* (and the *De Immortalitate Animae*) by the existence of a participation in subsistent Truth" (*Augustine's Ascent of the Soul*, p. 69). Van Fleteren also notes that, "in Augustinian noetic theory the mind performs judgments on extra-mental objects by confronting these objects with the eternal reasons imprinted upon the soul. The principles are the mind's participation in Truth itself and enable men to judge the truth or beauty present in an external object. Although his noetic theory is perhaps not fully elaborated in these early works, the germ of this theory is present there. In both the *Confessiones* and the Cassiciacum dialogues, the search for God is also a search for the source which enables man to perform these judgments. When man begins to recognize the power of his mind, he reaches another stage in the ascent toward God." See *Augustine's Ascent of the Soul*, p. 67. The classic presentation of the argument from judgment is given by Gilson. See E. GILSON, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, pp. 16-17. There has however been debate in regard to the precise nature of the argument. See T. KONDOLEON, "Augustine's Argument for God's Existence, *De Libero Arbitrio*, Book II", *Augustinian Studies*, 14 (1983); C. BOYER, "La preuve de Dieu augustiniennne", *Archives de Philosophie*, 7 (1930); R. TESKE, "The Aim of Augustine's Proof That God Truly Is", *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 26 (1986); L. P. GERSON, "Saint Augustine's Neoplatonic Argument for the Existence of God", *The Thomist*, 45 (1981); and J. MOURANT, "The Augustinian Argument for the Existence of God", in *Inquiries into Medieval Philosophy*, ed. J. Ross. (Westport: Greenwood, 1971), pp. 165-184.

³ Robert O'Connell also objected to Van Fleteren's thesis. O'Connell's specific objection was that Van Fleteren did not give sufficient attention to the chapters that fall between Augustine's ascents at 7.12, 7.17, and 7.20, a fact which O'Connell claimed renders his reconstruction incomplete. See R. O'CONNELL, "Faith, Reason, and Ascent to Vision in St. Augustine", *Augustinian Studies*, 21 (1990), pp. 83-126, and "Where the Difference Still Lies", *Augustinian Studies*, 21 (1990), 139-52. Van

distinction between two different arguments for God's existence and nature: the argument from dependence, which establishes that all beings are dependent upon Being Itself, and the aforementioned argument from Truth.⁴ Moreover, I conclude that the argument from dependence is the most probable argument described in *Confessiones* book 7 chapter 10 and 11, the passages in which Augustine first relates the content of the *libri Platoniorum*. The purpose of this article is to show that this reading of *Confessiones* is compatible with Augustine's early works. Taking Van Fleteren's methodological point of departure, several of Augustine's early texts will be reconsidered, and it will be shown that a close reading of *De Beata Vita*, *De Ordine*, and *De Immortalitate Animae* reveals that the theme of ontological dependence does critical conceptual work in these texts, a fact which establishes that its presence in the *Confessiones* does not signify an abrupt rupture in Augustine's understanding of the mind's ascent. More specifically, in *De Beata Vita* and *De Ordine* Augustine distinguishes between Truth and the source of Truth, a distinction which he uses to establish that a higher form of knowledge is achieved by recognizing Truth's ontological dependence, and a close reading of *De Immortalitate Animae* shows that the theoretical foundation for this distinction is the distinction between the argument from judgment and the argument from dependence. According to Augustine the argument

Fleteren did not neglect to defend his position. See F. VAN FLETEREN, "Per Speculum et in Aenigmate: 1 Corinthians 13:12 in the Writings of Saint Augustine", *Augustinian Studies*, 23 (1992), and *A Reply to Robert O'Connell*, pp. 127-37. Recently Brian Dobell has tried to address the deficiency O'Connell saw in Van Fleteren's work. Dobell attempts to structure these neglected chapters pointed out by O'Connell, but, because he accepts that Augustine uses the argument from judgement in 7.10 and 7.20, he does not escape contradiction. See *Augustine's Intellectual Conversion*, p. 138. Finally, it is worth noting that there is also debate concerning the continuity of the *Confessions* considered as a whole (i.e. how it is that books 1-10 and books 11-13 form a unity). See for example J. O'MEARA, *The Young Augustine: The Growth of Augustine's Mind up to His Conversion*, (London: Longmans and Green, 1954), pp. xv-xxxiv.

⁴ See J. PALETTA, "Saint Augustine's Milan Vision Reconstructed", *Augustiniana*, 58:3-4 (2008), pp. 151-180. Several other authors have identified Augustine's use of this argument in its various formulations. See E. PORTALIE, *A Guide to the Thought of Saint Augustine*, trans. R.J. Bastian, (Westport: Greenwood, 1975), pp. 125-126; *L'intelligence de la foi*, pp. 184-185, 191-192, and 93-194; E. GILSON, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, pp. 19-20, and fns. 35 and 36 on p. 19; G. ESSER, "The Augustinian Proof for God's Existence and the Thomistic Fourth Way", *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, 28 (1954), pp. 194-211; E. The use of the verb *facere* is common to all the arguments which are identified as examples by these authors.

from dependence produces a higher form of knowledge because it establishes the definitive nature of God and the soul.

1. The Theme of Ontological Dependence in *De Beata Vita*

The *De Beata Vita* is the account of a discussion that takes place between Augustine and some companions at a rural villa near Milan concerning the nature of happiness. In this work Augustine argues that knowledge of God is the essence of happiness, and in order to articulate the essential identity of God as the source of the *beata uita*, Augustine makes use of the theme of ontological dependence.⁵

In *De Beata Vita* Augustine takes up the question of happiness in opposition to the wealthy Epicure. Augustine uses the example of Sergius Orata. Orata, a wealthy man with a tremendous estate, was known for banquets of choice seafood and the construction of luxurious baths. According to Augustine, Orata is to be understood as having no wants at all for he does not want more than he already has.⁶ Augustine makes it clear that, in order for one's mind to be totally free from the temptation of Epicureanism, one must understand why one wouldn't be happy if one were in a state such as Orata's. One must understand why Orata's Epicurean values fail. Augustine attempts to solve this problem by giving his audience a clear definition of happiness. Augustine defines happiness (*beatitudo*) as not to be in want (*egestas*), for want, claims Augustine, is a lack or privation of some good. Simply, happiness is a state in which no additional good can increase one's sense of fullness (*plenitudo*).⁷ According to Augustine, happiness can only be attained when all want is eliminated, and, most importantly, this includes the

⁵ See *Confessiones*: 4.11.17 and P. VAN GEEST, "Stoic against his Will? Augustine on the Good Life in *De Beata Vita* and the *Praeceptum*", *Augustiniana*, 54 (2004) (Mélanges offerts à T.J. van Bavel à l'occasion de son 80e anniversaire, Leuven 2004).

