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# Luther and the Late Medieval Augustinians: Another Look

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On July 17, 1505, Martin Luther, M. A., of the University of Erfurt, applied for admission to the Reformed Congregation of the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine. When, later that year in September, he received the tonsure and black habit of the Austin Friars in the monastery church of the Augustinian cloister near Lehmann's bridge in the northeastern part of Erfurt, he entered an order dedicated to theological study, especially to the study of the writings of St. Augustine. At Oxford, Cambridge, Paris, and other centers of medieval learning—but especially at Paris<sup>1</sup>—doctors of the Augustinian Order had distinguished themselves for the breadth and profundity of their learning. Thomas Aquinas had no more famous pupil than Giles of Rome, whose independence of his teacher was so marked that he was even regarded by some Thomists as a rival of Aquinas.<sup>2</sup> Petrarch found in the Augustine scholarship of the Italian Augustinians an aid for his own studies in

the writings of St. Augustine.<sup>3</sup> And there is probably, among the late medieval scholastics, no doctor whose mastery of the theology of St. Augustine is more impressive<sup>4</sup> or whose ability to interpret the ideas of St. Augustine in the categories of his own time is more successful<sup>5</sup> than the famous general of the Augustinian Order, Gregory of Rimini.

The question of the relationship of Martin Luther to the theological traditions of his own order, to which he was exposed in a lesser or greater degree, has remained one of the interesting, if unsolved problems of Luther research. Was there a revival of August-

<sup>1</sup> Of the Augustinians whose commentaries on the *Sentences* have survived, 42 out of 75 lectured on the *Sentences* at Paris, including such famous doctors as Giles of Rome, James of Viterbo, Alexander of San Elpidio, Henry of Friemar, Augustinus of Ancona, William of Cremona, Henry of Friemar the Younger, Hermann of Schildesche, Thomas of Strassburg, Gregory of Rimini, Alfons Vargas of Toledo, Hugolino of Orvieto, Dionysius of Montina, to name only a few. See the table found on pages 174-176 of Adolar Zumkeller, "Die Augustinerschule des Mittelalters: Vertreter und philosophisch-theologische Lehre," *Analecta Augustiniana* 27 (1964), 167-262.

<sup>2</sup> "Dafuer spricht auch der Umstand, dass manche Thomasschueler seiner Zeit in ihm [Giles of Rome] einen ausgesprochenen Gegner des Aquinaten sehen wollen," A. Zumkeller, "Augustinerschule," p. 180.

<sup>3</sup> "Without wishing to make of this connection more than the evidence can sustain, it does not seem likely that Petrarch could have been unaware of the Augustinians' theological views, especially since he was introduced to the study of St. Augustine by the Augustinian Hermit, Dionigi of Borgo San Sepolcro," Charles Trinkhaus, *In Our Image and Likeness: Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought*, Volume 1 (London: Constable, 1970), p. 61. See A. Zumkeller, "Augustinerschule," pp. 206-207.

<sup>4</sup> "What is so new in Gregory is the fact that he is the best Augustine scholar of the Middle Ages from the milieu which created the Mil-leloquium," Damasus Trapp, "Augustinian Theology of the 14th Century: Notes on Editions, Marginalia, Opinions, and Book-Lore," *Augustiniana* 6 (1956), p. 181.

<sup>5</sup> Gordon Leff, *Gregory of Rimini, Tradition and Innovation in Fourteenth Century Thought* (Manchester: The University Press, 1961), pp. 241-242: "... what the Augustinians did for tradition in the thirteenth century he achieved in the fourteenth. He recast it and adapted it; and thereby preserved it. When the full history of fourteenth-century thought comes finally to be written, Gregory may well prove to have been its St. Bonaventure: the very divergence between them is the measure of his achievement."

tinianism in the Augustinian Order, which played an important role in the theological development of Martin Luther? As straightforward and simple as this question appears, it has proven unbelievably complex and difficult to answer. This paper will try, in as brief a manner as possible, to point out the difficulties which confront the historian when he attempts to address this question, to survey the history of the answers which have thus far been suggested, to indicate some of the more obvious deficiencies in those answers, and to recommend some directions which further historical research might profitably pursue.

