“GIVE ME UNDERSTANDING, THAT I MAY LEARN YOUR COMMANDMENTS”
THE GRACE OF THE LAW
A STUDY OF AUGUSTINE’S *ENARRATIO IN PSALMUM* 118

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate School
of the University of Notre Dame
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Edoth M. Mukasa

____________________

Brian E. Daley, Director

Graduate Program in Theology
Notre Dame, Indiana
April, 2014
From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.
The Law indeed was given through Moses.
Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

(Jn 1:16-17)

Lex ergo data est ut gratia quaeretur; gratia data est ut lex impleretur.

(De spiritu et littera 19.34)
“GIVE ME UNDERSTANDING, THAT I MAY LEARN YOUR COMMANDMENTS”
THE GRACE OF THE LAW
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Abstract
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Edoth M. Mukasa

This dissertation is a study of St. Augustine’s commentary on Psalm 118 (119). One of the latest works of Augustine, *Enarratio in Psalmum* 118 can be considered as the crowning Augustine’s commentaries on the Psalter. The first part of the dissertation examines the historical and literary context in which Augustine wrote his expositions on the Psalms, to which Erasmus gave the title of *Enarrationes in Psalmos*.

The second part studies Augustine’s *Enarratio in Psalmum* 118 in the context of patristic exegesis of Psalm 118 and underscores the originality of Augustine’s exegesis, the date and audience of the commentary, and the literary and theological structure of the exposition as a whole. In particular, the study highlights the use of the notion of the *Totus Christus*, through which Augustine develops the description of the Church as a people walking on the way of the Lord that is Christ, the end of law. Augustine’s commentary on this Psalm of the law thus becomes the *narratio* of a Church graced with God’s guidance and mercy in Christ.
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<td>De cistate Dei</td>
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<tr>
<td>De doctr.</td>
<td>De doctrina christiana</td>
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<tr>
<td>De Spir. et litt.</td>
<td>De Spiritu et littera</td>
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<tr>
<td>De Trin.</td>
<td>De Trinitate</td>
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<td>En. Ps.</td>
<td>Enarrationes in Psalmos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Epist.</td>
<td>Epistula(ε)</td>
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<td>Gen. ad litt.</td>
<td>De Genesi ad litteram</td>
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<td>In Epist. Ioan.</td>
<td>In epistulam Ioannis ad Parthos</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Ioan.</td>
<td>In Ioannis evangielium tractatus</td>
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#### Series, Periodicals, Encyclopedia, Dictionaries, and Miscellanea

<p>| AB                            | Anchor Bible                   |
| AcOr                         | Acta Orientalia                |
| AEPHE.R                      | Annuaire de l’École Pratique des Hautes Études. Section des Sciences Religieuses |
| AJP                          | American Journal of Philology  |
| ASE                          | Annali di storia dell’esegesi  |
| AugthA                       | Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia |
| Aug                          | Augustinianum                  |
| AugL                         | Augustinus-Lexikon             |
| AugSt                        | Augustinian Studies            |
| BA                           | Bibliothèque augustinienne     |
| BETL                         | Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensum |
| BLE                          | Bulletin de litterature ecclésiasticque |
| BTT                          | Bible de tous les temps        |
| CBLa                         | Collectanea Biblica Latina     |
| CBQ                          | Catholic Biblical Quaterly    |
| CCG                          | Corpus Christianorum. Series Graeca |
| CCL                          | Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina |
| CH                           | Church History                 |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<td>CSCO</td>
<td>Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSEL</td>
<td>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBS</td>
<td>Dictionnaire de la Bible. Supplément</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSS</td>
<td>Dead Sea Scrolls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAA</td>
<td>Études augustiniennes. Série Antiquité</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETL</td>
<td>Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETR</td>
<td>Études théologiques et religieuses</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTR</td>
<td>Harvard Theological Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPM</td>
<td>Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAAR</td>
<td>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAC</td>
<td>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</td>
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<td>JAC.E</td>
<td>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum. Ergäzungsband</td>
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<tr>
<td>JBL</td>
<td>Journal of Biblical Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>JECS</td>
<td>Journal of Early Christian Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JQR</td>
<td>The Jewish Quarterly Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSSR</td>
<td>Journal of the Scientific Study of Religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>JTS</td>
<td>Journal of Theological Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>LThK</td>
<td>Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche</td>
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<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Miscellanea Agostiniana</td>
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<tr>
<td>MelT</td>
<td>Melita Theologica</td>
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<td>NBA</td>
<td>Nuova Biblioteca Agostiniana</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRTh</td>
<td>Nouvelle revue théologique</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCA</td>
<td>Orientalia Christiana Analecta</td>
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<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td>Patrologia Graeca</td>
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<td>PL</td>
<td>Patrologia Latina</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAC</td>
<td>Realllexikon für Antike und Christentum</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAM</td>
<td>Revue d’ascétique et de mystique</td>
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<td>RAug</td>
<td>Revue augustinienne</td>
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<tr>
<td>RB</td>
<td>Revue biblique</td>
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<tr>
<td>RBen</td>
<td>Revue bénédictine</td>
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<td>REAug</td>
<td>Révue des études augustiniennes</td>
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<td>RechAug</td>
<td>Recherches augustiniennes (et patristiques)</td>
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<tr>
<td>RHE</td>
<td>Revue d’histoire ecclésiastique</td>
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<tr>
<td>RivB</td>
<td>Rivista biblica</td>
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<tr>
<td>RSLR</td>
<td>Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa</td>
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<td>RSR</td>
<td>Recherches de science religieuse</td>
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<td>SacEr</td>
<td>Sacris Erudiri</td>
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<td>SBLDS</td>
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<td>Studia Patristica</td>
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<tr>
<td>SVChr</td>
<td>Supplement to Vigiliae christianae</td>
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<td>ThPh</td>
<td>Theologie und Philosophie</td>
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<td>ThWNT</td>
<td>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</td>
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<td>TRE</td>
<td>Theologische Realencyklopädie</td>
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<td>TS</td>
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<td>WJT</td>
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<td>WSA</td>
<td>The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century</td>
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<td>WUNT</td>
<td>Wissenschaftlichen Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZKG</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZNW</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</td>
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Unless noted otherwise, the English translation of Augustine’s works is taken from the series The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century (WSA). References to the Psalms are made following the LXX numbering.
INTRODUCTION

The length of time Augustine devoted to the composition of the *Enarrationes in Psalmo*s throws this work into prominence. And the coherence of his reading of the Psalms as a whole is all the more remarkable because, as Erich Feldmann puts it, Augustine’s *Enarrationes in Psalmo*s constitute the “Höhepunkt der patristischen Psalmenexegese.”

This dissertation, whose subject is a study of *Enarratio in Psalmum* 118, is intended to be a contribution to the study of Augustine’s *Enarrationes in Psalmo*s. The purpose of this dissertation is to show the unique place En. Ps. 118 holds in Augustine’s overall project of commenting on the Psalter. In particular, the study will examine the categorization of En. Ps. 118, its structure and its major themes. Important among these themes is Augustine’s Christological interpretation of the law, which is referred to in the prologue as the *profunditas* of Psalm 118 and, indeed, of the entire Psalter.

The distinctive features of En. Ps. 118 have been highlighted by Charles Kannengiesser who described it as “a work that is both pastoral and scientific,” noting in particular that, “unlike most of the other *Enarrationes*, this one relies on a thorough confrontation of all Greek and Latin codices which were available in the library of

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The complex genre of En. Ps. 118, its structure, its major themes, and its emphases, all suggest that it crowns Augustine’s decades-long project of commenting on the Psalter. While most scholars agree with this assessment, none has yet provided evidence to support it. Only a detailed and careful analysis can illuminate the peculiar place of this Enarratio and highlight the specific contribution of the bishop of Hippo among the ancient commentators of Psalm 118. To the best of my knowledge, no comprehensive monograph on En. Ps. 118 has yet been published. At present, I am aware only of a few fragmentary studies.

Psalm 118 offered to Augustine a rare opportunity to deepen, complete and summarize his interpretation of the Psalms. Controversies are tamed, autobiographical elements are lacking: Augustine’s interpretation is wholly biblical and typological. The language of the commentary itself is wholly biblical. It is remarkable to notice that Augustine’s exposition on this Psalm retains its biblical structure, while depicting biblical

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3 Obviously, major studies on Augustine’s Enarrationes do have some treatment of En. Ps. 118. For such studies, see the general bibliography.


and extra biblical characters, who become, so to speak, woven in the biblical narrative and sequentia. As the last composed Enarratio, it stands as the crowning of Augustine’s exegesis on the Psalms.

Part I of the dissertation presents the literary context of Augustine’s Enarrationes in Psalms. In particular it highlights Augustine’s originality in commenting on the Psalter in comparison with earlier commentators. It assesses Erasmus’ characterization of this corpus of commentaries as ‘enarrationes’ and examines Possidius’ testimony regarding this work and scholars’ evaluations of Possidius, especially in categorizing the Enarrationes as dictated and preached expositions. Because most of the Enarrationes are made of sermons that Augustine actually delivered, an evaluation of the scholarship on their Sitz im Leben will provide an opportunity to further characterize the Enarrationes as a corpus. Finally, Part I will offer a concrete example of Augustine’s exegetical methodology in reading the Psalms as illustrated in interpretation of Psalm 4 in the Confessions.6

Building on the example taken from the Confessions, Part II will be wholly devoted to En. Ps. 118, in which Augustine blends enarratio and narratio in an original way. Indeed, En. Ps. 118 provides us with an example of exegesis in which Augustine presents the law of God, which is to be learned, to be observed, to be loved and to be prized above all treasures. As he comments on the law of God (enarratio), Augustine gives concrete examples of law-abiding figures who make up the Church (narratio). The

6 According to Sieben, Ps. 4 can be taken as a paradigm of the entire Psalter (Herman-Josef Sieben, “Der Psalter und die Bekehrung des Voces und Affectus: Zu Augustinus, Confessiones IX,4.6 und X,33,” ThPh 52 (1977): 490.
pilgrim Church, which is invited to follow the law, can rely on the examples of historical characters who have been confirmed as worthy of imitation (Paul, the martyrs, etc.) and avoid those characters who have failed to follow and obey the law (Adam, the scribes and the Pharisees, etc.).\(^7\) Naturally, such use of *narrationes* starts with Christ set as the *exemplum*, in whom “all fullness was pleased to dwell” (Col. 1:19) and in whom “are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” (Col. 2:3) so that “he might fill all things” (Eph. 4:10). Christ is thus the end of the law and, indeed, the grace of the law.\(^8\)

The use of the biblical language should not induce us to think that Augustine is only paraphrasing the biblical text. In his *Enarrationes*, Augustine gives an exposition of the life of the Church, because to speak about Scripture is to speak about the Church by means of history (*narratio*). The *narratio* is the part of the speech that sets out the facts of a case and which is used as required by the exegetical argument (*enarratio*).\(^9\)

Manlio Simonetti noted that, while the narrative element played an important role in pagan panegyrics and in the panegyrics of Christian martyrs (especially in the great Eastern orators, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus and John Chrysostom), it was not very prevalent in Augustine’s sermons, where one finds only a few references to the deeds and the death of the saints.\(^10\) Yet, as Pellegrino has shown with regard to the

\(^7\) On this, see Augustine’s use of Tyconius’ rule on the Church as a *corpus permixtum*: De doctr. 3.32.45; Epist. 53.3; En. Ps. 51.4-6; Sermo 73A; 248; 249; 251.


sermons, examples of narratio in Augustine’s preached work can be found in his paraphrases of gospel parables (to which he adds his own comments), in the biblical stories he recounts, in the passions of the martyrs, and in the examples and incidents of everyday life.

While Augustine interprets Scripture by alluding to concrete characters (Paul, Peter, martyrs, etc.), it is the Church as a body that he describes. Although the Church is made up of individuals, it is their being part and concrete witness of the Church that qualifies them as examples (typos) worth mentioning. Therefore, in Augustine’s *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, the enarratio of Scripture is blended with the narratio of concrete events in the drama of the Church as she journeys in time.

Augustine’s realistic portrayal of the Church is thus populated with concrete positive and negative exempla. In this innovative exegesis, for instance, Paul is both a biblical auctoritas and an exemplum, an archetype of the man walking in the ways (viae) of the Lord. As Martin has argued, for Augustine, the Psalms “were no longer simply historical texts, precious documents detailing ancient Israel’s relationship with God. They

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11 Sermo 73.1; 83.1; 86.16; 87.4; 115.2.

12 Sermo 32.3; 168.4; 261.1-2; 265.1; 266.3-7; 162A.2 (=Denis 19.2, in *MA* 2, 99); 270.2; 306.6.

13 Sermo 273; 277.6; 286.4; 302.8.

14 Sermo 178.8; 308.5.

15 Cf. *Contra epist. Pelagianorum* 3.19: “Apostolus et imperfectum et perfectum se dicit.” See also Sermo 153; 156.2; 165.9; 298.4; Conf. 13.24.40.
were now the songs of present Christian journeying and pilgrimage, present Christian
conversion and holiness.”

Augustine takes the whole Psalter as one book, whose mystery is expressed in
each and in every part. The soul of each Psalm is the *magnum mysterium* and the
*sacramentum* of Christ’s union with the Church. Yet he also points to the limit of this
important biblical metaphor: while human marriage is a *sacramentum*, the union between
Christ and the Church is a *magnum sacramentum*. Augustine’s commentaries
(*enarrationes*) recount (*narratio*) the mystery of the *Totus Christus*, head and body, that
is, the communion of Christ and his Church, which is rooted in the incarnation of the
Son: “The Word was made flesh and dwelled among us; to that flesh, the Church is
joined and there is made the Whole Christ, head and body.” Indeed, God’s salvific
action culminates in the mystery of incarnation in which Christ and the Church are made
present and visible in history.

In the *Enarrationes*, Augustine applies this mystery to the understanding of
Scripture because, for him, God willed to place the Incarnate Word at the center of
Scripture. Scripture is Christ-centered. Therefore, for Augustine and the early Christian

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17 Martin, “Psalmus Gratiæ,” 140.

18 Cf. In Ioan. 9.10 (CCL 36:96); En. Ps. 101.1.2; Sermo 341.1.1; 9.1; En. Ps. 8.1-5; 45.11; 67.16; 71.4;
77.2; 77.13. On *mysterium* and *sacramentum* as related to Christ and the Church in Augustine, see Charles
Couturier, “*Sacrmentum* et *mysterium* dans l’œuvre de saint Augustin,” in *Études augustiniennes* (eds.
Eph 5:32 in the *Enarrationes* include En. Ps. 10.10; 34.2.1; 37.6; 44.12; 54.3; 61.4; 71.17; 74.4; 90.2.5;
118.22.3; 118.29.9; 138.2; 138.21; 142.3; 150.2.

19 In Epist. Ioan. 1.2: “Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis; illi carni adjungitur ecclesia, et fit
Christus totus, caput et corpus.” Cf. En. Ps. 77.2; 45.11; Epist. 102.15 (CSEL 34:557).
writers, “without Christ, no commentary is possible.” Christ is the exegete who unlocks the Scriptures and opens the way to the Father (Luke 24:27; John 1:18). Yet, to speak about Christ alone is to forget the whole Christ, because Christ is always united to the Church: indeed, “no one ever hated his own flesh.” (Eph. 5:29) It is because of this privilege that only the Church, as body of Christ and as the community of people God claims as his own, has the right to articulate the revelations enshrined in both Testaments. Indeed, “to no single one of the saints is it granted to know all the judgments of God, because this is beyond the capacity of any man or woman.”

In Augustine, Christ-centered hermeneutics and Church-centered hermeneutics are one and the same. One who finds Christ in Scripture, will also find his bride, the Church. This understanding will be crucial in Augustine’s ecclesiological controversies. Those who divide the Church actually deny the very incarnation of the Word.

Furthermore, Augustine finds in the Psalms the very voice of the Totus Christus, because the prophet, “who is foretelling Christ, distributed his prophetic words in such a way that at one moment they come from the head, who is our Savior, and at another from

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22 En. Ps. 118.6.2.

23 Cf. In Ioan. 4.14; Psalmus contra Partem Donati.

24 En. Ps. 142.3; 138.21; 30.2.1.4; 37.6; 34.2.1; 61.4. See also Epist. 140.6; Sermo 129.4.
his body, which is the Church. But the Psalmist makes the two speak as one, foreseeing the great sacrament of unity, of which scripture says, *They will be two in one flesh.*”25

Fundamentally, whichever *vox* speaks in the Psalms, we hear foremost the *vox Christi.*26 Van der Meer reminds us of this, when he comments: “In every psalm and in every verse of every psalm (Augustine) thinks of Christ, and the Maurists were right in setting a vignette of David with his harp at the foot of a glorified cross over their edition of the *Enarrationes,* and putting over it the Lord’s own words, *All things must be fulfilled which are written in the Psalms concerning me.*”27 It is this Christological deep-rootedness of the Church that confers on Augustine’s ecclesiology its dramatic and sublime character.28

Michael Fiedrowicz has dedicated an excellent study to this fundamental principle as it is used in the *Enarrationes.* In his *Psalmus: Vox Totius Christi,* he documents Augustine’s consistent use of the Psalter discourses as the *vox ad Christum,* the *vox de Christo,* the *vox de ecclesiae,* the *vox Christi,* the *vox ecclesiae,* in short as the *vox totius*

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25 En. Ps. 118.22.3. For Augustine, Scripture is made of *historia* books and *prophetia* books. The Psalms belong to the *prophetia* books. See De doctr. 2.3; De civ. Dei 17.14; De Trin. 15.17. Véronique Fabre, “La Prophétie des Psaumes selon saint Augustin: A propos de Ps 1,1,” *NRT* 128 (2006):546-560.

26 En. Ps. 59.1: “Vix est ut in Psalmis inuenias uoces, nisi Christi et ecclesiae, aut Christi tantum, aut ecclesiae tantum.”


While noting the variety of literary forms in the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, Fiedrowicz identifies the principles, the method and the intention underlying virtually all of Augustine’s commentaries on the Psalms. At the heart of Fiedrowicz’s argument lies the conviction that Augustine’s hermeneutic is the demonstration of the power of God’s eternal word (*Verbum Dei*), the head of the body, as it works through and operates in the Church, the members of his body. This hermeneutic is powerfully illustrated in En. Ps. 118, where observing the law is dramatically presented as being bathed in the grace of Christ, who embodies the fullness of God’s law. In Christ, all “the ways of the Lord” find their fulfillment, so that “nothing is more direct, nothing safer, nothing speedier, nothing nobler than this way; that is why the Psalmist says he found in it such delight as he might have found in unlimited wealth.”

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29 For Michael Cameron this principle is the “hermeneutical center” of the *Enarrationes*. See Michael Cameron, “*Enarrationes in Psalmos,*” *AugthA*, 290-295, esp. 292-293.


32 En. Ps. 118.13.4.

33 En. Ps. 118.6.3; see also En. Ps. 118.3.3.
PART I

I. THE ENARRATIONES IN PSALMOS AND THEIR LITERARY CONTEXT

Augustine and his Predecessors

With a commentary covering the entire Psalter, it is almost impossible to assess the extent of Augustine’s debt towards earlier commentators. Moreover, too few substantial commentaries on the whole Psalter from the early Patristic period have survived for one to form a nuanced judgment on the issue. In the second part of this study, I shall offer my own assessment on Augustine’s dependence on earlier commentators of Ps. 118. At this stage, however, it will suffice to highlight Jerome’s criticism of Augustine’s early Enarrationes in light of the assessment of modern commentators.

The correspondence between Jerome and Augustine is remarkable for the length of its duration and the variety of its subjects. The exchange of the letters touches upon many aspects of the theology and religious atmosphere of the 4th and 5th centuries,


namely the importance of Job and Paul in theology and exegesis, an interest in the translation of the Bible from original languages (especially Hebrew), and a more positive approach toward Judaism.\(^{36}\) During this period Augustine shows particular interest in Paul’s personality and theological positions.\(^{37}\) In particular, he treats the question of the law with depth and personal commitment. It is not surprising that this period is marked by the composition of his commentaries on Paul’s epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians.\(^{38}\) In these works, one finds the major themes of the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*. As in Augustine’s commentaries on the Pauline epistles, Paul is at the heart of his exegetical investigation in the *Enarrationes* and, more than any other biblical figure, structures and shapes his thought. Often implied in a quasi-identification, Paul is used as


a polemical tool against Augustine’s perceived opponents. For instance, in his interpretation of Rom. 7, Augustine sees not only the inner conflict of the man not yet under grace, but also “the self-portrait of Paul with a divided mind uncommonly like his own.” Similarly, in the story of his teenage delinquency in stealing pears, Augustine sees the re-enactment of the story of Adam and Eve and that of every man under the power of sin.

Furthermore, Paul provides Augustine with the first elements and examples of his hermeneutic of salvation history so splendidly displayed in the City of God. Such a hermeneutic begins with the identification of two categories of people: the children of the slave woman and those of the free woman, the former born of the flesh and the latter through the promise of grace.

When the correspondence begins (386-387), Jerome is living in Bethlehem and has some undeniable advantages over Augustine. He has travelled to non-Latin territories, acquainted himself with the writings of the Greek Fathers and begun to learn

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41 Cf. Conf. 2.4.9.

42 Chadwick remarks that the title City of God was taken from the Psalms and “was chosen to offer a contrast to the Republics of Plato and Cicero, with whom parts of the work were a running combat” (Augustine, 103).

Augustine, who describes himself as “a youth in the field of Scripture,” is effusive in his praise of Jerome and clearly defers to him. More than once, the correspondence documents how highly Augustine thought of his learned correspondent, occasionally relying on his expertise.

Both Augustine and Jerome wrote in Latin. The extent to which they were able to use different sources of scripture depended on their knowledge of other languages, namely Greek and Hebrew. However, although Augustine strongly recommended to students of Scripture that they master Hebrew and Greek “in order that one may refer to the originals whenever the infinitive variety of the Latin versions occasions some doubt,” he himself never followed his own advice. According to his own admission, he had studied a little Greek, but disliked it. In contrast, Jerome was the philologist par excellence. Still, Augustine was an educated man, trained in the schools of the grammarians and rhetoricians, and not ignorant of the rules of interpretation that these disciplines supplied. As a matter of fact, the Enarrationes in Psalms demonstrate great care for the quality of the texts Augustine comments on. However, he did not regard

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45 Epist. 68.2.

46 See Epist. 28.2.1; Epist. 71, Epist. 82.2.1; Epist. 166.28; Epist. 167.1.21.


48 Conf. 1.13.1-4; see, however, C. litt. Pet. 2.38.91: “Et ego quidem graecae linguae perfaram assectus sum, et prope nihil.” As for Hebrew, Augustine seems not to have learned it. See Gen. ad litt. 1.18.36; 1.26.4.
attention to the linguistic subtleties of the texts as an end in itself. For him, the important thing was to get at the meaning of God’s word. Therefore, his basic rule of interpreting Scripture stemmed from a fundamental anti-Manichean position, that Scripture must be accepted in its entirety without addition or subtraction.\textsuperscript{49} This explains the accumulation of variant readings one finds already in Augustine’s early commentaries on Psalms 1-32.\textsuperscript{50}

Yet, when in 404/5 Jerome read Augustine’s \textit{Soliloquies} and “those little commentaries on the Psalms,” he was not impressed by what most brought the two scholars together. Instead, he expressed a harsh judgment, arguing that Augustine’s \textit{commentarioli} were at variance with “the interpretations of the ancient Greeks,” even if he was modestly emulating Jerome’s own philological work.\textsuperscript{51} As Bouvy has observed, “even Augustine’s efforts to amend the text of his Latin Psalter did not meet Jerome’s requirements.”\textsuperscript{52} With the accuracy for which he is known, Jerome then lists the Greek Fathers Augustine should have read (Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, Theodore of Heraclea, Asterius of Scythopolis, Apolinarius of Laodicea, and Didymus of Alexandria), all of whom had explained the Psalms in many volumes.

Let Your Wisdom answer me why after such great and so many commentators on the psalms you have different ideas. For, if the psalms are obscure, we have to believe that you also could be mistaken in them, but if they are clear, we believe that they could not have been mistaken about them. And in this way your

\textsuperscript{49} Cf. Sermo 12.2. In En. Ps. 43.3 Augustine declares that the OT and the NT are “diversi, sed non adversi.”

\textsuperscript{50} See the critical notes at En. Ps. 4.5; 16.14 and the Greek variants at En. Ps. 3.5; 4.6; 6.3; 7.12; 7.13; 7.14; 9.7; 16.14.

\textsuperscript{51} Epist. 72.3.5.

\textsuperscript{52} Edmond Bouvy, “Les \textit{Enarrationes} sur les Psaumes,” \textit{RAug} 3 (1903), 430. One cannot help but be curious about the fate Jerome would have reserved to En. Ps. 118, had he had it in his hands.
commentary will be superfluous on both counts, and by this rule no one will dare to speak after earlier writers, and a writer will not have the freedom to write on anything on which another author has worked.  

Jerome knew what the ideal commentary should look like. For him, if a commentary were to be “satisfactory, it should repeat and acknowledge the opinions of the many, and say, ‘some explain this passage in this way, others interpret it in that: these try to support their sense and understanding of it by these proofs and by this reasoning;’ so that the judicious reader, when he has perused the different explanations and familiarized himself with many that he can either approve or disapprove, may judge which is the best, and, like a good banker, reject the money from a spurious mint.” We know Augustine’s ad hominem reply: “You demand of me that I show at least one person whose opinion in this matter I have followed, since you have mentioned by name so many who preceded you in the position you are defending. You ask that, if I reprimand your error in this matter, I allow you to err with such persons, none of whom, I confess, have I read (quorum ego, fateor, neminem legi). But though they number about almost six or seven, you also weaken the authority of four of them. For you say that the Laodicean, whose name you do not give, has recently left the Church. You call Alexander an old heretic, and I read in your more recent writings that you have found fault with Origen and Didymus, and not just slightly, nor on unimportant issues, although you earlier praised Origen marvelously.”

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53 Epist. 75.6.20.
54 Sparks, “Jerome as a Biblical Scholar,” 536.
55 Epist. 82.23=Jerome, Epist. 116.
In reality, the tone of Jerome’s letters betrays his disappointment that Augustine did not know about or had ignored Jerome’s own work on the Psalter. Indeed, apart from his translations of the Psalter, Jerome had written some Notes on the Psalms (in fact an abridged compilation of Origen’s *Enchiridion*) and two smaller-scale commentaries on the Psalms. Now, with feigned modesty, Jerome is claiming that were he called upon to discuss Augustine’s *commentarioli*, he “would not say that they disagreed with (him), who (is) a nobody, but that they differed from the interpretations of the ancient Greeks.”

It is impossible to ignore the frustration of an accomplished exegete who laments that his work is not given at least the honor of a quotation. Andrew Cain has made the case that Jerome’s letters, especially the exegetical ones, were central components of his textual campaign to justify his authority as a biblical scholar. In response to questions put to him by his admirers, Jerome “ambitiously used these letters as a textual platform from which to shape the Latin Christian world’s perception of him as an unquestioned authority on the Bible.”

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56 Jerome, Comm. in Psalms, Prol.: “…ex quae in tomis vel in homiliis ipse (Origenes) disseruit, vel ego digna arbitror lectione, in hunc angustum commentariolum referam.”

57 Commentarioli in Psalms, CCL 72 (1959); Tractatus sive Homiliae in Psalms, CCL 78 (1958). On Jerome’s works on the Psalms, see Pierre Jay, “Jérôme et la pratique de l’exégèse,” in *Le monde latin antique et la Bible* (BTT 2; Paris, Beauchesne, 1985), 525-54. The attribution of the Tractatus sive Homiliae in Psalms to Jerome has been challenged by Vittorio Peri (*Omelie origeniane sui Salmi*; ST 289; Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1980), who argues that they are a translation and adaptation of Origen’s work made by Jerome. In fact, Jerome does not list them in his Epist. 112 to Augustine, where he lists his works on the Psalms.

58 Epist. 72.3.5.


60 Andrew Cain, *The letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2009, 194. See also Barbara Conring,
on the Psalms, one need only compare the commentaries of the two authors. Jerome’s commentaries are an impressive display of sacred, secular, textual, historical, and exegetical learning, all mixed together. In this regard, compared to Jerome, Augustine seems to be seriously deficient and can rightly be described as ‘un lettré de la décadence,’ as Marrou has put it.

While Jerome was correct to point out the lack of reference to the Greek Fathers in Augustine’s early Enarrationes, he failed to acknowledge that Augustine makes appropriate use of the argument of authority. As a matter of fact, Augustine refers moderately to earlier commentators whom he designates generally with such terms as quidam, nonnulli. For instance, when in 415 he comments on Ps. 67, he notes:

Some of our predecessors have made a distinction between canticle and psalm. They noted that since a canticle is sung with the mouth alone, whereas a psalm requires the accompaniment of some visible instrument, such as the psaltery, it seems that a canticle represents intelligence in the mind, and a psalm symbolizes bodily activity. Now, applying this distinction to Psalm 67, which we have undertaken to expound, these scholars have pointed to the verse that says, Sing to God, play psalms to his name. They think that sing to God refers to the activity of the mind within itself, which is known to God but unseen by human eyes. But good deeds need to be visible to other people, so that they may glorify our Father in heaven; and therefore the psalm rightly adds, Play psalms to his name, which means ‘Play psalms to make him publicly known,’ so that his name may be invoked with praise.
As the editors of the Corpus Christianorum Latinorum have rightly noted, Augustine is referring to the prologue of Hilary’s commentary. Martine Dulaey has shown that Hilary’s influence is perceptible already in the early expositions, particularly in the En. Ps. 4, 12, 2, 13, 3, 7, and 29. Therefore, according to Dulaey, Augustine knows and uses the Tractatus in Psalmos of Hilary as early as 394-395 when he had composed the En. Ps. 1-32. However, Augustine’s familiarity with Hilary’s Tractatus seems to predate the first Enarrationes since he had already mentioned Hilary’s commentary to Ps. 118 in the De Genesi contra Manicheos, a work dated 388-390.

Although Augustine does not mention the name of Ambrose before De doctrina christiana and does not quote any of his works before 402-403, scholars agree that Ambrose’s authority stands behind Augustine’s exegesis. In particular, Dulaey has convincingly argued that Ambrose’s influence is already seen in the early Enarrationes.

While Jerome complained about Augustine’s ignorance of the Greek Fathers, Dulaey is able to demonstrate that behind the anonymous references to earlier commentators stand such authors as Victorinus of Pettau, Hilary of Poitiers, Ambrose of

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Milan, Eusebius of Vercelli, Novatian, Cyprian and Optatus of Milevis. However, because the indications of Augustine’s dependence on these authors remain rare and often uncertain, Martine Dulaey has rightly warned that the plurals *quidam, nonnulli*, etc. with which Augustine refers to earlier commentators should be understood as referring generally to a single author rather than many. Overall, however, Dulaey recognizes that it is a question of occasional references rather than the adoption of a systematic way of interpreting.

While Jerome considers Augustine’s interpretation of the Psalms to be original and unconventional, Thomas F. Martin remarks that, “Anyone who has had the opportunity to consider Augustine’s entire commentary on the Psalms notes immediately both the lushness and artistry that makes the whole project. The striking insight, creative application, minute verbal analysis, and consistent pastoral exhortation often reach heights of eloquence and memorable aphorism. Taken as a whole the *Enarrationes* are so thoroughly marked by Augustine’s originality of thought and expression that when placed against the larger patristic Psalm-commentary tradition, especially in the Latin West, its uniqueness is immediately apparent.” To recall Feldemann’s observation, Augustine’s *Enarrationes in Psalmos* constitute a climax in the Patristic exegesis on the Psalter. This remark will be confirmed later in the study of En. Ps. 118, even though we

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73 Epist. 75.6.20 (=Jerome, 112.20): “Respondeat mihi prudentia tua, quare tu post tantos et tales interpretes in explanatione Psalmorum *diversa sensoris*?”
74 Martin, “Psalmus Gratiae,” 139.
have evidence, for instance, that Augustine knew of Hilary’s and Ambrose’s commentaries on Ps. 118 as early as the time of the writing of his first *Enarrationes*. Indeed, in spite of the many references to anonymous commentators, when it comes to commenting Ps. 118, Augustine’s methodology is again peculiarly his own.

**A Work Named *Enarrationes***

As is well known, it is to Erasmus of Rotterdam that we owe the characterization of Augustine’s commentaries on the Psalms as *Enarrationes in Psalmos*.\(^7^5\) The terms *enarrare* and *enarratio* belong to the vocabulary of Roman historians and grammarians and signify the action or the result of recounting, explaining, commenting or interpreting fully.\(^7^6\) In his *Institutiones*, Quintilian uses *enarratio* to designate the interpretation of poets as one of the two aspects of the profession of the *grammaticus*.\(^7^7\)

These basic meanings of *enarrare* and *enarratio* appear almost unchanged among the ecclesiastical writers, especially with reference to the commentary on the Psalms.\(^7^8\) However, more than once, ecclesiastical writers have used these terms to describe the ineffability of the mystery of Christ’s nativity or the specific action of the revelation of

\(^7^5\) Basel, 1529, vol. 8; S. Aurelii Augustini Hipponensis episcopi opus continens *Enarrationes in psalmos*. Pontet (*L’exégèse d’Augustin*, 82, note 238) takes the term *enarrationes* as a marketing title for a composite work: “une etiquette commode, et maintenant venerable, posée sur un merchandise composite.”

\(^7^6\) Cicero, *De divinatione* 1.55; Livy, 2.36; 27.50.3; 28.43; 29.29; Pliny, 2.92; Quintilian, *Institutiones* 1.4.2.

\(^7^7\) Quintilian, *Institutiones* 1.4.2: “Haec igitur professio, cum brevissime in duas partes dividatus, recte loquendi scientiam et poetarum enarrationem.”

\(^7^8\) Lactantius, Marius Victorinus, Ambrose, Jerome, Fulgentius, …
the Father as affected by the Son, following a tradition canonized by the Vulgate, especially in its rendition of Is 53:8\textsuperscript{79} and John 1:18.\textsuperscript{80}

In a letter dated to the end of 416, Augustine designates his commentaries on the Psalms as \textit{expositiones psalmorum},\textsuperscript{81} a description that Possidius also uses in his \textit{Indiculum}.\textsuperscript{82} Various codices of the individual commentaries bear the titles \textit{expositio psalmi}, \textit{psalmi expositi}, \textit{tractatus psalmi}, \textit{tractatus de psalmo}, \textit{sermo habitus}, \textit{expositio}, \textit{commentum}, or \textit{explanatio}.\textsuperscript{83} Glorie contends that the original title of the corpus was \textit{tractatus psalmorum}, as also reported by Possidius, at least for part of the collection.\textsuperscript{84}

Throughout the work, Augustine speaks of the individual \textit{Enarratio} as \textit{expositio}, \textit{commentum}, or \textit{explanatio}. But more often, he describes each exposition as \textit{sermo} or \textit{tractatus}.\textsuperscript{85} How does this characterization represent the unity Augustine saw in these various compositions on the Psalter text?\textsuperscript{86} According to Maurice Pontet, Augustine used

\textsuperscript{79} “Nativitatem ejus quis enarrabit?” Tertullian, Adversus Judaeos, PL 2:636C.

\textsuperscript{80} “Deus nemo vidit umquam unigenitus Filius qui est in sinu Patris ipse enarravit.” Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermo 8, in Cant. 7 (PL 183:813B-814A).

\textsuperscript{81} Epist. 149.5.

\textsuperscript{82} Possidius describes Augustine’s commentaries on the Psalms as \textit{psalmi expositi}, which he divides into two broad categories: the \textit{tractatus dictati} and the \textit{tractatus in populo habiti/disputati}.


\textsuperscript{85} Wilmart, \textit{La tradition}, 295, note 2.

\textsuperscript{86} On this, see Müller, “Zur literarischen Einheit der Exegetischen Predigt Augustins. Beobachtungen an den \textit{Enarrationes in Psalmos},” in \textit{L’esegesi dei Padri Latini}, 293-307; Christine Mohrmann, “Praedicare-
the terms *sermo* and *tractatus* as synonymous, because “he considered *tractatus* as the translation of the Greek ὁμιλία,⁸⁷ a term that means precisely the explanation of a sacred text made in front of an audience of low education.”⁸⁸ While Pontet noted that, “for Augustine, *tractare* is to unravel a difficult passage, to throw light on it, to expand it, to explain it,” he also suggested that this activity was intimately linked to an immediate audience. Indeed, Pontet considered Augustine’s *tractatus psalmorum* as a whole as a preached work. But, as we will see in the course of this study, there is some clarification to be made with regard to the character and the categorization of Augustine’s individual commentaries on the Psalms.

**The Printed and the Critical Editions of Augustine’s *Enarrationes***

Augustine’s *opera omnia* has been widely circulated, having been published and translated from the earliest days. However, it is only recently that critical editions of his works have begun to be published. Among these, the *Enarrationes in Psalmos* are undoubtedly the work that has the most complex textual tradition. As Simonetti notes, they were “certainly among the most read of Augustine’s works in late antiquity and in the Middle Ages, especially in monasteries, and which, apart from being disfigurred by mechanical errors, were also subjected to a quantity of conscious alterations, in order to

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make more intelligible passages that were not immediately intelligible."\(^8^9\) The textual contaminations became more apparent with the publication of the first printed editions of Augustine’s works, as evidenced by a letter from Erasmus when he undertook his own edition.\(^9^0\)

### The Printed Editions of Augustine’s Works

Johannes Amerbach published his edition of Augustine’s *opera omnia* in 1506, while the commentary of the Psalms, together with other lengthy works, had been published in single editions between 1489 and 1495.\(^9^1\)

In 1528-29, Erasmus published his edition of Augustine’s works in order to replace the one brought out by Johannes Amerbach at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

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\(^9^0\) Erasmus, Epist. 1204, to Adrian Barland (1521): “At ego nunquam crediturus eram tantum inesse prodigiosarum mendarum quantum comperio, partim relegens attentius, partim conferens cum vestis exemplaribus.” See also Epist. 7: “I shall die of this… There are so many blunders and the author is interminable.”

\(^9^1\) Namely, *The City of God*, *On the Trinity* and the *Enarrationes* (1489); the *Tractates on John* (1490); the letters (1493); the sermons (1495).
century. In particular, he included the works omitted by Amerbach, corrected the perceived errors and added his own critical observations. True to his character as a man of the Renaissance, Erasmus saw his enterprise as a contribution to the very *rebirth* of Augustine. As a matter of fact, on the title page of his edition, Erasmus claimed that, “he has purged with greater care all the works of saint Aurelius Augustine, bishop of Hippo, of countless mistakes so that the great Church Father can quite rightly be considered to be *born again.*”

Probably due to the air of suspicion that surrounded Erasmus’s edition, the scholars at the University of Louvain brought out a revised edition that included the letters and sermons missing from the previous editions and, for the first time, the *Contra Julianum opus imperfectum.*

From 1679 to 1700, the French Benedictine monks of St. Maur published their monumental edition of Augustine’s *opera omnia* and dedicated volume 4 to the

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Enarrationes in Psalmos (1681).\(^6\) In 1865, Jacques Paul Migne took over the Maurists’ text unchanged and republished it in volumes 36 and 37 of his Patrologia Latina (PL).\(^7\)

The Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina Edition (CCL)

In 1956, Eligius Dekkers and Jean Fraipont issued a critical edition of the Enarrationes in volumes 38–40 of the Corpus Christianorum, series Latina, taking the text of the Maurists as the basis of their work and using a few additional manuscripts in order to improve it.\(^8\) At its publication, the CCL edition was hailed as an “edizione eccellentissima.”\(^9\) With a few exceptions for the individual Psalms, modern translations of Augustine’s Enarrationes in Psalmos that appeared before the 1990s are based on the Maurists’ text as reprinted in the PL or as revised in the CCL.\(^10\)

When he undertook his edition of the Enarrationes in 1989, the Italian scholar Manlio Simonetti remarked that the CCL edition was “a cursory work, devoid of coherence and completeness, which - as the editors themselves have acknowledged - cannot be considered as a true critical edition and which, therefore, does not constitute a real improvement in comparison with the Maurist edition.”\(^11\) When it was begun, the

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\(^7\) Augustine’s works are published in volumes 32-47 of the PL.

\(^8\) See CCL 38, viii-xi. The CCL series was launched in 1953, and the volumes of the Enarrationes (38-40) were published in 1959. The second edition was issued in 1990.


\(^10\) Note, however, that for Enarrationes 112-133 the WSA follows the CSEL text, of which the first volume appeared in 2001; see WSA III/20:13, note 1.

series had the ambition of replacing the PL for completeness and quality. \textsuperscript{102} To date, the CCL is the most complete modern edition of Augustine’s works. Because it is the most complete edition of Patristic texts so far and also because of its limitations, it rightly bears the nickname of the “New Migne.” \textsuperscript{103}

**Manlio Simonetti’s Partial Edition**

Simonetti’s edition, in fact, was the first attempt to offer a true critical edition of the *Enarrationes in Psalms.* \textsuperscript{104} Written under the auspices of the Fondazione Lorenzo Valla, it is an anthology of only fourteen *Enarrationes,* \textsuperscript{105} for which Simonetti used a set of new manuscripts (at least four manuscripts for each *Enarratio*) in order to improve the CCL text. \textsuperscript{106}

Apart from covering only fourteen *Enarrationes*, this edition has another limitation, which Simonetti himself acknowledges. \textsuperscript{107} Although he had complained about the lack of collation of the many manuscripts of the *Enarrationes* that have reached us, he himself used only manuscripts originating from Rome, leaving out many other important

\begin{footnotes}
\item[105] *Enarrationes* 25.2; 29.2; 41; 51; 64; 76; 86; 89; 92; 109; 132; 133; 136; 143. One should note that, with the exception of En. Ps. 89, Simonetti’s anthology contains only homilies. See Simonetti, *Commento ai Salmi*, 312-341; 642.
\item[106] Simonetti, “Note sul testo,” 522; idem, *Commento ai Salmi*, xxxix-xl.
\item[107] Simonetti, *Commento ai Salmi*, xl.
\end{footnotes}
manuscripts from other areas. Nevertheless, Simonetti’s detailed editorial work on the Enarrationes published in the Lorenzo Valla edition alerted scholars to the many textual errors that had been upheld through the use of the two widely received editions, the PL and the CCL. As Simonetti has observed, “We are talking about the expansions of Augustinian expressions that were originally thought to be difficult either in form or in content, of alterations to the text of the psalms used by Augustine, of amplifications and even interpolations.”

The Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum Edition (CSEL)

Meanwhile, Simonetti’s complaint about the lack of a complete collation of the innumerable manuscripts of the Enarrationes was addressed when the Austrian Academy of Sciences began the publication of the collection of Augustine’s manuscripts in the catalogue series Die handschriftliche Überlieferung der Werke des Heiligen Augustinus. This outstanding endeavor dramatically changed the status questionis regarding the textual tradition of Augustine’s Enarrationes as presented by Wilmart in 1931.

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108 Simonetti, Commento ai Salmi, xxxix.
109 According to Weidmann, Augustine’s Enarrationes have been a text in constant change throughout its composition and also its reception, at the end of which stands the Maurist edition, which was eventually stabilized and canonized by the PL (“Zur Struktur der Enarrationes,” 124). Cf. Wilmart, “La tradition,” 312.
110 Simonetti, Commento ai Salmi, xxxi-xl.
111 Die handschriftliche Überlieferung der Werke des Heiligen Augustinus (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1969-).
It is, therefore, with a better and larger knowledge of the manuscript tradition that the CSEL undertook a new critical edition of the Enarrationes in Psalmos in 2001; the CSEL volumes, in fact, represent an extraordinary achievement. The work of several outstanding scholars, they constitute in my judgment the best critical edition of the Enarrationes so far. As Wilmart had already pointed out, the work of CSEL editors confirmed that most manuscripts of the Enarrationes are incomplete and fragmentary. Manuscripts containing the full text of the Enarrationes are few and date to the Carolingian period, i.e. the eighth and ninth centuries.113

Nevertheless, each CSEL volume is based on an extensive collation of manuscripts for the individual Enarrationes,114 the study of all relevant ancient witnesses (testimonia veterum scriptorum),115 and the consultation of all previous editions.116 Furthermore, the editors try to attend to the major problems related to the individual expositions, such as errors and contaminations in the textual tradition, date and circumstances of composition, audience and themes, offering thus the most up-to-date status quaestionis on each Enarratio. By taking into account the recent research on the

113 See Wilmart, “La tradition,” 300-311.
114 The number and quality of manuscripts collated for each volume are impressive. See, for instance, CSEL 93/1A (Clemens Weidmann), 34-54; CSEL 93/1B (Clemens Weidmann), 9-15; CSEL 94/1 (Hildegund Müller), 11-12; CSEL 95/1 (Franco Gori, in collaboration with Claudio Pierantoni), 8-9; CSEL 95/3 (Franco Gori), 13-24; CSEL 95/4 (Franco Gori, in collaboration with Francesca Recanatini), 9-11; CSEL 95/5 (Franco Gori, in collaboration with Giuliana Spaccia), 9-10
115 Beda (CCL 121; CCL 123B, CCL 123C); Cassiodorus, Expositio Psalmorum (CCL 97-98); Caesar of Arles, Sermones (CCL 103-104); Eugipius, Excerpta (CSEL 9); Prosper of Aquitaine, Expositio Psalmorum, Liber sententiarum (CCL 68A); Ps-Augustine (Sermo 10, PL 46, 843-846).
116 John Amerbach, (Basel, 1505-1506); Erasmus, vol. 8 (Basel, 1529); The Theologians of Louvain, vol. 8 (Louvain, 1576-1577); Maurists, vol. 4 (Paris, 1691); Migne, PL 36-37 (1865); Dekkers-Fraipont, CCL 38-40 (1956); Simonetti (1988).
Latin Psalter, they also provide useful insights on the Psalter text and identify the scriptural quotations and readings of the day in the sermons and the commentaries.

The CSEL project aims at publishing all the *Enarrationes* in three *quinquagenae*, following a textual tradition that divided Augustine’s *opus longe amplissimum* in three collections of 50 psalms each. Within this overall project, it appears that the editors have decided to publish the entire corpus by grouping the *Enarrationes* either by their date of publication, by decades as they appear in some important manuscripts and at Cassiodorus’ witness, or in series according to which Augustine had written or delivered them. For instance, in his edition of *Enarrationes in Psalmo* 1-32, Weidmann distinguishes these *Enarrationes* in *expositiones* and in *sermones* and, accordingly, publishes them separately by genres, a distinction supported in particular by some seventh-eighth century manuscripts that contain only either the preached *Enarrationes* or the dictated ones. Not all the commentators agree with such a decision.

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118 See Wilmart, “La tradition,” 295. On indications of a possible division in decades, see Müller, CSEL 94/1, 10-11.


120 Weidmann, CSEL 93/1A, 11; idem, CSEL 93/1B, 13: “nam vetustissimi codices P et L ante saeculum VIII confecti aut dictata aut dictas *enarrationes* continent…”

121 The editors of the Bibliothèque Augustinienne have challenged this decision, mainly because all the *Enarrationes* cannot be organized into specific groups. For instance, editing the *Enarrationes* on a thematic or chronological ground will result also in an important practical difficulty, since the reader will never know where to find the commentary he wishes to consult unless he refers first to the general index (Hombert, BA 57A, 7; see also, BA 57B, 5-6). Thus, in the BA, the *Enarrationes* 1-32, both those dictated
The volumes published so far in the CSEL series cover the *Enarrationes* 1-32; 51-60; 101-109; 119-133; 134-140; and 141-150. Yet to be published are the following *Enarrationes*: 33-50, 61-100, 110-117, and 118.

**The Bibliothèque Augustinienne Edition (BA)**

In 2009, the Bibliothèque Augustinienne undertook its fourteen-volume project of editing the *Enarrationes* in the hope of providing a reliable text in Latin and a good translation in French. So far, four volumes have appeared, covering *Enarrationes* 1-31 and 108-117. The initiative of a team of French scholars, this work presents itself as a “commented edition,” with lengthy, excellent introductions and notes, important essays and complementary notes by scholars such as Martine Dulaey, Isabelle Bochet, Pierre-Marie Hombert, Anne-Isabelle Bouton-Touboul and Éric Rébillard.

and those preached, follow the Psalter order so that the two *Enarrationes* on Ps 21, though different for their date of composition and their character, are edited together, because “as dissimilar as they may be, grouping them together is simply legitimate” (Hombert, BA 57A, 8).


124 Gori, in collaboration with Claudio Pierantoni.


128 BA 57A, 5.


130 Hombert, BA 57A, 8.
The major shortcoming of the BA project is its editors’ decision regarding the Latin text. As they write in the first volume, “le texte latin qu’on va lire n’est exactement ni celui du CCL ni celui du CSEL, mais il tient la balance entre les deux.”131 In the second volume, however, the same editors state that the text of the first commentary on Psalms 18, 21 and 25 relies on the CSEL edition (Weidmann), while that of the second commentary of the same Psalms follows the CCL edition (Dekkers-Fraipont), albeit with a few modifications concerning punctuation.132 Similarly, in the third volume, the text of second expositions on Psalms 26, 30 and 31 reproduce the CCL text.133 One would hope that, in its forthcoming volumes, the BA would plan the publication of its volumes so as to benefit more from the excellent CSEL volumes that have appeared to date.

While we can count on reliable texts for most of the *Enarrationes*, we are still left to work with previous editions for En. Ps. 118, that is, the CCL text, which represents a slightly improved version of the PL text, which in turn is a reprint of the Maurists’ text.134

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131 BA 57A, 103.
132 BA 57B, 6.
133 BA 58A, 8.
134 Before the 19th century only individual works of Augustine were translated into modern languages. Beginning in the 19th century, translations of the entire corpus were undertaken in France and in England. In the 20th century, new series aimed at providing translations for all of Augustine’s works were begun in French, Spanish, Italian, and English. Only the Italian (Nuova Biblioteca Agostiniana, NBA) and the Spanish (Biblioteca de Auctores Cristianos, BAC) series contain almost all known available texts.
The Text(s) of Augustine’s Psalter

Since the *Enarrationes* are commentaries and sermons on the Psalms, it is of the utmost importance to assess which text(s) of the Psalter Augustine used while working on this *opus longe amplissimum*.\(^{135}\) However, many difficulties lie ahead of such a task, precisely because the *Enarrationes* were composed in a very long timespan during which no one stable text of the Latin Psalter was widely circulated or commonly received. It is their use in the liturgy that has historically determined the survival or the eclipse of given Psalters throughout history.\(^{136}\) In the third century, there existed a Latin version of the Bible produced in Africa and which was frequently quoted by Tertullian and Cyprian, but there was certainly no official version, even though one would expect the Cyprian Psalter to be among the ones used in liturgy at Carthage and Hippo at the time of Augustine.\(^{137}\)

Also, as Manlio Simonetti has argued, there is evidence that the biblical quotations in most manuscripts of the *Enarrationes* were often harmonized in the course of the textual tradition in order to conform them to the text used in the period when these manuscripts were produced.\(^{138}\) Yet, as Müller has pointed out, the identification of the biblical *lemmata*, their integration in or their omission from the commentary proper are essential to the understanding of the very structure of each *Enarratio* as a rhetorical and

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\(^{136}\) E.g., the Psalterium Romanum which was widely circulated in Europe or the Psalterium Gallicanum, which, under Alcuin found its way in the Vulgate and was later confirmed by the authority of Charlemagne and Pius V. See Pierre Salmon, “Il testo e l'interpretazione dei Salmi al tempo di S. Girolamo e di S. Agostino,” *RivB* 2 (1954) 97-118; 193-219.

exegetical work. As a matter of fact, the most important cases of textual corruption seem to be located at the juncture between the lemmata and the commentary and appear to have resulted from deliberate omissions or additions by later editors. Nevertheless, even when one suspects that the biblical lemmata were supplied at a later stage, internal quotations can give us an indication about the biblical text Augustine used for the individual Enarrationes.

The Translations of Jerome

When in 382 Jerome set out to fulfill Pope Damasus’ commission to provide a new Latin translation of the Bible, he noted that, “there were almost as many texts as manuscripts.” Augustine confirms this state of affairs, when he remarks: “Those who translated the Scriptures from Hebrew into Greek can be counted; this is certainly not true of Latin translators. The fact is that whenever in the early days of the faith a Greek codex came into anybody’s hands, and he felt that he had the slightest familiarity with each language, he rushed in with a translation.” This is particularly true regard to the Psalter, of which many versions were in circulation. While in Bethlehem, Jerome endeavored to revise a Latin version of Origen’s Greek Hexaplar Psalter and produced ca. 139

139 Unlike the Maurist and the PL editions, both the CSEL and BA editions provide the biblical lemmata of Augustine’s commentaries.


141 Jerome, Preface to the Gospels (Latin text reproduced in Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Editionem (eds. Robert Weber and al.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983). As early as 1920, Ferdinand Cavallera established that Jerome was not responsible of the Vulgate translation of Acts, the Pauline epistles and the Apocalypse. It is now believed that another scholar, perhaps Rufinus, is behind the translation of these books; see “Saint Jérôme et la Vulgate des Actes, des Épîtres et de l’Apocalypse,” BLE 21 (1920): 269-292.

142 De doctr. 2.11.16.
385 a Latin Psalterium later known as the Psalterium Gallicanum in order to distinguish it from the Psalterium Romanum, both in circulation in the Carolingian empire. It is this Psalter version that will eventually become the Vulgate Psalter.

A few years later, ca. 390-392, Jerome produced another translation of the Psalter by referring to versions of the Hebrew text, especially those of Aquila and Symmachus. Although this Psalter is traditionally called Iuxta Hebraeos, it follows the LXX numbering and in fact represents a revision of a Greek Psalter rather than a complete version from the Hebrew.

We have some evidence that, from 415 on, Augustine knew about Jerome’s Hexaplar Psalter, of which he quotes some variants in his latest Enarrationes. But

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143 Epist. 106.


147 Especially En. Ps. 77; 78; 82; 104; 105; 108; 135; 150. See Paul Capelle, Le texte du Psautier latin en Afrique (CBLa 4; Rome: Pustet, 1913), 143-158; Josef Herrmann Frede, Kirchenschriftsteller: Verzeichnis und Sigel (Freiburg: Herder, 1995), 217-218; Fiedrowicz, Psalmus, 26; En. Ps. 89.17; Simonetti, Commento ai Salmi, xxvi; Anne-Marie La Bonnardière, “Augustin a-t-il utilisé la ‘Vulgate’ de Jérôme?” in Saint Augustin et la Bible (BTT 3; Paris: Beauchesne, 1986), 303-312. I believe that this Hexaplar Psalter is to be identified with the Psalterium Romanum rather than with Jerome’s Vulgate proper.
when Augustine begins his commentaries on the Psalter, he works with several Old Latin translations. In particular, he acknowledges that the multiplication of versions is “more of a help than a hindrance to the understanding of the Scriptures, provided only that readers are not casual and careless. The examination of several versions,” he claims, “has often been able to throw light on obscure passages…”

**Augustine and the Psalter Texts**

As commentators have pointed out, when Augustine undertook his commentaries on the Psalms, he did not know Hebrew and seemed not to be working directly with the Septuagint text. Yet one finds references to the Greek Psalter in the earlier commentaries and, indeed, throughout the entire corpus. For instance, Augustine’s commentaries on Psalms 1-32 already have seven references to the Greek Psalter.

Toward the end of 416, Augustine wrote a letter to Paulinus of Nola, reporting that he had in fact consulted the Greek text in his earlier exegetical work. Furthermore, editors have noted that in the manuscript tradition the Psalter text originally used by Augustine is often replaced with the Vulgate text so as to present a more familiar version to the reader. Because of this, Manlio Simonetti advocates that the editor of

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148 De doctr. 2.12.17.
149 Although Augustine recommends the knowledge of original languages in his De doctrina christiana 2.12.19, he certainly did not practice what he himself preached on this matter! See his understanding of diaplasma in En. Ps. 4.4; see Martine Dulaey, “Recherches sur les premiers commentaires sur les Psaumes d'Augustin (1-32),” *AEPHE.R* 106 (1997-1998), 349; Berthold Altaner, “Augustinus und die griechische Sprache,” in *Kleine patristische Schriften*, 316-331; Marrou, *Saint Augustin*, 27-46.
150 En. Ps. 3.5; 4.6; 6.3; 7.12; 7.13; 7.14; 9.7; 16.14. See Capelle, *Le texte du Psautier*, 135
151 Epist. 149.3-4.
152 See CSEL 93/1A, 38, note 44.
Augustine’s commentaries on the Psalms should prefer the variant readings concordant with the Greek and discordant with the Vulgate.\textsuperscript{153}

Since the majority of the references to the Greek text are found in the first decade of the \textit{Enarrationes}, Henri Rondet suggests that Augustine might have inserted them on the occasion of a later revision of the commentaries.\textsuperscript{154} However, based on certain formulations, such as the one found at En. Ps. 4.6 with regard to the \textit{diapsalma},\textsuperscript{155} Martine Dulaey argues that the references to the Greek Psalter might have originated from some manuals Augustine was using while he was working on his commentaries.\textsuperscript{156}

Whatever the degree of Augustine’s knowledge of the Greek, the reference to the Greek Psalter text in the \textit{Enarrationes} is evidence of his conviction about the authority of the LXX and of his consistent engagement with its variant readings.\textsuperscript{157}

While we have evidence that Augustine used the Greek Psalter and perhaps the Vulgate Psalter, especially in the later commentaries, we do not have any evidence that he ever used the Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos.\textsuperscript{158} Yet, writing to Audax, he declares: “I do

\textsuperscript{153} Simonetti, “Note sul testo,” 525.


\textsuperscript{155} En. Ps. 4.6.


not have the psalter that Jerome translated from the Hebrew. We have not translated it ourselves, however, but have corrected some mistakes of the Latin manuscripts from Greek copies. Hence we have perhaps made it better than it was, but not as good as it ought to be. For even now, by comparing the manuscripts, we correct points that escaped us then, if they disturb the readers. In that way we are also, along with you, still seeking the perfect translation.”\textsuperscript{159} In any case, Augustine’s use of different variants of the Psalter text suggests that he had several Latin manuscripts at his disposal and may have worked from an Old Latin Psalter text that had marginal glosses, including some in Greek.\textsuperscript{160}

We now know a little more about the Latin Psalter Augustine might have used thanks to the works of Paul Capelle, Alban Dold, Alberto Vaccari and Giovanni Ongaro. In 1913, Capelle published the result of his research on the Latin Psalter in Africa and pointed out to its complex character: a text in which the Syrian element, quite similar to that of Lucian, is combined with numerous additions characteristic of Egypt and a few precious elements of the original Latin version which had disappeared from other witnesses.\textsuperscript{161}

In the early 1930s, thanks to the works of Arthur Allgeier, Alban Dold and Donatien De Bruyne, the importance of the Psalter Veronense emerged: a sixth-seventh century Psalter, it resembled most of Augustine’s quotations on the Psalter, especially in

\textsuperscript{159} Epist. 261.5 (Ad Audacem). See, however, Marrou’s skepticism about Augustine’s proficiency in Greek (Marrou, \textit{Saint Augustin}, 422).

\textsuperscript{160} Dulaey, BA 57A, 26-27.

the later and the dictated *Enarrationes*.162 The publication of the Codex Palimpsest 912 by Alban Dold in 1931, with a commentary by Arthur Allgeier, coupled with the first notices of the Sinai Psalter in 1954, further confirmed the connections between the Psalterium Veronense and Augustine’s quotations.163 In 1952, Alberto Vaccari suggested that the Psalterium Veronense resembled the Psalter which was mainly used in Northern Italy and was close to Ambrose’s.164

This early research on the Latin Psalter resulted in an attractive narrative according to which, upon returning to Africa from Milan in 388, Augustine had brought a copy of the Latin Psalter in use there, that is, the Psalterium Veronense, whereas the Psalter which was in use in Carthage was that of Cyprian or another Psalter of the African family.165 According to this narrative, in the solitude of his study as a monk in Thagaste, Augustine would have used freely either Psalter. In his public ministry as a priest and bishop in Hippo, however, he was obligated to use the Psalter in usage in the Church of


165 See Fiedrowicz, *Psalmus*, 25 and note 60.
Africa and could have not changed this custom, especially under the scrutiny of the Donatists who would have not approved of any innovations in this matter.\(^{166}\) It didn’t take long before scholars identified the Psalterium Veronense with the *Itala*, whose qualities Augustine praises in *De doctrina christiana*.\(^{167}\)

Unfortunately, as attractive as it may be, this narrative is not supported by solid evidence and has been rightly challenged. In particular, scholars have not been able to identify conclusively the text of the *Itala*, let alone demonstrate its connection to the Psalterium Veronense.\(^{168}\) On the other hand, the question of the relationship between the Psalterium Gallicanum (Vulgate) and the Psalterium Veronense and the issue of their respective importance in the *Enarrationes* remain unresolved among scholars.\(^{169}\)

As for the suggestion that Augustine had used a Psalter of the African family for his preaching and an annotated Psalter of the European family for his written commentaries on the Psalms, there is no evidence to support such a clear-cut

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\(^{166}\) Cf. Epist. 71.3.5; Epist 75.6.21; 7.22; Epist. 82.5.35.


distinction.⁷⁰ Indeed, while most dictated Enarrationes contain more critical notes than the sermons there is no perceptible difference between the biblical text of the dictated Enarrationes and that of the preached ones.⁷¹ For instance, in a reference to Ps. 22:5 (You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over), Augustine uses poculum in En. Ps. 22.5 and calix in En. Ps. 10.11. Yet both expositions were dictated.⁷² As late as 418 Augustine displays familiarity with many versions of the Psalter, often quoting several versions of a given verse. Unfortunately he seldom if ever identifies them.

The issues involved in deciding on the Psalter text(s) used by Augustine are many and difficult. They include a proper assessment of the chronology of the Enarrationes, the variety and the distribution of the variants, the characterization of the different Latin Psalters, and the complex textual tradition of the work as a whole. Deciding which Latin translation(s) Augustine used in the Enarrationes would require a more detailed study, which goes beyond the scope of the present study. In this regard, the vague but satisfactory judgment of Dom Lambot is still the best assessment of the evidence we can gather from Augustine’s works. According to Lambot, “Saint Augustine sometimes used the African versions, especially those employed in the liturgy, sometimes the versions

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⁷⁰ Capelle, Le texte du Psautier, 158-159.


⁷² Similarly, for Ps. 15:9 (Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; my flesh also rest in hope), Augustine uses delectatum in En. Ps. 11 (as in the Roman Psalter) and iucundatum in En. Ps. 15.9 (as in the Codex Veronensis).
which he himself had revised in light of the Greek text, sometimes the version of Saint Jerome; this last, however, he used only for the gospels and reserved the right to alter it.”

In conclusion, deciding which Psalter text(s) Augustine used for the *Enarrationes* requires that one attend, among others, to the following issues:

1. Since Augustine used different Old Latin versions, there is a need to compare his quotations with the Psalter-types, which were used by other Latin Fathers from the second to the fourth centuries.

2. A decision regarding the sources of Augustine’s Greek references should be made: Is Augustine quoting directly from the LXX, as he himself claims, or is he quoting the Greek variants from other sources, such as the excerpts from Origen or the recensions of the Hexapla?

3. In spite of its importance in recent scholarship, the Psalterium Veronense should not be privileged solely on the basis of its differences with the Psalterium Gallicanum or the Psalterium Romanum. In fact, the variant readings identified as characteristic of these two European Psalters weigh almost equally in the *Enarrationes*.

Augustine’s *Enarrationes in Psalmos* are a precious but difficult witness to the text of the Old Latin Psalter, and probably to the Psalteria Veronense, Sangallense, and

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175 Epist. 261.4-5.
Sinaiticum. Occasionally, they give us the best example of Augustine as a critical exegete à la Jerome, interested in a biblical text that would be conform more closely to the LXX, clear in its expression and correct in its Latin.\(^{176}\) In a detailed study published in the *Miscellanea Agostiniana*, Donatien De Bruyne described Augustine as a “réviseur” of the Latin Bible, by pointing out the many variant readings that he had identified in Augustine’s exegetical works, especially on the Psalms, Paul, and the Gospels.\(^{177}\) However, recent studies have shown this characterization to be overstated. Indeed, the evidence shows that Augustine can appeal to several readings of the same Psalter passage without making any attempt to discriminate between them, as long as they do not raise theological problems.\(^{178}\) We know, for instance, that Augustine commented on Ps 21 at least four times.\(^{179}\) And in each instance, he showed a freedom with regard to the text and

\(^{176}\) See Epist. 261.5 (Ad Audacem): “I do not have the psalter that Jerome translated from the Hebrew. We have not translated it ourselves, however, but have corrected some mistakes of the Latin manuscripts from Greek copies. Hence we have perhaps made it better than it was, but not as good as it ought to be. For even now, by comparing the manuscripts, we correct points that escaped us then, if they disturb the readers. In that way we are also, along with you, still seeking the perfect translation.” Fiedrowicz, *Psalmus*, 25-28; Alfons Fürst, “Veritas Latina: Augustinus Haltung gegenüber Hieronymus’ Bibelübersetzungen,” *REAug* 40 (1994): 105-126.


\(^{178}\) Bonner, “Augustine as Biblical Scholar,” 546. See for instance, the variants at Ps. 118:139 in En. Ps. 118.28.2: either reading is in conformity with catholic doctrine and may, for that reason, be accepted.

used indifferently one variant or the other. For example, at Ps 21:19 (They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots), Augustine uses vestem in the first Enarratio on Psalm 21, while he has vestimentum in the second Enarratio. 

Augustine did not in fact use a text in an exclusive way. As Bonner has argued, “The actual text of Scripture upon which Augustine exercised his exegetical talent varied during the course of his life.” He used several versions of the Old Latin Psalter and quoted from a Psalter of the family of the Psalterium Veronense. He knew a Psalter close to the Psalterium Gallicanum (probably the Psalterium Romanum) and used it more consistently after 415. It seems therefore that, for the purpose of both preaching and teaching, Augustine believed that one biblical reading was as good as another. Unlike Jerome, he was not interested in philological minutiae per se, because “the exegetical principles upon which he worked did not impose upon him any necessity of constructing a critical text in the modern sense.” For his preaching and teaching, Augustine took the biblical text, or rather the texts, as they were. As Pierre-Maurice Bogaert noted, “here as elsewhere, (Augustine) may occasionally use the local liturgical text, that of his

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180 BA 57A, 26. In the four expositions on Psalm 21, out of a total of 37 quotations of this verse, 18 instances use vestem and 17 use vestimentum. In the Sermo Dolbeau 21, Augustine uses sometimes vestimentum and sometimes vestem (Dolbeau 21.17-18).

181 Compare En. Ps. 21.1.19 and En. Ps. 21.2.19. Similarly, for Ps. 21:1 (Deus meus, Deus meus, respice in me, quare me dereliquisti), Augustine uses Deus (ten times); Deus meus (ten times); respice in me (nine times) and he omits the phrase altogether (eleven times).

182 Bonner, “Augustine as Biblical Scholar,” 544-545.


184 Dekkers and Fraipont (“Praefatio,” xiii) note that, after 415, Augustine added the Gallican psalter for his revisions of the Latin text. According to Simonetti (“Note sul testo,” 525), many references to the Vulgate in the Enarrationes are more the result of textual contamination than of Augustine’s adoption of it.

185 Bonner, “Augustine as Biblical Scholar,” 547; cf. Conf. 12.18.27.
opponents or that of his correspondents.”

Rather than “réviseur” of the Bible, the *Enarrationes in Psalms* present us Augustine as a privileged witness of the tradition and complex history of the Latin Psalter, a text indefinitely revised in order to rejuvenate its vocabulary and language in conformity to the Septuagint.

The *Retractationes* and the Books against Julian of Eclanum

Shortly before his death, Augustine endeavored to “gather together and point out, in a work devoted to this express purpose, all the things which most justly displease [him] in [his] books.” Thus, he undertook to revise, “as with a censor’s pen,” his own writings (*opuscula*), which he lists under three categories: *libri, epistulae* and *tractatus*.

Although the *Enarrationes in Psalms* are not signaled in the *Retractationes*, they come easily under the category of the exegetical *tractatus*.

Conceived as early as 412 and written in 427, three full years preceding Augustine’s death, the *Retractationes* confirm the sense of change and progress in

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187 See *Epist.* 261.5 (Ad Audacem). Simonetti, *Commento ai Salmi*, xxviii “Se Agostino non si è preoccupato di rilevare il corredo filologico e critico che accompagnava, anche in Girolamo, la traduzione del testo, egli però ha considerate indispensabie fondare questa predicazione su un testo latino del Salterio corretto e chiaro.”

188 *Epist.* 143.2 (Ad Marcellinum).


Augustine’s life and career first seen in the *Confessions*.\(^{191}\) Although Augustine admitted that their publication was a matter of urgency, the work was really meant to demonstrate to his readers how one should read his books and assess his progress.\(^{192}\) Better translated as *Reconsiderations*, “the *Retractationes* constitute the most extraordinary instrument an author has ever offered in order to subject his own thinking to the judgment of others.”\(^{193}\)

By 427, Augustine had revised most of his works in the two books of the *Retractationes*. But he had to stop this project in order to respond to the eight books of Julian of Eclanum. Previously Augustine had responded to four books in which Julian of Eclanum attacked Augustine’s *On Marriage and Concupiscence*,\(^{194}\) after Alypius, a friend from boyhood, brought from Rome the segue of Julian’s work, in eight books.\(^{195}\)

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\(^{191}\) Epist. 143.2 (Ad Marcellinum): “For, if God grant me what I want, namely that I may gather together and point out in some work created for this purpose whatever rightly displeases me in all my works, then people will see that I am not partial toward myself.” See also Mark Vessey, “From *Cursus* to *Ductus*: Figures of Writing in Western Late Antiquity (Augustine, Jerome, Cassiodorus, Bede), in *European Literary Careers: The Author from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (eds., Patrick Cheney and Frederick A. de Armas; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 47-103, esp. 51-59. Possidius mistakenly attributes the writing of the *Retractationes* to Augustine’s realization that he was close to dying, when in fact the bishop had at least eighteen more years to live when he first conceived the project of the *Retractationes*.


Since Alypius had not yet copied the entire work, he sent to Augustine five books, promising to send the other three later. He insisted that Augustine answer them without delay. “Because of [Alypius’] insistence,” Augustine writes, “I was forced to go more slowly with the work I was doing. In order not to neglect either task, I worked at one during the day and at the other at night, to the extent that I was spared from other tasks, which continue to come to me from all sides. But I was engaged upon a task that was quite necessary, for I was reviewing my writings.”

The response to Julian had halted the redaction of the *Retractationes*, of which Augustine had already completed two volumes in which he had reviewed a total of two hundred and thirty-two books. If we except the letters and the sermons, which he had not yet revised, and trust the figure Augustine provides us in the *Retractationes*, we learn that Augustine had written 93 works, totaling 232 books.196 The conclusion of Possidius’ *Indiculum* gives even a higher figure, which has been supported in recent years by the discoveries of even more of Augustine’s lost works.197 At that point, Augustine noted:

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“The letters remain, and then the sermons for the people, which the Greeks call ‘homilies.’ I had already read the majority of the letters, but I still had not dictated anything on them when these books of Julian began to occupy me.”

Unfortunately, when the Vandals besieged Hippo, Augustine had not yet dictated the revision of the last part of his work, namely the letters and the sermons to the people. When he died on August 28, 430, he was still working on both of these projects at the same time, the response to Julian and the revision of his writings, “devoting the night to one and the day to the other.” The melancholic title of Augustine’s last work, as reported by Possidius, reminds us to this day of the incomplete character (*imperfectum*) of the *Retractationes* themselves

As we have seen, when Augustine began to revise his works he was still writing some more works. Nevertheless, if Augustine had followed his own plan, the revision of the letters and the sermons to the people would have constituted the last books of the *Retractationes*, and the *Enarrationes* and the *Tractates on the Gospel of John* would have been among the last to be revised. In effect, Augustine says that he had already read the

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198 Epist. 224.2.

majority of the letters, but still had not dictated anything on them, since he was engaged in responding to Julian.  

Because Augustine had written them throughout his career, it is very unlikely that he would have revised the letters and the Enarrationes in chronological order. With regard to the Enarrationes, one can make the case that Augustine could have revised them either by groups or collections of composition or in the order of the Psalter. We know that some collections of Augustine’s Enarrationes had begun to circulate as early as 403/4 and that by 415 Augustine was far from having commented on the entire Psalter.  

Augustine’s intention of revising the Enarrationes within or together with the preached works was to define their fate and their evaluation by later commentators. Indeed, while most of Augustine’s expositions on the Psalms are made of sermons to the people, it is not accurate to consider them as a whole as a preached work.

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200 On Augustine’s works posterior to and those missing from the Retractationes, see Gustave Bardy, “Introduction aux Révisions,” 593, note complémentaire 75.

201 Donatien De Bruyne, “Enarrationes in Psalmos prêchées à Carthage,” MA 2, 321: “Augustin voulait aussi écrire des Rétractations de ses sermons; il en aurait indiqué la date et l’occasion, comme il a fait pour les livres.”

202 As early as 404, Jerome knew of Augustine’s commentaries on the Psalms, which he calls, with some contempt, commentarioli (Epist. 105.5/72.3.5). Since Bouvy’s article, most scholars agree that these commentaries refer to the Enarrationes in Psalmos 1-32 (Edmond Bouvy, “Les Enarrationes sur les Psaumes,” RAug 3 (1903), 424-425). Epist. 169.1 (dated to the end of 415): “I have dictated also, in volumes of considerable size, expositions of three Psalms, the 68th, the 72nd, and the 78th. Commentaries on the other Psalms— not yet dictated, nor even entered on— are eagerly expected and demanded from me.” According to Wilmart (“La tradition,” 295), by 417 Augustine had already commented on 123 Psalms.