⁶ *De Beata Vita*: 4.26: Quis enim facile dicat Oratam egestate laborasse, hominem ditissimum, amoenissimum, deliciosissimum, cui neque ad uoluptatem quidquam defuit, neque ad gratiam, neque ad bonam integramque ualeitudinem? Nam et praediis quaestuosissimis et amicis iucundissimis, quantum libuit, abundauit; et illis omnibus aptissime ad salutem corporis usus est, eiusque (ut breuiter totum explicem) omne institutum uoluntatemque omnem successio prospera consecuta est. — For Latin text see *Contra Academicos*, *De Beata Vita*, *De Ordine*, *De Magistro*, *De Libero Arbitrio*, Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, 27, (Turnholti: Brepols, 1970), p. 79 (hereafter abbreviated CCL29).

⁷ *De Beata Vita*: 4.31/33.

desire of the intellect. It is in this manner that he demonstrates that Epicure's account of the good life is ultimately incomplete, for the Epicure is unable to obtain happiness insofar as he remains unable to know the highest good.

In book 4 of the *De Beata Vita* Augustine begins his analysis of virtue by opposing two moral concepts. According to Augustine, the Latin term worthlessness (*nequitia*), "the cause of all vice," is etymologically derived from that-which-is-nothing (*nequicquam*), while the virtue opposite to this vice, worth (*frugalitas*), is derived from fruit (*frux*).⁸ Augustine then identifies worth (*frugalitas*) with the term moderation (*modestia*), a concept that is almost convertible with *frugalitas* (but with a wider application than "frugality" because it signifies more than virtuous restraint), holding that this term is better understood as the opposite of "want" (*egestas*). He holds that the word moderation is derived from the word measure (*modus*), because wherever measure exists there is nothing either too much or too little and one is left with fullness (*plenitudo*).⁹ It is in this way that measure is like fullness, for it signifies a lack of want. He then claims that the ultimate measure (*modus*), or fullness (*plenitudo*), of the intellectual soul is wisdom, for all minds want to know: "[T]he measure of mind is wisdom."¹⁰ Thus, want is eliminated in the human mind only when it has been filled with wisdom. For Augustine, it is God Himself who is this wisdom, and it is this idea that is the ground of further knowledge:

But what wisdom should be so called, if not the wisdom of God? We have also heard through divine authority that the Son of God is nothing but the wisdom of God, and the Son of God is truly God. Thus, everyone having God is happy – a statement already acclaimed by everyone at the beginning of our symposium. But do you believe that wisdom is different from truth? For it has also been said: "I am the Truth." The truth, however, receives its being through a supreme measure, from which it emanates and into which it is converted when perfected. However, no other measure is imposed upon the supreme measure. For, if the supreme measure exists through the supreme measure, it is measure through itself... Who is the Son of God? It has been said: the Truth. Who is it that has no father? Who other than the supreme measure?¹¹

⁸ *De Beata Vita*: 2.8.

⁹ *De Beata Vita*: 4.32.

¹⁰ *De Beata Vita*: 4.32.

¹¹ *De Beata Vita*: 4.34: Quae est autem dicenda sapientia, nisi quae Dei Sapientia est? Accepimus autem etiam auctoritate diuina, Dei Filium nihil esse aliud quam

In the above Augustine makes a distinction between Truth (*veritas*) and the Supreme measure (*summum modus*), for he says that in order for Truth to be (*veritas autem ut sit*) it must be made through the supreme measure (*fit per aliquem summum modum*).¹² So the theme of ontological dependence does important work for Augustine in this his earliest work, for awareness of Truth's ontological dependence¹³ leads one to a higher level of knowledge, knowledge of that upon which truth depends, the highest measure. The claim that Truth leads one to a higher form of knowledge is supported by the fact that Augustine says later on in the passage that "whoever attains the supreme measure, through the Truth, is happy" (*Quisquis igitur ad summum modum per ueritatem uenerit, beatus est*). Truth is described as a type of medium

Dei Sapientiam (I Cor. I, 24): et est Dei Filius profecto Deus. Deum habet igitur quisquis beatus est: quod omnibus nobis iam ante placuit, cum hoc conuiuium ingressi sumus. Sed quid putatis esse sapientiam, nisi ueritatem? Etiam hoc enim dictum est: *Ego sum Veritas* (Io 14, 6). Veritas autem ut sit, fit per aliquem summum modum, a quo procedit, et in quem se perfecta conuertit. Ipsi autem summo modo nullus alius modus imponitur: si enim summus modus per summum modum modus est, per seipsum modus est... Quis est Dei Filius? Dictum est: *Veritas*. Quis est qui non habet patrem, quis alius quam summus modus? Quisquis igitur ad summum modum per ueritatem uenerit, beatus est. Hoc est animo Deum habere, id est Deo perfrui. Caetera enim quamuis a Deo habeantur, non habent Deum (CCL29, p. 84). The English translation is from *The Happy Life, Answer to the Skeptics, Divine Providence and the Problem of Evil, Soliloquies*, The Fathers of the Church (vol 5), trans. L. Schopp, (New York: Cima, 1948).