### I. INITIAL DIFFICULTIES

Some difficulties only become apparent when one has immersed oneself in the primary sources; but other difficulties dog the historian's footsteps from the very outset. What, for example, is meant by the term "Augustinian"? There are, so far as I am able to determine, five different senses in which this term is used by historians who discuss the phenomenon of late medieval Augustinianism. Apart from the sheer confusion which this plurality of meanings introduces, there is the additional danger that an historian, who has demonstrated the Augustinianism of a late medieval theologian in sense three, will assume that he has proven it in senses two, four, and five as well; and, what is worse, will begin to draw conclusions on the basis of those unproven assumptions.

The term "Augustinian" may be used simply to designate the theology of the Latin West in general. No Latin theologian, however Pelagian his own theological instincts, is absolutely unaffected by the teaching of St. Augustine. If he finds little that is relevant for his own theological situation in the anti-Pelagian writings of St. Augustine, he nevertheless will cite the early anti-Manichaean writings in support of his theological position.

If he rejects the Augustinian teaching concerning predestination, he may affirm with real gusto Augustinian ecclesiology. No Donatist rides against the enemy with the banner of a discredited heretic flying overhead. The teaching of St. Augustine's opponents is far more likely to be introduced under the aegis of an Augustine, now at last authentically understood. And one can always appeal to the moderate Augustine against the Augustine who spoke excessively.

It seems to me a serious mistake to regard as nothing more than theological posturing this universal respect for the teaching of St. Augustine, even when that teaching is misunderstood or abandoned. Men can venerate St. Paul and come to very different conclusions about the import of his teaching. A medieval theologian may be genuine in his commitment to Augustinianism and yet, for a variety of historical reasons beyond his own taste and preference, only be receptive to certain Augustinian motifs, while remaining totally deaf to others. What is at stake is not his sincerity, but the theological climate of an epoch. When Thomas Aquinas meets St. Augustine, he changes him into an Aristotelian; when Martin Luther meets him, he transforms him into a *modernus*. It is the strength of the Augustinian tradition that it can speak with many tongues and is attractive even in a stunted and truncated form.

The term "Augustinian" may also be used to describe the theology of the Augustinian Order. When it is used in this sense, it is not used evaluatively to mean agreement with the teaching of St. Augustine, but descriptively to mean the actual teachings of members of the Augustinian Order, whether those teachings are faithful to St. Augustine or not. Adolar Zumkeller,<sup>6</sup> and to some extent

<sup>6</sup> For Zumkeller, "Augustinerschule" and "Ordensschule" are interchangeable terms. See Zumkeller, "Augustinerschule," p. 169.

Damasus Trapp as well, have used "Augustinian" in this somewhat more theologically neutral and descriptive sense. Are there any tendencies in the teaching of the Augustinian Order which characterize the order as a whole and not simply a party within the order? If so, those tendencies deserve to be called Augustinian, as similar tendencies within the other mendicant orders might be called Franciscan or Dominican.

"Augustinian" may also be used evaluatively to describe a party within the Augustinian Order which agrees with St. Augustine on a wide range of issues and at a depth which is more profound than the merely nominal Augustinianism of all medieval theologians. A. V. Mueller is certainly using Augustinian in this evaluative and descriptive sense when he attempts to show the continuity between the teaching of Hugolino of Orvieto, Simon Fidati of Cassia, Augustinus Favaroni of Rome, Jacobus Perez of Valencia, and Martin Luther.<sup>7</sup> To some extent, H. A. Oberman wishes to use Augustinian in this sense,<sup>8</sup> though, since Oberman is a more subtle historian than Mueller, he uses Augustinian in other senses as well and with far more qualifications.

