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## St. Augustine's Theology of the Holy Trinity

Yves Congar

This excerpt from Yves Congar's book *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* (vol. 3, Part B - chapter 1: Augustine) outlines Saint Augustine's understanding of the person and role of the Holy Spirit in relation to the other two persons of the Most Holy Trinity.

Here we shall consider, although not exclusively, Augustine's *De Trinitate*, which he began in 399 and handed over to the public in 419.(1) He was not the first Christian in the West to write about the Trinity and the Holy Spirit. He knew the writings of Tertullian and had read the treatise on the Trinity by Hilary of Poitiers (+366), which he quotes. There can also be no doubt that he knew Marius Victorinus, who was greater influenced by Plotinus (see Volume 1, p. 77). He had heard Ambrose of Milan and had probably read his *De Spiritu Sancto* (c. 381), which was in many places inspired by Basil the Great and literally by Didymus the Blind and which transfers into Latin thought an exegesis of several passages in the Bible originally made by the Greek Fathers.

As far as the latter are concerned, Augustine knew or may have known, in translation, Origen's *De principiis* and Didymus' *De Spiritu Sancto* and the references that he makes to their vocabulary show that he must have had access to the writings of Basil the Great and, at a relatively late period, to those of Gregory Nazianzen, although it is impossible to say exactly to what extent. (2)

Augustine's *De Trinitate* is less dominated than the writings of Athanasius and the Cappadocians by immediate polemics against the fourth-century heretics, although his adversaries were the same as theirs -- the Arians and Eunomius. Arianism still had its followers and was at times favored by those in authority. Augustine had it consciously in mind.(3) He also attacked Sabellius, who affirmed unity in the deity to such a degree that he went so far as to obscure the distinction between the hypostases, whereas the Arians made a distinction between the Word and the Spirit in such a way as to deny their consubstantiality with 'God'.



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The essential problem was to combine the identity with the distinction of the Persons. This is just how Augustine expressed it. (4) He declared his intention in these words: 'to undertake, with the help of the Lord and as far as we can ourselves, a justification (reddere rationem) of this affirmation: the Trinity is one true God and it is exactly true to say, believe and think that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are of one single and the same substance or essence' (De Trin. I, 2, 4).

A few lines later, he states more precisely the means that he intends to employ. These are firstly the authority of Scripture ---he does this in Books I to IV of De Trinitate ---and then a rational process of discussion-he does this in Books V to VII. Augustine was sometimes very prolix, but the words that he uses in this context -- dicatur, credatur, intelligatur -- outline a programme.

Like the Greek Fathers, he takes as his point of departure what Scripture says, that is, the texts and the terms employed. Later, Thomas Aquinas was to do the same. To a very great extent, the treatises on the Trinity consist of a search for a way of speaking. Is it possible to say this or that, is it wrong to utter a certain sentence? Then, after making sure of the truth by faith, reasoning continues on the basis of the terms chosen. What is sought is an understanding of what is believed.

#### The Theology of the Relationships

In his De Trinitate, then, Augustine takes biblical texts as his point of departure and shows that they disprove the Arian construction (Books I to IV). Then he goes on to consider the problem if an intellectually valid agreement between unity and diversity (Book V). It is necessary, but at the same time sufficient, to distinguish between absolute and relative terms. The terms 'Father', 'Son' and 'Holy Spirit' distinguish the Persons, and they are 'relative' terms, that is, terms of relationship, expressing an *ad aliquid*. Relative *dicuntur ad in vicem*, they affirm the Persons by opposing one to the other.

Augustine says what the Greek Fathers so often said -- the Son is not the Father and the Father is not the Son, but the Father has never been without the Son; one term implies the other. But this 'relative' or 'relational' diversity can exist and does in fact exist within the same substance or, as Augustine preferred to say, 'essence'.

The absolute terms point, on the other hand, to the one substance that is common to all the Persons. 'Good' and 'all-powerful' are such absolute terms. They apply to each of the Persons without diversifying or multiplying the substance -- the Father is God; he is also good and he is all-powerful; he is also Creator. The Son is also all this, and so is the Holy Spirit. This does not, however, make three gods or three creators. The Father, the Son and the Spirit are each one Person, and any person affirms himself for himself: *ad se dicitur* (not *ad aliud*) (De Trin, VII, 11).

If, however, I search for how or of what it is made, I find inevitably that it consists of a relational opposition -- relative *dicitur*, that is, the Son exists by his relationship with the Father and therefore by a relationship of origin or procession. The Persons of the Trinity are therefore, according to the aspect by which they are considered, both relational and absolute.