¹² Van Fleteren, Du Roy, and Cipriani note this formulation, but they do not appear to hold that Augustine makes a real distinction between the Being and Truth of God. See *Augustine's Ascent of the Soul*, p. 69; *Le Fonti Cristiane*, pp. 269-271; and *L'intelligence de la Foi* pp. 154-161. Although Augustine appears to make a real distinction between the Being and Truth of God in *De Beata Vita* and *De Ordine* he does not think that this leads to subordinationism or inequality among the persons of the Trinity. For example in *De Beata Vita* 4.34 Augustine says that Truth and Measure are one: Sed etiam summus modus necesse est ut uerus modus sit. Ut igitur ueritas modo gignitur, ita modus ueritate cognoscitur (CCL29, p. 84). Similarly in *De Beata Vita* 4.35 he says that the three persons of the Trinity are one substance: Illa est igitur plena satietas animorum, hoc est beata uita, pie perfecteque cognoscere a quo inducaris in ueritatem, qua ueritate perfruaris, per quid connectaris summo modo. Quae tria unum Deum intellegendibus unamque substantiam, exclusis uanitatibus uariae superstitionis, ostendunt (CCL29, p. 84). But the distinction between the source of knowledge and the source of being remains. Consequently, it seems that we have here an incipient formulation of Augustine's Trinitarian doctrine, a formulation which admits of certain inconsistencies. That is to say it is probable that at this stage in his theological development Augustine maintains that the persons of the Trinity are equal and that they are distinct in regard to their Being and Truth (i.e. the Father is the source of the Son while the Son is Truth itself) without understanding that this involves contradiction. This point will be discussed in more detail in the above.

¹³ See fn. 33.

in this passage for the goal is to move *through* Truth to the supreme measure. This language suggests that awareness of Truth's "contingent" status leads one to a more perfect knowledge. Further, in this passage Augustine does not intend to present a formal argument for God's existence. But the description of the relationship between God the Son and God the Father are specific enough to suggest that they are based on the argument from judgment and the argument from dependence respectively. In other words, as is clear from the reference to *John* 14:6 (*sum ueritas*), here Augustine reveals his incipient understanding of the defining characteristics of the first two persons of the Trinity: the Son is the source of supreme knowledge while the Father is the ontological ground of the Son. It is in this manner that Augustine demonstrates that the Epicurean account of the good life is ultimately incomplete, for the Epicure is unable to obtain happiness insofar as he remains unable to know Truth and the Highest Measure.

2. The Theme of Ontological Dependence in *De Ordine*

In the *Retractationes* Augustine says that he intended the topic of *De Ordine* to be the problem of evil, but when he saw that the subject matter was too difficult for his interlocutors he switched it to an examination of the order of study.¹⁴ Augustine's order of study consists of four levels of knowledge, the final level of which is distinguished from the others in that it reveals, just as *De Beata Vita*, that upon which Truth depends, a clear use of knowledge attained through ontological dependence. Augustine holds that knowledge of eternal Truth is provisional because it does not establish whether the mind *is* Truth or is *in* Truth, while knowledge of the *source* of Truth is a higher form of knowledge because it does not admit of this ambiguity. In other words, this form of knowledge reveals the definitive nature of God and the soul.

In *De Ordine* 2.9.26 Augustine outlines a pedagogical program intended to lead young minds to the contemplation of the highest Truth. According to Augustine, this program enables one to know, "(1) how much wisdom is embodied in those very precepts that he has been observing before understanding [i.e. authority], (2) what reason itself is which he – now strong and capable after the cradle

¹⁴ See *Retractationes* 1.3.1. In *De Ordine* 1.9.27 Augustine defines this order as that which leads one to God: *Ordo est quem si tuerimus in uita, perducet ad Deum, et quem nisi tuerimus in uita, non peruenimus ad Deum* (CCL29, p. 102).

of authority – follows and comprehends, (3) what intellect is in which all things are, or rather, which is itself the sum total of all things, and (4) what, beyond all things, is the source of all things.”¹⁵ Here one can see that the final level of Augustine’s program concerns knowledge of God attained through awareness of ontological dependence, for this level concerns knowledge of the source of all things (*uniuersorum principium*). In the following chapters, *De Ordine* 2.9.27-2.19.51, Augustine gives a detailed explanation of the nature of the four levels which constitute the order of study: in 2.9.27-2.10.29 he defines the nature of authority, in 2.11.30-2.17.46 he defines the nature of reason (and its creation of the liberal arts), in 2.18.47 he defines the nature of philosophy (the category into which the final two levels fall), in 2.18.48-2.19.50 he describes the nature of the intellect, and in paragraph 2.19.51 he describes the principle of all things (*uniuersorum principium*).¹⁶ Analysis of the final two levels will establish that Augustine gives a privileged position to knowledge of God arrived at through reflection on Truth’s ontological dependence.

In *De Ordine* 2.18.47 Augustine reintroduces the final two levels of knowledge which lead one to the happy life, a subset which he defines as philosophy. The first object of philosophy is to identify the nature of the soul while the second concerns identifying the nature of God.¹⁷ Augustine says that knowledge of the first delights, makes one fit for happiness, and is for beginners, while knowledge of the second is more precious, makes one happy, and is for the well instructed.¹⁸

¹⁵ *De Ordine* 2.9.26: Tum demum discet et quanta ratione praedita sint ea ipsa quae secutus est ante rationem, et quid sit ipsa ratio quam post auctoritatis cunabula firmus et idoneus iam sequitur atque comprehendit et quid intellectus, in quo uniuersa sunt, uel ipse potius uniuersa, et quid praeter uniuersa uniuersorum principium (CCL29, p. 122). Both Cipriani and DuRoy see the second and first persons of the Trinity in the final two stages of Augustine’s program, and both claim that the descriptions of each are based on Plotinian philosophy. See, *Le Fonti Cristiane*, pp. 306-308; *L’intelligence de la Foi*, pp. 127-128. English translation: *Divine Providence and the Problem of Evil: A Translation of St. Augustine’s De Ordine*, ed. R. Russell, (New York, New York: Kissinger Publishing, 1942).