203 While the distinction between preached and dictated Enarrationes is important to us, it was probably not for Augustine. It is hard to believe that Augustine considered all the Enarrationes as a preached work, even though sermo is the term he used for most of them.
II. POSSIDIUS’ INDICULUM AND THE CATEGORIZATION OF THE ENARRATIONES

Possidius’ *Vita Augustini*

Possidius’ *Vita Augustini* is the only biography of Augustine written by a contemporary who, apart from his relationship with Augustine, is otherwise unknown.²⁰⁴ Composed at a difficult time, after Augustine had died and the Vandals had occupied North Africa, the *Vita* depicts Augustine’s life as tranquil and uncomplicated and his career as one of great success.²⁰⁵ Yet, as Hermanowicz writes, “When placed beside the *Confessions* or the *Retractationes*, Possidius’ *Vita* displays little of the imaginative vigor Augustine brings to his autobiography. Augustine writes about who he is, and who he has come to be. Possidius writes about what Augustine did.”²⁰⁶


It is at the end of his biography of Augustine that Possidius appended an *indiculum* listing all Augustine’s treatises, letters and sermons. Although the *Indiculum* can function very well without the *Vita*, by linking the biography with the *Indiculum*, Possidius was “following an established paradigm of prefacing literary collections with introductory biographies.” However, as most editors of the *Vita* and the *Indiculum* have noted, our extant manuscripts, the earliest of which date to the ninth century, contain either the *Vita* or the *Indiculum*, rarely both together.

**Possidius’ *Indiculum***

In the *Vita*, Possidius refers to Augustine’s works by subject, not chronologically, thus building a de facto *catalogue raisonné* of these works in order to facilitate their preservation, interpretation and circulation. Thus ‘frozen’, the books deliberately sidestep what was fundamental to Augustine when he was writing his *Retractationes*, that is, the process of change and development.

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207 Vita 18: “However, not to be thought to fail those who are especially eager for the words of truth, I have decided to append to this little work of mine a catalogue (*Indiculum*) of these books, tractates, and letters (*librorum, tractatum et epistularum*).” See also Weiskotten, 160, note 6.


210 Hermanowicz, 54.

Most scholars agree that, for the compilation of his *Retractationes*, Augustine had a list of his own works drawn up in the 420s, which he likewise called *indiculum* and which Possidius adopted, most likely after he or someone else had made the necessary additions.\textsuperscript{212} One can arguably claim that Possidius’s *Indiculum* is somehow a revision of Augustine’s *indiculum*.\textsuperscript{213} As Gamble has asserted, “The *indiculum* that Possidius appended to his biography of Augustine shows that the library [of Hippo] kept close track of Augustine’s works. Possidius anticipated that readers of his life of Augustine would want to know what Augustine had written and where those works might be found and copied. Yet Augustine himself was familiar with the catalogue and must have participated in devising it. He referred to his own works under the same categories as Possidius used (*Retr.* 2.4), and he was able to specify in the *Retractationes* the time and circumstances of his works, which suggests that the catalogue was not just a list but included specific information. In fact, the nature and possibility of a work like the *Retractationes* presupposes such a catalogue. Thus there is good reason to think that the catalogue presented by Possidius is based on Augustine’s own system of cataloguing his writings.”\textsuperscript{214}

At the end of the *Retractationes*, Augustine declared that he had completed the second book before the revision of the letters and the sermons to the people (*antequam*


epistulas ac sermones ad populum, alios dictatos, alios a me dictos retractare coepissem).\(^{215}\) The interpretation of this sentence, as it appears in the edition of the Maurists, has been the subject of learned debate, since the reading adopted by Pius Knöll who, in his critical edition of this work, suggested that the phrase should read as follows: “antequam epistulas ac sermones ad populum, alias dictatas, alios a me dictos retractare coepissem,” thus indicating that Augustine \emph{dictated} the letters and had \emph{delivered} the sermons \emph{orally}.\(^{216}\) But according to the reading of the Maurists, Augustine dictated the letters \emph{and} some of his commentaries, while delivering others \emph{orally} in the form of sermons.\(^{217}\) The solution one chooses for this “enigma” influences greatly the way one reads and interprets the information provided by Possidius’ \emph{Indiculum} with regard to the categorization of the \emph{Enarrationes} as preached or dictated.

\(^{215}\) Retr. 2.94.2: “Haec opera nonaginta tria in libris ducentis triginta duobus dictasse recolui, quando haec retractavi, utrum adhuc essem aliquos dictaturas ignorans, atque ipsam retractationem in libri duos edidi, urgentibus fratribus, antequam epistulas atque sermones ad populum, alios dictatos alios a me dictos, retractare coepissem” (CCL 57(1984):142-143; ed. Almut Mutzenbecher).

\(^{216}\) CSEL 36 (1902), 204. Knöll follows Codex Petropolitanus 1999, which he prefers because of its age and intrinsic worth (p. i). The reading of the Maurists (PL 32, 656), which has been received in the CCL, is accepted by Roy J. Deferrari, (“Saint Augustine’s Method of Composing and Delivering Sermons,” \textit{AJP} 43 (1922), 99-101, 212-219); Gustave Bardy, in his BA edition of the \emph{Retractationes} (BA 12, 254 and 558); by Maurice Pontet (\textit{L’exégèse d’Augustin prédicateur}, 3 note 9) and Mandouze (\textit{Saint Augustin}, 598, note 2). According to Mandouze, Augustine was about to revise his sermons “d’après une nette répartition en \emph{sermones dictati} et \emph{sermones dicti}.” This, Mandouze writes, would have solved one of the most difficult issues regarding Augustine’s sermons (Mandouze, 598). In her review of Bardy’s edition, Christine Mohrmann rejects the reading of the Maurists in favor of Knöll’s. As she writes, Knöll’s reading eliminates all doubt and “we can accept that Augustine did not write his sermons either before or after delivering them” (\textit{VChr} 8 (1954), 124). According to J. Oroz Reta (\textit{La retórica en los sermones de San Agustín} (Madrid: Augustinus, 1963, 165), all modern commentators now accept Knöll’s reading.

\(^{217}\) Deferrari, 99-100.
Modern commentators have generally been suspicious of Possidius. The excellent works by scholars vindicating the bishop of Calama have not significantly changed the trajectory of scholarship that emphasizes perceived errors and inaccuracies in the *Vita Augustini*. While one has to take into account Possidius’ testimony, one cannot underestimate the witness of the *Enarrationes* themselves as we have them today. It is only by confronting the *Enarrationes* as they have reached us with the information provided by Possidius that we can envision the text Possidius had in hand while compiling his *Indiculum*. On the other hand, a more accurate text of the *Indiculum* will help measure the amount of corruptions, lacunae and errors that might have affected it in the course of its transmission.

**The Indiculum and Its Enigmas**

From the information provided by Possidius, we gather that the *Enarrationes* as we have them today do not constitute the totality of Augustine’s exegetical work on the Psalms. As Dekkers and Fraipont have pointed out, “Mirum quidem est Augustinum non omnes expositiones psalmorum quas ad populum habuit, in *Enarrationes* collegisse.” For instance, under section X of his *Indiculum* dedicated to the *Tractatus diversi*, Possidius provides some information about Augustine’s many works on selected Psalms’ verses.

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220 Dekkers-Fraipont, “Praefatio,” v.

221 See Wilmart, “Operum S. Augustini Elenchus,” 230-232 (“De versibus Psalmorum sermones”). Augustine’s other sermons on the Psalms are published with other sermons on the OT in PL 38 and in CCL 41 (ed. Cyrille Lambert; 1961), which lists thirty-one sermons on the Psalms. Other remarkable treatments of the Psalms can be found in Conf. 9.4.8-11 and in De civ. Dei 17.8-19.
We know also that Augustine’s Letter 140 is a careful treatment of Psalm 21 under the heading *De gratia Testamenti Novi.*

In all likelihood, therefore, it is possible that Augustine himself had arranged the *Enarrationes in Psalmos* as one work, presumably selecting from a much larger pool of his expositions on the Psalms. The *Enarrationes in Psalmos* are made of 158 expositions on the entire Psalter, with eight Psalms receiving two commentaries each. Apart from Augustine’s willingness to produce a commentary on the whole Psalter at the insistence of his brethren, it is almost impossible to determine the rationale that dictated the organization of the collection as we have it today. In particular, it is not easy to ascertain why some Psalms were commented and collected more than once or to know with accuracy which *Enarrationes* are missing from our collection. For example, in his *Indiculum* Possidius claims that Augustine commented Psalm 121 twice. Yet only one *Enarratio* on this Psalm has reached us. If Possidius is to be trusted, this suggests that the


223 Wilmart, “La tradition,” 296; Dekkers-Fraimont, “Praefatio,” v: “Totus opus, quale nobis hodie innotescit, hoc fere modo ab auctore ordinatum esse constant tum ex Possidi uerbis cum ex ipsius Augustini praefatione ad enarrationem in ps. CXVIII…. Sed singulis psalmis semel uel bis expositis, Augustinus opus suum absoluit et edidit; ceteras contiones quas de psalmis habuit inter sermones ad populum disposuit.”

224 See En. Ps. 118, prologue (CCL 40:7-11): “Et cum molestissime ferrent fratres mei, eius solius expositionem, quantum ad eiusdem corporis psalmos pertinent, deesse opusculis nostris, meque ad hoc soluendum debitum vehementer urgenter, diu petentibus iubentibusque non cessi.”

225 On the double expositions of some *Enarrationes,* see M. G. Rauschenbach, “Augustine’s Shorter and Longer *Enarratio in Psalmum 21,*** in which the author compares the two expositions of Ps 21 by Augustine. She argues that the shorter exposition was dictated ca. 394 and the longer one is a sermon pronounced ca. 407. She also shows that the sermon was not just a more detailed exposition of the ideas already present in the dictated commentary, but was the result of a considerable exegetical development distinctly colored with anti-Donatist polemics. (*Vestnik drvevnj istorii* 2 (2009), 150-160 (in Russian; English summary accessed at http://cat.inist.fr/?aModele=afficheN&cpsidt=21821464).

226 Possidius, *Indiculum* X 4: “Fiunt ergo omnes tractatus psalmorum in populo habiti numero CXXIII, quia centensimus uicensimus primus *bis* est expositus.”
second exposition on Psalm 121 has been lost in the course of the transmission of the corpus. But, as François Glorie has argued, that does not seem to be the case.

Possidius’ Indiculum lists together the Enarrationes in Psalms and the Tractatus in Ioannem, two works that were already published—at least partially for the Enarrationes—when Augustine completed his two books of the Retractationes in 427. But what is the relationship between these two works? One can rightly argue that Possidius’ notice referencing the Enarrationes, the Tractatus in Ioannem, as well as some of Augustine’s letters and minor works somehow completes Augustine’s unfinished project of revising all his works. Yet, in all likelihood, we are still far from knowing all the works that Augustine composed.

Although Possidius’ notice attempts to distinguish those Enarrationes which Augustine preached from those he dictated, one of the major problems the Indiculum poses to interpreters rests precisely on deciding which Enarrationes were actually preached and which ones were only dictated. Suzanne Poque summarizes well this thorny question: “Quels sont, parmi les commentaires sur les Psaumes qui nous ont été transmis, les textes qui ont été dictés par Augustin à ses secrétaires et ceux qui ont été pris en note par des tachygraphes pendant qu’il prêchait?”

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227 See Seraphin M. Zarb, Chronologia Enarrationum S. Augustini in Psalms (Valetta: St Dominic’s Priory, 1948), 251. On another solution concerning this information, see Glorie, “Das zweite Aenigma,” 300-302.

228 See Glorie, “Das zweite Aenigma,” 292 and 301-309.

229 Cf. the discussion regarding the reading at Retr. 2.94.2.

The most difficult issue involved in deciding on this question is related to the ambiguity of the vocabulary used by Augustine himself to describe his activities as preacher and commentator.\footnote{For instance, if the action of \textit{exponere} is not explicitly clarified (cf. Ps. 118. Prol.: \textit{partim sermocinando in populis, partim dictando exposui}), the \textit{expositio} can be either dictated or preached. See Mandouze, \textit{Saint Augustin}, 606, note 4.} For instance, in a letter written to Evodius in 415, Augustine intimates that he had either dictated or preached certain Psalms or, at least, was planning to do so: “\textit{Dictaui etiam trium Psalmorum expositionem non paruis uolumnibus, sexagesimi et septimi, septuagesimi et primi, septuagesimi et septimi. Reliqui nondum dictati neque tractati uehementer a nobis expectantur atque flagitantur.}”\footnote{Epist. 169.1} We know that the expositions on Psalms 67, 71 and 77 were dictated by 415 and the verb (\textit{dictare}) used here supports that information.\footnote{Indiculum X4.2; Müller, “Enarrationes in Psalmos,” \textit{AugL} 1 (1984-1996), 804-838, here 830.} 

However, as commentators have realized, with regard to the remaining Psalms whose commentaries were eagerly expected from him, it is not clear whether Augustine used the verbs \textit{dictare} and \textit{tractare} synonymously or antithetically, or at least as two distinct activities.\footnote{Francisco J. Tovar Paz, “Empleo léxico de \textit{tractatus}, \textit{sermo} y \textit{homilia} en Agustin de Hipona y Jeronimo de Estridon,” \textit{Exerpta Philologica} 4-5 (1994-5): 439-448; Maurice Le Landais, “Deux années de prédication de saint Augustin: Introduction à la lecture de l’\textit{In Ioannem},” in \textit{Études augustinienes} (Théologie 28; ed. Henri Rondet, et al.; Paris: Aubier, 1953), 40 and note 111; Gustave Bardy, “Tractare, tractatus,” \textit{RSR} 33 (1946): 211-235; Mandouze, \textit{Saint Augustin}, 606-612.} All these eagerly awaited expositions were eventually completed, ending with the long commentary on Psalm 118.\footnote{The prologue to En. Ps. 118 is more precise and implies a clear difference between \textit{dictare} and \textit{sermocinari} (Prologue 1-4).} Up to this day, partly based on Possidius’ witness, scholars do not agree on which \textit{Enarrationes} were dictated and which were preached. Furthermore, the phrase \textit{in populo (tractati, disputati, habiti)}, meant to
convey the oral character of an *Enarratio*, has contributed to complicate the problem rather than solve it.  

Until recently, all the scholarly discussions on Possidius’ *Indiculum* were based on the critical edition established by André Wilmart, of which I reproduce here the section on the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*.  

**The Text of Indiculum X^4.1-5**

1. Psalmi expositi a primo usque ad tricensimum secundum. Ex his in populo tractati sunt XVIII, XXI, <XXV>, XXVI, XXVIII, XXX, XXXI, XXXII.  
2. Item alii dictati, idest LXVII, LXXI, LXXVII, LXXVIII, <LXXXI>, LXXXII, LXXXVII, LXXXVIII, CI, CV, CVII, CVIII, CX, CXI, CXII, CXIII, CXIII, CXV - coniuncto sibi CXVI, CXVII, CXXXV, CL.  
3. Reliqui omnes, excepto centensimo octavo decimo, in populo disputati sunt, numero nonaginta et septem.  
4. Fiunt ergo omnes tractatus psalmorum in populo habiti numero CXXIII, quia centensimus vicensimus primus bis est expositus.  
5. [Item] tractatus de evangelio Iohannis a capite usque in finem in codicibus sex.  

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236 Mandouze distinguishes the formula *ad populum* that accompanies the description of most sermones from the phrase *in populis*, which designates more appropriately “un milieu réel” (*Saint Augustin*, 608, note 2). On this, see Pierre Charles, “L’élément populaire dans les sermons de saint Augustin,” *NRTh* 69 (1947): 619-650;  

Many commentators have tried to compare Possidius’ *Indiculum* with the data and have recognized some incongruences. Before delving into the many issues involved in the interpretation of the *Indiculum*, let’s begin with the information it provides and the obvious questions it raises.

First, Possidius seems to characterize Augustine’s commentaries on the Psalms as *tractatus psalmorum*. Prima facie, Possidius’ *Indiculum* seems to indicate that Augustine had dictated some of these *tractatus* (*psalmi dictati*) and preached others, presumably in the context of a liturgy, in the presence of notarii, who had copied them down (*psalmi in populo disputati/ tractati/ habiti*) [§§ 1-3]. The distinction between these two types of commentaries is confirmed by Augustine himself who, in the prologue to *En. Ps.* 118, declares: “Psalmos omnes ceteros, quos codicem psalmorum nouimus continere, quod ecclesiae consuetudine Psalterium nuncupatur, *partim sermocinando in populis, partim dictando* composui, donante Domine, sicut potui.”

Second, Possidius’ *Indiculum* also indicates that there exists a relationship between the *Enarrationes* and the *Tractatus in Ioannem* (§ 5). Some commentators have attempted to describe this relationship. In particular, they have studied the genre and nature of the two works, the timeline of their composition and their overall place in Augustine’s exegetical endeavor.

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238 *En. Ps.* 118, prologue 1-4 (CCL 40:1664).
239 *Indiculum* X.5: “[Item] tractatus de evangelio Iohannis a capite usque in finem in codicibus sex.”
Almost unanimously, commentators have been puzzled by the status of En. Ps. 118 in the *Indiculum* (§3). Indeed, Possidius excludes it both from the dictated *Enarrationes* (§ 2) and from those delivered as sermons (§ 3).

Finally, in §4, Possidius gives the number of the preached expositions. As commentators have realized, it is not easy to reconcile this figure with the information in §§ 1-3, let alone with the corpus of the *Enarrationes* as we have them today.

**Editing and Understanding Possidius’ *Indiculum***

*The Omission of En. Ps. 25*

The edition of Possidius’ *Indiculum* involves the restoration of a text which has proven to be lacunary and corrupt in a few instances. The omission of Ps. 25 in § 1 has been noted by almost all the editors and commentators of Possidius, and most agree that it is the result of Possidius’ foresight. Accordingly, Wilmart restores Ps. 25 in Possidius’ list and integrates it between XXI and XXVI where it was omitted, presumably by haplography. Not all scholars, however, accept the integration of Ps. 25.²⁴¹

Recently, Weidmann has argued that En. Ps. 25 is described among the *tractatus diversi* under *Indiculum* X⁶.98 and that it was incorporated in the *Enarrationes* at a later stage. For Weidmann, therefore, it is understandable that En. Ps. 25 is not listed in § 1 among the *Enarrationes in populo tractati*. However, he acknowledges that it is impossible to know when and by whom it was incorporated in the *Enarrationes*. By the

6th century, however, it was already in a manuscript of the Enarrationes which Cassiodorus had consulted.  

In any case, the majority of scholars side with Wilmart, because we have evidence that Augustine probably preached on Ps. 25 in 410/11 in Hippo, after he had made a written exposition on the same Psalm.

En. Ps. 28 and 29

In § 1, Possidius suggests that Psalm 28 was dictated (expositus) and delivered as a sermon (in populo tractatus). This would indicate that there are two Enarrationes on Ps. 28: one dictated and one preached. But there is no evidence whatsoever to support the existence of a sermon on Ps. 28.

On the other hand, the omission of Ps 29 from the Enarrationes in populo tractati is surprising because we have it in the collection of the psalms preached by Augustine. Following Wilmart, most scholars believe that we have here either an error by Possidius

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242 Weidmann, “Zur Struktur der Enarrationes,” 114-120; CSEL 93/1A, 12.

243 Wilmart, “Operum s. Augustini Elenchus,” 181; Dolbeau, Survie, 9-12. On the date and place of En. Ps. 25, see Simonetti, Commento ai Salmi, xxii and 587; Zarb, Chronologia, 120-123, 170, 253; Rondet, Essais, 267-270; Anne-Marie La Bonnardière, “Notes de chronologie augustinienne: Notice sur le Psaume XXV,” RSR 45 (1957), 91-93; Isabelle Bochet, BA 57B, 261-263. It is commonly assumed that the written commentaries on Pss. 1-32, which are dated to 392, were composed before the sermons on this series of Psalms. Many sermons contain important clues that enable scholars to date them more easily. However, because of the many issues involved in the dating of the individual Enarrationes, and especially the dictated ones, it is not always the case that the dictated expositions were necessarily composed earlier than the sermons.

or a copyist’s corruption of the numerical XXVIII as XXVII. In fact, we know that this
psalm was the subject of a dictated exposition and of a predication in Hippo in 414/5. 245

In § 2, Possidius lists the Enarrationes which Augustine, according to the most
accepted interpretation, dictated but never preached. Possidius notes accurately that Ps
115 and Ps 116 are joined together in one exposition or dictation. 246 Therefore, the
commentary on the twenty-one Psalms listed in § 2 has only twenty expositions.

The Omission of En. Ps. 81

In an article written shortly after his edition of the Indiculum, Wilmart made the case that
Ps. 81 was missing from § 2 and should have been listed there as a dictated psalm. 247
Accordingly he attributed its omission to an error in the tradition and suggested that it be
restored in the list: “Il faudrait donc corriger sur ce point l’édition proposée des les
Miscellanea, § X4.2): item alii dictati idest LXVII... LXXVIII, <LXXXI>, LXXXII...” 248
With this integration, Wilmart concluded that there were twenty-one dictated
Enarrationes listed in this paragraph. 249 As in the case of Ps. 25, the integration of En.
Ps. 81 in § 2 is not unanimously accepted by scholars. 250

245 See Simonetti, Commento ai Salmi, xxiii and 593.
246 En. Ps. 115.9 ends with a reference to En. Ps. 116: Audite sequentem psalmum qui quattuor
versiculis continetur.
249 Wilmart, “La tradition,” 297-300.
250 For instance, Capelle, Zarb and La Bonnardière agree with Wilmart (Capelle, Le texte du
Psautier,” 132, 148 and 149; Zarb, Chronologia, 27; 248 and 251; La Bonnardière, Recherches de
cronologie, 133). For Suzanne Poque, the omission of Pss. 25 and 81 are not lacunary, but Possidius’
omissions, which do not affect Possidius’ final count: restoring them will result in a change in the final
count (“L’alternative,” 152).
The Number of the Enarrationes in Populo Habitaes

In § 3, Possidius claims that the remaining Psalms, with the exception of Psalm 118, were preached (in populo disputati) and counts ninety-seven Enarrationes. In § 4, Possidius gives the number of all the psalmi in populo habiti: 123, with Psalm 121 having been preached twice.

As was pointed out earlier, this paragraph has been the subject of much discussion, which will be addressed in the next section. In particular, since Wilmart’s critical edition, it has been agreed that one of the sermons on Ps. 121 was lost and that, in all likelihood, the exposition we now have is the second one. But as I will discuss later, François Glorie has convincingly challenged this proposal.

Finally, if one were to link § 4 and § 5, as the text of the Indiculum seems to imply, Possidius informs us that the six books of the Tractatus in Ioannem were also in populo habiti, from beginning to end (a capite usque in finem). How should one reconcile this information with the fact that not all the Enarrationes were in populo habitae/disputatae? Is § 4 wholly dedicated to the preached Enarrationes? Why do these Enarrationes receive such treatment in the Indiculum?

Interpreting or Rewriting Possidius’ Indiculum

With the addition of the missing Enarrationes, the interpretation of the first three paragraphs of the Indiculum seems quite straightforward. In spite of the subtleties involved, most scholars agree that the first three paragraphs of the Indiculum try to tell us
simply which and how the *Enarrationes* were dictated or preached. Therefore, interpreting the *Indiculum* means deciding which *Enarrationes* were dictated and which were preached.\(^{251}\)

**The Dictated Enarrationes**

One of the earliest commentators of Possidius’ *Indiculum*, Zarb argued that each of the three first propositions of the *Indiculum* contains some information about a number of dictated *Enarrationes*, while the fourth proposition is wholly concerned with the preached ones. From this observation, Zarb accordingly was able to distinguish three groups of dictated *Enarrationes* on the basis of the information provided in §§ 1-3 of the *Indiculum*: 1. *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 1-32 (§ 1); 2. *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 67, 71, 77, 78, 82, 87, 88, 104, 105, 107, 108, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, dictated together with 116, 117, 135, and 150 (§ 2); 3. *Enarratio in Psalmum 118* (§ 3). From § 1, Zarb subtracts the *Enarrationes in populi tractati*. Then he counts all the *Enarrationes dictati* listed in § 3. Finally, in § 3, he subtracts en. Ps. 118 from the *tractatus in populo disputati*.\(^{252}\) For Zarb, indeed, there is no doubt that En. Ps. 118 was dictated.\(^{253}\)

The main problem with § 4 involves deciding whether the phrase *omnes tractatus in populo habiti* refers to all the *Enarrationes* listed in §§ 1-3 or only to those which were


\(^{252}\) See Zarb, *Chronologia*, 5-30.

actually preached. Solving the issue requires the clarification of the terms *tractatus* and the nature of the characterization *in populo tractatus /habitus/ disputatus.*

Therefore, in order to justify the final count of 123 *tractatus psalmorum*, one has to go beyond the issue of the inclusion of En. Ps. 21 and 81, which Possidius supposedly omitted from §§ 1 and 2. Furthermore, because the section of Possidius’ *Indiculum* in question here concerns both the *Enarrationes* and the *Tractatus in Ioannem*, which are both referred to as *tractatus*, it is easy to see why a decision on § 4 will affect in some way § 5. Indeed, Possidius seems to indicate that the *Tractatus in Ioannem* (§ 5) were also *in populo habiti*, just as were the 123 *tractatus psalmorum* (§ 4).

**The Preached Enarrationes**

In her study on “Praedicare - tractare - sermo,” Christine Mohrmann showed that in the ancient church, *tractare* and *tractatus* “were the preferred names for exegetical exposition, whether oral or written” and were sometimes applied also to catechetical preaching. Mohrmann argued that it is during the 4th century that “*sermo* became the more common word for preaching of whatever kind: catechetical, exegetical, or hortatory,” even though no distinction was made between *sermo* and *tractatus.*

The ambiguity was further entertained by the verbs used for both the oral and written exegetical activities: *exponere, tractare, dictare, dicere.* Mohrmann also noted

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that “when the emphasis was being put on the pastoral character of the preaching, the term used was *sermo* or *tractatus popularis,*” that is, a preaching addressed to “the community of the faithful gathered in the church.” According to Mohrmann, the phrase *in populo/ad populum habitus* is clearly meant to signify the presence of the public and so stress the oral character of the exposition.

In § 4 of the *Indiculum,* Possidius uses *tractatus psalmorum* with *in populo habiti.* Even if the term *sermo* is not used, this pairing suggests that he had in mind those *tractatus* that were actually preached and, thus, could be called *tractatus* or *sermones populares.* Indeed, many scholars agree that the term *tractatus,* as used by Augustine and Possidius refers more specifically to sermons that were actually delivered. As Paul Agaësse writes: “Le mot désigne le commentaire *oral* d’un livre ou d’un passage de l’Écriture, présenté sous forme de *sermon* au peuple.”

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257 Mohrmann, “Praedicare,” 70-71. See also Tovar Paz, “Empleo léxico,” 434-446.


Possidius did not think it necessary to further specify how Augustine had delivered the *Tractatus in Ioannem*, whereas in §§ 1-3 he attempted to account for the double origin (dictated or preached) of the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*.

In a remarkable article on the *Tractatus in Ioannem*, Maurice Le Landais accurately noted that Possidius had presented this work “as one single block, without distinction: ‘Item tractatus de evangelio Joannis a capite usque in finem in codicibus sex.’ Nothing here would suggest the existence of a part that was dictated.”261 On the basis of this observation, Le Landais argued that the *Tractatus in Ioannem* are made of actual sermons which Augustine delivered in the course of two years of preaching, from the end of 414 to the summer of 416.262 While rejecting Le Landais’ hypothesis of two years of preaching, La Bonnardière insisted on “the oral character of the second part of the *Tractatus in Ioannem*” as well.263 Yet, as Henri Rondet reported already in 1960, many scholars believe that the last *Tractatus* 55-124 were actually dictated and never delivered as sermons, a point now confirmed by Augustine’s Letter 23A* discovered by Divjak.264

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263 La Bonnardière, *Recherches de chronologie*, 123. La Bonnardière suggests that the *tractatus* were given between 408-422, with an interruption of some ten years, from 408 to 418 (*Recherches de chronologie*, 19-62; 63-118). For another proposal of chronology, see Suzanne Poque, “L’énigme des *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 110-117 de saint Augustin,” *BLE* 77 (1976), 241, note 2.
If § 4 of the Indiculum tries to account for the number of the preached Enarrationes, how should one reconcile the number provided by Possidius and the actual data we find in the corpus of the Enarrationes?

**Glorie and the Enigma of the Indiculum**

As was pointed out earlier, the corpus of the Enarrationes as we have them today contains only one exposition on Ps. 121, even if Possidius claims that psalmus “centesimus vicesimus primus bis est expositus” (§ 4). Almost all commentators suggest that the second tractatus on Ps. 121 may have been lost. But it is also possible that Augustine commented on this Psalm only once and that the information of the Indiculum is the result of a corrupted or lacunary text. In fact, François Glorie has offered one of the best solutions for the interpretation of § 4, thus resolving the problem of the double exposition of Ps. 121. Indeed, Glorie made the case that § 4 of the Indiculum is lacunary and needs to be emended. Glorie rightly noted that it was surprising that among all the expositions on the Psalter only an exposition on Ps. 121 would go missing. After a careful paleographical analysis of the manuscripts of the Indiculum, Glorie was able to determine that the corruption in § 4 may be the result of a homeoteleuton. After emendation, Glorie suggested that § 4 be read as follows: “Fiunt ergo omnes tractatus

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266 Already in 1868, the Bolandist J. Stilting suggested that § 4 was lacunary: Acta Sanctorum, vi: Aug. (Parisiis et Romae, 1868), 450F: “Illa iterata expositio unius Psalmi 121 efficere non potest, ut tot sint sermones, ita ut hic aliquid vel desideretur, uti in editis, vel locus sit mendosus.”


268 Glorie, “Das zweite Aenigma,” 301.

psalmorum in populo habiti numero CXXIII, quia <CXXXII coniuncto sibi CXXXIII> est expositus.\textsuperscript{270}

Glorie’s conjecture is confirmed by the organization of the work as we have it today: En. Ps. 132 and En. Ps. 133 appear to be connected and belong to Augustine’s predication on the \textit{Psalmi graduum}.\textsuperscript{271}

\section*{§ 4 and the Number of the Preached Enarrationes}

As for the final count of the \textit{tractatus psalmorum in populi habiti} given by Possidius in § 4, no scholar has given a satisfactory solution to the discrepancy between the figure and the data. In reality, the suggestions offered so far have resulted in arcane and unnecessarily complex studies.\textsuperscript{272} Among these studies, the one by François Glorie

\textsuperscript{270} Glorie, “Das zweite Aenigma,” 304. See Prosper of Aquitaine, \textit{Expositio psalmorum} (CC 68A). For Poque, (“L’alternative,” 147-8), “l’apport indéniable de Fr. Glorie est d’avoir découvert que ce texte est lacuneux en son 4\textdegree{} paragraphe et d’avoir apporté une conjecture fondée sur des bases paléographiques sûres. Il ne faudra plus désormais croire à une double predication sur le Ps. 121.”


deserves a comment, because it offers a radical solution that is original in its proposal and surprising in its boldness.\textsuperscript{273}

Puzzled by the discrepancy between the figure and the content, many scholars had concluded that Possidius’ \textit{Indiculum} contained an enigma, which no one was able to solve satisfactorily.\textsuperscript{274} However, with his emendation of § 4, Glorie claimed that there was no enigma at all, because the new critical text he proposed solved all the difficulties perceived in the figures given in §§ 3 and 4 of the \textit{Indiculum}.\textsuperscript{275} For him, therefore, “there is no enigma in the apparent contradiction between the content and the figure, because the real enigma lies in the reference to a second exposition of Psalm 121, which should be omitted in section 4; this fact clearly indicates that the text is corrupt at this point.”\textsuperscript{276} Glorie’s emendation of § 4 was made to automatically solve the enigma. In fact, it had important consequences both in the organization and the interpretation of Possidius’ \textit{Indiculum}.\textsuperscript{277} Unfortunately, the coherent and almost impeccable text Glorie proposed raises another set of issues.

Like many other commentators of Augustine, Glorie is intrigued by the character of the En. Ps. 110-117 and by their listing among the \textit{psalmi dictati} of § 2 (ed. Wilmart).

\textsuperscript{273} Glorie’s article is so entitled in reference to earlier studies by Donatien De Bruyne (“Une énigme dans la liste des écrits d’Augustin rédigée par Possidius,” \textit{MA} 2, 317-319) and Zarb (“Une autre énigme de l’Indiculum de Possidius,” \textit{RB} 44 (1935), 412-415).

\textsuperscript{274} Glorie, “Das zweite Aenigma,” 293: “… das sogenannte ‘zweite Aenigma’, könnte man auf folgende Weise zusammenfassen: sollen im 2. Abschnitt des Kapitels X\textsuperscript{4} die \textit{Tractatus in ps. LXXXI} und \textit{in ps. CXVIII} als dictati eingefügt und die \textit{Tractatus in ps. CX-CXVII} als tractati getilgt werden?”

\textsuperscript{275} Glorie, 303: “Wir warden sehen, dass dieser neue kritische Text alle Schwierigkeiten der Zahlen im 3. und 4. Abschnitt löst.”

\textsuperscript{276} Glorie, “Das zweite Aenigma,” 292.

\textsuperscript{277} Glorie, “Das zweite Aenigma,” 304.
While Glorie’s decision to list them in his section 2 among the *psalmi in populo tractati* can be justified, it is difficult to see why he characterizes the other 13 *Enarrationes* listed in that subsection as *in populo tractati* as well, whereas Possidius and recent commentators consider them as dictated.  

More intriguing, however, is Glorie’s characterization of the *Enarrationes* listed in this subsection as both dictated and preached: “item (in populo tractati sunt) alii (psalmi, praeter supradictos) dictati.” To reach such a conclusion, Glorie takes the adverb *item* in § 2 to mean *ita, similiter, aequaliter, eodem modo, pari modo*, thus implying that all the Psalms referred to in the first subsection of section 2 were *similarly dictati* and *in populo habiti*, just as were the preceding eight Psalms referred to previously (in § 1, ed. Wilmart). Accordingly, Glorie concludes that all the Psalms listed after *item* in § 2 should be considered as *dictati and in populo habiti*. As he concludes, “according to the critical text I have established, all Psalms mentioned under *item* in section 2 must be considered as both *dictati* and *in populo tractati*.”

Glorie’s interpretation of section 2 of Possidius’ *Indiculum* has been rightly challenged by Suzanne Poque, who has convincingly argued that, throughout the *Indiculum*, the adverb *item* is always used to mean the ‘addition of one thing to other

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278 En. Ps. 67, 71, 77, 78, 82, 87, 89, 104, 105, 107, 108, 135 and 150. See Müller, “Enarrationes in Psalms,” 817-824; 830-831, who notes, however, that it is difficult to determine the reason why Augustine never gave a sermon on these Psalms (831).


things of the same nature’ and never in the way Glorie interprets it.\footnote{Cf. Poque, “L’alternative,” 148-149, according to whom \textit{item} is used 121 times in the \textit{Indiculum} and only with the meaning of “also.”} Furthermore, there is no material evidence to support Glorie’s suggestion that the Psalms listed in section 2 were first dictated and then preached. If someone argues that a Psalm was first dictated and then preached, he should be able to either support their claim by providing evidence or by showing two forms of that \textit{Enarratio}, one representing the dictated version and the other the preached one. That is what Possidius attempted to clarify in § 1, when he listed the eight \textit{Psalmi expositi}, which were later \textit{in populo tractati}. As Poque convincingly shows, one has to decide whether an \textit{Enarratio} was either dictated or preached, or alternatively dictated first and then preached, but not both at the same time.\footnote{Poque, “L’alternative,” 150; Tovar Paz, “Aproximación,” 149.}

In this regard, Poque’s claim that, with the exception of those Psalms listed in § 1 which were once dictated and then preached, each Psalm was either the object of a dictation or of a predication, and not of both at the same time, is correct. Those Psalms which were dictated first and then preached have two forms. Further clarification by Glorie to explain the circumstances in which an \textit{Enarratio} could be considered both as \textit{dictata} and \textit{in populo habita} have really no consequence with regard to its categorization.\footnote{Glorie, “Das zweite Aenigma,” 306: “Diese alii (psalmi ausser Ps. 1-32) sind also \textit{dictati} von Augustin, und nachher \textit{item} (\textit{in populo tractati}) vielleicht nicht von Augustin.”} Indeed, the assumption that an \textit{Enarratio} may have been dictated by Augustine and later preached by others is too vague to be of any help in deciding on its categorization. In fact, later circumstances in themselves do not confer on an \textit{Enarratio} any special status as far as its categorization in the works of Augustine is concerned.
As we will see in the course of this study, this remark is especially important in the evaluation of En. Ps. 118. The fact that Possidius does not list it among the dictated Psalms of § 2 has led many to believe that this *Enarratio* might belong to a special or mixed genre. But, as it will be shown, the evidence indicates that En. Ps. 118 was dictated. Because the categories dictated/preached are exclusive, apart from those indicated in § 1, no evidence supports the existence of an *Enarratio* that was dictated first and then preached or could belong to both categories at the same time. This does not mean that we know with all certainty the genre of each and every *Enarratio*.

Deciding conclusively on the status of the En. 110-117 remains difficult. As for En. Ps. 118, commentators have noted that it resembles the dictated *Enarrationes*, but is also somewhat different from them. Both Possidius’ *Indiculum* and Augustine suggest that it belongs to a different category.²⁸⁴ Most scholars have accepted this suggestion. That is, for instance, the position of André Mandouze who writes: “Entre la catégorie des pièces sûrement dictées et la catégorie des pièces sûrement prononcées se devine une catégorie intermédiaire que l’ambiguïté même du mot *exponere* ne rend pas facile à identifier.”²⁸⁵

Nevertheless, one has to acknowledge that while the distinction dictated/preached is important, it is not sufficient in characterizing the *Enarrationes* as a whole. There is, therefore, a need to attend to the intrinsic features of these expositions, without neglecting the fact that they were either preached or dictated. That requires defining the

²⁸⁴ Possidius, *Indiculum*, X4.3; En. Ps. 118, prologue.
genre of the *Enarrationes* beyond or in spite of the two broad categories. Indeed, as Simonetti has remarked, “the difference between a dictated *Enarratio* and a preached one is not only of size and tone, but most often of structure.”\(^{286}\) Similarly, Franco Gori has made the case that the distinction between a dictated and a preached *Enarratio* is also of content: “In the preached *Enarrationes* the parenetical content is more accentuated, while the theological and doctrinal reflections therein are rare. There is one feature that distinguishes above all others the exegesis of the dictated *Enarrationes*: it is much more scientific and philological than the exegesis of the preached *Enarrationes*.\(^{287}\) Finally, Gori believes that the difference between the dictated *Enarrationes* and the preached ones is such that it is really not possible to identify in this work on the Psalms common characters that would define its genre as a whole.\(^{288}\)

Although scholarly discussions regarding Possidius’ witness, especially whether an *Enarratio* belongs to one or the other categories, are likely to continue for a long time, the distinction between preached and written *Enarrationes* seems to be solidly established.

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\(^{286}\) Simonetti, *Commento ai Salmi*, xxiv.

\(^{287}\) Franco Gori, “Genere oratorio, tradizione manoscritta e critica testuale delle Enarrationes in Psalmos predicate di Agostino,” in *Textsorten und Textkritik*, 130. Gori argues that the dictated *Enarrationes* demonstrate a clear application of De doctr. 2.12.17 and 2.14.21. As a consequence, “in the preached *Enarrationes* Augustine cites very rarely Latin or Greek variants, which he recalled from memory or read in conjunction with the Latin Psalter he had before his eyes” (Genere oratorio,” 130, note 16).

**Challenging Possidius: The Case of En. Ps. 110-117**

The most serious challenge to Possidius’ testimony with regard to the distinction between dictated and preached *Enarrationes* concerns the series of En. Ps. 110-117, which Possidius lists in § 2 among the dictated Psalms.\(^{289}\)

**Early Assessments: Wilmart, Zarb, La Bonnardière**

André Wilmart had characterized these *Enarrationes* as “des sermons rédigés, sans relation immédiate avec la liturgie,” but submitted that, given the privileged information Possidius had at the time of the compilation of the *Indiculum*, he is probably right to list them as he did, that is, among the *psalmi dictati* of § 2.\(^{290}\)

Similarly, Zarb noted that the *Enarrationes* on Psalms 110-117 had a distinctive character compared to the other dictated expositions listed in § 2. In particular, he pointed out that the latter had the form of exegetical commentary, while the former had the form of sermons. On the other hand, he remarked that the En. Ps. 110-117 were different from the preached ones by their brevity - a characteristic they share with the thirty-two sermons of En. Ps. 118 and the *Tractatus in Ioannem* - and by their lack of any reference to the liturgical readings of the day. Also, unlike most *Enarrationes*, Zarb noted, En. Ps. 110-117 were commented following the biblical order. Finally, because this series of Psalms immediately precedes Ps 118, Zarb ventured the opinion that they might have


\(^{290}\) Wilmart, “La tradition,” 298. According to Tovar Paz, (“Aproximación,” 151), the listing of the En. Ps. 110-117 in § 2 is the result of a hasty classification on the part of Possidius.
been written either shortly before or either together with En. Ps. Ps. 118, with which they share some similarity with regard to the form. However, since Augustine explicitly states that Psalm 118 was the last he commented, Zarb suggested that this series of En. Ps. 110-117 was dictated in Hippo before Lent in 415, when Augustine was working on the remaining Psalms he had not yet commented.\footnote{Zarb, \textit{Chronologia}, 235-236; also Zarb, “Une autre énigme,” 413-414. Cf. Epist. 169.1.1.}

For La Bonnardière, these \textit{Enarrationes} or some of them seem to have been preached by Augustine, but in circumstances that she was not able to elucidate.\footnote{La Bonnardière, \textit{Recherches de chronologie}, 143-149; 155-156. La Bonnardière is especially intrigued by Augustine’s information that he had preached Ps. 111 \textit{ad populum} (De octo Dulcitii quaestionibus, 4.2; Retr. 2.65)} In particular, La Bonnardière did not see any liturgical allusions in the En. 110-117. As she writes, “On a donc l’impression qu’il n’y a pas eu de lectures liturgiques correspondant aux \textit{Enarrationes in Psalmos} 110-117.”\footnote{La Bonnardière, \textit{Recherches de chronologie}, 151.} Therefore, in spite of the reference to the Alleluia, she believed that En. Ps. 110-117 do not include the Easter \textit{lectiones certae} that would situate them during the Paschal period.\footnote{La Bonnardière, \textit{Recherches de chronologie}, 150-155. Cf. Cyrille Lambot, “Les sermons de saint Augustin pour les fêtes de Pâques: Liturgie et archéologie,” \textit{RSR} 30 (1956), 230-240; idem, “Une série pascale de sermons de saint Augustin sur les jours de la création,” in \textit{Mélanges offerts à Mademoiselle Christine Mohrmann} (Utrecht: Spectrum, 1963), 213-221; Marie Comeau, “Les prédications pascales de saint Augustin,” \textit{RSR} 23 (1933): 257-282.} Overall, La Bonnardière was perplexed by the character of the En. Ps. 110-117 and was undecided as which of the two categories they ultimately belong to. Therefore, she concluded prudently: “One cannot count them among the dictated \textit{Enarrationes} or without hesitation among the preached \textit{Enarrationes}, from which they differ by a certain impersonality that is not customary for Augustine.
(...) This series [of Enarrationes] has a peculiarity whose mystery we have not been able to solve.”295

Suzanne Poque and the Case of En. Ps. 110-117

To my knowledge, it is Suzanne Poque who has offered the best assessment of En. Ps. 110-117, by showing convincingly and on internal evidence that these Enarrationes were effectively preached by Augustine. And this conclusion is the most radical challenge to Possidius who lists these expositions among the dictated Enarrationes.

In her detailed study of En. Ps. 110-117, Poque determined that Augustine dictated only the exordia to these Enarrationes, in preparation for a series of sermons he delivered at a gathering of bishops.296 Thus, differing from what had been commonly accepted, Suzanne Poque believed that an attentive reading of these Enarrationes reveals some allusions to the liturgy and to the audience.297 First of all, Poque observed that the En. Ps. 110-117 are generally much longer than the dictated Enarrationes on Psalms 1-

295 La Bonnardière, Recherches de chronologie, 164.

296 Poque, “L’enigme,” 263: “Augustin se sera préparé à commenter, devant ses collègues et au sein de l’assemblée des chrétiens, les Psaumes 110-117, en dictant les exordes et les grandes lignes de développements qu’il aura par la suite étoffés en improvisant. Connaissant de façon précise la date, d’ailleurs toute proche, de ses homélies, il se plaçait par avance dans les circonstances concrètes de l’assemblée devant laquelle il se trouverait.” The likelihood of Poque’s suggestion is not supported by the excellent study of Roy J. Deferrari, who has argued that Augustine’s preached works are literally filled with evidence of spontaneity and extemporization. In particular, contrary to Poque, Deferrari noted that, “the beginnings and ends of (Augustine’s) sermons most often contain statements which clearly show spontaneity and indicate that Augustine spoke without any sort of written guidance” (Roy Deferrari, “Augustine’s Method,” 199); see also Gori, “Egesi e oratoria,” 67 and 110-119. In the De doctrina christiana (4.10.25), Augustine does not entertain the possibility of reading an already written sermon. Reading somebody else’s sermon is a concession made to those who cannot improvise or compose a sermon of their own (De doctr. 4.29.62); see Alexandre Olivar, La predicación cristiana antigua (Barcelona: Herder, 1991), 606-611; Idem; “Preparación e improvisación en la predicación patrística,” in Kyriakon: Festschrift Johannes Quasten, vol. 2 (eds. Patrick Granfield and Josef A. Jungmann; Münster: Verlag Aschendorff, 1970), 736-767.

32, but sensibly shorter than most of the thirteen dictated Enarrationes listed in § 2 of the Indiculum. After examining three stylistic elements of the preached Enarrationes (the captatio benevolentiae of the exordium, the apostrophes to the public by the use of vocatives and imperatives, the presence of forms of the second person), Poque noted the length of the exordia and the difference in style between the exordia and the developments that follow them.\textsuperscript{298} She then observed that, “the eight commentaries of Ps. 110-117 present an array of interjections, and precisely those found in delivered sermons.”\textsuperscript{299}

\textit{Date and Occasion of En. Ps. 110-117}

After acknowledging that “the Enarrationes 110-117 seem to bear more similarity with the dictated commentaries,” she proceeded to give a detailed analysis of the context and noted that these Enarrationes probably belonged to a liturgical period during which the Alleluia is sung.\textsuperscript{300} Consequently, she argued that Augustine might have chosen this series of Psalms as appropriate texts for commentary during the Easter octave, just like the Tractatus in epistulam Ioannis ad Parthos or of the sermons on the seven days of creation.\textsuperscript{301}

\textsuperscript{298} Poque, “L’éénigme,” 248.

\textsuperscript{299} Poque, “L’éénigme,” 249. See, e.g., En. Ps. 115, end: “Audite…”

\textsuperscript{300} Poque, “L’éénigme,” 253. En Ps 110.1: “Venerunt dies ut cantemus Alleluia;” 113.1,5; 115.2; 117.2,4,23.

Thus, according to Poque, “although A. Wilmart puts these commentaries among a group of ‘sermons written without immediate connection with the liturgy,’ one can still discover references to the liturgical readings of the day.” Therefore, not only did Poque connect these expositions to the Easter octave, she also identified the Gospel reading, which she associated with the celebration of the martyrs Marianus and Jacobus, honored in Carthage on May 6. To be even more precise, Poque argued that En. Ps. 110-117 are true sermons, which Augustine delivered before an assembly of bishops between May 6 and May 29, 399, the Feast of Pentecost.

**Audience of En. Ps. 110-117**

Because she had noticed that, throughout these *Enarrationes*, Augustine seems to be particularly deferential toward his public, which appears to be learned, Poque suggested that the terms *fratres et filii carissimi*, contrary to common usage, referred here to a

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305 Poque, “L’enigme,” 264. The Easter season, the *paschalis solemnitas*, broadly understood, comprised the Lenten preparation to Easter and the period down to and including Pentecost.

306 En. Ps. 113.1.1; 113.2.2; 117.2; 112.2; 114.1. On the ways the congregation was addressed in early Christian preaching, see Gerhard Krause, “Anredeformen der christliche Predigt,” in *Wort und Welt: Festgabe für Professor D. E. Hertzsch* (ed. Manfred Weise; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1968), 175-188; Mary Bridget O’Brien, *Titles of Address in Christian Epistolography* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1930); Antoon A. R. Bastaensen, *Le cérémonial épistolaire des chrétiens latins: Origines et premiers développements* (Nijmegen: Dekker & van den Vegt, 1964). According to Pontet, the use of the phrase ‘fratres carissimi’ in an Augustinian sermon was sometimes a sufficient reason for Erasmus to reject it as spurious (*L’exégèse d’Augustin*, 20).
group of bishops who were in attendance during the liturgy and listened to Augustine’s preaching, presumably at the Council of Carthage of 399.

For Poque, therefore, “the oratorical features of the exordia, the continued addressing of the public, the uncovering of the liturgical readings in these texts, as well as the identification of an unexpected audience, all support the suggestion of a real preaching” of the En. Ps. 110-117. Poque’s observations reinforce the opinion of the Maurists who had characterized each of these Enarrationes as sermo, sermo ad populum or sermo ad plebem.

Poque’s study has received contrasting evaluations. In particular, her dating of these Enarrationes to 399 seems to be the weakest point of her proposal. Although

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308 Sermo (En. Ps. 113.1-2); sermo ad populum (En. Ps. 111); sermo ad plebem (En. Ps. 110; En. Ps. 114-117).


310 For instance, Berrouard (“L’exégèse augustinienne,” 120, note 72) for whom, “S. Poque explique ingénieusement le caractère étrange de cette série de sermons qui auraient été rédigés par Augustin avant d’être prêchés par lui, mais les arguments qu’elle avance pour dater leur predication de mai 399 me paraissent trop fragiles pour emporter la conviction.” We know something about the councils which were held in 393, 397, 399, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 407, 408, 410, 411, 412, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 421, 422-23 and 425 (Cf. Concilia Africæ (ed. Ch. Munier, CCL 149:1974)). Incidentally, however, the one which we know the least about Augustine’s activities is precisely the council of 399. On Augustine’s activities at the 399 council of Carthage, see Perler and Maier, Les voyages de Saint Augustin, 222-228 and the chronological tables therein, 430-477; Gustave Bardy, “Conciles d’Hippone au temps de saint Augustin,” Augustiniana 5 (1955): 441-458; La Bonnardière, Recherches de chronologie, 162-163; Charles Munier and Herman Josef Sieben, “Concilium (concilia),” AugL 1 (1986-1994), 1085-1107, esp. 1091-1099; Hermann Josef Sieben, Die Konzilsüder der Alten Kirche (Münich: Schöningh, 1979), 68-102.
many scholars agree that Augustine composed these Enarrationes early in his career, there is really no solid evidence to support this dating in particular. On the other hand, as Mandouze has warned, the use of internal criteria, such as subject matter, tone and style, are not decisive elements in deciding on the place where a sermon was delivered.

Furthermore, most of the oral characteristics Poque highlights are prominent primarily in the exordia. This fact may suggest that these exordia constitute later additions to previously written texts. Indeed, following the exordia the style of the En. Ps. 110-117 is very similar to that of the dictated Enarrationes on Psalms 1-32. Poque is aware of this objection when she argues that Augustine might have dictated the exordia before preaching on the individual Psalms. The difficulty, however, is that the dictated exordia have the oral characteristics, which one would have expected to see in the preached sections, that is, in the body of the Enarrationes. In any case, only Suzanne Poque’s study best explains both why the En. Ps. 110-117 belong in §2 of Possidius’s Indiculum and is described by Augustine as pertaining to his sermonic material. Also,

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311 For other proposal of datation, see La Bonnardière, Recherches de chronologie, 156-158; Zarb, Chronologia, 235-241 (Easter 414); Pierre-Marie Hombert, Nouvelles recherches de chronologie augustinienne (EAA 163; Paris: Institut d’études augustinienes, 2000), 240, note 12 (Winter 403/404). Ironically, it is La Bonnardière who provides Poque with a decisive support for dating the En. Ps. 110-117 to 399. Indeed, La Bonnardière has shown that 399 is the year when Gaudentius and Jovius executed the anti-Pagan laws of 399 (Cod. Theod. xvi.10.13; 15-20) and En. Ps. 113.2 seems to refer to the pagan practices of that period. On the application of these anti-Pagan laws in Carthage, see Epist. 47.3, En. Ps. 96, Sermo 62 and the De consensus Evangelistarum. Now, all these texts are dated to 399. See La Bonnardière, Recherches de chronologie, 158-164; André Mandouze, “Saint Augustin et la religion romaine,” RechAug 1 (1958): 187-223; esp. 207-210; Perler and Maier, Les voyages de saint Augustin, 391-395.

312 Mandouze, Saint Augustin, 618, note 1.

313 Cf. De octo Dulcitii quaestionibus, 4.2.
it provides us with a rare, and perhaps unique example of the way Augustine composed his sermons and delivered them.\textsuperscript{314}

While Possidius’ \textit{Indiculum} gives us some clear indication as to the status of most of the \textit{Enarrationes} with regard to their genre, distinguishing clearly between dictated \textit{Enarrationes} and sermons requires more information than we can possibly have for all of them.\textsuperscript{315} But there can be no doubt about the two \textit{Hauptgattungen} of the \textit{Enarrationes in Psalms}.

Indeed, in the important prologue to En. Ps. 118, written to complete his work on the Psalter, Augustine claimed that he had commented all the psalms “partim sermocinando, partim dictando,” thus distinguishing the dictated \textit{Enarrationes} from the preached ones. As we have seen, this distinction transpires also in Possidius’s \textit{Indiculum}. That some \textit{Enarrationes} were dictated first and then preached is already acknowledged by Possidius who, in the first paragraph of his \textit{Indiculum}, lists those psalms which were \textit{expositi} first and then \textit{in populo tractati}. For these psalms, we have accordingly at least two forms of the expositions.\textsuperscript{316} For most of the \textit{Enarrationes}, however, it is still difficult to decide whether they were dictated or preached, the most intriguing case being the series of En. Ps. 110-117.


\textsuperscript{315} See Wilmart, “La tradition,” 296: “La distinzione des ‘dictées’ et des véritables sermons est en effet incertaine.”

\textsuperscript{316} In the group of Psalms 1-32, for instance, En. Ps. 18, 21, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31 and 32 were dictated and preached once, twice (En. Ps. 32) and even thrice (En. Ps. 30).
The *Indiculum* and the Transmission of Augustine’s *Enarrationes*

As we have seen, in composing his catalogue (*indiculum*) of Augustine’s works, Possidius organized his information thematically, not chronologically. Hence, the section we have examined deals respectively with the *tractatus* on the Psalms and the *tractatus* on the Gospel of John. Yet it is fair to say that, with regard to the section on the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, a certain chronological order is still perceptible.

Indeed, the *Indiculum* begins with the earliest *Enarrationes* (§ 1) and ends with some information on the last one (§ 3). The progression from § 1 to § 3 describes a chronological curve from the first commentaries (En. Ps. 1-32) to the last (En. Ps. 118). On the other hand, it seems that Possidius wanted also to organize the *Enarrationes* by grouping them according to their genres and by following perhaps the order according to which they were gathered in earlier series, collections or compilations.\(^{317}\) The §§ 1-3 may represent different *indicula*, established at different periods, and Possidius’ *Indiculum* may be the result of their compilation.\(^{318}\) The problematic § 4 seems to be Possidius’ editorial summary. As such, it contains the most difficult readings of the *Indiculum*.\(^{319}\)

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\(^{317}\) Hence the distinctions between *psalmi expositi*, and *psalmi in populo tractati/ habiti/disputati*. En. Ps. 1-32 seem to have circulated as a collection as early as 404. The preached *Enarrationes* of § 1 may have been published together as it is witnessed in the 7th c. manuscript of Luxeuil (see CSEL 93/1A, 11). According to Bouvy (“Les *Enarrationes* sur les Psaumes,” 426), they constituted a *libellus*. On collections of the *Enarrationes*, see also Michael M. Gorman, “The Oldest Epitome of Augustine’s Tractatus in Euangelium Ioannis and Commentaries on the Gospel of John in the Early Middle Ages,” *REAug* 43 (1997): 63-103, esp. 67-69; Joseph T. Lienhard, “The Earliest *Florilegia* of Augustine,” *AugSt* 8 (1977): 21-31.


\(^{319}\) But more fundamentally, as is well known, the transmission of lists, full of names and figures, often carries its share of errors. See Dolbeau, “*Indiculum*, -us,” 571-581.
Therefore, most of the convolution and confusion of the *Indiculum* may be the result of Possidius’ attempt to present the information regarding the *Enarrationes* both chronologically and thematically.\textsuperscript{320} Such an endeavor was rendered even more difficult because of the canonical order of the Psalms in the Bible. Hence, an *Enarratio* composed earlier but numbered higher in the Psalter would end up being listed later than an *Enarratio* written later but numbered lower in the Psalter… But, as it is well known, Augustine commented in canonical order only a few series of Psalms.\textsuperscript{321} This state of affairs accounts for the confusion and difficulties in interpreting Possidius’ *Indiculum*. The mention of En. Ps. 118 in § 3 signals that it was one of the last and supports the suggestion that Possidius might have used Augustine’s *Indiculum* in order to draw or check his own list(s).\textsuperscript{322}

**The *Indiculum* and the Earlier Collections of the *Enarrationes***

As Poque has argued, Possidius’ *Indiculum* is evidence that there existed in Hippo a collection of heterogeneous commentaries on the entire Psalter, some of which are now known as *Enarrationes in Psalmos*. These commentaries are related to Augustine’s ministry in the Roman Province of Africa and particularly in Numidia between 391 and

\textsuperscript{320} According to Dolbeau, the *Indiculum* demonstrates “(1) la conservation de sequences chronologiques ou liturgiques, plus ou moins étendues; (2) une relative fidélité à l’égard des recueils composites.” (“Indiculum, -us,” 577).

\textsuperscript{321} Namely Pss. 1-32; 104-108; 110-117; 119-133. On this last group, see En. Ps. 125.1: “Since we have been taking this group of psalms in numerical order, you will already be aware that the one we deal with today is the 125\textsuperscript{th} and that it belongs to the collection entitled *Songs of Steps.*”

\textsuperscript{322} On Augustine’s own *indiculum*, see Retr. 2.41. Dolbeau believes that Possidius is not the original author of the *Indiculum*, but rather a redactor. Hence his suggestion to call the document *Indiculum of Hippo* (“La survie des œuvres,” 14).
In the *Indiculum*, this ministry of the word is expressed by the phrases *exponere, in populo tractare/habere/disputare*.\(^\text{324}\)

As happens with all popular works, Augustine’s expositions on the Psalms were collected early enough by increments until the collection was complete, with one or more commentaries on each Psalm. This process, which may have begun during Augustine’s life (at least in the case of En. Ps. 1-32) or shortly after his death, found its first documented shape in the *Indiculum* of Possidius, but continued to change by alterations and changes, as witnessed in our manuscripts.\(^\text{325}\) Factors that may have contributed to this complex process of collection and organization of the corpus include the importance of the Psalms in liturgy, the canonical ordering of the Psalms, the importance of the Psalter in monastic circles, the fame of Augustine and the evolution of sermon practices, from *in populo* delivery to study practices among learned monks.

**The Role of the Notarii in the Transmission of the Enarrationes**

As Glorie and Weidmann have pointed out, the degree of textual corruptions in the *Indiculum* and the *Enarrationes* cannot be underestimated, because these textual corruptions (insertions, deletions, rearrangements) affect not only small units, but also the


\(^{325}\) On the *Indiculum* as the earliest detailed list of Augustine’s writings, see Weiskotten, *Sancti Augustini Vita*, Chapter xviii, 160, note 6.
very structure of the work as a whole. In this sense, they expose the tension between the
intention of the author of the *Enarrationes* and their reception as a coherent work.\textsuperscript{326}

Without external testimony, such as Possidius’s, and strong internal evidence from Augustine’s own works, there is no way we can know with certainty which
*Enarrationes* were either preached or dictated, because all the *Enarrationes* have reached us in written form devoid of the immediacy of the oral delivery.\textsuperscript{327} Indeed, as obvious as this may sound, all the *Enarrationes* were written down and have reached us as *scripta* or transcripts of the *notarii*.\textsuperscript{328} As Deferrari has argued: “The sermons as we have them today are copies of the longhand transcripts of the notes of the *notarii*. This explains the vigor, the conversational tone, and the many irregularities which are to be found in Augustine’s discourses.”\textsuperscript{329} So, in a certain sense, preached or dictated, all the *Enarrationes* are somehow the work of scribes, that is, the result of dictation.\textsuperscript{330}

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\textsuperscript{327} Possidius reports that, “everyone employed stenographers, as much as he wanted and was able to, so that what Augustine said was retained in written form” (Vita 7).

\textsuperscript{328} The notary was an official who took the dictation of another. Cf. En. Ps. 51.1.5; Retr. Prol. 2; Vita 7; 18; Retr. 1.18; 1.26; 2.16; 2.19; 2.31; 2.32; Epist. 75.1; 82.17; 162.1; 169.1; Sermo 173A; 202A.5; 238.1. On the *notarii*, who were also called *exceptores* (catchers) and *tachygraphers* (speedwriters), see O. Fieberger, “Exceptor,” *Pauly-Wissowa Realencyclopädie* VI/2 (1909), 1565ff; Weinberger, “Kurzschrift,” *Pauly-Wissowa Realencyclopädie* XI/1 (1922), 2217-31; Weinberger, “Tachygraphoi,” *Pauly-Wissowa Realencyclopädie* IV A.2 (1932), 1996; Defferrari, 105-110; 119-123; Olivar, *La predicación cristiana*, 911-914; Desiderius Ohlmann, “Die Stenographie im Leben des hl. Augustinus,” *Archiv für Stenographie* 56 (1905): 273-279; 312-319; Hans C. Teitler, *Notarii and Exceptores: An Inquiry into Role and Significance of Shorthand Writers and Ecclesiastical Bureaucracy of the Roman Empire (From the Early Principate to c. 450 A.D.)* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1985); Harald Hagendahl, “Die Bedeutung der Stenographie für die spätlateinische christliche Literatur,” *JAC* 14 (1974): 24-38. On the ressources available to Augustine as a writer, see J. Scheele, “Buch und Bibliothek bei Augustinus,” *Bibliothek und Wissenschaft* 12 (1978): 14-114; Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 165-168.

\textsuperscript{329} Defferrari, 211.

\textsuperscript{330} See Müller, CSEL 94/1, 10, note 3. En. Ps. 51.1.5: “…placuit fratribus non tantum aure et corde, sed et stilo excipianda quae dicimus, ut non auditorum tantum, sed et lectorem etiam cogitare debeamus.” Although Augustine delivered his sermons extemporaneously, it would be inaccurate to claim that he
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Therefore, “the difference between writing and dictating sermons is very slight, since it is
the difference merely between having some one put your careful thought in writing for
you, and performing the manual labor yourself.”

The importance of scribes and stenographers cannot be underestimated because,
as De Bruyne has remarked, “all the sermons preached in the absence of the notarii are
permanently lost to us.” Indeed, stenographers were active in various settings: they
were in Augustine’s workplace and in the assemblies before which he preached. On the
one hand, as André Mandouze comments, “the general habit of dictation that
characterizes Augustine as a writer has certainly influenced the preacher as to likely
reduce in practice the distance that separates some sermones dicti from some sermones
dictati.” On the other hand, while “the transcriptions of the notarii, from which much
light and shade has naturally disappeared, show us that many sermons were punctuated
by loud applause, sometimes, indeed, by complete dialogues between speaker and
audience, all of which have been faithfully reproduced,” we have nevertheless lost
Augustine’s voice, suavitas dictionis and perspicuitas dicendi, that is, his usus
sermocinandi.

Therefore, van der Meer is right when he states:

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331 Deferrari, 98; see also Eduard Norden, Die antike Kunstprosa vom VI. Jahrhundert von Christus bis

332 Donatien De Bruyne, “La chronologie de quelques sermons de saint Augustin,” RBen 43 (1931):

333 Mandouze, Saint Augustin, 617, note 1. See also Heinrich Marti, “Lateinische Predigten zwischen

334 De doct. 4.8.22; 4.13.29. See also van der Meer, Augustine the Bishop, 427; Gori, “Esegesi e
oratoria,” 70-72; Johannes van Oort, “Augustine, his Sermons, and their Significance,” HTS Theological
Studies 65 (2009): 363-372; here 364. Indeed, we have lost what the ancients called the actio, that is, the
What is true of all good speakers is certainly true of Augustine, namely, that the bare text which has been reconstructed from the notes of stenographers does not even give an approximate idea of the reality. That stream of words that ceaselessly rushes on, sparkling and shimmering as it goes, has here been reduced to a shadow of its true self. One must have heard the man himself, writes Possidius, however well what he says looks on paper.\footnote{335}

Yet, as important as the notarii may be, their role should not overshadow that of Augustine in the final shaping of the Enarrationes. Indeed, with the variety of the circumstances in which they were produced, it would be inaccurate to claim that Augustine himself never wrote anything. In fact, the dictated Enarrationes on Psalms Ps. 1-32 may well be Augustine’s personal exegetical notes that he himself may have written.\footnote{336} As the grammarian’s practice dictated, for Augustine also “composing was always a matter of dictating (dictare), and once a fair copy was transcribed from stenographic notes, of correcting (emendare).”\footnote{337} However, in the case of the Enarrationes, this emendation did not amount to a revision, because, “after they were transcribed into longhand, they were probably never revised by anyone, not to mention the author himself.”\footnote{338}

timbre of the voice, the gestures and the facial expressions, because, as van der Meer writes, “The sermon was not only a form of popular education but also of popular entertainment” (Augustine the Bishop, 431).

\footnote{335} van der Meer, Augustine the Bishop, 412. Cf. Vita 31.9.

\footnote{336} On Augustine’s own adnotationes, see Retr. 2.34.

\footnote{337} Gamble, Books and Readers, 139. In De Trin. 15.48, Augustine says, referring to In Ioan. 99, “in sermone quodam proferendo ad aures populi christianis diximus, dictumque conscripsimus. See also Simonetti, Commento ai Salmi, xxii: “Ma abbiamo motivi di credere che buona parte delle omelie di Agostino giunte a noi sia stata stenografata durante la predicazione. Agostino, successivamente, rivedeva il testo. Là dove non c’era stata la registrazione stenografica, provvedeva egli stesso alla redazione. Come è norma per i testi oratori giunti dall’antichità, anche delle omelie agostiniane noi possediamo dunque un testo rielaborato, che perciò non corrisponde in modo assolutamente fedele a quello che fu pronunciato.” Pace Deferrari, 100, for whom Augustine “spoke his sermons unhampered, and did not read his discourses after having previously written or dictated them.”

\footnote{338} Deferrari, 219. In fact, Augustine expressly states in the Retractationes that he has revised all his works except the letters and sermons (Retr. 2.94.2). And Possidius informs us that death eventually prevented Augustine from attending to this task: “Praereptos etiam sibi quosdam libros ante diligentioriorem
Categorizing the *Enarrationes* in Recent Scholarship

Modern commentators have devoted time and talent to distinguishing more accurately the different categories of the *Enarrationes* on their own terms and beyond the witness of Possidius.\(^{339}\) However, most of these contributions are not systematic in their approach.

In his remarkable partial edition of the *Enarrationes*, Manlio Simonetti noted that, while the difference between a preached and a dictated *Enarratio* can be perceptible, the criteria applied in the formation of the corpus are anything but obvious. In particular, Simonetti pointed out the sheer diversity among the dictated *Enarrationes*.\(^{340}\) Already Wilmart had attempted to go beyond Possidius’ *Indiculum* by grouping the *Enarrationes* in four distinct categories: “[1] de brèves notes d’exégèse, [2] des ‘expositions’ ou commentaires plus détaillés, [3] d’autres expositions ‘dictées’ qui revêtent la forme du sermon, mais ne furent point débitées, enfin [4] des sermons proprement dits (*tractatus*), prêchés devant le peuple.”\(^{341}\)

It is Hildegund Müller who has offered one of the best analyses on the categories of Augustine’s *Enarrationes in Psalmodi* in summarizing, as it were, the contributions of recent scholars. In a remarkable article published for the *Augustinus-Lexikon*, Müller

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\(^{340}\) Simonetti, *Commento ai Salmi*, xxiii: “I testi dettati ci si presentano in modo diverso, alcuni come una serie di brevi annotazioni, altri come testi molto più ampi e impegnativi.”

\(^{341}\) Wilmart, “La tradition,” 295.
studies the *Enarrationes* as we have them today and attends especially to the philological aspects of the individual expositions, their exegetical features and eventually their thematic references. After acknowledging that the *Enarrationes* are made of sermons and dictated commentaries varying in form and length, she identifies the four major categories of these expositions: the commentaries to Psalms 1-32 (*Kommentaren zu Ps 1-32, Psalmi expositi*), the sermons (*Predigten, Psalmi in populo tractati/disputati/habiti*), the great dictated commentaries (*grossen diktierten Auslegungen, Psalmi dictati*) and the commentary on Ps. 118, “die nicht charakterisiert wird.” Müller’s careful analysis brings together the issues of philology, chronology and Augustine’s biographical elements in the assessment of the *Enarrationes*.

1. The Dictated Commentaries on Psalms 1-32

While she acknowledges the difference among the dictated En. Ps. 1-32, Müller sees the underlying unity of these exegetical productions and consequently considers them as one *Kommentar* dated to 394/395. She describes this series of expositions as the result of Augustine’s earlier work on the Psalms, which he had dictated shortly after his ordination.

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344 According to Müller (“Enarrationes in Psalmos,” 806-807), these *Enarrationes* have the form of the *commentarius currens* and seem to have been composed in their biblical order, just like En. Ps. 110-117 and 119-133; For Dulaey, however, only En. Ps. 1-11 were composed following the order of the Psalter (“Recherches sur les premières *Enarrationes*,” 348).
to the priesthood.\textsuperscript{345} In particular, she notes that in the En. Ps. 1-14 and 15-32, Augustine comments the psalms respectively verse by verse and by paraphrases and allegoresis.\textsuperscript{346}

As I have already pointed out, it is this series of \textit{Enarrationes} that Jerome refers to as \textit{commentarioli}.\textsuperscript{347} Müller rightly argues that this characterization suggests that these commentaries were not originally meant for preaching.\textsuperscript{348} As will be noted later, these \textit{Enarrationes} are structurally different from the other dictated \textit{Enarrationes}: Effectively characterized on the whole by their brevity, only En. Ps. 17, 21 and 30 are longer than 7 pages in the CSEL edition. Wilmart had characterized them as ‘brèves notes d’exégèse,’ while Rondet argued that only En. Ps. 11-32 could be called \textit{parvae glossae} (a term taken from Zarb) and, as such, correspond to Jerome’s characterization.\textsuperscript{349}

However, the characterization of these \textit{Enarrationes} as “brèves notes exégétiques,” \textit{notae parvae} or \textit{commentarioli}, has led many scholars to consider them as

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{345} Cf. Epist. 149.5 on Ps. 16: “Recensui brevissimam quandam eiusdem Psalmi expositionem, quam iam olim dictaveram.”
\item\textsuperscript{346} Müller, “Enarrationes in Psalmos,” 807. This observation is reasserted by Weidmann, who suggests that En. 1-14 “ist im Still eines lemmatisierten Kommentars gehalten” and that in En 15-32 “sind die Psalmen in einer paraphrasierenden Form erklärt” (“Zur Struktur der Enarrationes,” 106; see also idem, “Unde ipsi…,” 233-243). See also Henri Rondet, who had remarked that the series of En. Ps. 1-32 was made of two structurally distinct groups: en. Ps. 1-10 and 11-32 (Rondet, “Essais sur la chronologie,” \textit{BLE} 61 (1960): 113-127). For Müller, however, the allegorical exegesis of En. 15-32 does not confer to them a different genre (See Problem der allegorischen Psalmenexegese; Müller, “Zur Struktur des patristischen Kommentars,” 16, note 4); for Weidmann, CSEL 93/1A, 16-17, the series of En. Ps. 1-32 is made of sermones and expositiones. On the structure and technique of the commentary in En. Ps. 1-32, see Fiedrowicz, \textit{Psalmus}, 55-61, and 67.
\item\textsuperscript{347} Jerome, Epist. 105.5 The hypothesis that these \textit{commentarioli} referred to the En. Ps. 1-32 was first made by Bouvy, “Les \textit{Enarrationes} sur les Psaumes,” 403. See also Martine Dulaey, “Recherches sur les sources exégétiques,” 285, note 184.
\item\textsuperscript{348} Müller, “Enarrationes in Psalmos,” 806: “Die Bezeichnung ‘commentarioli’ legt nahe, dass die frühen diktierten Kommentare und nicht etwa einzelne Predigten gemeint sind.”
\item\textsuperscript{349} Wilmart, “La tradition,” 295; La Bonnardière, “Notes de chronologie,” 91: “notes personelles, sans plus.” For Weidmann (CSEL 93/1A, 15-32), En. Ps. 1-32 are “allegorische Paraphrase,” while Martin (“Psalmus Gratiae,” 142) describe them as “spiritual paraphrases.”
\end{itemize}
lacking in depth. Martin has warned that characterizing them in that way should not make one overlook their complex dynamic. Indeed, in spite of the limitations Augustine himself perceived in some of them, these early commentaries should not be taken as the endeavor of a novice. In fact, Isabelle Bochet has shown how these early compositions deeply influenced the *Confessions* and how their fundamental intuitions are expanded therein.