As I. Chevalier pointed out, 'the substance of the Father comes from his being God, not from his being Father; his property as Father, on the other hand, comes from his being in relationship (*ad Filium*). Hence the identity of substance, despite the plurality of relationships; hence also the reality of the relationships which would not exist without that substance. (5) Augustine did not know or use the term, but he had the fundamental idea of what Thomas Aquinas later called a 'subsistent relationship'. (6)

In the same way, even before Thomas, he also expressed the fact that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit were one with regard to each other: *alius, but non aliud*; each was a different subject, but not of a different substance. (7) This had already been said by Gregory Nazianzen. (8)

It is worth noting in this context that the Greek Fathers recognized the distinction between the hypostases in terms of their relationships, or rather their characterization by correlative terms. In his treatise against Eunomius, for example, Basil accused the latter of translating the relative diversity between the Father and the Son into a diversity of substance.(9) Gregory of Nyssa followed his brother Basil in his defense of the unity of nature and repeated what Basil had said, namely that the words 'Father' and 'Son' are relative terms.(10) In the same way, Gregory Nazianzen stated that 'Father' and 'Son' were names not only of a relationship, but of a relationship of origin.(11) Augustine only knew of this after 417.

To the Cappadocian Fathers, we can also add Maximus the Confessor (+662): 'The name "Father" is neither a name of essence nor a name of energy. It is a name of a relationship and it tells us how the Father is with regard to the Son and how the Son is with regard to the Father.' (12)

In his study of the possible dependence of Augustine on the Greek Fathers, in which he stressed their real agreement in this whole question of relationships, (13) I. Chevalier also noticed certain important differences and commented on them:

The two terms (*schesis*, *oikeiosis*) which Basil uses to characterize the divine begetting do not represent for him the same hierarchy of ideas that they do for Augustine and the Scholastic theologians. For the Greek doctor, what was in question was the community of nature which exists between a father and a son as a result of begetting. It is this relationship of origin as the only cause of difference between the Father and the Son which, far from destroying their identity, confirms it and explains it.

But Basil does not mean to say that, because the unity and identity of the essence of God are presupposed, the immanent begetting can only result in a distinction of relationships. His point of departure is the relationship established by this begetting, and from this he ends up by way of the relationship with the community of nature, whereas Thomas Aquinas, for example, takes the simplicity of God as his point of departure and goes on from that to purely relative terms of procession. This last point of view is also that of Augustine.

Although we must take care not to exaggerate it, and above all not to build it up into a system characteristic of 'the Latin mind', we cannot ignore this difference. The part played by the idea of relationship is somewhat changed in it. Basil notes these relationships, but, as it were, granted their divine subjects and above all their source, the begetting *ex ipsa natura* and the procession, he deduces from these the unity of the divine essence. Augustine notes the divine identity and then, since the processions have been revealed, deduces from these the relationships. What we have, then, are the same truths seen from different points of view. There is, surely, nothing surprising in this!

In the case of the Greeks, however, the result is that the idea of relationship is presented in a more realistic and, it could be said, more vital form. It is important to emphasize that the *schesis* is not seen from a static point of view, that is, as a constitutive principle of the divine hypostasis. This idea is seen rather as a means of expressing the mystery of the divine life, those immanent processions from the one and the return to that one-principle from which those modes of subsistence which are the divine Persons, whose whole reason for existing is to be directed towards each other and who safeguard the unity of the divine essence, eternally come and circulate within each other.

These two points of view still come to the same conclusion, namely that the three divine hypostases are distinguished by their properties and the latter are distinguished by differences in origin, which are oppositions of relationship within an essential identity. 'Between the three, everything is identical, apart from the relationship of origin.' (14)

Olivier du Roy has expressed the difference between Augustine and the Greeks in an even more radical way. (15) T. de Regnon tirelessly repeated his own argument, namely that, whereas the Greeks took the Persons as their first data and then showed that they were consubstantial in their

unity of nature on the basis of the 'monarchy' of the Father, Augustine and the Latin Fathers took the unity and unicity of 'God' as their starting-point and from that unity of the sovereign divine Being went on to affirm the plurality of the Persons.

It cannot be denied that there is an element of truth in what de Regnon maintained, but close examination reveals the emptiness of his formula that the Greeks saw the Persons in recto and the unity of the divine essence in obliquo, whereas the Latins considered the unity in recto and the Persons in obliquo.

Du Roy does not deny the validity of de Regnon's insight, but points to another origin of difference in the case of Augustine, who undoubtedly had a powerful influence on later Latin theology. Augustine discovered the Trinity in the works of the Neo-Platonists before he discovered the incarnation in the letters of Paul. His approach was not purely theoretical. It was rather the beginning of a very deep existential conversion.