¹⁶ Between his outline of the program and his account of the final levels Augustine describes the order of the liberal arts. See *Augustine’s Intellectual Conversion*, p. 118: “The remainder of the second book of *On Order* consists of Augustine’s description of ‘the order of learning,’ which is constituted by the study of the seven liberal disciplines: grammar (2.12.35-7), dialectic (2.13.38), rhetoric (2.13.38), music (2.14.39-41), geometry (2.15.42), astronomy (2.15.42) and arithmetic.”

¹⁷ *De Ordine* 2.18.47: Cuius duplex quaestio est: una de anima, altera de Deo (CCL29, p. 133).

¹⁸ *De Ordine* 2.18.47: Illa nobis dulcior, ista carior, illa nos dignos beata uita, beatos haec facit; prima est illa discentibus, ista iam doctis (CCL29, p. 133).

Most importantly, he says that the first allows the soul to know itself while the second allows one to know its origin (*Prima efficit ut nosmetipsos nouerimus, altera, ut originem nostram*).¹⁹ Here again one can see that Augustine understands the final level to concern knowledge of God reached through ontological dependence for it concerns knowing that upon which the soul depends. This, says Augustine, is the order of wisdom (*ordo sapientiae*) and it enables one to grasp the order of things (*ordem rerum*), distinguish between two worlds (*duos mundos*), and know the author of the universe (*ipsum parentum uniuersitatis*).²⁰

In chapters 2.18.48-2.19.50 Augustine describes the nature of the soul. He begins his analysis with a preview of the knowledge that the soul (educated in the liberal arts) attains about itself once it has become devoted to philosophy:

The soul therefore, holding fast to this order, and now devoted to philosophy, at first introspects itself and – as soon as that mode of learning has persuaded it that *reason either is the soul itself or belongs to it, and that there is in reason nothing more excellent or dominant than numbers, or that reason is nothing else than number* [emphasis added] – soliloquizes thus: “By some kind of inner and hidden activity of mine, I am able to analyze and synthesize the things that ought to be learned and this faculty of mine is called reason.”²¹

This is not the only place where Augustine observes that reason either *is* the soul or *is in* the soul. In *De Ordine* 2.19.50 he argues that the immortality of the soul is based on knowing the eternality of Truth:

Perhaps reason is not immortal? But, one to two, or two to four, is a ratio in the truest sense. That ratio was no truer yesterday than today, nor will it be truer tomorrow or a year hence. Even if the whole world should fall into ruins, that ratio will always necessarily be: it will always be such as it is now... Therefore, if reason is immortal, and if I who analyze and synthesize all those things, am reason, then that by

¹⁹ *De Ordine* 2.18.47.

²⁰ *De Ordine* 2.18.47: Hic est ordo studiorum sapientiae, per quem fit quisque idoneus ad intellegendum ordinem rerum, id est ad dignoscendos duos mundos et ipsum parentem uniuersitatis (CCL29, p. 133).

²¹ *De Ordine* 2.18.48: Hunc igitur ordinem tenens anima iam philosophiae tradita, primo seipsam inspicit, et cui iam illa eruditio persuasit, aut suam aut seipsam esse rationem, in ratione autem aut nihil esse melius et potentius numeris, aut nihil aliud quam numerum esse rationem, ita secum loquetur: Ego quodam meo motu interiore et occulto, ea quae discenda sunt possum discernere uel connectere, et haec uis mea ratio uocatur (CCL29, p. 133).

which I am called mortal is not mine. Or if the soul is not the same as reason, and I nevertheless use reason, and if through reason I am superior, then we ought to take flight from the lesser good to the greater, from the mortal to the immortal.²²

In the above Augustine claims that one to two or two to four is a ratio, and that this ratio *must* be true, it must necessarily be, for it will always be in the same manner as it is.²³ Moreover, this argument for the soul's immortality is clearly based on the argument from judgment. But even though the argument from judgment shows one something eternal, one is still left with a nebulous understanding of the mind.²⁴ According to Augustine, the conclusion of the argument establishes that either one is immortal because one *is* reason (i.e. "Therefore, if reason is immortal, and if I who analyze and synthesize all those things, am reason") or one is immortal because one is *connected* to reason (i.e. "or if the soul is not the same as reason, and I nevertheless use reason").²⁵ Because the conclusion it reaches does not establish what the mind is, Augustine must be speaking about the third level in the *ordo sapientiae*, for the ambiguous nature of the mind described at this level (one does not know if one is reason or if one contains reason within oneself) perfectly matches the description of knowledge of the soul related in 2.18.48 and 2.9.26. This conclusion is further confirmed by the fact that this argument clearly does not show the soul's origin (*originem nostram*), the knowledge promised at the forth and highest level in *De Ordine* 2.18.47.

Augustine describes the final level of the *ordo sapientiae* in 2.19.51. Here, just as in *De Beata Vita*, Augustine makes a distinction

²² *De Ordine* 2.19.50: Igitur si immortalis est ratio et ego quae ista omnia uel discerno uel connecto ratio sum, illud quo mortale appellor non est meum. Aut si anima non id est quod ratio et tamen ratione utor et per rationem melior sum, a deteriore ad melius, a mortali ad immortale fugiendum est (CCL29, p. 134).

²³ *De Ordine* 2.19.50: Sed unum ad duo uel duo ad quatuor uerissima ratio est: nec magis heri fuit ista ratio uera quam hodie, nec magis cras aut post annum erit uera, nec si omnis iste mundus concidat, poterit ista ratio non esse. Ista enim semper talis est, mundus autem iste nec heri habuit, nec cras habebit quod habet hodie, nec hodierno ipso die uel spatio unius horae eodem loco solem habuit: ita cum in eo nihil manet, nihil uel paruo spatio temporis habet eodem modo (CCL29, p. 134).

²⁴ See *Augustine's Intellectual Conversion*, pp. 122-123: "As we will see, Augustine did not resolve this matter – which forms part of what he calls 'the question of the soul' – until after *De Immortalitate Animae*. Until that time, Augustine was unclear whether the soul was reason or merely used reason."