2. The Sermons

The second broad category of the *Enarrationes* is made of the sermons Augustine preached throughout his career in Hippo Regius, Carthage, Thagaste, Utica and, probably, in Camarata/Mauritania, between 400-420. According to Müller, these expositions are characterized by their oral style, their tendency to repetition, their apparent lack of logical flow, their linguistic mismatches, and their spontaneous digressions. They document Augustine’s career as bishop and preacher as well as his theological, ecclesiastical and pastoral contributions. They are an indispensable tool for

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351 See for instance Retr. 1.19.2, on Augustine’s use of the phrase *homo dominicus* in his earlier works, including the *Enarrationes*.


the dating of Augustine’s career as a “Seelsorger.” Franco Gori characterizes them as “testi oratori, improvvisati, concepiti e formulati per un pubblico che ascoltava e guardava l’oratore—talora c’è qualcosa in essi che richiama alla mente le peculiarità di un testo teatrale.”

To my knowledge, there is no scholar who has better highlighted the complexity of Augustine’s task as a preacher and of his preaching circumstances than Roy Deferrari in his article on “St. Augustine’s Method of Composing and Delivering Sermons.” Yet it is Manlio Simonetti who has underscored one of the many challenges Augustine faced while preaching: to teach and admonish at the same time, encourage and reprimand. As obvious as it might appear, the paraenetic character of the preached Enarrationes is wholly governed by the particular needs and the preparation of the audience. Simonetti has shown that the paraenetic character of the sermons of the 3rd century, which were addressed to small and learned communities, such as the community at Caesarea under Origen, was less pronounced than in the 4th-5th century sermons. Indeed, the public that listened to Augustine was a different one. The Church had become “popular” and preaching was now more an opportunity to teach about doctrine and morals than about

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355 van der Meer, Augustine the Bishop; Joseph B. Bernardin, “St. Augustine the Pastor,” in A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine (ed. Roy W. Battenhouse; New York, 1955), 57-89. On Augustine’s preached Enarrationes, their dates and delivery circumstances, see Müller, “Enarrationes in Psalmos,” 809-831. Most of the Enarrationes in this category are dated after 410 and present Augustine as a mature and experienced preacher who now provides coherent answers to major theological and pastoral questions.


358 Simonetti, Commento ai Salmi, xxiv; cf. De doctr. 4.4.6: “Debet igitur divinarum scripturarum tractator et doctor, defensor rectae fidei ac debellator erroris, et bona docere et mala dedocere.”
the meaning of the biblical text per se. Therefore, what characterizes Augustine’s sermons is the combination of exegesis and exhortation or, better, an exegesis wholly governed by the pastoral needs of the people. In particular, for Augustine, preaching was also an occasion to address the danger of schism and heresy, the ethical problems the Christian community faced, and the many questions of “our turbulent times.” The occasions of Augustine’s preaching range from the liturgy to study circles to councils. Within the liturgical occasions, the celebration of the martyrs holds an important place.

Contrary to what Schäublin has argued, Müller insists that the structure of Augustine’s sermons is not “completely transparent,” but rather that their composition follows “complex principles, which can only be discovered through the analysis of the structure of individual sermons.” In fact, many factors affect the structure of Augustine’s preached Enarrationes: the organization of the liturgy, the theme and the goal of the sermon (aedificatio ecclesiae), the theological controversies (with the Manicheans, the Donatists, the Pelagians, the Arians and the Pagans), Augustine’s own

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360 Simonetti, Commento ai Salmi, xxiv-xxv. Accordingly, as Mohrmann has shown (Die altchristliche Sondersprache, 21), Augustine’s language in the sermons is “a form of idealized popular language, but an idealized form that not only remains intelligible to the people but also does not strain their capacity for appreciation.”
361 See Sermo 80, on the fall of Rome.
362 On Augustine’s role at African councils, see Munier and Sieben, “Concilium (concilia),” 1085-1107.
biography, as well as the history of the African Church. As Müller has suggested, uncovering the literary sophistication of Augustine’s preached *Enarrationes* requires a deeper investigation of these and other circumstances that gave rise to the preaching.

In particular, a careful analysis shows that the preached *Enarrationes* are not just a modification of the dictated one, with an elaborate beginning and a conclusion. Instead they are influenced by the biblical and extra-biblical themes, the amplification of specific themes and the formal context of the biblical text that requires various forms of elaboration, reduction and polarization. While van der Meer observed that “The older [Augustine] became, the shorter and more powerful and the better became his sermons,” Augustine’s preached *Enarrationes* are not necessarily short.

Commentators have noted that in his sermons and preached *Enarrationes* Augustine sets a main theme in the introduction, which he then develops *lemma* by *lemma*, aiming at joining the proposed theme with the major issues arising from his exegesis of the biblical text. While Manlio Simonetti has observed that Augustine’s preached *Enarrationes* conclude *ex abrupto*, Josephine Brennan has shown

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368 van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop*, 451.


370 Pace van Oort (“Augustine, his Sermons,” 366), who claims that Augustine rarely announces the theme of a sermon: he simply explains and analyzes the biblical passage.

371 Simonetti, *Commento ai Salmi*, xxvi; see however the end of En. Ps. 136. On *codae* and *clausulae*, see Doyle, “Augustine’s Sermonic Method,” 230.
convincingly that Augustine’s sermons generally display “an obvious attention to rhythmical cadences and an abundance of metrical and accentual clausulae.”

Simonetti summarizes well the features of Augustine’s sermons on the Psalms by likening them to a piece of music composed on an initial theme, and whose basic melodic line is then extensively developed and continued in a series of short variations. Repetitions, rhetorical questions, direct apostrophes of the audience and invented dialogues, all contribute to the underlining of the main theme. Occasionally, the contrast between the more developed exordium and the seriatim commentary (by lemmata made of one verse or a part thereof) is such that the Psalm seems not to receive the required amount of time.

While Augustine’s sermons on the Psalms document for us his usus dicendi et sermocinandi, they also bear witness that he was not the only one speaking: his listeners responded, cheered, whispered, disapproved and manifested their reactions in many ways. These sermons are among the most vital masterpieces of Christian

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373 Simonetti, *Commento ai Salmi*, xxvi.

374 See Ps. 92.5. Often, as Dom Lambot noted, Augustine’s sermons display “digression piled on digression and a lack of proportion between several parts” (*Mémorial Dom Cyrille Lambot*, 145).


376 van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop*, 339: “Augustine’s congregations were in the habit of reacting to whatever was read or preached with all liveliness of their temperament. They shouted comments, sighed, laughed, like children at the cinema.”
literature and convey an idea of the living linguistic practice of a fifth-century Christian community.\textsuperscript{377}

I have already alluded to the difficult task of distinguishing the preached \textit{Enarrationes} from the dictated ones. Indeed, as Simonetti has observed, “the overall impression one gets from reading the \textit{Enarrationes} is that, when delivered, Augustine had in view, beyond its immediate audience, the future reader, who would be able to better understand that great eloquence which escaped even the African audience.”\textsuperscript{378}

By studying their structure, themes and overall features, it is possible to single out a series of expositions among the preached \textit{Enarrationes}, perhaps because we know more about the circumstances of their delivery. For instance, Müller highlights in particular the En. Ps. 119-133 which, together with En. Ps. 21.2 and 95, were probably preached by Augustine alternately with the \textit{Tractatus in Ioannem 1-12}.\textsuperscript{379} She also calls attention to the series of \textit{Enarrationes} preached in Carthage and whose theme is the collection of

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\textsuperscript{378} Simonetti, \textit{Commento ai Salmi}, xxvii.

funds for clergy training and the construction of a church. Similarly, she points out the cycle of three psalms preached in Utica and whose theme is the two cities (En. Ps. 64, 138, 136).

Following Poque, Müller considers the 7 Psalms alleluia (Ps 115 and 116 forming one exposition), which Possidius listed among the dictated psalms, to belong instead among the preached *Enarrationes*. In her study on these *Enarrationes*, Suzanne Poque had suggested 399 as the date of their delivery. Whether one accepts Poque’s dating or that of La Bonnardière (400), they seem to be among the earliest that Augustine ever preached.

3. The Great Dictated *Enarrationes in Psalmos*

According to Müller, the gaps which Augustine had left after preaching on parts of the Psalter were eventually filled and supplemented with detailed commentaries that he dictated. Hence the so-called “grosen diktierten *Enarrationen*.” It is at this point that Augustine’s intention of commenting the entire Psalter becomes manifest: his exegesis becomes more coherent, cross-references become prevalent and the idea of a work begins

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to transpire. Indeed, if Augustine had intended to comment on the entire Psalter early in his career, he might have written a preface. 383

If one accepts Müller’s suggestion, that the dictated Enarrationes were meant to complete the corpus of the expositions on the Psalms, one should also concede that no further preached Enarrationes were entered in the corpus once the series of the dictated Enarrationes was begun. 384 As a consequence, with the exception of the early commentaries of Psalms 1-32, the dictated Enarrationes are the latest in the corpus, which they were meant to complete. As we shall see in the course of this study, this observation has a direct import on the characterization of En. Ps. 118. Augustine alludes to the drafting of the first three Enarrationes in this group in a letter to Evodius. 385 Müller notes that it is difficult to determine why Augustine did not preach on these psalms. 386

Obviously, the great dictated Enarrationes are longer than the preached ones, whose length was in some ways determined by the limited attention of the listener. They also lack time signals, vocatives, and any indications of oral delivery. Rightly characterized as “commentaires prolixes” by Wilmart, they illustrate what La

385 Epist. 169.1.
386 Müller, “Enarrationes in Psalms,” 831.
Bonnardièrè called “une exégèse savante,” which includes critical notes, comparison of manuscripts, explanation of locutions, etymology of proper names, etc.\textsuperscript{387}

Müller argues that the last exposition of these dictated \textit{Enarrationes} is probably En. Ps. 150, which can functions as a conclusion to the entire work.\textsuperscript{388} In the quasi proemium to the exposition, Augustine alludes to the mystical significance of the total number of the Psalms and to the general structure of the Psalter.

4. \textit{Enarratio in Psalmum 118}

However, as is well known, with the exposition of Ps. 150 Augustine’s \textit{Enarrationes in Psalmos} were still incomplete, lacking an exposition on Ps. 118. As in the other dictated \textit{Enarrationes}, which were “vehementer [ab eo] expectantur atque flagitantur,” Augustine claims that En. Ps. 118 was composed “petentibus iubentibus [fratribus].”\textsuperscript{389} Is this an indication that En. Ps. 118 was begun or planned as early as 415, when the letter to Evodius was written?

Because of the indications provided by Possidius’ \textit{Indiculum}, scholars have been puzzled by the status of this \textit{Enarratio}. In particular, they have wondered whether it is a preached or a dictated \textit{Enarratio}. As we shall see in the course of this study, Augustine


\textsuperscript{388} Müller, “Enarrationes in Psalmos,” 831; Anne-Marie La Bonnardière, “L’interprétation augustinienne du \textit{magnum sacramentum} de Ephés. 5,32,” \textit{RechAug} 12 (1977): 11. En. Ps. 150 is dated to 417/418. Some codices prefix the concluding prayer of En. Ps. 150 with the following remark: “The prayer of saint Aurelius Augustinne, which he was accustomed to say after each sermon or exposition” (Cf. WSA III/20, 515). For other concluding prayers, see En. Ps. 80.22; 86.9; 128.13; 143.19; Sermo 67; 100; 141; 183. On opening prayers in the sermons, see Sermo 71, 124, 133, 154, 164, 242. For the suggestion that some prayers may be the work of \textit{notarii}, see Deferrari, 214-215; on peculiar additions and insertions by the \textit{notarii}, see Sermo 324.31; En. Ps. 36.2.19-20.

\textsuperscript{389} Epist. 169.1; En. Ps. 118, prologue.
himself asserts that he had commented this long psalm by sermons, which the Greeks call ὠμιλίας. However, most scholars have noted that it is very difficult to reconcile this information with the features of the exposition as a whole.

Like the majority of commentators, Müller thinks that it is difficult to characterize this exposition, to which she therefore assigns a special status. As she writes, En. Ps. 118 is an exposition, “die einem eigenen, zwischen Predigt und Kommentar anzusiedelnden Genus angehört.” Since we have already identified the two broad categories of Augustine’s Enarrationes in Psalmos, it is now fair to ask which one En. Ps. 118 ultimately belongs to. I have already intimated that there cannot be an intermediary category for a given Enarratio, unless it can be demonstrated either that the Enarratio in question has two forms (hence two texts) or is made of parts which were dictated and parts which were preached. In my opinion, in spite of the features of oral delivery in the first eight sermons, which Wilmart has rightly characterized as “sermons factices,” En. Ps. 118 was wholly dictated and belongs to the group of the great dictated Enarrationes, which were composed in order to complete the corpus of the expositions on the Psalms.

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390 En. Ps. 118, prologue.


As is well known, En. Ps. 118 is the longest exposition perhaps because it is based on the longest Psalm. Although it is divided into thirty-two sermones, there are no temporal indices that would indicate that these sermones were ever delivered on successive days during a given period of time. The suggestion that En. Ps. 118 was written by Augustine with the intention that it might be preached at a later time by somebody else than himself only underscores the fact that it was not preached by him, but rather that it was dictated by him.\textsuperscript{393} As I will argue in the course of this study, such a suggestion is also unwarranted because it raises more difficulties than it solves. In particular, it raises the following question: Why would Augustine single out this Enarratio in particular as the only one fit to be preached by others? In all likelihood, one can argue that, because of the popularity of their author, virtually all Augustine’s sermons were destined to someday become other preachers’ sermons.

It remains, nevertheless, that the homiletic character of many Enarrationes is undeniable. In fact, whether one agrees or not with Possidius’ count, or some other scholarly conclusions, the number of the preached Enarrationes exceeds that of the dictated ones.\textsuperscript{394} And this fact plays heavily in the general characterization of the

\textsuperscript{393} On this suggestion, see De doctrina 4.62; Deferrari, 100-103; see La Bonnardière, Recherches de chronologie, 120-121, on her interpretation of the phrase from the prologue: qui proferantur in populi. She also describes En. Ps. 118 as “une ‘diction’ d’Augustin à un groupe restringant, accompagnée ou immédiatement suivie d’une mise par écrit d’un texte destiné à servir ensuite à ceux qui prêcheraient devant le peuple” (141).

\textsuperscript{394} Wilmart, “La tradition,” 295; Simonetti, Commento ai Salmi, xxiii; Poque, “L’alternative,” 150-152. According to most commentators, the corpus of the Enarrationes is made of 86 dictated expositions and 119 homilies. See Olivar, La predicación cristiana, 933.
*Enarrationes in Psalmos* as a whole, especially with regard to their connection to the liturgy.\(^{395}\)

III. THE LITURGY AND THE SITZ IM LEBEN OF THE PREACHED ENARRATIONES

It is commonly accepted that the liturgy is the *Sitz im Leben* of most of Augustine’s *Enarrationes*. We now know a great deal about Augustine’s preaching thanks to the information provided in his innumerable sermons. As Deferrari has documented, we have precious indications about Augustine’s way of composing and delivering sermons, about his preaching habits and about the audiences he addressed and who “were in the habit of reacting to whatever was read or preached with all the liveliness of their temperament.”

We know, for instance, that for a long text, the assembly would return the following day, in certain cases for up to four days. Furthermore, while there is still disagreement concerning details, it can be stated that we now have a very reliable picture

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398 See, for instance, En. Ps. 37; 72; 95; 103; Sermo Mai 126.1; Sermo 51.1; 147.21. On the frequency and duration of Augustine’s sermons, see *Augustin: Sermons pour la Pâque* (ed. Suzanne Poque; SCh 116; Paris: Cerf, 1966), 80; Alexandre Olivar, “La duración de la predicación antigua,” Liturgica 3 (1966): 143-184; 166-177.
of Augustine’s sermons in terms of number, length, content and circumstances. Nevertheless, it remains that our knowledge regarding his preached *Enarrationes* is quite incomplete compared to that of his *tractatus in Ioannem* or his actual *sermones ad populum*.400

*Augustine’s Sermones ad Populum and the Verbi Divini Ministerium*

Augustine’s career as a preacher began with the unprecedented initiative of Bishop Valerius to extend to the newly ordained Augustine the privilege that was then the exclusive prerogative of the bishop.401 Possidius notes that Valerius’ decision was soon followed and generalized throughout the African Province: “*Et postea currente et volante huiusmodi fama, bono praecedente exemplo, accepta ab episcopis potestate, presbyteri nonnulli coram episcopis populis tractare coeperunt.*”402

Unfortunately we have only a few sermons that Augustine delivered as a priest,403 even though the first expositions on the Psalms were composed as early as 390, when, still as a youth, (he) began to write and to preach before the people.404 When Augustine succeeded Valerius as bishop of Hippo in 395, he had some experience of what he would

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399 See the summaries in the *Clavis Patrum Latinorum*, 110-124; Mandouze, *Saint Augustin*, 599-615.

400 The scholarship on the *Enarrationes* is characterized by its fragmentation. Apart from a few outstanding works (including Fiedrowicz), most studies on the *Enarrationes* are concerned with the dating of the expositions rather than with their actual analysis.

401 Vita 5: “*Et idem presbyter potestatem dedit se coram in ecclesia evangelium praedicandi ac frequentissime tractandi, contra usum quidem et consuetudinem Africanum ecclesiarum.*” See also Pellegrino, *Possidio*, 204, notes 3 and 4; Sermo 20.5 (CCL 41, 267); Epist. 41.1 (CSEL 34.2, 81); van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop*, 6-7.

402 Vita 5.


404 Retr. Prol. 2: “…cum iuvenis coepissem scribere vel apud populos dicere.”
later call the sarcina episcopatus, the “burden of the episcopate.” From that time on, preaching became his daily routine, the heart of “the hustle and bustle of the manifold duties of a bishop.” As he himself acknowledged:

There is nothing better, nothing more pleasant than to search through the divine treasure chest with nobody making a commotion; it is pleasant, it is good. But to preach, to refute, to rebuke, to build up, to manage for everybody, that is great burden, a great weight, a great labor. Who would not run away from this labor?

Augustine’s career as a preacher is not evidenced only by the sheer number of his sermons, but also by his undeniable rhetorical qualities. Writing to his friend Romanianus about Augustine’s consecration as a bishop, Paulinus of Nola congratulates Romanianus “not on the mere fact of his [Augustine] having become a bishop, but because the Churches of Africa can now hear him; for the trumpet of the Lord blows through Augustine’s mouth.” Although he spoke with a feeble voice, Augustine preached exspectore, with the ability to move his hearers not only to tears, but also to conversion. Possidius writes that, Augustine “was not only a ‘scribe learned in everything regarding

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406 Hubertus R. Drobner, “I would rather,” 117. Nowhere is the burden of preaching more vividly expressed than in sermo 339 (de proprio natali) given by Augustine in 425 on the anniversary of his ordination. Mohrmann characterizes this sermon as the Confessions of Augustine the preacher (“Augustin prédicateur,” 393). It was published for the first time by O. Fraia Frangipane in MA 2, 189ff. and by Cyrille Lambot, Augustini sermones, 112ff. On the issues surrounding the text on this sermon, see WSA III/9, 279, note 1.

407 Sermo 339.4; van der Meer, Augustine the Bishop, 268. On things demanded of Augustine as a preacher, see Sermo 340.1: “To rebuke those who stir up strife, to comfort those of little courage, to take part of the weak, to refute opponents, to be on guard against traps, to teach the ignorant, to shake the indolent awake, to discourage those who want to buy and sell, to put the presumptuous in their place, to mollify the quarrelsome, to help the poor, to liberate the oppressed, to encourage the good, to suffer the evil, and to love all men.”

the kingdom of heaven, who brings out from his treasure what is new and what is old,’ and one of those merchants who ‘on finding a pearl of great value sold everything he owned in order to buy it,’ but he also belonged to those persons, for whom it is written: ‘So speak and so act,’ and about whom our Savior said: ‘Whoever thus acts and teaches will be called great in the kingdom of heaven’.”

Augustine’s homiletic corpus is made of sermons of diverse types, to which posterity has given titles that are not those given by Augustine himself. For instance, Possidius characterizes Augustine’s sermons on the Psalms and the Gospel of John as *tractatus* and groups all the other sermons under the heading *tractatus diversi*. In his *Retractationes*, however, Augustine calls his entire homiletic corpus *sermones ad populum*.

André Mandouze describes Augustine’s career as a preacher as a dialogue with the crowds, a characterization concretely captured by the Latin phrases *ad populum/in populo*, which are affixed to most of Augustine’s sermons. Although the audience could not ask questions, we find in the sermons “many indications of the care with which

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409 Vita, 31.

410 Under this heading, Possidius lists 199 tractatus, of which two (27 and 73) are characterized as *sermo*; see Wilmart, “Operum S. Augustini Elenchus,”182; 191-207.


Augustine watched the effect of his words upon the congregation. In his sermons, Augustine displays the readiness of his memory, the depth of his knowledge of Scripture, the familiarity with the subject. The simplicity and directness of his discourses betray the complicity between the preacher and his audience.

Perler and Maier have documented that Augustine accomplished his duty as a preacher so well throughout the African province that, wherever he went and whenever there was opportunity to speak to the people, rarely was he allowed to remain silent. It wasn’t long before Jerome hailed him as the “most famous bishop in the world,” a description consistent with the portrayal of Augustine as “un homme de nombreux voyages et de longues absences.”

Augustine the Preacher

Since the 19th century the discoveries of Augustine’s lost sermons have continued to reshape our understanding of the career of the bishop of Hippo by placing him again, as Pierre-Marie Hombert puts it, “in his most ordinary ministry, that of the preacher.”

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414 On the use of images and symbols in Augustine’s preaching, see Suzanne Poque, Le langage symbolique dans la prédication d’Augustin d’Hippone (Paris: Institut d’études augustiniennes, 1984), for whom the imagination of a 4th century preacher is expressed “avec le réalisme pittoresque de son temps, de son pays et de sa langue” (xvi); Christine Mohrmann, Das Wortspiel in den Augustinischen Sermones (Rome: Edizione di Storia e letteratura, 1936).

415 Retr. Prol. 2: “… ubicumque me praesente loqui opus esset ad populum, rarissime taceres atque alios audire permetteret et esse ‘velox ad audiendum, tardus autem ad loquendum’ (Iac. 1.19).”

416 Epist. 75.3.5: “episcopus in toto orbe notissimus;” Perler and Maier, Les voyages de saint Augustin, 8.

417 Pierre-Marie Hombert, “Augustin, prédicateur de la grâce au début de son épiscopat,” in Augustin prédicateur (395-411): Actes du Colloque International de Chantilly (EAA 159; ed. Goulven Madec; Paris: Institut d’études augustiniennes, 1998), 217. Augustine was one of the most prolific preachers of ancient
Indeed, until recently, Augustine’s sermons had often been used in a subsidiary way to confirm certain facets of his doctrine or to support a particular aspect of his career. Augustine’s preached work is essential to understanding his whole career. As a priest (390) and a bishop (395), Augustine preached without interruption in several cities of North Africa, mainly in Hippo and Carthage. Reflecting on his own contribution to the discoveries of Augustine’s lost sermons, François Dolbeau remarked:

Painters often portrayed Augustine seated in his study room, away from the people; I am happy now to imagine him standing in front of the crowd, as a ‘sower of words,’ which he had filled with seeds of truth.

On concluding his article on Augustine the preacher Drobner hoped that, “Maybe someone will write a book ‘Augustine the Preacher’ as Fritz van der Meer wrote on Augustine the Bishop.” But, as van der Meer himself has highlighted, Augustine the bishop is first of all Augustine the preacher.

The scholarship on Augustine’s sermons has naturally led to a renewed interest in the Enarrationes in Psalmos, a work on which he worked for over 30 years (390-
Augustine’s longest opus that also chronicles his career as a preacher and a “seminator verborum,” because, as André Wilmart rightly put it, “Augustine’s entire career is somehow therein summarized.”423 In fact, apart from the sermons, there is no better place to meet Augustine the preacher than in his Enarrationes. Yet, as it has already been pointed out, all the Enarrationes were not produced and delivered in the same circumstances and not every Enarratio resulted from Augustine’s preaching. Moreover, not every preached Enarratio had its setting in liturgy.

**Liturgical Sermons and Exegetical Discourses**

Although all the sermons of Augustine are exegetical in nature, it is legitimate to distinguish the liturgical homilies from the actual exegetical ones. Indeed, it is useful to distinguish Augustine’s preaching in the context of liturgy and his preaching in other contexts. In fact, Possidius informs us that, “in private and in public, at home and in the church, Augustine taught and preached the Word of salvation (…) both in finished books and extemporaneous sermons.”424 In these contexts, the function of the homily was “to outline and update the character of Christian identity and reconnect it to its origins. It is

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424 Vita 7: “Et docebat ac praedicabat ille privatim et publice, in domo et in ecclesia salutis verbum cum omni fiducia adversus Africanas haereses, maximeque contra Donatistas, Manicheos et paganos, libris confectis et repentinis sermonibus…”

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not surprising that a large part of Christian literature in the various languages in which early Christianity is expressed is made up of homilies.”

The distinction between liturgical sermon and exegetical discourse is subtle, but can be particularly important for the Enarrationes in Psalms, because it helps distinguish among them those that were actually delivered in a liturgy from those that may have their Sitz im Leben in other extra-liturgical contexts, such as councils, study groups, or any other context that scholars have not been able to identify. For example, while in an actual sermo in populo no questions can be asked from the floor, in the exegetical commentaries a more structured form of interaction between the preacher and his audiences may be involved.

While we know that the reading of the Psalms was part of the ordinary liturgy, we do not know with certainty how a particular exposition on a psalm fitted into the various liturgies Augustine presided over. Also, it is not evident how often a Psalm may have been the subject of the main preaching in a given liturgy. Many studies that purport to inform us on when and how a given Enarratio was preached often fail to explain how


that *Enarratio* featured in the liturgy envisioned or to suggest an alternative context that would be more appropriate for the exposition.\(^{428}\) Furthermore, not all liturgies had the same form.\(^{429}\) Although it is impossible to be specific on the liturgies that involved the *Enarrationes*, it is not enough to characterize all the preached *Enarrationes* simply as *sermones ad populum/in populo*. Even when they were preached, most *Enarrationes* have in fact reached us as exegetical commentaries, because their liturgical *Sitz im Leben* remains not only elusive but also uncertain.

If we had more precise data regarding all the *Enarrationes* that were delivered in a liturgical context, we would characterize them more accurately as liturgical sermons, geared toward preaching. Those that were delivered in extra-liturgical contexts would qualify, for lack of a better word, as exegetical discourses, if such contexts could be clearly identified. While they were not preached, most dictated *Enarrationes* accomplished the function of the exegetical discourses, more geared toward teaching. There is evidence that Augustine emended or revised some of the dictated commentaries so that they might be suitable for a sermonic style.\(^{430}\) This strategy involved the addition

\(^{428}\) See, for instance, the studies of La Bonnardièrê and Suzanne Poque. In her article on En. Ps. 110-117, Poque conflates council and paschal liturgy to explain the shape of this series of *Enarrationes*, without explaining how these two contexts relate.


\(^{430}\) As I will argue in this study, this seems the case for the first 8 sermons of En. Ps. 118.
of fictive audiences and, probably, later rhetorical add-ons. Because we are concerned here with those Enarrationes that were actually delivered during a liturgy, it is fair to ask when and how they were part of a given liturgy.

Readers, Expositors and Auditors of the Word

The liturgical commentary, with the lector-cantor-expositor performance, seems to have its origin in the synagogue. Maurice Pontet has observed that, “The only, or almost only, point of departure for the sermons of Saint Augustine is the Bible as read or (in the case of the Psalms) sung in the liturgy. The preacher comments on what everyone has just heard.”

The lector, the singer and the tractator (disputator or expositor) functioned as actors in a drama in which they proclaimed (sonare, resonare, proclamare) the word of

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431 On this, see Leo C. Ferrari, “The Peculiar Appendage of Augustine’s En. in Ps. LXI,” Augustiniana 28 (1978): 18-33, in which the author argues that the example of the astrologist who converted, mentioned in the appendix of this Enarratio, cannot be taken at face value as belonging to the earliest commentary, because Augustine’s does not normally speak of himself in the third person. See also Adolf Primmer, “Augustinus und der Astrologe: Zu Enarratio in Psalmum 61,” JAC.E 28 (1998): 253-262.

432 On liturgy at the time of Augustine, see Adalbert-Gautier Hamman, La vie quotidiennne en Afrique du Nord au temps de saint Augustin (Paris: Hachette, 1986), 221-244; Wunibald Roetzer, Des heiligen Augustinus Schriften als Liturgiegeschichliche Quelle (Munich: Hüber, 1930); van der Meer, Augustine the Bishop, 317-346; Zwinggi, “Der Wortgottesdienst,” 95-113. (Cf. Epist 29; De civ. Dei 22.8).


434 Pontet, L’exégèse d’Augustin, 219. En. Ps. 63.19: “Rectify your hearts now, brothers and sisters, correct them now. Who is preventing you? The psalm is sung, the gospel is read, the reader makes his proclamation, the teacher’s message resounds.” On the role (officium) of the readers and references to them in the works of Augustine, especially the sermons and the Enarrationes, see Paoli-Lafaye, “Les lecteurs des textes liturgiques,” in Saint Augustin et la Bible (ed. Anne-Marie La Bonnardière), 59-74; Michael Margoni-Kögler, “Lectio. Lector,” AugL 3 (2004-2010), 914-923. Cf. En. Ps. 93.9; 96.13; 103.2.11; En. Ps. 106.8; En. Ps. 138.1; En. Ps. 84.3; Sermo 17 (on Ps. 49:3); Sermo 22A (on Ps. 49:3); Sermo 32 (on Ps. 143); Sermo 356.1; Sermo 45.1; Sermo 18.5; In Ioan. 22. In this regard, the variant reading at En. Ps. 66.3.73-75 is instructive: “Surgit quotidie, currit ad ecclesiam Dei, audit lectionem, hymnum cantat” (variant: lectorem). On this, see Müller, “Zur litterarischem Einheit,” 301, note 20.
God in turns. They were the intermediaries through whom God communicated to his people: “On every side (God) calls us to amend, from every quarter he summons us to repent. He calls through the blessings of creation, he calls by granting us a prolongation of our lives, he calls through the reader, he calls through the preacher, he calls through our inmost thoughts, he calls through the corrective scourge, he calls through his comforting mercy: he is long-suffering and richly merciful.” Through them, the Word of God is now broken down into syllables and is mediated through letters and sounds, whereas in the heavenly city, “we shall need to have no book read to us, no sermon preached as it is preached to you now.” The role of these actors was important, but not indispensable. As Augustine himself noted, sometimes the Psalm text is so simple “that it might be thought to require a reader or a listener only, not an expositor.”

While we know that the Psalm was part of the customary readings in the liturgies, we do not know how some of the actually preached Enarrationes featured in those liturgies. Addressing this issue would require attending to the following questions: Did some liturgies involve only the reading of the Psalms? Does what applies to the sermons necessarily apply to the preached Enarrationes? Were some preached Enarrationes originally part of an organized liturgy?

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435 Cf. En. Ps. 146.1; 147.2; 117.1; 63.19. On notarii and readers, see En. Ps. 84.3; 93.9; 102.16; 103.3.6; 146.1; 147. 1. De praedestinatione sanctorum 14.27. On the singing of the Psalms, see Paoli-Lafaye, “Les lecteurs,” 63-64; Fiedrowicz, Psalmus, 29-30. Cf. En. Ps. 138.1; 146.1.

436 En. Ps. 102.16.

437 En. Ps. 103.3.3.

438 En. Ps. 118, prologue.

439 Gori, “Egesesi e oratoria,” 63.
In the early Church, there existed the practice of a continuous reading and subsequent explanation of a biblical book, the so-called, *lectio continua*.\(^{440}\) That seems to be what Augustine accomplished with the Gospel of John and the first Epistle of John. Although more than 400 Augustine’s sermons are based on the Psalms, the *Enarrationes in Psalmos* constitute a *lectio continua* of a biblical book only in part and only *post factum*.\(^{441}\) Theologically, however, Augustine understood the Psalter to constitute but one book.\(^{442}\)

We have evidence that an ordinary liturgy or service included three customary readings: one from the Old Testament or the New Testament, one from the Psalms, and one from the Gospels, because “the mouth of Christ is the Gospel.”\(^{443}\) Sermo 165.1, for example, begins as follows: “We have heard the apostle, we have heard the psalm, we have heard the gospel: all these divine readings agree in telling us that we must place our hope not in ourselves but in the Lord.”\(^{444}\)

The organization of the readings was governed by the firm conviction that the two Testaments and all their parts formed a unity, because they had God as their author and were to be read as a “single reading,” so that “When the reading from the prophet ends, you have the promise; when the reading from the apostle begins, you are being told what


\(^{443}\) Sermo 85.1; Sermo 302.1; In Ioan. 30.1.

\(^{444}\) Sermo 165.1.
By explaining Scripture by Scripture (Sacra Scriptura sui interpres), Augustine was following a long tradition.

However, it is because of the liturgical practice of “linking texts in which the preachers saw a common reference to the event being celebrated or which, for whatever reason, were customarily joined together,” that Pontet has characterized Augustine’s exegesis in general as being more liturgical than scientific. But the connection of several biblical texts in the preached Enarrationes does not necessarily stem from a liturgical setting. Peter Brown accurately pointed out that, “In one sermon, (Augustine) could move through the whole Bible, from Paul to Genesis and back again, via the Psalms, piling half-verse on half-verse. This method of exegesis indeed, which involved creating a whole structure of verbal echoes, linking every part of the Bible, was particularly well-suited to teaching this hitherto quite unknown text, to an audience used to memorizing by ear.”

In fact, the numerous studies that have attempted to identify the different readings which Augustine may have commented in connection with a given Psalm have failed to

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445 Sermo 45.1. See similarly Sermo 25.1, when commenting Jer. 31:31-32, Ps. 93:12, and Lk 19:1-10: “There the gospel was promised, here it is given; promised through the prophet, given by means of the prophets.” On the use of Scripture in ancient liturgies, see Albert Gerhards, “Der Schriftgebrauch in den altkirchlichen Liturgien,” JAC.E 23 (1996): 176-190; Pellegrino, “Introduction,” 26-32.

446 Pellegrino, “Introduction,” 44; Pontet, L’exégèse d’Augustin, 157. See also van der Meer, “Augustine’s Liturgical Practice,” in Augustine the Bishop, 317-346. The arrangement of Scripture readings which Augustine follows has been carefully studied by Anton Zwinggi, “Die fortlauende Schrifflausung,” who deals, among other things, with the number of readings, the principles governing their selection, and the questions of whether there was a continuous reading of the Scriptures in the liturgy and whether there was a set order of pericopes (Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft 12 (1970): 85-129). See also Martijn Schrama, “Prima lectio quae recitata est: The Liturgical Pericope in Light of Augustine’s Sermons,” Augustiniana 45 (1995): 141-175.

447 Brown, Augustine of Hippo, 251.
demonstrate whether these readings feature in the *Enarrationes* by virtue of the principle of explaining Scripture by Scripture or as part of a liturgy where the Psalm happened to be the main biblical text to comment.

While the natural setting of Augustine’s sermons in general may have been liturgical, most of the preached *Enarrationes* provide us with very little information as to their liturgical situation. Indeed, with a corpus covering more than thirty years, the *Enarrationes* give us only an elusive picture of the liturgical seasons and the celebrations of saints, even if the reference to the martyrs is prominent therein. Nevertheless, in his careful study on Augustine’s sermons, Geoffrey G. Willis made the case that, “the information which they [the sermons] give is sufficient to reconstruct the lectionary at Hippo for the seasons of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost, and to give us some information for a skeleton plan of the lessons of the *Sanctorale.*” More recently, Michael Margoni-Kögler has advocated for the probability, and even the possibility, of a liturgical context for most of the preached *Enarrationes*. His impressive study on the pericopes in Augustine’s sermons provides extensive information on the readings, responses and other liturgical indications for daily, Saturday, Sunday and feast services in Augustine’s career as a preacher.

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Although many Enarrationes may have originated in specific liturgies, Augustine seems to have altered their original character by incorporating them in one corpus together with the dictated Enarrationes and by making them part of a lectio continua of the Psalter as one book. However, because the evidence of the preached Enarrationes as such is undeniable, it is important to assess the role of De doctrina christiana in shaping Augustine’s understanding about preaching.

**De Doctrina Christiana and Augustine on Preaching**

Augustine himself acknowledged that the dialogue with the crowds required a specific training for the preacher. He accordingly dedicated an entire treatise to this matter. Composed in two stages, the first part of De doctrina christiana (Preface through 3.25.35) was most likely completed around 397, when Augustine took up the writing of his Confessions. The work was set aside, to be taken up and completed only thirty years later (426-27). Augustine describes De doctrina christiana as a set of ‘precepts for interpreting Scripture’ (Preface 1), that is, a guide for discovering its meaning (Books 1-3) and conveying its sense in one’s own words (Book 4).

The dating of this work on Christian exegesis and preaching is significant because 396 is the year in which Augustine became bishop of Hippo. By the time he completed the De doctrina, Augustine had come full circle on preaching, so that “in book 4, he is

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able to reflect on a lifetime’s experience of the art of public speaking.”

Therefore, there is a certain autobiographical strain in the *De doctrina*, in which Augustine illustrates his teaching from his own experience. As van der Meer comments:

“Whoever begins to read the *sermones* of the Bishop of Hippo knows after the first few pages that the theory in the last part of *Christian Knowledge* had been lived and experienced long before it was written down. The portrait that is there drawn, in a few rapid strokes, of the servant of the word might well be an involuntary self-portrait of Augustine himself, for all that is written there applies to him.”

As early as 396, in a letter to Bishop Aurelius, Augustine and Alypius astutely praised Aurelius’ decision on the use of the Donatist Tyconius for the purpose of training young priests to preach. Like *De doctrina*, Letter 41 shows Augustine’s interest in preaching and his appreciation of the seven exegetical rules of Tyconius, “a man gifted with penetrating intelligence and persuasive rhetoric.” The *De doctrina* is intended for

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453 Cf. De doctr. 4.53; Mohrmann, “Saint Augusin prédicateur,” 395: “La théorie qu’il (Augustin) développe dans le quatrième livre *De doctrina christiana* me semble d’ailleurs inspirée par la pratique de sa prédication personnelle: comme il arrive souvent, la pratique précède la théorie.” See also Madeleine Moreau, “Lecture du *De Doctrina christiana*,” in *Saint Augustin et la Bible* (ed. Anne-Marie La Bonnardière), 253-285; Deferrari, 193: “Augustine’s homilies give abundant proof that the principles which he enunciated for preaching the word of God were derived directly from his own practice.”

454 van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop*, 413.

455 Epist. 41.1-2. Using the connection between *De Doctrina christiana* and Epist. 41, Edmund Hill (“*De Doctrina Christiana*: A Suggestion,” *StPatr* 6 (1962): 443-446) argued that *De doctrina christiana* was undertaken for the training of the clergy in response to an explicit request from Aurelius.

456 Contra duas epist. Pelagianorum 1.1. In *De doctr. 3.42*, Augustine describes Tyconius as “a man of conflicted spirit (*absurdissimi cordis*).” Epist. 41:2: “…as I have already often written, I await to know what you think (*quid tibi videatur*) concerning Tyconius’ seven rules or keys.” The rules of Tyconius are studied in De doctr. 3.30-37. Moreau, “Lecture,” 255; Eugene Kevane, “Augustine’s *De Doctrina Christiana*: A Treatise on Christian Education,” *RechAug* 4 (1966): 97-133. Tyconius is also referred to by name in Contra epist. Parmeniani 1.1; 2.21.40; 2.22.42; 3.3.17; Epist. 93.10; 249; Retr. 2.18. On
those who endeavor to study Scripture (*studiosi scripturarum*), by providing them with certain rules (*praeccepta*) that will allow them to gain a deeper knowledge of the Bible.

But, as stated at the beginning of Book 4, the study of Scripture is based on two elements: how to discover (*invenire*) what is to be understood and how to express (*proferre*) it or, in other words, how to preach.457

Although the relationship between *De doctrina christiana* and Augustine’s preached work cannot be overestimated, it needs to be put in the context of his overall understanding about preaching.458 From the outset of book 4 Augustine warns the reader not to expect an exposition of the “rules of rhetoric,” confident that Christians can also find outstanding models of rhetoric in Scriptures.459

Reversing Cicero’s classical goals of rhetoric,460 Augustine suggests that the ultimate aim of the Christian preacher is to teach, therefore he subordinates eloquence to truth, and the desire to please to clarity of expression and the concern to be understood.461

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457 De doctr. 4.1; Retr. 2.4.31; Moreau, “Lecture,” 354.


459 De doctr. 4.2; 4.4-5.

460 Cicero, *De oratore* 21.29: to teach (*docere* or *probare*), to delight (*delectare* or *conciliare*) and to move (*movere* or *flatere*).

461 Harrison, “The Rhetoric of Scripture,” 220. On diletatio, see Sermo 159.3; De doctr. 1.26.27-27.28; 1.33.37; 1.35.39; De doctr. 4.28.61: “In his speech itself he should prefer to please more with the things said than with the words used to speak them; nor should he think that anything may be said better than that which is said truthfully; nor should the teacher serve the words, but the words the teacher.” Rowan D. Williams, “Language, Reality and Desire in Augustine’s *De doctrina*,” *Journal of Literature and Theology* 3 (1989): 138-150.

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Because the Christian preacher is “an interpreter and teacher of the holy Scriptures”
(\textit{divinarum scripturarum tractator et doctor}),\footnote{De doctr. 4.4.6: “Debet igitur divinarum scripturarum tractator et doctor, defensor rectae fidei ac debellator erroris, et bona docere et mala dedocere.”} his essential task is “pro aeterna hominis salute in verbo et doctrina laborare.”\footnote{De doctr. 4.30.63.} According to Augustine, preaching is therefore a debt of love owed to the people of God who, in turn, have to respond by love, because it is love that ultimately “informs the nature, the practice, content and goal of exegesis and preaching.”\footnote{Harrison, “The Rhetoric of Scripture,” 228. On \textit{debitum sermonis}/\textit{debitum dilectionis}, see Sermo 112A.1 = Caillau 2.11.1 (\textit{MA} 1, 256).} More precisely, in the \textit{De doctrina christiana} Augustine promotes a distinctive Christian aesthetic that aims at teaching and moving the listener to delight in and love the truths of the faith.\footnote{Harrison, “The Rhetoric of Scripture,” 222: With the \textit{De doctrina}, “we can speak of a Christian aesthetic, a new Christian literary culture; one in which rhetoric holds as central a place as it did in classical culture, but where it is transformed from a practice that primarily aims to please and persuade, to one which aims to inspire love of, and the practice of, the truth.” Cf. Sermo 17.2; Sermo 340.1.} Indeed, in each and every Augustinian sermon, “It is love that asks, love that seeks, love that knocks, love that reveals, love, too, that gives continuance in what is revealed.”\footnote{De moribus, 1.31.}

At a deeper level, one can agree with Peter Brown’s assessment, when he pointed to the rhetorical limitations or the idealism of \textit{De doctrina christiana}: “In a sense, it was already out of date. For it had taken for granted things which, after the barbarian invasions, could no longer be taken for granted. It had assumed that men could still receive a sufficiently sound primary education in the Roman schools to be able to speak good Latin unselfconsciously without the affected polish of the rhetoricians. It had looked forward to continued intellectual interchange between the scholars in different
parts of the Christian world. In fact, it would have been impossible for a provincial, in 420, to make the same career as Augustine had made in the 370’s.\textsuperscript{467}

More fundamentally, as John C. Cavadini has rightly observed, the rhetorical book 4 of \textit{De doctrina christiana} is “less theory of rhetoric \textit{per se} than a theory of conversion.”\textsuperscript{468} Building on Cavadini’s observation, Hildeguard Müller has demonstrated that Augustine’s exegetical works, and especially his preached ones, function as \textit{via affectuum} in order to effect conversion.\textsuperscript{469} Müller concludes her essay by stating that:

“Both in his theory and in his practice, Augustine concentrates on the immediate effect of his speech. In both cases, the central term to describe his rhetoric is \textit{movere}: just as his sermons characteristically outline an emotional and intellectual movement towards conversion, his rhetorical theory aims at \textit{movere ad agendum}, compelling one’s listeners to do as they should. That these two processes of \textit{movere} merge into one is shown most clearly in the end of many of his sermons, where the line of the emotionally structured explanation leads directly into a moral appeal.”\textsuperscript{470} Indeed, the \textit{De doctrina christiana} and Augustine’s exegetical works are more concerned more often with the power of God’s work to effect conversion than with simply rhetorical persuasion.\textsuperscript{471} This explain why

\textsuperscript{467} Brown, \textit{Augustine of Hippo}, 414-415.


\textsuperscript{469} Müller, “Theory and Practice of Preaching.” 233.

\textsuperscript{470} Müller, “Theory and Practice of Preaching.” 237.

\textsuperscript{471} Cf. Gerald A. Press, “The Subject and Structure of Augustine’s \textit{De Doctrina Christiana},” \textit{AugSt} 11 (1980): 99-124; Möhrmann, “Saint Augustine and the \textit{eloquentia}, 351-370; Adolf Primmer, “The Function of the \textit{genera dicendi} in \textit{De doctrina christiana} 4,” in \textit{De doctrina christiana} (eds. Arnold and Bright), 68-86; En. Ps. 93.9: “For when we speak, God is not silent; when the lector reads, he is not silent; when the Psalm sings the praises of all that, he is not silent;” En. Ps. 130.14: “Ergo, fratres, non cessat Deus alloquitos;” En. Ps. 85.7: “…quando legis, Deus tibi loquitur.”
Augustine’s approach to the literary understanding of Scripture as presented in the *De doctrina christiana* never resulted solely in the meticulous philological concerns we see in Jerome. Augustine’s hermeneutics is chiefly a hermeneutics of conversion.

**Augustine and the Hermeneutics of Conversion**

Isabelle Bochet rightly points out that Augustine’s hermeneutics is wholly governed by Scripture and finds supporting evidence for this in Augustine’s *De doctrina christiana*, a treatise she places at the heart of Augustine’s exegesis.\(^{472}\) She contends that the specificity of Augustine’s hermeneutics is rooted in the fact that the interpretation of Scripture controls the interpretation of one’s existence. As she writes, “si l’écriture joue un rôle dans l’œuvre augustinienne, il est logique que l’herméneutique scripturaire commande l’interprétation du sujet et de l’histoire.”\(^{473}\)

Such an assertion needs some clarification. The reader who is familiar with Bochet’s work will recognize her tendency of interpreting Augustine as an important proponent of the “émergence du sujet,” the first such sujet being Augustine himself as he discovers his very self in his ‘autobiography.’ Scripture becomes a medium by which one reaches “l’interprétation de soi et de l’histoire.”\(^{474}\) But, as John Cavadini has contended, although there are some elements to support such a reading, central to Augustine’s hermeneutic is the Word of God and its power to *enlarge* the heart of those it


\(^{474}\) See also Isabelle Bochet, “Interpretation scripturaire et compréhension de soi: Du *De doctrina christiana* aux Confessions de saint Augustin,” in *Comprendre et interpréter: Le paradigme herméneutique de la raison* (Philosophie 15; Paris: Beauchesne, 1993), 21-50.
touches. In Augustine, Cavadini writes, “Even when we have vision, there is no “self” with a stable boundary at which one might gaze securely, but an ongoing transformation, and ongoing enlargement of the heart, ongoing and increasing reference to the Love which is the highest res.”

Therefore, what Augustine calls dilatatio cordis is the refashioning of the self through and by the Word of God. Challenged by the Word of God, the self is summoned to choose between belonging to God and belonging to oneself, between being God’s servant and being one’s own master, between resting in manibus Dei and being in manibus meis. Indeed, because there is suavitas only for the one who rests in God, the self and its celebration are not at the heart of Augustine’s hermeneutics. Transformed by the Word of God, the self becomes literally bound to Christ, the Word of God, as in the union of the body and its head.

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477 En. Ps. 118.10.3; 12.5; 15.8; 16.2; 21.6; 23.4; 26.6. Cf. the theme of the two loves: “Fecerunt itaque ciuitates duas amores duo, terrenam scilicet amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei, caelestem uero amor Dei usque ad contemptum sui” (De civ. Dei 14.28); “Duas istas ciuitates faciunt duo amores: Ierusalem facit amor Dei; Babyloniam facit amor saeculi” (En. Ps. 64.2).

478 Accordingly, the opposite of dilatatio is uanitas (En. Ps. 118.17.5).

479 On the transformative dynamics of reading Scripture, see Pamela Bright, “Augustine and the Ethics of Reading the Bible,” in The Reception and Interpretation of the Bible in Late Antiquity: Proceedings of the Montréal Colloquium in Honour of Charles Kannengiesser (The Bible in Ancient Christianity 6; eds. Lorenzo DiTommaso and Lucian Turcescu; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 55-64, esp. 59-63; De Doctr. 2.11, where Augustine imagines the transformative dynamics as a seven-step graduated ascent to Wisdom: Dei timor (fear of the Lord), pietas (holiness), scientia (knowledge), fortitudo (fortitude), concilium misericordiae (the resolve of compassion), purgatio oculorum cordis (the cleansing of the eyes of the heart), and sapientia (wisdom).
In the next chapter, I would like to show that what Augustine ultimately accomplishes in his exegesis, even in the context of his ‘autobiography,’ is really the biography of the incarnate Word as it is alive and active in the Church and the world. I would argue that Augustine’s main concern in interpreting Scripture is not to promote the emergence of the individual or the self *per se*, but to challenge it in the light of the incarnate Word. As Cavadini has argued, for Augustine the self remains “the darkest enigma” because if ‘The Self’ corresponds to anything in Augustine, it is this reified structure of pride, an attractive illusion, but ultimately a self-contradiction, doomed to eternal incoherence.”

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In the genre of “autobiography,” Augustine’s *Confessions* stand as a masterpiece. Yet, the disconcerting presence of the last four books where, after a meditation on the faculty of memory, Augustine undertakes the exegesis of the first chapter of Genesis, has puzzled commentators and challenged the modern conception of autobiography.\(^{481}\)

Indeed, when Augustine began to review his literary career, he recalled that he had written “thirteen books of [his] *Confessions,*” a concept far richer than autobiography.\(^{482}\) As Michel Foucault has remarked, by writing the *Confessions* Augustine was giving expression to an essential aspect of Christianity as a *confessional* religion, in which the believer confesses God’s sovereignty while recognizing at the same time the presence of evil, the necessity of grace, and the possibility of salvation through Christ.


\(^{482}\) Retr.2.6.1: “The first ten books were written about myself, the last three about Holy Scripture, from the words: *In the beginning God created heaven and earth* (Gen 1:1) as far as the Sabbath rest (Gen 2:2).” Cf. Luigi Franco Pizzolato, *Le ‘Confessini’ di sant’Agostino: Da biografia a ‘confessio’* (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 1968), esp. 59-156.
time what is happening in and to him by virtue of such a confession. In such an exercise, the role and the use of the text that shapes the confessant’s discourse cannot be overlooked, precisely because the confession takes the form of a narratio (narrative) and of an enarratio (commentary).

While commentators of Augustine’s Confessions have noted that the transition from narratio to enarratio is more manifest at the end of the book, they have not failed to point out that the work as a whole mingles the genres of narrative and exegesis. Nowhere is this feature more evident than in book 9.4.8-11, where Augustine offers an unparalleled reading of Ps. 4 and blends the biblical text into his own story, producing what Levinson has called an “exegetical narrative.” As Levinson writes,

The exegetical narrative is composed of a story which simultaneously represents and interprets its biblical counterpart. As hermeneutical reading of the biblical story presented in narrative form, its defining characteristic lies precisely in this synergy of narrative and exegesis. As exegesis, it creates new meanings from the biblical verses, and as narrative it represents those meanings by means of the biblical world. As exegesis, it is subservient to the biblical narrative, but as a story in its own right, it creates a narrated world which is different from its biblical shadow.

Levinson recognizes this genre as conforming particularly to rabbinic narrative. It is therefore important to point out the peculiar features of Augustine’s “autobiographical” exegetical narrative. O’Donnell noted that the position of book 9 is at

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484 See Conf. 11.1.1.


the exact middle point of the *Confessions* and that the overall structure of section 4.8-11 mirrors that of the *Confessions* as a whole.\(^{487}\) Just as the *enarratio* of the first chapter of Genesis in book 11 is used to signify how God has recreated Augustine and let light shine up on his soul, so the *enarratio* of Ps. 4 in book 9 is used to narrate one of the most important moments of Augustine’s self-consciousness as it came in contact with the biblical text. In that section Augustine evokes *quid de [me] fecerit ille psalmus* (what that Psalm did to or made of him). In this sense, one can agree with Brian Stock when he asserts that, in Augustine’s *Confessions*, “the reading of a book [*enarratio*] and the understanding of the self [*narratio*] became analogous intentional activities.”\(^{488}\) Written ca. 397/398, the *Confessions* therefore contain one of Augustine’s earliest commentaries on a Psalm.

**The Exegetical Narrative of Ps. 4 in the *Confessions* 9**

Since in *Conf. 9*.4.8-11 Augustine speaks as much as the revealed text, the combined exegetical narrative of *narratio* and *enarratio* demonstrates simultaneously sameness and difference, subservience to the biblical text and creativity.\(^{489}\) Because of this synergy of narrative and exegesis, this text of *Conf. 9* has what Mikhail Bakhtin has termed the double-voiced discourse or the “dialogical,” that is, “the coexistence in a single utterance of two intentionally distinct, identifiable voices.”\(^{490}\)


\(^{489}\) Cf. Levinson, “Dialogical Reading,” 498.

However, this dialogical feature is not generated primarily by the genre of the text commented upon, but by its narrative situation, in which the world of the biblical text confronts the world of its interpreter.\textsuperscript{491} Indeed, the dialogical character of the exegetical narrative rests mainly on the very act of interpretation, on what Levinson calls “the dignity of exegesis” or commentary.\textsuperscript{492} As Michel Foucault writes, a “commentary must say for the first time what had nonetheless already been said. … It allows us to say something other than the text itself, but on condition that it is this text itself which is said, and in a sense completed.”\textsuperscript{493} Therefore, the commentary does not reveal only that which had long seemed closed and which is now opened up again, but also the impact of the commented text on the interpreter.\textsuperscript{494}

On the other hand, as Levinson has argued, the dialogical dimension applies also to the second interpreter, that is, “the reader who is confronted with two texts that must be read together.”\textsuperscript{495} In the case of Conf. 9.4, the reader is not only challenged to decide whether he is reading the Psalm or Augustine’s story, but also to respond to both the appeal of the Psalm and of Augustine. By its structure, the exegetical narrative invites a dialogical reading: “To read dialogically is both to read one text as both narrative and exegesis and also to read two texts as one, in stereo as it were, with and against each


\textsuperscript{492} Levinson, “Dialogical Reading,” 501.

\textsuperscript{493} Michel Foucault, “The Discourse on Language,” in \textit{The Archaeology of Knowledge} (trans. Alan Mark Sheridan-Smith; New York: Routledge, 2002), 221.


\textsuperscript{495} Levinson, “Dialogical Reading,” 500.
other.”496 But this dialogical reading applies not only to book 9, but also to the
Confessions as a whole, a book in which Scripture, and especially the Psalms, features
prominently.

The Canonical Status of the Biblical Text

Although the Psalms are prominent in the Confessions, it is not their genre as such that
gives them a voice within Augustine’s exegetical narrative, but rather their
authoritativeness as commented text. Indeed, the authority of a text rests ultimately on its
status rather than on its genre or form. This point provides us with an additional element
of comparison between book 9, which deals with a Psalm, and book 11, which comments
on a narrative from Genesis.

These two books are similar in that they form together with Augustine’s story an
exegetical narrative. Yet they differ with respect to their genre. In both book 9 and book
11, however, it is the status of the biblical text qua biblical text that governs the
interpretation. For a text to be relevant and have a voice in an exegetical narrative, it has
to enjoy a canonical status, as it were, so that its interpreters are able to “confront the
canonical protoworld by constructing a new, alternative fictional world.”497

While this phenomenon is easy to detect in reference to the biblical text, it is
important to note that it applies to almost every text invested with the potentiality of

496 Levinson, “Dialogical Reading,” 524.
497 Lubomír Doležel, Heterocosmica: Fiction and Possible Worlds (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins
becoming authoritative and, hence, generating a community by virtue of its interpretations. Such communities can rightly be defined as textual communities, that is, “microsocieties organized around the common understanding of a script.”

It is because of the canonicity and the authoritativeness of the text for multiple textual communities through the ages, that the commentary always has the potential of representing more than one voice. That is what Lubomír Doležel has termed “literary transduction.” As Levinson rightly asserts,

> From the moment the canonical text defines a textual community, it is continuously retold. Paradoxically, it is precisely the canonical status of the text – that which acts as the foundation for its cultural legitimacy – that invites its constant transformation, violation, and appropriation.

As Augustine comments upon the biblical texts, he demonstrates exactly this kind of “literary transduction.” There is no doubt, however, that the Psalms lend themselves to this “literary transduction” in virtue of their intrinsic dialogical character. Carleen Mandolfo has made a strong case regarding the inner dialogical viewpoints in the lament Psalms, in which the Psalmist argues with himself or herself toward God in persuasive rhetoric. Walter Brueggemmann believes that, as a distinct speech practice, the Psalms are evidences of Israel’s resolve to keep its life dialogical. Thus, he uses the term dialogical “to characterize an ongoing interaction between speaking partners (for which

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500 Levinson, “Dialogical Reading,” 499.

the biblical term may be *covenantal*) in which both parties may take initiative and in which both parties may be impinged upon or placed at risk by the utterance of the other."\textsuperscript{502} It is precisely this distinctive *covenantal* aspect imbedded in these quasi-anonymous first-person texts that makes the Psalms relevant for an “autobiographical” exegetical narrative. They allow their readers to take the very words of the Psalms as their own. That is what Athanasius of Alexandria had remarked long ago:

No one would ever utter the patriarchs’ words as though they were his own, nor would anyone dare to imitate and to say Moses’ own words; those of Abraham about his slave and Ishmael and the things concerning the great Isaac, as though they were his own, even if necessity were to press him. … No more would any one use the prophets’ words of praise or blame as though they were his own… Indeed it is clear that one who reads these books utters them not as his own words, but as those of holy men and other people about whom they write. But contrariwise, remarkably, barring those prophecies about the Savior and some about the nations, he who recites the Psalms is uttering its words as his own, and each sings them as if they were written concerning him, and he takes them and recites them not as if someone else were speaking, nor as if speaking about someone else. But he handles them as if he is speaking about himself, offering the words to God as his own utterance, just as if he himself had made them up.\textsuperscript{503}

And in *Conf.* 9.4.8-11, Augustine provides us with an outstanding example of Athanasius’ claims. In this regard, the Psalms are particularly fitting for the autobiographical exegetical narrative.\textsuperscript{504} No wonder that the Psalter is the most quoted biblical book in the *Confessions*.\textsuperscript{505}


\textsuperscript{504} See Bochet, *Le firmament de l’écriture*, esp. 162-186.

\textsuperscript{505} The *Confessions* quote or allude to the Psalms nearly 400 times, with 39 references to Ps 118, 21 references to Ps 17, 21 references to Ps 18 and 18 references to Ps 4. See Suzanne Poque, “Les Psaumes dans les *Confessions*,” in *Saint Augustin et la Bible* (ed. Anne-Marie La Bonnardière), 156.
The Psalms in the Confessions

The blending of narratio and enarratio so evident in book 9 is prevalent throughout the Confessions, a book that has been rightly characterized as an “amplified Psalter” or a “pastiche of the Psalter.” Indeed, the book as a whole has the lyrical tone of the Psalter.

The Confessions open with a quotation from Ps. 47: 2: “Great are you, O Lord, and exceedingly worthy of praise” (Conf. 1.1.1). As Augustine works toward reforming the ethical direction of his conduct, “words, phrases, and verses from the Psalms are reinterpreted within the narrative of the life he intends to live.”

Commentators have long noticed that in the Confessions Augustine deals not only with the biblical text, especially the Psalms, but also with tensions that have characterized his own story. In Augustine’s interpretation, the study of the Psalms encodes and provides the script of a life in conversation with God. More than creating simply a new literary world, Augustine’s reading of the biblical text demonstrates the actualizing quality of exegesis on the interpreter, that is, the effect of the text upon its reader, a fact

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captured by the enigmatic quid de me fecerit ille psalmus ("what that Psalm did to [or made of] me"). The link between the initial creation of the world in book 11 and the evocation of what the Psalm made of Augustine in book 9 helps explain Augustine’s apparently perplexing decision to include the exegesis of Genesis 1-2 in his Confessions.  

For Augustine, “the Word who creates ‘in the beginning’ is the same Word who recreates us in our reading of Scripture.”  May Through the use of the Psalms, God becomes Augustine’s frame of reference.  This point is worth stressing, because it shows how exegesis can extend far beyond textual interpretation and mediate new relationships in the imagined world.  Slusser has convincingly shown that “it was a method of literary and grammatical analysis of Scripture that provided the early Christian thinkers with a way to talk about God in a Trinitarian fashion.”  Book 9 is the clearest statement of both the emergence of a new paideia and the transformation of subjectivity in its contact with the biblical text.

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511 McCarthy, “Creation,” 204.


513 Imagined or fictional world should not be understood simply as fiction or fantasy. Rather, the concept captures the horizon of a possible world envisioned in the process of interpretation.

What the Fourth Psalm Made of Augustine: The Hermeneutics of Conversion

In his outstanding biography of Augustine, Peter Brown recognizes that the use of the Psalms was a startling literary innovation because, “for the first time, a work of self-conscious literary art had incorporated (and most beautifully) the exotic jargon of the Christian communities.” While he contends that the literary product marked the end of classical literature, Brown rightly notes that, for Augustine, far more was at stake than the production of a new literary form. Brown concedes that Augustine “had gradually entered a new world of religious sentiments, he had undergone experiences, which he could only express in the language of the Psalter.”

While Augustine narrates his life in the light of Ps. 4, the Psalm is interpreted in light of Augustine’s story. Narratio and enarratio are thus blended so as to form what we have identified as an exegetical narrative. On the existential level, Augustine reports what the fourth Psalm made of him, and the narrative in book 9 presupposes that experience, which is now recalled in the very words of the Psalm.

In his exposition of Ps. 4, Augustine follows an exegetical tradition that goes back to Philo and Athanasius of Alexandria. It is Athanasius who laid down the hermeneutical principle according to which Christians were to read the Psalms as if they

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517 Philo, *De posteritate Caini* 32, 110-111 (tr. Colson; LCL 227, 391): “Nor is it only persons (*prosopai*) and matters dealt with (*pragmata*) that occasion our speech to vary its form, but the causes (*aitiai*) too of the things that happen, and the ways in which they happen, and besides these, times (*chronoi*) and places (*topoi*) which enter into all things.”
were themselves speaking in them, since the Psalms reflect the actual stages of
experience of the one who reads them. In En. Ps. 123, Augustine says that any ideal
reader or listener of the Psalms would recognize his own voice in the Psalm he reads or
listens to: “Listen to it as if you were listening to yourselves. Listen as if you were
watching your own reflection in the mirror of Scriptures.” Rooted in this
hermeneutical tradition, Augustine perceives a correspondence between his own life and
the text of the Psalm, just as he has called upon his congregation to do:

If the Psalm is praying, pray yourselves; if it is groaning, you groan too; if it is
happy, rejoice; if it is crying out in hope, you hope as well; if it expresses fear, be
afraid. Everything written here is like a mirror held up to us.

Book 9, however, provides us with a peculiar use of the technique of prosopological
exegesis, as documented by Rondeau. The dialogical feature of the Psalm and its
dynamism allow Augustine to recognize in the text of the Psalm the multiple references
that have populated his own life. It is this complex operation that produced the unique
features of Conf. 9.4.8-11.

518 Athanasius, Letter to Marcellinus, 12: “And it seems to me that these words (of the Psalms) become
like a mirror to the person singing them, so that he might perceive himself and the emotions of his soul, and
thus affected, he might recite them. … Therefore, when one sings the third Psalm, and recognizing his own
tribulation, he considers the words in the Psalm to be his own” (tr. Robert C. Gregg, 111).
519 En. Ps. 123.3. In the Enarrationes in Psalmos, however, Augustine’s interpretation is broader, as he
offers an even more dynamic understanding of the Psalms that are the vox totius Christi (the voice of the
whole Christ, head and body). There, “the Psalms possess a dialectical character and comprise an ongoing,
communicative exchange between God and humanity within the ecclesial body, which prays and meditates
upon them” (Michael C. McCarthy, “An Ecclesiology of Groaning: Augustine, the Psalms, and the Making
of Church,” TS 66 (2005), 29).
520 En. Ps. 30.4.1.
521 Marie-Josèphe Rondeau, Les commentaires patristiques du psautier (IIIè-Vè siècles), 2 vols. (OCA
The first reference to the Psalm is an evocation of v. 2, which is used as the exegetical horizon of Augustine’s narrative. At this point, the Psalm’s verse has not yet become Augustine’s words and Augustine is not yet the speaker.523 The main focus of the verse is undoubtedly Augustine’s act of reading:

I could wish that they (the Manicheans) had been somewhere nearby, without my knowing it, and had gazed upon my face and listened to my voice as I read the fourth Psalm in that place of peace. When I called on him he heard me, the God of my vindication; when I was hard beset you led me into spacious freedom. Have mercy on me, Lord, and hearken to my prayer. At this point, one clearly distinguishes the voice of the Psalmist and that of the commentator, two roles that Augustine will take as he narrates his life.524 In the Psalms, these two identities are most often shrouded because, as Mowinckel has observed, “the psalm writer is most of all himself and most genuine when he hides wholly behind the worshipper and enters completely into him and his situation, whether the worshipper represents the congregation (the people) or the individual Israelite in the typical situation of sorrow or joy.”525

Although v. 2 is already “the intimate expression of [his] mind, as [he] conversed with [himself] and addressed [himself] in [God’s] presence,” it is not yet Augustine’s spoken words in the actual narrative of Conf. 9.4.

As he now reports on v. 3, Augustine acknowledges that the words are spoken by God’s good Spirit to “us,” saying, *How long will you be heavy-hearted, human creatures? Why love emptiness and chase falsehood?* The wording of the verse forces Augustine to admit that it cannot apply to him alone, since it refers to all those “human creatures, [who] love emptiness and chase falsehood.” While Augustine identifies the addressee as *us*, he thinks that the verse is addressed to him personally, both because he is part of the human community and because, as he admits himself, he “had certainly loved emptiness and chased falsehood” (4.9).

Indeed, Augustine reads v. 5 and takes it as applying directly to *himself* rather than all the “human creatures” referred to previously: “How these words moved *me*, my God! I had already learned to feel for my past sins anger with myself that would hold me back from sinning again” (4.10). With the recollection of his past sins, he realizes his actual ability to appreciate the Psalm and be moved by its words as he reads them.

Even as he imagines the Psalm text as transformative for him, he suggests that he was in fact transformed *before* the reading event. Thus, at the time of reading, he had already begun to feel angry for his sins. Thus he takes the attacks of the narrator (“How long will you be heavy-hearted?”) as addressed not to him at the time of the Psalm reading, but to the man he had been. Augustine may even imply that if he had not already been transformed, the text would have not “spoken” to him. It had apparently not “spoken” to the Manicheans, “the kind of person [he] remembered to have been.” And this act of remembering brings painful memories, as he look back to the Manicheans,
“who still love emptiness and chase falsehood” (4.9). In this way, Augustine excludes himself from the multitude of vv. 3-4, whom he now identifies only with the Manicheans.

With v. 6, Augustine evokes in general terms “those who want to find their joy in external things and who, thus, “too easily grow empty themselves.” These, like the Psalmist, could well ask: “Who will show us good things?” (4.10). As in vv. 3-4, the wording of v. 6b forces Augustine to identify the speaker as we (us in the reported speech). Read in context, the verse could have been uttered by the Manicheans, whose hearts “lived in their outward-gazing eyes, outside and away from” God (9.4.10) and now beg to be shown good things. Appropriately, the answer to their query is given by the unidentified collective character of v. 7a: “Let us answer them, and let them hear the truth: The light of your countenance has set its seal upon us, O Lord” (4.10). The verse is directed both to them and to the Lord referred to in the quotation, in a clear example of multivocality, an aspect George Savran has analyzed as a convention in biblical narrative.526

The allusion to v. 7b allows Augustine to express the deep emotion of joy in his heart, as he subsequently reads the words of v. 9. Deeply moved, he cries in the very terms of the Psalm: “In peace, in being-itself, I will rest and fall asleep” (9.11).527 This verse, at last, is the only discourse Augustine appropriates for himself as an individual.


527 The phrase id ipsum appears at least 6 times in the Latin version(s) of the Psalms Augustine reads: Ps. 4:9; 33:4; 40:8; 61:10; 73:6; 121:3. It brings in Augustine’s mind the picture of calmness and peace, one of the main themes of the Confessions.
With the merging of the voice of the Psalmist and that of Augustine, Augustine the narrator then concludes the exegetical narrative with v. 10: “You, O Lord, through hope have established me in unity” (4.11).

As the narrative comes to an end, the reader understands the ambiguity of the opening sentence: “Quas tibi, Deus meus, uoces dedi, cum legerem Psalmos.” In reality, it is the Psalm that has lent a voice to Augustine.

The Manicheans as Augustine’s Anti-Type

Because implicit references to Augustine’s argument with the Manicheans and his explicit remarks with respect to them permeate the text, O’Donnell has suggested that the Manicheans were “the express targets of (Augustine’s) exegesis” in Conf. 9.528

How loudly I began to cry out to you in those Psalms, how I was inflamed by them with love for you and fired to recite them to the whole world, were I able, as a remedy against human pride! Yet in truth they are sung throughout the world, and no one can hide from your burning heat. I felt bitterly angry with the Manicheans, though my indignation was tinged with pity, because they knew nothing of this remedy and ranted against the very antidote which might have healed them.

For those scholars who follow O’Donnell, Augustine uses Ps. 4 as a protreptic text, invested with therapeutic virtues so as to heal the Manicheans’ pride.529 Others argue that book 9 contains two different exegeses of the Bible and, in support of this view, they allude to the expression “the enemies of that Scripture” (inimicis scripturae huius).530

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529 According to Kotzé, “the emphasis on Christ’s death and resurrection (at 4.9) is meant to speak directly to the Manicheans who did not believe in the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ” (“Reading Ps. 4 to the Manicheans,” VChr 55 (2001): 129). See also Julien Ries, “La Bible chez saint Augustin et chez les manichéens,” REAug 9 (1963), 201-215.

530 Caroline P. Bammel, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy in Late Antiquity*
The reference to “the enemies of that Scripture” is ambiguous because it is not clear whether he means Scripture as a whole or only one part of it, namely the Old Testament, or this particular Psalm.\footnote{Augustine’s first book on the Old Testament is precisely a commentary on Genesis against the Manicheans (\textit{De Genesi contra Manichaeos}), which was begun about 394, was never completed and was finally replaced with \textit{De Genesi ad litteram}, written between 401-415.}

At any rate, the Manicheans appear as those whom Scripture does not transform. Their insensitivity to the Word of God is confirmed by Augustine’s inability to reach out to the them: “I read on and on, all afire, but I could find no way to help those deaf, dead folk among whom I had once been numbered.” (4.11).

But by calling the Manicheans the “enemies of that Scripture,” Augustine acknowledges that he himself was one such enemy of Scripture: “I had been a lethal nuisance, bitter and blind and baying against honey-sweet Scriptures distilled from heaven’s honey, Scriptures luminous by your light; but now to think of the enemies of that Scripture caused me anguish” (4.11).

Augustine’s bitter anger against the Manicheans is in reality directed toward his former Manichean self,\footnote{See O’Donnell, \textit{Augustine: Confessions}, 3: 94.} the man who was “panting in the interval” (4.7) and who now confesses: “It is you, you, Lord, \textit{who through hope establish me in unity}” (Ps. 4:10). The narrative gains full complexity and clarity when one looks backward at 9.4.7 and forward at 9.4.12. In \textit{Conf.} 9.4.7, Augustine introduces the section with the following heading:
“At last the day arrived which was to set me free in fact from the profession of rhetor, as I was free already in spirit.”

Before the events alluded to in book 9, a break from the rhetoricians was achieved only partially through the three works Augustine had produced in dialogical format (*Against the Academics*, *The happy life*, and *On order*). Yet, as he acknowledges himself, these were works unquestionably devoted to God’s service, “but still with a whiff of scholastic pride about it” (*Conf.* 9.4.7), because they were still modeled after the dialogues of Pagan rhetoricians.

At the end of the section, Augustine states: “When the holidays were over I announced my retirement [from the profession of rhetor]. The citizens of Milan would have to provide another word-peddler for their students, because I had made up my mind to give myself to your service” (*Conf.* 9.4.12). These two instances clearly show how the *enarratio* of 9.4.8-11 is positioned between the two allusions to Augustine’s resignation from his secular career. In the exegetical narrative, the Manicheans function as a character representing both Augustine and the Rhetoricians. With this intimate interpretation of Ps. 4, the former Augustine gives way to the new one who, to use Herbert Levine’s words, has been “brought into the framework of eternity.” In this picture, the Manicheans become an anti-type for the new Augustine. As he enters the world of religious experience, Augustine turns his fascination with the Manicheans into anger and pity against himself (cf. *Conf.* 3.5.9-10).