Some historians use the term "Augustinian" to describe the theological right wing of the later Middle

Ages without paying any attention whatever to the affiliation of that right wing with any of the orders. If a theologian is Augustinian in a more radical sense than, say, Thomas Aquinas, he qualifies to be regarded as a late medieval Augustinian.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps, right wing is the wrong term to use, since it carries the connotation of opposition to all theological currents of one's own time. Thomas Bradwardine could be said to be a right-wing Augustinian who resisted the theological currents of the 14th century, but hardly Gregory of Rimini, who gave Augustine a 14th-century voice. Augustinian in this fourth sense is the designation for a sentiment in theology which takes Augustine without ice or water and translates him into the theological categories of a later age. In the later Middle Ages to be Augustinian in this sense generally meant such things as a stress on predestination, on concupiscence as an essential ingredient of original sin, on grace as the precondition of moral virtue as well as of merit, and on the merits of the Christian as nothing more than *merita de congruo* or half-merits.

There is, of course, a fifth and last sense of the term "Augustinian" which also plays a part in adding complexity to the historian's task. As anyone who has studied theology knows, Augustinianism and Pelagianism are terms in the history of Christian thought with a life of their own. They are frequently used to mean not strict agreement with the teaching of Augustine and Pelagius so much as the embodiment of a tendency which in special cases may go beyond the original teaching. In one sense it is

<sup>7</sup> A. V. Mueller, *Luthers Theologische Quellen* (Giessen, 1912); *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* (1915), 131-172; "Agostino Favaroni († 1443) e la teologia di Lutero," *Bilychnis* 3 (Rome, 1914), 373-387; "Giacomo Perez di Valenza, O. S. Aug., Vescovo di Chrysopoli, e la teologia di Lutero," *Bilychnis* 9 (1920), 391-403; "Una fonte ignota del sistema di Lutero: Il beato Fidati da Cascia e la sua Teologia," *Bilychnis* 10 (1921), fasc. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Heiko A. Oberman, "Headwaters of the Reformation: *Initia Lutheri—initia reformationis*," unpublished lecture delivered on Aug. 23, 1971, to the Fourth International Congress for Luther Research held in St. Louis, Mo. Citations are from the typescript which was made available to the delegates. Unfortunately, this typescript did not include the critical apparatus.

<sup>9</sup> I defend the use of Augustinian in this sense in *Misericordia Dei. The Theology of Johannes von Staupitz in its Late Medieval Setting*, *SMRT* 4 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), pp. 30-34. See my review of "Willigis Eckermann, OSA: *Gottschalk Hollen, OESA († 1481): Leben, Werke und Sakramentenlehre*," in *ZKG* 80 (1969), 411-414.

possible to say that Thomas Aquinas is more Augustinian than Luther on the question of merit if the standard is fidelity to the original teaching of St. Augustine. But one can also hold without absurdity that Luther is more Augustinian than Thomas if the frame of reference is the more perfect embodiment of a tendency.

To complicate the problem still further, historians must always bear in mind the context and intention of theological affirmations. Original formulations do not always mean the same thing in changed historical circumstances. Indeed, it may be necessary to formulate views in a more extreme way—or even in a totally different way—in order to say the same thing. Augustinians in the 15th century faced a revived semi-Pelagianism. Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century did not.<sup>10</sup> The fact of the difference of context between Thomas and 15th century Augustinians has not been taken sufficiently into account by historians who for the most part have been content merely to compare the formulations of these theologians against the standard of the teaching of St. Augustine.

A second kind of difficulty which plagues the historian very early in the game, even though it is not peculiar to this problem, is the question of influence. What kind of evidence is required to establish influence? It is an exceedingly complex question and one which would deflect us from our main purpose were we to explore it in any depth. Nevertheless, there are two principles which we need to fix firmly in mind before we survey the literature on the question of the relation of Luther and late medieval Augustinianism. Both principles are negative. An historian has not demonstrated influence when he has proven accessibility or parallelism.

That a man had access to a book does not prove that he read it or, if he read it, that he recommended it to his friends or thought it sheer rubbish. Catalogs of monastic libraries are interesting and do prove accessibility. They do not, by themselves, prove influence.