²⁵ In the first example Augustine claims this when he says that one should connect oneself to reason (i.e. in order to become immortal).

between the Father and the Son by making a distinction between Truth and the source of Truth:

But when the soul has properly adjusted and disposed itself, and has rendered itself harmonious and beautiful, then it will venture to see God, the very source of all Truth and the very Father of Truth... I shall say no more, except that to us is promised a vision of beauty – the beauty of whose imitation all other things are beautiful, and by comparison with which all other things are unsightly.²⁶

Augustine says that at the highest level of knowledge one sees the source from which flows all Truth (*ipsum fontem unde manat omne uerum*) and the Father of Truth (*Patrem Veritatis*). The language here clearly reflects a relationship of ontological dependence, because the highest level of knowledge concerns seeing that upon which Truth depends. As it has been shown, the language of ontological dependence is consistently used by Augustine throughout book 2 of *De Ordine* in order to describe this final level, for in 2.9.26 he promises to show the reader the principle of all things which is before all things (*praeter uniuersorum principium*) and in 2.18.47 he says that this level reveals the origin of the soul (*originem nostram*) and the Father of the universe (*parentem uniuersitatis*). Moreover, in the above Augustine explicitly states here that “he will not say more,” and so the precise nature of this highest level of knowledge is defined incompletely. The reason for this, as 2.18.47 suggests, is that knowledge of God reached via the argument from dependence is a higher form of knowledge suitable only for the educated.²⁷

Further, here, as in *De Beata Vita*, Augustine makes a real (as opposed to conceptual) distinction between Truth and the source of Truth.²⁸ Consequently, at this stage in Augustine’s intellectual development (at Cassiciacum) he is not in accord with the orthodox doctrine on the nature of the Trinity (at least the language he uses is not).²⁹ This

²⁶ *De Ordine* 2.19.51: Cum autem se composuerit et ordinauerit ac concinnam pulchramque reddiderit, audebit iam Deum uidere, atque ipsum fontem unde manat omne uerum ipsumque Patrem Veritatis... Nihil amplius dicam, nisi promitti nobis aspectum pulchritudinis, cuius imitatione pulchra, cuius comparatione foeda sunt cetera (CCL29, p. 135).

²⁷ See fn. 18.

²⁸ It is of course possible that Augustine is referring to the truth possessed by the created mind. But the phrase *patrem ueritatis* and the precedent of *De Beata Vita* suggests, if we are to be conservative, that he still understands Truth to be dependent upon Being. Although not as strong as the examples found in the *De Beata Vita* and *De Ordine* it is worth noting that letter 11.4 also suggests this distinction.

²⁹ Certainly, however, by the time he writes the *De Trinitate* (and perhaps earlier) Augustine expresses the orthodox formulation. See *De Trinitate* 5.8.9.

should come as no surprise for Augustine entertained the possibility of basing the distinction between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit on the distinction between being, knowing, and willing at least as late as the *Confessions*:

For I am and I know and I will. Knowing and willing I am. I know that I am and I will. I will to be and to know... When, however, through his investigation of these three, he has found something out and has made his report on that, he should not suppose that he discovered the immutable that transcends them – that which immutably is, immutably knows, and immutably wills. It baffles thought to inquire whether these three functions are the ground which constitutes the divine Trinity; or whether the three components are present in each Person, so that each Person has all three, or whether both these alternatives are true... who can readily conceive?³⁰

In the above Augustine says that he is not sure if the Trinity of being, knowing, and willing corresponds to the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit respectively (i.e. the Father is Being, the Son is Truth, and the Spirit is Will) or if each of these qualities are able to be predicated of each person of the Trinity (i.e. the Father is Being, Truth, and Will, the Son is Being, Truth, and Will, etc.). Therefore, it seems very possible that the early dialogues represent an incipient formulation of the nature of the Triune God based on the triune structure of the mind.³¹

3. The Theme of Ontological Dependence in *De Immortalitate Animae*

De Beata Vita and *De Ordine* are not the only early works which make important use of the theme of ontological dependence. Close analysis reveals that in *De Immortalitate Animae* the distinction between Truth and the source of Truth made in *De Beata Vita* and *De Ordine* has its theoretical foundation in the distinction between the argument from Truth and the argument from dependence.

³⁰ *Confessiones* 13.11.12: Sum enim et scio et uolo: sum sciens et uolens et scio esse me et uelle et uolo esse et scire... Sed cum inuenerit in his aliquid et dixerit, non iam se putet inuenisse illud, quod supra ista est incommutabile, quod est incommutabiliter et scit incommutabiliter et uult incommutabiliter; et utrum propter tria haec et ibi trinitas, an in singulis haec tria, ut terna singulorum sint, an utrumque miris modis simpliciter et multipliciter infinito in se... quis facile cogitauerit?... – For latin text see *Confessionum Libri XIII*, Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, 27, (Turnholti: Brepols, 1990), pp. 247-248. The English translation is by Chadwick. See *St. Augustine's Confessions*, trans. H. Chadwick, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

³¹ See fn. 12.

In *De Immortalitate Animae* 1.1-5.9 Augustine presents his most basic arguments for the soul's immortality. Moreover, these arguments are essentially variations on the argument from judgment, the ability to acquire inward knowledge of the immutable and eternal. For example, in the opening chapter Augustine claims that because knowledge (*disciplina*) is unchangeable, and because the soul adheres in knowledge like an accident within a subject (i.e. because it is always connected to knowledge), the soul will always be connected to the unchangeable, a fact which makes it immortal.³² In the chapters which follow Augustine identifies this immutable knowledge with reason, and reason with Truth.³³

In *De Immortalitate Animae* 6.10 Augustine goes on to note the same ambiguity that he does in *De Ordine* concerning knowledge based on eternal truth, for he says, "Reason is the aspect of the mind which (1) perceives the true *per se* and not through the body; or (2) it is the contemplation of the true, not through the body; or (3) it is the true itself which is contemplated."³⁴ Again, in this passage one can see the original ambiguity found in *De Ordine*, for Augustine says that the mind is either *in* truth (i.e. "it is the contemplation of the true") or that it *is* the truth (i.e. "it is the true itself").³⁵ Here, however, he rejects the possibility that the mind is identical to Truth, because he now sees that there is a duality in the perception of the true, a duality which requires both the mind *and* truth. Consequently, he modifies his understanding