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We have shown that the *enarratio* of Ps. 4 ends with Augustine finding his own voice through the voice of the Psalmist. Indeed, an attentive analysis shows that the only speakers in the section are the Psalmist and Augustine. This fact is in line with the *Confessions* as a whole, in which Augustine addresses God in the words of the Psalmist or in the way the Psalmist did.\(^{534}\)

**What Augustine Made of the Psalm: Narrating the Power of God’s Word**

On his long journey to become a Christian, Augustine had vacillated between the unappealing nature of Scripture and the beauty of classical prose (cf. 3.5.9). In book 9 the struggle is about to end:

> The next verse wrung a cry from the very depths of my heart: *In peace!* Oh, *In Being itself!* What did it say? *I will rest and fall asleep* (Yes, for who shall make war against us when that promise of Scripture is fulfilled. …?) (4.11).

The thirst for resting in God corresponds to what Augustine had declared at the beginning of his *Confessions*: “You stir us so that praising you may bring us joy, because you have made us and drawn us to yourself, and our heart is unquiet until it rests in you” (*Conf.* 1.1.1). On the existential level, we have an insight into what this Psalm 4 made of Augustine. On the narratological level, however, we witness what Augustine did to the Psalm.

In the *Confessions*, Augustine immerses himself into the Psalms’ linguistic patterns to narrate his own story. Nowhere is this phenomenon more poignant than in

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\(^{534}\) It is also indicative to note that in a later commentary on Psalm 4 (En. Ps. 4 of 392), Augustine does not mention the Manicheans at all (Cf. Feldmann, “Psalmenauslegungen,” 310).
book 9, in which Ps. 4 provides Augustine with his true voice. By casting the story of his life in the form of a narratio and an enarratio, Augustine lends his narrative the color of the biblical text. As Rowan Williams notes, “The psalmodic pattern explains why the Confessions is and is not an ‘autobiography.’ It seeks not to give an exhaustive account of this person’s past, or to make a case in favor, but only to create a text that has the sort of unity that a psalm has”\(^535\), that is, a psalm-like dialogical text.

While Augustine’s rewriting of the biblical text does not reach the status of the so-called rewritten Bible, in which “the biblical text itself is replaced by its interpretative retelling,”\(^536\) the blending of the Psalm text into Augustine’s own story invests the narrative with the authority of a biblical text, bringing the question of authorship beyond that of the actual writer.\(^537\) By using the word of God with such intimate ownership, “the apparent pretense of narrating one’s own ‘autobiography’ is severely undercut by the language that continues to suggest that God could tell Augustine’s story far better than he can.”\(^538\) After all, it is God who commanded Augustine to write the Confessions (see Conf. 1.1.1). Elsewhere Augustine had confessed: “I can say nothing right to other people unless you have heard it from me first, nor can you even hear anything of the kind from me which you have not first told me” (Conf. 10.2.2).

An analysis of the exegetical narrative of Conf. 9.4.8-11 shows not only what the biblical text has made of Augustine, but also what Augustine has made of it and done to


\(^{536}\) Steven Fraade, From Tradition to Commentary (Albany: State University of New York, 1991), 2.


\(^{538}\) McCarthy, “Augustine’s Mixed Feelings,” 469.
it, proving true what Elizabeth Clark says about patristic commentary: “By expanding the meaning of a text, (patristic) commentary creates, in effect, a ‘new text’.”539 The stories provided in the *Enarrationes* are cast into the biblical text and the mystery it contains. The *Enarrationes* use the old biblical stories to tell the story of the new people, the Church.

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PART II

V. PSALM 118/119: A TORAH PSALM

The *Enarratio* studied in this dissertation has always been referred to as a commentary on Psalm 118. It is important to note from the outset that the Latin Fathers never knew the Hebraic numbering of the Hebrew Bible (HB), which was established only in the 16th century. In fact, even the numbering of Jerome’s *Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos* follows that of the LXX. Moreover, the numbering of the Latin Psalter has suffered some inconsistencies since earlier times, as witnessed by a series of African Latin Psalters whose numbering does not follow the Hebrew Bible nor the LXX numbering as we have it today.\(^{540}\)

Psalm 118 is the longest Psalm in the Bible, consisting of 176 verses, organized in twenty-two stanzas of eight verses each. In the original Hebrew, the number of the twenty-two stanzas is determined by the number of the letters in Hebrew alphabet. While in all of the other alphabetic Psalms there is typically only one entry or unit for a given letter, in Ps. 118 the eight lines of the first stanza all begin with א, the eight lines of the second stanza all begin with ב, and so on to the last stanza, whose eight lines all begin

with א.541 While Mowinckel observed that the artificial alphabetic pattern of the acrostic Psalms often results “in a rambling and obscure train of thought and a loose composition,”542 Freedman recognized that Ps. 118 represents the “apotheosis or ultimate expression of the alphabetic acrostic pattern in Hebrew biblical poetry.”543

A few Greek and Latin translations of Ps. 118 may have retained some indication of its alphabetical acrostic structure. Augustine is aware of this feature, to which he alludes twice in his exposition, whereas he never mentions it fact in his expositions of the other alphabetical Psalms.544 Because of Augustine’s occasional references to Hilary and Ambrose, both of whom are interested in the symbolic interpretation of the Hebrew alphabet, Kannengiesser has suggested that the acrostic form of the Psalm was apparent in the Latin codex used by Augustine for his commentary.545 It is impossible to verify this suggestion. One can only note that Augustine was working with Greek and Latin


543 David N. Freedman, “The Structure of Psalm 119,” in Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom (eds. David P. Wright, David Noel Freedman and Avi Hirvitz; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 728. Freedman’s observation is particularly true when one compares Ps. 118 to other alphabetical Psalms. For instance, in Ps. 9/10, the ת, נ, ל and ה lines are missing, while the ו and פ lines are switched; in Ps 25, the ת line is missing, while the letter וה begins two lines; in Ps. 34 the ג line is missing.

544 En. Ps. 118.21.2: “Each verse forms part of a stanza of eight, all beginning with the same letter, and each stanza is headed by the corresponding letter of the Hebrew alphabet, right through to the end of this very lengthy psalm.” 32.8: “In the Hebrew text not only is each stanza of eight verses headed by a successive letter of the alphabet, but within each stanza every stanza begins with that letter. So we are informed by those who know the language.”

versions of the Psalm, and he explicitly stated that he provided this information for the benefit of those who cannot verify it from the Greek and Latin versions, where the acrostic pattern is not preserved. In particular, he noted that he derived the information about the acrostic structure of each octastich, not from personal knowledge, but from those who knew the Hebrew language.\footnote{En. Ps. 118.32.8: “Sicut nobis ab eis qui illas noverunt litteras indicatus est.” Is this a veiled reference to Jerome, with whom Augustine had exchanged letters on matters pertaining to Scripture? On Augustine’s possible use of Jerome’s Liber interpretationum hebraicorum nominum, see En. Ps. 33.1.4; Anne-Marie La Bonnardière, “Jérôme ‘informateur’ d’Augustin au sujet d’Origène,” REAug 20 (1974): 46.} Additionally, one realizes that Augustine did not divide his sermons according to the twenty-two stanzas of the Hebrew alphabet, but rather in a series of thirty-two sermons.\footnote{Kannengiesser, “Enarratio in psalmum CXVIII,” 366. In the course of this study, I will argue that there is another structure underlying the division of En. Ps. 118 into thirty-two sermons.} In fact, there are instances where a sermon covers only one verse or where one verse is distributed between two sermons.\footnote{Verse 3 is commented on in sermones 1-3; v. 19 in sermones 7-8; v. 73 in sermones 18-19; and v. 119 in sermones 24-25.}

**Torah as Wisdom**

Traditionally called “The Great Psalm,” Psalm 118 is renowned for its constant and repeated meditation on YHWH’s law, a theme that recurs in various ways in almost every line of the Psalm.\footnote{With the exception of vv. 3, 37, 90 and 122, every verse contains one of the following terms: lex, testimonium, mandatum, praeeptum, iustificatio, iudicium, iustitia, sermo, eloquium. The absence of these terms in the verses mentioned above is compensated for by their double occurrence in vv. 16, 48, 160, 168 and 172. Exegetes do not agree whether these terms should be considered as synonymous and thus equivalent to law. See André Robert, “Le sens du mot ‘loi’ dans le Psalume CXIX (Vulg. CXVIII),” RB 46 (1937): 182-206. Critical scholarship has established that the term Torah has many meanings in the Hebrew Bible and that those meanings can contradict each other. See Sheldon Haas Blank, “The LXX Renderings of Old Testament Terms for Law,” Hebrew Union College Annual 7 (1930): 259-283; Barnabas Lindars, “Torah in Deuteronomy,” in Words and Meanings: Essays Presented to David W. Thomas (eds. Peter R. Ackroyd and Barnabas Lindars; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 117-136; Joseph Jensen, The Use of Tôrâ by Isaiah: His Debate with the Wisdom Tradition (Washington: Catholic Biblical Association, 1973); Stephen Westerholm, “Torah, Nomos and Law: A Question of Meaning,” Studies in Religion 15 (1986): 327-336.} In particular, the supplicant glories in his knowledge of the law (vv.
98-100) and in his enjoyment of it (vv. 14, 16). In the entire Bible there is no text that is more preoccupied with the law than Psalm 118. Indeed, one of the most significant features of Ps. 118 is its use of eight or ten terms representing different aspects of the law, but whose original meanings seem to have been lost by the time of the Psalm’s composition. The repetition of each of these key words is close to twenty-two, the number of the Hebrew alphabet, and their distribution throughout the Psalm betrays a literary pattern from which the author deliberately deviates only occasionally. However, there is no doubt that some of these terms were introduced by copyists, both in the direct and the indirect transmissions of the text. Hebrew manuscripts and Latin translations support this suggestion because they often witness to different and conflicting traditions with regard to these terms and the general aspect of the text.

Exegetes have noted that some of the key words used for law may have derived from the Torah doxology of Ps. 18:8-11, of which Ps. 118 seems to be an expanded version. However, as Deissler has pointed out, the nature and the dimensions of both

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551 According to Alfons Deissler, *uia* and *semita* should also be counted among the key words for law [Psalm 119 (118) und seine Theologie: Ein Beitrag zur Erforschung der anthologischen Stilgattung im Alten Testament (Munich: Karl Zink, 1955), 85-86].


553 A nice example of this textual phenomenon is provided by Florence Bouet, “Pluralité textuelle et choix éditoriaux,” 43-55. There is an indication that the Vorlages of Augustine’s codices had two different readings at v. 56, namely *iustitias* (δικαιοσύνας) and *iustificationes* (δικαιώματα).

554 Levenson, “The Sources of Torah,” 562. The five terms that appear in Ps. 18 are the following: *lex, testimonium, iustitia, praeceptum, and iudicium.*
Psalms are noticeably different, and the relationship between them may well be characteristic of Biblical intertextuality in general. In fact, similarities between Ps. 118 and other Torah Psalms, particularly Ps. 1 and Ps. 37, have also been noted.

In spite of the variation in the description of the law and the emphatic accumulation in the terminology for Torah, Ps. 118 does not provide a clear content for this important notion. Yet there is no doubt about the intention of the Psalmist: the Psalm is an exaltation of the law, a prayer to keep it (v. 5), a plea to teach it to those who ignore it (v. 42), and a lament about those who wander from it (vv. 21, 53, 136).

Certainly, in the mind of the Psalmist, the law summarizes all that God has ordered to his people through Moses and his prophets, because it represents the whole of God’s revelation conceived as way of life. In this sense, Ps. 118 can be described as “a literary monument in honour of Yahweh’s revelation of himself to Israel.”

555 Deissler, Psalm 119, 266.
558 Günter Stemberger, Einführung in die Judaistik (Munich: Beck, 2000), 92: “…dass die Bibel als einmalige Offenbarung Gottes für alle Zeiten in einem begrenzten Text alle Möglichkeiten des Lebens anspricht.” This tradition is also represented in the Midrash on the Psalms; see Midrash Tehillim 119.8 (Braude, 2:252): “Thou hast charged that we shall diligently keep Thy commandments (Ps. 119:4). In every part of Scripture the Holy One, blessed be He, charged the children of Israel to keep the commandments of the Torah: He charged them in the five books of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Writings, as is shown by the verse Have I not written three times unto thee of counsels and knowledge? (Prov. 22:20). Hence it is said Thou hast charged that we shall diligently keep Thy commandments.”
A. Leslie has pointed out, like all the other Torah Psalms, Ps. 118 describes the beauty and the spiritual values of life under the law as Judaism envisioned it.\(^{560}\)

**The Genre of Psalm 118**

Herman Gunkel has demonstrated that the genre of Ps. 118 is very complex, insofar as it represents various motives from the Old Testament and oscillates between individual complaint, hymn, thanksgiving, meditation and wisdom teaching, without being exclusively one or another. As a *Mischgedicht*—a poem of mixed form—it combines I-form supplications, prophetic pronouncements and didactic teaching.\(^{561}\)

Additionally, Gunkel has observed that the style of Ps. 118 is anthological, because the entire poem is made up of aphorisms on the law and tends to paraphrase and share lexicological affinities with other biblical texts, particularly Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Proverbs and Job.\(^{562}\) With such a variety of sources, the author of Ps. 118 has created Scripture through the creative use of Scripture. Like the author of Ps. 1, he has altered his sources in such a way that his composition may be said to contain an exegesis of its sources.\(^{563}\)


While a rhetorical analysis of Ps. 118 shows that it is primarily a prayer addressed to YHWH, its anthological style, alphabetical structure, and possible relationship to Wisdom literature give to this Psalm an important didactic character. Appropriately, Kittel has characterized it as a didactic poem (*Lehrgedicht*) with the hunger for illumination as thematic center:

\[
\text{Legem ponne mihi, Domine, uiam iustificationum tuarum;}
\text{et exquiram eam semper.}
\]

\[
\text{Da mihi intellectum et scrutabor legem tua,}
\text{et custodiam illam in toto corde. (vv. 33-34; cf. vv. 66, 73)}
\]

The portrait in Ps. 118 is, on the one hand, that of the Jewish sage who, like Solomon, “prays that God endow him with discernment, which, in turn, will enable him to understand the commandments.” In fact, the Psalmist claims that he has received his knowledge of the law as a charismatic gift of wisdom, by which he has been introduced to revelation and illumination, after he had petitioned for them:

\[
\text{Suauitatem fecisti cum seruo tuo, Domine,}
\text{secundum uerbum tuum.}
\]

\[
\text{Suauitatatem et eruditionem et scientiam doce me,}
\text{quoniam mandatis tuis credidi. (vv. 65-66)}
\]

\[
\text{Hereditate adquisiui testimonia tua in aeternum,}
\text{quoniam exsulatio cordis mei sunt. (v. 111)}
\]

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564 Apart from vv. 1-3, and 115, the whole Psalm is addressed to YHWH, who is referred to at least twenty-five times throughout the Psalm.


From this divine illumination flows the learning and wisdom that the sage wishes to impart to others.\textsuperscript{567} 

On the other hand, Ps. 118 describes the prayer of an exemplary student of the Torah who, filled with the awareness of leaving the legacy to others (v. 79), meditates on it day and night.\textsuperscript{568} A companion of all who fear God and keep his precepts (v. 63), he is ultimately a happy man whose way is blameless, who walks in the law of the Lord, keeps his decrees and seeks the Lord with his whole heart (vv. 1-2). Those who fear the Lord see him and rejoice, because he has hoped in the word of the Lord (v. 74). As a student of the law, the poet of Ps. 118 sees himself also as a young man (vv. 9, 99, 100), who is derided, oppressed and persecuted (vv. 23, 46), put in bonds (v. 61), and destined to die (vv. 121-122), because of his love for God’s law.

Through these apparently autobiographical statements, the supplicant of Ps. 118 is able to identify himself with the major figures of Israel. Like Abraham, he is an alien (\textit{incola}) in the land (v. 19), and like him, he has wandered like a lost sheep (v. 176).\textsuperscript{569} Like Moses, Aaron, Daniel, and other prophets, he has spoken of God’s decrees in the presence of Kings and was not put to shame (v. 46)\textsuperscript{570} and like them he is now persecuted

\textsuperscript{567} The interchange between the stem of the verb “to teach” in the original Hebrew (לָמַד) and its derivative “to learn” (לִמַּד) makes this point particularly clear: taught by God, the supplicant becomes a learned individual who in turn is able to teach. See vv. 7, 12, 26, 64, 66, 68, 71, 73, 99, 108, 124, 135, 171.

\textsuperscript{568} Psalm 118 describes the supplicant as an exemplary student who mediates God’s law \textit{nocte} (v. 55), \textit{media nocte} (v. 62), \textit{tota die} (v. 97), \textit{intempesta nocte} (v. 147), \textit{ad matutinam} (v. 148), and \textit{septies in die} (v. 164). See Kent Aaron Reynolds, \textit{Torah as Teacher: The Exemplary Torah Student in Psalm 119} (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

\textsuperscript{569} Gen. 23:4; Exod. 2:22; 18:3; Deut. 26:5.

\textsuperscript{570} Jer. 38:14-28; 1 Kgs 19:14.
(vv. 25, 28, 61, 71, 82, 86, 87, 95). Indeed, through his love of the law, he identifies himself with Israel, the nation of the Torah.

With such a strategy, Ps. 118 accomplishes the representation of Israel as a corporate personality through the figure of one individual. It provides, therefore, for the description of the people of God, whose very existence is reduced to one condition: keeping the law. As Levenson has observed: “Just as the highly variegated national history has been telescoped into one person’s biography, so have all the messages of the tradition been reduced to one great dichotomy—to keep the commandments or to forsake them.”

*Sitz im Leben and Wirkungsgeschichte of a Torah Psalm*

Gunkel and Mowinckel have already suggested that the mixed form of Ps. 118 was indicative of a late composition. Most scholars agree now that Ps. 118 is an example of post-exilic compositions that are characterized by the blending of the genres, by the blurring of their boundaries, and by the creation of new texts through allusion and rephrasing of previous texts considered as authoritative.

571 Levenson, “The Sources of Torah,” 568-569

572 Henry W. Robinson, *Corporate Personality in Ancient Israel* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1981). For an example of national history told through the examplars of many individuals, see Sir. 44-50, “Praise of the Fathers.”

573 Levenson, “The Sources of Torah,” 569.

More precisely, Edward Lipinski argued that Ps. 118 was the work of the Jerusalem priestly circles of the 6th century. However, most scholars now think that it reflects beautifully the Judaism “around the time of Ezra, not least because of its central preoccupation with the Torah of Yahweh, a dominant theme of the reformation engineered by the notable scribe.” Indeed, Ezra is described as a scribe well-versed in the law of Moses, whose mission is to expound and to teach it to Israel.

Furthermore, the identification of the student of the law with the Wisdom teacher, crystalized in the figures of Eza and Nehemiah, and culminating in Ben Sira, has provided exegetes with the most accepted background and Sitz im Leben for Ps. 118, that is, the Bet ham-Midrash, the Wisdom study house.

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577 Ezra 7:6-10.
With the discovery of the Hebrew text of Ben Sira, scholars have noted Ben Sira’s influence on ancient prayers and religious poetry (piyyutim). While the earliest parts of the Jewish prayer book were traditionally ascribed to the Great Assembly at the time of Ezra, modern scholarship now believes that several customs found in the Halakah and the Eighteen Benedictions come really from the Hebrew text of Ben Sira.

For example, Hans Joachim Kraus showed that the Jewish festival on rejoicing in the Torah (Simchat Torah) finds its origin in the tradition supported by Ps. 19, Ps. 119 and Ben Sira, in which wisdom is identified with the Torah given to Israel as the source of the Israelites’ enduring enjoyment. This emphasis became particularly noticeable in the period following the destruction of the Temple, when the true source of joy was understood to lie in the study of the law and the performance of the divine commandments (מִצְוֹת) rather than in the temple sacrifices.

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580 Virtually all the major and minor rabbinical festivals in the Jewish calendar are commemorative and look backward to particular events and motives in the Hebrew Bible.

581 Hans J. Kraus, Theologie der Psalmen (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1979), 41; Emmanuel Levinas, Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism (tr. Seán Hand; Baltimore: Hopkins University Press, 1990), 19: “The law for the Jew is never a yoke. It carries its own joy, which nourishes a religious life and the whole of Jewish mysticism.” The festival Simchat Torah begins with the following words: “Rejoice and be glad on Simchat Torah and give honor to the Torah today. To acquire it is better than all acquisitions, more delicious than gold and pearls. Let us exult and rejoice in this Torah, for it is our strength and our light.” See Ps. 18:8: “The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart.” References to the delight in the Torah in Ps. 118 are found at vv. 14, 16, 24, 35, 47, 48, 70, 77, 92, 97, 111, 127, 143, 159, 162 and 174.

Ancient Interpreters of Ps. 118

As the most grandiose celebration of the law in the Bible, Ps. 118 has fascinated many Christian writers. At the conclusion of his own exposition, Augustine recognized that there have been more-learned interpreters (sapientiores doctioresque) who may have commented on this Psalm better (melius) than he.583 Unfortunately, it is not easy to present a reliable picture of Patristic exegesis on Ps. 118 because, for such a lengthy Psalm, the fragments are innumerable and their attribution to one writer or the other remains problematic.584 Ancient interpreters of Psalm 118 include the following.

Origen of Alexandria (185-254). In his homilies on Leviticus, Origen referred to an exposition on Ps. 118 which seems to have been lost.585 Origen’s commentary on Ps. 118 has survived only in fragments, notably in the extensive quotations of the Catenae collections.586

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583 En. Ps. 118.32.8: “Vt potui, quantum a Domino adiutus sum, psalmun istum magnum pertractaui et exposui. Quod profecto melius sapientiores doctioresque fecerunt, siue facturi sunt.” Augustine’s other references to experts and uiri docti can be found in Epist. 101.4; De doctr. 2.16.26; En. Ps. 33.1.4.

584 An excellent sketch of the history of the exegesis on Ps. 118 up to the 1950s is provided by Deissler, “Die Beurteilung des Psalms 119 (118) in der Geschichte der Exegese,” in Psalm 119, 33-66; see also Robert Devreesse, Les anciens commentateurs grecs des Psalms (ST 264; Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica Vaticana, 1970), passim; La chaîne palétiste sur le Psaume 118 (eds. Marguerite Harl and Gilles Dorival; SChr 189-190; Paris: Cerf, 1972).

585 Origen, In Leviticum 13.2: “Memini tamen dudum nos cum centesimi octavi psalmi exponeremus illum versiculum, in quo scriptum est: Lucerna semitis meis (Ps. 118:115) diversitatem lucernae et lucis pro viribus ostendisse.”

586 Devreesse, Les anciens commentateurs, 19-85; Rondeau, Les commentaires patristiques, vol. 1, 55-63. There may well be more than twenty different types of Catenae containing quotations from works by the Fathers on the Psalms. These are mainly taken from the commentaries of Eusebius of Caesarea, Didymus the Blind, and Theodoret. Occasionally, in some of the Psalms, there is also material from Apollinaris of Laodicea, Asterius the Sophist, Basil of Caesarea, Cyril of Alexandria, Chrysostom, and Origen. For Psalm 118, there is also material from Athanasius. But the most important of the Catenae is known as the Palestinian Catena, which was originally compiled in Palestine in 6th century. The Palestinian Catena stands out for the size and the quality of the extracts it preserves. On this particular genre, see Gilles Dorival, Les chaînes exégétiques grecques sur les Psaumes: Contribution à l’étude d’une forme littéraire (Louvain: Peeters, 1986); Devreesse, “Les chaînes exégétiques grecques,” DBS 1 (1928): 1084-1233;
**Eusebius of Caesarea (263-339).** One of Eusebius’s last works was an extensive commentary on the Psalms, which was translated into Latin by Eusebius of Vercelli. Eusebius’ translation is lost, and only a few extant portions of the original Greek commentary on Ps. 118 have survived in the catenae.

**Athanasius of Alexandria (295-373).** The closest Athanasius came to a commentary on the Psalms is his Letter to Marcellinus, in which he provided a summary of almost all the Psalms in a very condensed form and describes them as “the perfect image for the soul’s course of life.” Athanasius described Ps. 118 together with Pss. 1, 31, 40, 127 and 111 as examples of beatitude songs. The Palestinian Catena on Psalm 118 contains some twenty glosses attributed to Athanasius. Deciding from which Athanasian source they derive is a thorny and complex issue that has not been satisfactorily resolved.

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587 Jerome, De viris illustribus 81; Epist. 61.2; 112.20. Bernard de Montfaucon printed an edition of Eusebius’ commentary on Pss. 1-118, which Jean-Baptiste Pitra reedited in his *Analecta Sacra*. Angelo Mai added the remainder, from Pss. 119-150. Both editions were eventually reprinted in PG 23:71-1396 and 24:9-78. Unfortunately the materials were printed with insufficient care and seem to be contaminated by quotations from Origen. On this, see Carmelo Curti, *Eusebiana 1: Commentarii in Psalmos* (Catania: Centro di Studi sull’Antico Cristianesimo, 1989).


590 Athanasius, Epist. ad Marcellinum 14.

591 See Harl, *La chaîne palestinienne*, 49-56. Harl notes that the addition of Athanasius to the Palestinian Catena may have been the work of monastic circles: “Les glosses d’Athanase nous semblent
**Apollinaris of Laodicea (315-390).** Appolinaris’ *Metaphrasis Psalmorum* in Greek hexameter verse, whose authenticity is disputed, is reproduced in the PG.\(^{592}\) Fragments of his commentary on Ps. 118 in the Palestinian Catena seem to represent a different tradition than the one represented by Origen.\(^{593}\)

**Didymus the Blind (ca. 313-398).** The discovery of some 2000 pages of papyrus at Tura has offered a new access to Didymus’ works on the Psalms, in the form of unrevised transcripts of his oral lectures by his students. Unfortunately, the Tura commentary covers only Psalms 20-44.\(^{594}\) An incomplete commentary on Ps. 118 bearing the name of Didymus is probably not genuine.\(^{595}\) Didymus’s authentic fragments and short quotations on Ps. 118 are known through the Catenae.\(^{596}\) Apart from his adaptation of Origen’s interpretation, Harl has noted that Didymus’ Psalter text is significantly different from the one used by Origen and Eusebius and may be of Egyptian origin.\(^{597}\)

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**Theodoret of Cyrus (ca. 393-458).** A student of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret’s commentary on the Psalms is one of the best preserved of all early Greek patristic commentaries.\(^{598}\) Fragments on Ps. 118 have survived in different catanae, including sixteen glosses in the Palestinian Catena which are often, as Harl has pointed out, very similar to Origen’s.\(^{599}\)

**Hesychius of Jerusalem (+ ca. 450).** Although extensive fragments on Hesychius’ commentaries on the Psalms are preserved in the Catena, only one gloss on Ps. 118 has reached us (v. 176) through the Palestinian catena.\(^{600}\)

**Cyril of Alexandria (376-444).** Cyril of Alexandria, who claimed that “the entire Scripture is one book and was spoken by the one Holy Spirit,”\(^{601}\) has left fragments of a christological interpretation of Ps. 118.\(^{602}\) According to Assunta Rossi, not all of these fragments are authentic.\(^{603}\)

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\(^{599}\) Harl, *La chaîne palestinienne*, 47-49.

\(^{600}\) A series of brief glosses on the Psalter (*De titulis psalmorum*) previously attributed to Athanasius (PG 27:649-1350) seems to be the work of Hesychius; see Devreesse, *Les anciens commentateurs*, 243-301; Rondeau, *Les commentaires patristiques*, 1:137-143.

\(^{601}\) Commentary on Isaiah 29.11-12 (PG 70:655a.).

\(^{602}\) Rondeau, *Les commentaires patristiques*, 1:131-134

Hilar y of Poitiers (310-368). Hilary’s Tractatus super Psalmod was designed to convey the doctrinal and exegetical riches of the Greek-speaking church to the Christian communities of the West, which Hilary considered to be still in their infancy.\(^{604}\) As Jerome states in his account On Illustrious Men, in this work Hilary imitated Origen.\(^{605}\) On Ps. 118, in particular, consistent with the tradition he depended on, Hilary showed a great deal of care in distinguishing the different terms used for law.\(^{606}\)

Ambrose of Milan (333-397). Ambrose probably preached his twenty two sermons on Ps. 118 during the years 389-390.\(^{607}\) He interpreted the Psalm in light of Song of Songs, a practice already present in Origen.\(^{608}\)

Jerome (347-420). Because of his work as a Bible translator, Jerome came across Ps. 118 on several occasions. However, he did not produce any complete exposition on this Psalm, to which he refers only briefly. In particular, in his Epist. 30 (to Paula) and Epist. 106 (to Sunnia and Fretela) he characterized Psalm 118 as the shadow of things to come (Heb. 10:1), highlighted the allegorical character of the Hebrew alphabet and explained

\(^{604}\) (CSEL 22:354-544).


\(^{607}\) Expositio Psalmod CXVIII (ed. Michael Petschenig; CSEL 62; Vienna: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1913).

\(^{608}\) Harl, La chaîne palestinienn, 95, note 1. About one third of Ambrose’s commentary deals with Song of Songs of which 90 out 117 verses are referred to in the commentary.
the readings that were at variance with those presented by his correspondents. It is not clear whether these remarks were preliminary to or independent from Jerome’s translation works. In any case, they betray the influence of the Greek Fathers, especially Origen.

**The Greek Fathers and the Palestinian Catena on Ps. 118**

As can be seen from this survey, almost all the commentaries on Ps. 118 by the Greek Fathers have reached us through the Catenae. While we now have a broader access to this material, the study of the genealogy of the Catenae on the Psalter and their proper reconstruction remains a bewildering challenge, mainly because of the uncertain attribution of the quotations, the complexity of the Catenae family tree, the corruption in the textual tradition, and the catenists’ own program, intervention, and editorial work. The compilers of the Catenae inevitably abridge, alter, or censor their sources. Occasionally, they obscure and distort the connections between the quotations, for which they sometimes provide doubtful attributions. While the intention of the catenists is to give an exegetical panorama of a given text, by selecting and organizing their materials they end up producing inevitably a far more coherent and complete exegesis than is present in any of their sources.610

As Devreesse and Harl have shown, the Catenae on the Psalms generally use three authors (Eusebius, Didymus and Theodoret), with occasional references to others such as


610 See Dorival, “Comment écrire l’histoire des chaînes,” 1-98.
Apollinaris. The list of those used for Psalm 118 is much larger (up to seven names), with Origen placed on the top of the list, followed by Eusebius and Didymus, while Athanasius and Hesychius are used only marginally.\(^611\) This fact indicates the popularity of Ps. 118 among the early exegetes and the interest of the catenists in compiling these Fathers’ exegeses on this particular Psalm. There is some indication that the catenist of the Palestinian Catena on Ps. 118 used Didymus’ quotations only when he had no reason to quote Eusebius or when he did not have access to Origen.\(^612\) With the exception of Apollinaris, the tradition reported in this Catena is therefore wholly Origenist, with Origen being the most quoted contributor.\(^613\) Overall, the Palestinian Catena on Ps. 118 is remarkable for its Origenist slant.

In particular, the interpretative tradition represented by the Palestinian Catena on Ps. 118 is ethical, because it understands Psalm 118 as describing the way to perfection. As the opening Athanasian gloss states:

In this psalm, the psalmist describes the lifestyle of the saints: their fights, torments, ordeals, the attacks, the nets, and traps of the demons on them, the many evil thoughts that creep their minds; he also describes what helps them triumph: the law, the teachings, patience, the help that comes from above; finally, he describes what is bestowed on them after these trials: the prize, the crowns, the rewards.\(^614\)

\(^{611}\) The glosses of Athanasius are short, and Hesychius has only one entry at v. 176. Harl suggests that Athanasius and Hesychius may have been added at a later stage (Harl, \textit{La chaîne palestinienne}, 29-36).

\(^{612}\) For instance, Theodoret’s quotations seem to have been sacrificed in favor of Origen’s, precisely because they did not seem to the catenists any different from them (Harl, \textit{La chaîne palestinienne}, 48, 551).


\(^{614}\) \textit{La chaîne palestinienne}, 184b.
The two opening verses of the Psalm provide the interpretative key of the Catena contributors. They set the theme of progression of the individual on the way toward moral perfection or perfect gnosis (v. 75), in a process of θεραπεία (vv. 29, 58) and progression where the Law, the Prophets and Christ are understood as concrete historical moments to measure one’s achievement on the way to perfection (vv. 1, 14, 32, 169). Among the contributors to the Palestinian Catena on Ps. 118, only Origen seemed to be interested in distinguishing between the different terms for law. These terms become for him the epinoiai Christi and are thus presented as ethical goals to be emulated by the individual Christian.

For the Palestinian Catena contributors, the last verse (v. 176), with its theme of the lost sheep, describes not only the state of humanity left without the help of Christ, but also the concrete state of the one who has not walked in the way of the Lord and who ends up being lost. Psalm 118 expresses, therefore, the drama, the anguishes, and the prayers of the Psalmist κατὰ τὴν ἱστορίαν (vv. 141a), the anagogical interpretation of which allows the actual reader to understand the deeper meaning of his own situation (v. 147a), while signifying occasionally the situation of Israel, of the Church, or of humanity as a whole (v. 130a). This third level of interpretation, however, is not widespread because what interests this interpretative tradition, deeply conscious of the literal sense of the text, remains individualistic. The use of the first person throughout the Psalm helps

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616 Harl, *La chaîne palestinienne*, 125-129. On this particular point, Hilary follows Origen: In Ps. 118. Prol. 3 (SChr 344:93-94); De titolo psalmi 91 (CSEL 22:345); In Matthaeeum 24.3 (SChr 258:166).
reduce the actual distance between the Psalmist, the commentator and the reader, thus creating a shared experience among the three.

Concretely, the Palestinian Catena promotes an approach in which the Psalmist becomes the prototype of the perfect Christian, the perfect martyr, and even the perfect monk. Therefore, it finds embedded in the Psalm text the theory of ascetic discipline and avenues for ascetic practices and venture. Particularly important in highlighting this “monastic” tendency are the Athanasian glosses.

The second characteristic of the tradition represented in the Palestinian Catena on Ps. 118 is its erudite approach to the biblical text. The catenists of the Palestinian Catena show an interest in the Hebrew text as such and highlight the textual variants and readings taken from Symmachus, Aquilla, and Origen’s Quinta. In particular, they note the acrostic structure of the Psalm and its the division into twenty-two stanzas or three staseis (at vv. 1-72, 73-131, 132-176) and are aware of the most significant differences in the exegetical contributions, for instance those of Didymus, which they introduce

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618 Another writer showing this tendency is Evagrius (345-399), whose work on Ps. 118 has survived only in scholia, the identification and edition of which have not advanced. In an initial collation, Marie-Josèphe Rondeau assigned to Evagrius 82 scholia on Ps. 118 (“Les commentaires sur les Psaumes d’Évagre le Pontique,” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 26 (1960): 307-348).

619 The different hexaplaric variants are found at vv. 9b, 10c, 13a, 24c, 27c, 28b, 29c, 33b, 65-66, 68c, 80a, 85b, 95a, 119b, 121b, 122c, 143b a, 154b, 170b c, 173d. These variants come from Origen (three variants); Eusebius (twelve variants); Apollinaris (four variants); Theodoret (two variants). On the characteristics of the Hexapla, particularly column five, see Joachim Schaper, “The Origin and Purpose of the Fifth Column of the Hexapla,” in *Origen’s Hexapla and Fragments* (Texte und Studien zum Antike Judentum 58; ed. Alison Salvesen; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 3-15.
appropriately with the phrase ἑτέρα γρφή (another interpretation).\(^{620}\) The *exégèse savante* of the Palestinian Catena demonstrates the outstanding qualities of the contributors chosen for the collection as well as the Catenists’ interest in including as much diversity as they could for the interpretation of Psalm 118.

The third feature of the Palestinian Catena on Ps. 118 is its insistence that the Jews did not have the key to unlock the Scriptures. Yet both Origen and Eusebius seem to be familiar with Jewish interpretations of the Old Testament.\(^{621}\) The discoveries of the Dead Sea Scrolls have shown how popular was Ps. 118 at Qumran.\(^{622}\) On the other hand, the Midrashic corpus on the Psalms (*Midrash Tehillim*), the result of the collection and accretion of very early haggadic compositions on the Psalms, bears much similarity with the catenic literature.\(^{623}\) A literature of compilation and quotations, the Midrash tends to string together a chain of expositions according to the arrangement of the biblical text, usually by identifying the authors of the individual expositions. The combination of the expositions is often introduced by the phrase *dabar aher* (another interpretation), a feature that is also characteristic of the Catenae.\(^{624}\)

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\(^{620}\) See for instance vv. 26, 41, 43, 65, 72, 81, 88, 105, 107, 142, 151, 172. For a list of all the textual variants in the Palestinian Catena, see Harl, *La chaîne palestinienne*, 111-121.

\(^{621}\) See Origen, Homilies on Jeremiah 20.2 (SChr 238:256); Eusebius, Praepartio evangelica 5.5; 11.6.

\(^{622}\) Fragments of Ps. 118 recovered at Qumran have been published in the Discoveries in the Judaean Desert series (DJD) as 1Q10 (vv. 31-34; 43-48; 77-79); 4QPs (vv. 37-43; 44-46; 49-50; 73; 81-83; 90-92); 4QPh (vv. 10-21); 5QPs (99-101; 104; 113-120; 138-142); 11QPs (vv. 1-6; 15-28; 37-49; 59-73; 82-96; 105-120; 128-142; 150-164; 171-176).

\(^{623}\) Specialists in Rabbinic literature acknowledge that the style, the manner of homilies and the Amoraim mentioned in *Midrash Tehillim* as well as the sources upon which it draws, are evidence of its Palestinian origin and of the antiquity of its first collections.

It is not difficult to assume that there existed some mutual influences between Christians and Jews in the interpretation of the Psalms and, in particular, that the contributors to the Palestinian Catena were aware of some Jewish interpretations.\textsuperscript{625} As Horbury has argued, between the Jewish and Christian writers of the 4\textsuperscript{th} and 5\textsuperscript{th} centuries, “exegetical methods were shared, and divergent interpretation reflected differences of custom and tenet, not of exegetical principle.”\textsuperscript{626} In fact, as is now commonly accepted, the symbolic interpretation of the Hebrew alphabet among the Fathers, particularly Origen, Jerome, Ambrose, and Hilary, finds its origin in Jewish religious circles.\textsuperscript{627}

**Hilary of Poitiers, Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine on Ps. 118**

Both Ambrose and Hilary of Poitiers drew heavily on the Greek Fathers for their ethical interpretation of Ps. 118.\textsuperscript{628} Jerome, who claimed that Hilary merely imitated Origen and that Augustine had not followed the Greek Fathers closely enough, was inspired by the


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Greek Fathers, especially Origen, whose works he had translated. All three interpreted Ps. 118 with an ethical and individualistic outlook, in following the Origenist tradition embedded in the Palestinian Catena.

On the other hand, contrary to the Palestinian Catena tradition, Augustine’s interpretation of Ps. 118 is entirely corporate in its approach. Augustine opens his exposition with a theological vision according to which the law is given to both good and bad people. The grace of the law that the individual enjoys is the very grace bestowed on humanity as a whole. In fact, the very first verse of the Psalm gives Augustine the opportunity to present the universal longing for happiness, not only as an individual desire, but also as a gift to humanity as a whole. With the last verse, Augustine again presents the theme of the lost sheep from a corporate perspective, because the lost sheep is equated to the nations from which God gathers his Church: “Through the work of those who choose God’s commandments, weigh them mentally, and love them, the sheep is still being sought; and through the blood of his shepherd, poured out and spread abroad, the sheep is being found among all nations.”

Thus, in Augustine, the sense of the individual’s progress highlighted by the Palestinian Catena is replaced by a deepening understanding of God’s operative grace toward humanity in the continual act of creating an ever-growing community that he claims as his own among the nations. With such an outlook, the individualistic approach seen in the Palestinian Catena is constantly broadened and balanced with a more

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629 En. Ps. 118.32.7: “Sed per eos qui mandata Dei eligunt, colligunt, diligunt, adhuc quaeritur, et per sui pastoris sanguinem fusum atque dispersum, in omnibus gentibus inuenitur.”
Christocentric interpretation whereby God continues to expand the body of Christ out of a humanity that would go astray if it were to lack the grace of the law and the grace of Christ. Augustine’s interpretation of Ps. 118 is thus constructed on the fullness of God’s grace in the law and in Christ as expressed in John’s gospel: *Lex enim per Moysen data est gratia et veritas per Iesum Christum facta est* (Jn 1:17).630

This positive approach to the law characterizes one of the most important aspects of Augustine’s theology, that is, his understanding of the Old Testament and Judaism. Augustine’s approach to the Old Testament has been expertly documented by Paula Fredricksen, who finds in the *Contra Faustum* the work in which Augustine produced “something all but unprecedented within his tradition: a Christian affirmation of Jews and Judaism.”631 According to Fredricksen, Augustine’s engagement against Faustus had inevitably led him to put forward a positive understanding of the Old Testament and to offer a very favorable understanding of the law. In fact, apart from a passing reference to the Mishnah as a collection of extra-canonical tales,632 one finds hardly any negative attacks on the Jews or Judaism in En. Ps. 118, an exposition which is entirely governed


632 En. Ps. 118.20.5: “Has uero habent in diuersis sectis ac professionibus, et litterae saeculares, et Iudaeorum quae Deuterosis nuncupatur, continens praeter diuinarum canonem scripturarum milia fabularum.” The description of the Mishnah as Deuterosis is widespread in Christian and Jewish circles. According to R. Nathan ben Yehiel, the Mishnah is called Deuterosis “because it is second in relation to the Torah.” The earliest attestation of the term in Christian literature seems to be in the *Didascalia apostolorum* and it appears elsewhere in Patristic writings (Jerome, Epist. 121.10; De viris illustribus 18; In Habakkuk 2.15; Eusebius, Praeparatio evangelica 11.5; Epiphanius, De haeresibus 33.4).
by what Augustine understood to be the grace of the law, that is, its capability to prepare a people for the Lord (Lk 1:17). And Augustine sees this people of God realized both in Israel and in the Church, so that his ecclesiological vision is that of a Church which “has been present on earth since the dawn of humanity.”\(^{633}\) In every generation, the law of God is active and bears its graced results through the work of those who choose God’s commandments, weigh them mentally, and love them.\(^{634}\)

In contrast to what he had developed in the *Contra Faustum*,\(^ {635}\) Augustine does not speak of the different ages or stages of the law and grace in En. Ps. 118. He sees law and grace as one single act of divine solicitude toward humanity. It is this intimate relationship between Moses and Jesus, between the Old and the New Testament, that allows Augustine to understand law and grace as gift above gift, *gratia pro gratia* (Jn 1:16).

Therefore, contrary to Origen and Hilary, for example, Augustine does not approach the different terms for law philologically, but rather theologically. Indeed, among all the terms that designate the law in Ps. 118, Augustine highlights only *uerbum/eloquium* (λόγος) and *testimonium* (μαρτυρία), precisely because these two terms evoke for him respectively Christ the Word of God (*promissum Dei*)\(^ {636}\) and Christ the proto-martyr, whom the martyrs and confessors emulate.\(^ {637}\)

\(^{633}\) En. Ps. 118.29.9. See also the theme of the *ecclesia ab Abel* in De civ. Dei 18.51.

\(^{634}\) En. Ps. 118.32.7.

\(^{635}\) Contra Faustum 19.2.

\(^{636}\) The equivalence between *uerbum* and *promissio/promissum* is made at En. Ps. 118.10.3; 13.1; 13.2; 16.2; 17.1; 19.3; 20.1; 20.2; 23.3; 27.6; 32.1. Kannengiesser rightly notes that there is no other *Enarratio*
As I have already suggested, the symbolic interpretation of the Hebrew alphabet in Ambrose and Jerome depends certainly on the tradition represented by the Palestinian Catena. Augustine dismisses any symbolic or ethical interpretation of the alphabet by noting that he “omitted this because (he) found nothing in the psalm that seemed to be affected by the letters.” Therefore, it is plausible that the two references to the Hebrew alphabet found in En. Ps. 118 (21.2; 32.8) are meant to contrast his own interpretation with that of other authors on this particular point, probably Ambrose and Jerome.

While Ambrose and Hilary do not show a great interest in the minutiae of the biblical text, Jerome seems to emulate the philological works of Origen and Didymus as he deals with the text of Ps. 118, an approach that is consistent with his work as a Bible translator. At a loss to understand the frequent differences between Jerome’s Latin Psalter of 383, the so-called Roman Psalter and the LXX (the “common” edition), two Getic priests, Sunnia and Fretela, had sent him a long list of passages with a request for explanation. Jerome replies fully and points out that they have been misled by their edition of the LXX, which differs widely from the critical text Origen had given in the

where the link between uerbum and promissum is more highlighted than En. Ps. 118 (“Enarratio in psalmum CXVIII,” 373, note 47).

637 References to testimonia as martyria are found at En. Ps. 118.9.2; 9.3; 14.3; 20.8; 21.7-8; 23.3; 23.7; 28.7; 31.7.

638 Jerome, Epist. 30.5-12; Ambrose, Expositio de psalmo CXVIII.14.1.

639 En. Ps. 118.32.8: “Nihil dixi, non sit mirum, quoniam nihil quod ad istum proprie pertineret inueni; non enim solus habet litteras.” Augustine also remarks that in the Hebrew Psalm 118 “was far more carefully structured than the so-called alphabetical psalms our own people have generally composed, whether in Latin or in Punic,” in which “each stanza begins with a particular letter, but this letter initiates only the opening line,” whereas, “in the Hebrew text not only is each stanza of eight verses headed by a successive letter of the alphabet, but within each stanza every verse begins with that letter.” Note that Augustine himself had composed an alphabetical Psalm against the Donatists (Psalmus contra partem Donati; Retr. 1.20). See Filippo Ermini, “Il Psalmus contra partem Donati,” MA 2, 341-352; Cyrille Lambot, “Texte complété et annoté du Psalmus contra partem Donati de saint Augustin, RBen 47 (1935): 312-330; Eugène Tréhorel, Le psaume abécédaire de saint Augustin (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1939).
Hexapla and which Jerome himself had used. In section 75 of his letter to Sunnia and Fretela, Jerome addresses seven such differences in the text of Ps. 118 (vv. 47, 48, 59, 69, 109, 136, 172) by referring to both the Greek and Hebrew. He writes, for instance:

“Centesimo octauo decimo: et meditabar in mandatis tuis, quae dilexi (v. 47). In Graeco uehementer additum legisse uos dicitis; sed hoc superfluum est.”

If there is an Enarratio in which Augustine would have emulated Jerome, it is certainly En. Ps. 118. Whether Augustine knew about Jerome’s translations as he undertook his exposition on Ps. 118 will be discussed in the course of this study. On the basis of the critical notes Jerome provides in his Epist. 106, most scholars believe that Augustine was not aware of the letter in which Jerome clears a misunderstanding regarding the variant “anima mea in manibus meis” (Ps. 118:109), a reading Augustine was at loss to explain. Upon noting that “nonnulli codices habent in manibus meis, sed plures in tuis,” Augustine was startled: “Anima uero mea in manibus meis, quomodo intellegatur, ignoro.” Indeed, the philological character of En. Ps. 118, which includes more than eighty critical and philological notes, does not derive necessarily from the tradition represented by the Palestinian Catena on Ps. 118 via Jerome, but rather seems to be consistent with Augustine’s practice already applied in the earliest Enarrationes in Psalmos.

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641 En. Ps. 118.23.5.
In summary, since Augustine composed En. Ps. 118 almost at the end of his literary career, we can assume that he was able to access a vast literature on this Psalm, particularly because he had began to familiarize himself with this text early. Whether he relied on earlier commentaries remains difficult to establish, given the way he uses his sources, which he seems to blend with his own thought. Because En. Ps. 118 is one of Augustine’s mature works, it may well be that he did not think it fit to explicitly reference other peoples’ ideas that he himself had come to espouse as his own. While it is very unlikely that he depended on the Greek Fathers for his commentary on Ps. 118, even if one cannot rule out an indirect influence through Hilary and Ambrose, there is some evidence to suggest that Augustine knew Hilary’s and Ambrose’s commentaries. Yet he does not mention them by name and refers to earlier commentators only infrequently and anonymously. While the Latin term interpres can mean both translator and commentator, it is well established that in this Enarratio it refers primarily to the many codices of the biblical text with which Augustine was working rather than to other commentators. However, on at least three occasions and on subjects unrelated to the exposition of the Psalm as such, Augustine refers to commentators whose opinions he

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642 Augustine quotes Hilary (In Ps. 118.15.10) in De natura et gratia 62.73 and probably alludes to him in En. Ps. 67.1. He refers repeatedly to Ambrose in the Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum 4.11.29-31. See Kannengiesser, “Enarratio in psalmum CXVIII,” 365, note 29.


644 En. Ps. 118.6.4 (latini interpretes quidam); 11.6 (latini interpretes in hoc loco nonnulli interpretati sunt); 13.3 (sicut de graeco quidam diligentibus expresserunt); 15.2 (quod expressius interpretati sunt); 17.1 (nostri interpretes transulerunt); 18.2 (quidam interpretes); 18.4 (quod autem interpretati sunt nostri); 19.2 (alii diligentius expresserunt); 20.1 (quidam nostri interpretes); 20.5 (interpretes nostri); 23.7 (nonnulli... interpretati sunt); 24.7 (nostri interpretati sunt); 25.6 (expressius interpretati sunt quidam nostri); 26.3 (quia autem interpretati sunt).
presents as differing from or complementing his own, but never as authoritative interpretations that he borrows or agrees with.  

The rather infrequent indications he provides in En. Ps. 118 with regard to earlier commentators suggest that Augustine perhaps depended on the works of Hilary of Poitiers, Ambrose and Jerome for some of the details of his commentary. But this assumption cannot be proven beyond this general remark.

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645 En. Ps. 118.10.2 (quamvis... quidam intellexerint); 18.1-2 (nec defuerunt qui...); 25.3 (nonnulli quippe etiam catholici tractatores).

VI. THE BIBLICAL TEXT OF AUGUSTINE’S PS. 118

Augustine’s Latin text of Psalm 118 can easily be reconstructed from the quotations within the exposition. The major caveat regarding this endeavor is that the text recovered from these quotations may be the result of a later process of harmonization in the manuscripts tradition. On the other hand, one should always assume that every biblical text, whatever its textual tradition, has undergone changes over time, so that a fair comparison of the variants remains often a matter of conjecture. Since the text of Ps. 118 is significantly different from that of the Psalterium Veronense Augustine had used for his earlier expositions, most scholars have argued that the Psalterium Gallicanum (a.k.a. Vulgate) provides the text against which to check the one embedded in En. Ps. 118. Even if it sometimes agrees with the Vulgate, Augustine’s text of Ps. 118 is very different from the Vulgate. In fact, when one compares Augustine’s text with those of the Vulgate and the Iuxta Hebraeos, for both of which we have now reliable critical editions, one can safely conclude that Augustine’s text of Ps. 118 is neither that of the Vulgate nor that of Jerome’s Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos.647 For a comparison, Table 1 presents a synopsis of Augustine’s text, the Vulgate text and the text of the Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos.