As a priest and bishop, dedicated to meditating on the Scriptures and to studying and analyzing them with the aim of defending the Christian faith, Augustine kept at heart to his original direction, which differed from that of the Greek Fathers, who spoke of a Tri-unity connected with its economic revelation. (16)

Augustine, on the other hand, was fundamentally concerned with a Deus-Trinitas thought of in a static manner, independently of the incarnation and the economy of salvation. Du Roy therefore says: 'Augustine's special contribution to Western theology consists of this representation of God who is one in his essence and who deploys the Trinity of his inner relationships in the knowledge and love of himself. This was the logical conclusion of a Neo-Platonism applied to a deep reflection about faith before being converted.' (17)

It is quite certain that Arianism made Christian thinkers apply their minds to a different set of considerations. Before Arianism emerged, the Trinity was seen in its revelation and its economic commitment, at the risk of inclining towards subordinationism. Arianism and Nicaea turned their thoughts towards the unity and consubstantiality of the three Persons.

In the case of Augustine, this tendency, which was justified by the persistent influence of Arianism, may have been inherited from and reinforced by his Neo-Platonic past and his own deeper existential approach. Even his reflection about the 'missions' of the Word and the Spirit did not improve the chances that he might consider the economy. (18) He was somewhat hampered by the question of theophanies, which the Arians used very effectively, and he therefore turned to the visible missions of the Word and the Spirit and then to the invisible missions, describing them theologically, on the one hand as a value of manifestation and knowledge and, on the other, by means of their connection with the processions.

Even Hilary and Ambrose, whose works Augustine had read, went back from the temporal to the eternal procession. Augustine said: 'Sends, the One who begets; sent is the One who is begotten' (De Trin. IV, 20, 28). The missions reveal a divine Person in his eternal origin. According to Augustine, 'As for the Son to be born is to be from the Father, so for the Son to be sent is to be known in his origin from the Father. In the same way, as for the Holy Spirit to be the gift of God is to proceed from the Father, so to be sent is to be known in his procession from the Father. What is more, we cannot deny that the Spirit also proceeds from the Son... I cannot see what he could otherwise have meant when, breathing on the faces of the disciples, the Lord declared: " Receive the Holy Spirit' (Jn 20:20). (19)

Augustine's thoughts about the theophanies in the first place and then about the divine missions were guided on the one hand by the affirmation of the unity and consubstantiality of God and, on the other, by his related desire to deepen and intensify the image of the Deus-Trinitas in the souls of believers. The soul is more God's image when, because of the knowledge that the Word communicates to it and the love that the Spirit places in it, it makes present the resemblance to the one of whom it is the image. The missions make possible an increase in faith and love. (20)

This theory of the relationships which make the Persons different within the substance or essence without dividing the latter is simple, grand and satisfactory. Nonetheless it does involve a difficulty in characterizing the Holy Spirit. 'Father' and 'Son' are correlative, terms which comprise an opposition in a reciprocal relationship.

If, however, the Spirit is the Spirit of the Father and the Son, as Scripture testifies, how does he affirm two Persons by a reciprocal relational opposition? What correlative term has the Spirit from which he proceeds and which points to a hypostasis? From Photius onwards, the Orthodox have continued to stress this difficulty in opposition to the Filioque.

But on this view, which is based exclusively on the terms of Jn 15:26, the theory of relationships does not fit easily, since, if the Spirit is in a relationship of procession only with the Father, he must be his Son. How, in that case, can he be distinguished from the monogenous one? (21)

Augustine was aware of this difficulty. In his reply to it, he made use of his theology of the Holy Spirit in which he attributed the personal title of Gift to the latter. I shall set out this theology briefly here, since it seems to me to be true and very profound. Augustine notes that 'Spirit' (holy Spirit) can be applied either to the Father or to the Son or can point to the third Person. He has this to say about the third Person:

There is no need for anxiety (after this remark) about the absence, it would seem, of a term that corresponds to him and points to his correlative. We speak of the servant of the master or of the master of the servant, of the son of the father or of the father of the son, since these terms are correlative, but here we cannot speak in that way. We speak of the Holy Spirit of the Father we do not speak in the reverse sense of the Father of the Holy Spirit; if we did, the Holy Spirit would be taken to be his son. In the same way, we speak of the Holy Spirit of the Son, but not of the Son of the Holy Spirit, since, in that case, the Holy Spirit would be seen as his father.