³² *De Immortalitate Animae* 1.1: Si alicubi est disciplina, nec esse nisi in eo quod uiuit potest, et semper est, neque quidquam in quo quid semper est potest esse non semper; semper uiuit in quo est disciplina. Si nos sumus qui ratiocinamur, id est animus noster, nec recte ratiocinari sine disciplina potest, nec sine disciplina esse animus, nisi in quo disciplina non est, potest; est in hominis animo disciplina. – Latin text found in *Soliloques, De immortalitate Animae, De Quantitate Animae*, Bibliothèque Augustinienne (Dialogues Philosophiques 5: 2. Dieu et l'âme), trans. P. de Labriolle, (Paris: Desclée, De Brouwer, and Cie, 1948), p. 170 (hereafter abbreviated BA5).

³³ See for example *De Immortalitate Animae* 4.6: Sed cum uel nos ipsi nobiscum ratiocinantes, uel ab alio bene interrogati de quibusdam liberalibus artibus ea quae inuenimus, non alibi quam in animo nostro inuenimus: neque id est inuenire, quod facere aut gignere; alioquin aeterna gigneret animus inuentione temporali (nam aeterna saepe inuenit; quid enim tam aeternum quam circuli ratio, uel si quid aliud in huiusmodi artibus, nec non fuisse aliquando, nec non fore comprehenditur?): manifestum etiam est, immortalem esse animum humanum, et omnes ueras rationes in secretis eius esse, quamuis eas siue ignoratione siue obliuione, aut non habere, aut amisisse uideatur (BA5, pp. 180 and 182).

³⁴ *De Immortalitate Animae* 6.10: Ratio est aspectus animi, quo per seipsum, non per corpus uerum intuetur; aut ipsa ueri contemplatio, non per corpus; aut ipsum uerum quod contemplatur (BA5, p. 186).

³⁵ Clearly he also lists here a new possibility which holds that reason is the part of the mind which perceives the true *per se*.

of the ambiguous knowledge achieved through the argument based on eternal truth, for he no longer believes that his mind could confuse itself with (i.e. that it could consider itself to be) truth.

But this new position does not erase the ambiguous nature of the knowledge achieved via the argument from judgment. Augustine refines his understanding of this knowledge by expressing it in the language of substance and accident: "[T]he connection between the mind which perceives and the true which it perceives is either such that the mind is the subject with the true in it as in a subject; or on the other hand the true is the subject with the mind in it as a subject; or, both are substances."³⁶ Essentially, the problem generated by awareness of eternal truth remains because knowledge of the soul's nature is still unclear.

In *De Immortalitate* 6.11 Augustine inquires into how this new ambiguity might be overcome. To that end he entertains the possibility that the relationship between the mind and the truth it contemplates is such that they can both be considered to be substances and *not* as accidents inherent in subjects.³⁷ A problem with this possibility, however, immediately surfaces. If the mind and the True are separate substances then it seems possible to hold that the mind could cease to be by separating itself from the true, a possibility which would threaten its status as something truly immortal.³⁸ Augustine then considers what could possibly effect such a separation. He says that nothing weaker than the soul could separate it from the True due to the principle which holds that the superior (i.e. the soul) cannot be overcome by the inferior (i.e. the body). Neither could it be separated by a power equal to it, that is, another soul which wants to contemplate the true, for the true can accommodate an unlimited number of souls without depleting its store. Further, it is not possible for the true itself to separate the soul from itself because the true is without envy, and therefore, there is nothing which could prevent the true from giving itself to the soul. Augustine concludes that the only remaining possibility is that the soul is separated from the true by its own free act of will. He immediately sets this

³⁶ *De Immortalitate Animae* 6.11: Quare ista coniunctio intuentis animi, et eius ueri quod intuetur, aut ita est ut subiectum sit animus, uerum autem illud in subiecto; aut contra subiectum uerum, et in subiecto animus; aut utrumque substantia (BA5, p. 188). Augustine will recall this ambiguity again at *De Immortalitate Animae* 10.17.

³⁷ See fn. 36.

³⁸ *De Immortalitate Animae* 6.11: Nam si animus substantia est, et substantia rationi coniungitur; non absurdè quis putauerit fieri posse, ut manente illa hic esse desinat. Sed manifestum est quamdiu animus a ratione non separatur eique cohaeret, necessario eum manere atque uiuere (BA5, p. 188).

consideration aside and concludes that if the soul does not *freely* separate itself from the true it cannot be destroyed through any form of forced separation. He then explains why this is the case:

However, if this force of reason [the true], through its very connection, affects the mind – for it cannot but affect it – it affects it certainly only in such a way that it gives it its being. And reason [the true] itself is there in the highest degree where changelessness is conceived in the highest degree. Therefore, reason [the true] forces that mind somehow to be, which it, from its own being, affects. Thus, without separation from reason [the true], the mind cannot be extinguished. But, a separation is impossible [i.e. forced separation], as we have reasoned above. Therefore, the mind cannot perish.³⁹

In the above Augustine says that if the power of reason (i.e. the True) effects the mind through their connection in any way it must be the case that it effects it by giving it being (*ut ei esse tribuat*). Consequently, if the mind does not separate itself from the True, the mind will not be destroyed. What is important to note about Augustine's reference to ontological dependence here is that the language he uses indicates that this claim is not based on a necessary conclusion arrived at through rational argument for he says, "if (*si*) the power of reason effects the mind" and "reason forces that mind somehow (*quodammodo*) to be." In other words, here Augustine does not explain to the reader the reason *why* one must hold that created things receive their being from God, he only asserts that one must hold this to be so. The reason for this is that Augustine has reasoned to the existence of the True only via a version of the argument from judgment, only by showing that the mind is attached to something eternal, and this argument does not demonstrate that created beings are dependent upon (i.e. made and sustained by) He Who Is.