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647 Facing texts of the Vulgate and the Hebraicum may be consulted conveniently in the one-volume edition of the Vulgate, *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatum Editionem*, edited by Robert Weber and al. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983). In addition, one should entertain the possible influence of the texts used by Ambrose and Hilary, both of which are reproduced in the critical editions of their commentaries on Ps. 118: Hilary: Tractatus super Psalmos (ed. Antonius Zingerle; CSEL 22; Vienna: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1891); Ambrose: Expositio Psalmi CXVIII (ed. Michael Petschenig; CSEL 62; Vienna: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1913).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>v.</th>
<th>Augustinus</th>
<th>Psalterium Gallicanum (Vulgatum)</th>
<th>Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beati immaculati in uia, qui ambulant in lege Domini</td>
<td>Beati inmaculati in uia, qui ambulant in lege Domini</td>
<td>Beati inmaculati in uia, qui ambulant in lege Domini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Beati qui scrutinur testimonia eius, in toto corde exquirunt eum</td>
<td>Beati qui scrutinur testimonia eius, in toto corde exquirunt eum</td>
<td>Beati qui custodiunt testimonia eius, in toto corde requirunt eum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Non enim qui operantur iniquitatem, in uii eius ambu-lauerunt</td>
<td>Non enim qui operantur iniquitatem, in uii eius ambu-lauerunt</td>
<td>Nec enim qui operantur iniquitatem, in uii eius ambu-lauerunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tu praecepti mandata tua custodiri nimis</td>
<td>Tu mandasti mandata tua custodire nimi-s</td>
<td>Tu mandasti praecepta tua custodire nimi-s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Vtinam dirigantur uiae meae ad custodiendas iustificationes tuas</td>
<td>Vtinam dirigantur uiae meae ad custodiendas iustificationes tuas</td>
<td>Vtinam dirigantur uiae meae ad custodiendas praecepta tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tunc non confundar, dum inspicio in omnia mandata tua</td>
<td>Tunc non confundar, dum inspicio in omnia mandata tua</td>
<td>Tunc non confundar, cum res-pexero ad omnia mandata tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Confitebor tibi, Domine, in directione cordis, in eo quod didicerim iudicia iustitiae tuae</td>
<td>Confitebor tibi in directione cordis, in eo quod didic-dici iudicia iustitiae tuae</td>
<td>Confitebor tibi in directione cordis, cum didicero iudicia iustitiae tuae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Iustificationes tuas custodiam; ne derelinquas me usque ualde</td>
<td>Iustificationes tuas custodi-am; non me derelinquas usquequa-que</td>
<td>Praecepta tua custodiam ne derelinquas me nimi-s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>In quo corrigit iunior uiam suam? In custodiendo uerba tua</td>
<td>In quo corrigit adul-escentior uiam suam in custodiendo ser-mones tuos?</td>
<td>In quo corrigit iuuenis semitam suam, cum custodierit urba tua?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>In toto corde meo exquisiti te; ne repellas me a mandatis tuis</td>
<td>In toto corde meo exquisiti te; non repellas me a mandatis tuis</td>
<td>In toto corde meo exquisi-tui te; ne errare me facias a mandatis tuis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>In corde meo abscondi eloquia tua ut non peccem tibi</td>
<td>In corde meo abscondi eloquia tua ut non peccem tibi</td>
<td>In corde meo abscondi eloquia tua ut non peccem tibi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Benedictus es, Domine; doce me iustificationes tuas</td>
<td>Benedictus es, Domine; doce me iustificationes tuas</td>
<td>Benedictus tu, Domine; doce me praecepta tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>In labis meis enuntiaui omnia iudicia oris tui</td>
<td>In labis meis pronuntiaui omnia iudicia oris tui</td>
<td>In labis meis narravi omnes iustitias oris tui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>In uia testimoniorum tuorum iucundatus sum, quasi in omnibus diuiitiis</td>
<td>In uia testimoniorum tuorum delectatus sum, sicut in omnibus diuiitiis</td>
<td>In uia testimoniorum tuorum laetatus sum, quasi in omnibus diuitiis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>In mandatis tuis garriam et considerabo uias tuas</td>
<td>In mandatis tuis exercer-ebor et considerabo uias tuas</td>
<td>In praeceptis tuis meditabor et contemplabor semitas tuas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v.</td>
<td>Augustinus</td>
<td>Psalterium Gallicanum (Vulgatum)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>In iustificationibus tuis meditabor, non obliuiscar uerborum tuorum</td>
<td>In iustificationibus tuis meditabor; non obliuiscar serrones tuos</td>
<td>In iustitiis tuis delectabor; non obliuiscar uerba tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Retribue seruo tuo; uiuam et custodiobuo uerba tua</td>
<td>Retribue seruo tuo; uiuifica me et custodiom serrones tuos</td>
<td>Tribue seruo tuo; uiuam et custodiobuo uerba tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Reuela oculos meos et considerabo mirabilia de lege tua</td>
<td>Reuela oculos meos et considerabo mirabilia de lege tua</td>
<td>Reuela oculos meos et uidebo mirabilia in lege tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Incola ego sum in terra; non abscondas a me mandata tua</td>
<td>Incola ego sum in terra; non abscondas a me mandata tua</td>
<td>Aduena ego sum in terra; ne abscondas a me mandata tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Concupiuit anima mea desiderare iustificationes tuas in omni tempore</td>
<td>Concupiuit anima mea desiderare iustificationes tuas in omni tempore</td>
<td>Desiderauit anima mea desiderare iudicia tua in omni tempore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Increpasti superbos maledicti qui declinant a mandatis tuis</td>
<td>Increpasti superbos maledicti qui declinant a mandatis tuis</td>
<td>Increpasti superbos maledicti qui recedunt a mandatis tuis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Aufer a me opprobrium et contemntum, quoniam testimonia tua exquisiui</td>
<td>Aufer a me obprobrium et contemntum, quia testimonia tua exquisiui</td>
<td>Aufer a me obprobrium et contemntum, quoniam testimonia tua custodiui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Etenim sederunt principes et aduersum me loquebantur; seruus autem tuus exercebatur in iustificationibus tuis</td>
<td>Etenim sederunt principes et aduersum me loquebantur; seruus autem tuus exercebatur in iustificationibus tuis</td>
<td>Etenim sedentes principes aduersum me loquebantur; seruus autem tuus meditabatur praecepta tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Nam et testimonia tua meditatio mea est et consilium meum iustificationes tuae</td>
<td>Nam et testimonia tua meditatio mea et consilium meum iustificationes tuae</td>
<td>Sed et testimonia tua uoluntas mea, quasi uiri amicissimi mei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Adhesiit pauiimento anima mea, uiuifica me secundum uerbum tuum</td>
<td>Adhesiit pauiimento anima mea, uiuifica me secundum uerbum tuum</td>
<td>Adhesit pulueri anima mea, uiuifica me iuxta uerbum tuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Viam meas enuntiua i et exaudisti me; doce me iustificationes tuas</td>
<td>Viam meas enuntiua i et exaudisti me; doce me iustificationes tuas</td>
<td>Viam meas exposui et exaudisti; doce me iustitiam tuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Viam iustificationum tuarum insinua mihi; et exercobor in mirabilibus tuis</td>
<td>Viam iustificationum tuarum instrue me; et exercobor in mirabilibus tuis</td>
<td>Viam praeceptorum tuorum fac me intellegere; et loquar in mirabilibus tuis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Dormitauit anima mea praec taedio; confirma me in uerbis tuis</td>
<td>Dormitauit anima mea praec taedio; confirma me in uerbis tuis</td>
<td>Destillauit anima mea praec stultitia; serua me iuxta eloquium tuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Viam iiniquitatis amoue a me; et lege tua miserere mei</td>
<td>Viam iiniquitatis amoue a me; et lege tua miserere mei</td>
<td>Viam mendacii aufer a me; et legem tuam dona mihi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Viam ueritatis elegi; iudicia tua non sum oblitus</td>
<td>Viam ueritatis elegi; iudicia tua non sum oblitus</td>
<td>Viam fidei elegi; iudicia tua proponebam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Adhaesi testimoniis tuis, Domine; noli me confundere</td>
<td>Adhaesi testimoniiis tuis, Domine; noli me confundere</td>
<td>Adhesi testimoniiis tuis, Domine; ne confundas me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Viam mandatorum tuorum cucurri, cum dilatasti cor meum</td>
<td>Viam mandatorum tuorum cucurri, cum dilatasti cor meum</td>
<td>Viam mandatorum tuorum curram, quoniam dilatasti cor meum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 1 (CONTINUED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>v.</th>
<th>Augustinus</th>
<th>Psalterium Gallicanum (Vulgatum)</th>
<th>Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td><em>Legem pone</em> mihi, Domine, uiam iustificationum tuarum et exquiram eam semper</td>
<td><em>Legem pone</em> mihi, Domine, uiam iustificationum tuarum et exquiram eam semper</td>
<td><em>Ostende</em> mihi, Domine, uiam praeceptorum tuorum et custodiam eam per uestigium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td><em>Da mihi intellectum,</em> et scrutabor legem tuam et custodiam <em>illam</em> in toto corde <em>meo</em></td>
<td><em>Da mihi intellectum,</em> et scrutabor legem tuam et custodiam <em>illam</em> in toto corde <em>meo</em></td>
<td><em>Doce</em> me, et <em>obseruabo</em> legem tuam et custodiam eam in toto corde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Deduc me in semita mandatorum tuorum, quia ipsam uolui</td>
<td>Deduc me in semita mandatorum tuorum, quia ipsam uolui</td>
<td>Deduc me in semita mandatorum tuorum, quia ipsam uolui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td><em>Inclina</em> cor meum <em>in</em> testimonia tua et non <em>in</em> aaurantiam</td>
<td><em>Inclina</em> cor meum <em>in</em> testimonia tua et non <em>in</em> aaurantiam</td>
<td><em>Inclina</em> cor meum <em>ad</em> testimonia tua et non <em>ad</em> aaurantiam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Auerte oculos meos, ne uideant uanitatem; in uia tua uuiufica me</td>
<td>Auerte oculos meos, ne uideant uanitatem; in uia tua uuiufica me</td>
<td>Auerte oculos meos, ne uideant uanitatem; in uia tua uuiufica me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td><em>Statue</em> seruo tuo eloquium tuum in timorem tuum</td>
<td><em>Statue</em> seruo tuo eloquium tuum in timorem tuum</td>
<td><em>Suscita</em> seruo tuo eloquium tuum in timorem tuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td><em>Amputa</em> opprobrium meum quod <em>suspicatus</em> sum, quia iudicia tua <em>suauia</em></td>
<td><em>Amputa</em> opprobrium meum quod <em>suspicatus</em> sum, quia iudicia tua <em>iucunda</em></td>
<td><em>Auerte</em> obprobrium meum quod <em>reuerritus</em> sum; iudicia tua <em>bona</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Ecce <em>cconcupiui mandata</em> tua; in tua iustitia uuiufica me</td>
<td>Ecce <em>cconcupiui mandata</em> tua; in aequitate tua uuiufica me</td>
<td>Ecce <em>desiderai praeecepta</em> tua; <em>iustitia</em> tua uuiufica me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Et <em>ueniat</em> super <em>me misericordia tua,</em> Domine, <em>salutare</em> tuum <em>secundum</em> eloquium tuum</td>
<td>Et <em>ueniat</em> super <em>me misericordia tua,</em> Domine, <em>salutare</em> tuum <em>secundum</em> eloquium tuum</td>
<td>Et <em>ueniant</em> mihi <em>misericordiae tuae,</em> Domine, et <em>salus</em> tua <em>iuuxt</em> eloquium tuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Respondebo <em>exprobrantibus</em> mihi <em>uerbum,</em> quoniam sperauit in <em>uerno</em> tuis</td>
<td>Respondebo <em>exprobrantibus</em> mihi <em>uerbum,</em> quoniam sperauit in <em>uerno</em> tuis</td>
<td>Et <em>respondebo</em> <em>exprobranti</em> mihi <em>sermonem,</em> <em>quia</em> sperauit in <em>sermonem</em> tuol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Et ne auferas <em>ex</em> ore meo <em>uerbum</em> ueritatis usque <em>uale</em>; <em>quiram</em> in <em>iudiciis</em> tuis <em>supersperaui</em></td>
<td>Et ne auferas <em>de</em> ore meo <em>uerbum</em> ueritatis usque <em>quaerante,</em> quia in <em>iudiciis</em> tuis <em>supersperaui</em></td>
<td>Et ne auferas <em>de</em> ore meo <em>uerbum</em> ueritatis usque <em>nimis,</em> <em>quiram</em> iudicia tua <em>exceptauit</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Et custodiam legem tuam <em>semper,</em> in saeculum et <em>in saeculum saeculi</em></td>
<td>Et custodiam legem tuam <em>semper,</em> in saeculum et <em>in saeculum saeculi</em></td>
<td>Et custodiam legem tuam <em>iugiter,</em> in <em>semipiternum</em> et <em>ultra</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Et ambulabam in <em>latitudine,</em> quoniam <em>mandata</em> tua <em>exquisiiui</em></td>
<td>Et ambulabam in <em>latitudine,</em> quoniam <em>mandata</em> tua <em>exquisiiui</em></td>
<td>Et ambulabo in <em>spatioso,</em> quia <em>praeeacta</em> tua <em>quaesiui</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Et loquebar in testimoniis tuis <em>in conspectu</em> regum et non <em>confundebatur</em></td>
<td>Et loquebar in testimoniis tuis <em>in conspectu</em> regum et non <em>confundebatur</em></td>
<td>Et <em>loquar</em> in testimoniis tuis <em>coram regibus</em> et non <em>confundar</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td><em>Et meditabatur</em> in mandatis tuis, quae <em>dilexi</em></td>
<td><em>Et meditabatur</em> in mandatis tuis, quae <em>dilexi</em></td>
<td><em>Et delectabatur</em> in mandatis tuis, quae <em>dilexi</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Et <em>leuabui</em> manus meas ad mandata tua, quae <em>dilexi</em> et <em>exercerab in iustificationibus</em> tuis</td>
<td>Et <em>leuabui</em> manus meas ad mandata tua, quae <em>dilexi</em> et <em>exercerab in iustificationibus</em> tuis</td>
<td>Et <em>leuabo</em> manus meas ad mandata tua, quae <em>dilexi</em> et <em>loquar in praeeceptis</em> tuis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td><em>Memento uerbi</em> tuui <em>seruo</em> tuo, <em>in quo</em> spem <em>dedisti</em></td>
<td><em>Memor esto uerbi</em> tuui <em>seruo</em> tuo, <em>in quo</em> mihi <em>spem</em> <em>dedisti</em></td>
<td><em>Memento</em> <em>sermonis</em> seruo tuo, <em>quam me sperare fecisti</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Haec <em>me consolata</em> est in <em>humilitate</em> mea, quoniam <em>urbum tuum</em> uiuificauit me</td>
<td>Haec <em>me consolata</em> est in <em>humilitate</em> mea, quia <em>eloquium tuum</em> uiuificauit me</td>
<td>Haec est <em>consolatio mea</em> in <em>adflictione</em> mea; quia <em>eloquium tuum</em> uiuificauit me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Superbi <em>inaque agebant usque ualde</em>; a lege <em>autem</em> tua non declinaiu</td>
<td>Superbi <em>inaque agebant usquequequa</em>; a lege <em>autem</em> tua non declinaiu</td>
<td>Superbi <em>deridebant me nimis</em>; a lege tua non declinaiu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td><em>Memor fui</em> iudiciorum tuorum a saeculo, Domine, et <em>consolutus sum</em></td>
<td><em>Memor fui</em> iudiciorum tuorum a saeculo, Domine, et <em>consolutus sum</em></td>
<td><em>Recordatus sum</em> iudiciorum tuorum a saeculo, Domine, et <em>consolutus sum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td><em>Taedium detinuit me a peccatoribus reliquentibus</em> legem tua</td>
<td><em>Defectio tenuit me prae peccatoribus dereliquentibus</em> legem tua</td>
<td><em>Horror obtinuit me ab improi qui dereliquerunt</em> legem tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td><em>Cantabiles erant mihi iustificationes tuae</em> in <em>loco incolatus mei</em></td>
<td><em>Cantabiles mihi erant iustificationes tuae in loco peregrinationis meae</em></td>
<td><em>Carmina erant mihi praecepta tua in domo peregrinationis meae</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td><em>Haec facta est mihi, quoniam iustitas tua exquisiui</em></td>
<td><em>Haec facta est mihi, quia iustificationes tuae exquisiui</em></td>
<td><em>Hoc factum est mihi, quia praecepta tua custodiui</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td><em>Pars mea, Domine, dixi, custodire legem tua</em></td>
<td><em>Portio mea Dominus, dixi, custodire legem tua</em></td>
<td><em>Pars mea Dominus, dixi, ut custodiad urbum tuum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td><em>Precatus sum faciem tuam in toto corde me</em>; miserere mi secundum eloquium tua</td>
<td><em>Deprecatus sum faciem tuam in toto corde me</em>; miserere mi secundum eloquium tua</td>
<td><em>Deprecatus sum uultum tuum</em> in toto corde; miserere mi secundum eloquium tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td><em>Cogitauui</em> uias meas et <em>auerti</em> pedes meos in testimonia tua</td>
<td><em>Cogitauui</em> uias meas et <em>auerti</em> pedes meos in testimonia tua</td>
<td><em>Recogitauui</em> uias meas et <em>conuerti</em> pedes meos ad testimonia tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td><em>Paratus sum et non sum turbatus, ut custodiam</em> mandata tua</td>
<td><em>Paratus sum et non sum turbatus, ut custodiam</em> mandata tua</td>
<td><em>Festinaui et non neglexi custodire</em> mandata tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td><em>Funes peccatorum circumplexi sunt</em> me, et <em>legis tuae</em> non sum oblitus</td>
<td><em>Funes peccatorum circumplexi sunt</em> me, et <em>legem tuae</em> non sum oblitus</td>
<td><em>Funes impiorum implicauerunt</em> me; <em>legem tuam</em> non sum oblitus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td><em>Media nocte surgam</em> ad confitendum tibi super <em>iusticia tuae</em></td>
<td><em>Media nocte surgam</em> ad confitendum tibi super <em>iustificationis tuae</em></td>
<td><em>Medio noctis surgam</em> ad confitendum tibi super <em>iustificationis tuae</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td><em>Particeps ego sum omnium timentium te et custodientium mandata tua</em></td>
<td><em>Particeps ego sum omnium timentium te et custodientium mandata tua</em></td>
<td><em>Particeps ego sum omnium timentium te et custodientium praecepta tua</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td><em>Misericordia tua, Domine, plena</em> est terra; et <em>iustificationes tuas</em> doce me</td>
<td><em>Misericordia Domini plena</em> est terra; <em>iustificationes tuas</em> doce me</td>
<td><em>Misericordia tua, Domine, completa</em> est terra; <em>praecepta tua</em> doce me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td><em>Suauitatem fecisti cum</em> seruo tuo, Domine, secundum <em>urbum tuum</em></td>
<td><em>Bonitatem fecisti cum</em> seruo tuo, Domine, secundum <em>urbum tuum</em></td>
<td><em>Benefecisti seruo tuo, Domine, secundum urbum tuum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td><em>Suauitatem et eruditionem</em> et scientiam doce me, quoniam <em>mandatis tuis credidi</em></td>
<td><em>Bonitatem et disciplinam</em> et scientiam doce me, quia <em>mandatis tuis credidi</em></td>
<td><em>Bonum sermonem et scientiam doce me, quia mandatis tuis credidi</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td><em>Priusquam humilarer ego deliqui; propterea</em></td>
<td><em>Priusquam humilarer ego deliqui; propterea</em></td>
<td><em>Ante quam audirem ego ignorau; nunc autem</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Suavis es, Domine, et in tua suauitate doce me</td>
<td>Bonus est tu, et in bonitate tua doce me</td>
<td>Bonus tu et beneficus; doce me praecepta tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>Multiplicata est super me iniquitas superstorum; ego autem in toto corde meo</td>
<td>Multiplicata est super me iniquitas superstorum; ego autem in toto corde scrutabor mandata tua</td>
<td>Adplicabant mihi mendacium superbi; ego autem in toto corde seruabam praecepta tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Coagulatum est ut lac cor eorum; ego uero legem tuam meditatur sum</td>
<td>Coagulatum est sicut lac cor eorum; ego uero legem tuam meditatur sum</td>
<td>Incrassatum est uelut adeps cor eorum, et ego in lege tua delectabar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Bonum mihi quoniam humiliasti me ut discam justificationes tuas</td>
<td>Bonum mihi quia humiliasti me ut discam justificationes tuas</td>
<td>Bonum mihi quia adfectus sum ut discerem praecepta tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Bona mihi lex oris tui, super milia auri et argenti</td>
<td>Bona mihi lex oris tui, super milia auri et argenti</td>
<td>Melior mihi est lex oris tui, super milia auri et argenti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>Manus tuae fecerunt me et finxerunt me; da mihi intellectum ut discam mandata tua</td>
<td>Manus tuae fecerunt me et plasmuerunt me; da mihi intellectum et discam mandata tua</td>
<td>Manus tuae fecerunt me et firmauerunt me; doce me et discam mandata tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Qui timent te uidebunt me et iucundabantur, quoniam in uerba tua speraueri</td>
<td>Qui timent te uidebunt me et laetabuntur, quia in uerba tua superauperi</td>
<td>Qui timent te uidebunt me et laetabuntur, quia sermonem tuum expectau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>Cognoui, Domine, quia iustitia iudicia tua, et uritatem humiliasti me</td>
<td>Cognoui, Domine, quia aequitas iudicia tua, et uritatem humiliasti me</td>
<td>Scio, Domine, quia iustum iudicium tuum, et uere adfissisti me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>Fiat misericordia tua, et consoletur me secundum eloquium tuum seruo tuo</td>
<td>Fiat misericordia tua, ut consoletur me secundum eloquium tuum seruo tuo</td>
<td>Sit, obscecor, misericordia tua in consolatione mea, sicut locutus es seruo tuo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>Veniant super me miserationes tuae et uuiam, quia lex tua meditatio mea est</td>
<td>Veniant mihi miserationes tuae et uuiam, quia lex tua meditatio mea est</td>
<td>Veniant mihi misericordiae tuae et uuiam, quia lex tua delectatio mea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Confunduntur superbi, quoniam inuiste iniuatatem fecerunt in me; ego autem exercerbor in mandatis tuis</td>
<td>Confunduntur superbi, quia inuiste iniquatem fecerunt in me; ego autem exercerbor in mandatis tuis</td>
<td>Confunduntur superbi, quoniam inique contruerunt me; ego autem loquar in praeceptis tuis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Conuerantar ad me qui timent te et qui cognoscunt testimonium tua</td>
<td>Conuerantar mihi timentes te et qui nouerunt testimonium tua</td>
<td>Reuerantar ad me qui timent te et qui sciunt testimonium tuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Fiat cor meum immaculatum in justificationibus tuis, ut non confundar</td>
<td>Fiat cor meum immaculatum in justificationibus tuis, ut non confundar</td>
<td>Fiat cor meum perfectum in praecipitis tuis, ut non confundar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Defecit in salutare tuum anima mea, et in uerbum tuum superspereu</td>
<td>Defecit in salutare tuum anima mea; in uerbum tuum superspereu</td>
<td>Defecit in salutare tuum anima mea; uerbum tuum expectau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>Defecerunt oci mei in eloquium tuum dicentes: Quando consolaberis me?</td>
<td>Defecerunt oci mei in eloquium tuum dicentes: Quando consolaberis me?</td>
<td>Consumpti sunt oci mei in uerbum tuum dicentes: Quando consolaberis me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Quoniam factus sum tamquam uter in pruina; justificationes tuas non sum oblitus</td>
<td>Quia factus sum sicut uter in pruina; justificationes tuas non sum oblitus</td>
<td>Et cum essem quasi uter in pruina; praecepta tua non sum oblitus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Quot sunt dies serui tui? Quando facies de</td>
<td>Quot sunt dies serui tui? Quando facies de</td>
<td>Quot sunt dies serui tui? Quando facies in</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Narrauerunt mihi ini qui delectationes; sed non sicut lex tua, Domine</td>
<td>persequentibus me iudicium? Narrauerunt mihi ini qui fabulationes; sed non ut lex tua</td>
<td>persequentibus me iudicium? Foderunt mihi superbi foueas, quae non erant iuxta legem tuam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>Omnia mandata tua uritas; iniuste persecutioni sunt me, adiuva me</td>
<td>Omnia mandata tua uritas; inique persecutioni sunt me, adiuva me</td>
<td>Omnia mandata tua uera; falsi persecutioni sunt me, auxiliare mihi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>Paulo minus consummuerunt me in terra; ego autem non dereliqui mandata tua</td>
<td>Paulo minus consummuerunt me in terra; ego autem non dereliqui mandata tua</td>
<td>Paulo minus consumpserunt me in terra; ego autem non dimisi praecepta tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>Secundum misericordiam tuam uiuifica me et custodiam testimonia oris tuorum</td>
<td>Secundum misericordiam tuam uiuifica me et custodiam testimonia oris tuorum</td>
<td>Secundum misericordiam tuam uiuifica me et custodiam testimonium oris tuorum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>In aeternum, Domine, uerbum tuum permanet in caelo</td>
<td>In aeternum, Domine, uerbum tuum permanet in caelo</td>
<td>In aeternum, Domine, uerbum tuum perstat in caelo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>In generationem et generationem uritas tua; fundasti terram et permanent</td>
<td>In generationem et generationem uritas tua; ordinatione tuarum, omnia seruiunt tibi</td>
<td>In generationem et generationem fides tua; fundasti terram et stat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Ordinatione tua permanet dies, quoniam omnia seruiunt tibi</td>
<td>Ordinatione tua persecutionat dies, quoniam omnia seruiunt tibi</td>
<td>Iudicio tuo stant usque hodie, quia omnia seruiunt tibi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>Nisi quod lex tua meditatio mea est, tunc forsitan perissem in humilitate mea</td>
<td>Nisi quod lex tua meditatio mea est, tunc forte perissem in humilitate mea</td>
<td>Nisi quod lex tua delectatio mea, forte perissem in pressura mea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>In aeternum non obliuiscar iustificationum tuarum, quoniam in ipsis uiuificasti me</td>
<td>In aeternum non obliuiscer iustificationes tuas, quia in ipsis uiuificasti me</td>
<td>In sempiternum non obliuiscer praeceptorum tuorum, quia per ipsa uiuificasti me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Tuus sum ego, saluum me fac, quoniam iustificationes tuas exquisiui</td>
<td>Tuus sum ego, saluum me fac, quoniam iustificationes tuas exquisiui</td>
<td>Tuus ego sum, salua me, quoniam praecepta tua quaesui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>Me expectauerunt peccatores ut perderent me; testimonia autem tua intellexi</td>
<td>Me expectauerunt peccatores ut perderent me; testimonia tua intellexi</td>
<td>Me expectauerunt impii ut perderent me; testimonium tuum considerabo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>Omnis consummationis uidi finem; latum mandatum tuum ualide</td>
<td>Omnis consummationis uidi finem; latum mandatum tuum nimis</td>
<td>Omnis consummationis uidi finem; latum mandatum tuum nimis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Quomodo dilexi legem tuam, Domine! Tota die meditatio mea est</td>
<td>Quomodo dilexi legem tuam! Tota die meditatio mea est</td>
<td>Quam dilexi legem tuam! Tota die hae meditatio mea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>Super inimicos meos sapere fecisti me mandatum tuum, quoniam in aeternum mihi est</td>
<td>Super inimicos meos prudentem me fecisti mandato tuo, quia in aeternum mihi est</td>
<td>Super inimicos meos instruis me mandata tua, quia in sempiternum hoc est mihi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>Super omnes docentes me intellexi, quia testimonia tua meditatio mea est</td>
<td>Super omnes docentes me intellexi, quia testimonia tua meditatio mea est</td>
<td>Super omnes qui docebant me eruditus sum, quia testimonia tua meditatio mea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Super seniores intellexi, quia mandata tua exquisiui</td>
<td>Super seniores intellexi, quia mandata tua quaesuii</td>
<td>Super seniores intellexi, quia praecepta tua seruaui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Ab omni via maligna prohibuui pedes meos, ut</td>
<td>Ab omni via mala prohibuui pedes meos, ut</td>
<td>Ab omni semita mala prohibuui pedes meos, ut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv.</td>
<td>Augustinus</td>
<td>Psalterium Gallicanum (Vulgatum)</td>
<td>Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>A iudiciis tuis non declinaui, quia tu legem posuisti mihi</td>
<td>A iudiciis tuis non declinaui, quia tu legem posuisti mihi</td>
<td>A iudiciis tuis non recessi, quia tu inluminasti me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>Quam dulcia faucibus meis uerba tua super mel et fauum ori meo</td>
<td>Quam dulcia faucibus meis eloquia tua super mel ori meo</td>
<td>Quam dulce gutturi meo eloquium tuum super mel ori meo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>A mandatis tuis intellexi, propterea odio habui omnem uiam iniquitatis</td>
<td>A mandatis tuis intellexi, propterea odiui omnem uiam iniquitatis</td>
<td>Praecepta tua considerabam, propterea odiui omnem semitam mendacii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>Lucerna pedibus meis uerbum tuum et lumen semitis meis</td>
<td>Lucerna pedibus meis uerbum tuum et lumen semitis meis</td>
<td>Lucerna pedi meo uerbum tuum et lux semitae meae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>Uraui et statui custodire judicia iustitiae tuae</td>
<td>Uraui et statui custodire judicia iustitiae tuae</td>
<td>Uraui et perseuerabo, ut custodiam iudicia iustitiae tuae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Humiliatus sum usque ualde; Domine, uiuifica me secundum uerbum tuum</td>
<td>Humiliatus sum usquequaque; Domine, uiuifica me secundum uerbum tuum</td>
<td>Adlictus sum usque nimis; Domine, uiuifica me iuxta uerbum tuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>Voluntaria oris mei beneplacita fac, Domine; et iudicia tua doce me</td>
<td>Voluntaria oris mei beneplacita fac, Domine; et iudicia tua doce me</td>
<td>Voluntaria oris mei compleant tibi, Domine; et secundum iudicia tua doce me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>Anima mea in manibus tuis semper; et legis tuae non sum oblitus</td>
<td>Anima mea in manibus tuis semper; et legem tua non sum oblitus</td>
<td>Anima mea in manu mea semper; et legis tuae non sum oblitus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>Posuerunt peccatores laqueum mihi et a mandatis tuis non erraui</td>
<td>Posuerunt peccatores laqueum mihi et de mandatis tuis non erraui</td>
<td>Posuerunt impii laqueum mihi et a praeceptis tuis non aberraui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>Hereditate adquisuii testimonia tua in aeternum, quoniam exsultatio cordis mei sunt</td>
<td>Hereditate adquisuii testimonia tua in aeternum, quia exultatio cordis mei sunt</td>
<td>Hereditas mea testimonia tua in sempiternum, quia gaudio cordis mei sunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Inclinaui cor meum ad faciendas iustificationes tuas in aeternum propter retributionem</td>
<td>Inclinaui cor meum ad faciendas iustificationes tuas in aeternum propter retributionem</td>
<td>Inclinaui cor meum ut facerem iustitias tuas propter aeternam retributionem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>Iniquos odio habui et legem tuam dilexi</td>
<td>Iniquos odio habui et legem tuam dilexi</td>
<td>Tumultuosos odiui et legem tuam dilexi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>Adiutor meus et susceptor meus es tu; in uerbum tuum supersperaui</td>
<td>Adiutor meus et susceptor meus es tu; in uerbum tuum supersperaui</td>
<td>Protecto me et scutum meum tu es; uerbum tuum expectaui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>Declinate a me, maligni, et scrutabor mandata Dei mei</td>
<td>Declinate a me, maligni, et scrutabor mandata Dei mei</td>
<td>Recedite a me, maligni, et custodiam mandata Dei mei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>Suscipe me secundum eloquium tuum et uiiuam; et ne confundas me ab expectatione mea</td>
<td>Suscipe me secundum eloquium tuum et uiiuam; et ne confundas me ab expectatione mea</td>
<td>Confirma me secundum uerbum tuum et uiiuam; et nolite confundere ab expectatione mea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>Adiuua me et saluus ero; et meditabor in iustificationibus tuis semper</td>
<td>Adiuua me et saluus ero; et meditabor in iustificationibus tuis semper</td>
<td>Auxiliare mihi et saluus ero; et delectabor in praeceptis tuis iugiter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>Spreuisti omnes discendentes a iustitii tuis, quia iniusta cogitatio eorum</td>
<td>Spreuisti omnes discendentes a iustitii tuis, quia iniusta cogitatio eorum</td>
<td>Abiecisti omnes qui auersantur praecepta tua, quia mendax cogitatio eorum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>Praeuaricantes deputau omnes peccatores terrae, propterea dilexi testimonia tua semper</td>
<td>Praeuaricantes reputau omnes peccatores terrae, ideo dilexi testimonia tua</td>
<td>Quasi scoriam computasti omnes impios terrae, propterea dilexi testimonia tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>Confige elauis a timore tuo caiens mea; a iudicii enim tuis timui</td>
<td>Confige timore tuo caiens mea; a iudicii enim tuis timui</td>
<td>Horrippilait a timore tuo caro mea; et iudicia tua timui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>Feci iudicium et iustitiam; ne tradas me nocentibus me</td>
<td>Feci iudicium et iustitiam; non tradas me calunniatibus me</td>
<td>Feci iudicium et iustitiam; ne derelinquas me his qui calumniat me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>Excipe seruum tuum in bonum; non calunniatur mihi superbi</td>
<td>Suscipe seruum tuum in bonum; non calunniatur me superbi</td>
<td>Sponde pro seruo tuo in bonum; ne calunniatur me superbi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>Oculi mei defecerunt in salutare tuum et in eloquium iustitiae tuae</td>
<td>Oculi mei defecerunt in salutare tuum et in eloquium iustitiae tuae</td>
<td>Oculi mei defecerunt in salutare tuum et in eloquium iustitiae tuae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td>Fac cum seruo tuo secundum misericordiam tuam et iustificationes tuas doce me</td>
<td>Fac cum seruo tuo secundum misericordiam tuam et iustificationes tuas doce me</td>
<td>Fac cum seruo tuo iuxta misericordiam tuam et praecepta tua doce me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td>Seruus tuus ego sum; da mihi intellectum et sciam testimonia tua</td>
<td>Seruus tuus sum ego; da mihi intellectum et sciam testimonia tua</td>
<td>Seruus tuus ego; instrue me et cognoscam testimonia tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td>Tempus faciendi Domino; dissipauerunt legem tuam</td>
<td>Tempus faciendi Domino; dissipauerunt legem tuam</td>
<td>Tempus est ut facias, Domine; praeuaricati sunt legem tuam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127</td>
<td>Ideo dilexi mandata tua super aurum et topazion</td>
<td>Ideo dilexi mandata tua super aurum et topazion</td>
<td>Propterea dilexi mandata tua super aurum et topazion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128</td>
<td>Propterea ad omnia mandata tua corrigebar; ommem uiam iniquam odio habui</td>
<td>Propterea ad omnia mandata tua dirigebar; ommem uiam iniquam odio habui</td>
<td>Propterea uniuersa praecepta tua direxi; ommem semitam mandacci odio habui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129</td>
<td>Mirabilia testimonia tua; propter hoc scrutata est ea anima mea</td>
<td>Mirabilia testimonia tua; ideo scrutata est ea anima mea</td>
<td>Mirabilia testimonia tua; idcirco custodiiit ea anima mea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130</td>
<td>Manifestatio urborum tuorum illuminat, et intelligere facit paruulos</td>
<td>Declaratio sermonum tuorum inluminat et intellectum dat paruulis</td>
<td>Ostium sermonum tuorum lucidum; doce paruulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td>Os meum aperiu et adtraxi spiritum, quoniam mandata tua desiderabam</td>
<td>Os meum aperiu et adtraxi spiritum, quia mandata tua desiderabam</td>
<td>Os meum aperiu et respiraui, quia mandata tua desiderabam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132</td>
<td>Respice in me et miserere mei secundum iudicium diligentium nomen tuum</td>
<td>Aspice in me et miserere mei secundum iudicium diligentium nomen tuum</td>
<td>Respice ad me et miserere mei iuxta iudicium diligentium nomen tuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133</td>
<td>Gressus meos dirige secundum eloquium tuum et non dominetur mei omnis iniquitas</td>
<td>Gressus meos dirige secundum eloquium tuum et non dominetur mei omnis injustitia</td>
<td>Gressus meos firma in sermone tuo et non des potestatem in me uniuerseae iniquitati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134</td>
<td>Redime me a calunniis hominem et custodiam mandata tua</td>
<td>Redime me a calunniis hominen et custodiam mandata tua</td>
<td>Redime me a calumnia hominis et custodiam praecepta tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135</td>
<td>Faciem tuam illumina super seruum tuum et doce me iustificationes tuas</td>
<td>Faciem tuam illumina super seruum tuum et doce me iustificationes tuas</td>
<td>Vultum tuum ostende seruo tuo et doce me praecepta tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>136</td>
<td>Exitus aquarum descenderunt oculi mei, quia</td>
<td>Exitus aquarum deduxerunt oculi mei, quia non</td>
<td>Rii aquarum fluebant de oculis meis, quia non</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-----</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>137</td>
<td>Iustus es, Domine, et rectum iudicium tuum</td>
<td>Iustus es, Domine, et rectum iudicium tuum</td>
<td>Iustus es, Domine, et rectum iudicium tuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>138</td>
<td>Mandasti iustitiam testimonia tua et ueritatem tuam valde</td>
<td>Mandasti iustitiam testimonia tua et ueritatem tuam nimis</td>
<td>Praecepisti iustitiam testimoniis tuui et ueritatem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>139</td>
<td>Tabe cesit me zelus meus, quia obliiti sunt uerborum tuorum iunior me</td>
<td>Tabescere me fecit zelus meus, quia obliiti sunt uerba tua inimici mei</td>
<td>Consumpsit me zelus meus, quia obliiti sunt uerborum tuorum hostes mei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td>Ignitum eloquium tuum ualde, et seruus tuus dilexit illud</td>
<td>Ignitum eloquium tuum uehementer, et seruus tuus dilexit illud</td>
<td>Probatus sermo tuus nimis, et seruus tuus dilexit illum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td>Iunior ego sum et contentus; iustificationes tuas non sum oblitus</td>
<td>Adulescentulus sum ego et contentus; iustificationes tuas non sum oblitus</td>
<td>Paraulus ego sum et contemptibilis, sed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>142</td>
<td>Iustitia tua iustitia in aeternum et lex tua ueritas</td>
<td>Iustitia tua iustitia in aeternum et lex tua ueritas</td>
<td>praecpta tua non sum oblitus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143</td>
<td>Tribulatio et necessitas inuenerunt me; mandata tua meditatio mea est</td>
<td>Tribulatio et angustia inuenerunt me; mandata tua meditatio mea</td>
<td>Tribulatio et angustia inuenerunt me; mandata tua uoluntas mea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144</td>
<td>Iustitia testimonia tua in aeternum; intellectum da mihi et uiuam</td>
<td>Acquitas testimonia tua in aeternum; intellectum da mihi et uiuam</td>
<td>Iusta testimonia tua semper; doce me et uiaum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145</td>
<td>Clamaui in toto corde meo, exaudi me, Domine; iustificationes tuas exquiram</td>
<td>Clamaui in toto corde, exaudi me, Domine; iustificationes tuas requiram</td>
<td>Clamaui in toto corde, exaudi me, Domine;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>146</td>
<td>Clamaui, saluam me fac et custodiam testimonia tua</td>
<td>Clamaui te, saluam me fac et custodiam mandata tua</td>
<td>praecpta tua custodiam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>147</td>
<td>Praeueni intempesti nocte et clamaui; in uerbs tuis speraui</td>
<td>Praeueni in maturitate et clamaui; in uerba tua supersperaui</td>
<td>Inuocauit te; saluam me fac et custodiam testimonia tua.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>148</td>
<td>Praeuenerunt ocui mei ad matutinem ut meditare eloquia tua</td>
<td>Praeuenerunt ocui mei ad diluculum ut meditarer eloquia tua</td>
<td>Surgebam adhuc in tenebris et clamabam, uerbum tuum expectans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>149</td>
<td>Vocem meam exaudi, Domine, secundum misericordiam tuam; et secundum iudicium tuum uiuifica me</td>
<td>Vocem meam audi secundum misericordiam tuam, Domine; secundum iudicium tuum uiuifica me</td>
<td>Praeueniebant ocui mei uigilias ut meditarer in sermonibus tuis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>Adpropinquauerunt persequentes me iniquitate; a lege autem tua longe facti sunt</td>
<td>Adpropinquauerunt persequentes me iniquitate; a lege autem tua longe facti sunt</td>
<td>Vocem meam audi iuxta misericordiam tuam,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151</td>
<td>Prope es tu, Domine, et omnes uiae tuae ueritas</td>
<td>Prope es tu, Domine, et omnes uiae tuae ueritas</td>
<td>Domine; secundum iudicium tuum uiuifica me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>152</td>
<td>Ab initio cognouit de testimoniis tuis, quia in aeternum fundasti ea</td>
<td>Ab initio cognouit de testimoniis tuis, quia in aeternum fundasti ea</td>
<td>Adpropinquauerunt persecutores mei sceleri; et</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153</td>
<td>Vide humilitatem meam et eripe me, quia legem tuam non sum oblitus</td>
<td>Vide humilitatem meam et eripe me, quia legem tuam non sum oblitus</td>
<td>a lege tua procul facti sunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prope es tu, Domine, et omnia mandata tua ueritas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A principio noui de testimoniis tuis, quod in aeternum fundaueris ea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vide adffactionem meam et eripe me, quia legis tuae non sum oblitus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 1 (CONTINUED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>vv.</th>
<th>Augustinus</th>
<th>Psalterium Gallicanum (Vulgatum)</th>
<th>Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>154</td>
<td>Iudica <em>iudicium meum</em> et redime me; <em>propter eloquium tuum</em> uiuifica me</td>
<td>Iudica <em>iudicium meum</em> et redime me; <em>propter eloquium tuum</em> uiuifica me</td>
<td>Iudica <em>causam meam</em> et redime me; <em>sermone tuo</em> uiuifica me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155</td>
<td>Longe est a <em>peccatoribus</em> salus, quia <em>iustificationes tuas</em> non exquirerunt</td>
<td>Longe <em>a peccatoribus</em> salus, quia <em>iustificationes tuas</em> non exquirerunt</td>
<td>Longe ab <em>impiis</em> salus, quia <em>praecepta tua</em> non quaeerunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>156</td>
<td><em>Miserationes</em> tuae multae, Domine; <em>secundum iuxta Hebraeos</em> <em>tua</em> uiuifica me</td>
<td><em>Misericordiae</em> tuae multae, Domine; <em>iuxta iudaica tua</em> uiuifica me</td>
<td><em>Misericordiae</em> tuae multae, Domine; <em>iuxta iudicia tua</em> uiuifica me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>157</td>
<td>Multi <em>persequentes</em> me et <em>tribulantes</em> me; a testimoniis tuis non declinaui</td>
<td>Multi <em>qui persequuntur</em> me et <em>tribulant</em> me; a testimoniis tuis non declinaui</td>
<td>Multi <em>qui persequuntur</em> me <em>et adfligunt</em> me; a testimoniis tuis non declinaui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>158</td>
<td>Vidi <em>insensatos et tabescebam</em>, quia <em>eloquia tua</em> non custodierunt</td>
<td>Vidi <em>praeuaricantes et tabescebam</em>, quia <em>eloquia tua</em> non custodierunt</td>
<td>Vidi <em>praeuaricatores tuos et maeremab</em>, quia <em>uerbum tuum</em> non custodierunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>159</td>
<td>Vide quoniam <em>mandata</em> tua dlexi, Domine; in <em>tua misericordia</em> uiuifica me</td>
<td>Vide quoniam <em>mandata</em> tua dlexi, Domine; in <em>misericordia tua</em> uiuifica me</td>
<td>Vide quoniam <em>praecapta</em> tua dlexi, Domine; <em>iuxta misericordiam tuam</em> uiuifica me</td>
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<tr>
<td>160</td>
<td><em>Principium</em> uerborum tuorum ueritas et in <em>aeternum omnia iudicia</em> iustitiae tuae</td>
<td><em>Principium</em> uerborum tuorum ueritas et in <em>aeternum omnia iudicia</em> iustitiae tuae</td>
<td><em>Caput</em> uerborum tuorum ueritas et <em>sempiternum omne iudicum</em> iustitiae tuae</td>
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<tr>
<td>161</td>
<td>Principes persecuti sunt me <em>gratis et a uerbis tuis formidant</em> cor meum</td>
<td>Principes persecuti sunt me <em>gratis et a uerbis tuis formidant</em> cor meum</td>
<td>Principes persecuti sunt me <em>sine causa; uerba autem tua timuit</em> cor meum</td>
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<td>162</td>
<td><em>Exsultabo</em> ego <em>super eloquia tua</em> sicut qui inuenit spolia multa</td>
<td><em>Laetabor</em> ego <em>super eloquia tua</em> sicut qui inuenit spolia multa</td>
<td><em>Gaudens</em> ego <em>sum in eloquio tuo</em> sicut qui inuenit spolia multa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>163</td>
<td><em>Injustitiam</em> odio habui et <em>abominatus</em> sum; legem autem tuam dlexi</td>
<td><em>Iniquitatem</em> odio habui et <em>abominatus</em> sum; legem autem tuam dlexi</td>
<td><em>Mendacium</em> odio habui et <em>detestatus</em> sum; legem autem tuam dlexi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>164</td>
<td>Septies in die <em>laudaui te super iudicia</em> iustitiae tuae</td>
<td>Septies in die <em>laudem dixi tibi</em> super <em>iudicia iustitiae tuae</em></td>
<td>Septies in die <em>laudaui te</em> super <em>iudiciis iustitiae tuae</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>165</td>
<td>Pax multa diligentibus legem tuam et non est <em>eis scandalum</em></td>
<td>Pax multa diligentibus legem tuam et non est <em>illis scandalum</em></td>
<td>Pax multa diligentibus legem tuam et non est <em>illis scandalum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>166</td>
<td><em>Expectabam</em> salutare tuum, Domine, et mandata tua dlexi</td>
<td><em>Expectabam</em> salutare tuum, Domine, et mandata tua dlexi</td>
<td><em>Expectau</em> salutare tuum, Domine, et mandata tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>167</td>
<td>Custodiuit anima mea testimonia tua et dlexi ea <em>ualde</em></td>
<td>Custodiuit anima mea testimonia tua et dlexi ea <em>vehementer</em></td>
<td>Custodiuit anima mea testimonia tua et dlexi ea <em>animis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>168</td>
<td><em>Custodiui mandata</em> tua et testimonia tua, quia omnes uiae meae in conspectu tuo, <em>Domine</em></td>
<td><em>Seruau mandata</em> tua et testimonia tua, quia omnes uiae meae in conspectu tuo</td>
<td><em>Custodiui praecepta</em> tua et testimonia tua, quia omnes uiae meae in conspectu tuo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>169</td>
<td><em>Adpropinquet oratio</em> mea in conspectu tuo, Domine; <em>secundum eloquium tuum da mihi intellectum</em></td>
<td><em>Adpropinquet deprecation mea in conspectu tuo, Domine; iuxta eloquium tuum da mihi intellectum</em></td>
<td><em>Ingridiatur laus</em> mea <em>coram te</em>, Domine; <em>secundum uerbum tuum doce me</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>170</td>
<td><em>Intret postulatio</em> mea in conspectu tuo, Domine; <em>secundum eloquium tuum eripe me</em></td>
<td><em>Intret postulatio</em> mea in conspectu tuo; <em>secundum eloquium tuum eripe me</em></td>
<td><em>Veniat deprecation mea ante uultum tuum; secundum eloquioum tuum libera me</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v.</td>
<td>Augustinus</td>
<td>Psalterium Gallicanum (Vulgatum)</td>
<td>Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>171</td>
<td><strong>Eructabunt</strong> labia mea hymnum, <strong>cum docueris</strong> me iustificationes tuas</td>
<td><strong>Eructabunt</strong> labia mea hymnum, <strong>cum docueris</strong> me iustificationes tuas</td>
<td><strong>Fundant</strong> labia mea hymnum; <strong>docebis enim</strong> me praecepta tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>172</td>
<td><strong>Pronuntiabit</strong> lingua mea eloquia tua, quia omnia mandata tua iustitia</td>
<td><strong>Pronuntiabit</strong> lingua mea eloquium tuum, quia omnia mandata tua aequitas</td>
<td><strong>Loquetur</strong> lingua mea sermonem tuum, quia omnia mandata tua iusta</td>
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<tr>
<td>173</td>
<td><strong>Fiat</strong> manus tua ut saluum me faciat, quia mandata tua elegi</td>
<td><strong>Fiat</strong> manus tua ut saluet me, quoniam mandata tua elegi</td>
<td><strong>Sit</strong> manus tua auxiliatrix mea, quia praecepta tua elegi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>174</td>
<td><strong>Concupiui</strong> salutare tuum, Domine; et lex tua meditatio mea est</td>
<td><strong>Concupiui</strong> salutare tuum, Domine; et lex tua meditatio mea</td>
<td><strong>Desiderau</strong> salutare tuum, Domine; et lex tua uoluntas mea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>175</td>
<td>Viuet anima mea et laudabit te, et iudicia tua adiuvaunt me</td>
<td>Viuet anima mea et laudabit te, et iudicia tua adiuvaunt me</td>
<td>Viuet anima mea et laudabit te; et iudicia tua auxiliabunt mihi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>176</td>
<td>Erraui <strong>sicut</strong> ouis <strong>perdita</strong>; quaere seruum tuum, quia <strong>mandata tua</strong> non sum oblitus</td>
<td>Erraui <strong>sicut</strong> ouis <strong>quae perit</strong>; quaere seruum tuum, quia <strong>mandata tua</strong> non sum oblitus</td>
<td>Erraui <strong>quasi</strong> ouis <strong>perdita</strong>; quaere seruum tuum, quia <strong>mandatorum tuorum</strong> non sum oblitus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Augustine’s Psalter Codices in En. Ps. 118

As is well known, Augustine’s commentary on Ps. 118 is replete with philological and critical notes. Throughout the commentary, Augustine refers to many variant readings contained in different codices. Compared to earlier Enarrationes, the quantity of notes in En. Ps. 118 is impressive, and the number of codices referred to easily reach four or five. From the terminology used in comparing the different variants, it appears that Augustine knew many (plures) Psalm codices, the use of which is consistent with the late composition date of En. Ps. 118, when he could lay his hands on as many codices as possible, including Greek ones.

Generally, Augustine reports a variant because it represents a different text from his. Occasionally, he lists a reading that he deems better than his. Sometimes he rejects a variant reading on the basis of the Greek and on one occasion he is dismayed that none of his codices has the reading he expected. At verse 119, he does not mention different codices, yet he uses two different texts from one section

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648 At En. Ps. 118.16.3, for the Greek φυλάξασθαι of v. 60 (to keep your commandments), Augustine’s text has ut custodiam mandata tua; but he knows at least three other versions with the following readings: ad custodiendum mandata tua; ut custodiem; custodire.

649 Nonnulli, nonnulli quidem, nonnulli sane (vv. 19, 26, 103, 109), aliqui (19, 60, 68, 85, 139, 152), plures (26, 45-48, 58, 59, 66, 68, 103, 109, 126, 139, 147, 158). On Greek codices, see variants at vv. 15-16, 19, 26, 43, 45-47, 48-49, 79, 146.

650 See v. 120 (En. Ps. 118.25.6).

651 See vv. 36, 56, 98 (melius); v. 50 (expressius); v. 74 (diligentius expressum); v. 119 (potius).

652 At En. Ps. 118.26.2, Augustine notes: “The Greek has τοῖς ἀντιδίκοις, and some have translated this as those who harm me, others as those who persecute me, others again as those who traduce me. But I am surprised that none of the codices on which I could easily lay hands had the reading, my adversaries; this is strange because the Greek ἀντίδικος is incontestably represented by the Latin adversarius, adversary.”
to the other. 653 Most often, however, we do not know Augustine’s rationale in listing some variants while overlooking others.

Since Augustine does not specify which codex he is referring to, attempts to clearly identify the origin of the various readings have not yielded definitive conclusions, but they clearly document his concern for exhaustiveness in presenting the different variants in the text of Psalm 118. According to Allgeier, possible candidates to represent the variants listed in En. Ps. 118 include the Psalterium Romanum, the Vulgate, the Psalterium Veronense, the Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos, and Ambrose’s and Hilary’s texts. Table 2 lists the different variants and their distribution among the following Psalters: Psalterium Romanum, Psalterium Gallicanum, Psalterium Veronense, and Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos. 654

653 En. Ps. 118.25.1: “Praeuaricantes deputati omnes peccatores terrae, propterea dilexi testimonia tua semper.” En. Ps. 118.25.4: “Praeuaricantes aestimavi omnes peccatores terrae, propterea dixi testimonia tua semper.”

654 The readings of these Psalters are conveniently reproduced in Robert Weber, Le Psautier Romain et les autres anciens Psaltiers latins (CBLa 10; Vatican City: Libreria Vaticana, 1953).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Augustinus</th>
<th>Ps. Romanum</th>
<th>Ps. Gallicanum</th>
<th>Ps. Veronense</th>
<th>Ps. iuxta Hebraeos</th>
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<td>usque ualde</td>
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<td>insinua mihi</td>
<td>insinua mihi</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>et non in avaritiam</td>
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<td>in avaritiam</td>
<td>in avaritiam</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>in mandatis tuis qua diley</td>
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<td>diley nimi</td>
<td>diley ulehementer</td>
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<td>48</td>
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<td>quia eloquium tuum</td>
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<td>pars mea</td>
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<td>Ps. Gallicanum</td>
<td>Ps. Veronense</td>
<td>Ps. iuxta Hebraeos</td>
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</table>

**TABLE 2**

Verse Augustinus Ps. Romanum Ps. Gallicanum Ps. Veronense Ps. iuxta Hebraeos

119 deputau
119 preuaricatores praeuaricantes praeuaricantes praeuaricatores
119 dilexi testimonia tua dilexi testimonia tua dilexi testimonia tua dilexi testimonia tua
119 dilexi testimonia tua dilexi testimonia tua dilexi testimonia tua dilexi testimonia tua
120 confige clauis
121 ne tradas me nocentibus persequentibus calumniuntibus nocentibus
122 non calumnientur mihi mihi me mihi
126 tempus faciendi Domino Domine Domino
136 exitus acquirum descenderunt transierunt deduxerunt descenderunt
136 oculi mei
139 tabefecit me
139 zelus meus zelus domus tuae zelus meus zelus domus tuae
146 clamaui
150 perseverentes me iniquitate
152 ab initio cognoui
158 uidi insensatos uidi non servantes pactum
167 et dilexi ea ualde
176 quaere seruum tuum
En. Ps. 118 and the Psalterium Romanum

Table 2 indicates that Augustine may have checked his text against the Psalterium Veronense, the Psalterium Romanum and possibly the Psalterium Gallicanum (the Vulgate), or at least some forms of these Psalters. He seems not to have used the Hebraicum.\textsuperscript{655} An analysis of the variants reported in Table 2 indicates that very few variants are unique to the Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos (vv. 19, 27, 36, 60). In fact, even those that appear unique to the Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos can be accounted for by their presence in other Latin witnesses, especially Ambrose and Hilary.\textsuperscript{656}

Augustine’s text for Psalm 118 seems to be a text closer to but different from the Veronense, which he had previously used in other Enarrationes. According to Allgeier, Augustine’s text of Psalm 118 agrees more with the Psalterium Romanum than with the Psalterium Veronense.\textsuperscript{657} Henri de Sainte-Marie suggested that Augustine used the Vulgate for his commentary on Psalm 118.\textsuperscript{658} In reality, almost all the readings of the Vulgate can be explained through the Psalterium Romanum.

A further confirmation that Augustine was using a text of the family of the Psalterium Romanum is provided by the direct quotations from other Psalms in En.

\textsuperscript{655} The only quotations from the Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos in Augustine’s works appear in the \textit{Speculum}, a work now considered as spurious.

\textsuperscript{656} With a couple of exceptions (vv. 27 and 36), all the readings of the iuxta Hebraeos can be accounted for through other Latin Psalters and through Ambrose (v. 19) and Hilary (v. 103).

\textsuperscript{657} Allgeier, \textit{Die Psalmen der Vulgata}, 162-165.

Ps. 118. Almost all these quotations agree with the Psalterium Romanum. There are, however, a few instances where Augustine quotes other Psalms from the Psalterium Veronense. Further studies may determine whether this fact signals different stages in the composition of En. Ps. 118. Other quotations, peculiar only to Augustine and marked Aug in critical editions, seem to be the result of Augustine’s own adaptation and rephrasing of the Psalm text to the context. These quotations are often closer to the Psalterium Veronense. If this suggestion can be confirmed, then the text used in En. Ps. 118 may represent a text close to the Psalterium Romanum that has undergone some degree of alteration and adjustment.

Whether this text is to be identified with the Itala remains a difficult issue to resolve. One should remember that the qualities described by Augustine regarding the Itala could apply to any number of texts of Italian origin. Also, Augustine’s remarks on the Itala concern the Bible as whole and not only the Psalter. In fact, the textual issues regarding the Latin Bible as a whole cannot simply be equated with those regarding the Psalter, whose textual tradition and history of translation are far more complex.

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659 Ps. 102:4 (7.2; 29.6); Ps. 83:8 (5.4); Ps. 86.5 (21.2); Ps. 61:6 (23.3); Ps. 2:11-12 (31.8); Ps. 31:8 (32.1). Out of eight quotations of Ps. 83:8 (Nam et misericordiam dabit qui legem dedit), six agree with the psalterium Romanum (Nam et benedictionem dabit qui legem dedit).

660 Ps. 84:13 (17.3; 26.2); Ps. 142:10 (17.3; 27.8); Ps. 38:13 (8.1); Ps. 17.37 (21.8); Ps. 6:3 (27.3); Ps. 21:12 (29.7).

661 See for instance v. 119 (Praeuaricantes deputaui omnes peccatores terrae, propterea dixi testimonia tua semper), where Augustine uses the otherwise unattested deputaui while the Psalterium Romanum has reputauui.

662 Ps. 123:1-2 (15.3; 29.6); Ps. 67:16 (17.8); Ps. 94.5 (18.1); Ps. 83.3 (20.1); Ps. 6:4 (20.2); Ps. 23:1 (21.6); Ps. 24:4 (24.6); Ps. 94:2 (29.4).

663 See the studies collected in Richesses et déficiences des anciens Psautiers latins (CBLa 13; Rome: Abbaye Saint-Jérôme, 1959).
VII. AUGUSTINE’S *ENARRATIO IN PSALMUM* 118

The Prologue and the Epilogue

One of the most important features of *En. Ps. 118* is its prologue. But just as important as the prologue are its closing lines. While most *Enarrationes* end with a couple of concluding lines, *En. Ps. 118* concludes with a paragraph as lengthy as the prologue and that can rightly be considered as an epilogue. In the prologue, Augustine highlights the motivations and purpose of his exposition on Psalm 118. In particular, he claims that he has commented on all the Psalms *partim sermocinando in populis, partim dictando*. We have seen how important (and difficult) is this information in distinguishing the two major categories of Augustine’s *Enarrationes in Psalmos*. From the outset, Augustine notes the *notissimam longitudinem* of Ps. 118, a feature he will often recall in the course of the commentary. However, he declares that he had put off the commentary of this Psalm not so much because of its length, but because of its profundity and obscurity, qualities that are noticeable only to a few people (*paucis cognoscibilem*).

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664 Kannengiesser (“Enarratio in psalmum CXVIII,” 364) notes that it is the only preface to an *Enarratio* that was not preached.

665.32.8.

666 The psalm is characterized as *magnus* (En. Ps. 1.1; 11.1; 15.1; 16.1; 20.1; 22.1; 25.1; 26.1; 32.8); *maior* (10.1); *maximus* (8.1); *prolixus* (14.1; 21.2); *omnia prolixissimae* (13.1).

667 The apparent simplicity of the Psalm is also characteristic of the biblical text as a whole.
While Ambrose considered Ps 118 to be “as clear as the sun at midday,” Augustine contends that this clarity is deceptive. “While in other Psalms,” he writes, “some passage presents difficulty, at least the obscurity itself is obvious, even though the meaning is hidden; in this Psalm not even the obscurity is evident.” Augustine characterizes Psalm 118 as profound at least three times in the prologue.

An Obscure and Profound Psalm

In fact, the obscurity and profundity of Psalm 118 are the only features highlighted in the prologue, because any other other information seems to navigate around them. In particular, the profunditas of Ps. 118 is embedded in a simple form, “for on the surface the psalm is so simple that it might be thought to require a reader or listener only, not an expositor.” Yet, more than any other Psalm, Ps. 118 requires an expert expositor. On his part, Augustine had tried to comment on this Psalm several times but had always felt that he could not measure to the task: “quotiescumque inde cogitate tentaui, semper uires nostrae intentionis excessit.”

We know for a fact that Ps. 118 is the most quoted Psalm in the Confessions, and it appears in several of Augustine’s works. However, the plainer the Psalm

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668 PL 15.1197.


670 “Propter eius profunditatem;” “tanto mihi profundior;” “quam sit profundus.”

seemed, the more profound it appeared to him, so much so that he was not able to
demonstrate how profound it was. Henri-Irénée Marrou and Maurice Pontet have
observed that sometimes Augustine deludes himself about the depth of a particular
passage of the Bible, declaring it profound and difficult, when he really has more
imagined than perceived such depth.672

Why is Ps. 118 an obscure and profound Psalm for Augustine? I will suggest
that the obscurity and profundity of Ps. 118 lie in the very mystery of its central
theme, the law, whose end is to reveal grace or to reveal itself as grace, because “the
function of law is to send us to grace.” 673 According to Augustine, the law is obscure
because grace is hidden in it and it is profound because it reveals grace. Indeed, the
primary function of the law is to reveal humanity’s sin. Yet the law also reveals
God’s merciful grace, since “where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more”
(Rom 5:20). As Augustine writes elsewhere, “The law was given in order that we
would seek after grace; grace was given so that we might fulfill the law.”674 It is this
interrelation between law and grace that makes Ps. 118 an obscure and profound
Psalm.

The prologue also tells us that Augustine could no longer put off the
exposition of Ps. 118, because of the insistent request put forth by his brothers. It is
difficult to assess whether these requests are based in fact or are only a literary

672 Marrou, Saint Augustin, 484-494; Pontet, L'exégèse d'Augustin, 132.
673 See En. Ps. 118.25.5: “Lex enim ad hoc prodest, ut mittat ad gratiam.”
674 De Spir. et litt. 19.34: “Lex ergo data est ut gratia quaeeretur; gratia data est ut lex impleretur.”
convention. Like the Retractationes document, many other of Augustine’s works were prompted by the request and insistence of his friends. Augustine’s letter to Evodius, in particular, indicates that one such request specifically urged him to attend to the commentary of the remaining Psalms. One can also note that both the Retractationes and En. Ps. 118 were written in the last 15 years of Augustine’s life (ca. 415-427) and may have been, indeed, the result of the urgent request from Augustine’s brethren to see him write and complete these works before his death. In the case of En. Ps. 118, the situation was made even more urgent because only Ps. 118 was missing from Augustine’s opuscula on the Psalter; as he himself points out, the brethren had become particularly dissatisfied about this omission. More fundamentally, however, attending to his brethren’s request was for Augustine a duty he could not refuse, because it was a ministry he owed them. On the other hand, as Augustine states in the prologue, without an exposition on Ps. 118, the Church congregations (conuentus ecclesiastici) would be deprived of something essential regarding the Psalter as a whole.

If we know at whose request Augustine decided finally to comment on this profound Psalm, we are left to guess who exactly are the conuentus ecclesiastici for

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675 Retr. 2.67: “…atque ipsam retractationem in libris duobus edidi, urgentibus fratribus…” Epist. 92; 95; 98; 102; 111; 118; 120; 169; 205; 130; Brown, Augustine of Hippo, 412.

676 Epist. 169.1.

677 See Possidius’ rationale for the composition of the Retractationes:

678 En. Ps. 118, prologue 7-11: “Et cum molestissime ferrent fratres mei, eius solius expositionem, quantum ad eiusdem corporis Psalmos pertinet, deesse opusculis nostris, meque ad hoc solvendum debitum vehementer urgerent, diu petentibus iubentibusque non cessi.”

679 En. Ps. 118.32.8: “Nec ideo tamen ei nostrum deesse debuit ministerium, maxime id de me flagitantibus fratribus, quibus sum debitor huius officii.”
whom he thought it unfair to deny comprehension of this Psalm. The reference to the fact that they were accustomed to the sound of this Psalm when it is sung like other Psalms has led some scholars to envision a monastic community as the final audience of this Enarratio.\footnote{See La Bonnardière, Recherches de chronologie, 125; Kannengiesser, “Enarratio in psalmum CXVIII,” 364-365; Grahan W. Woolfenden, “The Use of the Psalter by the Early Monastic Communities,” StPatr 26 (1993): 88-94. En. Ps. 118 has allusions that may refer to monastic prayers and vigils; see En. Ps. 118.29.3-5; 31.5. On the early monastic and liturgical connections of Psalm 118, see Luigi F. Pizzolato, Expositio psalmi CXVIII (SAEMO 9-10; Milan: Città Nuova, 1987), 21; Anton Baumstark, Nocturna Laus (Münster: Aschendorff, 1957).} Are these conuentus ecclesiastici the same brethren who had requested the commentary in the first place? I shall address the issue of audience later in the course of this study.

Finally, according to the prologue, Augustine could have not accomplished his enterprise without God’s help. Just as he had commented on the other Psalms donante Deo, he now undertakes his exposition of Ps. 118 with the trust that God will be with him and assist him, as he has done in matters that had seemed to him difficult or almost impossible to understand at first. Indeed, at the conclusion of the commentary, Augustine acknowledged that he had carefully expounded this great Psalm to the best of his ability and to the extent that the Lord had helped him in the task. The role of prayer in En. Ps. 118 cannot be underestimated.\footnote{On prayer in the Enarrationes in general and in En. Ps. 118 in particular, see Monique Vincent, Saint Augustin maître de prière d’après les Enarrationes in Psalms (Théologie historique 84; Paris: Beauchesne, 1990); Kannengiesser, “Enarratio in psalmum CXVIII,” esp. 376-377; Marc-François Lacan, “Le mystère de la prière dans le Psalme 119,” Lumière et Vie 23 (1955): 125-142.} Because the invocations to God intervene at significant junctures throughout the commentary, they are particularly important in structuring En. Ps. 118.\footnote{These invocations appear either at the beginning or the end of the sermons, except in sermo 15 and sermo 24 where they appear both at the beginning and at at the end: Ps. 118: 2.1: opitulante Deo; 5.1: sicut Dominus donat; 7.4: Domino adiuuante; 8.5: adiuuante Deo; 10.1: sicut Deus dederit; 11.1:}
Categorizing En. Ps. 118

As I have suggested, one of the major issues raised by the Prologue concerns the manner of the exposition on Ps. 118. How should one interpret the phrase per sermones... qui proferantur in populis, quas Graeci ὁμιλίας uocant? In other words, how should one categorize En. Ps. 118 in comparison to earlier Enarrationes? Was it preached or dictated?

Apart from the series of En. Ps. 1-32, 110-117, 119-139, Augustine commented on the Psalter randomly. Because of the scope of the enterprise and the length of time dedicated to completing it, it is very difficult to know when the intention of commenting on the Psalter as a book arose in his mind. In effect, such an intention is essential to describing the character of the Enarrationes as a whole. Some of the letters indicate that by 416 Augustine intended to continue and, eventually, finish his expositions on the Psalter, an endeavor he had begun some twenty years earlier.683

Studies on the Enarrationes unanimously recognize the heterogeneous nature of this work, which began as short notes on individual Psalms and eventually turned into a large and remarkable compilation of exegetical expositions on the entire Psalter. One can argue that the prologue to En. Ps. 118 witnesses to one of the

683 Epist. 169.1.
moments when Augustine decided to collect his sermons and his expositions on the Psalter in one single work, thus imposing on this heterogeneous corpus a unity that is both literary and theological.

When he undertook his exposition on Psalm 118, Augustine had commented on all the other Psalms *partim sermocinando in populis, partim dictando*, whereas he set out to tackle Ps. 118 by way of *sermones*, which the Greeks call ὁμιλίας. It is not clear how different is this way of proceeding from *sermonare* or *dictare*, the two procedures he had used in commenting on all the other Psalms. Indeed, one of the major problems regarding En. Ps. 118 is deciding whether Augustine had dictated or preached the thirty-two sermons of En. Ps. 118.

Since Lenain de Tillemont, scholars have been puzzled on how to characterize this *Enarratio*, partly because of Possidius’ classification of this exposition in his *Indiculum*. The most common interpretation of the *Indiculum* claims that Possidius distinguishes En. Ps. 118 both from the dictated and the preached *Enarrationes*.684 However, the only specific claim Possidius makes regarding this *Enarratio* is that it was *not* preached. In fact, § 3 of the *Indiculum* reads: *Reliqui omnes, excepto centensimo octavo decimo, in populo disputati sunt, numero nonaginta et septem.*

François Dolbeau has argued that the term *excepto* in this paragraph indicates that, when the Indiculum was compiled, Ps. 118 was not yet *in populo disputatus* and,

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therefore, was not yet positively entered in the list of Augustine’s published works. For Dolbeau, the *Indiculum* was meant to draw up, over time, the inventory of Augustine’s published works. According to him, the *Indiculum* does not tell us whether En. Ps. 118 was dictated or preached, but rather that En. Ps. 118 was not yet entered into the catalogue of Hippo, because it was not yet composed.685 In this sense, it is not an independent list, but an assessment written and continually updated at the library of Hippo by an anonymous secretary in preparation for Augustine’s *Retractationes*. For this reason, Dolbeau suggests that this text be called *Indiculum of Hippo* rather than Possidius’s. While I find Dolbeau’s proposal attractive with regard to the nature and the composition process of the *Indiculum*, I do not agree with his interpretation of § 3. As I have already argued, Possidius or the compiler of the *Indiculum* tried to organize the *Enarrationes* both by their categories and by their chronological order of composition. In this sense, § 3 of the *Indiculum* is meant to suggest (1) that En. Ps. 118 was composed last and (2) that it was *not in populo disputatus*. In this context, the Latin preposition *excepto* simply means except and indicates that En. Ps. 118 is to be subtracted from the *Enarrationes* that, according to Possidius or the anonymous compiler of the *Indiculum*, were *in populo disputatae*.

**A Sui Generis *Enarratio in Psalmum***?

Throughout the commentary, Augustine uses the word *sermo* to describe his exposition on Ps. 118 or parts thereof.686 On the other hand, as La Bonnardière has

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686 The term *sermo* appears twenty-eight times throughout the exposition. In at least fifteen instances, it describes the actual commentary of the Psalm: En. Ps. 118.1.3; 2.3; 5.1; 5.4; 6.1; 7.4; 8.1; 8.5; 8.6; 10.6; 11.6; 13.1; 15.9; 18.4; 24.7.
noted, Augustine never uses the word *sermo* to characterize his dictated *Enarrationes*.687 As Christine Mohrmann has shown, the term *sermo* by itself does not necessarily refer to a delivered sermon, because there is no substantial difference between *sermo* and *tractatus*.688 However, Mohrmann notes that when emphasis is put on the pastoral character of the preaching, the terms *sermo* or *tractatus* are used, with the addition of words such as *popularis* or *in populo/ad populum*, in order to concretely convey the presence of the community of the faithful gathered in the church. And she finds examples of such usages in Augustine’s works, including in the prologue to En. Ps. 118, that are meant to describe Augustine’s *ministerium sermonis ad populum*.689 Therefore, in summarizing Mohrmann’s argument, La Bonnardière remarks: “Il semble donc que le projet d’Augustin, en entreprenant l’*Enarratio in Psalmum* 118, ait été de faire œuvre de prédicateur et non d’écrivain.”690 Is En. Ps. 118 made of *sermones ad populum*? Did Augustine actually preach his exposition on Psalm 118 before a congregation?

In his remarkable 1953 study on the *Tractatus in Ioannem*, Maurice Le Landais calls attention to a quotation transcribed in the *De Trinitate*, in which Augustine describes the Tractatus 99 as “a sermon preached to the Christian people,

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688 Cf. Sermo 228.3; Mohrmann, “Prædicare,” 70-71. In his attempt to distinguish between Augustine’s commentary on the Gospel of John and En. Ps. 118, Marie-François Berrouard sees a major difference between *sermo* and *tractatus*, “la différence majeure révélée par le nom que le nom même qu’Augustin leur donne, entre *tractatus* et *sermones*: les premiers sont présentés comme explications éxégétiques, les seconds veulent être des sermons ou, comme le précise le mot grec qu’il ajoute, des homélies.” See *Introduction aux homélies de saint Augustin sur l’évangile de saint Jean* (EAA 170; Paris: Institut d’études augustiniennes, 2004), 195.

689 In support of her proposal, Mohrmann referred to similar uses of the expression namely in Conf. 6.4.6, De Trin. 4.27.48, De civ. Dei 17.17 and Epist. 224.2.

690 La Bonnardière, *Recherches de chronologie*, 121.
which (he) had later written down.” The occurrence of the terms *sermo, ad aures populi christiani* and *proferre*, led Le Landais to argue that the *Tractatus in Ioannem* were preached first and written down only later. Building on Le Landais’s argument, La Bonnardière suggests that En. Ps. 118 may represent a specific situation of delivery similar to that of the *Tractatus in Ioannem*, namely a text preached by Augustine which would eventually be delivered later by others. In support of this suggestion, La Bonnardière invokes book 4 of *De doctrina christiana*, where Augustine encourages those who cannot compose sermons of their own to use somebody else’s. In particular, she notes that the phrase *atque ad populum proferant* of *De doctrina christiana* matches the phrases *per sermones qui proferantur in populis* of the prologue to En. Ps. 118 and *in sermone quodam proferendo ad aures populi christiani* of *De Trinitate*.

However, considering Possidius’ witness according to which, Augustine taught and preached “privatim et publice, in domo et in ecclesia,” La Bonnardière concludes that En. Ps. 118 was not *stricto sensu* “une prédication in populo,” but a

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691 De Trin. 15.27.48: “De hac re in sermone quodam proferendo ad aures populi christiani diximus, dictumque conscriptimus.”

692 Le Landais, “Deux années de prédication,” 41. On *dicere* and *conscribere*, see Retr. Prol. 2: “…quia multa etiam, quae dictata non sunt, tamen a me dicta conscripta sunt.”

693 See Angelo Corticelli, “Introduzione,” in *Opere di Sant’Agostino: Esposizioni sui Salmi* (NBA 25; Roma: Città Nuova, 1967), viii: The thirty-two sermons on Ps. 118 were “dettate in privato, ma con lo scopo di essere lette in pubblico.”

694 De doctr. 4. 29.62: “Sunt sane quidam, qui bene pronuntiare possunt, quid autem pronuntient, excogitare non possunt. Quod si ab aliis sumant eloquenter sapienterque conscriptum memoriaeque commendent atque ad populum proferant, si eam personam gerunt, non improbe faciunt.”


696 Vita 7.
private course given by Augustine the bishop to his monastery.\textsuperscript{697} Since the existence of a \textit{monasterium clericorum} or a similar organization in Carthage is well documented,\textsuperscript{698} she argues that the enigmatic phrase \textit{per sermones} of the prologue designates the means by which a group of priests (not Augustine) would deliver the Psalm \textit{in populis}, that is, to the \textit{conuentus ecclesiastici} mentioned in the prologue. As she writes: “Saint Augustin qui ne s’adresse pas directement aux membres des \textit{conuentus ecclesiastici} prépare pour eux ceux qui leur ouvriront l’intelligence du Psaueme.”\textsuperscript{699} Using almost a neutral term, La Bonnardière concludes that En. Ps. 118 was “une \textit{diction} d’Augustin à un groupe restreint, accompagnée ou immédiatement suivie d’une mise par écrit d’un texte destiné à servir ensuite à ceux qui prêcheraient devant le peuple.”\textsuperscript{700} For La Bonnardière, En. Ps. 118 presents us with the rare situation of two audiences: the immediate small audience of Augustine’s priests and the audience of the \textit{conuentus ecclesiastici} in the distant future. This complex situation, she argues, explains the unclear literary form of En. Ps. 118. Nevertheless, it is important to note that, with this proposal, La Bonnardière never suggests that Augustine himself delivered En. Ps. 118 as a \textit{sermo ad populum}, but rather as a course.

\textsuperscript{697} La Bonnardière, \textit{Recherches de chronologie}, 123.


\textsuperscript{700} La Bonnardière, \textit{Recherches de chronologie}, 124. In French, \textit{dictée} means dictated, while \textit{diction} means elocution.
The *Sitz im Leben* of En. Ps. 118

If the distinction between liturgical sermon and exegetical discourse were clear, it would have been useful in assessing La Bonnardière’s proposal and characterizing En. Ps. 118 as *oration* rather than *sermo ad populum*.701

In her article on “Theory and Practice of Preaching,” Hildegrund Müller has usefully pointed out the twofold characteristic of the preached *Enarrationes*: “on the one hand,” she writes, “the explanation of the biblical text—that which makes the homily akin to the biblical commentar,—and on the other hand the liturgical situation and the particular needs of the audience which the sermon has to meet.”702 In the case of En. Ps. 69, Müller explains, the liturgical situation is very obvious: it is a feast day of martyrs and Augustine endeavors to instill in his listeners the valor of the martyrs whom they should emulate.703 Indeed, one can make a similar observation for almost all the preached *Enarrationes*: they are exegetical homilies on a Psalm whose liturgical context or performance can be determined from the text or the literary context.704

However, when one reads En. 118 independently from its prologue, one sees no indication of a liturgical context whatsoever. While there are indications of oral

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701 On the distinction between liturgical sermon and exegetical discourse, see Part I, pp…
703 En. Ps. 69.14: “Audiamus ergo quoniam laboraverunt martyres…”
704 See for instance En. Ps. 119.1: “Breuis psalmus est et ualde utilis, quem modo nobis cantatum audiuius et cantando respondimus.”
delivery, these are few and seem to be, as I shall demonstrate shortly, the result of later editorial work or indicative of an extra-liturgical context.  

As I have already argued, in Epist. 224, the phrase “tractatus populares, quos Graeci homilias uocant” does not refer specifically to preached Enarrationes, but rather to all the sermons and Enarrationes that Augustine had not yet revised by the time he had completed his two books of the Retractationes. Indeed, we know that not all of the latter were actually preached or delivered as sermons. Therefore, Augustine used the phrase tractatus populares as a short description of his sermonic corpus and his heterogeneous work on the Psalms as a whole. In this sense, sermones or tractatus populares represent his categorization of the collection of all the Enarrationes, both dictated or preached, as he undertook the the revision of his works. As such, when applied to a given Enarratio, the phrase by itself does not necessarily imply that that Enarratio was preached as a sermon or homily.

**On What the Greeks call ὡμιλία**

Apart from Epist. 224, the prologue to En. Ps. 118 is the only other place where Augustine pairs the idea of sermo popularis with what “Graeci ὡμιλίας uocant.” In his article on homily, Maurice Sachot shows how this concept was applied to

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705 See the apostrophes in sermones 1-8 and the following comment at 5.4: “This must be enough for today, if your minds are to be nourished but not wearied. The verses that follow demand a sermon to themselves.” In general, however, En. Ps. 118 lacks clear time indicators to suggest that it was delivered in a liturgical context.  

706 See Retr. 2.67.  

707 On the characterization of works in Antiquity, see Bianca-Jeanette Schröder, Titel und Text (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999).  

708 Epist. 224.2; En. Ps. 118. Prol. 24-25.
Christian works that had mainly the shape of the *commentarius currens*. He notes that, as rhetorical and literary creations, these works were characterized by non-homiletic exegetical explanations, methods and procedures, which the authors used according to the rules of the ancient *enarratio*. Sachot argues that the Greek ὁμιλία entered the West primarily with the meaning of *tractatus, expositio, explanatio* and *commentarium*. It was only later, probably through the translators of Origen, namely Jerome and Rufinus, when the distinction between *tractatus* and *sermo* was no longer observed, that ὁμιλία and *sermo* became interchangeable in Western homiliaries. And referring to Epist. 224 and the prologue to En. Ps. 118, he suggests that Augustine may be the first to provide the earliest connection between ὁμιλία and *sermo in populum*.

In spite of his reluctance to use Grecisms, the construction X+relative pronoun+Y+Graeci uocant/appelant, which Heinrich Marti has called *nova verba* or *circumloqui*, appears in Augustine’s works and notably in the later ones. In particular, Augustine uses that construction when he provides technical explanations and descriptions, and this is particularly evident in the *Retractationes* and the *Locutiones*, a work written because multa autem in Scripturis sanctis obscura,

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cognito locutiones genere, dislucescunt (Retr. 2.54). As one can expect, in the
Enarrationes, En. Ps. 118 is the work where the construction appears the most.

*Homilia* is a word rarely used in Augustine’s works. Apart from the prologue
to En. Ps. 118 and Epist. 224, it appears four times in the *Contra Iulianum*, where it
occurs three times in reference to a work by John of Constantinople (quoted by
Julian, whose interpretation of that author Augustine refutes) and once in reference to
Hilary of Poitiers’ *Tractatus in Iob*. The connection to the *Contra Iulianum* is
significant, because it is the book that had forced Augustine to stop the composition
of the *Retractationes*, noting in his Epist. 224 that he had not yet revised the letters
and the “tractatus populares quod Graeci homilias uocant.” The dating of the
*Contra Iulianum* and Epist. 224 is important because these two works were written
late in Augustine’s career (ca. 427), just as was En. Ps. 118. Because of the late and
rare occurrence of the phrase “sermones… qui proferantur in populis, quas Graeci
ὁμιλίας uocant” in Augustine, it may be interesting to inquire about where and why
he may have borrowed it.

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714 E.g. De civ. Dei 5.15; 6.12; 7.6; 7.8; 9.4; 10.1; 14.8; De doctr. 3.40; 4.11; 4.13; De Trin. 4.4;
4.31; 5.3; 12.11; 15.15; De rhetorica 3, 4, 7, 11, 16; De musica 4.36; 5.28; 6.27; 6.38; Locutiones
1.130; Quaestiones in Heptateucum 2.50; 2.78; 2.95; 2.116; 2.118; 2.120; 2.177; 3.2; 3.51; 4.4; 7.18.
Retr. 1.6.2; 1.10.4; 2.12; 2.17; 2.24.2; 1.24.2.

715 En. Ps. 118.17.1: “suavitatem, quam χρηστότητα Graeci uocant;” 17.2: “disciplina, quam Graeci
appellant παιδείαν;” 20.5: “…quas Graeci ἁδολεσχίας uocant.”

716 Contra Iulianum 1.21; 1.26; 1.29; 2.27. Only a few fragments of Hilary’s *Tractatus in Iob* are
extant.

717 Epist. 224.2.
The paragon of the learned Greek in the Latin West was Origen. Two Latin writers had been instrumental in the propagation of his works, Jerome and Rufinus of Aquileia, whose personal relationship is renowned for its tumultuous ups and downs. In particular, Jerome and Rufinus had translated Origen’s homilies, prefacing them with their own original prolegomena, which, as Rufinus claims, “Origenem romanum facerent et Latinis auribus eum donarent.” It seems to me that Rufinus may provide us with a key to interpret the use of ὠμιλία in Augustine.

In translating Origen’s homilies, Rufinus used the terms oratio, oratiuncula or the loan omelia, rather than sermo. For instance, in the preface to his Latin translation of Origen’s homilies on Psalms 36-38, Rufinus presents them as one discourse (dictio) that has been organized in nine oratiunculae, which the Greeks call homilies. Erasmus had already noted that Rufinus’ phrasing was ambiguous,

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721 See Rufinus, *Apologia* 2.16.16 (CCL 20:96); *Prologus in omelias super Iesum Naue*, 14 (CCL 20:271); *Prologus in omelias super Numero. 31* (CCL 20:285); *Apologia* 2.25.16-17 (CCL 20:101).


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because it made it difficult to identify the original author of the work or to determine whether the division in *orantiunculae* was the work of the original author or his translator.\(^723\) Thanks to the information provided by Jerome’s *Epist.* 33 (ca. 384) and by the newly discovered homilies of Origen on the Psalms, we know now that the division of the commentary into nine sermons or homilies comes from Origen himself.\(^724\) But it might well be that Rufinus perceived that the division in small *orationes* (or *orantiunculae*) was indeed what Greek call *omelias*.\(^725\) In fact, the Latins themselves used *sermo* to describe such parts of a larger discourse, even if that term eventually became used to describe a preached sermon. The choice of *oratio* versus *sermo* in Rufinus may signal his intention to describe primarily a unit of discourse rather than a genre.\(^726\) This suggestion does not preclude the possibility that Origen actually preached his homilies on Psalms 36-38.\(^727\) It may be that, as a recipient and a transmitter of a written text, Rufinus was not primarily interested in whether Origen

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\(^724\) Jerome, *Epist.* 33.16 (ad Paulam). In April 2012, Maria Molin Pradel identified, in the Cod. Graec. 314 of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, twenty-nine anonymous homilies on the Psalms: two homilies on Ps. 15, four on Ps. 36, two on Ps. 67, three on Ps. 73, one on Ps. 74, one on Ps. 75, four on Ps. 76, nine on Ps. 77, two on Ps. 80 and one on Ps. 81. A comparison of the four homilies on Ps. 36 with the Latin translation of Rufinus has revealed that the corpus of these homilies is certainly to be identified as part of the original Greek homilies of Origen. On the history, the physical description of the manuscript and of its content, see Maria Molin Pradel, “Novità originiane dalla Staatsbibliothek di Monaco di Baviera,” *Adamantius* 18 (2012): 16-39. On a preliminary discussion of the discovery, see Lorenzo Perrone, “Riscoprire Origene oggi: Prime impressioni sulla raccolta di omele sui Salmi nel Codex Monacensis Graecus 314,” *Adamantius* 18 (2012): 41-58.


had *actually* preached the Psalms commentaries he was translating. Thus, under his pen, what the Greeks call *omelias* did not necessarily imply the oral character that these compositions may have had in their original setting.

In fact, changes in form or content were not unusual in the translators of Origen, who sometimes edited them and turned delivered sermons into expositions. Rufinus himself admits that his work as translator sometimes amounted to editing. For instance, while he had translated Origen’s homilies faithfully, Rufinus acknowledged that he had edited and corrected Origen’s works on Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus. In particular, he noted that he had changed what was originally in the form of sermon into the form of an exposition: “I made it my object to supplement what Origen spoke *ex tempore* in the lecture room of the church; for his aim there was the application of the subject for the sake of edification rather than the exposition of

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729 Rufinus, Praefatio ad Romanos 16-24 (CCL 20:275): “You add, however, so that nothing may be wanting to the labor I am undertaking, that I had better abbreviate this whole body of fifteen volumes, which in the Greek reaches to the length of forty thousand lines or more, and bring it within moderate compass. Your injunctions are hard indeed, and might be thought to be imposed by one who did not care to consider what the burden of such a work must be. I will, however, attempt it, hoping that through your prayers, and the favor of the Lord, what seems impossible to man may become possible.” Alluding to his plans of translating the *Recognitiones* of (the Pseudo-) Clement of Rome, Rufinus presents the translated work as his own as well as the work of his original author, Clement. He writes: “I will put my own name in the title of the work, though I shall have that of the author also. It shall be called Rufinus’s Clement.” (ibid. 47-49; CCL 20:277): “dabo titulo nomen meum, auctoris nihilominus uocabulo permanente: nam Rufini Clemens scribetur.”). See E. Bammel, “Rufins Einleitung zu den Klemens zugeschriebenen Wiedererkennungen, in *Storia e Esegesi in Rufino di Concordia*, 151-169; Edward C. Brooks, “The Translation Techniques of Rufinus of Aquileia (343-411),” *StPatr* 17 (1982): 357-364. On the conflation between interpres and auctor, see Jerome, Epist. 84.7.6: “Nec disertiiores sumus Hilario nec fideliores Victorino, qui tractatus eius (Origenis) non ut interpretes, sed ut auctores proprii operis transtulerunt.”
the text. This I have done in the case of the Homilies, and the short lectures on
Genesis and Exodus, and especially in those on the book of Leviticus, where he spoke
in a hortatory manner, whereas my translation takes the form of an exposition. This
duty of supplying what was wanted I took up because I thought that the practice of
agitating questions and then leaving them unsolved, which he frequently adopts in his
homiletic mode of speaking, might prove distasteful to the Latin reader.”730

Although the division in nine units is to be traced back to Origen, the use of
orationculae/omelias seems to suggest that Rufinus did not present such units
primarily as delivered sermons. Could this be the sense in which Augustine uses the
word ὁμιλίας in En. Ps. 118? The word sermo in the prologue, defined as ὁμιλία,
may well refer to the divisions in Augustine’s commentary on this particularly long
Psalm. Indeed, the prologue seems to suggest that a division in small units is the
fairest way to present this long Psalm to the comprehension of the church
congregations. As Augustine declares, “hoc enim iustius arbitror.” To use Rufinus’
terminology, the thirty-two divisions of En. Ps. 118 should be taken as oratiunculae,
units in which Augustine divided his exposition.

A Dictated Commentary

In all probability, En. Ps. 118 is the last of Augustine’s great dictated Enarrationes.
Like these Enarrationes, it is characterized by “une exégèse savante” that includes

730 Rufinus, Epilogus ad Romanos 6-16 (CCL 20:276). On the intervention of copyists in the
addition of doxologies at the end of homilies, see Olivar, La predicación cristiana, 524-525; Henri
comparison of manuscripts and explanation of locutions.\(^{731}\) As La Bonnardière acknowledged, it is hard to imagine preached sermons that involve so many grammatical and philological notes.\(^{732}\) Furthermore, the suggestion that the sermons of En. Ps. 118 were meant to be preached later is met with the same objection. If Augustine could have not preached En. Ps. 118 because of the many critical notes it contains, why could anybody else?

Usually lengthy, the great dictated Enarrationes lack clear indicators of the timespan during which they were preached. The sermons of En. Ps. 118 also lack any clear time indicators. Instead, one finds terms that are consistent with intertextuality within a commentarius currens.\(^{733}\)

Although the prologue ends with the phrase “iam de ipso est loquendum” as a way to introduce Augustine’s “delivered” sermons on Psalm 118, many scholars agree that the eight seemingly delivered sermons that open the series of the thirty-two sermons are in fact fictitious and may have never been delivered.\(^{734}\) In particular, En. Ps. 118 presents us with a minimum usage of apostrophes and second person

\(^{731}\) La Bonnardière, “Recherches sur les grandes Enarrationes,” 320. The critical and lexicological notes in En. Ps. 118 appear at the following verses: 4, 8b, 15, 19, 22, 26b, 27, 36, 43, 45, 48, 50, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 65, 66, 67, 68, 73, 74, 79, 81, 85, 88, 90, 95, 103, 109, 111, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 136, 139, 141, 146, 147, 150, 152, 158, 167, 176.

\(^{732}\) La Bonnardière, Recherches de chronologie, 121-122.

\(^{733}\) These include for instance: superius (En. Ps. 118.5.4; 7.1; 8.4), alius (2.3; 6.1; 7.4; 11.6; 15.9), ante (18.3), superior (7.1; 10.3; 14.1), sequens, sequuntur, subsequuntur (5.4; 8.5; 9.1; 11.6; 14.1; 15.9; 17.10), pristinus, nuper (13.1).

addressees.\textsuperscript{735} While sermones 1-8 contain apostrophes that might support the suggestion of an oral delivery, with two exceptions, all the apostrophes are found at the beginning of the sermons.\textsuperscript{736} Dom Germain Morin has observed that later additions of apostrophes to Augustine’s commentaries are not uncommon. In fact, it is on the basis of similar additions of apostrophes that he was able to dismiss as spurious a sermon on the Ascension attributed to Augustine.\textsuperscript{737} As “desk homilies,” sermones 1-8 may have been written by Augustine to fill the gaps in a collection primarily made of sermons.\textsuperscript{738}

Occasionally, however, En. Ps. 118 contains indications that might suggest an oral performance. I have determined that these indications do not signal an oral delivery.\textsuperscript{739} One such example appears at 2.1 and refers in general to both the reader and the listener: “In this psalm it is written, \textit{Those who break his law have not walked in his ways}. We read these words and know them to be true. But they need further comment, lest what is rightly said be not rightly understood and the reader or listener


\textsuperscript{737} Germain Morin, “Une production inédite de l’école de saint Augustin,” \textit{RBen} 29 (1912), 253-261. In another article, Morin observed in particular that the phrase \textit{dulcissimi fratres} in Augustine’s sermons was often an indication of a late Spanish provinience (“Notes d’ancienne littérature chrétienne,” \textit{RBen} 29 (1912), 82-90).


\textsuperscript{739} These include references to the Psalmist as \textit{cantor} (28.1; 29.1; 5.3) or \textit{narrator} (14.1), and to the Psalm as \textit{cantatio} (17.2).
be worried.” As can be deduced from the context, such references are related to the general way of expressing openness to Scripture, which needs to be obeyed and hence listened to even when it is actually read, and are not necessary to the actual oral delivery of the commentary on Ps. 118.

In addition, unlike the preached *Enarrationes*, En. Ps. 118 is peculiar in that it lacks any reference to the familiar actors of the liturgical performance: there is no reader, no singer, no lector, no auditor involved in the performance of the liturgical act. Two references to the (possible) singing of the Psalm appear in the Prologue and at 4.1. Again, both references seem to be linked to the practice of singing the Psalms in general and not to the actual singing of this Psalm in a liturgical context.

As Augustine states in the Prologue, more than in any other Psalm, Psalm 118 needs an expositor, rather than a reader or listener. More precisely, the expositor is the reader. Indeed, En. Ps. 118 is remarkable for the prevalence of vocabulary

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740 En. Ps. 118.2.1: “Scriptum est, et legitur, et uerum est, in hoc psalmo: *Non enim qui operantur iniquitatem, in uiiis eius ambulauerunt.* Sed elaborandum est, opitulante Deo, in cuius manu sunt et nos et sermones nostri, ne recte dictum, non recte intellectum, lectorem auditorem perturbet.”

741 The most common way of accessing the Scripture was by proclamation, because only a few knew how to read. While all were expected to listen to Scripture (audire), reading it was really an office (lector) reserved to a given number of people in the community.

742 See Part I: Readers, Expositors and Auditors of the Word.

743 En. Ps. 118. Prol. 26-27: “…ut conventus ecclesiastici non fraudentur etiam psalmi huius intellegentia, cuius, ut aliorum, defectari assolent cantilena.” 4.1: “Et potius istam sententiam falsam esse cederemus, qua dictum est: *Ne quid nimis,* quam diuinum eloquium, ubi legitimus atque cantamus: *Tu praecipisti mandata tua custodiri nimis,* nisi nos non graeca elatio, sed uera ratio reuocaret.” See also 32.1.