In many relatives, it is not possible to find a term that expresses the reciprocal connection between the relative realities. For example, is there a term that is more manifestly relative than 'pledge' (pignus)? (22) A pledge clearly refers to the thing of which it is the pledge (23) and a pledge is always a pledge of something. If we speak of the pledge or guarantee of the Father and the Son (2 Cor 5:5; Eph 1: 14), can we speak in the reverse sense of the Father and the Son of the pledge? At least, when we speak of the gift of the Father and the Son, we obviously cannot speak of the Father and the Son of the gift. In order to have a reciprocal correspondence in this case, we must speak of the gift of the giver or the giver of the gift. In this latter case, then, it has proved possible to find a term that is in use, in the other case, not. (24)

It is true that the Father and the Son are not brought together in Scripture under the same title of giver, but Scripture does speak of the mission or sending of the Spirit by the Father and by the Son. It is on that basis that it is possible to call the Spirit 'Gift' -- Augustine always quotes Acts 8:20, also Rom 5:5 and Jn 4:7 -- and both the Father and the Son 'givers'. It is therefore on the basis of the economy that Augustine constructs his theology of the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son (see note 19), that is, not as 'Father' and as 'Son,' but as 'giver'. I have already said that I think that this theology is very profound. It is also Christian. But it does not, of course, satisfy the Orthodox, who have a different understanding of the Trinity and its homogeneity.

#### The Filioque

This teaching did not originate with Augustine. It had already been expounded in one form or another by Tertullian, Hilary, Marius Victorinus and Ambrose. Augustine deals with this question only in his *De Trinitate*.

We have to bear in mind that he borrowed a great deal from his commentary on St John and that it is difficult to date with certainty the composition of any particular book in his great work. To begin with, he does no more than simply affirm that the Spirit is the Spirit of the Father and the

Son (De Trin. I, 4, 7; 5, 8; 8, 18). His point of departure is the fact that the Spirit is said to be both Spirit of the Father (Mt 10:28; Jn 15:26) and Spirit of the Son (Gal 4:6; Jn 14:26; 20:22; Lk 6:19; cf. Rom 8:15). The Spirit, then, is common to both.

Thus, if the Spirit is said by Scripture to proceed from the Father (Jn 15:26), it cannot be denied that he also proceeds from the Son (De Trin. IV, 20,29; V, 11, 12; 14,15). The Son, however, has this faculty of being the co-principle of the Spirit entirely from the Father. Augustine stresses this fact very forcibly, either by using his term *principaliter* (25) or in formulae which could be taken to mean a *Patre solo*. (26) Whichever way he chooses, it is the equivalent of a *per Filium*.

The Spirit, then, is from the Father and the Son. Augustine reflects about this datum, often within the context of his ordinary preoccupations, such as the need to answer certain questions, to reply to the Donatists, or to throw light on the spiritual life of believers and their life in the Church. He says, for example:

'Scripture enables us to know in the Father the principle, *auctoritas*, in the Son being begotten and born, *nativitas*, and in the Spirit the union of the Father and the Son, *Patris Filiique communitas*... The society of the unity of the Church of God, outside of which there is no remission of sins, is in a sense the work of the Holy Spirit, with, of course, the cooperation of the Father and the Son, because the Holy Spirit himself is in a sense the society of the Father and Son.

The Father is not possessed in common as Father by the Son and the Holy Spirit, because he is not the Father of the two. The Son is not possessed in common as Son by the Father and the Holy Spirit, because he is not the Son of the two. But the Holy Spirit is possessed in common by the Father and the Son, because he is the one Spirit of the two.' (27)

Augustine was naturally loving and always gave priority to charity. As a pastor and teacher living in the midst of Donatists, he elaborated an ecclesiology at two levels, that of the sacramentum and that of *unitas-charitas-Columba*, in which the Spirit was the principle of life, unity and effectiveness to save. Even in his early writings, he called the Spirit *charitas*. (28) This idea emerges from the first evidence of his interest in a theology of the Holy Spirit. It can be found, for example, in his preaching and his commentaries on Scripture. (29) It is clearly present in De Trin. VI, 5, 7. Augustine concludes: 'They are three, the one loving the one who has his being from him, the other loving the one from whom he has his being, and that love itself.'

He also showed that, in God, that *charitas* is substantial, because 'God is charity' (1 Jn 4:16). This gives rise to a question: the Father is charity, the Son is also charity, and the *Deus-Trinitas* is also charity. Since it is substantial, then, how is it peculiar to the Spirit and characteristic of his Person? This question is not answered until the last book of the treatise (XV, 17, 27ff.).

The answer is first of all related to the economy -- it is the Spirit who gives us charity (XV, 17, 31 to 19, 35) -- and then the answer is given at the intra-divine level (XV, 19, 36ff.), the Spirit being the substantial communion of the Father and the Son, *communio amborum*, because *communes ambobus*. Being common to the Father and the Son, he receives as his own the names that are common to both of them (XV, 19, 37).

Before concluding his treatise on the Trinity with a humble prayer, Augustine replies to the following difficulty: 'If the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, why does the Son say: the Spirit proceeds from the Father (Jn 15:26)?' In answering this question, he repeats the reply that he had already given a little earlier in his commentary In Ioan. ev. XCIX, 8-9, namely that the Father communicates to the Son all that he is, apart from his being Father. Thus, all that the Son has comes from the Father and is from the Father.