In the next chapter, chapter 7.12, Augustine addresses whether or not it is possible for the soul to destroy itself by *freely* separating itself from the True. More specifically, he says that when the mind turns away from reason (the true) it can't help but suffer defect. Defect is a tending

³⁹ *De Immortalitate Animae* 6.11: At si illa rationis uis ipsa sua coniunctione afficit animum; neque enim non afficere potest; ita profecto afficit ut ei esse tribuat. Est enim maxime ipsa ratio, ubi summa etiam incommutabilitas intellegitur. Ita quaecumque ex se afficit, cogit esse quodammodo. Non ergo exstingui animus potest, nisi a ratione separatus; separari autem non potest, ut supra ratiocinati sumus: non potest igitur interire (BA5, p. 190). The English translation is from Schopp. See *Immortality of the Soul, Magnitude of the Soul, On Music, Advantage of Believing, Faith in Things Unseen*, The Fathers of the Church (vol 4), trans. Ludwig Schopp (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1984).

toward nothing (*nihil*), and to move toward nothing is to move toward destruction.⁴⁰ After reflecting on this chain of consequences he says, "Why this destruction does not fall upon the mind, although it is subject to defect is hard to say."⁴¹ This passage reveals that Augustine cannot explain why the soul is not destroyed when it separates itself from the True. He cannot advance an account of how it is that the mind is kept in existence even when it is separated from the True, because, again, he is lacking an argument which shows that the True sustains the soul in existence. As a result, from Augustine's perspective, if the soul is no longer connected with Truth it is not clear how it is protected from the chain of falsity, defect, and nothingness/destruction.

Four chapters later in *De Immortalitate Animae* 11.18 Augustine returns to this problem.⁴² But here, as opposed to chapter 7.12, he argues that the Truth is immutable, and that what is immutable truly *is*. Consequently, the mind either has its being from that which *is* in the highest degree or the mind has being through itself, that is, it is the source of its own being.⁴³ He says that if the mind has being through itself then nothing can destroy it. But if the mind has its being from some other essence an inquiry should be made into the nature of what is contrary to this source which might be able to destroy it (the soul), for just as the soul receives its being from this essence (*if* in fact it does) it seems possible that the soul may be destroyed by attaching itself to the opposite of that which gives being.⁴⁴

Augustine then says that this essence, that which *is* in the highest degree, is convertible with truth. Therefore, when a thing *is* it is true and when a thing *is not* it is false. It seems then that the soul may lose its existence when it clings to falsity, because when something

⁴⁰ *De Immortalitate Animae* 7.12: Omnis autem defectus tendit ad nihilum; et interitum nullum magis proprie oportet accipi, quam cum id, quod aliquid erat, nihil fit. Quare tendere ad nihilum, est ad interitum tendere (BA5, pp. 190 and 192).

⁴¹ *De Immortalitate Animae* 7.12: Qui cur non cadat in animum, uix est dicere, in quem defectus cadit (BA5, p. 192).

⁴² *De Immortalitate Animae* 11.18: Rursus igitur si quid metuendum est, id est metuendum ne deficiendo animus intereat, id est dum ipsa existendi specie priuatur (BA5, p. 204).

⁴³ *De Immortalitate Animae* 11.18: Sed si, quod nemini dubium est, tunc est animus sapientissimus, cum ueritatem, quae semper eodem modo est, intuetur, eique immobilis inhaeret diuino amore coniunctus et illa omnium quae quoquomodo sunt summe maximeque est: aut ab illa est animus in quantum est, aut per seipsum est (BA5, p. 204).

⁴⁴ *De Immortalitate Animae* 11.18: Sed si per seipsum est, quoniam ipse sibi causa existendi est, et nunquam se deserit; nunquam interit, ut supra etiam disputauimus. Si uero ex illa, diligenter opus est quaerere quae res ei possit esse contraria, quae animo auferat animum esse quod illa praebet (BA5, p. 204).

is false it is not. But, according to Augustine, falsity causes the mind to be deceived, and one who is deceived must be alive, and so falsity cannot take away the mind's being.⁴⁵ He then says that the soul either derives its being from the first essence or has being through itself.⁴⁶ Here again, however, one can see that Augustine does not say that it is a consequence of rational necessity that one hold that He Who Is is the source of the soul's being, for knowledge of the soul's source of being is not definitive. Essentially, he still has not given an argument which would provide a definitive conclusion to the problem of the soul's identity.

In chapter 12 Augustine finally introduces the argument which shows why the soul cannot be destroyed by separating itself from the highest essence:

[There] is no contrary to any essence inasmuch as it is an essence, much less than is there a contrary to that first essence inasmuch as it is essence. The first statement is true. For the whole essence is not through another essence, but only because it *is*. Being, moreover, has no contrary except non-being: hence nothing is the contrary of essence. Therefore, in no way can anything exist as a contrary to that substance which supremely and originally *is*. If the mind has its essence from that itself which *is* (for since it does not have it from itself it cannot have it otherwise than from that thing which is superior to the mind itself); then there is nothing by which it may lose its being, because there is nothing contrary to that thing from which it has it.

Of course, the mind can possess wisdom in turning toward the source of its being, and can lose it by turning away from it. Now, turning away is the contrary to turning toward. But the mind cannot lose that which it has from that source to which no thing is contrary. Therefore, the mind cannot perish.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ *De Immortalitate Animae* 11.18: Sed manifestum est, atque in promptu situm, quantum nocere animo falsitas possit. Num enim amplius potest quam fallere? at nisi qui uiuit, fallitur nemo. Non igitur falsitas interimere animum potest. (BA5, p. 204).

⁴⁶ This seems like a return to the original problem concerning the soul's nature presented in *De Ordine* (i.e. that it either is or is in Truth = it either exists through itself or it exists through the first essence). This is certainly a new version of this same problem. That having been said the new ambiguity expressed first at 6.11 (see fn.36) has not been forgotten for Augustine repeats it just before this passage in 10.17.