744 See En. Ps. 118.30.1.
related to the activity of analysis (*exponere*).\textsuperscript{745} The expositor is omnipresent and does his duty *diligentius* (1.3), *operosius* (24.7), *diutius* (29.3). With the exception of one instance, where Augustine invokes the weariness of his addressees’ mind, the reasons for adjourning the expositions have to do primarily with the length of the Psalm or the *obscuritas* of the subject matter at hand, that is, the laborious work imposed on the expositor, rather than on the listeners.\textsuperscript{746}

As is well known, when Augustine executed his project of revising his work, he had devised a *catalogue raisonné* according to which his *opuscula* were to be organized.\textsuperscript{747} As is evident from the *Retractationes* and the content of the books, Augustine’s project involved not only a degree of editing of the individual works, but also a somehow an artificial tripartite categorization of his entire opus.\textsuperscript{748} This is what transpires in Epist. 224.2 and Retr. 2.67, where all the *Enarrationes*, whether preached or not, are categorized as *tractatus* or *sermones ad populum*. It seems to me that the same editorial endeavor is at work in the description of En. Ps. 118 as made of sermons “qui proferantur in populis, quas Graeci ὁμιλίας uocant.” It is probable that Augustine had composed or edited the first eight *sermones* in order to adjust

\textsuperscript{745} *Considerare* (5.1; 6.4; 10.1; 11.1; 15.1; 20.1; 26.1); *disputare, disputatio* (6.1; 8.1; 14.1; 17.1; 24.1; 27.1; 29.3; 30.1; 18.4; 24.7); *dissere*re (8.5; 12.1); *elaborare* (2.1); *explicare* (24.7); *exponere* (10.3; 20.1; 23.4; 29.3; 32.8); *intellegere* (1.2; 2.1; 3.3; 4.1; 4.5; 5.1; 6.1; 6.5; 7.1; 15.2; 19.1; 22.1; 22.8; 23.4; 24.7; 25.1; 30.1); (*per-*) *scrutare* (5.1; 20.1; 23.1; 24.3; 25.7; 27.2); (*per-*) *tractare* (6.1; 9.1; 10.1; 11.1; 11.6; 15.1; 15.9; 16.1; 17.6; 18.4; 23.1; 24.7; 26.1; 32.8); *penetrare, pertractatio* (24.7).

\textsuperscript{746} En. Ps. 118.5.4: “Haec satis sint, ut uestrae mentes sine fastidio nutriantur: alium sermonem desiderant quae sequuntur.”

\textsuperscript{747} See Retr. Prol. 1 (BA 12:266): “…ut opuscula mea sive in libris sive in epistolis sive in tractatibus recenseam.”

\textsuperscript{748} On the artificiality of this tripartition, see Bardy, “Introduction aux Révisions,” 39-41 and the studies collected in *Titres et aticulations du texte dans les œuvres antiques* (eds. Jean-Claude Frédouille and Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé; EAA 157; Paris: Institut d’études augustiniennes, 1997).
them to the description we find in Epist. 224 and in Retr. 2.67. Had he completed his revision of the *Enarrationes*, he might have subjected the other dictated *Enarrationes* to a similar editorial process.

To conclude, one can realize that the prologue to En. Ps. 118 is remarkable in two regards: in what it tells us about the *Enarratio in Psalmum* 118 and in the many questions it raises. This makes its interpretation one of the most challenging tasks of Augustine’s scholars. In particular, it requires scholars to categorize En. Ps. 118 beyond the alternatives dictated/preached, by suggesting a intermediate category. As André Mandouze wrote: “Entre la catégorie des pièces sûrement dictées et la catégorie des pièces sûrement prononcées se devine une catégorie intermédiaire que l’ambiguïté même du mot *exponere* ne rend pas facile à identifier.”

I have suggested in this section that En. Ps. 118 should be listed among Augustine’s great dictated *Enarrationes*. Dictated *Enarrationes* and preached

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750 See Müller, “*Enarrationes in Psalmos,***” 831.


752 For Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont, Augustine commented on Ps. 118 “en divers sermons qui sont au nombre de 32 ou plutôt il divisa son explication en diverses parties qui lui devaient servir de matière pour autant de sermons: car il est difficile de croire que tels que nous les avons, ils aient été prêchés et prononcés devant le peuple. Les premiers ont quelque forme de sermons, mais les derniers n’en ont aucune” (Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire ecclésiastique des six premiers siècles, vol. 13 (Paris: Charles Robustel, 1702), 643). For Rondet, “Le Psaume 118 a été commenté le dernier et le commentaire, dicté, est décomposé en 32 tractatus auxquels Augustin a donné la forme de sermons, mais qui n’ont jamais été prêchés” (“Bulletin d’histoire de la théologie,” *RSR* 37 (1950), 629).

According to De Bruyne, “Saint Augustin a dicté des sermons, nous les connaissons. Les trente-deux sermons qui expliquent le psaume 118 (*statui per sermones id agere qui proferantur in populo; Prooemium*). Les soixante-dix sermons qui expliquent les neuf derniers chapitres du Quatrième Evangelie. Peut-être encore quelques autres à l’usage de ses prêtres. Mais il n’a pas prêché ces sermons. Ils diffèrent absolument de tous ceux que nous connaissons; ils manquent de vivacité, de contact avec
Enarrationes are the two broad categories that help us distinguish the Enarrationes in Psalmos at a first level, and these categories can often be supported by internal evidence. However, this suggestion is not incompatible with La Bonnardière’s proposal that Augustine gave En. Ps. 118 as a course or a conference, thus confirming the distinction made by Perler and Maier between discourse (discours) and preaching (prédication), between liturgical and extraliturgical Sitz im Leben. 753

En. Ps. 118 and its Audience(s)

If La Bonnardière’s suggestion that En. Ps. 118 was given as a course by Augustine is to be entertained, perhaps its first recipients were supposed to give it later also as a course or a conference. La Bonnardière identified the first recipients of En. Ps. 118 with the members of Augustine’s monastery. According to Kannegiesser, the audience for whom Augustine composed his commentary on Ps. 118 was made of a select group of people able to understand this profound Psalm, an “élite audience censée pénétrer les secrets du psaume à commenter.” 754 Since Kannengiesser does not rule out that this audience can be identified with those fratres mei who had l’auditoire. Si par hypothèse, ils les a prêchés plus tard, il les aura transformés” (“La chronologie de quelques sermons de saint Augustin,” RBen 43 (1931): 193). See also Le Landais, “Deux années de prédication,” 42; Bardy, “Tractare,” 230.

753 Perler and Maier, Les voyages de saint Augustin, 430-477. As an example of an extra-liturgical discourse, Retr. 2.33 (BA 12:508) refers to Augustine’s conference or course as conlocutio: “Venit etiam necessitas, quae me cogeret adversus novam pelagianam haeresim scribere, contra quam prius, cum opus erat, non scriptis, sed sermonibus et coloncutionibus agebanus.”

754 Kannengiesser, “Enarratio in psalmum CXVIII,” 364. See En. Ps. 118. Prol. 4-7 (CCL 40:1664): “Psalmum uero centesimum octauum decimum, non tam propter eius notissimam longitudinem, quam propter eius profunditatem paucis cognoscibilem differebam.” See also Martin, “Exercises in Grace,” 151: “Those (Augustine) addresses are presumed to be able to delight not only in theological details but also in textual and grammatical intricacies. He is, indeed, writing for intellectually and theologically advanced brethren who are concerned with how to read Scripture correctly yet critically.”
requested the commentary from Augustine, his proposal that the addressees of En. Ps. 118 were few (paucis) can be challenged.

Indeed, Paul Monceaux has documented that in his letters Augustine frequently makes reference to the “fratres qui mecum sunt in Domino”756 to designate not only the members of his monastery in Hippo, but also those of other similar monastic institutions elsewhere in Africa.757 Furthermore, as we learn from the Retractationes, the phrase fratries mei applies to various peoples, including those whose solicitation prompted Augustine to write some of his books.758 If En. Ps. 118 was addressed to the fratries mei, then the suggestion that the addressees of En. Ps. 118 were a few (paucis) people becomes questionable.759 In fact, the prologue and the evidence we have do not allow us to decide conclusively the identity of the fratries referred to in En. Ps. 118, let alone their number or their elitist qualities.760

755 En. Ps. 118. Prol. 7-9 (CCL 40:1664): “Et cum molestissime ferrent fratres mei, eius solius expositionem, quantum ad eiusdem corporis psalmos pertinet, esse opusculis nostris, meque ad hoc soluendum debitum uehementer urgerent, diu petentibus iubentibusque non cessi.”

756 See Epist. 28*; Epist. 62; Epist. 214.7; Epist. 63; Epist. 100; Epist. 83; Epist. 125; Epist. 213; Epist. 216; Epist. 212A.

757 Paul Monceaux, “La formule ‘qui mecum sunt fratres’ dans la correspondance de saint Augustin,” in Mélanges Paul Thomas, 1930, 529-537. The Enarrationes refering to Augustine’s brothers in the episcopate include: En. Ps. 34.1.1; 139.1; 23.30; 94.1; 36.2.1.

758 Cf. Retr. 2.13: “nisi quia scio fratres id habere, quorum studio non potuit denegari.”

759 According to Martin (“Exercises in Grace,” 153), “It is also possible that ‘fratres mei’ refers to a wider circle of kindred bishops and fellow ‘servi Dei’ who shared with Augustine a common love for Christ’s church and its scriptures, an office of preaching and teaching, and a commitment to a life of holiness and ascetical dedication to spiritual growth and progress.” Cf. De gestis Pelagii 39: “fratribus nostris sue coepiscopis.” Similarly, for Javier Castillo (“La contemplación,” 55), “La Enarración al salmo 118 es dictada por S. Agustín ante la petición de sus hermanos, sus hermanos en el episcopado y los clérigos de la comunidad de Hipona y monasterios distantes, par que la comentase y quedase completo su comentario al salterio.”

760 In fact, even the apostrophes in sermones 1-8 do not suggest a particular audience to the exclusion of others.
The safest option with regard to the issue of the audience of En. Ps. 118 is to suggest that this commentary was intended for the *populus fidelium* for whom Augustine exercised his *ministerium verbi divini*, by teaching and preaching, by ways of books (*libri*) and sermons (*sermones*), in private as well as in public, *in domo* or *in ecclesia*, that is, in the variety of the situations he ministered to his people as a priest and a bishop.\(^{761}\) If we take into account the fact that by 412 Augustine had already conceived the idea of writing his *Retractationes* as a way to subject his work to the judgment of posterity, the ultimate audience of his work, including En. Ps. 118, is anyone who would read his books (*quisquis opuscula mea legerit*), an audience Augustine had in mind as he began the revision of his works.\(^{762}\)

**The Dating of En. Ps. 118**

While scholars agree that En. Ps. 118 was the last to be written, they disagree on the precise date of its composition.\(^{763}\) In fact, the most important studies on Augustine’s *Enarrationes in Psalms* deal with the issue of dating. As Perler and Maier have acknowledged, the chronological issues related to Augustine’s preached work are many and complex.\(^{764}\) Yet Perler’s and Maier’s book remains one of the most remarkable achievements in Augustinian scholarship, even though it was published before the discovery of new sermons and letters that provide even more information.

\(^{761}\) See *Vita* 7.


\(^{763}\) For a panorama of proposals on the dating of the *Enarrationes*, see Fiedrowicz, *Psalmus*, 430-439; Müller, “Enarrationes in Psalms,” 809-830.

in dating Augustine’s works. However, as scholars have observed, the fact that Augustine did not revise the *Enarrationes* deprives us of essential information regarding the work as a whole. As contradictory as they may be, the studies on the dating of the *Enarrationes* have the merit of underlining the composite character of this work, in showing not only its composition over the years, but also the development of Augustine’s exegesis on the Psalter.

Since the publication of Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont’s *Mémoires*, modern scholarship dates En. Ps. 118 to ca. 418, the year of the condemnation of the Pelagians at the Council of Carthage. Inspired by Kunzelmann’s article on the chronology of Augustine’s sermons and by the new discoveries of Augustine’s works, scholars have undertaken to date almost all the sermons and the *Enarrationes*. Among the most important studies that deal with the dating of the *Enarrationes*, the contributions of Seraphin Zarb, Henri Rondet, Charles Kannengiesser, Anne-Marie La Bonnardière and Pierre-Marie Hombert have been the most remarkable because of their methodologies and the scope of their projects. While Zarb, Rondet, La Bonnardière and Hombert have attempted to date as many *Enarrationes* as possible, Kannengiesser has focused primarily on En. Ps. 118.

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765 On the importance of the letters in sketching Augustine’s career, see Matilde Caltabiano, “Storie di uomini, lettere e libri nella corrispondenza di S. Agostino,” in *L’adorabile vescovo*, 73-96.


Seraphin Zarb and the Terminus a Quo (1948)

Zarb offered the first comprehensive essays on the chronology of the *Enarrationes* in a series of articles published in Rome for the journal *Angelicum*. Zarb began by distinguishing the *Enarrationes dictatae* from the *Enarrationes praedicatae*, then proceeded to identify the locations where the latter were preached (Utica, Thagaste, Carthage and, finally, Hippo). Zarb’s articles were later collected in a book under the title *Chronologia Enarrationum S. Augustini in Psalmos*. Zarb’s pioneering work was rigorous and paintaking, but it has been challenged by many recent studies. In particular, his proposals on the location of Augustine’s preaching continue to be questioned.

With regard to En. Ps. 118, Zarb noted that, when Augustine returned to Carthage in 416, he had already composed all the *Enarrationes* except En. Ps. 118. For this *Enarratio*, he suggested the beginning of 418, a dating adopted by many scholars, including the editors of the CCL. Indeed, most scholars consider 418 as

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771 Valetta (Malta): St Dominic’s Priory, 1948.

772 See, for instance, En. 119, which, according to Zarb (1938, 382) was preached in Carthage, but is now believed to have been preached in Hippo in the winter of 414-415 (Le Landais, “Quatre mois de prédication,” 232 note 28, 274 note 88).


774 See CCL 38, 1956, xv-xviii, with corrections by Louis Brix, “Bulletin augustinien pour 1961 etcompléments d’années antérieures,” *REAug* 10 (1964), 193. Kannengieser (“Enarratio in psalmum CXVIII,” 359) suggested that Zarb proposed 418 ‘sans raison particulière.’ In reality, Zarb provided some evidence to support his dating, namely the completion of all the other *Enarrationes* by the end of 416, the completion of *De Trinitate* and other anti-Pelagian and anti-Donatist works, and Augustine’s participation in the local synod of Hippo and in the provincial Council of Carthage in May 418 (Zarb, *Chronologia*, 29-30).
the terminus a quo, even if there are still some, like Henri Rondet, who propose even earlier datings. In their outstanding book on Augustine’s travels, Perler and Maier have characterized 418 as one of culminating points of Augustine’s career.\footnote{Perler and Maier, \textit{Les voyages de saint Augustin}, 340-350.}

**Henri Rondet and the Literary Context (1950)**

Through a careful analysis of Augustine’s letters, Henri Rondet endeavored to produce a comprehensive study on the chronology of the \textit{Enarrationes} by following the development of an idea, an image, and the different exegesis of a biblical text in Augustine’s entire work, so as to have a comprehensive knowledge of an \textit{Enarratio} or a group of \textit{Enarrationes}.

Kannengiesser and the Council of Carthage (1962)

In his 1962 study on En. Ps. 118, Charles Kannengiesser provided the most detailed analysis of the anti-Pelagian character of En. Ps. 118. In particular, Kannengiesser concluded that En. Ps. 118 should be considered as an exegetical commentary of canons of the Council of Carthage (418). He highlighted especially canons 3 and 4 and characterized En. Ps. 118 as the clearest pastoral teaching Augustine had taken from the magisterial decision of 418. After noting that that En. Ps. 118 shared more similarities with the *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum* than any other of Augustine’s works posterior to 418, Kannengiesser concluded that there was enough evidence to place the dictation of this commentary, “if not at a specific date, at least in the context of the years 420-422.”

La Bonnardière, the Scriptural Dossiers and the Cult of the Martyrs (1965)

Anne-Marie La Bonnardière’s studies on the chronology of Augustine’s works have been remarkable for the consistency of her methodology and quality of her analysis. In her study on En. Ps. 118, La Bonnardière assessed Kannengiesser’s positions and rightly pointed out that En. Ps. 118 does not deal only with Pelagius’ errors, because after 418 Augustine is involved in the controversy against Julian of Eclanum who, though a follower of Pelagius, brought to the controversy new concerns other than those highlighted by Kannengiesser.

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780 For an assessment of La Bonnardière’s methodology, see Mandouze, *Saint Augustin*, 49-50.
Because Augustine began to refute Pelagius’s positions as early as 411, La Bonnardière remarked that En. Ps. 118, especially sermones 1-3, could be understood without the background of the Pelagian controversy. However, she insisted that En. Ps. 118 goes well beyond the goal of refuting Pelagianism. Therefore, instead of focusing only on the Pelagian controversy, La Bonnardière chose to examine the biblical verses Augustine used in En. Ps. 118 in order to connect this Enarratio with other contemporary works. Thus, the analysis of scriptural quotations allowed her to locate En. Ps. 118 in an interpretative context that includes works like De nuptiis et concupiscentia (Retr. 2.53), Contra Iulianum (Retr. 2.62), the Enchiridion (Retr. 2.63), the last sections of the De civitate Dei (Retr. 2.43), Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum (Retr. 2.61), Quaestiones in Heptateuchum (Retr. 2.55) and other sermons written or completed between 420 and 422.

Since En. Ps. 118 was composed after the dictated Enarrationes, most of which are posterior to 419-420, La Bonnardière concluded: “S’il en est bien ainsi, nous devons penser que l’Enarratio in Psalmum 118, non seulement n’est pas antérieure aux années 420-422; mais sans aucun doute doit être plus tardive, puisque nous savons que saint Augustin a observé un certain délai entre les grandes Enarrationes dictées et l’explication du Psaume de la Loi.”

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782 La Bonnardière, Recherches de chronologie, 180. La Bonnardière insisted that the scriptural methodology should be supplemented by other studies, including prosopographical data, Councils’ decisions and Augustine’s travels (Recherches de chronologie, 17).

783 Namely En. Ps. 67, 71, 77, 78, 81, 82, 87, 89, 104, 105, 107, 108 and 135.

784 La Bonnardière, Recherches de chronologie, 139-140.
Furthermore, in at least twenty cases Ps. 118 designates the law by the word
*testimonia*. La Bonnardière rightly observed that in eleven instances, Augustine
highlights the Greek translation μαρτυρία. After identifying the many allusions to
martyrdom in Augustine’s works, she noted that these works were written late in
Augustine’s career and suggested that En. Ps. 118 was composed after 422, during a	
timespan whose length is difficult to determine. 785


Considering that the proposals put forth by Zarb and Kunzelmann, for instance, were
now dated and rested on weak evidence, Pierre-Marie Hombert took advantage of
Dolbeau’s publication of the Mainz-Grande Chartreuse sermons and undertook a new
analysis of the *realia*, events and places mentioned in them, in order to revise the
chronology of Augustine’s works. 786 Like La Bonnardière, Hombert argued that only
“a systematic review of the biblical quotations in a book or a sermon was the surest
way to understand Augustine’s reasoning and to date, sometimes accurately, any
Augustine’s work.” 787 In particular, after taking into account the changes in
chronology brought about by the discovery of the Mainz-Lorsch sermons, Hombert
proposed a new dating for Augustine’s works mentioned in the *Retractationes 2.6-

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785 La Bonnardière, *Recherches de chronologie*, 141. On the cult of the martyrs, see Peter Brown,
*The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago

786 François Dolbeau, *Vingt-six sermons au people d’Afrique* (EAA 147; Paris: Études
augustiniennes, 1986).

787 Pierre-Marie Hombert, *Nouvelles recherches de chronologie augustinienne* (EAA 163; Paris:
Études augustiniennes, 2000), vi.
2.26, Possidius’ *Indiculum X* 102-133, sermons 150, 284, 343, and some other fifty *sermones ad populum* and *Enarrationes*. 788

Although he does not study specifically the case of *Enarratio in Psalmum* 118, Hombert remarks that it shared some similarities with *sermo* 284, which he had characterized as “a typical anti-Pelagian sermon.” 789 He notes, for instance, that both texts show an interest in the patience of the martyrs, have a scriptural dossier on grace, and use other specific biblical verses, namely Ps. 61:6 and Ps. 29:7-8. 790 He concludes that there is a convergence of data for dating sermo 284 to 418 and for confirming the suggestion that En. Ps. 118 was composed after 422. 791 However, since Hombert dates *sermo* 284 to 418, one would expect him to agree with Zarb’s dating (418) rather than Kannengiesser’s and La Bonnardière’s. Yet, without actually making clear his case, Hombert agrees with Kannengiesser and La Bonnardière, against his own suggestion that *sermo* 284 and En. Ps. 118 share some commonalities and, hence, may belong to the same period.

**The Terminus ad Quem of En. Ps. 118**

We know that by 416, Augustine was engaged in dictating the commentaries on the remaining Psalms to complete his expositions on the whole Psalter. As Müller has

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788 The *Enarrationes* studied by Hombert include the following: 57, 80, 103, 146 and 147; 30.2; 34 and 68; En. 38, 61, 76; 47; 49; 65 and 91; 84; 85, 86 and 142; 99; 101; 134.


790 En. Ps. 118. 23.3; 26.2; Sermo 284.3; 6.

791 Kunzemann had also dated sermo 284 to 418 (“Die Chronologie,” 506). For an alternative dating (certainly with more convincing arguments), see Perler and Maier who suggest 397 (*Les voyages de saint Augustin*, 218-219; 340, note 5; 439).
rightly noted, once the series of the great dictated *Enarrationes* was begun, no more preached *Enarrationes* were entered into the corpus.\(^7\) The prologue to En. Ps. 118 suggests that some time elapsed between the dictation of the last dictated *Enarrationes* and En. Ps.118: “Psalmum vero centesimum octauum decimum, non tam proter eius notissimam longitudinem, quam propter eius profunditatem paucis cognoscibilem differebam.”\(^7\)

Indeed, between 417 and 420 Augustine composed En. Ps. 81, 105, 108 and probably 135.\(^7\) Approximately two years later, he seems to have begun the 32 *sermones* on Psalm 118. Therefore, Augustine’s own claim that *every time* he tried to think about the task, it *always* seemed far beyond the powers of his mind, undermines somehow Zarb’s suggestion that En. Ps. 118 was completed at the beginning of 418.\(^7\) Both Kannengiesser and Labonnardière have argued that Augustine’s commentary on Psalm 118 was probably not begun *before* 422. In fact, La Bonnardière’s and Kannengiesser’s proposals seem to be the most widely accepted among scholars, even if many disagree with their respective methodologies.\(^7\) But, as La Bonnardière has suggested, there is some evidence to indicate that En. Ps. 118 was

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\(^7\) Müller, “*Enarrationes in Psalmos,*” 830.

\(^7\) En. Ps. 118. Prol. 5-7.

\(^7\) Müller, “*Enarrationes in Psalmos,*” 830-831.

\(^7\) En. Ps. 118. Prol. 11-12 (CCL 40:1664): “Quia quotiescumque inde cogitare tentaui, semper uires nostrae intentionis excessit.” More recently, based on the heresiologic topics he identifies in the work, Mickaël Ribreau suggested that En. Ps. 118 was composed in 419, during Augustine’s controversy against Vincentius Victor. See Mickaël Ribreau, “À la frontière de plusieurs controverses doctrinales: L’*Enarratio au Psaume* 118 d’Augustin,” *StPatr* 70 (2013): 99-104.

\(^7\) For instance, in his *Christologie et spiritualité selon saint Augustin* (Paris: Beauchesnes, 1985), Albert Werwilghen recalls the positions of La Bonnardière and Kannengiesser (248) and indicates as a matter of fact that En. Ps 118 was composed around 422. The consensus of modern scholarship dates En. Ps. 118 to the years immediately following 422 (Martin, “Exercises in Grace,” 156).
not completed for a few more years. What then is the terminus ad quem before which En. Ps. 118 was composed?

At the time he was about to complete De civitate Dei (427), Augustine referred to his uolumina on the Psalter as a work that was completed or almost completed. Scholars have noted that En. Ps. 118 uses the exegetical method laid down in De doctrina christiana, a work also completed in 427. In particular, they have remarked that the theoretical methodology described in De doctrina christiana is somehow influenced by Jerome’s exegetical method. For instance, it is in that book that Augustine advocated that Scripture scholars should learn the original languages of the Bible. By the time of the writing of the Retractationes, Augustine himself was able to assess the quality of the biblical text he had used in earlier works by comparing it with new manuscripts, including Greek ones. In particular, he realized then that his copies were often faulty and lacunar, because he had not checked them against the Greek. The claim made in En. Ps. 118, that “the Greek (codices) are more trustworthy as they are in the earlier language, whence our translations derive,” appears also in the Retractationes.

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797 Recherches de chronologie, 141.
798 De civ. Dei 17.15. On the circumstances of this work, see Retr. 2.43 (BA 12:522-527). On the completion date of the De civ. Dei, see Perler and Maier, Les voyages de saint Augustin, 384.
799 De doctr. 2.12.17.
800 Retr. 1.7 (BA 12:298): “mendositas nostri codicis me fefellit.”
801 En. Ps. 118.14.2 (CCL 40:1709): “Nonnulli autem codices non habent mandata, sed testimonia; sed mandata in pluribus inuenimus, et maxime graecis. Cui linguae tamquam praeceudenti, unde ad nos ista translata sunt, magis credendum esse quis ambigat?”
802 Retr. 1.7 (BA 12:300): “Hoc esse verius graeci libri indicant, ex qua lingua in latinam secundum Septuaginta interpretes veterum divinarum scripturarum est facta translatio.”
En. Ps. 118 shows a rare knowledge of Greek. Augustine’s grammatical remarks on the Greek are an indication that it was written when he had acquired more than just a working knowledge of the language. En. Ps. 118 provides us with undeniable examples that document that, at least toward the end of his life, Augustine practiced what he had taught in De doctrina christiana. The knowledge of Greek demonstrated in En. Ps. 118 leaves no doubt that he knew Greek with some degree of expertise. For instance, he knew the difference between λόγιον (eloquium) and λόγος (uerbum) and he was aware that there is only one syllable in Greek to distinguish ζῆσον from ζήτησον, two readings that account for the different variants he finds in his Latin codices.803 At one point, he was dismayed that none of his Latin codices had the translation (adversarius) that best represented the original Greek ἀντίδικος.804

Furthermore, in comparing the text of Ps. 118 used during the years of the Pelagian crisis (411-418) with the one used in En. Ps. 118, one comes to the conclusion that one is dealing with completely two different versions of the biblical text.805 Ps. 118:133 is the most quoted verse of this Psalm during the Pelagian crisis, where it reads: Itinera mea dirige secundum uerbum tuum, ne dominetur mihi omnis

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803 En. Ps. 118.15.2; 32.7.
804 En. Ps. 118.26.2.
805 The following verses of Ps. 118 are quoted in these anti-Pelagian works: v. 1: De perfectione iustitiae 9.20; v. 4: De peccatorum meritis 2.7; v. 5: De peccatorum meritis 2.7; v. 6: De peccatorum meritis 2.7; v. 29: Epist. 157.16; v. 36: Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum 4.30; v. 40: Epist. 157.16; v. 73: De natura et gratia 17.19; De peccatorum meritis 2.5; v. 80: De perfectione iustitiae 10.21; v. 85: De spiritu et littera 52; v. 118: De natura et gratia 62.73; v. 119: Epist. 157.15; v. 133: Epist. 157.8; Epist. 157.16; De perfectione iustitiae 10.21; De natura et gratia 13.14; De gestis Pelagianorum 14.31; De peccatorum meritis. 1.54; De peccatorum meritis 2.6; De Spiritu et littera 9; v. 175: De peccatorum meritis 2.26; v. 176: De peccatorum meritis 1.27.54.
iniquitas, whereas the text used for En. Ps. 118 runs as follows: **Gressus meos dirige secundum eloquium tuum et non dominetur mei omnis iniquitas.**

In the *index scriptorum* to Augustine’s anti-Pelagian works, the editors of the CSEL marked almost all the quoted verses of Ps. 118 with a star explaining that: “Loci a Vulgata discrepantes stellula notati.”\(^{806}\) In fact, with the exception of v. 73 (*Da mihi intellectum ut discam mandata tua*), all the quotations from Ps. 118 indicate that the Psalm text Augustine was using during the Pelagian crisis is consistent with the Psalterium Veronense, while the one used for En. Ps. 118 is closer to the Psalterium Romanum.\(^{807}\) As I have argued, Augustine’s use of many (*plures*) codices make no doubt that En. Ps. 118 was composed at a time when these different codices became available to him.\(^{808}\) While an earlier date is possible, a later one seems more plausible.

En. Ps. 118 was composed after the heated years of the Pelagian crisis and looks at the controversy somehow retrospectively. In particular, the biblical text of the Psalm used in the commentary is different from and posterior to the one used during the Pelagian controversy. En. Ps. 118 uses the methodology laid down in *De doctrina christiana* and reflects the concerns for accuracy and revision reflected in

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\(^{806}\) CSEL 60:573-574. The sample of citations of Ps. 118 within the *Enarrationes* is not large enough to help in a relative datation of En. Ps. 118. Ps. 118 is quoted or alluded to in the following *Enarrationes*: En. Ps. 89.17 (v. 18); 148.11 (v. 19); 77.45 (v. 34); 30.3.3; 54.8; 76.5; 138.27 (v. 53); 34.1.12; 36.1.4 (v. 57); 147.27 (v. 27); 38.17; 42.3; 147.27 (v. 71); 34.1; 38.2; 38.6 (v. 85); 8.10; 21.1.2 (v. 155); 30.3.3; 38.5 (v. 158).

\(^{807}\) Contrary to what has been suggested, Augustine used in his later works the Psalterium Romanum rather than the Vulgate. See Anne-Marie La Bonnardière, “Augustin a-t-il utilisé la Vulgate de Jérôme,” in *Saint Augustin et la Bible*, 303-312.

\(^{808}\) Cf. En. Ps. 118.26.2.
Augustine’s *Retractationes*. In all likelihood, then, En. Ps. 118 was written over the course of several years, probably from 422 to 428. 809 Indeed the hasty character of the last sermons can be explained by Augustine’s need to finish a work that had been long enough in the making.

809 La Bonnardière, Recherches de chronologie, 120, 14. On Augustine’s activities and whereabouts from 418 to 428, see Perler and Maier, *Les voyages de saint Augustin*, 340-386.
VIII. THE STRUCTURE AND THE THEOLOGICAL LAYOUT
OF EN. PS. 118

The Prologue and the Epilogue

En. Ps. 118 is certainly one of the best structured Enarrationes, as it opens with a prologue and closes with an epilogue. Both the prologue and the epilogue are constructed around clearly identifiable concepts. The prologue recalls Augustine’s exposition of all the other psalms (psalmos omnes ceteros... exposui) and introduces the exposition of Ps. 118 (ad pertractationem eius accedo). Characteristically, Augustine notes that he had expounded all the other Psalms with God’s help and can count again on God’s assistance to complete his exposition on Ps. 118, just as the Psalmist repeatedly instructs that no one can achieve anything without prayer.810

In both the prologue and the epilogue, Augustine’s own assessment in exposing the Psalter and now Psalm 118 is expressed by the phrases sicut potui/ut potui. It is impossible to miss the care with which Augustine composed these two sections.

The Prologue:

Psalmos omnes ceteros,
quos codicem Psalmorum nouimus continere,
quod Ecclesiae consuetudine Psalterium nuncupatur,

810 En. Ps. 118.6.1: “Et id a Domino demonstravit debere nos petere, sine quo nihil possumus facere.”
partim sermocinando in populis,
partim dictando
  exposui, donante Domino, sicut potui;

Psalmum uero centesimum octauum decimum,
  non tam propter eius notissimam longitudinem,
  quam propter eius profunditatem paucis cognoscibilem differebam.

Et nunc quod tandem ad pertractationem eius accedo,
  quid in eo possim, prorsus ignoro;
  spero tamen, ut aliquid possim, adfuturum atque adiuturum
  Deum.

The Epilogue:

Vt potui,
  quantum a Domino adiutus sum,
  psalmum istum magnum pertractaui et exposui.

As can be noted, all the important concepts identified in the prologue appear also in the epilogue.

The Subdivisions of En. Ps. 118

According to the Tabula Chronologica of the CCL edition, there are only ten other Psalms that have more than one sermo explaining them, the largest number of sermons dedicated to a Psalm being four.\textsuperscript{811} As he does in other Enarrationes, Augustine discusses Ps. 118 in sequence (seriatim). While in other Enarrationes some verses are occasionally left out,\textsuperscript{812} no verse is left out in the exposition on Ps. 118, where even the variant readings of the text are parsed and explained, though it is true that some verses receive only a short commentary.\textsuperscript{813}

\textsuperscript{811} Ps. 103. Cf CCL 38 (1956): xv-xviii.
\textsuperscript{812} Ps. 17:24; Ps. 18:5; Ps. 21:19; Ps. 27:6.
\textsuperscript{813} For instance, vv. 7, 14, 27, 28, 29, 34, 35, 41, 52, 55, 57, 60, 61, 62, 67, 68, 69, 72, 78, 87, 89, 92, 93, 101, 102, 103, 106, 110, 114, 117, 122, 124, 125, 133, 135, 140, 142, 143, 146, 148, 153, 158, 160, 169, 170, 171, 172, 175.
Furthermore, in his commentary on Psalm 118, Augustine does not allocate an equal number of verses to each sermon. The number of verses per sermon ranges between one and eight. In fifteen sermons, he deals with a whole stanza. There are three instances where one sermon deals with only one verse.\textsuperscript{814} There are two instances of two and three verses per sermon;\textsuperscript{815} one case of a sermon with seven verses\textsuperscript{816} and eight sermons with four verses each.\textsuperscript{817} There are times when Augustine comments on a verse he has already discussed in a previous sermon.\textsuperscript{818}

Kannengiesser has provided the most accepted structure of En. Ps. 118 and has observed in particular that the expository rhythm is accelerated toward the end of the exposition.\textsuperscript{819} Indeed, by the middle of the text (sermo 16), Augustine had commented only 64 verses. Two factors may account for Kannengiesser’s observation. Because of the anthological and repetitive nature of the text, Augustine had already covered the major topics of the Psalm by the middle of his exposition and could only recall them \textit{passim} with short comments, the very length of the Psalm allowing for depth and repetition. On the other hand, if we suppose that En. Ps. 118 was dictated over a long timespan, the last \textit{sermones} may signal Augustine’s desire to bring to an end a commentary that had lasted long enough. Table 3, reproduced from Kannengiesser’s article, shows the distribution of the verses in greater detail.

\textsuperscript{814} \textit{Sermo} 2 (v. 3); \textit{Sermo} 3 (v. 3); \textit{Sermo} 18 (v. 73).
\textsuperscript{815} \textit{Sermo} 1 (vv.1-3); \textit{Sermo} 8 (vv. 19-20); \textit{sermo} 25 (vv. 119-120).
\textsuperscript{816} \textit{Sermo} 24 (vv. 113-119).
\textsuperscript{817} \textit{Sermones} 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14.
\textsuperscript{818} \textit{Sermones} 1-3 (v.3); \textit{Sermones} 18-19 (v. 73); \textit{Sermones} 24-25 (v. 119).
\textsuperscript{819} Kannengiesser, “Enarratio in psalmum CXVIII,” 366.
TABLE 3

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<tr>
<th>Sermons</th>
<th>Stanzas</th>
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<td>161 – 168</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>ת</td>
<td>169 – 176</td>
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Hildegund Müller has argued that the structure of Augustine’s *Enarrationes* is more complex and sophisticated than it appears and needs to be uncovered through a proper analysis. If one were to consider some specific markers throughout the commentary, one could identify alternative divisions independently from the

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traditional division in thirty-two sermons. I propose an alternative structure consisting of twenty-four sections identified according to three clear markers: (1) the term *sermo* or another reference to the psalm verses as a unit commented or to be commented on in a section or the following one,\(^ {821}\) (2) the analytical verbs and notions describing Augustine’s activity as an expositor,\(^ {822}\) and (3) God’s invocations at the beginning or conclusion of the individual units.\(^ {823}\) Having exhausted the discussion as to whether En. Ps. 118 was preached or dictated, the proposed subdivision considers the sections identified as parts of a discourse, whose *Sitz im Leben* may be a course or conference.

**Opening and Closing Statements**

In the exceptional cases where the beginning and the end of a unit are not specifically signaled by the markers I have described, the individual section can still be clearly isolated by the ending of the previous one or the beginning of the next one. For instance, the beginning of section III is marked at 3.1, but the ending of that section is clearly identifiable at 5.1, which functions thus both as the end of the previous unit and beginning of the following one. Similarly section XVII (*sermo* 19) lacks both a beginning and an end statements.\(^ {824}\) But the end of the previous section (18.4) and the

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\(^ {821}\) These terms include *uersus, pars, locus, lectio, sermo, uerbum,* and *psalmus.* Kannengiesser (“Enarratio in psalmum CXVIII,” 365, note 31) had already identified some of these terms as stanza markers at 5.1 (*hos uersus*), 14.1 (*superiores uersus*), 15.1 (*hos uersus*), 16.1 (*hos uersus*), 17.1 (*hi uersi*), 20.1 (*istam partem*), 23.1 (*istos uersus*), 24.1 (*locus psalmi*), 26.1 (*istos uersus*), 30.1 (*lectio*).

\(^ {822}\) These analytical terms include: *considerare, disputare, disserere, elaborare, explicare, exponere, intellegere, (per-)scrutare, (per-)tractare.*

\(^ {823}\) The invocations include: *Deo largiente, Domino adiuwante, Domino donante, in voluntate Dei, opitulante Deo, pro uiribus quas Deus donat, quantum a Domino adiutus sim, quantum donat Dominus, sicut Dominus dederit, sicut Dominus donat, si adiuuerit Dominus, si Deus donauerit.*

\(^ {824}\) See WSA, 429, note 1: “The fairly impersonal tone, and the absence of any remarks at the end about deferring the next verses until another day, suggest that this sermon may never have been preached.”
beginning of the next one (20.1) clearly isolate it as a whole. Occasionally, therefore, a marker can function as breaker between two sections. In general, however, multiple markers intervene in identifying a division within the *Enarratio*.

On the other hand, I would suggest that *sermones* 12 and 13 be taken thematically as one unit because of Augustine’s own statement at the beginning of *sermo* 13: “This sermon, which will deal with the verse that comes next, is to be taken in conjunction with the foregoing sermon, the one we preached most recently on this longest of all psalms.”

Likewise, at the end of *sermo* 18, Augustine remarks that his discussion has ranged over necessary questions that have resulted in a rather long discourse. Yet *sermo* 18 is not excessively longer than the others within the exposition: Augustine’s statement makes more sense if one takes *sermo* 17 and *sermo* 18 as one unit. Table 4 presents the division of En. Ps. 118 into twenty-four sections marked by an opening and/or a closing statement.

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825 En. Ps. 118.13.1: “Sermoni pristino, quem de psalmo qui est omnium prolixissimus, nuper habuimus, de uerbis eius quae sequuntur iste iungendus est.” See also the reference to *sermo* 12.4 at *sermo*13.4.

826 En. Ps. 118.18.4: “Sed quoniam res quidem necessarias, quantum existimo, tamen prolixa disputatione tractauimus, dilatis sequentibus psalmi huius uersibus, sermonem istum isto fine claudamus.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Sermones</th>
<th>Opening Statement</th>
<th>Concluding Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ab exordio suo <em>magnus psalmus iste</em>, carissimi, exhortatur nos ad beatitudinem, quam nemo est qui non expetat (1.1)</td>
<td>Sed iam <em>sermo iste</em> claudendus est, nec in angustum tanta quaestio coartanda (1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Scriptum est, et legitur, et uerum est, <em>in hoc psalmo</em>: Non enim qui operantur iniquitatem, in uuis eius ambulauerunt (2.1)</td>
<td><em>Alius sermo</em> necessarius est, quia iste claudendus est (2.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>3 – 4</td>
<td>Propter id quod <em>in psalmo isto</em> scriptum est: Non enim qui operantur iniquitatem, in uuis eius ambulauerunt (3.1)</td>
<td>Hae satis sint, ut uestrae mentes sine fastidio nutriantur: <em>alium sermonem</em> desiderant quae sequuntur (5.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Hos uersus, carissimi, <em>isto consideremus in psalmo</em>, et sicut Dominus donat, eius sacras litteras <em>perscrutemur</em>: In quo corrigit iunior uiam suam? In custodiendo uerba tua (5.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Initium sermonis huius</em> est nobis in psalmo de quo <em>disputamus, hic uersus</em>: In labiis meis enuntiaui omnia iudicia oris tui (6.1)</td>
<td>Sed de isto inquilinatu uel incolatu non est <em>sermo</em> coartandum; et ideo non iste de hac re, sed alius exspectandus, et Domino adiuuante reddendus est (7.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>Si huius psalmi superiора</em> meministis, carissimi, adiuuare nos debent ad <em>intellegenda</em> sequentia (7.1)</td>
<td>Sed ea quae sequuntur, quoniam iam iste prolixus est, <em>alia sermone</em>, adiuuante Domino, commodius <em>dissertentur</em> (8.5).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Exspectationi Caritatis uestrae de sequentibus <em>huius maximi psalmi sermo</em> reddendus est, <em>ab illo uersu</em> scilicet, ubi ait: Incola ego sum in terra; non abscondas a me mandata tua (8.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>9</td>
<td><em>Psalmi huius</em> quae <em>tractanda</em> subsequuntur, admonent nos causam nostrae miseriae recordari (9.1)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 4 (CONTINUED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Sermones</th>
<th>Opening Statement</th>
<th>Concluding Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IX 10</td>
<td>Sequitur <strong>in isto psalmo</strong> maiore, quod <strong>considerare</strong> et, sicut Dominus dederit, <strong>pertractare</strong> debemus: Adhaesit pauimento anima mea, uiuifica me secundum uerbum tuum. (10.1)</td>
<td>Multa dici possent de ista cordis latitudine, sed <strong>huius sermonis</strong> iam contradicitur longitudini (10.6)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>X 11</td>
<td><strong>In psalmo isto</strong> magno sequitur quod nobis, adiuuante Domino, <strong>considerandum atque tractandum</strong> est: Legem pone mihi, Domine, uiam iustificationum tuarum, et exquiram eam semper (11.1)</td>
<td>Sed quae sequuntur, <strong>alio sermone tractanda</strong> sunt (11.6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI 12</td>
<td>Sequitur <strong>in psalmo</strong> quem suscepimus <strong>disserrendum</strong>: Auerte oculos meos, ne uideant uanitatem; in uia tua uiuifica me (12.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII 13</td>
<td><strong>Sermoni</strong> pristino, quem <strong>de psalmo</strong> qui est omnium prolixissimus, nuper habuimus, de uerbis eius quae sequuntur iste jungendus est. Haec uerba sunt: Et ueniat super me misericordia tua, Domine (13.1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>XIII 14</td>
<td><strong>Superiores uersus prolixi psalmi huius</strong> orationem habent; hi autem qui sequuntur, de quibus nunc <strong>disputandum</strong> est, narrationem (14.1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>XIV 15</td>
<td><strong>Consideremus</strong>, quantum donat Dominus, et <strong>pertractemus</strong> hos uersus magni <strong>psalmi</strong> huius: Memento uerbi tui seruo tuo, in quo spem dedisti mihi. Haec me consolata est in humilitate mea, quioniam uerbum tuum uiuificauit me (15.1)</td>
<td>Sed quia iste in longum <strong>sermo</strong> processit, ea quae sequuntur, Domino donante, ab alio melius <strong>tractabuntur</strong> exordio (15.9)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV 16</td>
<td><strong>Hos uersus psalmi huius</strong> magni nunc aggredimur in Dei uoluntate <strong>tractandos</strong>: Pars mea Dominus, quod habent quidam: Portio mea, Domine (16.1)</td>
<td>Sed quoniam res quidem necessarias, quantum existimo, tamen prolixa <strong>disputatione tractauimus</strong>, dilatis sequentibus <strong>psalmi huius uersibus</strong>, <strong>sermonem istum</strong> isto fine claudamus (18.4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI 17 - 18</td>
<td><strong>Hi uersus psalmi huius</strong>, de quibus nunc in uoluntate Dei <strong>disputaturi sumus</strong>, ab hoc incipiunt: Suauitatem fecisti cum seruo tuo, Domine, secundum uerbum tuum, uel potius, secundum eloquium tuum (17.1)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>XVII 19</td>
<td>Dominus Iesus <strong>in hoc psalmo</strong> per prophetam, tamquam sibi, petiuit</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
intellectum dari a Deo corpori suo quod est ecclesia, ad Dei mandata discenda. (19.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Sermones</th>
<th>Opening Statement</th>
<th>Concluding Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XVIII</td>
<td>20 – 22</td>
<td>Adiuuante Domino, istam magni huius psalmi partem considerandam exponestamque suscipientis, ubi dicit: Defecit in salutare tuum anima mea, et in uerbum tuum sperauit (20.1)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Scrutandos atque tractandos pro uiribus quas Deus donat, nunc istos uersus psalmi huius aggregimus, quorum primus est: Lucerna pedibus meis uerbum tuum, et lumen semitis meis (23.1)</td>
<td>Sed hic quaestionem propondere suffecerit, alio, si Deus donauerit, sermone tractandum, ne huius prolixitas eam cogat angustius explicari, quam ut bene possit quod explicatur intellegi (24.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Psalmi huius locus de quo in uoluntate Dei disputaturi sumus, sic incipit: Iniquos odio habui, et legem tuam dilexi (24.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXI</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Quaerimus, si Deo largiente inuenire possimus, quomodo intellegendum sit quod in isto psalmo magno dictum est: Praeuaricatores, uel potius praeanicantes (25.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXII</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Istos magni psalmi huius uersus considerandos nunc suscepimus atque tractandos: Feci iudicium et iustitiam; ne tradas me nocentibus me (26.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXIII</td>
<td>27 – 29</td>
<td>Verba psalmi haec sunt de quibus, adiuuante Domino, disputaturi sumus: Mirabilia testimonia tua; propter hoc scrutata est ea anima mea (27.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXIV</td>
<td>30 – 32</td>
<td>Nemo in Christi corpore constitutus a se alienam abitretur esse hanc uocem (quoniam re uera totum Christi corpus in hac humilitate positum dicit), unde psalmi huius incipit lectio, de qua nunc disputatur suscepimus: Vide humilitatem meam, et eripe me, quia legem tuam non sum oblitus (30.1)</td>
<td>Vt potui, quantum a Domino adiutus sum, psalum istum magnum pertractauet exposui (32.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analytical Notions and Prayer Invocations

Depending on the tense and the form in the phrasing of the sentence, the prayer markers may apply *ad sensum* either to the previous unit or to the following one. Similarly, at the conclusion of a unit, the description of the method of exposition may apply to the previously explained section or the following one. For instance, at the end of *sermo* 6.1, Augustine recalls that he had already treated this matter in *sermo* 5. In both cases, the marker reported in that section (here *sermo* 6.1) is reported in brackets as referring to the previous one (here *sermo* 5). Table 5 provides the subdivision of En. Ps. 118 in twenty-four sections using the analytical notions and the prayer invocations as markers.
## TABLE 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Analytical Notions</th>
<th>God’s Invocations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>[est loquendum (Prol.), [pertractai et exposui (32.8)]</td>
<td>[adfuturum atque adiuturum Deum (Prol.)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>elaborandus est (2.1)</td>
<td>opitulante Deo (2.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>[alia iam sermonem tractauimus (6.1), consideremus, perscrutaremus (5.1)</td>
<td>sicut Dominus Donat (5.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>disputamus (6.1), tractare suscepimus (6.1)</td>
<td>quantum Deus donat (6.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>[disputuimus (6.5)], ad intellegenda sequentia (7.1)</td>
<td>[Domino adiuuante (7.4)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>ea quae… disserentur (8.5), quae tractanda (9.1)</td>
<td>[adiuauante Domino (8.5)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>considerare, pertractare (10.1)</td>
<td>sicut Dominus dederit (10.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>considerandum atque tractandum (11.1)</td>
<td>adiuuae Domino (11.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>disserendum (12.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>disputandum est (14.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI</td>
<td>consideremus, pertractemus (15.1)</td>
<td>quantum donat Dominus (15.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII</td>
<td>[ab alio melius tractabuntur exordio (15.9)], tractandos (16.1)</td>
<td>[Domino donante (15.9)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII</td>
<td>[prolixa disputatione tractauimus (18.4)], disputaturi sumus (17.1)</td>
<td>in uoluntate Deo (17.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV</td>
<td>considerandam exponendamque (20.1)</td>
<td>adiuuante Domino (20.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV</td>
<td>scrutandos… atque tractandos (23.1)</td>
<td>pro uiribus quas Deo donat (23.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI</td>
<td>disputaturi sumus (24.1)</td>
<td>in uoluntate Deo (24.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII</td>
<td>[…] disputatione alia pertratanda est, alio… sermonem tractandum (24.7)], quomodo intellegendum sit (25.1)</td>
<td>[si Deus donauerit, si adiuuerit Dominus (24.7)], Deo largiente (25.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII</td>
<td>considerandos…, tractandos (26.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX</td>
<td>disputaturi sumus (27.1)</td>
<td>adiuuante Domino (27.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX</td>
<td>disputare suscepimus (30.1)</td>
<td>a Domino adiutus (32.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Overall Structure of En. Ps. 118

Kannengiesser’s description of En. Ps. 118 may suggest that Augustine commented on Ps. 118 by following its alphabetical acrostic structure. The structure I have proposed shows that only the verses covered by the ט, ח, ז, ד and ט stanzas are commented on in one setting. In fact, Augustine’s reference to the acrostic structure at 21.2 is surprising: “After that verse about heaven we now have one that looks to the earth. Each verse forms part of a stanza of eight, all beginning with the same letter, and each stanza is headed by the corresponding letter of the Hebrew alphabet, eight through to the end of this very lengthy psalm.” By all accounts, this allusion seems completely out of context, because the connection between v. 89 and v. 90 could have been made without it. Although I have not found any satisfactory explanation to explain it, it seems to me that the reference to the acrostic structure of Psalm 118 (here at stanza ט) should have appeared at the beginning of stanza ט (v. 89). Furthermore, in the epilogue Augustine expressly stated that he had omitted to mention the acrostic form of the Psalm (nihil dixi), because it was not relevant to the understanding of the text. Therefore, in structuring En. Ps. 118, I did not consider the Hebrew alphabet as particularly significant. Table 6 presents the comprehensive structure I have suggested, with the verses covered by each section.

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828 En. Ps. 118.21.2: “Senquens autem uersus post caelum, pertinent consequenter ad terram. Vnus enim uersus est eorum octo qui ad istam litteram pertinent. Singulis quippe litteris hebraeis subduntur octoni, donec psalmi huius prolixitas terminetur.”
829 En. Ps. 118.32.8.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
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<th>Stanzas</th>
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<td>I</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>א</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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<td>II</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>א</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
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<td>3-8</td>
<td>3 - 4</td>
<td>א</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>9-12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>ב</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.4</td>
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<td>13-16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>ב</td>
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<td>6.5</td>
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<td>17-19</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>7.4</td>
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<td>19-20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>ג</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.5</td>
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<td>81-104</td>
<td>20 – 22</td>
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<td>22.8</td>
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<td>105-112</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>ג–ג</td>
<td>23.1</td>
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<td>113-118</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>ס–ס</td>
<td>24.1</td>
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<td>ס–ס</td>
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<td>ט–ט</td>
<td>26.1</td>
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<td>129-152</td>
<td>27 – 29</td>
<td>ק–ק–ק</td>
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<tr>
<td>XXIV</td>
<td>153-176</td>
<td>30 – 32</td>
<td>ת–ת–ת</td>
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<td>32.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
One of the most remarkable features of En. Ps. 118 is the number of (rhetorical) questions that guide Augustine’s commentary. While this feature is not unusual in Augustine’s works, it appears to reach a level of sophistication here. The alternation of questions and answers (quaestio et responsio or, in Greek, ἔρωταποκρίσεις) is a rhetorical device Augustine admired in the writings of Paul. As scholars have noted, the quaestio-genre arose in didactic literature, especially in the explanation of topoi, and the most important category of the genre (the explanation of a text) is represented in both Greek and Latin classic literature. The technique of the quaestio is also characteristic of the Midrash, a literature in which, not infrequently, the connections within the individual expositions between rabbis’ teachings and biblical readings are made by way of questions to which Scripture provides answers. Henri-Irénée Marrou has argued that in explaining a text by way of quaestiones et responsiones, the ancient expositor demonstrated the curiositas of the grammarian, while accomplishing the roles of the rhetor and philosopher.

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830 De doctr. 4.7.13-14. I am most grateful to Paolo Bernardini who sent me a copy of his masters’ dissertation written at the University of Pisa and who addresses the issue of the quaestiones in En. Ps. 118. See his Cordis dilatatio, iustitiae est delectatio: Studio sulla Enarratio in Psalmum CXVIII di Agostino (Diss.; Pisa: Università degli Studi di Pisa, 2000), 87-96.

831 Cf. Porphyry, Quaestiones Homericae ad Iliadem; Quaestiones Homericae ad Odysseum; Plutarch, Πλατονικὰ ζητήματα, Philo, ζητήματα καὶ λύσεις. On the didactic and educational scope of the quaestio, see the studies collected in La littérature des questions et réponses dans l’antiquité profane et chrétienne: de l’enseignement à l’exégèse (ed. Marie-Pierre Bussières; Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia 64; Turnhout: Brepols, 2013); Yannis Papadoyannakis, “Instruction by Question and Answer: The Case of Late Antique and Byzantine,” in Greek Literature in Late Antiquity: Dynamism, Didacticism, Classicism (ed. S. Fitzgerald Johnson; Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 91-105.

832 On the structure of the Midrash, see Wellmann, Von David, Königin Ester, 18-26.

833 Marrou, Saint Augustin, 470-473.
In the early Church, the genre of question-and-answer shared formal continuity, rhetorical models and stylistic conventions with classical literature. As the writer whose corpus is the richest in works pertaining to this genre, Augustine has contributed extensively to the Christian literature of the *Quaestiones*. Dom Lambot observed that the genre was “extensively used by Saint Augustine in responding to questions asked of him or simply in order to clarify his ideas on a particular point of exegesis or doctrine.”

As a matter of fact, at least seven of Augustine’s works include the word *quaestio* in their titles. Furthermore, Augustine’s letters hover between *quaestio* and *tractatio*. In fact, one can even argue that the exegetical letters exchanged

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835 Roland J. Teske has offered the fullest list of Augustine’s works pertaining to the *quaestio*-genre: “Augustine of Hippo and the Quaestiones et Responsiones Literature,” in *Erotapokriseis*, 127-144. See also Lorenzo Perrone, “Il genere delle Quaestiones et responses nella letteratura cristiana antica fino ad Agostino,” in *Lectio Augustini: Da diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus; De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum* (Rome: Città Nuova, 1996), 11-44; Bardy, “La littérature patristique,” *RB* 41 (1932): 515-537.


837 De diuersis quaestionibus octoginta tribus (388-95), Ad Simplicianum de diuersis quaestionibus (395/96), Quaestiones euangeliorum (403/404), Quaestiones in euangelium secundum Matthaenum (400/411), Queaestiones in Heptateuchum (419), De octo Dulcitii quaestionibus (424), De octo quaestionibus ex Veteri Testamenti (424).

838 See for instance Epist. 54-55 (Ad inquisitiones Ianuarii; Retr. 2.20); Epist. 102 (Quaestiones expositae contra paganos; Retr. 2.31); Epist. 135-137; Epist. 140 (De gratia Novi Testamenti ad Honoratum; Retr. 2.36).
between Augustine and Jerome “belong also to the literary genre of *quaestiones et responsiones*, in which knotty Scriptural problems were posed and solved.”839.

Although En. Ps. 118 is not formally a *quaestio* work, it is nevertheless developed on the assumption that the Psalm’s text provides questions to which the expositor, through the use of other biblical texts and examples, offers answers. In this sense, En. Ps. 118 as *explication du texte* takes the *quaestio-et-responsio* shape because, for Augustine, exegesis is primarily to question Scripture and to receive answers from it.

One peculiar example of *quaestio-et-responsio* appears in *sermo* 2 where, after commenting v. 3 (*Those who break his law have not walked in his ways*), Augustine concludes that people who walk in the Lord’s ways do not commit sin, and yet are not free from it. To reach such a conclusion, he proceeds with a series of questions and answers to demonstrate that, though a sinner, Paul walked in the ways of the Lord. He writes:

Tell us, then, most blessed Paul: did you walk in the ways of the Lord while you still lived in the flesh? “Of course I did,” he answers. “How else could I have said, *Let us walk consistently with the level we have attained* (Phil. 3:16)? How could I have asked, *Did Titus take advantage of you? Have we not both been walking by the same Spirit? Have we not both trodden the same path?* (2 Cor. 2:18) Why did I often say, *As long as we are in the body we are on pilgrimage and away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight* (2 Cor. 5:6-7)?

Then he continues:

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These replies must be sufficient to teach us that the apostle Paul certainly did walk in the ways of the Lord; but we need to question him about something else. Tell us, please, apostle: during your life in the flesh, when you were walking in the Lord’s ways, did you sin at all, or were you without sin?

To this last question, Augustine has Paul reply: “Have you not read the passage where I confess, \textit{I fail to do the good I want to do; what I do is the evil I do not want?}” Still, he continues: “Yes, we have heard that, but we have another query. How could you have been walking in the ways of the Lord if you were doing evil things you did not want to do, and the holy psalm loudly intones, \textit{Those who break his law have not walked in his ways?} Paul’s reply comes swiftly: \textit{If what I do is what I do not want to do, he says, it cannot be I who am at work, but the sin that dwells in me} (Rom. 7:15-17).”

The rhetorical strategy of \textit{quaestio-et-responsio} is so essential that it appears throughout the exposition, which, more than any other \textit{Enarratio}, contains an impressive amount of questions and answers. More precisely, the quotations from Scripture supply Augustine with appropriate answers to the questions raised during the exposition of Ps. 118 because, as Martin has commented, it is the Bible itself that explains, clarifies, and amplifies the Psalmist’s intention and meaning \textsuperscript{841} The total number of quotations in the thirty-two sermons reaches the hundreds, with Paul being quoted over 230 times. The number of references per stanza varies from one to sixteen, with an average of ten to eleven references per sermon. \textsuperscript{842} But the \textit{quaestio}

\textsuperscript{840} En. Ps. 118.2.2.

\textsuperscript{841} Martin, “Exercises in Grace,” 149-150.

\textsuperscript{842} See the scriptural index in the apparatus of CCL 40:1664-1776.
feature in En. Ps. 118 is not only in the form, but also in the very questions Augustine addresses, avoids or adjourns.\textsuperscript{843} The vocabulary of query includes \textit{interrogatio}, \textit{disputatio}, \textit{responsio} and \textit{quaestio}\textsuperscript{844} and focuses on important issues that Augustine tackles, sets aside or postpones.\textsuperscript{845}

**The Church as the Subject Theme of En. Ps. 118**

Finally, it is the Psalm’s text itself that supplies Augustine with three concrete questions at vv. 9 and 84. The double rhetorical question at v. 84, characteristic of the lament Psalms, (\textit{Quot sunt dies serui tui? Quando facies de persequentibus me iudicium?}) does not elicit a specific answer from the Psalm text. For Augustine, however, it evokes the plea of the martyrs during persecution, as expressed in Rev. 6:10, and the Lord’s invitation to patience (\textit{patientia}, \textit{ὑπομονή}), as stated in Acts 1:7: “It is not for you to know the times which the Father has appointed by his own authority.”\textsuperscript{846} From this lament of the Psalmist, Augustine is able to invoke the Church of the martyrs and to introduce the theme of Christian hope that rests on the trust in God’s providence.

\textsuperscript{843} For the parsing of some difficult theological questions, see En. Ps. 118.25.1-5; 32.5.


\textsuperscript{845} For some examples of postponed questions, see En. Ps. 118.1.3; 5.4; 7.4; 8.1; 10.6. Kannengiesser, “Enarratio in psalmum CXVIII,” 362.

\textsuperscript{846} En. Ps. 118.20.4.

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The most important question in Ps. 118 is found at v. 9 which has been universally read and translated as a question-and-answer: *In quo corrigit iunior uiam suam? In custodiendo uerba tua.*\(^{847}\) Since the Psalm does not ask “By what means does anyone (*homo*) or a man (*vir*) straighten his path,” but rather “By what means does a youth (*iunior*) straighten his path,” Augustine does not dwell on the answer provided by the Psalmist, but on the identification of the *iunior* mentioned in the question. Accordingly, he asks: “But why does the Psalm speak in particular of a youth?”\(^{848}\) Afterward, in a series of questions and answers, he identifies the *iunior* as any youth open to correction; then as the youth who once left his father to squander his money by living recklessly with prostitutes yet, coming to his senses, returned to his father’s house; and finally to the new self (*nouus homo*) as opposed to the old self (*uetus homo*) because anyone, “even though advanced in bodily age and worn out with years, will be youthful before God when converted and made new by grace.”\(^{849}\)

While both the youth open to correction (Sir 6:18) and the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:18-21) stand for the Church, it is the *nouus homo* that best describes the new people of God. Thus, with Pauline lyricism, Augustine declares: “This child of grace

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\(^{847}\) That is how the verse is translated, among others, by Ibn Ezra (12th c.), Radaq (13th c.), Luther (1545), the Geneva Bible (1599), the King James Version (1611), the American Standard Version (1901), the Jewish Publication Society (1917), the Revised Standard Version (1952), the New Revised Standard Version (1989), and the Jerusalem Bible (1956, 1966). Modern scholarly attempts to view the entire verse as one question have not been convincing. See for instance the discussion between William M. Soll (“Question of Psalm 119:9,” *JBL* 106 (1987): 687-688) and Kent A. Reynolds (“The Answer of Psalm cxviii.9,” *VT* 58 (2008): 265-269).

\(^{848}\) En. Ps. 118.5.2: “Sed quid sibi uult iste iunior?”

\(^{849}\) En. Ps. 118.5.2: “Sit ergo licet quilibet, quantum ad aetatem pertinet corporis, annosa uetustate decrepitus, iunior erit ad Deum percepta gratae nouitate conuersus.” At En. Ps. 118.28.4, Augustine notes that the word *iunior* in Greek is νεώτερος, a comparative adjective that implies a contrast with someone older.
is the younger people, the new humanity and the new self, the singer of the new song, the heir of the new covenant. This younger son is not Cain but Abel; not Ishmael but Isaac; not Esau but Israel; not Manasseh but Ephraim; not Eli but Samuel; not Saul but David.”

Therefore, v. 9 provides Augustine with the central theme of his exposition on Ps. 118. Although the Psalm is “spoken by a single individual, in fact it is the members of Christ who speak, the members who belong to one head and form one body.” For Augustine, Psalm 118 is foremost the *vox ecclesiae*, the body of Christ, and he is keen to highlight that the Psalm speaks *in persona Christi* only on a couple of occasions.

In fact, at the conclusion of the exposition, upon identifying the Church with the lost sheep (v. 176), Augustine notes: “And now, at the very end, he reveals himself openly and shows us who has been speaking throughout the psalm.” As the *vox ecclesiae*, En. Ps. 118 is a description of a people (the Church, the younger son), whose faith is active through love (Gal. 5:6), because “the only—or at least

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851 En. Ps. 118.7.1.

852 See comment at vv. 63, 73; 74, 79; 99.

853 En. Ps. 118.32.7.

the principal—requirement of the commandments is love.”855 With the identification of the *iunior* with those whose faith is active through love, Augustine can now portray the Church as doer of the law.

The importance of Gal. 5:6 should not be underestimated in the overall economy of En. Ps. 118.856 This Pauline text is quoted eight times in En. Ps. 118 and at least five times in the other *Enarrationes* posterior to 411.857 As has been already intimated, for Augustine, it is the martyrs, whose faith never failed, who offer the most beautiful example of faith working through charity.858

### The Church as Doer of the Law

Although Psalm 118 can be described as a meditation on the law,859 Javier Castillo has rightly argued that in his exposition of this Psalm Augustine offers foremost an “exégésis de acción,”860 precisely “because God’s commandments are most perfectly known when obeyed.”861 Indeed, Augustine’s commentary on Ps. 118 is more than

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855 En. Ps. 118.8.4.


857 En. Ps. 17.25; 31.2.5-6; 115.1; 93.23 and En. Ps. 118.3.3; 5.2; 7.1; 14.2; 19.4; 21.4; 22.1 and 27.3.

858 En. Ps. 118.15.3.


861 En. Ps. 118.17.7.
just an explanation of a text; it is also a concrete description of a Church living out her faith through love. Made good by the Spirit, the Church is able to do good things well from the faith that operates through love.\textsuperscript{862} In a sense, one can argue that the Church is built on the obedience to the law, or in Paul’s and Augustine’s terms, on the obedience of faith, because those who believe also observe God’s commandments, whose fulfillment is love (Rom 13:10).\textsuperscript{863} And it is through embracing this graced love in us and directing it to the other members of the Church, that each one becomes “part of the structure of Christ’s body.”\textsuperscript{864}

Origen had already insisted that the meditation on the law by words and sounds was insufficient, and needed to be followed by concrete actions. According to Origen, one meditates on God’s judgments not with rhetoric or fine phrases, but by doing them, “for it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous in God’s sight, but the doers of the law who will be justified (Rom 2:13).”\textsuperscript{865} As a consequence, Origen also saw martyrdom as the most sublime way of meditating on the law.\textsuperscript{866} Like Origen, both Ambrose and Hilary of Poitiers maintained that meditating on God’s law meant to observe and to keep it.\textsuperscript{867}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item En. Ps. 118.14.2.
\item En. Ps. 118.26.8.
\item In Epist. Ioan. 10.3 (Schr 75:414); Brian E. Daley, “The Law, the Whole Christ, and the Spirit of Love : Grace as a Trinitarian Gift in Augustine’s Theology,” \textit{AugSt} 41 (2010): 142.
\item Palestinian Catena 118.16a (Harl, 212-213); 118.97a (Harl, 344-345). On meditation and action in Origen, see Henri Crouzel, \textit{Origène et la connaissance mystique} (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1961), 400-405.
\item Palestinian Catena 118.92a (Harl, 336-337).
\item Ambrose, In Psalmum 118.2.37 (CSEL 62:41): “…iustitias eius non solum sermone, sed etiam operis imitatione meditari.” Hilary, In Psalmum 1.12 (CSEL 22:27): “Meditatio itaque legis non solum in verbis legendi est, sed in operis religione; neque ut libros tantum et scripturas recenseamus, sed ut
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Augustine also insists that the only way to learn God’s commandments is to put them into practice, and not simply to retain them in memory and repeat them. Hence, for him, God’s ways of justice are not only statements about justice but also just deeds, so that “to know them and to keep them are the same thing.” On the other hand, “one acts on what is known and comes to know better by acting, because God’s commandments are most perfectly known when obeyed.”

However, what is peculiar to Augustine is the development of the theme of meditation-action beyond the simple ethical exhortation. Indeed, beyond advocating for action, Augustine also describes the Church as a concrete reality in which, through and because of the grace of Christ, faith works through love. While to know the commandments and to keep them are the same, it is the Church of Christ that best illustrates the accomplishment of the law, that is, the love of God and of one’s neighbor. Therefore, Augustine’s En. Ps. 118 is not only a meditation on the law or an invitation to practice the commandments, but also the narratio of the Church on the way of God’s precepts, “the works performed by just people in obedience to God’s commandments.” In this way, the references to Scripture operate both as authority and example. As Martín has rightly observed in the case of Paul, “The apostle himself will teach as well as model what it means to walk in the way of the

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868 En. Ps. 118.17.9.
869 En. Ps. 118.17.7
870 En. Ps. 118. 8.2; 11.6; 13.4; 14.2; 17.2; 21.8; 22.2; 27.6. On loving one’s neighbor, see also En. Ps. 11.3; En. Ps. 14.3.5; En. Ps. 25.2.2; Sermo 359.9; Isabelle Bochet, “Note complémentaire 18: Voir en chacun un prochain,” BA 57B, 332-332.
871 En. Ps. 118.6.1.
Lord, the way set forth throughout this *magnus psalmus* […] It is not only necessary to listen to Paul; one must look at the example of Paul’s own life and journey to discover and learn what is the Christian journey of holiness.”872

Such an approach is consistent with Augustine’s overall understanding of the Psalms as songs of the new Jerusalem, the *ipsissima uerba* of the Church,873 the true language that effectively expresses what Fontaine has called “le temps vécu de cette Église concrète.”874 But in En. Ps. 118 this understanding is brought to an unsurpassable level of detail and vividness, as the Psalm is interpreted in a way that it also provides concrete examples of faith working through charity.

**The Theological Layout of En. Ps. 118**

The theological layout of En. Ps. 118 can now appear clearly: After the introduction of the themes of happiness, sin and concupiscence, and baptism (*sermones* 1-5), Augustine dedicates the remaining 27 *sermones* to a description of the Church in her life of grace, that is, in her life of faith working through charity. In her journey (*sermones* 8, 10, 15), the Church has been given the law so that she might love God disinterestedly (11), renounce vanity (12) and, justified by grace (25), walk in charity

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872 Martin, “Exercises in Grace,” 159.

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(14) and understanding (17-18) as the light of the world (23), in proclaiming God’s mercy and truth (6) and groaning with hope (20-22) in the expectation of her Lord (30-32).

With such a description of the Church, what Augustine envisions is the eschatological recreation of the very experience of the Apostles who saw “Christ, but could only believe about the Church, which they couldn’t see.” However, because the Church is the embodiment and the manifestation of Christ’s incarnation, Augustine writes, “We too see the Church, but must believe in Christ, whom we cannot see; and by holding on to what we can see, we shall finally reach him whom we cannot yet see.” 875 In the Church, it is the incarnate Lord who continues to act charitably, thus manifesting his love for God and neighbor. This proximity of Christ, both in the Church and in the neighbor, is thus rooted in his incarnation, because “the Word was made flesh, that he might also be my neighbor.” 876

While Augustine touches on the sins, trials, vanity, persecutions, unfaithfulness and failures of the Church and its members, the story he narrates is one of suavitas and dilatatio, that is, a story of freedom on the way of the law, toward the grace of eternity, where God’s mercy and grace renew a Church that is intimately bound to Christ through the incarnation. Walking in the the law of the Lord is embarking on a way of wider freedom, where one’s heart is enlarged and delighted in

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875 Sermo 238.3.
876 En. Ps. 118.12.5: “Ipse est enim Verbum Deus; et Verbum caro factum est, ut esset et proximus meus.”
While the love of the law is born when a person finds God’s ways of justice delightful, delight itself comes from God because “to find enjoyment in goodness is a great gift from God,” so that the sweeter one finds God’s commands, the more lovingly does one study them.

Such a positive narratio or historia of a Church journeying delightfully in wide freedom is all to the glory of God, whose law graces the Church with an instrument of guidance, nourishment, hope, correction, and suauitas, leading her to happiness (beatitudo), through Christ who is the “via ad lucem, ad ueritatem, ad uitam,” into the world to come, where the fulfillment of the law will be enjoyed fully and where nothing further will be sought.

In a way, En. Ps. 118 is not only a treatise on grace but rather a description of life according to the law of grace, a “handbook for servants of God’s making progress in holiness.” Thus, it is the narratio of the Church as a whole on her journey in the viae Domini which are mercy and truth. That is why the similarities between En. Ps. 118 and Augustine’s City of God cannot be underestimated. As a concrete description of the Church in gratia Christi, En. Ps. 118 is a celebration of lives of

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877 En. Ps. 118.11.1; 14.2; 22.1.
878 En. Ps. 118.17.1; 17.7; 17.10.
879 In Ioan. 34.8-9.
880 En. Ps. 118.11.3. Augustine sees this fulfillment of the law in Christ as the fullness of grace, a position he insisted on especially during the Pelagian controversy.
grace, a new song for a new and young people, the drama of the Church accomplishing the law. As such, it expresses the anxieties, the hope and the joys of the Church journeying towards her Christ.

By identifying the central verses of Ps. 118 and the leading questions to which they correspond, one can identify the theological layout of En. Ps. 118, pinpoint the main issues and the examples Augustine provides in order to illustrate the major articulations of his exegesis of Psalm 118. Table 7 provides the list of leading verses around which Augustine articulates his exposition, while Table 8 presents the major themes of the expositions, the guiding quaestiones, the biblical respondiones, and the illustrations he provides in reference to the themes discussed.