The same thing is true with respect to parallels. If two men are found to teach the same thing or very nearly the same thing, it does not in and of itself prove the influence of one man upon the other. They may both have been influenced by a third party who may or may not have been the same person. Or they may have, by very different paths and for very different reasons and under very different circumstances, come to similar conclusions. It is an important discovery when an historian can demonstrate similarities in thought between two theologians who he suspects may have influenced each other. But similarities do not establish influence. They only establish agreement. That is important, but it is not the same thing as influence. More and other evidence is required to demonstrate influence. This is a point which we need to keep continually in mind as we examine the history of scholarship on this question.

## II. SURVEY OF SCHOLARSHIP FROM MUELLER TO OBERMAN

The thesis that Luther was influenced by an Augustinian theological tradition within his own order was first stated in a sharp and unsubtle way by Alfons Victor Mueller.<sup>11</sup> In a series of books and articles beginning with *Luthers Theologische Quellen* in 1912, Mueller argued that Simon Fidati of Cassia (d. 1348), Hugolino of Orvieto (d. 1374), Augustinus Favaroni of Rome (d. 1443), and Jacobus Perez of Valencia (d. 1490) were representatives of an Augustinian school within

<sup>10</sup> On this problem see Harry J. McSorley, *Luther: Right or Wrong?* (New York, 1969), p. 167.

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 7 above.

the Augustinian Order and were in the most direct and immediate possible sense forerunners of the Reformation. Between their teaching and the new Reformation theology of Martin Luther there exists *una differenza di forma, non di sostanza*.

Mueller's thesis was, of course, discussed excitedly, both by Reformation historians and by specialists in late medieval thought. While Mueller did win some—at least partial—converts to his point of view, the great majority of historians was inclined to view his work with suspicion. There were indeed no strong *prima facie* grounds for confidence in his historical method. In his treatment of Perez and Luther, for example, Mueller summarized in only 13 pages the teaching of Luther on faith, hope, certitude of salvation, penance, original sin, concupiscence, Baptism, marriage, free will, and double justice, and compared Luther's teaching on each point with quotations from the writings of Perez. When on the last page Mueller announced triumphantly the full agreement of Luther and Perez, other historians might be forgiven if they preferred to reserve judgment.

The deficiencies in Mueller's methodology, the errors in his judgment and unnecessary sharpness of his polemic against the historians who criticized him diminished the impact of his insights. Still there were some historians who were attracted to his ideas. In 1937 Eduard Stakemeier in his book, *Der Kampf um Augustin auf dem Tridentinum*, took up part of Mueller's thesis. He agreed with the critics of Mueller that there existed an unbridgeable chasm between the teaching of the late medieval Augustinians and Martin Luther;<sup>12</sup> neverthe-

less he saw in these late medieval friars forerunners of the Augustinian theologians at the Council of Trent.<sup>13</sup> Mueller's work, which was meant to cast light on Martin Luther, proved for Stakemeier to cast light instead on the general of the Augustinian Order, Girolamo Seripando.

Stakemeier was attacked by Hubert Jedin in a sharply critical article in the *Theologische Revue* for 1937.<sup>14</sup> Stakemeier had not proven the influence of these theologians on each other or on Seripando. He had simply placed the teaching of these theologians in parallel columns. He had demonstrated similarity, not influence. In order to prove the lines of influence, Stakemeier needed to work assiduously in the primary sources, a very difficult task indeed, since most of the materials needed to prove influence are still scattered and unedited! In his book Stakemeier had not worked through the primary sources for himself but had simply been content with the repetition of the evidence which Mueller had assembled in his own books and articles.

Jedin's judgment in his *History of the Council of Trent*, written many years later, summarizes fairly well the judgment of Catholic historians on Stakemeier's adaptation of Mueller:

Not proven, and scarcely capable of proof, is the hypothesis that Seripando was the most prominent upholder of a school tradition of his Order so that he and his fellow Augustinian Luther were as two branches on one and the same tree.<sup>15</sup>

Aufstellungen in diesem Punkte unhaltbar sind. Was diese Augustiner ueber die Rechtfertigung aus dem Glauben sagen, ist nichts anderes als die schon vom hl. Thomas erklarte Lehre von der *fides formata iustificans*. Wenn Mueller hier sagt, das sei nur *una differenza di forma, non di sostanza*, so widerspricht er sich selbst."