This reminds us inevitably of the *principaliter* discussed above. Just as he said: 'My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me' (Jn 7:16), when he said 'the Spirit proceeds from the Father' the Son did not mean: 'He does not proceed from me'. There are therefore good reasons to believe that the Spirit also proceeds from the Son. It is clear, however, that the Orthodox could not declare themselves satisfied with this.

## A Note on Augustine's Theology of the Trinity and the Eastern Tradition

In anticipation of a conclusion which I shall be in a better position to maintain at the end, when the situation has been fully examined, I can say now that what we have here are two theological constructions of the same mystery, each of which has an inner consistency, but a different point of departure.

Augustine's aim was to guarantee the perfect consubstantiality of the three Persons. He made sure of this by making the distinction between them consist in the relationship which opposes them correlatively to each other and which is a relationship of procession. The relationship between the Father and the Son does not give rise to any questions -- it is clear, and our own experience provides a striking analogy.

The Spirit is distinguished relationally from the two in the unity of the divine essence only by proceeding from the two as their common Spirit. If he did not proceed from the Son, he would not be distinguished from him by that relationship which safeguards the divine equality and consubstantiality. As H. B. Swete, who, as a historian, was not disposed to speculate, said: 'the Western Filioque, as Augustine states it, is almost a necessary inference from the Homoousion'. (30)

An initial difference, not to say difficulty, comes from the vocabulary. The same Latin verb, *procedere* -- although Augustine also says *exire* (*De Trin.* V, 14, 15) -- is used to translate the *proeimi* or the *erchomai* of Jn 8:42 and the *ekporeuomai* of Jn 15:26, although the Greeks make a distinction between these terms in that the second, which is reserved for the 'procession' of the Holy Spirit, refers to the Father as the original source.

From the time of Gregory Nazianzen -- who did not give the matter any polemical emphasis -- the Greeks have on many occasions remarked that the Latin lacks the subtlety of the Greek. In theological Latin, the word 'procession', means the fact of coming from another, in the more general sense. It therefore includes the sense of the Greek *ekporeusis*, but does not express the shade of meaning given to this word as a procession from an original and absolute principle.

The Greeks thought of and justified consubstantiality in terms of the monarchy of the Father, (31) the perichoresis and the Trinitarian character of all the relationships. In itself, the monarchy of the Father is not opposed to the Spirit's also deriving from the Son. This is clear from the various images that we have previously considered: the images of the arm, the hand and the finger (*Didymus*), the root, the branch and the fruit (*John Damascene*) and the source, the river and the water, as well as others.

All these images illustrate a theology of the procession of the Spirit from the Father through the Son. It has to be recognized, however, that the Latin vocabulary fails to express the value that the Greeks rightly place on the *ekporeuetai* of Jn 15:26. Having said that, we can also say with Pusey in the nineteenth century that we in the West also condemn the heresy for which we have been criticized since the time of Photius, because the real meaning of the Filioque is quite different.

As we have already seen, the Greek Fathers were familiar with the category 'relationship'. This applies particularly to Gregory the Theologian. The concept, however, plays only an occasional part in their writings, (32) whereas, in the work of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, it helps to justify the diversity of the hypostases in the unity of substance. The Greeks appeal to the particular character of each hypostasis as different from that of another. (33) They do this within a theological climate that is more apophatic than that of the Latins, although these too do not lack the apophatic sense. (34)

The idea of the Holy Spirit as communion between the Father and the Son is exceptional in the East. In the patristic period, it is only to be found in the writings of Epiphanius of Salamis. (35) Gregory Palamas was, however, also familiar with it and said, for example: 'The Spirit of the

Word is like a love (eros) of the Father for the mysteriously begotten Word, and it is the same love that the beloved Word and Son of the Father has for the one who begot him. That love comes from the Father at the same time as it is with the Son and it naturally rests on the Son,' (36)

We should not therefore be surprised to find Sergey Bulgakov writing in this century: 'if God, in the Holy Trinity, is Love, then the Holy Spirit is Love of that love'. (37) No more surprising is the profound comment of Paul Evdokimov on the Person in the center of the Andrei Rublev's wonderful icon; the Holy Spirit, he says, 'is in the middle of the Father and the Son. He is the one who brings about the communion between the two. He is the communion, the love between the Father and the Son. That is clearly shown by the remarkable fact that the movement comes from him. It is in his breath that the Father moves into the Son, that the Son receives his Father and that the word resounds.' (38)

These pieces of evidence are not sufficient, of course, to form a theological tradition, but they do create a link and point to an openness. 'The walls of separation do not reach as high as heaven!'

#### The Images of the Trinity (39)

Augustine continued, in Books VIII to XV of his *De Trinitate*, to look for an understanding of what Christians believed and he did this on the basis of the images of the Triad that could be found in the human spirit and its activity. It was, for him, certainly not a question of deducing a Trinity of Persons philosophically from the structure of man's spirit, as Hegel, Gunther and perhaps also Gioberti have claimed to do.