⁴⁷ *De Immortalitate Animae*: 12.19: Nam si nulla essentia in quantum essentia est, aliquid habet contrarium, multo minus habet contrarium prima illa essentia, quae dicitur ueritas, in quantum essentia est. Primum autem uerum est. Omnis enim essentia non ob aliud essentia est, nisi quia est. Esse autem non habet contrarium, nisi non esse: unde nihil est essentiae contrarium. Nullo modo igitur res ulla esse potest contraria illi substantiae, quae maxime ac primitus est. Ex qua si habet animus idipsum quod est (non enim aliunde hoc habere potest, qui ex se non habet, nisi ab illa re quae

In the above Augustine begins by seeking the opposite of Truth.⁴⁸ He explains that strictly speaking there is no contrary to an essence or substance, and therefore that it is all the more impossible for the highest essence to have a contrary. The reason for this is that the highest essence exists through itself and not through some other form. It *is*, and the contrary of what *is*, Being, is non-being. Therefore, there is literally nothing contrary to that which supremely *is*. One knows that the mind receives its being from the first essence because the mind does not have being through itself, and what does not have being through itself must have it from that which is greater than itself (in being). This can only be He Who Is. Consequently, it is clear that in this passage Augustine presents a formal argument for God's existence and nature.⁴⁹

After having presented this argument Augustine concludes that the soul cannot be destroyed by the opposite of the first essence. But this is not the only problem that the argument solves. In the final paragraph above Augustine answers the question which has alluded him throughout the work, Can the soul destroy itself by separating itself from the True? Here he says no, for "the mind cannot lose that which it has from that source to which no thing is contrary." According to Augustine, the mind needs the first essence not only to know the true but also *to be*.⁵⁰ Therefore the argument from dependence shows that

illo ipso est animo praestantior), nulla res est qua id amittat, quia nulla res ei rei est contraria qua id habet; et propterea esse non desinit. Sapientiam uero, quia conuersione habet ad id ex quo est, auersione illam potest amittere. Conuersioni namque auersio contraria est. Illud uero quod ex eo habet cui nulla res est contraria, non est unde possit amittere. Non igitur potest interire (BA5, p. 206).

⁴⁸ In the *De immortalitate animae* Augustine refines his perspective in the sense that he no longer refers to "He Who Is" as the source of Truth. In fact, in this work, Augustine will make it clear that Truth and Being are identical. Despite this he still makes a distinction between knowledge gained through the argument from Truth and knowledge gained through the argument from dependence, and, as it will be seen, he ranks the latter as a more definitive form of knowledge than the former. This is the critical point.

⁴⁹ See fn. 4.

⁵⁰ What is assumed in this conclusion is the discussion at 8.14 where it is established that the essence which gives being to creation also sustains creation in being: "this force and incorporeal nature which effected the whole body, however, preserves the whole by its ever-present power. For after the making; it did not vanish and did not desert the thing made." According to Augustine, creation includes the act of sustaining that which was created. DuRoy and Gilson argue that this passage is an example of the argument from dependence. But this is not possible. Although he states that the material world is not the cause of its own existence and therefore needs such a cause he does not rule out the possibility that the mind is this cause. See *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, p. 19 fn. 35; *L'intelligence de la foi* pp. 193 and 194. It is also worth noting that this understanding of the mind as able to lose truth

the soul can separate itself from the first essence without being destroyed. Augustine states this definitively. But from chapter 6.11 it is clear that for the soul to be separable at all it must first be the case that God and the soul are each substances.⁵¹ Consequently, it must also be true that the argument from dependence shows that God and the soul are substances (this is supported by the fact that Augustine explicitly refers to God as a substance for the first time in this very chapter, a designation not assigned to God before this point). This knowledge in turn solves the problem concerning the soul's identity (i.e. concerning whether the mind is a subject with the true in it as in a subject, whether the true is a subject with the mind in it as in a subject, or whether they are both substances) produced by the argument from judgment, for it is now *certain* that God and the soul are distinct substances.

There is here a clear parallel between *De Immortalitate Animae* and *De Ordine* which establishes that Augustine intends to base his distinction between Truth and the source of Truth on the distinction between the argument from judgement and the argument from dependence, and which makes it clear that the latter is a higher form of knowledge than the former because it attains definitive knowledge concerning the nature of God and the soul. In *De Immortalitate Animae* the argument for the immortality of the soul based on the argument from judgment does not establish (1) whether the mind is a subject with the true in it as in a subject (i.e. as an accident in a substance), (2) whether the true is a subject with the mind in it as in a subject, or (3) whether they are both substances, an ambiguity which is based on the earlier ambiguity also found in *De Ordine* concerning whether or not the soul is *in* truth or *is* truth. Therefore in *De Immortalitate Animae* Augustine faces the same problem he does in *De Ordine*, the problem of the soul's identity. This problem is only solved in *De Immortalitate Animae* 12.19 where Augustine introduces the argument from dependence, just as in *De Ordine* 2.19.51 it is only solved through knowledge of the source of Truth. Therefore in *De Immortalitate Animae* one can see the theoretical foundation (the argument from Truth and the argument from dependence respectively) for the distinction between Truth and that upon which Truth depends made in *De Ordine*.

but not being would seem to confirm that Augustine references the argument from dependence in *De Trinitate* 8.2.5. See *Saint Augustine's Milan Vision*, pp. 168-173, and L. Gioia, *The Theological Epistemology of Augustine's De Trinitate* (Oxford Theological Monographs), (Oxford:Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁵¹ See fn. 38.

Conclusion

In *De Beata Vita* and *De Ordine* Augustine makes a distinction between Truth and that upon which Truth depends. In both of these works knowledge of that upon which Truth depends is described as a higher form of knowledge. Analysis of *De Immortalitate Animae* establishes the theoretical foundation for this distinction, and enables one to build upon Van Fleteren's thesis: the argument from judgement is a dominant theme in Augustine's early works but it is subordinate to and preparatory for knowledge attained through the argument from dependence. This reading also supports the thesis that *Confessiones* book 7 chapter 10 is the description of Augustine's use of the argument from dependence, for Augustine indicates its primacy in his earliest writings.

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