<sup>12</sup> Stakemeier, *Kampf*, p. 22.

<sup>13</sup> *Theologische Revue* 36 (1937), 425-430.

<sup>14</sup> Hubert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, Vol. II, *The First Sessions at Trent*, trans. by Dom Ernest Graf, O.S.B. (Edinburgh, 1961), p. 258.

<sup>15</sup> Eduard Stakemeier, *Der Kampf um Augustin auf dem Tridentinum* (Paderborn, 1937), p. 21: "Zwischen diesen Augustinertheologen des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts und der Gesamtlehre Martin Luthers ist ein solch wesentlicher und grundsatzlicher Unterschied, dass Muellers

The Protestant judgment concerning Mueller's original thesis was no less pessimistic. Gordon Rupp, who has the gift for brief résumé of issues, characterized the state of the question with these words:

The suggestion which A. V. Mueller offered as the clue to Luther's development, that there was a revival of Augustinianism in the milieu in which Luther was trained, has never got beyond the stage of an interesting hypothesis. Augustine was always a main ingredient in medieval theology. The Bible and the Fathers, Augustine, Aristotle, were the main elements. You might add a double dose of Augustine to the pre-existing mixture of Peter Lombard and Aristotle, but the result would be a Gregory of Rimini, or a Bradwardine, a recognizably medieval Augustinianism worlds apart from Luther's theology as it developed in these formative years.<sup>16</sup>

And there, at least for the time being, the debate ground to a halt.

While interest in Mueller's thesis subsided, two related developments provided the kind of evidence essential for a reassessment of the problem, "Luther and late medieval Augustinianism." On the one hand, a number of historians have, from a variety of different perspectives, written monographs and articles on individual theologians of the Augustinian Order: Schueler,<sup>17</sup> Wuersdoerfer,<sup>18</sup> Vignaux,<sup>19</sup> Oberman,<sup>20</sup> Trapp,<sup>21</sup> and Leff<sup>22</sup> on

Gregory of Rimini; Toner<sup>23</sup> on Augustinus Favaroni of Rome; Zumkeller on Hugolino of Orvieto,<sup>24</sup> Dionysius of Montina,<sup>25</sup> and Hermann von Schildesche;<sup>26</sup> Eckermann<sup>27</sup> on Gottschalk Hollen; Wolf;<sup>28</sup> Weijenborg<sup>29</sup> and Steinmetz<sup>30</sup> on Staupitz; Stake-meier<sup>31</sup> and Jedin<sup>32</sup> on Seripando;

<sup>22</sup> Footnote 5 above.

<sup>23</sup> N. Toner, "The Doctrine of Original Sin according to Augustine of Rome (Favaroni) († 1443)," *Augustiniana* 7 (1957), 100-117, 349-366, 515-530; "The Doctrine of Justification according to Augustine of Rome (Favaroni) († 1443)," *Augustiniana* 8 (1958), 164-189, 299-327, 497-515.

<sup>24</sup> Adolar Zumkeller, *Hugolin von Orvieto und seine theologische Erkenntnislehre* (Wuerzburg, 1941); "Hugolin von Orvieto (ob. 1373) ueber Urstand und Erbsuende," *Augustiniana* 3 (1953), 35-62, 165-193; 4 (1954), 25-46; "Hugolin von Orvieto ueber Praedestination, Rechtfertigung und Verdienst," *Augustiniana* 4 (1954), 109-156; 5 (1955), 5-51

<sup>25</sup> Adolar Zumkeller, *Dionysius de Montina: ein neuentdeckter Augustinertheologe des Spaetmittelalters* (Wuerzburg, 1948).

<sup>26</sup> Adolar Zumkeller, *Hermann von Schildesche O.E.S.A.* (Wuerzburg, 1957); *Schriftum und Lehre des Hermann von Schildesche* (Rome and Wuerzburg, 1959); "Wiedergefundene exegetische Werke Hermanns von Schildesche," *Augustinianum* 1 (1961), 236-272, 452-503.

<sup>27</sup> Willigis Eckermann OSA, *Gottschalk Hollen, OESA († 1481): Leben, Werke und Sakramentenlehre* (Wuerzburg, 1967).