For Augustine, it was a search in faith, one which becomes deeper by an existential conversion to be conformed once again to the image of God by thinking of him and loving him. (The stages are: *credere Deo, credere Deum, credere in Deum, credendo in Deum ire.*) Augustine therefore analysed a series of triads, moving from more external ones to more intimate ones and from simple psychological analysis to an expression of supernatural experience. The following summary has been provided by Fulbert Cayre (*Bibl. August. 16, p. 587*):

1. *amans, amatus, amor* (*De Trin. VIII, 10, 14; cf. IX, 2, 2*);
2. *mens, notitia, amor* (*IX, 3, 3*);
3. *memoria, intelligentia, voluntas* (*X, 11, 7*);
4. *res (visa), visio (exterior), intentio* (*XI, 2, 2*);
5. *memoria (sensibilis), visio (interior), volitio* (*XI, 3, 6-9*);
6. *memoria (intellectus), scientia, voluntas* (*XII, 15, 25*);
7. *scientia (fidei), cogitatio, amor* (*XIII, 20,,26*);
8. *memoria Dei, intelligentia Dei, amor Dei* (*XIV, 12, 15*).

A little later, Cayre observes, Augustine wrote his *De Civitate Dei* and, in Book XI, 24-28 of this work there are six similar triads. (40) Each time and in related terms, Augustine finds in the structure of the soul (see A. Gardeil, note 39 below) and in the way in which it is supernaturally actualized an image of the Holy Triad: three in the unity of the same substance; one stable consciousness of self, one act of knowledge and one movement of love.

To make God, the Christian God, present in these three aspects is to experience a conversion and restore the image. (41) It is also being able to perceive how the manifestations of the Persons in the economy and the three whom we confess in the baptismal formula are one inseparable Trinity.(42) In this way, the personalization and the consubstantial unity of the *Deus-Trinitas* are united.

In this case too, the way followed by Augustine has hardly any parallel in the East, apart from the theme of man's re-formation in the image and likeness of God. (43) In this case too, however, there is once again a parallel in the East in the work of Gregory Palamas, who drew attention to the analogy of the Holy Triad in the soul, with the nous, the logos and the eros. (44) There can be little doubt that Gregory had read Maximus Planudes' translation of Augustine.

Augustine was very conscious of the distance separating the image from the model. Both his Sermo 52 and Book XV of his De Trinitate end with his expressing his feeling of inadequacy and with an appeal to prayer, thanks to which God may himself give man an experience and a knowledge of his mystery. Again and again Augustine expresses his awareness of the fact that the similitudes are dissimilar. (45)

In the same Book XV, Augustine looks back at what he has already written and expresses the feeling that he has spoken more about the Father and the Word than about the Holy Spirit. He therefore resolves to devote several chapters (17-20 and 26-27) to the latter. I too have the feeling that I have discussed Augustine's Trinitarian theology more than his pneumatology. One is, of course, contained within the other. As there are so many excellent texts, several of which I have quoted in Volume II of this work, I shall only consider two groups.

A.-M. La Bonnardiere noted that 'from 387 to 429, Augustine quoted at least 201 times the verse of St Paul: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Rom 5:5). His quotations of this verse were relatively rare until 411 (51 in all), but they became very frequent in the decade 411-421, which was the period in which he was engaged in controversy with the Pelagians over the question of grace, and they continued afterwards in his works of controversy with Julian of Eclanum.' (46)

In fact the criticism which the Bishop of Hippo made of the Bishop of Eclanum was as follows: 'You would like to make the grace of Christ consist in his example and not in his life. You say that man is made righteous by imitating him, and not by the help of the Holy Spirit who leads him to imitate him, that Spirit whom he has poured out so abundantly on his own.' (47) The Spirit is the principle of all life according to the grace that Augustine continued throughout his Christian life to preach, discuss and further.

For the edification of his people and in his struggle against the Donatists, Augustine developed and defined more precisely the part played by the Spirit in the Church. There are dozens of texts to be found in his works, each one more magnificent than the last. There are, for example, those in which he shows how the Spirit brings about in the mystical Body of Christ what the soul brings about in our body. S. Tromp listed 83 of these texts, either as extracts or as references. (48)

There is also the ecclesiology that Augustine developed in his controversy with the Donatists at two levels, that of the sacramentum, that is, the signs and institutions that the Donatists had in common with the Catholics, and that of the res, that is, the spiritual fruit that saves, which the Donatists did not have, the principle of which is the Holy Spirit. (49) The Spirit, for Augustine, was not only the principle of unity. He was also the principle of that catholicity which consists of the variety of gifts in the communion of the same Body. (50).