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884 Cf. En. Ps. 149.
TABLE 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Verses</th>
<th>Sermones</th>
<th>Leading Verses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beati immaculati in uia, qui ambulant in lege Domini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Non enim qui operantur iniquitatem, in uis eius ambulaverunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>3-8</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>Tu praecepisti mandata tua custodiri nimis. Utinam dirigantur uiae meae ad custodiendas iustificationes tuas. Tunc non confundar, dum inspicio in omnia mandata tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>In quo corrigit iunior uiam suam? In custodiendo uerba tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>13-16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>In labis meis enuntiaui omnia iudicia oris tui</td>
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<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>17-19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Retribue seruo tuo; uiuam, et custodibo uerba tua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>19-20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Incola ego sum in terra: ne abscondas a me mandata tua. Concupiuit anima mea desiderare iustificationes tuas, in omni tempore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>21-24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Aufer a me opprobrium et contemptum, quoniam testimonia tua exquisiui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>25-32</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Adhaesit pauimentum anima mea, uiuifica me secundum uerbum tuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>33-36</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Inclina cor meum in testimonia tua, et non in auaritiam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI</td>
<td>37-40</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Auerte oculos meos, ne uideant uanitatem; in uia tua uiuifica me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII</td>
<td>41-44</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Et ueniat super me misericordia tua, Domine</td>
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<tr>
<td>XIII</td>
<td>45-48</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Et ambulabam in latitudine, quoniam mandata tua exquisiui</td>
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<tr>
<td>XIV</td>
<td>49-56</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Memor fui in nocte nominis tui, Domine, et custodiui legem tuam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV</td>
<td>57-64</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Particeps ego sum omnium timentium te, et custodientium mandata tua (vox Christi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI</td>
<td>65-73</td>
<td>17-18</td>
<td>Suauitatem et eruditionem et scientiam doce me, quoniam mandatis tuis credidi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII</td>
<td>73-80</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Qui timent te videbunt me et iucundabuntur (vox Christi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII</td>
<td>81-104</td>
<td>20-22</td>
<td>Deficit in salutare tuum anima mea, et in uerbum tuum speraiu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX</td>
<td>105-112</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Lucerna pedibus meis uerbum tuum, et lumen semitis meis</td>
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<tr>
<td>XX</td>
<td>113-118</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Declinate a me, maligni, et scrutabor mandata Dei mei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXI</td>
<td>119-120</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Praeuaricatores deputaii omnes peccatores terrae; propterea dilexi testimonia tua (semper)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXII</td>
<td>121-128</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Ideo dilexi mandata tua super aurum et topazion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXIII</td>
<td>129-152</td>
<td>27-29</td>
<td>Manifestatio uerborum tuorum illuminat, et intellegere facit paruulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXIV</td>
<td>153-176</td>
<td>30-32</td>
<td>Expectabam salutare tuum, Domine, et mandata tua dilexi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sections</td>
<td>Sermones</td>
<td>Themes</td>
<td>Quaestiones</td>
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<td>I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Happiness in Via Domini</td>
<td>Vtquid ergo nobiscum agitur, ut uelimus quod nolle non possumus, nisi quia omnes quidem beatitudinem concupiscunt, sed quonam modo ad eam perueniatur, plurimi nesciunt? (1.1)</td>
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<td>An uero sancti Domini non ambulant in uis Domini? (2.2)</td>
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<td>Quid enim operatur peccatum nolentibus nobis, nisi sola illicita desideria? (3.1)</td>
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<td>The Newness of the Church</td>
<td>Sed quid sibi uult iste iunior? Potuit enim dicere: In quo corrigit homo uiam suam? aut: In quo corrigit uir uiam suam? (5.2)</td>
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<td>Et qui fidem seruauit, quando id faceret, nisi, ut ipse ait, misericordiam consecutus ut fidelis esset? (7.2)</td>
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<td>Trials and Iniquity</td>
<td>Et quid impedit in uia iustificationum Dei sic ambulare, ut homo facile possit ad illa etiam mirabilia peruenire? (10.5)</td>
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<td>Numquid quamdiu sumus in hoc mundo, possumus non uidere uamitatem? (12.1)</td>
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<td>Two Loves: Vanity and Truth</td>
<td>Quid hic ergo poscit, nisi ut mandata quae concupiuit, per eius misericordiam faciat, qui mandauit? (13.1)</td>
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<td>XIII</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>God’s Mercy on the Lapsi</td>
<td>Quid est igitur: <em>Et ambulabam in latitudine</em>, nisi, ambulabam in caritate, quae diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum sanctum qui datus est nobis? (14.2)</td>
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<td>Quid est igitur: <em>Nox mihi facta est, quia iustificationes tuas exquisiui?</em> (15.8)</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Participation in the Incarnate Word</td>
<td>Quid est: <em>Portio mea, Domine, dixi, custodire legem tuam, nisi quia ita erit portio cuiusque Dominus, cum legem eius custodierit?</em> (16.1)</td>
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<td>XVI</td>
<td>17 – 18</td>
<td>Suavitas and Understanding</td>
<td>Quod autem non ait: <em>Da mihi, sed, Doce me, quomodo suauitas docetur, si non detur?</em> (17.3)</td>
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<td>XVII</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>The Law as Source of Life</td>
<td>Qui sunt autem qui timent Deum, et quem uidebunt et laetabuntur, quoniam in uerba Dei sperauit?</td>
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<td>The Law and the Preaching of the Church: Light of the World</td>
<td>Quod intellecturi sumus in isto psalmo dictum esse: <em>Praeuaricantes aestimaui omnes peccatores terrae, nisi intellegamus aliquam legem non per Moysen datam, secundum quam sunt praeuaricantes ceterarum gentium peccatores?</em> (25.4)</td>
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<td>XX</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Meditating the Law</td>
<td>Vbi autem felix est qui in cogitatione miser est? Aut quomodo ibi non miser est qui ad nihilum redactus est? (24.6)</td>
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<td>XXI</td>
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<td>Abyss of Sin, Abyss of Grace</td>
<td>Quid intellecturi sumus in isto psalmo dictum esse: <em>Praeuaricantes aestimaui omnes peccatores terrae, nisi intellegamus aliquam legem non per Moysen datam, secundum quam sunt praeuaricantes ceterarum gentium peccatores?</em> (25.4)</td>
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<td>XXII</td>
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<td>The Grace of the Law</td>
<td>Quid enim facit in homine iustitiam, nisi qui iustificat impium, hoc est, per gratiam suam ex impio facit iustum? (26.1)</td>
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<td>XXIII</td>
<td>27 – 29</td>
<td>The Spirit and the Law</td>
<td>Quid enim facit mandata tua sicut facienda sunt, id est, ex fide quaer dilectionem operatur, nisi eius in corde per Spiritum sanctum ipsa dilectio diffundatur? (27.3)</td>
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<td>XXIV</td>
<td>30 – 32</td>
<td>The Lord is Near: the Church in Vigil</td>
<td>Si ergo exspectabant salutare Dei, qui mandata eius dilexerunt, quanto magis necessarius erat Iesus, hoc est salutare Dei, saluis faciendis eis qui mandata eius non dilexerunt? (31.6)</td>
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The positive description of a Church journeying in happiness toward her Lord with the guidance of the law is met by the hard reality of the human inability to observe the law in the first place. As Paul had argued, *If a law capable of giving life had been granted to us, then of course righteousness would have been obtainable through the law* (Gal. 3:21). However, since the law does not justify, Augustine asks: “Why was it given, then—a law impotent to give life, one from which no justification could follow?”

At the heart of Augustine’s query lie the *obscuritas* and the mystery of the law, whereby a good God has issued good commands, yet he has given them to people who could not be given life by them nor gain any righteousness whatsoever from them. How can one make sense of this reality?

According to Augustine, the observance of God’s commands is met with a double dilemma: understanding the purpose of the law and accomplishing it effectively. This dilemma is resolved only when one is able to express in his deeds what he has learned about the commandments. Indeed, on the one hand, “only someone to whom the Lord grants understanding can know the law as it ought to be known; that is to say, the true intention of the law, why it was imposed on people who

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885 En. Ps. 118.27.2.
886 En. Ps. 118.6.5.
were not going to keep it.”⁸⁸⁷ That is why the Psalmist asks repeatedly for the gift of understanding: *Give me understanding, and I will study your law, and I will keep it with all my heart.*⁸⁸⁸ On the other hand, once the understanding of the law is granted, the grace to fulfill it must be asked with persistence: “Give me also the blessing of your grace, that I may learn by practicing what you have commanded in your revelation.”⁸⁸⁹

For Augustine, prayer to understand and accomplish the law is at the heart of the mystery of this gift, because it is only through prayer that the *obscuritas* of the law is dispelled and “faith obtains what the law can only command.”⁸⁹⁰ As Kannengiesser has rightly noted, “la prière surmonte l’aninomie de la lettre et de l’esprit. Elle consiste à demander à l’Esprit le pouvoir d’accomplir ce que l’ont *sait.*”⁸⁹¹

Precisely because of the importance of prayer in revealing the true intention of the law and obtaining its intended effects, the role of the Holy Spirit becomes indispensable, because “without him the letter of the law will be death-dealing, and sin will seize its chance through the law to produce in men and women all kinds of

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⁸⁸⁷ En. Ps. 118.11.4.
⁸⁸⁸ Ps. 118:34, 66, 73, 125, 144.
⁸⁸⁹ En. Ps. 118.5.4.
disordered desires. It is through prayer that the Holy Spirit comes to the help of the weakness in which concupiscence has established humanity. Because of concupiscence, humanity as a whole is infirma, and bereft of God’s help it is overpowered by sin, as if it were utterly forsaken by God (v. 8). Although God’s commands are holy, just and good, sin uses them to deal death to humanity unless it is helped by God’s grace. But through the life-giving Spirit, “every kind of sin is blotted out and charity is breathed into us, so that we may act aright.”

Because of the Holy Spirit, who makes it possible both to understand and to accomplish the law, one realizes that the function of law was to send humanity to grace. But since “grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (Jn 1:17),” the gift of the law, its understanding and its intended effects in the lives of the faithful happen in Christ in whom God is reconciling the world to himself (Cf. 2 Cor. 5:19). Indeed, if the world is gratis justificatus, it is because the Word has taken its mortality and made it participant in his divinity: “He became a sharer in our mortality that we might become sharers in his divinity; we have become participants in the one Christ unto

892 En. Ps. 118.16.2.
893 See Ps. 6:3: Miserere mei, Domine, quoniam infirmus sum; En. Ps. 118.4.5. For Augustine, a humanity open to God’s grace sees itself as humble and small before God: “Quid est paruulus, nisi humilis et infirmus? Noli ergo superbere, noli de tua, quae nulla est, uti tute praesumere; et intelleges quare sit a bono Deo bona data lex, quae tamen utuificare non possit. Ad hoc enim data est, ut te de magno paruulum faceret, ut te ad faciendam legem uires de tuo non habere monstraret; ac sic opis indigus et egenus ad gratiam confugeres, et clamares: Miserere mei, Domine, quoniam infirmus sum.” (En. Ps. 118.27.3).
894 En. Ps. 118.4.2; Rom 7:13.
895 En. Ps. 118.25.5.
896 En. Ps. 118.25.5: “Lex enim ad hoc prodest, ut mittat ad gratiam.” See In Epist. Ioan. 6.9 (SChr 75:296).
897 Martine Dulaey, “Jean 1, 16-17 dans l’interprétation patristique,” Graphé 10 (2001): 103-123.
898 En. Ps. 118.15.18; Cameron, Christ Meets Me, 260-281.
life, because he partook with many unto death.”⁸⁹⁹ God’s grace flows to the members of Christ’s body through its head, that is, through Jesus Christ.⁹⁰⁰ As a gift from God, “the law bears witness to Christ” who is, therefore, “the end of the law, bringing justification to everyone who believes (Rom. 10:4), a justification that comes freely through his grace (Rom. 3:24).”⁹⁰¹ Therefore, all those who fear God and recognize his testimonies now turn to Christ, to whom God bore witness through the prophets.⁹⁰²

It is within this Trinitarian outlook that one should interpret the famous formula, *Da quod iubes et iube quod vis*, and its variations in En. Ps. 118.⁹⁰³ The examples of martyrs, so prevalent in En. Ps. 118, are a constant reminder that keeping God’s commandments perfectly (*nimis*) is impossible unless aided by God’s grace, otherwise even the martyrs, whose witnesses was helped by God’s Spirit, would have been put to shame, because only the humble-hearted who put their trust in God do not flinch under persecution.⁹⁰⁴ As Augustine writes, “The martyrs were promised the

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⁸⁹⁹ En. Ps. 118.19.6. See also 16.1: “…participatio illius unius qui verus est Deus.”
⁹⁰⁰ En. Ps. 118.16.6: “Gratia Dei per Iesum Christum.”
⁹⁰¹ En. Ps. 118.32.5; 22.2.
⁹⁰² En. Ps. 118.19.6.
power to do this when they were told, *It is not you who are speaking, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you* (Mt 10:20).*  

On the other hand, although the observance of the law is not the prerogative of the martyrs only, their example nevertheless indicates that the law is not an elusive gift, but one that is actually given to humanity to accomplish and enjoy. In a sense, the martyrs are the concrete embodiment of what the opening verse of Psalm 118 proclaims: *Beati immaculati in via, qui ambulant in lege Domini.*

Christine Mohrmann is startled by the fact that Augustine never dwells on the names of the martyrs and on the circumstances of their martyrdom. She observed that when Augustine speaks of the martyrs, he gives almost no details about their ordeal. It seems strange that a man who has depicted human history in the antithesis of the two cities would be so little interested in the anecdotal facts about the martyrs. In reality, what interests Augustine is not the individual martyr, but the phenomenon of martyrdom as the *figura* of the Church and the sweetness of μαρτυρία as the ultimate example in keeping the law. In En. Ps. 118 Augustine occasionally refers to historical facts, but his intent is to present martyrdom as the crowning example of a Church that keeps the law perfectly (*nimis*).

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905 En. Ps. 118.13.2.
907 A reference to the festivals in honor of the martyrs appears at En. Ps. 118.30.5.
IX. UNDERSTANDING THE LAW: *LATITUDO FIDEI*

As already noted, the central theme of Ps. 118 is the law, a topic that runs throughout Augustine’s writings and in defense of which he wrote the *Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum*. It is impossible to summarize here Augustine’s understanding of the law. But the major articulations of his thought can be usefully highlighted.

For Augustine, God is the author of the law, which expresses his will and providence for humankind. He uses the law as an expression of his goodness in order to teach and to convey his will to humankind. However, because of original sin, humankind is incapable of accomplishing the law unless it is aided by God’s grace. Since he is the author of the law, only God can use mercy with regard to the violation of the law.

In the *Contra Faustum*, Augustine had distinguished three types of laws that functioned as a discriminating factor between three groups or ages of humankind:


909 See Contra Faustum 15.8; Sermo 26.10; En. Ps. 36.3.5; En. Ps. 103.4.9; En. Ps. 118.26.8; En. Ps. 123.14; In Ioan. 3.2; 7.10; 9.5; De libero arbitrio 1.5.11-13;

910 See Sermo 25A.1; Ad Simplicianum 1.1.12, 16, 17; Quaestiones in Heptateuchum 2.166.2; Contra adversarium legis 2.7.28.

911 See De perfectione iustitiae 19.42; De Spir. et litt. 26.45; In Ioan. 3.12.

912 See In Ioan. 3.2; Sermo 170.1.
There are three laws. One is that of the Hebrews, which the apostle calls the law of sin and death; the second is that of the Gentiles, which he calls the law of nature […] the third law is the truth […]. 913

Considering that the Law of Moses was given in view of faith in Christ, 914 Augustine noted that natural law — whose foundation he finds in Paul — 915 and the law of truth corresponded to a specific grace: the grace by which one is man (gratia Adami) and the grace by which one is Christian (gratia Christi). 916 One of the major questions raised in the Contra Faustum was to identify which one of the three laws Christ spoke of when he said that he had come not to abolish the law, but to fulfill it. 917

When Pelagius declared that Scripture records examples of people who lived in sanctity and pleased God between the time of Adam and that of Moses by using natural law, 918 Augustine’s reply was based on Paul who states that, “Death exercised

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913 Contra Faustum 19.2 (CSEL 25.1:497): “Sunt autem legum genera tria: unum quidem Hebraeorum, quod peccati et mortis Paulus appellat; aliud vero gentium, quod naturale vocat […]; tertium vero genus legis est veritas […].” The mention of the genera legum (ante legem, sub lege, sub gratia) appears in some form or the other in Expositio epist. ad Galatas 46; Expositio ex epist. ad Romanos 13-14; De Trin. 4.4.7; En. Ps. 92.1; En. Ps. 103.3.5.

914 See Gal. 3:24: “Itaque lex pedagogus noster fuit in Christo ut ex fide iustificemur.”

915 Rom. 2:14-16: “When Gentiles, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, to which their own conscience also bears witness; and their conflicting thoughts will accuse or perhaps excuse them on the day when, according to my gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all.” See Jacques Maritain, “La loi naturelle ou la loi non écrite,” in Œuvres complètes XVI (Paris: Saint-Paul, 1999), 687-918.


917 Contra Faustum 19.2 (CSEL 25.1:497): “Tribus ergo existentibus legibus et Iesu adseuerante nobis, quia non unum solvere legem, sed adimplere, non parua cura ac diligentia opus est, de qua earum dixerit intellegere.”

918 Pelagius, Epistula ad Demetriadem 4 (PL 30:19C): “Hac lege (naturali) usi sunt omnes, quos inter Adam atque Moysen sancte vixisse atque placuisse Deo, Scriptura commemorat.”
dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam.”919 Indeed, like Paul, Augustine insisted that the function of the Mosaic Law was to reveal the intrinsic sin of humankind, even when it was enlightened by natural law,920 which is only put on a firmer footing by divine law.921 Hence, both natural law and the Mosaic Law reveal the intrinsic vulnerability of humankind as created being, that is, the Adam in each human being.922

On the other hand, while there is no comparison between natural law and the law of truth, Augustine defended natural law even in his writings against Pelagius. In his revision of the De natura et gratia, he recalls that it was a book by which he wished to defend grace rather than demote nature.923 Indeed, he understands natural law and the law of Christ as two distinct, but related graces enshrined by the creator in unwritten and written forms.924

Although the relationship between unwritten (natural) and written (biblical) law will later allow Augustine to place humankind as a whole under the care and

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919 Rom. 5:14: “Sed regnauit mors ab Adam usque ad Moysen etiam in eos qui non peccauerunt ex similitudine praevaricationis Adae qui est forma futuri.” See Georges de Plinval and Jeanne de La Tullaye, “Le règne de la mort (Rom. 5:14).” BA 21 (1966), 587-588.
921 En. Ps. 118.25.4: “Multo magis ergo praevaricatores facti sunt lege divina, qua naturalis illa siue instaurata, siue aucta, siue firmata est.”
922 See En. Ps. 118.25.4.
923 Retr. 2.42 (BA 12:522): “Librum ergo huic respondi, defendens gratiam, non contra naturam, sed per quam natura liberatur et regitur De natura et gratia nuncupavi.”
embrace of God’s law as revealed in Scripture, the distinction between the law of sin and the law of truth led him to identify the Jew as the one subjected to the law (or the letter) and the Christian as subjected to grace (or the Spirit). This distinction resulted in the characterization of the Jew as the prototype of the man incapable of accomplishing the law and, therefore, as the anti-type of the Christian, whom Augustine considered as the true observer of the law. In particular, Augustine accepted Paul’s view that only the law of Christ frees humankind from the death and sin revealed by the Mosaic Law.

There is no doubt that much of Augustine’s contrasting views on the Mosaic Law and the law of truth originate from the polemical contexts in which he developed them. More than often, Augustine thinks that “the New Testament is not opposed to the law that was given through Moses, just as Abraham and Moses are not opposed to each other.”

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925 See En. Ps. 57.1; En. Ps. 118.25.4. Whether written on stones (in tabulis lapideis) or on the heart (in cordibus), Augustine considers the law revealed in the OT and the NT as written by God’s finger. See Contra Faustum 12.30; Contra Iulianum 4.3.25; Sermo 155.4.6; En. Ps. 118.5.4; 6.1; 11.1-2; 22.2; 22.6.

926 See Epist. 196; Sermo 2; Contra Adimantium; Ad Simplicianum 1.1.17; Epist. 82; De cathedrizandis rudibus 22.39-41; De Spir. et litt. 10.16.


928 See Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum 3.2.2; 4.5.11.

929 Contra adversarium legis 2.8.31: “Hine quipple isti, si remoto velamine legerent, intellegerent ita non esse inimicum Evangelium Legi, quae data est per Moysen, sicut inter se non sunt inimici Abraham et ipse Moyses.”
The Law as God’s Revelation

In En. Ps. 118, the three types of laws are intertwined and considered as integral parts of the economy of salvation. Instead of distinguishing between them, Augustine highlights what they have in common, because the law is nothing else than God’s words and precisely his words of truth and mercy:930 Truth, because humankind is humbled even to death by God’s judgment through the law, whose decrees are just and true; mercy, because it is renewed and brought back to life through Christ, whose gift is grace.931 The fundamental truth about human nature revealed through the law is that it turns all on earth “into law-breakers, whether we think of the law imposed in paradise, or the law instilled into human nature, or the law promulgated in writing.”932 Yet, in revealing this truth, the law also points to the grace that frees from sin, for the function of the law is to send to grace.933

In his interpretation of Ps. 118:119a (Praeuaricatos deputaui omnes peccatores terrae), Augustine recalls Paul’s statement in Rom. 3:23 (Omnes autem peccaverunt, et egent Gloria Dei) in order to describe the human need for God’s grace. Whatever the law, Augustine notes, humankind is incapable of understanding and accomplishing it without God’s help.934 As Augustine writes in De civitate Dei:

930 En. Ps. 118.31.3: “Neque enim lex Dei non sunt uerba et eloquia Dei.”
931 En. Ps. 118.19.3: “Et hic quidem primo ueritatem posuit, qua humilati sumus in mortem, iudicante illo cuius iudicia iustitia est; deinde misericordiam, qua instauramur ad uitam, promittente illo cuius beneficium gratia est.” See also En. Ps. 118.3.3.
932 En. Ps. 118.25.5: “Quoniam lex siue in paradiso data, siue naturaliter insita, siue in litteris promulgata, praearicatones fecit omnes peccatores terrae.”
933 En. Ps. 118.25.5: “Lex enim ad hoc prodest, ut mittat ad gratiam.”
934 See En. Ps. 118.25.1-5.
Man’s nature was created good by God, who is good; but it was made changeable by him who is changeless, since it was created from nothing. And so the will in that nature can turn away from good to do evil—and this through its own free choice; and it can also turn from evil to do good—but this can only be with the divine assistance.935

It follows that the inability of accomplishing the law is rooted in the fact that all human beings, including babies, are “lawbreakers like Adam,” on whom a law was imposed in paradise.936 What the law reveals then is the Adam in each one of us and it is this Adam who, through God’s underserved mercy, “is brought back to life every day from that deathly condition, for he is constantly given life by God, whose grace renews our inner self day by day.”937

So, on the question of the law, beyond the coincidence of their views, there are some subtle differences between Paul’s vision and Augustine’s. According to Paul, sin exists in the world even before the law was given, but it is not imputed to anyone when there is no law.938 But for Augustine, it is not only the Jew who is incapable of obeying the law, but humankind in general is incapable of obeying any law, including natural law, unless aided by God’s grace.

With his reevaluation of Paul’s positions, Augustine is able to depict the situation of all human beings in need of grace and redemption. Hence, whether before

935 De civ. Dei 15.21.
936 En. Ps. 118.25.5: “Iam uero si in omnibus peccatoribus terrae non incongrue deputantur et paruuli, propter originalis uincula peccati, etiam ipsi in similitudine praevaricationis Adae, ad illam praevaricationem pertinere monstrantur, quae, data lege in paradiso, prima commissa est.”
937 En. Ps. 118.10.2. See 2 Cor. 4:16.
938 See Rom. 5:13: “Usque ad legem enim peccatum erat in mundo; peccatum autem non inputatum cum lex non est.”
the law, under the law, or under grace, humanity as a whole is in need of Christ as long as it is in this life, where the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh.  

939 Because he points to Christ who is truth and mercy, the Adam revealed by the law becomes e contrario the figure of Christ.  

940 Hence, both Adam and Christ point to the worst and the best of the law: the first points to sin, the second to mercy.  

Again, Augustine invokes Paul in order to illustrate the fundamental difference between these two human beings, a truth upon which the Christian faith above all rests:  

If you want to see clearly the difference between these two types of human beings, look first at two men: Adam and Christ. Hear what the apostle has to say of them: As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made to live (1 Cor. 15:22). From Adam we are born to die, in Christ we rise again to live for ever. As long as we bear the image of the earthly man, we are “men;” when we bear the image of the heavenly man, we are “sons of men,” because Christ was called the Son of Man.  

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Although Adam is the antitype of Christ, there is still a grace in being Adam, for both creation and redemption describe God’s res gestae, for which the gratia Adami is the audiutorium sine quo aliquid non fit and the gratia Christi the audiutorium quo aliquid fit.  

939 Gal. 5:17: “Caro enim concupiscit adversus spiritum, spiritus autem adversus carnem. Haec enim invicem adversantur ut non quaecumque vultis illa faciatis.”  


941 En. Ps. 35.12: “Et si vultis discernere ista duo genera hominum, duos homines primo attendite, Adam et Christum. Audi Apostolum: Sicut enim in Adam omnes moriuntur, sic et in Christo omnes vivificabuntur. Nascimur de Adam, ut moriamur: resurgimus per Christum, ut semper vivamus. Quando portamus imaginem terreni hominis, homines sumus: quando portamus imaginem coelestis hominis, filii hominum sumus; quia Christus Filius hominis dictus est.” See also Epist. 190.3.  

One of the most frequent and important characterizations of the law in En. Ps. 118 is made through the phrase *via(e) Domini*. For Augustine, the law summarizes the ways of the Lord (*viae Domini*) and Christ is the way *par excellence*, because “the law was given through Moses but the grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” However, it is in the famous formula of Ps. 24:10 that Augustine finds the best description of the law as *via*: *Universae viae Domini misericordia et ueritas*. Martin Dulaey has shown that, in his interpretation of this verse, Augustine often links *uertitas* with God’s judgment (*iudicium*), of which the law is an instrument, and *misericordia* with the remission of sins. That explains the pairing of *iudicium* with *misericordia* in some *Enarrationes*. The law is truth (*uertitas*) both because it brings about consciousness of sin and because it bears witness to the righteousness of God that comes outside the law, that is, through Christ. In fact, in En. Ps. 118, Augustine refers to Ps. 24:10 to stress that both *ueritas* and *misericordia* are found only in Christ, to whom he applies Ps. 118:75-76.

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943 Jn 1:17 “Quia lex per Mosen data est; gratia et veritas per Iesum Christum facta est.”
944 See En. Ps. 60.9; 68.1.17; 88.1.3; 88.1.15; 88.1.25; 118.3.3; 118.6.4; 118.19.3; 118.29.8; 137.5; 137.10.
945 Dulaey, “Note complémentaire 17: Miséricorde et vérité,” 331.
946 See for instance En. Ps. 31.2.1; 32.2.1. 88.1.15.
947 En. Ps. 118.28.5: “Quomodo enim non ueritas lex, per quam cognitio peccati, et quae testimonium perhibet iustitiae Dei?” See Rom. 3:20-21.
948 En. Ps. 118.3.3: “Quia *universae viae Domini misericordia et ueritas*; utrumque autem in Christo est, et praeter Christum nusquam est.”
949 Ps. 118:75-76: “Cognoui, Domine, quia iustitia iudicia tua, et *uertitate* humilasti me. Fiat *misericordia* tua, et consoletur me secundum eloquium tuum servo tuo.”
By interpreting the law as God’s instrument of judgment and mercy in Christ, Augustine highlights an essential truth and inner conviction about God’s dealings with both the just and the unjust:

All the Lord’s ways are mercy with regard to his saints, and equally all his ways are truth in their regard, because even in judging them he helps them, and thus there is no lack of mercy, while in showing mercy he is fulfilling his promises, and thus there is no lack of truth. All the Lord’s ways are mercy and truth in his dealings both with those he sets free and with those whom he condemns, because in cases where there is no mercy, his truth is plainly vindicated. He sets free many who do not deserve to be freed, but he condemns no one who does not deserve it.950

One can rightly argue that En. Ps. 118 describes how God deals with humanity in truth and mercy through the law and through Christ. In a way, Augustine’s interpretation of Ps. 118 can be considered as his best assessment of the law understood as the grace of truth and mercy in Christ. For Augustine, therefore, if the Psalmist claims to love the law, this cannot be anything else than the law of grace, to which the law in general points:

The function of law is to send us to grace. Not only does law bear witness to the justice of God to be revealed outside the law; it also turns those who know the law into law-breakers, to such a point that the letter is death-dealing. In either case, the fear it arouses forces us to flee to the life-giving Spirit, through whom every sin is blotted out and charity is breathed into us, that we may act aright.951

From such a perspective, the polarity between the law of sin and the law of grace is placed in a broader vision, in which the former reveals sin and the latter removes it.

950 En. Ps. 118.29.8: “Sed erga sanctos et uniuersae uiae Domini misericordia, et uniuersae uiae Domini ueritas, quia et in iudicando subuenit, atque ita non deest misericordia; et in miserando id exhibet quod promisit, ne ueritas desit. Erga omnes autem et quos liberat, et quos damnat, omnes uiae Domini misericordia et ueritas; quia ubi non miseretur, uindictae ueritas exhibetur. Multos quippe immeritos liberat, immeritum autem neminem damnat.”

951 En. Ps. 118.25.5: “Lex enim ad hoc prodest, ut mittat ad gratiam. Non solum enim quod adtestatur manifestandae iustitiae Dei, quae sine lege est; urum etiam hoc ipso quod praecurientes facit, ita ut etiam littera occidat; ad uiuificantem Spiritum confugere timore compellit, per quem peccatorum deleatur uniuersitas, et recte factorum caritas inspiretur.”
Paul’s assessment of the Mosaic Law as death-dealing is thus understood as the drama of humanity under the law, but unaided by Christ’s grace. Furthermore, as Paul points out, though good, the law is not merely powerless to remove sin, but it even increases it, so that only God’s mercy can come to the rescue of humanity: through the law comes only consciousness of sin, but not its removal. As Augustine comments in one of his sermons:

The law that commands is indeed good; the command is holy, and just, and good (Rom. 7:12); but is was weakened through the flesh (Rom. 8:3), and was unable to achieve in us what it commanded. So let one law show you what sin is, let the other take it away; let the law of the letter show you sin, let the law of grace take it away.

Furthermore, since “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” Augustine interprets the law in Ps. 118 in reference to God’s salvation universally offered in Christ to Gentiles and Jews alike. Although the condition of the Gentiles, who are ignorant of the law, is worse than the condition of the Jews who know it, no one, whether Gentile or Jew, can be delivered without faith in Christ. As Paul maintains, Christ Jesus came to the Jews to save the truth of God and confirm the

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952 See En. Ps. 118.25.1.
953 Rom. 3:20-21. En. Ps. 118.25.5; 28.5.
954 Sermo 152.11: “Ipsa est lex spiritus vitae, quae liberavit te a lege peccati et mortis. Quia lex illa altera, lex litterae, lex iubens, bona est quidem; mandatum, sanctum, et iustum, et bonum: sed infirmabatur per carnem; et quod iubebat, in nobis impleri non poterat. Alia ergo lex, ut dicere coeperam, tibi ostendat peccatum, alia tollat: ostendat peccatum lex litterae, tollat peccatum lex gratiae.” See En. Ps. 118.4.2: “Et mandata tua sancta, et iusta, et bona; sed peccatum per bonum mihi operatur mortem, nisi adiuvet tua gratia.”
955 Rom. 3:23-24: “Omnes enim peccaverunt et egent gloriam Dei; iustificati gratis per gratiam ipsius per redemptionem quae est in Christo Iesu.” See De civ. Dei 10.32.
956 See De gratia et libero arbitrio 3.5: “Sine fide enim Christi nemo liberari potest.”
promises made to the Patriarchs, and he came to the Gentiles to give them a reason to glorify God for his mercy. 957

Therefore, Augustine’s understanding of the law as the Lord’s ways of truth and mercy goes beyond the observance of specific commandments and is summed up in one single thing—faith in Christ, who alone is truth and mercy. 958 The extent of this faith (dilatatio fidei) is such that it is open to all, the Jews in the first place, but the Greek also. 959

Christ and the Law in En. Ps. 118

Scholars have noted that En. Ps. 118 as a whole does not deal with the Mosaic Law per se. Rather, Psalm 118 gave Augustine an opportunity to present the law as an instrument of God’s universal redemption in Christ. As I will argue in the course of this study, the Psalm’s words in praise of the law evoke for Augustine the image of a God who seeks out humankind and meets it with mercy and kindness, gathering it into one flock, the Church, just as a good shepherd would seek the lost sheep and bring it back into the fold. 960

The term lex and its synonymous key words (uerba, eloquia, uiia, testimonia, mandata, iustificationes, iudicia) appear frequently in Augustine’s text and

957 Rom. 15:8-9: “Dico enim Christum Iesum ministrum fuisse circumcisionis propter veritatem Dei ad conﬁrmandas promissiones patrum; gentes autem super misericordiam honorare Deum.”
958 En. Ps. 118.3.3: “Itaque in uis Domini, quas omnes fides una complectitur, qua in eum creditor qui iustificat impium, qui etiam dixit: Ego sum uiia.”
959 See En. Ps. 118.6.2.
960 Lk 15:3-7; Ez. 34:11-16. See En. Ps. 118.5.3; 32.7. On the use of this image in the early Church, see Martine Dulay, “La parabole de la brebis perdue dans l’Église ancienne: De l’exégèse à l’iconographie,” REAug 39 (1993): 3-22.
commentary of Ps. 118. Although he occasionally attempts to differentiate these terms from each other, in general Augustine approaches them for their theological implication and relationship to Christ, the law and grace of God, in order to stress one of his important ideas, namely that “the Old Testament is revealed in the New and the New Testament is veiled in the Old.”

Indeed, in En. Ps. 118, Augustine interprets the law primarily and consistently in reference to Christ, so that the *lex Dei* that is the focus of Psalm 118 becomes none other than the *lex gratiae*.

Thus, the law as *eloquium* or *uerbum* is understood primarily as the realization in Christ of the promise (*promissum*) made to Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed. Similarly, the image of the law as a large *uia* in which humankind walks, runs, and finds joy is connected to Christ who is *uia*, *uita* and *ueritas*. The *mandata*, as specific commands of the Decalogue or the object of intellectual inquiry, are interpreted as the very *eloquia Dei* and, through Augustine’s understanding of Mt 22:36-40, they are summarized in Christ’s double *latum mandatum* on which the law and the prophets depend. The law as *iustificatio*, whether taken as God’s just decree (*iudicia*) or man’s *opera iusta*, is the result of

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961 See En. Ps. 105.36: “…legendo in apostolicis Litteris, in propheticos autem scrutando, et Vetus Testamentum in Nouo reuelatum, in Vetricum uelatum uides.” En. Ps. 84.4: “In Vetricum Testamento figurabatur Testamentum Nouum; illa figura erat, haec expressio ueritatis.” De catechizandis rudibus 4.8: “Quapropter in Vetricis Testamento est occultatio Novi, in Novo Testamento est manifestatio Veteris.”

962 Martin, “Exercises in Grace,” 158.

963 Gen. 12:3. See En. Ps. 118.10.3; 13.1; 16.2; 17.1; 19.2; 24.2; 29.4.

964 Jn 14:6. See En. Ps. 118.1.1-2; 2.2; 3.1-3; 6.3-4; 10.6; 11.1-2; 12.1-3; 16.2; 19.3; 21.8; 29.8. According to Marie Comeau, Jn 14:6 summarizes for Augustine the mystery of Christ as the only way to the Father. See Marie Comeau, “Le Christ, chemin et terme de l’ascension spirituelle d’après saint Augustin,” *RSR* 40 (1952): 80-89.

965 Mt 22:40. See En. Ps. 118.9.6; 14.2; 21.8; 22.1; 27.6.
God’s justice by which he reconciles the world to himself in Christ. In effect, just deeds, “the works performed by just people in obedience to God’s commands,” are themselves a gift from God. On the other hand, God’s iudicia, the pronouncements by which he judges the world in truth and mercy, both now and at the end of time, remain inscrutable because they are hidden in Christ. In fact, Augustine insists that through God’s judgment “our well-deserved misery is remedied by the undeserved mercy of God.” Therefore, God’s iustitia toward humankind in Christ, “who has been made for us by God wisdom, and justice, and sanctification, and redemption,” should compel those who are justified to boast, not of themselves, but of the Lord. Finally, since God’s justice is accomplished through the incarnation and death of Christ, these mysteries become the highest testimonia of God’s justifying grace, so that by “way of God’s testimonies we must understand Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

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966 2 Cor. 5:19. See En. Ps. 4.5; 6.1; 8.3-4; 10.6; 19.3; 23.3; 30.8; 31.3. On justification in Christ in Augustine, see the excellent study by Basil Studer, “Le Christ, notre justice, selon saint Augustin,” RechAug 15 (1980): 99-143.

967 En. Ps. 118.6.1: “Iustificationes enim sunt, non dicta, sed facta iustitiae, opera scilicet iustorum, quae imperat Deus. Ideo autem Dei dicuntur, quamuis a nobis fiant, quia nisi ipso donante non fiunt.”

968 En. Ps. 118.6.1: “Iudicia porro Dei sunt, quibus ab eo mundus et nunc et in fine saeculi iudicatur.”


970 En. Ps. 118.5.3: “Quis est autem dignus, ex quo per unum hominem peccatum intrauit in mundum, et per peccatum mors, et ita in omnes homines pertransit, in quo omnes peccauerunt? Sed indebita Dei misericordia sanatur debita nostra miseria.” See also En. Ps. 50.10.

971 1 Cor. 1:30.

972 1 Cor. 1:31. See En. Ps. 118.12.5; 13.1; 15.7; 25.6; 32.3.

973 En. Ps. 118.6.3: “Viam testimoniorum Dei nihil citius, nihil certius, nihil breuius, nihilque grandius intellegimus esse quam Christum, in quo sunt omnes thesauri sapientiae et scientiae absconditi.”
The positive celebration of the law one finds in Ps. 118 collides with Paul’s negative assessment, according to which the law is an instrument of sin and death.\textsuperscript{974} Augustine dedicates \textit{sermo} 25 of En. Ps. 118 to reconciling the views of the Psalmist with those of Paul, by stressing the relationship between law and grace, “which alone frees us from the guilt of law-breaking incurred through our knowledge of the law.”\textsuperscript{975}

While Paul asserts that the law was death-dealing rather than life-giving, Augustine welcomes heartedly the very positive celebration of the law and opens his commentary with the claim that the law brings happiness and life. However, this central assertion is met with the most important questions regarding the scope of the law: Why has a good God issued good commands and given them to people who could not find life in them? Why was a law impotent to give life given in the first place?\textsuperscript{976}

For Augustine, these questions position God’s law as a reality shrouded in mystery and obscurity. Therefore, to understand the law as grace requires more than just a theoretical knowledge, because it ultimately means to realize that a law powerless to give life was given because “Scripture included all things under sin, so

\textsuperscript{974} See Rom. 3:20; Rom. 7:10; 1 Cor. 15:56; 2 Cor. 3:7; Gal. 3:10.
\textsuperscript{975} En. Ps. 118.25.6: “Cognita itaque Dei gratia, quae sola liberat a praevarbeitione, quae legis cognitioe committituir, […]”
\textsuperscript{976} En. Ps. 118.27.2.
that through faith in Jesus Christ the promise might be given to those who believe.”

Such an understanding of the law is granted only to those who ask for it and are open
to receive it, for it requires us to see in the law the life given through the mystery of
the incarnation. While it is a meditation on the law, En. Ps. 118 is also a meditation
on the benefits of the incarnation.

Augustine’s commentary on Psalm 118 is thus at the junction of two major
issues wrapped in a sublime mystery of opacity or, to use Augustine's phrase, in a
mystery of profunditas: the profunditas of the law and the profunditas of grace, both
of which point to Christ, because this profunditas is the depth “from which the grace
of God comes gratuitously according to the secret and hidden plan of his will.”

Hence, the law is obscure inasmuch as it reveals sin and it is profound inasmuch as it
opens us to grace.

The central request of the Psalmist to be granted the understanding of the law
is becomes a prayer to understand its profunditas, that is, what the law is for and what
its benefits are. It becomes a prayer to understand the grace of the law, a grace that is
nothing else than Christ. To understand the law is to realize how much to
humankind’s advantage Christ’s incarnation has been. The Psalmist’s plea to know
and to understand God’s law is therefore a prayer aiming at learning the

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977 Gal. 3:22: “Conclusit Scriptura omnia sub peccato, ut promissio ex fide Iesu Christi dare tur
credentibus.” See En. Ps. 118.27.3.

978 Epist. 140.63 (De gratia Novi Testamenti): “…et profundum, unde gratuita gratia Dei secundum
secretum et abditum voluntatis eius existit.” See Eph. 3:18-19. En. Ps. 8.5; En. Ps. 18.34; En. Ps.
118.14.4.

979 See En. Ps. 15.3.
commandments so as to praise and to love more deeply the God revealed in Christ.\textsuperscript{980}

Consequently, to understand the law means to discover how profitable and honorable God’s ways are; then passionately to desire them; and, finally, to take delight in putting them into practice.\textsuperscript{981} Indeed, to understand the \textit{profunditas} of the law is to realize that “Christ came so that where sin abounded, grace might abund more”\textsuperscript{982} and to walk in his ways even to the point of martyrdom, for love of both God and neighbor.\textsuperscript{983}

However, since such a knowledge of the law is not natural, Augustine insists that, “only someone to whom the Lord grants understanding can know the law as it ought to be known.”\textsuperscript{984} Only God, who is light, is able to illuminate the mind, imparting the knowledge of what is divinely revealed.\textsuperscript{985} Given that human nature is so badly deformed by sin, its reason needs to be reformed in order to understand the law as it ought to be understood. And this process can only be achieved through faith, because there are things that one cannot understand unless one believes, for “as hearts are cleansed by faith eyes are opened and become ever clearer.”\textsuperscript{986} As a result, God’s

\textsuperscript{980} See Conf. 1.1.1: “Da mihi, Domine, scire et intelligere, utrum sit prius invocare te an laudare te et scire te prius sit an invocare te […] Quomodo autem invocabunt, in quem non crediderunt?”

\textsuperscript{981} En. Ps. 118.8.5.

\textsuperscript{982} En. Ps. 118.26.7: “Et opportuno iam tempore Christus aduenit, ut ubi abundavit delictum, superabundaret gratia.”

\textsuperscript{983} En. Ps. 118.12.2; 13.2; 14.4.

\textsuperscript{984} En. Ps. 118.11.4: “Quamquam etiam ut scatur lex quomodo scienda est, id est, ut inteligatur quid sibi uelit quare sit eis posita qui eam non erant seruaturi, quid habeat utilitatis etiam hoc ipsum quod lex subintravit, ut abundaret delictum, nemo comprehendet, nisi a Domino acceperit intellectum.”

\textsuperscript{985} En. Ps. 118.18.4.

\textsuperscript{986} En. Ps. 118.18.3: “Propter hos igitur interiores oculos, quorum caecitas est non intelligere, ut aperiantur, et magis magisque serenentur, fide corda mundantur.”
law is known more and more to the person who grows in understanding by drinking continually from the fountain of eternal light.\footnote{En. Ps. 118.26.6.} For Augustine, one’s understanding of the law develops so as to grasp more firmly the truths of faith, and faith grows to believe more firmly what one had only begun to understand. “This process,” Augustine claims, “occurs not through our natural powers but by the help and gracious gift of God; it is a process not of nature but of healing, which imparts to a diseased eye the power to see.”\footnote{En. Ps. 118.18.3: “Sed hoc non fit propriis tamquam naturalibus uiribus, sed Deo adiuuante atque donante; sicut medicina fit, non natura, ut uitiatus oculus uim cernendi recipiat.”}

While God’s law is exceedingly wide (\textit{latum ualde}) by its very nature, through the Holy Spirit it becomes even broader, when “the breath of the commandment is revealed as love.”\footnote{En. Ps. 118.22.1: “Dilectio est igitur latitudo mandati.”} Because it is fulfilled as charity,\footnote{Rom. 13:10: “Plenitudo legis caritas.” See En. Ps. 118.16.2.} the breadth of the law (\textit{latitudo mandati}) turns out to be the breadth of love for God and neighbor (\textit{latitudo caritatis}), on which all the law and the prophets depend. While one may learn God’s commandments, one cannot accomplish the wide commandment of love, unless he is aided by God’s Holy Spirit. As Augustine comments:

\begin{quote}
But the charity of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given us (Rom. 5:5); and in the wide outpouring of that charity there is wide freedom for us. Even the narrow way can be walked without constriction in that generous freedom. This is the gift of God, to whom another Psalm gives thanks: \textit{You have made room for my steps under me, and my footsteps have not grown faint} (Ps. 17:37). The commandment of charity is broad indeed, and it is a double commandment, enjoining love of both God and our neighbor. What could be wider than a command on which all the law and the prophets depend?\footnote{En. Ps. 118.21.8: \textit{Caritas autem Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum sanctum, qui...}}
\end{quote}
Through the gift of his Holy Spirit, God shows that he is both the author of the commandments and the giver of grace whereby he causes men and women to do and enjoy what he commands with generous freedom of heart.992

**Sweetness, Delight, and Love**

Augustine calls *suavitas* (sweetness) the intimate action of God’s grace that enables one to delight in what is good. *Suavitas* describes, therefore, the presence of God’s grace, “its gentle working and delightful effect.”993 Graciously inspired by the Holy Spirit, *suavitas* results in the enlargement of heart (*dilatatio* or *latitudo cordis*), whereby the fear previously inspired by the law is turned into the broad freedom of doing what is good and finding enjoyment in goodness.994 According to Augustine, *suavitas* is not an intrinsic quality of the law *qua* law, but rather the proper result of the grace of God who, through his Spirit, “teaches us so effectively that we do what we ought to do, by inspiring us with sweetness.”995 It is through the benevolent grace of God that the fear of the law is turned into sweetness, for it is only when the law is sweet that it can learnt and obeyed.996 Indeed, it often happens that we do not do what

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*datus est nobis*. In hac diffusione latitudo est, in qua sine angustiis uia quaque ambulatur angusta, donante illo cui dictum est: Dilastasti gressus meos subter me, et non sunt infirmata uestigia mea. Latum est ergo mandatum caritatis, mandatum illud geminum, quo iubetur Deus et proximus diligi. Quid autem latius, quam ut ubi pendeat tota lex et omnes prophetae?”

992 See En. Ps. 118.14.2; 17.4; 22.1.


994 En. Ps. 118.10.6; 11.1; 17.1.

995 En. Ps. 118.17.3: “Quando Deus ea docet, sic docet ut scienda sciamus, aperiendo ueritatem, sic docet ut facienda faciamus, inspirando suauitatem.”

996 When the risen Lord opened the mind of the disciples of Emmaus (Lk 24:13-32), he taught them so effectively that their hearts burnt with delight (see En. Ps. 118.17.3).
we ought to do because we do not take pleasure in doing it, even if we wish we had the pleasure in acting so.997

What a delightful law inspires is no more constrictive fear, but a chaste fear that enlarges the heart and empowers it to know and gladly do what the law commands.998 And since fear is quelled only by love, only charity “sets us free, inspiring us to act not out of fear of punishment but out of delight in goodness.”999

Moreover, because Ps. 118:68 declares God himself to be suauis (Suauis es, Domine, et in tua suauitate doce me iustificationes tuas), Augustine considers the suauitas of the law as the foretaste of the gladness of the age to come.1000 In a sense, suauitas signals the concrete effect of God’s presence within us, through the Holy Spirit whom we have received as the pledge of the fullness of life that “will be ours only when we reach another life beyond the mirror-like, puzzling perceptions proper to our life in the present, and see God face to face.”1001 On the one hand, as a pledge of the life to come, the suauitas of the law blossoms into love for both God and the neighbor in the present age, since “love is born when a person finds God’s ways of

997 En. Ps. 118.8.4.
998 On the opposition between timor castus and timor seruiilis, see En. Ps. 118.22.6; 25.7; 31.3; En. Ps. 127.7; Epist. 145.5. On the possible biblical origin of timor castus, through a version of Ps. 18:10, see “Compte-rendu des séances du groupe de Strasbourg,” Revue des études latines 24 (1946): 54-55.
999 En. Ps. 118.25.7: “Sed hunc timorem, quo poena metuitur, consummata caritas foras mittit; quae non timore poenae, sed delectatione iustitiae liberos reddit.” See also En. Ps. 118.10.6.
1000 En. Ps. 118.19.2; En. Ps. 30.4.6.
justice delightful.” On the other hand, the love born from such an enjoyment is intensified by the sweetness of a fuller gift of wisdom, imparted to those who obey God and find understanding through his commandments.

What Augustine suggests is a model of spiritual progress whereby, the sweeter one finds God’s law, the more lovingly does one study it; the more one knows the law, the better one acts on what is known—and comes to know better by acting out of love. En. Ps. 118 describes cogently the understanding of the law as an enlargement of heart which is nothing else than love, the perfect implementation of the law. As Martin rightly notes, the foundational affirmation of Augustine’s vision of the law remains always the *gratia Christi*, humbly acknowledged and lovingly lived out. Empowered by God’s Spirit, one becomes able to do good things from the faith that operates through love.

**The Grace of the Law as Beatitudo**

Augustine’s commentary on Psalm 118 opens with a statement on the universal longing for happiness, a central theme in Hellenistic philosophy. As Henri-Irénée Marrou has observed, *beatitudo* is a theme that features prominently in Augustine’s

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1002 En. Ps. 118.17.10: “Hoc autem quia non fit nisi per dilectionem, ubi qui facit habet delectationem.” The terms *caritas, delectatio, dilectio, and dilatatio* appear often in En. Ps. 118 as an expression of *suavitatis*. See En. Ps. 118.10.6; 11.1-2; 14.2; 14.4 (*delectatio*); 6.3; 8.4; 10.6; 14.4; 16.1; 17.1-3; 17.10; 20.6; 22.7; 25.7 (*dilectio*); 3.3; 5.2; 6.3; 7.1; 8.3; 10.6; 12.5; 14.2; 14.4; 17.10; 19.4; 21.4; 22.1-2; 22.6; 23.8; 26.8; 26.9; 27.3 (*dilatatio*).

1003 En. Ps. 118.22.8.

1004 En. Ps. 118.17.7.

1005 See Rom. 13:10; En. Ps. 11.1; 17.2; 17.10.

1006 Martin, “Exercises in Grace,” 175.

1007 See Gal. 5:6. En. Ps. 118.3.3; 5.2; 7.1; 14.2; 19.4; 21.4; 22.1; 27.3.
thought. To it Augustine dedicated an entire treatise, *De beata vita,* and returned to it in almost all his philosophical works, primarily because he understood happiness to be one of God’s very attributes. On revisiting the circumstances of the composition of the *De beata vita,* Augustine noted that there was no greater happiness for man than the perfect vision of God in the life to come.

It is the first verse of the Psalm that allows Augustine to conflate the themes of happiness, law and progress in the Lord’s way with one of the central tenets of Christianity—eternal life. As he sets out to comment on Psalm 118, he acknowledges: “From its very first verse, this Psalm urges us to seek happiness,” since there is no one, there has never been anyone, and there will never be anyone who does not want to be happy. With such an opening, Augustine is able to introduce an important claim that overshadows his entire commentary on Psalm 118, namely, that the law was given for humanity’s happiness. As a gift from God, the law

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1008 Marrou, *Saint Augustin,* 174: “Le problème central de la pensée augustinienne est, la chose est bien connue, celui du bonheur.”


1011 Retr. 1.2 (BA 12:282-284): “…non esse beatam vitam nisi perfectam cognitionem Dei. […] cum perfectam cognitionem Dei, hoc est qua homini maior esse non possit, in futura vita speret Apostolus, quae sola beata vita dicenda est.” The theme of beatitudo appears also in the final books of *On the Trinity,* the *City of God,* in passages from the *Confessions,* the *Lord’s Sermon on the Mount* and in the two letters to Jerome on the origin and the destination of the soul (Epist. 166-167).

1012 Ps. 118:1: “Beati immaculati in uia, qui ambulant in lege Domini.”

1013 En. Ps. 118.1.1: “Ab exordio suo magnus psalmus iste, carissimi, exhortatur nos ad beatitudinem, quam nemo est qui non expetat. Quis enim usquam uel potest, uel potuit, uel poterit inueniri qui nolit esse beatus?”
that leads to happiness represents the expression of God’s providence and care for both good and bad people, for “happiness is so great a good that both good people and bad people desire it.” That good and bad people equally seek happiness is an indication that the longing for happiness is independent of individual qualities, but comes from our being created. Therefore, the Psalm does not only invite us to seek happiness, but it also teaches us that happiness itself is a desire that God has put in the human heart. Indeed, the deep longing by which both good and bad people seek happiness is rooted in the *gratia Adami*. The first grace of the law is thus this call to, and offer of, happiness that results from its divine origin and scope. Precisely because of its divine origin, only God can offer true happiness to humankind. This is a claim that Augustine makes also in the *Confessions* where he declares: “You stir man to take pleasure in praising you, because you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.” And the pleasure (*delectatio*) of praising God results from the peace one finds ultimately only in God who alone is “utter peace and life immune from disturbance.”

As a way to happiness, the law is good and sweet because it bears witness to the intrinsic goodness of God. Even if humankind is incapable of accomplishing it, the law is intrinsically good and ought to be loved more dearly than gold and very precious stones, “for no human goods can in any respect compare with the good

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1014 En. Ps. 118.1.1: “Beatum quippe esse, tam magnum est bonum, ut hoc et boni uelint et mali.”
1015 Conf. 1.1.1: “Tu excitas ut laudare te delectet, quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te.”
1016 Conf. 2.10.18: “Quies est aput te ualde et uita impetrabilis.”
1017 En. Ps. 118.27.2.
commandments whereby human beings themselves become good.”\textsuperscript{1018} Just as creation bears witness to the goodness of God and fills the devout mind with wonder, so does the law.\textsuperscript{1019} According to Augustine, if we were able to embrace God’s commandments “in one contemplative intuition,” we would have cried, “I have pondered your works, and trembled.”\textsuperscript{1020} More importantly, however, the wonder of the law rests in the fact that it manifests the solicitude of a loving creator towards his creatures, for the law is the means by which God graciously proves how much he loves humankind.\textsuperscript{1021}

Although he interprets the law in its relationship or, better, its ability to procure eternal life, Augustine also insists that the law is unable to deliver on that very happiness, because of the defective human will. In his treatment of the human will, he often asserts that human will is not only ineffective, but also defective in choosing what is good for, without outward constraint, it cleaves to something it does not wish to attain.\textsuperscript{1022} Furthermore, what this inability reveals is “not some invasion by a nature not our own, but a symptom of our own sickness,” which Paul describes

\textsuperscript{1018} En. Ps. 118.26.8: “Cum uero ipsa mandata diliguntur super aurum et lapidem pretiosum multum, omnis prae ipsis mandatis terrena uilis est merces; nec uilla ex parte comparantur quaecumque alia hominis bona, his bonis quibus ipse homo fit bonus.”

\textsuperscript{1019} See En. Ps. 118.27.1-2. R. Akiba called the Torah “the precious instrument by which the world was created” (M. Pirke Avot 3:15). According to Gabrielle Boccaccini, the issue of the preexistence of the Torah did not arise in Judaism until the lateness of the Torah became an argument used by Christians against the Jews, particularly in reference to the preexistence of the Word. See Gabrielle Boccaccini, “Hellenistic Judaism: Myth or Reality?,” in Jewish Literatures and Cultures: Context and Intertext (eds. Anita Norich and Yaron Z. Eliav; Brown Judaic Studies 349; Providence: Brown University Press, 2008), 71-75.

\textsuperscript{1020} See Heb. 3:2. En. Ps. 118.27.1: “Si uero tamquam sub unius contemplationis aspectu uelut audeamus cuncta contueri, nonne fit in nobis quod ait propheta: Consideraui opera tua, et expaui?”

\textsuperscript{1021} En. Ps. 118.6.3.

\textsuperscript{1022} See De civ. Dei, 15.21.
as the sin dwelling in us or as the flesh lusting against the spirit, to the point that all without exception can be reckoned sinners and violators of the law. Deprived of God’s glory, all on earth are cut off from eternal life.

Building on Ps. 118:25 (Adhaesit pauimentum anima mea, uiuifica me secundum uerbum tuum), Augustine describes the fact of being deprived of God’s glory as being stuck to the pauimentum, subjected to uanitas, and ridden with all sorts of desideria peccati.

While it is true that the desires of the flesh cool down when spiritual desires burn keenly, humankind remains always under what Paul calls the abundance of sin. Therefore, as it invites us to seek happiness, Psalm 118 also calls us “to keep the cause of our wretched condition (causam nostrae miseriae) before our minds.”

Even though this wretched condition is revealed by the law, it is independent from the

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1023 Rom. 7:17: “Nunc autem iam non ego operor illud sed quod habitat in me peccatum.” See En. Ps. 118.3.1. Gal. 5:17: “Caro enim concupiscit adversus spiritum, spiritus autem adversus carнем. Haec enim invicem adversantur ut non quaecumque vultis illa faciatis.” See En. Ps. 118.8.3; 8.4; 10.2; 19.3; 19.7; 22.1; 22.5.


1025 En. Ps. 118.10.1-2. For Augustine, pauimentum refers to the mortality of earthly life. See also Ambrose, Expositio Ps. CXVIII.4.1: “Pavimentum terram intellegimus.” On a different use of pauimentum in the Enarrationes, especially in En. Ps. 31.2.25, 44.17 and 148.7, see Suzanne Poque, Le langage symbolique dans la prédication d’Augustin (Paris: Institut d’études augustiniennes, 1984), 240-241.

1026 En. Ps. 118. 2.1; 12.1-3; 15.4; 17.5; 18.3.

1027 En. Ps. 118.3.1-2. According to Augustine the desideria peccati are prava (22.5), carnalia (3.3; 25.3; 25.7; 26.2) and illicita (3.1-2).

1028 Rom. 5:20a: “Lex subintravit, ut abundaret delictum.” See En. Ps. 10.5; 11.4; 25.1; 26.7.

1029 En. Ps. 118.9.1: “Psalmi huius quae tractanda subsequuntur, admonent nos causam nostrae miseriae recordari.”
law and, therefore, it cannot be remedied by the law, through which comes only consciousness of sin, but not its removal.\textsuperscript{1030} In fact, the law bears witness that the justice of God is to be revealed outside the law.\textsuperscript{1031} More precisely, the “the law bears witness to Christ,”\textsuperscript{1032} so that when we hear the line “I have passionately longed for your salvation, O Lord,”\textsuperscript{1033} we should spontaneously refer it to Christ, who is God’s salvation.\textsuperscript{1034}

As a result, Augustine maintains that humanity as whole, whether under the law or outside the law, is in need of grace in order to enjoy happiness and eternal life. Accordingly, when Paul proclaims, “Where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more,”\textsuperscript{1035} he means the grace by which all sins are forgiven, not only those committed where the law is absent but also those committed under the law.\textsuperscript{1036} Within this outlook, the redemptive role of Christ is presented as fulfilling both the broken promises of the law and the promise made to Abraham, even before the Mosaic Law. Consequently, when the Psalmist asks to be given life \textit{secundum uerbum tuum} (Ps. 118:25), Augustine interprets \textit{uerbum} as referring to God’s promise to bless all the nations in Abraham’s seed,\textsuperscript{1037} that is, all those who, whether under the law or outside the law, would believe in Christ. According to Augustine, since God’s

\textsuperscript{1030} Rom. 3:20. En. Ps. 118.25.5; 28.5.
\textsuperscript{1031} Rom. 3:21. En. Ps. 118.21.2; 25.5; 27.3; 28.5.
\textsuperscript{1032} En. Ps. 118.32.5: “Lex perhibet testimonium Christo.”
\textsuperscript{1033} Ps. 118:174: “Concupiui salutare tuum, Domine; et lex tua meditatio mea.”
\textsuperscript{1034} En. Ps. 118.12.5; 32.5.
\textsuperscript{1035} Rom. 5:20b: “Ubi abundavit autem delictum, superabundavit gratia.”
\textsuperscript{1036} En. Ps. 118.25.1.
\textsuperscript{1037} Gen. 12:3; 22:18. See En. Ps. 118.3.3; 10.3; 11.1; 13.1; 13.2; 16.2; 17.1; 19.2; 20.1; 23.3; 25.1.
promise extends to and beyond Abraham, the ultimate expression of God’s love for humankind is no more the law qua law, but faith in Christ, who is “the end of the law, bringing justification to everyone who believes, a justification that comes freely through his grace.” And the proof for God’s love in Christ consists in this, that Christ died for us when we were still sinners. Christ’s death inaugurates thus the promise of even greater gifts to come.

The first verse of the Psalm describes, therefore, the situation of those who hope in the implementation of the everlasting promises inaugurated by Christ’s death and who walk in Christ, “the way in which the Psalmist prays to be given life.” The happy man who walks in the way of the Lord is no other than the man who, because of his active faith in Christ enjoys a happiness that is hoped for rather than actually present: though hungry and thirsty now, he shall be satisfied; though mourning now, he will be comforted; though persecuted now, he will inherit the kingdom of God. Augustine concludes that we must take the Psalm’s beatitude in the same sense.
X. LIVING OUT THE LAW: *LATITUDO CARITATIS*

Étienne Gilson observed that the problem related to the quest of happiness in Augustine was twofold: “to know what one should desire in order to be happy and to know how to obtain it.” The question that intrigues Augustine as he begins his exposition is: If it is true that the human spirit spontaneously desires happiness, why is it necessary for the Psalmist to exhort us to seek it? For Augustine, the answer lies in the realization that, while all long for happiness, many do not know how to reach it: all desire the good, but few desire the only route that leads to it. By suggesting unequivocally that Christ is the way and the route to happiness, Augustine comments on Ps. 118 as an illustration of how one ought to walk in Christ. To walk in the Lord’s way becomes the best way to accomplish the law. By way of examples and counterexamples, Augustine depicts the Church as walking in the Lord’s ways to the effect that, as Martin observes,

> What this Psalm will teach is a Christian *paideia*, the discipline of grace, offering schooling, exercises, even painful instruction not only for theological

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1045 En. Ps. 118.1.1: “Quid igitur exhortatione opus est ad eam rem quam sua sponte appetit animus humano?”
growth but perhaps even more importantly for spiritual and ascetical growth and progress.\textsuperscript{1046}

If one were to consider the Jewish opinion according to which the beginnings contain potentially everything that follows, then one could argue that Ps. 1:1 provides a key to identifying the \textit{beatus uir} referred to throughout the Psalter.\textsuperscript{1047} As is well known, the Psalter opens with an evocation of the \textit{beatus uir} who, in Augustine’s mind, is no other than Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{1048} Both \textit{homo} and \textit{dominus}, Jesus Christ shows to humankind that true happiness consists in striving to become \textit{homo dominicus}, until it reaches maturity “to the measure of the stature of Christ.”\textsuperscript{1049} Accordingly, the \textit{beati} of Psalm 118 are those who walk in the ways of the \textit{beatus uir} of Psalm 1. The first requirement in observing the law, is adherence to Christ as the way to happiness.


\textsuperscript{1047} Ps. 1.1: “Beatus vir qui non abiit in consilio impiorum et in via peccatorum non stetit et in cathedra pestilentiae non sedit.” On Augustine’s position about the Psalter as one single book, see En. Ps. 150.2.

\textsuperscript{1048} See En. Ps. 1.1. Fabre, “La prophétie des Psaumes,” 549-552.

\textsuperscript{1049} Eph. 4:13. Augustine uses the expression \textit{homo dominicus} in De sermone Domini in monte 2.6.22, in En. Ps. 1.1 and in En. Ps. 8.13. See Gustave Bardy, “Note complémentaire 29: Sur l’expression \textit{homo dominicus},” BA 12 (1950), 572; Aloys Grillmeier, “Jesus Christ, the \textit{Kyriakos Anthrops},” \textit{TS} 38 (1977): 275-293; Goulven Madec, “Dominicus homo,” \textit{AugL} 2 (1996-2002), 591-592. On Augustine’s later qualm in using that phrase, see Retr. 1.19.8, where he argues that the expression is justified when it is used to \textit{sancta familia}. As Goulven Madec rightly observed, by \textit{sancta familia} Augustine meant the Church as \textit{sancta familia Christi} (see En. Ps. 118.2.1) and not the Holy Trinity \textit{pace} Wilhelm Geerlings, \textit{Christus exemplum: Studien zur Christologie und Christusverkündigung Augustins} (Mainz: Matthias-Grunewald-Verlag, 1978), 82.}
According to Augustine, the ways of the Lord can be summed up in one single thing: faith in the one who said, *I am the way.*\(^{1050}\) As Augustine points out, by referring to himself as the way, Christ was evoking the humility of his birth in the flesh and of his passion as the unmistakable testimonies of God’s elective love for humankind.\(^{1051}\) For humankind’s salvation, Christ who is most high with the Father became most low in his birth from his mother\(^ {1052}\) and, taking on human flesh, he became our neighbor.\(^ {1053}\) Since faith is perfected through love, the fulfillment of the law brought about by the incarnation, and which operates through love, is nothing else than the love of God and of the neighbor.\(^ {1054}\) For the Church, to walk in the law of the Lord means to have a faith that operates through charity.

**The Faith and the Hope of the Church**

Augustine’s vision of the Church, the admission into which is realized through faith, is rooted in the mystery of the incarnation, which inaugurated God’s due time

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\(^{1050}\) Jn 14:6.


\(^{1052}\) En. Ps. 118.21.2: “Ipse est enim et apud Patrem altissimus, et propter nos in ista mater factus humiliatus.”

\(^{1053}\) En. Ps. 118.12.5: “Ipse est enim Verbum Deus; et Verbum caro factum est, ut esset et proximus meas.”

\(^{1054}\) Rom. 13:10b: “Plenitudo ergo legis est dilectio.” See En. Ps. 118.11.1; 13.4; 26.8; Gal. 5:6: “Nam in Christo Iesu neque circumcisio aliquid valet neque praeputium sed fides quae per caritatem operatur.” See En. Ps. 118.3.3; 5.2; 19.4; 21.4; 27.3; Mt 22:40: “In his duobus mandatis universa lex pendet et prophetae.” See En. Ps. 118.8.2; 2.5; 14.2; 21.8; 27.6.
(plenitudo tempus), the acceptable time (tempus acceptabile), the day of salvation (dies salutis), and indeed God’s time to act (tempus faciendi Domino).\textsuperscript{1055} The Church, the chosen race, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, is the people God has made his own (populus adquisitionis),\textsuperscript{1056} through faith in Christ, in whom she is given life.\textsuperscript{1057} The only thing that can prevent one from receiving the life given in Christ is unbelief. That is why unbelievers are reckoned “to be dead and believers to be alive because it is through faith that a just person lives.”\textsuperscript{1058}

The role of the incarnation is so important in Augustine’s understanding of the Church that he maintains that even those who lived before Christ had hoped for his coming in the flesh. Since faith is the “assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen,”\textsuperscript{1059} Augustine argues that even before the Virgin’s childbearing, there existed men and women who longed for the coming of Christ in the flesh. In commenting on Ps. 118:147 (\textit{I came before you at dead of night, anticipating the due time, and I cried out; I hoped in your words}),\textsuperscript{1060} he explains that the verse expresses the prayer of the Church before the fullness of time at which Christ was to be manifested in the flesh.\textsuperscript{1061} In particular, he notes that the Greek phrase \textit{ἐν ἀωρίᾳ}, which some Latin translators have represented with \textit{intempesta} or \textit{inmaturitate},

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1055} Gal. 4:4; Is. 49:8; 2 Cor. 6:2. See En. Ps. 118.26.7.
\item \textsuperscript{1056} See 1 Pt 2:9. En. Ps. 118.6.2; 20.1.
\item \textsuperscript{1057} En. Ps. 118.12.1-3; 13.1; 15.1-2; 20.8; 21.5; 23.3; 29.6; 30.2; 30.4; 30.7; 32.7.
\item \textsuperscript{1058} See Rom. 1:17. En. Ps. 118.7.1: “Quapropter si mortuos intellegimus infideles, uiuos autem fideles; quoniam iustus ex fide uiuit…”
\item \textsuperscript{1059} Heb. 11:1: “Est autem fides sperandorum substantia, rerum argumentum non parentum.”
\item \textsuperscript{1060} Ps. 118:147: “Praeueni intepesta nocte et clamaui; in uerbi tuis sperau.”
\item \textsuperscript{1061} See En. Ps. 118.20.1.
\end{itemize}
indicates the anticipation of the dawn. Taking the dawn as the image of the mature time when God sent his mercy through his only-begotten Son, Augustine finds that the Lord himself referred to the longing of the saints of old, when he said to his disciples, “Many a prophet, many a king, has longed to see what you see, but not seen it, and to hear what you hear, but never heard it.”\textsuperscript{1062} For him, the righteous of old benefited not only from the divinity of Christ, which always existed, but also from his humanity, which had not yet been revealed.\textsuperscript{1063} So, Augustine argues, when the Lord declares that, “Abraham desired to see my day, and he did see it and rejoiced,”\textsuperscript{1064} we should conclude that “Abraham was filled with faith in his incarnation.”\textsuperscript{1065}

For Augustine, Simeon gave voice to the longing of the Church of old, when he took the child Jesus into his arms and expressed the intense desire, which was shared by all the holy people of ancient times.\textsuperscript{1066} As he rhetorically asks:

\begin{quote}
What use would it have been to the righteous of ancient times to love God’s commandments, if Christ, who is God’s salvation, had not come to set them free?\textsuperscript{1067}
\end{quote}

Therefore, the saints of old kept vigil in the expectation of the incarnation, for “before the incarnation, the Church was not silent but anticipated the due time by crying out in prophecy and hoping in the words of God, who had power to do what he had

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{1062} Mt 13:17. See En. Ps. 118.20.1.
\footnote{1063} See En. Ps. 97.1: “The prophets reaped a harvest of magnificent joy even in their own days, when they contemplated in spirit the realities not yet present but guaranteed for the future.”
\footnote{1064} Jn 8:56.
\footnote{1065} De gratia Christi et de peccato originali 2.27.32.
\footnote{1066} Lk 2:29-30. En. Ps. 118.20.1.
\footnote{1067} En. Ps. 118.31.6: “Quid enim iustis profuisset antiquis Dei dilexisse mandata, nisi eos Christus qui est Dei salutare, liberasset.”
\end{footnotes}
promised: that in Abraham’s seed all nations would be blessed.”\textsuperscript{1068} With the evocation of Abraham, Augustine highlights the importance of a faith that extends from generation to generation to all those who believe, for “Abraham is our father, not because we are descended from him in the flesh, but because we imitate his faith.”\textsuperscript{1069} Because he envisions the faith in Christ as the way by which all the nations will be blessed, Augustine maintains that Christ “is not the property of one, but of all nations.”\textsuperscript{1070} Therefore, one can rightly argue that Christ’s incarnation brings “to fulfillment the rerum ordo gestarum of God that began with the call of Abraham.”\textsuperscript{1071}

While God’s time to act begins historically with the call to Abraham, Augustine insists that the Church did not begin with Abraham, for she has been established since the beginning (κατ’ ἀρχάς; ab initio) when it was decreed that “they will be two in one flesh,”\textsuperscript{1072} a prophecy Paul explains as referring to the great mystery (magnum sacramentum) of Christ and the Church.\textsuperscript{1073} It is through this great

\begin{footnotes}
\item[1068] Gen 12:3; 22:18. En. Ps. 118.29.4: “Quamquam si uelimus intellegere immaturum tempus noctis huius, antequam uenisset plenitudo temporis, id est, ipsa maturitas, quando Christus manifestaretur in carne; nec tunc ecclesia tacuit, sed praeueniens istam maturitatem, prophetando clamauit, et in uerbis Dei sperauit potentis facere quod promisit, ut in semine Abrahae benedicerentur omnes gentes.”
\item[1069] En. Ps. 30.3.9: “Abraham pater noster fuit, non propter propaginem carnis, sed propter imitationem fides.” On Abraham’s progeny, see En. Ps. 118.16.2; 19.2; 22.1; 25.1; 29.4.
\item[1070] De civ. Dei 10.32.2.
\item[1071] Daley, “Incarnation,” 446.
\end{footnotes}
mystery that Christ became the head of his body.1074 And Scripture as a whole bears witness to this mystery to the effect that,

When we listen to a Psalm, or to a prophet, or to the law, all of which were set down in writing before our Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh, our whole endeavor must therefore be to find Christ in what we hear, and to discern his presence in it.1075

Although the Church exists ab initio, it is Abel who is her first-fruits, because he witnessed prophetically to the blood that would be shed one day by Christ.1076 For Augustine, Abel’s death prefigures Jesus’ kenosis from the forma Dei to the forma servi.1077 Abel, who died in the field, is the forma futuri of Jesus who, by dying on Calvary,1078 perfected the abasement he underwent in the incarnation.1079 As forma futuri of Jesus’ death, Abel becomes the perfect figure of God’s justification in Christ.1080 However, as a man, Abel faced his death with fear of death (timor

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1075 En. Ps. 98.1: “Modo ergo tota intentio nostra est, quando Psalmum audimus, quando Prophetam, quando Legem, quae omnia antequam veniret in carne Dominus noster Jesus Christus, conscripta sunt, Christum ibi videre, Christum ibi intellegere.”

1076 Gen. 4:8. En. Ps. 118.29.9. Abel is referred to in the following Enarrationes in Psalmos: 8.13; 48.2.11; 39.13; 101.11; 108.18; 128.2; 61.4-7; 64.2; 90.2.1; 142.3. On Abel as the first-fruits of the Church, see Borgomeo, L’Église de ce temps, 30-32; Yves Congar, “Ecclesia ab Abel,” in Abhandlungen über Theologie und Kirche: Festschrift für Karl Adam (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1952), 79-108, esp. 81-86.

1077 Phil. 2:5-11.

1078 See Contra Faustum 12.9: “Itaque occiditur Abel minor natu a fratre maiore natu; occiditur Christus caput populi minoris natu a populo Iudaeorum maiore natu: ille in campo, iste in Caluariae loco.”