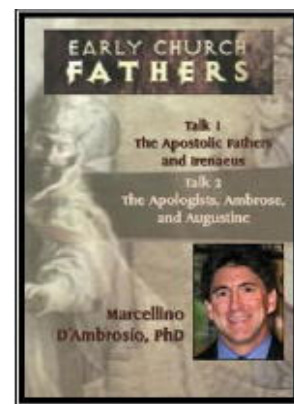
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### NOTES

1. See the (Euvres de S. Augustin, 15: La Trinite, Fr. tr. M. Mellet and T. Camelot, with an introduction by E. Hendrikx; 16, Fr. tr. P. Agaesse, with notes by J. Moingt (Paris, 1955); a full bibliography of works published up to that date will be found in these volumes which give column references to PL 42. Apart from the works listed in note 29 on Volume I, p. 83, and articles mentioned below, see O. du Roy, L'intelligence de la foi en la Trinite selon S. Augustin. Genese de sa theologie trinitaire jusqu'en 391 (Paris, 1966); J. Verhees, 'Die Bedeutung des Geistes im Leben des Menschen nach Augustinus friihester Pneumatologie', Zeitschrift ftr Kirchengeschichte, 88 (1977), 161-189. I consider principally, but not exclusively, the De Trinitate in this section of my book. Arranged in terms and themes, a mass of other Augustinian texts dealing with the Holy Spirit will be found in the articles of F. Cavallera and these, however material they are, or rather, precisely because they are material, can be of great use in this respect: 'La doctrine de S. Augustin sur l'Esprit Saint A propos du "De Trinitate"', RTAM, 2 (1930), 365-387; 3 (1931), 5-19.
2. I. Chevalier has concluded from a careful study: 'it is certain that Augustine read Athanasius', Basil's and Gregory Nazianzen's works on the Trinity as well as Epiphanius' Recapitulation, but it is probable, or simply possible, that he also knew the latter's Panarion and Ancoratus and the two works on the Trinity by Didymus the Blind': S. Augustin et la pensee grecque. Les relations trinitaires (Fribourg, 1940), p. 160.
3. De Trin. V, 3, 4; 6, 7; VI, 1, 1; see also Contra sermonem arianorum (418-419); Collatio cum Maximino and Contra Maximinum.
4. In Ioan. ev. 39; De Civ. Dei XI, 10; De Trin. I, 2,4; 3,5; 5,8; VI, 6, 8; VIII, proem.; XV, 3, 5; Enarr. in Ps. 68; Ep. 170, 238.
5. I. Chevalier, op. cit. (note 2), p. 63, commenting on the following text, which resists translation: 'Quidquid est Pater quod Deus est, hoc Filius, hoc Spiritus Sanctus. Cum autem Pater est, non illud est quod est, Pater enim non ad se, sed ad Filium dicitur: ad se autem Deus dicitur. itaque eo quod Deus est, hoc ipso substantia est ... secundum substantiam tibi dixi hoc esse Filium quod Pater est, non secundum id quod ad aliud dicitur (Enarr. in Ps. 68, 5; PL 36, 845): 'All that the Father is in that he is God, the Son is, the Holy Spirit is. But when one takes him as Father, he is not what he is thus, but he is taken in his relationship to the Son. It is in his being in itself that he is called God. Thus, from the fact that he is God, he is substance ... and it is according to the substance that I have said that the Son is what the Father is, not according to what he is described in relationship to another (another thing).'
6. Thomas Aquinas, De Pot. q. 9, a. 1 and 2; ST Ia, q. 29, a. 4. It is clearly because of his Thomist training that I. Chevalier, op. cit., p. 76, spoke of 'a double character of relationships character of inhering in, expressing the need of a subject in order to exist at all, and a character that is specific (ad), expressing an entering into a relationship with another. But this is certainly Augustine's idea.
7. Augustine, De anima et eius origine, II, 5 (PL 44, 509); see the references in I. Chevalier, op. cit. (note 2), p. 62.