Christ, on the other hand, faced his death without fear for, as the just par excellence, he was not affected by original sin and, therefore, was not destined to die. Contrary to Abel who died by the hand of his brother Cain, Christ’s death was due to his free will, which makes him the perfect exemplum iustitiae, in which the Church is born.\footnote{Since the Church of today longs for the manifestation of Christ as the judge of the living and the dead, Augustine claims that the image of the expectation of the dawn applies also to the return of Christ in glory. Consequently, she lives in constant expectation of the one who is to come,\footnote{On the link between fear of death and original sin, see De civ. Dei 9.5; 13.4; De peccatorum meritis 2.45.54-56; Robert Dadaro, “Christus Iustus and the Fear of Death,” in Signum Pietatis (ed. Adolar Zunckeller), 341-361; Carole Straw, “Timor Mortis,” AugthA, 838-842.} to the point that there has never been and there will never be any diminishment of her longing for Christ until the end of the ages.\footnote{See Studer, “Le Christ notre justice,” 128-139; Marie-François Berrouard, “Mort du Christ et formation de l’Église,” BA 71 (1971), 904-906; Bruno Delaroche, Jésus notre justice selon saint Augustin: Une lecture de la Passion dans les Enarrationes in Psalms (Diss.; Rome: Pont. Univeristas Lateranensis, 1989); Biagio Aprile, “Passio Christi tam evident quam evangelium recitatur:” La Passione di Cristo sulla croce: Studio sul commento II al Salmo 21 di Agostino d’Ippona (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 2007).} Indeed, just as the Church of old longed for him as the one who would come from the womb of his mother, so does the Church of today long for him as the one who will come from the right hand of his Father.\footnote{Augustine points out that the text of the Psalm expresses also the Church’s longing, so that “When you hear the phrase ‘O that…!’ (utinam) you must recognize the accents of someone who is yearning” (En. Ps. 118.4.2).} For Augustine, the Church as a whole is born out and sustained by this longing for Christ, so that from the dawn of
humanity until the end of this world, in all who have lived at any time, are alive now, or will live, the Church is the people that longs for Christ. The faith of the Church is such that it extends from the foundation of the world to the end of time.
Walking in the Ways of the Lord

Although the metaphor of the people in vigil is apt to describe the Church, Augustine prefers that of a people journeying toward the heavenly Jerusalem, in order to stress the fact that the Church has no citizenship on earth.\(^{1086}\) The metaphor that best captures the condition of this Church longing for her Christ is, therefore, that of a stranger traveling toward his homeland. Augustine finds a confirmation for this in Ps. 118:19\(^{1087}\) and he notes that the Greek πάροικος, which some Latin translators have rendered as incola (lodger), inquilinus (alien), or aduena (stranger), refers to people who have no home of their own and live in a house belonging to others.\(^{1088}\) The Church is alien on earth and is headed toward her heavenly homeland, which she has already received in pledge and from which she will never depart once she has reached it.\(^{1089}\)

For Augustine, the condition of incola is most appropriate to the Church, a people whose forefathers in faith sighed with holy longing for that heavenly country but who, as the Letter to the Hebrews puts it, “died in faith without receiving what was promised, but viewed it from afar and saluted it, acknowledging that they were

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\(^{1086}\) Phil. 3:20. See En. Ps. 118.8.2. On this metaphor in other *Enarrationes*, see En. Ps. Ps. 49.22; 93.6; 119.6-7; 121.2; 137.12.

\(^{1087}\) Ps. 118:19: “Incola sum in terra; non abscondas a me mandata tua.”

\(^{1088}\) En. Ps. 118.8.1. See also En. Ps. 119.6: “Incola dicitur qui habitat in terra aliena, non in ciuitate sua.”

\(^{1089}\) See Sermo 111.4: “Ipse est Christianus, qui et in domo sua et in patria sua peregrinum se esse cognoscit. Patria nostra sursum est, ibi hospites non erimus.”
but strangers and foreigners on earth.” As a result, unbelievers cannot truthfully call themselves strangers on earth, for they are in the place where they were born according to the flesh and have no city anywhere else but on earth. Believers, on the other hand, are not only lodgers, but also pilgrims as they journey toward their heavenly city, where they will be fellow-citizens with the angels.

The Journey toward Jerusalem

Perler and Maier have observed that, in spite of his many travels, Augustine disliked traveling. In particular, they have documented that, unlike John Chrysostom for whom traveling was more painful than a thousand exiles, Augustine traveled extensively. Like many scholars, Perler and Maier also note that the motif of *peregrinatio* features prominently throughout Augustine’s writings and that road metaphors are among the most important in the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*.

Augustine’s characterization of the Christian as a pilgrim “*ambulando per desiderium*” finds a powerful confirmation in the text of Ps. 118 where the term *uia* is used as a synonym for law. As a consequence, his commentary on Ps. 118 describes the Christian as a pilgrim or a *homo uiator* toward his homeland. Although

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1090 Heb. 11:13: “Iuxta fidem defuncti sunt omnes isti non acceptis repromissionibus sed a longe eas aspicientes et salutantes et confitentes quia peregrini et hospites sunt supra terram.”


1092 Perler and Maier, *Les voyages de saint Augustin*, 45.

1093 John Chrysostom, Letter to Olympias 6.1c (SChr 13bis:129).


1095 En. Ps. 41.10.
that image carries with it a sense of pain and disorientation, it is a positive one as it points to the “hope of eternal rewards.”\textsuperscript{1096} As George Lawless notes:

This portrayal of men, women and children as travelers or wayfarers defines them as people pushing forward, sojourners and pilgrims in hope of arriving safely at their eternal home.\textsuperscript{1097}

The hope of the pilgrim Church resides in the goal that lies ahead of the journey, but whose attainment can be hindered by temptations and distractions on the way.\textsuperscript{1098} In particular, the Church needs to walk unencumbered, free from any burdens that could weigh her down on the journey.\textsuperscript{1099} Therefore, when compared to what lies ahead, the travel itself should be irksome and unattractive to the Christian, for when it becomes more enjoyable than the goal, the traveler is likely to forget the homeland and put other interests before it. Yet, as Augustine reminds his congregation, “our true home is not such that we should put anything else before it.”\textsuperscript{1100} Therefore, the Church is never fully happy on her journey because she is keen to reach the heavenly city.\textsuperscript{1101} Consequently, she does not draw near to that goal by movement in place, but by commitment and good behavior;\textsuperscript{1102} she does not gaze from afar on it, but resolutely walks toward it.\textsuperscript{1103} In short, as a pilgrim, the Church does not stray off the road, nor

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item En. Ps. 118.15.2.
\item See Umberto Occhialini, La speranza della chiesa pellegrina: Teologia della speranza nelle Enarrationes in Psalmos di S. Agostino (Assisi: Studio Teologico Porziuncola, 1965).
\item En. Ps. 136.13.
\item Sermo 378: “Qui peregrinatur, et novit se peregrinari, desiderat patriam; quam dum desiderat, molesta est peregrinatio. Si amat peregrinationem, obliviscitur patriam, et non vult redire. Non est talis patria nostra, cui aliquid paeponamus.” See also De doctr. 1.4.
\item See Sermo 75.2.
\item De doctr. 1.10.10.
\item De Trin. 4.25.20.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
does she go back or stay where she is.\textsuperscript{1104} She walks toward Christ who is above, “seated at the right hand of God.”\textsuperscript{1105}

The notion of \textit{peregrinatio} defines, therefore, the situation of a Church journeying between the \textit{already} and the \textit{not yet}, between \textit{here} and \textit{there (hic et ibi)}.\textsuperscript{1106} Though she is established here below, the Church strains toward heaven where her foundation is laid.\textsuperscript{1107} Augustine insists that the Church as a whole is on the way and has not reached her goal, precisely because she is on a life-long pilgrimage until she reaches the Sabbath rest of the Holy City. She has reached this goal only through desire, having already cast her hope ahead an anchor to safeguard her from shipwreck, temptations, and persecutions as the weather here becomes rough.\textsuperscript{1108} As a body of passers-by, the Church walks by faith toward her Christ, who said, “I am the way, the truth and the life.”\textsuperscript{1109} This is the message Augustine conveys in a sermon on one of the \textit{Psalmi graduum}:

Anyone who is still on pilgrimage, walking by faith, has not yet reached home but is already on the way to it. A person who is not in that homeland, but does not believe, is not even on the way there. Let us walk, then, like people who know they are on the way, because the king of our homeland has made himself our way. The king is the Lord Jesus Christ; there at home he is our truth, but here he is our way. To what are we traveling? To the truth. How shall we get there? Through faith. Whither are we traveling? To Christ. How

\textsuperscript{1104} Sermo 256.3: “Noli errare, noli redire, noli remanere.”

\textsuperscript{1105} Col. 3:1. See En. Ps. 118.12.1.

\textsuperscript{1106} See Fontaine, “La pédagogie augustinienne,” 375.

\textsuperscript{1107} See En. Ps. 29.2.10: “Ecclesia uero posita tendit in caelum. Fundamentum ergo nostrum ibi positum est, Dominus noster Iesus Christus sedens ad dexteram Patris.” On Chirst as \textit{fundamentum}, see En. Ps. 15.2; 21.2; 29.1; 29.9; 51.12.

\textsuperscript{1108} En. Ps. 64.3: “Iam desiderio ibi sumus, iam spem in illam terram quasi anchoram praemisimus, ne in isto mari turbati naufragemus.” See En. Ps. 118.15.3; 31.7.

\textsuperscript{1109} See En. Ps.128.13: “Qui sunt transeuntes? Illi qui iam per viam istam, id est, per vitam istam transierunt hinc ad patriam: Apostoli transeuntes erant in ista vita, Prophetae transeuntes erant.”

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shall we reach him? Through Christ. He told us himself, *I am the way, the truth and the life* (Jn 14:6).\footnote{1110}

**The City and Its Builder**

Indeed, the journey of the Church is aptly expressed by the dynamics of the *Psalmi graduum* which, as Augustine reminds his listeners, describe people going up toward a destination human speech cannot describe and cannot even conceive in thought, a destination which no eye has ever seen, nor ear heard, and which has never risen into the human heart, a reality that cannot be put into words, a place God has appointed in his heart.\footnote{1111} While the ascent toward the heavenly Jerusalem begins in the valley of weeping, Augustine insists that it leads to the great vision promised to us, which is “nothing else but God himself, who founded that city.”\footnote{1112} But this “face-to-face vision depends on our having cleansed our heart” through faith.\footnote{1113} In fact, in his commentary on Ps. 118, Augustine observes that “the Psalm does not confine itself to saying, Happy are those who carefully search his testimonies, but adds, They seek him with their whole hearts.”\footnote{1114}

\footnotetext[1110]{En. Ps. 123.2: “Qui ergo peregrinatur, et per fidem ambulat, nondum est in patria, sed iam est in via; qui autem non credit, nec in patria est, nec in via. Sic ergo ambulemus, tamquam in via simus; quia ipse Rex patriae factus est via. Rex patriae nostrae, Dominus Iesus Christus; et ibi ueritas, hic autem via. Quo imus? Ad ueritatem. Qua imus? Per fidem. Qua imus? Ad Christum. Qua imus? Per Christum. Ipse enim dixit: *Ego sum via, ueritas et uita.*”}


\footnotetext[1112]{En. Ps. 64.3: “Nescio quod nobis magnum spectaculum promittitur; et hoc ipse Deus est qui condidit ciuitatem.”}

\footnotetext[1113]{En. Ps. 123.2: “Videbimus autem facie ad faciem: tunc autem uidemus facie ad faciem, cum habuerimus corda mundata.”}

\footnotetext[1114]{En. Ps. 118.1.2: “Sciens enim Spiritus qui haec dicit, multos propter alium, non propter quod constitutum est, scrutari testimonia eius, non tantum dixit: *Beati qui scrutantur testimonia eius,* sed
For Augustine, to observe the law *in toto corde* (wholeheartedly) describes the attitude of one who walks in the Lord’s ways with such loving faith in Christ, that even when sin occurs “one is accepted by God as though he or she has not committed it.”\(^{1115}\) The result is such that the law seems to be on the tables of one’s heart (*tabulis cordis*), rather than on tables of stone (*tabulis lapideis*).\(^{1116}\) Imprinted in the heart by the Holy Spirit, as though by the finger of God, the law can then be observed wholeheartedly by loving choice in wide freedom of love, in enlargement of heart that symbolizes charity, which is the perfect implementation of the law and for which the martyrs offer the best example.

Consequently, set “afire with longing for the heavenly Jerusalem,”\(^{1117}\) the pilgrim Church should seek God with all her heart (*ex toto corde*), that is, with heart cleansed by faith, for only those whose heart is pure will see God. Indeed, “face-to-face vision depends on our having cleansed our hearts, for the Lord tells us, *Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God* (Mt 5:8).”\(^{1118}\) Therefore, anyone who desires happiness must be undefiled.\(^{1119}\)
On the other hand, those who do not have straightforwardness of heart end up wandering in twisting paths, for they seek God with a crooked heart, hoping to find and gain possession of something else than God himself. For Augustine, to seek God with a crooked heart amounts to hating him, inasmuch as God is sought not for what he is but merely as a means to some other advantage. As an example of such people, Augustine singles out the scribes, the Pharisees, and the rich young man, who did not look for God’s testimonies, but rather for what they could get out of them, namely, adulation from other people or riches. Yet to love God’s law without loving what it reveals and without wanting to be led by it to God is not to seek it ex toto corde et ex tota anima et ex tota mente.

According to Augustine, among the vices that defile the heart in this regard, particularly despicable is covetousness, which Paul defines as the root of all evils. After carefully noting that “the word covetousness corresponds to a Greek word with wider connotations, meaning an appetite on anyone’s part for more than enough,” Augustine explains that the worst degree of that vice is love of money or avarice (auaritia). And it is this particular vice that affected the young man who,

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1120 En. Ps. 118.1.2; 4.4.
1123 1 Tim. 6:10: “Radix enim omnium malorum avaritia.”
preferring his wealth to the Lord’s counsel about the commandments, departed sadly on hearing that he needed to give away his possessions.\footnote{1125 En. Ps. 118.1.2: “Sed quomodo eum in toto corde quaesiuit, cuius consilio diuitias suas praetulit, quo audito tristis abscessit?”}

Since the Psalm teaches that God’s law must be loved more dearly than gold and precious stones,\footnote{1126 Ps. 118:127. En. Ps. 118.26.8.} Augustine maintains that anyone who carries out God’s commandments with an eye to being rewarded with earthly happiness is going backward rather than forward; he is being led below rather than above, for any action performed for the sake of earthly gain belongs not above but below.\footnote{1127 En. Ps. 118.14.4.} Because the young man, the scribes and the Pharisees had set earthly interest above God’s law and, indeed, above God himself, Augustine expects the Church to seek the law better than the scribes and Pharisees and accomplish it more joyfully than the young man.\footnote{1128 En. Ps. 118.1.2; 22.4.}

The issue of straightforwardness of heart brings to the fore one of the most important claims Augustine makes in his writings, namely that nothing should be set above the love of God, for nothing can truly be loved by loving if love itself is not loved.\footnote{1129 En. Ps. 118.8.3: “Quod autem diligendo diligitur, si ipsa dilectio non diligitur?” See Marie-François Berrouard, “Personne ne s’aime lui-même s’il n’aime pas Dieu,” BA 75 (2002), 491-492.} Indeed, the principal requirement of the commandments being love, Augustine argues that, “We need to love the very love by which what we are bound to
love is loved, just as we must hate the love by which what ought not to be loved is loved.”

This idea, so well developed in the theme of the two loves, finds a powerful illustration in the figure of Job. One of Augustine’s preferred Old Testament figures, Job offers the best example of disinterested love for God. Challenged by the enemy that he “hardly worships God for nothing” and that his heart was inclined toward greed and the temporal advantages with which the Lord had enriched him, Job revealed the disinterested character of his devotion to God, in spite of the trials he underwent. As Augustine notes, even in the mire, Job showed himself wiser in dealing with the devil than Adam in paradise. According to Augustine, Job loved God for nothing else but God, because his heart was not bent toward covetousness. By putting God’s love above anything else, Job becomes the prototype of the humble person who seeks God wholeheartedly and whom the Lord

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1130 En. Ps. 118.8.4: “Non enim possem concupiscere desiderium iustitiae, nisi concupiscendo iustitiam. An hoc est quod superius dixi, quod diligenda sit etiam ipsa dilectio qua diligitur quod diligiopert; sicut odio habenda est dilectio qua diligitur quod diligi non oportet?”

1131 See for instance De civ. Dei 14.28; En. Ps. 64.2; 148.4.


1133 Jb 1:9.

1134 En. Ps. 118.11.6; 12.4.

1135 En. Ps. 29.2.7: “Et ille Adam in stecore cautior, quam Adam in paradiso.” According to Augustine, Adam and Eve were ruined by the desire to get more (πλεονεξία) than they had received and they ended up losing even what they had (see En. Ps. 118.11.6).

1136 En. Ps. 118.11.6.
consoles in their afflictions.\textsuperscript{1137} Wholly dependent on God’s care, he was justified because of his resilience even before the tempter.\textsuperscript{1138} Job’s simple soul earned him one of the most impressive praises Augustine ever sang to a human being:

Blessed is the soul that is entirely simple! It does not stick fast in earthly things; its wings are not glued or entangled. Gleaming with splendid virtues it soars on the twin wings of two-fold love, freely into the upper air. From there it sees that what has been taken from it are things it only trampled on, not anything it needed for its support. Secure in this knowledge it repeats, \textit{The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away. This has happened as the Lord willed: may the Lord’s name be blessed}. He gave, and he has taken away; he who gave stays with me, all that has gone is what he gave. May his name be blessed.\textsuperscript{1139}

Job’s example teaches that the love of the law or search for happiness without love of God is deception. God becomes the allotted portion only for those who cling to the him wholeheartedly, for the one who observes the law receives God himself.\textsuperscript{1140}

\textbf{Jerusalem, the City of Mercy}

Cast in the \textit{peregrinatio} paradigm, wholeheartedness requires that the unconditional love for the heavenly Jerusalem be set above the highest earthly joy, lest Babylon attract the pilgrim Church and she forget Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{1141}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{1137} En. Ps. 118.15.2.
\item \textsuperscript{1138} En. Ps. 118.26.4. On Job as a just, see En. Ps. 12.5; 29.2.7; 103.4.8; Ad Simplicianum 2.1.4; 2.3.1.
\item \textsuperscript{1139} En. Ps. 66.3: “Anima beneficata omnis simplex, non haerens rebus terrenis, nec visco implicatis pennis iacens, sed exserto nitore virtutum, in geminis alis geminae dilectionis exsultat in auras liberas; et videt sibi subtrahit esse quod calcabat, non ubi incumbebat; et dicit secura: Dominus dedit, Dominus abstulit; sicut Domino placuit, ita factum est: sit nomen Domini benedictum. Dedit, et abstulit; manet qui dedit, et abstulit quod dedit: sit eius nomen benedictum.” On the symbolism of the wings in Augustine’s preaching, see Poque, \textit{Le langage symbolique}, 331-341.
\item \textsuperscript{1140} See Ps. 72:28a: “Mihi autem adhaerere Deo bonum est;” Ps. 118:57: “Pars mea, Dominus, dixi; custodiire legem tuam.”
\item \textsuperscript{1141} See Ps. 136:5-6: “Si oblitus fuero tui, Hierusalem, in oblivione sit dextera mea; adhereat lingua mea gutturi meo si non recordatus fuero tui, si non praeaposuero Hierusalem in principio laetitiae
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
However, for Augustine, the Church should set Jerusalem above anything else, not only because it is her destination, but also because the earthly Jerusalem is the city where the Lord exercised his mercy. Although Augustine is aware that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, he usually takes Jerusalem as the place of the incarnation, which encompasses all the mysteries of Christ, from birth to the resurrection. In many passages of the *Enarrationes*, Augustine sets the incarnation alongside the passion and resurrection as the key phases of God’s saving dispensation in Christ and he seems to suggest that all these mysteries were somehow fulfilled and witnessed in Jerusalem. It is remarkable that in the *Enarrationes* Augustine consistently interprets the Psalm’s phrase *homo factus est in ea* (i.e. in Jerusalem) as referring to the incarnation. Central to this understanding is his perception that Jerusalem is founded by the Most High for the purpose of dispensing mercy, first through Jesus and then through the Church. In particular, building on Luke’s Gospel, according to which God’s mercy was to be dispensed among all the nations beginning from...
Jerusalem, Augustine sees the remission of sins in Jesus’ name as the most important consequence of the incarnation. Therefore, he writes:

Indeed, Lord, you wrought wonderful mercy in the city of Jerusalem, for there Christ suffered, there he rose from the dead, there ascended into heaven and there performed many miracles; but we have far more reason to praise you for the wonderful mercy you have wrought in the city that lies all round it, for you have poured out your mercy over all the Gentiles.

The theme of mercy is one of the most important in En. Ps. 118, not only because God’s commandments are “obeyed through the mercy of the one who commanded” them, but also because, as gratia Christi, God’s law is primarily gratia misericordiae, for “Christ himself is the salvation of God, and is to be identified with the mercy prayed for in the plea of the Psalmist.” The importance of mercy in En. Ps. 118 is obviously heightened by the insistent pleas of the Psalmist throughout the Psalm. But it appears also as central notion so that it can be said to

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1146 Lk 24:44-47. See En. Ps. 32.3.7; 49.4; 57.6; 99.3; 109.10; 147.18.

1147 En. Ps. 30.4.9: “Mirificasti quidem, Domine, misericordiam tuam in ciuitate Ierusalem; ibi passus est Christus, ibi resurrexit, ibi ascendit in caelum, ibi multa mirabilia fecit; sed maior laus tua est quia mirificasti misericordiam tuam in ciuitate circumstantiae, id est, in omnibus gentibus diffudisti misericordiam tuam”

1148 En. Ps. 118.13.1: “Quid hic ergo poscit, nisi ut mandata quae concupiuit, per eius misericordiam faciat, qui mandauit?”

1149 En. Ps. 118.13.1: “Ipse Christus est et salutare Dei; quo uerbo exposuit quam misericordiam diceret ubi ait: Et ueniat super me misericordia tua, Domine.”

competes with the themes of grace and love and, hence, be related antithetically to judgment (iudicium), justice (iustitia), or truth (uertitas).1151

The Mercy Shown to Paul

For Augustine, misericordia describes primarily God’s gratuitous grace in Christ, for “if it were not gratis it would not be grace.”1152 Therefore, no merits entitle anybody to receive God’s grace. Augustine insists that even people who lived before the manifestation of Christ in the flesh benefited from God’s grace, for their hope in the incarnation had accomplished for them what the law could not. Indeed, according to Augustine, before a person comes to faith, nothing is owed to him or her except evil things in return for evils (mala pro malis). But through faith, God has repaid good for evil (bona pro malis), when Christ justified, through undeserved grace, even those who did not know him in the flesh.1153

As a concrete example of God’s underserved mercy, Augustine presents Paul who once was dead through his own unrighteousness, before he began to live through God’s grace.1154 Previously known as Saul, Paul, who had made havoc in Jerusalem among those who had believed in Christ, was met with God’s mercy on his way to Damascus, while he was “still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of

1152 En. Ps. 70.2.1: “Gratia gratis data est: nam nisi gratis esset, gratia non esset.”
1153 En. Ps. 118.7.1.
1154 See En. Ps. 118.7.2: “Vide illum Saulum, postea Paulum…”
the Lord.” But, as Paul often recalls, God repaid his evil with good, giving him life in place of death and crowning him in pity and mercy. Augustine claims that Paul could have accomplished nothing unless, as he himself reports, he had received the mercy that empowered him. Described as both imperfectus et perfectus, Paul is presented as someone whose life was renewed day by day through God’s mercy.

What God has accomplished in Paul he also accomplishes in his Church as a whole. For Augustine, Paul is the prototype of the Church ambulando in legem Domini. Indeed, however, although “the fullness of time” had already come with the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, the Church is met with what Paul calls the law of sin and is in need of constant renouatio. Her well-deserved misery is renewed day by day through the new birth given in baptism (regenerationis lauacrum), through the help of the Spirit (adiutorium Spiritus), and through the efficacy of her prayer to be forgiven her sins (oratio dominica). It is graced by the manifestation of Christ in the flesh and renewed by his mercy that the Church journeys toward her Christ, straining for what lies ahead.

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1156 See 1 Tim. 1:13-14.
1157 See 1 Cor. 7:25; Titus 3:5.
1158 En. Ps. 118.2.2; Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum 3.19.
1159 En. Ps. 118.19.7: “Fit ergo cor immaculatum membrorum et corporis Christi, gratia Dei per ipsum corporis caput, hoc est per ilesum Christum Dominum nostrum, per regenerationis lauacrum, ubi abolita sunt omnia praeterita peccata nostra, per spiritus adiutorium, per quod concupiscimus aduersus carmem, ne uincamur in pugna nostra; per dominicae orationis effectum, in qua dicimus: Dimitte nobis debita nostra. Ita donata nobis regeneratione, adiuta conflictione, fusa precatione, fit cor nostrum immaculatum, ut non confundamur.”
1160 Phil. 3:13-14. See En. Ps. 39.7: “Imo uero contemptis aliis, perge ad illum; obliviscens alia, memento illius; relinquens retro alia, extendere in illum.”
From Jerusalem to Jericho

Recast in the *peregrinatio* scheme, God’s *indebita misericordia* whereby the Church is brought back to life from her deathly condition\(^{1161}\) finds a fitting illustration in the well-known story of the Good Samaritan. Indeed, the parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates powerfully how the Lord redeems the Church from the Pit day by day and crowns her with steadfast love and mercy.\(^{1162}\)

Because Augustine insists that the journey toward Jerusalem involves trials and setbacks, it can appropriately be likened to the journey of the traveler who went down, in the reverse direction, from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among robbers. Wounded, left lying half-dead in the road and unable to walk, the traveler had nowhere to go or run to.\(^{1163}\) A priest and a Levite passed him by, but a Samaritan chanced that way and took pity on him. Augustine and many Fathers of the Church see in the Samaritan our Lord, who takes pity of the human race and the Church.\(^{1164}\)

\(^{1161}\) See En. Ps. 118.5.3: “Indebita Dei misericordia sanatur debita nostra miseria.”

\(^{1162}\) Lk 10:25-37. See Ps. 102:4: “Qui redivit de interitu vitam tuam; qui coronat te in misericordia et miserationibus.” En. Ps. 118.7.2; 29.6; 8.2; En. Ps. 102.4-7. The parable of the Good Samaritan is referred to in En. Ps. 30.2.8; 31.2.7; 60.8; 68.11; 88.2.5; 118.15.6; 121.5; 121.7; 125.15; 136.7; 137.13.

\(^{1163}\) En. Ps. 30.2.8: “Quo iret, quo fugeret, si ambulare non posset, semivivus in via, sauciatus vulneribus latronum? Quem transiens sacerdos praeteriit, transiens Levita praeteriit, transiens Samaritanus miseratus est, id est ipse Dominus, qui miseratus est genus humanum. Samarites enim custos interpretatur. Et quis nos custodit, si ille deserit?”

Hence, for Augustine the parable of the Good Samaritan is the parable of mercy *par excellence* because it describes the “condition of wayfaring humanity in this land where it is subject to death, having left paradise and the heavenly Jerusalem,” but upon which God lavishes his mercy.\(^{1165}\) Although robbers will always try to put the Church to death, God will always give her life in Christ.\(^{1166}\) Therefore, there cannot be a better theme for the Church’s song in the land of her pilgrimage than God’s mercy: “Misericordiam Domini in aeternum cantabo.”\(^{1167}\) This *canticum nouum* is not only a matter of cheerfulness but also a matter of love.\(^{1168}\)

On her journey toward the heavenly Jerusalem, the Church experiences God’s mercy as a foundational reality, whereby Christ reveals himself as her neighbor showering her with mercy and grace.\(^{1169}\) For Augustine, therefore, the parable of the Good Samaritan is not primarily meant to illustrate for us how to love one’s neighbor, but to illustrate the direct consequence of the incarnation, namely that the Word was made flesh so that he might be humankind’s neighbor.\(^{1170}\) Indeed, by showing himself

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\(^{1165}\) *En. Ps. 118.15.6.*

\(^{1166}\) *En. Ps. 118.30.7:* “Isti mortificant, tu uiuifica.”

\(^{1167}\) *Ps. 82:2. En. Ps. 118.15.6:* “Sed propter misericordiam quae per illum Samaritanum cum illo facta est, cantabiles illi erant iustificationes Dei in loco peregrinationis suae.” See also Ps. 101:1. *En. Ps. 118.26.1.*


\(^{1169}\) *Ps. 102:8.*

\(^{1170}\) *En. Ps. 118.12.5:* “Et Verbum caro factum est, ut esset et proximus meus.”
as a neighbor to the Samaritan, Jesus demonstrates that when mercy is due to him, even a Samaritan cannot be considered as a stranger.1171

**In the Valley of Weeping**

Upon reading Augustine’s interpretation of Ps. 118:55-56,1172 one realizes that God’s mercy is not directed only to humankind’s external wounds incurred during the earthly journey, but also to the sin incurred as a result of the pride of the first parents. Therefore, the journey from Jerusalem to Jericho can also describe humankind in the night of sin, in what one Psalm characterizes as the valley of weeping (vallis lacrimarum).1173 In a sense, the Church’s journey is an ascent from the valley of weeping to the place God has appointed.1174

In any case, because of Adam’s sin, the journey that began with the light of creation is now in its deepest night, in the expectation of the morning star, because the morning is “the time when, for those who were sitting in the shadow of death, light arose.”1175 Indeed, because of the humiliation suffered by Adam, the entire human creation is corrupted at its root and is subjected to futility. Although she is redeemed from Adam’s sin, the Church toils under the “heavy yoke that lies upon Adam’s children from the day they leave their mothers’ wombs, and burdens every

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1171 En. Ps. 118.8.2: “Patuitque in facienda misericordia neminem alienum esse deputandum ab eo qui diligit proximum.”


1173 Ps. 83:7. Augustine’s text reads in convalle plorationis instead of in valle lacrimarum. See En. Ps. 83.10; 119.1-2.

1174 See En. Ps. 119.2.

1175 En. Ps. 118.29.5. See Is. 9.2.
one of them until the day when they are buried in the earth." Therefore, the night represents the humiliated state, whereby humankind experiences the bitterness of being mortal, pride in behaving wickedly, and disgust at abandoning God’s law. Yet, in the darkness of this valley of weeping and death shines the light that has appeared in Christ, the true light enlightening all creatures. On her travel, the Church trudges along in the night, waiting in hope and patience, until the Lord comes. Precisely because it is in this night that she has been shown mercy as a pledge for her redemption, each member of the Church “must remember the name of God, to ensure that anyone who boasts may boast in the Lord,” for there is nothing that had happened to the Church which has not been given her through Christ. Furthermore, praise to God is particularly due when the Church realizes that, rather than being weakened, she has profited even from her tribulations in the valley of weeping.

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1176 En. Ps. 118.19.3: “Considerans huius mortalitatis miseriam, in qua iugum graue super filios Adam, a die exitus de uentre matris eorum, sic in omnibus pertenditur usque in diem sepultureae in matrem omnium, ut propter carnem concupiscentem aduersus spiritum, etiam regenerati gemere sub eius grauitate cogantur.”

1177 See En. Ps. 118.15.7.


1179 1 Cor. 4:5. See En. Ps. 49.10.

1180 1 Cor. 1:31. See En. Ps. 118.32.3: “Omnis enim qui audiuit a Patre et didicit, uenit ad eum qui justificat impium, ut non solum memoria retinendo, uerum etiam faciendo custodiat iustificationes Dei. Sic enim qui gloriatur, non in seipso, sed in Domino gloriatur, hymnusque eructatur.”

1181 1 Cor. 4:7. See En. Ps. 118.30.3.

1182 En. Ps. 118.31.4.
Midnight on the Journey: The Persecutions and Martyrdom

The night in the valley of weeping was the darkest when the Church was faced with persecutions, “when the cruelty of the persecutors waxed so fierce that the Church was almost blotted out from the earth.”\textsuperscript{1183} For Augustine, the persecutions mark midnight on the Church’s journey, because midnight symbolizes the most severe phase of tribulations, when the Church was invited to use even distress as a spur to confess God.\textsuperscript{1184}

Augustine maintains that the persecutions that are fruitful to the Church are those she faces as a result of her faithfulness to God’s law, for when someone loves God’s commandments and keeps them wholeheartedly, it often happens that “enemies arise, and then the commandments have to be kept in the teeth of their opposition.”\textsuperscript{1185} Accordingly, Augustine considers martyrdom as the most eminent form of faithfulness to the law and the most perfect manifestation of grace, which brings about steadfastness even in the midst of tribulations and persecutions.\textsuperscript{1186}

\textsuperscript{1183} En. Ps. 118.20.8: “Quod tacendum non fuit, propter dulcissimum martyrum nomen, qui procul dubio quando tanta persequentium crudelitas saeuiebat, ut ecclesia paulo minus consummaretur in terra…”
\textsuperscript{1184} En. Ps. 118.16.5.
\textsuperscript{1185} En. Ps. 118.31.7: “Plerumque autem dum mandata Dei custodiuntur, fiunt inimici contra quorum uoluntatem custodiuntur. tunc uero fortiter et testimonia custodienda sunt, ne persequentibus inimicis negentur.”
However, like the law, martyrdom itself is perfected only through love, through which the martyr becomes a *testis Christi*, so that “if someone lacks charity, even being burnt up for the sake of God’s testimonies is useless.”\footnote{En. Ps. 118.31.7. See 1 Cor. 13:3; En. Ps. 118.30.7. For Augustine, martyrdom is measured only by the love of Christ and not by one’s accomplishments. Hence, his oft-repeated formula, “martyrem non facit poena, sed causa.” See Sermo 94A.1; 138.2; 275.1; 285.2; 306A.1; 325.2; 327.1; 328.4; Epist. 89.2; 108.14; 185.2; 204; Ad Crescentium 3.51; En. Ps. 34.2.13; 43.1; 68.9; Tractatus in Job 88.3.1-2.} For Augustine, the martyrs are therefore those people “who were humiliated and subjected to various torments on account of their witness to Christ, and fought for the truth even to death.”\footnote{En. Ps. 118.9.2: “Vnde illos qui propter testimonium Christi diuersis passionibus humilati sunt, et usque ad mortem pro ueritate certarunt, non testes, quod latine utique possemus, sed graece martyres appellamus.”}

Because God who has commanded that his law be obeyed most earnestly (nimis),\footnote{Ps. 118:4: “Tu praecepisti mandata tua custodiri nimis.” See En. Ps. 118.4.1-2; 14.4.} martyrdom suffered in obedience to the law and for love of Christ is necessarily a grace from God, for the desire to obey the law perfectly and the will to sacrifice one’s life for Christ’s love are perfected only by him who inspires both will and work for his own purpose.\footnote{Phil. 2:13. See En. Ps. 118.15.9; 25.6; 29.1.} It is through God’s mercy that the martyrs refused to let go of the truth to save their lives and, by dying for the truth, found life.\footnote{En. Ps. 118.20.8.} Indeed, it is by God’s grace that some became martyrs and witnessed to the truth, while many others wanted to do it but were not able to.\footnote{En. Ps. 118.23.7: “Multi quippe uoluerunt, neque potuerunt.”}
Although the terms *martyr* and *martyrium* are not part of the Psalm’s vocabulary, they appear respectively twenty-nine and twenty-four times in En. Ps. 118, where Augustine connects them to the Latin *testimonia* of the Psalm, through the Greek original *μαρτυρία*. The inclusion of these terms in Augustine’s commentary is significant, because it indicates his willingness to set before his readers the concrete example of the martyrs as an expression of the Church’s perseverance in guarding God’s testimonies *usque in finem*. As Augustine points out, the happy coincidence that the Greek has *martyria* for the Latin *testimonia* should not be passed over in silence, because of the precious reality it evokes for the Church. For him, the single job (*officium*) of the martyrs has been to guard God’s testimonies, since God’s testimonies are guarded only when they are not disowned. As a result, the phrase “to guard God’s testimonies,” in all its variations, becomes for Augustine equivalent to the confession that leads to martyrdom.

In a sense, martyrdom elucidates the phrase, *in custodiendo uerba tua*, that appears in the central question-and-answer of Ps. 118: *In quo corrigit iunior uiam*

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1193 See En. Ps. 118.9.2; 9.3; 14.3; 20.8; 21.7; 23.7; 25.5; 28.7; 29.2; 30.5; 31.7. On the importance of martyrdom in En. Ps. 118, see La Bonnardière, *Recheches de chronologie*, 140-141.

1194 En. Ps. 118.20.8: “Atque ut posset perseverare usque in finem, secundum misericordiam, inquit, tuam uiuifica me, et custodiam testimonia oris tui.”

1195 En. Ps. 118.20.8: “…quae græcus habet *martyria* Quod tacendum non fuit, propter dulcissimum martyrum nomen.” See also En. Ps. 118.9.2: “Testimonia graece *martyria* nuncupantur, quo uerbo iam utimur pro latino.”

1196 En. Ps. 118.31.7: “Custodiuntur testimonia Dei, dum non negantur. Hoc est martyrum officium, quia testimonia graece martyria nuncupantur.”

1197 En. Ps. 118.23.3: “Sic et superius, ut eum Deus uiuificaret, oratu in humiliatione persecutionis, ubi ait: *Paolo minus consummaverunt me in terra; ego autem non dereliqui mandata tua: secundum misericordiam tuam uiuifica me, et custodiam testimonia*, id est martyria oris tui.” In Psalm 118, the phrases *custodire legem*, *-testimonia*, *-mandata*, *-iudicia*, *-uерba*, *eloquiu, or praecepta* appear in the following verses: 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 17, 21, 22, 33, 34, 44, 55, 56, 57, 60, 63, 67, 88, 101, 106, 115, 129, 134, 136, 145, 146, 158, 167, and 168.
suam? In custodiendo uerba tua.\textsuperscript{1198} As a consequence, Augustine’s commentary on Psalm 118 seems to suggest that it is through the testimonies of her martyrs who guarded God’s words even to the point of death, that the Church straightens her paths on her way to eternal life, because the \textit{iunior} to which the Psalm refers represents the Church, “the younger people, the new humanity and the new self, the singer of the new song, the heir to the new covenant.”\textsuperscript{1199}

As some scholars have noted, it is significant that Augustine does not provide any concrete examples of individual martyrs in his writings, even if their celebration had become particularly popular in Africa, where the Greek word \textit{martyria} was now very familiar to the ears of the people.\textsuperscript{1200} In En. Ps. 118, the closest Augustine comes to referring to individual martyrs is his mention of the sufferings of Esther, Daniel and the three men in the furnace.\textsuperscript{1201} However, there is no doubt that he considers that the blood shed by the martyrs had enriched the Church and brought about an enormous crop all over the world, even to the point of contributing to the conversion

\textsuperscript{1198} Ps. 118:9. En. Ps. 118.5.1.

\textsuperscript{1199} En. Ps. 118.5.3: “Sed iste iunior populus, gratiae filius, homo nouus, cantator noui cantici, heres testamenti noui…”


\textsuperscript{1201} En. Ps. 118.29.8. in his sermons, Augustine refers often to the Maccabees as martyrs, but insists that even though they suffered for the law of Moses they were Christians, because they anticipated in their deeds the name Christian that was publicized much later on by the Christian martyrs. See Sermo 300.2. References to the Maccabees appear in En. Ps. 33.2.22; 36.3.9; 78.3, 8; 90.11; 137.14; 148.11.
of the persecutors themselves who, because of the martyr’s steadfast bravery, had come to believe.\textsuperscript{1202} About this impressive success, he writes:

This is a fact; we know it, we remember it, we acknowledge it. The whole earth is reddened with the blood of martyrs; heaven is flowering with martyrs’ garlands; our churches are adorned by the memorials of martyrs; our calendars are studded with martyrs’ festivals; cures obtained through martyrs’ merits grow ever more frequent.\textsuperscript{1203}

While he considers martyrdom as the most perfect way in which the Church honors God, Augustine also sees the crowning of the martyrs as the best way in which God glorifies his Church, conforming her to the sacrifice of Christ and giving her life instead of death. Hence, in accordance with God’s mercy, true life is granted to the martyrs, “lest by clinging to natural life they should deny the life that matters, and, by denying it, lose it.”\textsuperscript{1204} However, if the Lord had not endowed the martyrs with patient perseverance, it is not only the bodies of the martyrs that would have been slaughtered in the persecutions, but also the very soul of the Church.\textsuperscript{1205} Martyrdom appears therefore as another expression of God’s mercy and care for both the martyrs and the Church. In fact, it is one of God’s greatest gifts to his Church, for the Church receives true life from the sacrifices offered as \textit{testimonia mirabilia} in imitation of

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[1202] En. Ps. 118.31.2: “Sed spolia multa inuenta sunt, quando patientiam mirati martyrum, etiam qui persecute sunt crediderunt; et qui regem nostrum detrimento militum eius sunt damnificare moliti, ab illo sunt insuper adquisiti.” See also En. Ps. 118.32.6. On the idea that martyrs contribute to the growth of the Church, see Tertullian, Apologia 50.
\item[1203] En. Ps. 118.30.5: “Factum est, nouimus, recolimus, agnosceamus. Purpurata est uniuersa terra sanguine martyrum; floret caelum coronis martyrum, ornatae sunt ecclesiae memorias martyrum, insignita sunt tempora natalibus martyrum, crebrescunt sanitates meritis martyrum.”
\item[1204] En. Ps. 118.20.8: “Viuificati sunt enim, ne amando uitam, negarent uitam, et negando uitam, amitterent uitam.”
\item[1205] See En. Ps. 118.23.3: “Vbi intellegitit, si ipse non uiuificet donando patientiam, propter quod dictum est: In uestra patientia possidebitis animas uestradas; et de quo dictum est: Quoniam ab ipso est patientia mea; non corpus in persecutione mortificari, sed animam, non custodiendo martyria et iudicia iustitiae Dei.”
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That is why Augustine does not hesitate to invite the Church to desire and pursue the glory of the martyrs: “Let the Church suffer patiently what the head of the Church suffered patiently.”

Given life gratuitously, the Church has escaped from the hunters’ snare and can exclaim in the words of another Psalm: “If the Lord had not been among us, perhaps they would have swallowed us alive.” More fundamentally, however, because of the victory given her through the martyrs, she can already sing her song of triumph and taunt death, which has been defeated and swallowed up in Christ’s victory: “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?”

Because she is not weakened by the persecutions, but rather is given life through the martyrs, the Church has good reason to praise God seven times a day, that is, always. And these praises are due even if some of her members, lacking the fortitude to endure the reproaches cast at them when persecution waxed heavy, have denied Christ. Indeed, since the bargain is that “whoever conquers will be

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1206 See Ps. 118:129: “Mirabilia testimonia tua; propter hoc scrutata est ea anima mea.”
1207 En. Ps. 93.8: “Patiatur et ecclesia patienter, quod passus est caput ecclesia patienter.”
1208 Ps. 123:2-3: “Nisi quia Dominus erat in nobis, fortasse viuos absorbuissent nos.” See En. Ps. 118.15.3; 30.5; En. Ps. 123.2-3.
1209 1 Cor. 15:55: “Ubi est, mors, contenttio tua? Ubi est, mors, aculeus tuus?” In the Enarrationes in Psalmos, Augustine’s quotation of this verse has Ubi est, mors, contenttio tua? Ubi est, mors, aculeus tuus? (En. Ps. 123.4; 125.14; 127.16; 143.9; 148.4). Other works have either the version of the En. Ps. (Sermo 151.2; 163.9) or Ubi est, mors, victoria tua? Ubi est, mors, stimulus tuus? (Sermo 233.5) or even a combination of the two versions (Opus imperfectus c. Iulianum 6.40).
1210 En. Ps. 118.31.4. See also En. Ps. 110.9.
1211 En. Ps. 118.13.3.
those who do not endure the persecution but turn aside from witnessing to Christ by denying him, fail to pass the test. Yet, even when some Christians abandon and deny God’s testimonies under the pressure of persecuting enemies or for fear of death (timor mortis), the Church is still crowned with the victory given her through Jesus Christ. Indeed, God’s mercy toward those who flinch under persecution is demonstrated by the fact that he counts them in his Church. In fact, through these lapsi, God disciplines his Church and diminishes her pride, showing her again and again that there is nothing that she has that she did not receive. It is by God’s grace that the Church is what she is. Therefore, as Augustine writes, in the Church “there is no place whatever for human pride to rear its head, for when God rewards us with good things he is rewarding his own gifts.”

This is particularly true when God crowns us with compassion and mercy, like in the case of Peter who trusted himself but failed the test. However, upon realizing his weakness, he found grace before the Lord and was eventually untrusted with the care of the Church. For Augustine, Peter is the best example of both those “qui

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1212 Rev. 2:10.26; 3:12.21
1213 See En. Ps. 118.13.1; 30.5.
1214 See En. Ps. 118.31.7.
1215 See 1 Cor. 15:57.
1216 1 Cor. 4:7. See En. Ps. 118.13.3: “Quoniam quem diligit Dominus corripit; flagellat autem omnem filium quem recipit.”
1217 1 Cor. 15:10.
1218 En. Ps. 118.7.3: “Nusquam ergo se extollat humana superbia: donis suis Deus retribuit bona praemia.” See also En. Ps. 102.2; Epist. 194.5.19.
1219 En. Ps. 118.13.1. See also En. Ps. 118.15.2.
defecerunt ad horam negando” and those who, after repenting, “martyrii palmam quae perdidierant, reparata confessione, sumserunt.” Thrown off course by fear of death, Peter denied Christ for a time but was regenerated by his tears and was later crowned for his confession. As typus ecclesiae, he symbolizes the penitent Church whose tears, shed over her transgressions, can be likened to a second baptism. The link between tears and baptism underscores again the importance of God’s mercy in readmitting the lapsi into the Church’s fold. Just as baptism marks the entry into the Church, a penitent’s tears mark his re-entry in the Church.

As a symbol of the Church in her weakness, Peter underscores again the importance of God’s mercy in the making up of the Church. It is through God’s mercy that those who have weakened and denied Christ for a time, but have later repented and come to life, are counted as members of the Church. The admission of the lapsi into Christ’s body results from the complete gratuitousness of God’s

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1221 En. Ps. 118.13.3: “Quia etsi ad horam negauit timore turbatus, tamen flendo est reparatus, et confitendo est postea coronatus.”

1222 En. Ps. 118.13.3; 20.8.

1223 See En. Ps. 118.27.9 for Augustine’s comment on Ps. 118:136: “Exitus aquarum descenderunt oculi mei, quia non custodierunt legem tuam.”


1225 See Sermo 76.4; Sermo 137.3; En. Ps. 60.3; 90.2.2; In Ioan. 50.12; 7.14; En. Ps. 108.1

1226 En. Ps. 118.13.1.
grace and mercy toward his Church. As Martin has observed, in En. Ps. 118 “Augustine offers a model for the spiritual journey that is marked by a progressive rather than a success model.”¹²²⁷ For Augustine, the Church is a corpus permixtum, where Jerusalem is held captive in Babylon,¹²²⁸ and where the humble-hearted who did not flinch under persecution, and the proud who failed the test, are welcomed into one fold.¹²²⁹ This highlights the nature of the Church as the body in its relationship to the head: only in her body can the Church be likened to a prodigal son;¹²³⁰ only in her body does the Church wander far from her source of life;¹²³¹ only in her body does she lie in the shadow of death;¹²³² only in her body does she sin;¹²³³ only in her body is she lost.¹²³⁴ On the other hand, of the head it is written that he knew no sin, but was made sin in his body so that we might be made righteous in him.¹²³⁵

Upon concluding his commentary on Psalm, Augustine points out that it is at the very end that the Psalmist reveals himself openly and shows us who has been speaking throughout the Psalm.¹²³⁶ Augustine accurately notes that that speaker reveals himself in a prayer: “I have strayed like a lost sheep; seek your servant, for I

¹²²⁸ See En. Ps. 136.1
¹²³⁰ See En. Ps. 118.5.2.
¹²³¹ See En. Ps. 118.23.5.
¹²³² See En. Ps. 118.29.5.
¹²³³ See En. Ps. 118.2.1.
¹²³⁴ See En. Ps. 118.9.2.
¹²³⁵ See 2 Cor. 5:21.
¹²³⁶ En. Ps. 118.32.7: “Nouissime prorsus aperit se, et quae persona per totum psalmum loquebatur, ostendit.”
have not forgotten your commandments.”\textsuperscript{1237} And with remarkable attention to philological details, he points out that there is only one syllable in Greek to distinguish ζήσον from ζήτησον, which explains why some codices read give life instead of seek. On his part, he concludes:

Whichever is right, let the lost sheep be sought and the lost sheep be given life. For the sake of this one sheep the shepherd left ninety-nine in the mountains and was torn by Jewish thorns as he looked for it.\textsuperscript{1238}

For Augustine, God’s solicitude for humankind is captured by the image of the shepherd in search for the lost sheep, both among the Jews and among the Gentiles, both among the people under the law and among the people outside the law. For “if those who loved God’s commandments were awaiting his salvation, how much more necessary was Jesus, God’s salvation, for the saving of people who did not even love the commandments?”\textsuperscript{1239} God, who promised to seek out what has perished and to call back the one that has strayed,\textsuperscript{1240} seeks and finds those who are in need of his underserved grace and make them his Church.\textsuperscript{1241} But until he has brought humanity into one fold, the Church is still being sought among the nations, through the blood of the shepherd.\textsuperscript{1242} Wherever she may now be lying, the lost sheep is being sought and its hope is to be found.

\textsuperscript{1237} Ps. 118:176: “Erraui, inquit, sicutouis perdita; quaere seruum tuum, quia mandata tua non sum oblitus.”

\textsuperscript{1238} En. Ps. 118.32.7:“Sed quodlibet horum sit,ouis perdita quaeratur,ouis perdita uiuificetur, propter quam pastor eius nonaginta nouem dimisit in montibus, et eam quaerens, iudaicis laceratus est uepribus.” The mention of the Jewish thorns is one of the only negative references to the Jews in the entire commentary.

\textsuperscript{1239} En. Ps. 118.31.6: “Si ergo exspectabant salutare Dei, qui mandata eius dilexerunt, quanto magis necessarius erat Iesus, hoc est salutare Dei, saluis faciendis eis qui mandata eius non dilexerunt?”

\textsuperscript{1240} Ez. 34:16.

\textsuperscript{1241} En. Ps. 118.5.3; 32.7.

\textsuperscript{1242} En. Ps. 118.32.7.
Hope above Measure

Augustine’s vision of the Church leads even to a greater hope about what lies ahead. In his philological remarks on the translation of the Greek ἐπελπίζω, which appears in the Psalm’s Greek text, Augustine notes that the word is better translated as supersperare (to hope above measure). Although this composite form is unusual in Latin, Augustine maintains that it conveys more accurately the abundance of God’s mercy stored for the Church. Indeed, according to him, the mercy shown to the Church on her journey toward the heavenly Jerusalem is only a pledge for greater gifts still to come. Renewed day by day by God’s mercy, the Church now looks forward to the implementation of the everlasting promises that will be given her in the future, when she will be fully crowned in compassion and mercy.

While sperare expresses the hope that leads the Church to wait patiently for what she believes but does not see as yet, supersperare conveys more accurately that “what is to come is greater than can be expressed.” Indeed, for these greater gifts, the Church can only hope above measure. What the term supersperare implies

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1243 See En. Ps. 118.13.3; 14.1; 19.2; 20.1; 24.2. On the Greek Fathers’ interpretation of this term, see Marguerite Harl, “Y a-t-il une influence du ‘grec biblique’ sur la langue spirituelle des chrétiens? Exemples tirés du psaume 118 et de ses commentateurs d’Origène à Théodoret,” in *La Bible et les Pères* (eds. André Benoit and Pierre Prigent; Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1971), 246.

1244 See En. Ps. 118.6.1.

1245 See Epist. 194.5.19.

1246 En. Ps. 118.20.1: “Quae spes facit ut per patientiam exspectetur quod a credentibus non uidetur. Etiam hic graecus illud uerbum habet, quod quidam nostri interpretes supersperauit transferre maluerunt; quia procul dubio plus futurum est, quam dici potest.”

1247 See Eph. 3:20-21: “Ei autem qui potens est omnia facere superabundanter quam petimus et intellegimus secundum virtutem quae operator in nobis, ipsi gloria in ecclesia et in Christo Iesu in omnes generationes saeculi saeculorum.”
therefore is the superabundance of grace with which God will repay the abundance of sin. Precisely because “what God does is more wonderful than we ask or understand, it would not be enough to hope for those things; we must hope above measure.”

In his commentary of Psalm 118, Augustine emphasizes that the law points to grace, but he also insists that it falls short in indicating the full measure of this grace. In walking in the ways of the Lord, the Church has finally understood that grace is above all measure. Therefore, while God’s law fills us with wonder, his gracious mercy fills us even with greater wonder. By walking the full extent of God’s law in latitudine caritatis, The Church has discovered that she is enshrouded in the mystery of God’s mercy from start to end. As Augustine writes:

For, just as we have obtained mercy from the very beginning of faith, not because we were believers but in order that we might be believers, so in the end, when there will be eternal life, he will crown us, as scripture says, in compassion and mercy (Ps 102:4). It is not in vain, therefore, that we sing to God, And his mercy will come before me (Ps 58:11), and, His mercy will follow after me (Ps 22:6).

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1248 En. Ps. 118.19.2: “Hinc enim etiam illud in alio psalmo legitur: Quam magna multitudo dulcedinis tuae, Domine, quam abscondisti timentibus te! Nunc ergo quamdiu timent, nondum uident; sed uidebunt, et iucundabuntur, quia et ilic sequitur: Perfectisti autem sperantibus in te; et hic, quia in uerba tua speravi, vel supersperavi, ut in uerbo ita composito et cura interpretis diligentioris expresso, etiam illud intellegamus, quod potens est Deus facere supra quam petimus et intellegimus; ut quia supra quam petimus et intellegimus sunt, parum sit ea sperare, sed debeamus supersperare.”

1249 Epist. 194.5.19: “Sicut enim ab initio fidei misericordiam consecuti sumus, non quia fideles eramus, sed ut essemus; sic in fine, quo erit vita aeterna, coronabit nos, sicut scriptum est, in miseratione et misericordia. Non itaque frustra Deo cantatur: Et misericordia eius praeveniet me; et: Misericordia eius subsequeatur me.”
CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to present Augustine’s understanding of Christ as the Grace of the Law. The many issues surrounding Augustine’s *Enarrationes in Psalmos* have been presented in Part I, in which I tried to show how these expositions fit into the career of the Bishop of Hippo who, according to Possidius, “taught and preached the word of salvation in private and in public, at home and in the church […], both in his finished books and extemporaneous sermons.”

Because it is the longest, the last and certainly one of the most complex of Augustine’s commentaries on the Psalms, *Enarratio in Psalmum* 118 raises even more difficult issues of its own, which I have tried to present in Part II of this dissertation. For a Psalm of which Augustine knew earlier commentators, like Ambrose and Hilary of Poitiers, it is intriguing that he did not see it fit to refer to them. In any case, the commentary appears as a work of maturity in which Augustine combines and articulates the best of his theological intuitions.

Written in the course of many years, probably between 422 and 428, the composition of this exposition covers roughly the years during which Augustine planned and eventually wrote his unfinished *Retractiones*, a work with which En.

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1250 Vita 7: “Et docebat ac praedicabat ille privatim et publice, in domo et in ecclesia salutis verbum cum omni fiducia […], libris confectis et repentinis sermonibus.”
Ps. 118 shares a concern for precision and accuracy. The unique nature of the Retractationes, a rare example in the history of literature, has been rightly noted by commentators. The number and the nature of the critical and grammatical observations of En. Ps. 118, as well as the cross-references within the commentary, demonstrate a work written with care. Although the use of the Greek in the assessment of the biblical text as described in the De doctrina is noticeable in other works, it is best exemplified in En. Ps. 118. Both the effective use of Greek codices and the eclectic nature of the Latin biblical text used for this commentary may be an additional indication that it was written over a long period of time and completed toward the end of Augustine’s career.

Augustine was aware of Jerome’s translation projects as early as 395. However, as best as can be determined, his basic text of Psalm 118 is definitely different from Jerome’s Vulgate and Psalterium Hebraicum. It appears to be close to a text of the Psalterium Romanum family, which has been somehow contaminated by, or rather, corrected with a text of the Psalterium Veronense group.

Given that Psalm 118 is one of the most quoted Psalms in all of Augustine’s works, it is fair to suggest that, by the time of the composition of En. Ps. 118, he has

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1251 See De doctr. 2.14.21.

1252 See Epist. 28; 71; 82; 261.5; De doctr. 4.7.15. Anne-Isabelle Bouton-Touboulic, “Autorité et tradition: La traduction latine de la Bible selon saint Jérôme et saint Augustin,” Aug 45 (2005): 185-229.

1253 See especially vv. 53, 57, 71, 85, 158. On Jerome’s authorship or revision of the Psalterium Romanum, see Jerome’s own preface to the Vulgate, as well as the works of Alberto Vaccari (“I salteri di s. Girolamo e di s. Agostino”), Donatien de Bruyne (“Le problème du Psautier Romain,” RBen 42 (1930): 101-126), and Robert Weber (Le Psautier Romain, esp. vii-ix).
familiarized himself with this text and may have even commented earlier on part of it, perhaps in the context of a course or a series of lectures, as Anne-Marie La Bonnardière has suggested. Nevertheless, the prologue and the epilogue set the thirty-two *sermones* of En. Ps. 118 as a whole and these *homiliai* represent likely practical divisions rather than a homiletic program. Although La Bonnardière’s proposal seems to be the most satisfactory suggestion with regard to the *Sitz im Leben* for En. Ps. 118, deciding how any earlier Augustine’s compositions on Ps. 118 have influenced and fit into the final work cannot be adequately determined. In any case, as they stand, the thirty-two sermons of En. Ps. 118 seem to belong to an extra liturgical context and, in all likelihood, were never preached. In fact, although they are both oral performances, the homily (liturgical sermon) and the course (exegetical discourse) require certainly different levels of rhetorical involvement and sophistication. Throughout Augustine’s commentary on Ps. 118, the role of the expositor is so omnipresent that it overshadows completely the audience that would have been perceptible if we were dealing with a series of *sermones in populum*.

Like in the case of the last *tractatus in Ioannem*, the *sermones* of En. Ps. 118 seem to have been dictated by Augustine in order to complete the corpus of his existing commentaries on the Psalms. Hildegung Müller reminds us that “While

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1254 La Bonnardière, *Recherches de chronologie*, 141.
1255 This suggestion has been confirmed by the discovery of Epist. 23A*: “Et ut faciam de Iohannis quoque euangelio ea quae restant, dictare iam coepi populares tractatus non prolixos mittendos Carthaginem ea conditio, ut si uult idem senex noster sibi ceteros mitti, <dicat> neque cum dixerit edere differat. Iam sex dictaui; noctes enim sabbati et dominici ipsis proprie deputau. itaque dictaui ex quo ueni, id est a tertio Idus Septembris usque ad Kalendas Decembres uersuum ferme sex milia.” See Marie-François Berrouard, “L’activité littéraire de saint Augustin du 11 septembre au 1er décembre 419 d’après la lettre 23A* à Possidius de Calama,” in *Les lettres de saint Augustin découvertes par Johannes Divjak* (eds. Claude Lepelley, et al.; EAA 98; Paris: Institut d’études
Augustine rarely if ever went so far as to fake orality, he seems to have gone to great
lengths to stage it.\textsuperscript{1256} However, between faking and staging, there is the possibility
of editing: both the prologue and the first eight sermones may have undergone some
editorial work to fit either the character of many of Augustine’s previous
commentaries or his idea that biblical exegesis in general was something to be done
in public.\textsuperscript{1257}

The suggestion that Augustine composed the sermones of En. Ps. 118 for the
use of future preachers rests on one important phrase of the prologue and it cannot be
lightly dismissed as it finds support among many outstanding scholars.\textsuperscript{1258} But I have
some difficulties in reconciling this proposal with the peculiar features of this
commentary as a whole. In particular, I am not convinced that this long, difficult and
full of critical notes text was intended specifically either for a few knowledgeable
preachers-to-be (Kannengiesser) or whatever less accomplished ones (Müller,
Berrouard), rather than for an audience unknown to us (in a course-like context?) and
to the future reader that Augustine had in mind when he began to revise his works.\textsuperscript{1259}

\textsuperscript{1256} Müller, “Preacher: Augustine and his Congregation,” 304.

\textsuperscript{1257} See Müller, “Preacher: Augustine and his Congregation,” 304-305. On similar issues with
regard to the last seventy tractatus in Ioannem, see Berrouard, BA 74A (1993), 26-38.

\textsuperscript{1258} En. Ps. 118. Prol. 23-25 (CCL 40:1665): “Statui autem per sermones id agere, qui proferantur
in populis, quas Graeci ομιλίας uocant.” See De doctr. 4.62; Kannengiesser, “Enarratio in psalmum
CXVIII,” 364; Müller, “Enarrationes in Psalmos,” 831; idem, “Preacher: Augustine and his
Congregation,” 304; Berrouard, BA 74A (1993), 39-44.

\textsuperscript{1259} See Retr. Prol. 2; Matilde Catalbiano, “Agostino e i suoi libri: Dalla composizione alla
Like in most *Enarrationes*, the structure of En. Ps. 118 is sophisticated. In Chapter VIII of this study, I have suggested a structure based on opening and closing statements, prayer invocations, and notions of analysis. While Augustine comments the Psalm *seriatim*, he highlights only a specific groups of verses, in order to underline the theological themes he wishes to present. Hence, the commentary is written as if it were a piece of music composed on an initial theme (the law), whose basic melodic line is then extended and developed in a series of variations underlining the main theme (sin, faith, grace, mercy, justification, prayer, martyrdom, etc.).

The identification of the Church as the *iunior* mentioned in the central question-and answer of verse 9 becomes particularly important in the theological layout of En. Ps. 118 as it sets the Church as the subject invited to correct his ways by walking in those of the Lord. As Thomas Martin rightly notes, to change one’s ways for God’s ways requires sacrifices, determination and grace:

Augustine’s expansive exposition offers a comprehensive, dynamic, and demanding vision of the Christian life: one where grace both prompts and supports a life marked by love and humility, intelligence and service; one that provides a model that does justice to the redemption wrought by Christ.

Scholars realize now how prominently the principle of the *Totus Christus* features in Augustine’s hermeneutics of conversion. By identifying the voice of the Church as body of Christ in the very biblical text, Augustine creates a textual world with which every member of the Church can identify. Therefore, as he maintains, “when we recognize our own voice (in the Psalms) we can hardly remain unmoved,

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1260 See Simonetti, *Commento ai Salmi*, xxvi.

1261 See Ps. 118:5: “In quo corrigit iunior uiam suam? In custodiendo uerba tua.”

1262 Martin, “Exercises in Grace,” 159.
and our joy is all the more intense as we feel ourselves to be present there.”  

More importantly, however, the notion of the *Totus Christus* steeps the Church, as it were, into the words of Scripture and expresses her intimate union with the incarnate Word, “the perfect man (Eph. 4:13) in whom we are each of us members.”  

For Augustine, the identity of the Church flows from her intimate rootedness in the incarnate Christ, whose ways she experiences as truth and mercy (Ps. 24:10).  

Augustine asserts that the essence of the Church rests on her proclamation of God’s testimonies so that they may be dear as they become clear to many. This is her *suavis exercitatio*, because God wills that his commandments be preached everywhere. Indeed, as Augustine comments:

> God teaches from within, but faith comes through hearing. And how will people hear without a preacher? God gives the increase, unquestionably, but that does not mean there is no need for planting and watering.  

As minister of the word, the Church preaches God’s law of truth and mercy. But her proclamation can be effective only if she understands the law as grace and perceives

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1263 En. Ps. 59.1: “Ac per hoc quando uoces nostras agnoscimus, sine affectu agnoscere non possumus: et tanto magis delectamur, quando indidem nos esse sentimus.”  
1264 Sermo 341.1: “[… quodam modo totus Christus, in plenitudine Ecclesiae, id est, caput et corpus, secundum plenitudinem perfecti cuiusdam viri, in quo viro singuli membra sumus.”  
1267 En. Ps. 118.6.4; 8.2.  
1268 En. Ps. 118.32.4: “Quamuis enim Deus doceat intrinsecus, tamen fides ex auditu est. Et quomodo audiant sine praedicante? Neque enim quia Deus dat incrementum, ideo non est plantandum et rigandum.”
how she herself relates foundationally to that grace. Therefore, to understand the Church, one has to address the following questions which Augustine formulates so eloquently in his commentary on Ps. 103:

How does the Church grow, and develop, and reach perfection? How is she oriented to an immortal destiny? What kind of proclamation makes her known? For what high mysteries do we venerate her? Under what sacred signs is she hidden? How does preaching reveal her?\textsuperscript{1269}

En. Ps. 118 is an attempt to answer these questions, by suggesting that the Church exists \textit{ab initio} and is headed toward the heavenly Jerusalem. For Augustine, the law was given to the Church and humankind as the grace of \textit{beatitudo}, for which the incarnate Christ provides the unmistakable testimonies. By understanding the law as grace, the Church is able to understand what God has done to her through Christ and assess her hope on the journey. The centrality of Christ’s mysteries, in Augustine’s interpretation, does not, however, diminish the role of the law. In fact, the relationship between law, happiness and eternal life is reinforced as Augustine refers to Jesus’ statement on the commandments as the way to eternal life:

The only life that deserves to be called simply “life” without qualification is eternal, happy life. That alone merits the name. In comparison with that, what we have now should be called death more properly than life. True life is envisaged in the gospel, where someone is bidden, \textit{If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments} (Mt 19:17).\textsuperscript{1270}

However, Augustine emphasizes that God’s commandments, which could not possibly be implemented by fear, are fulfilled only through love, which “has been

\textsuperscript{1269} En. Ps. 103.3.25: “Ipsa autem Ecclesia quomodo accepit incrementa, successus, perfectionem? Quomodo destinatur ad finem quemdam immortalitatis? Quibus praecociis praedicatur? quibus mysteriis commendatur? quibus sacramentis occultatur? qua praedicatione revelatur?”

\textsuperscript{1270} En. Ps. 118.19.4: “Ipsa enim et sineullo additamento dicitur uita, nec intellegitur nisi aeterna et beata, tamquam sola dicenda sit uita, in cuius comparatione ista quam ducimus, mors potius sit appellanda quam uita; quale illud est in euangelio: \textit{Si uis uenire ad uitam, serva mandata}.”
poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given us." And such gift of the Spirit results from the donum Dei par excellence, Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word.

In En. Ps. 118, Augustine understands baptism, the help of the Holy Spirit and the forgiveness of sin as concrete benefits of the incarnation, namely the dispensation of mercy to humankind on a journey from sin to hope above hope, a journey that can be likened to the journey from Jerusalem to Jericho, as in the Parable of the Good Samaritan:

As for us, we were all born traveling a long way away from our Lord, from the moment when he breathed the breath of life into the first man. Our home country is in heaven, its citizens the angels. Letters were sent to us from our home country, urging us to return, and they are read out every day in our congregations.

Both the New and the Old Testament provide Augustine with concrete examples that illustrate God’s dispensation of grace throughout a human history interpreted as an ascent toward the heavenly Jerusalem. These examples become the *figurae* *Ecclesiae* that illustrate how God teaches, disciplines and leads the Church to a better knowledge of the law and its grace, redeeming her from the pit and crowning her in love and mercy (Ps. 102:4). Among these *figurae Ecclesiae*, the martyrs hold an

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1271 Rom. 5:5. En Ps. 118.26.8.
1272 Sermo 378: “Nos a Domino nostro, ex quo inspiravit primo homini flatum vitae, peregrinantes omnes nati sumus. Patria nostra in caelis est, cives Angeli. De patria nostra, ut ad reditum exhortemur, litterae nobis missae sunt, quae quotidie in populis recitantur.”
1274 See Émilien Lamirande, “Ecclesiae Figurae,” *AugL* 2 (1996-2002), 721-732. I should point out that the use of biblical figures as *imagines, typi, figuras, formae, exempla, allegoriae, or signa* of the Church opens a wide field of research with regard to Augustine’s typological exegesis. I would suggest that when they are applied to the Church, which exists *ab initio*, most of these terms must be interpreted in connection with *sacramentum* and *mysterium*, so that they are not merely understood as
exceptional place, because by their unique witness they express perfectly in their flesh the original unity of Christ the head and the Church his body. As such they exemplify both the *latitudo fidei* and the *latitudo caritatis*. Because of the martyrs, who walked along the way on which the Lord himself and the apostles went first, the narrow, thorny and rough way of the commandments is now smooth and has become a source of life for the Church.\textsuperscript{1275}

With an extensive combination of scriptural texts to illustrate these ideas, En. Ps. 118 exemplifies powerfully what La Bonnardière and Hombert have characterized respectively as *orchestration scripturaire* and *nœuds scripturaires* in Augustine’s exegesis.\textsuperscript{1276} In my opinion, the major themes of Augustine’s commentary on Ps. 118 crystalize around the ideas expressed in Ps. 24:10, Ps. 102:4, Rom. 5:20 and Gal. 5:6,\textsuperscript{1277} with the result that the love of the law celebrated in Ps. 118 is turned into a *formae* or *sacramenta futuri* of the Church but as the concrete embodiment and the actual realization of the union between the head and his body. Thus, Abraham is not only a symbol of the Church, but he is the Church when she believes, Job is the Church when she loves without interest, Peter is the Church when she repents, Paul is the Church walking by faith... Some indications in this direction can already be found in the following studies: Pontet, *L’exégèse d’Augustin*, 257-303 (“Les sacramenta de l’Écriture”); Charles Couturier, “*Sacramentum et mysterium* dans l’œuvre de saint Augustin,” in *Études augustinienes* (eds. Henri Rondet et al.), 161-274, esp. 257-268; Robert Markus, “*Imago and Similitudo* in Augustine,” *REAug* 10 (1964): 125-143; Armand Strubel, “*Allegoria in factis et allegoria in verbis.*** Poétique: Revue de théorie et d’analyse littéraires* 23 (1975): 342-357, esp. 342-347; Marie-François Berrouard, “O sacramentum pietatis, o signum uriritatis, o uinculus caritatis,” BA 72 (1977), 814-815; Robert W. Bernard, *In Figura: Terminology Pertaining to Figurative Exegesis in the Works of Augustine of Hippo* (Diss.; Princeton University, 1984), esp. 243-313; Basil Studer, “*Sacramentum et exemplum* chez saint Augustin,” *SpPa* 16 (1985): 570-588.

\textsuperscript{1275} See Sermo 295.8.


\textsuperscript{1277} Ps. 24:10: “Universae viae Domini misericordia et veritas;” Ps. 102:4: “Qui redimit de interitu vitam tuam, qui coronat te in misericordia et miserationibus;” Rom. 5:20: “Lex autem subintrandit ut abundaret delictum; ubi autem abundavit delictum superabundavit gratia;” Gal. 5:6: “Nam in Christo Iesu neque circumsicio aliquid valet neque praeputium, sed fides quae per caritatem operatur.”
celebration of God’s love manifested in the incarnate Christ. To quote the title of a book honoring Brian Daley, I believe that En. Ps. 118 is a commentary written “in the shadow of the incarnation.”\textsuperscript{1278} As Joanne McWilliam has shown, Augustine’s Christology has been relatively neglected until recently.\textsuperscript{1279} Scholars realize now that Christology overshadows every aspect of Augustine’s theology and exegesis.

Of course, by interpreting Christ as the grace of the law, Augustine had an opportunity to revisit his theology of grace beyond the Pelagian controversy. As Brian Daley points out, the ultimate key to understanding grace lies in Augustine’s “very conception of the being of God, as utterly beyond human understanding or explanation, yet continually and even personally involved in human history from its very beginning.”\textsuperscript{1280} Since this involvement in human history is always in Christ, it necessarily involves his members who are made participants in the incarnate Christ \textit{ab initio}. In a sense, history—which for Augustine is foremost what is written in Scripture—is wholly concerned with this mystery of unity and grace between Christ and his Church.\textsuperscript{1281} For what we find in Scripture is a testimony that confesses both

\begin{footnotes}
\item[1280] Daley, “The Law, the Whole Christ,” 124.
\end{footnotes}
Christ and his vine, the head and the body, the King and his people, the shepherd and his flock.  

But, as we know, Augustine ends his commentary on Ps. 118 by stating that the relationship between the shepherd and the flock is sealed in the blood of the shepherd. While the law elicits wonder, the self-emptying love of the Lord elicits even greater wonder because, as Cavadini points out, it heals humanity’s pride and renews its wonder. For Cavadini, it is the shedding of the blood of the incarnate Word that “causes us to see our being as wonderful not in the first instance for anything it has accomplished or can accomplish, but because it is the object of such prodigal love.”

Augustine’s exposition on Ps. 118 deals not only with the law, but also with God’s prodigal love expressed in wonderful acts of mercy as a result of the incarnation. There is no better way to summarize this commentary than to quote the prayer in which Augustine (or rather the Psalmist) asks to be granted an understanding of the law, or rather, an understanding of the benefits of the incarnation:

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1282 En. Ps. 79.1: “Denique hoc testimonium et Christum et vineam confitetur; hoc est caput et corpus, regem et plebem, pastorem et gregem, et totum omnium Scripturarum mysterium Christum et Ecclesiam.”

1283 En. Ps. 118.32.7.

I have longed to love you with all my heart, all my soul, and all my mind, and my neighbor as myself. Give me life, but give it not in recognition of any justice of my own; in your justice give me life. Fill me with the charity I long for. Help me to do what you ordain, give me what you command. In your justice give me life, because what I had in myself is enough to kill me. Only in you do I find my hope of life. Your justice is Christ, who has been made for us by God wisdom, and justice, and sanctification, and redemption. As it is written, Let anyone who boasts, boast in the Lord. (1 Cor. 1:30-31) In him I find your commandments, for which I have longed, so that in your justice—in your Christ, I mean—you may give me life. He is God, the Word, but the Word was made flesh, that he might also be my neighbor.\textsuperscript{1285}

\textsuperscript{1285} En. Ps. 118.12.5: “Ecce concupiui ex toto corde, ex tota anima, ex tota mente diligere te, et proximum sicut me: non in mea, sed in tua iustitia uiuifica me, hoc est, ista caritate quam concupiui, imple me. Adiuua ut faciam quod commendas, dona ipse quod mandas. In tua iustitia uiuifica me, quia in me unde morerer habui; unde autem uiuam non inuenio nisi in te. Iustitia tua Christus est, qui factus est nobis sapientia a Deo, et iustitia, et sanctificatio, et redemtio; ut, quemadmodum scriptum est: Qui gloriatur, in Domino glorietur. Et in illo inuenio mandata tua quae concupiui, ut in tua iustitia, hoc est in illo, uiuifices me. Ipse est enim Verbum Deus; et Verbum caro factum est, ut esset et proximus meus.”
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