8. Gregory Nazianzen, Orat. 31 (PG 36, 141ff.); the Son is not the Father, but he is what the Father is. The Holy Spirit is not the Son, but he is what the Son is.
9. Basil, PG 29, 588C-589A; Fr. tr. in I. Chevalier, op. cit. (note 2), p.131.
10. See Gregory of Nyssa, Quod non sint tres dii (PG 45, 133C) and other references in I. Chevalier, op. cit., p. 103; see also T. de Regnon, Etudes de theologie positive sur la Sainte Trinite, I (Paris, 1892), pp. 77-78.
11. See Gregory Nazianzen, Orat. 29 (PG 36,96); 31 (PG 36,140C and 141C); I. Chevalier, op. cit., pp. 146-147; de Regnon, op. cit., I, pp. 76-77.
12. Maximus, Ambigua 26 (PG 91, 1265C-D).
13. Chevalier goes so far as to say, op. cit. (note 2), p. 174: 'The famous axiom "In God all is one, except where there is an opposition of relationship" is Greek as much as Latin in all its parts. Although it is not stated in exactly the same form and although it does not play precisely the same part as it does in Augustine, it is familiar to both. The Greek doctors always taught that the persons are distinguished by their properties, but that those properties should be seen as mutual relationships. They rejected as absurd the fact that they might be accidents. It is no more than a single step from this to the synthesis, subsistent relationship, but they did not make that step.'
14. Gregory Nazianzen, Orat. 34 (PG 36,253A); 20 (PG 35, 1073A); 31 (PG 36,165B); 41 (PG 36, 441C); quoted in I. Chevalier, op. cit., pp. 168-169.
15. O. du Roy, in his difficult, but very suggestive thesis, op. cit. (note 1).
16. O. du Roy adopted an attitude that was opposite to that of A. Malet in *Personne et Amour dans la theologie trinitaire de S. Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris, 1956); Malet's claims are taken up by M.-J. Le Guillou in *Istina*, 17 (1972), 457-464, and *Le Mystere du Pere* (Paris, 1973). The Cappadocians apparently abandoned the ante-Nicene view of the economy, according to Le Guillou, and taught a primacy of essence. G. Lafont, *Peut-on connaitre Dieu en Jesus-Christ?* (Paris, 1969), pp. 67ff., and L. Scheffczyk, *Mysterium Salutis*, V (Fr. tr.; Paris, 1970), pp. 252, 261, have a similar attitude.
17. O. du Roy, op. cit. (note 1), p. 458.
18. Augustine discusses the 'missions' in *De Trin.* II, 5, 7-10; IV, 18, 24 to 20, 29; see also I, 22, 25; 11, 7, 12-13; 12, 22; III, proem. 3 and 1, 4. See also J.-L. Maier's monograph, *Les Missions divines selon S. Augustin* (Paradosis, XVI) (Fribourg, 1960).
19. *De Trin.* IV, 20, 29. This link between the temporal mission and the eternal procession of the Spirit, with reference to the text of *Jn* 20:22, can also be found in *De Trin.* XV, 26, 45; *De Gen. ad litt.* 10, 5; *De Civ. Dei*, XIII, 24; *In Ioan. ev.* XCIX, 7 and CXXI, 4; *Contra Maxim.* 11, 14, 1; see Cavallera, op. cit. (note 1) (1931), 17; Maier, op. cit. (note 18), p. 152. Only the Father is not sent 'quoniam solus non habet auctorem a quo genitus sit vel a quo procedat': *Contra serm. arian.* 4, 4 (PL 42, 686).
20. For faith, *De Trin.* IV, 20, 28; for charity, *In Ioan. ev.* LXXIV, 3.
21. In the colloquium that took place in 1950 between Orthodox and Catholic Christians, S. Verkhovsky reaffirmed that 'the Son and the Spirit as hypostases coming from the Father are sufficiently distinguished, so that there is no need to affirm an opposition of relationship between them'. H. Dondaine's response to this was: 'The Son is distinguished from the Father because he is a hypostasis coming from the Father. In the same way, the Holy Spirit is distinguished from the Father. How does that distinguish the Son from the Holy Spirit?': see *Russie et Chritienti* (1950), 223.
22. 'Pledge' or 'guarantee' is one of the names for the Holy Spirit in the New Testament: 'You ... were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is the guarantee (arrabon) of our inheritance' (*Eph* 1: 14). In *2 Cor* 1: 22 and 5:5, arrabon tou Pneumatos, the genitive is a genitive of apposition: see H. Behm, 'arraban', TDNT, I, P. 475; cf. *Rom* 8:23, aparche tou Pneumatos. Augustine's texts on pignus have been gathered together by F. Cavallera, op. cit. (note 1) (1930), 370.
23. 'Ad id quippe refertur cuius est pignus'; is it not possible and even necessary to translate this as 'a pledge refers to that from which it comes as a pledge (to the being of which it is the pledge)'? Otherwise the sentence says the same thing twice.
24. *De Trin.* V, 12, 13. 1. Chevalier said, for example (and I give in brackets what he placed in notes): 'By the character of his procession, which is holiness, love or gift, the Holy Spirit on the one hand ensures the unity of spirit of the Father and the Son and, on the other hand, the same

Holy Spirit is distinguished from each of them (De Trin. VI, 5, 7; XV, 17-20). If there is a relative meaning, it is that he takes his origin from the Father and the Son. He proceeds as a Gift and the latter are a single Giver. The Giver and the Gift are, then, essentially relative (V, 14, 15; 15, 16; 16, 17). That Gift and that giving are, like the Giver, et