<sup>28</sup> Ernst Wolf, *Staupitz und Luther, Ein Beitrag zur Theologie des Johannes von Staupitz und deren Bedeutung fuer Luthers theologischen Werdegang, Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte*, Vol. 9 (Leipzig, 1927): "Johann von Staupitz und die theologischen Anfaenge Luthers," *Luther-Jahrbuch* 9 (1929), 43-86.

<sup>29</sup> Reinoud Weijenborg, O.F.M., "Neuentdeckte Dokumente im Zusammenhang mit Luthers Romreise," *Antonianum* 32 (1957), 147-202.

<sup>30</sup> David C. Steinmetz, *Misericordia Dei, The Theology of Johannes von Staupitz in its Late Medieval Setting*, SMRT 4 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968); *Reformers in the Wings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971).

<sup>31</sup> Eduard Stake-meier, *Der Kampf um Augustin auf dem Tridentinum* (Paderborn, 1937).

<sup>32</sup> Hubert Jedin, *Girolamo Seripando*, 2 vols. (Wuerzburg, 1937).

<sup>16</sup> Gordon Rupp, *The Righteousness of God: Luther Studies* (London, 1953), p. 140.

<sup>17</sup> Martin Schueler, *Praedestination, Suende und Freiheit bei Gregor von Rimini* (Stuttgart, 1934).

<sup>18</sup> J. Wuersdoerfer, *Erkennen und Wissen nach Gregor von Rimini*, BB, Vol. XX, Pt. 1 (Muenster i. W., 1917).

<sup>19</sup> Paul Vignaux, *Justification et predestination au XIV<sup>e</sup> siecle, Duns Scot, Pierre d'Auriol, Guillaume d'Occam, Gregoire de Rimini* (Paris, 1934).

<sup>20</sup> Heiko A. Oberman, *Archbishop Thomas Bradwardine: A Fourteenth Century Augustinian* (Utrecht, 1958); *The Harvest of Medieval Theology, Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963).

<sup>21</sup> Footnote 4 above.

Werbeck<sup>33</sup> on Jacobus Perez of Valencia; Lohse<sup>34</sup> and Ferdigg<sup>35</sup> on John of Paltz; O'Malley<sup>36</sup> on Giles of Viterbo—and so the list goes on. Though these books and articles do not represent a consensus on the nature of the theological currents in the Augustinian Order in the 14th and 15th centuries, they do provide us with the kind of data which was not generally available at the time when Mueller wrote his works.

The second development was equally important. Two historians, both members of the Augustinian Order, have attempted to elaborate an overarching theory concerning the direction of the theological movement of the order as a whole. They have not presumed to single out a party within the order but simply to describe the common elements which unite the separate parties. To use the distinctions I tried to draw at the beginning of this essay, they were not interested in isolating Augustinianism in senses three or four, as a radical party within or outside the Augustinian Order, but only in sense two, as the theology of the order itself, whether it agreed in all points with St. Augustine or not. The Augustinian School, as used by these historians, refers to the theology of the

Augustinian Order, as one might use the term Franciscan School to characterize the theology of that order. Nevertheless, it should be added that these historians came swiftly to the conclusion that the Augustinian Order does house a special kind of theological Augustinianism.

Damasus Trapp in his article, "Augustinian Theology of the 14th Century: Notes on Editions, Marginalia, Opinions and Book-Lore," divides Augustinian theology into two epochs.<sup>37</sup> The first stretches from Giles of Rome to Thomas of Strassburg; the second begins with Gregory of Rimini. Early Augustinianism is heavily influenced through Giles of Rome by Thomas Aquinas. It is not surprising, for example, that early Augustinians joined with Thomas Aquinas and the Dominicans in opposing the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary defended by Scotus and the Franciscans. Later Augustinianism is more heavily dependent on Augustine himself, having recovered a far wider corpus of the writings of Augustine than was at the disposal of Giles of Rome. As a sign of this new independence vis-à-vis its own past, the Augustinians shift their alliance from the Dominicans to the Franciscans on the question of the immaculate conception. Throughout its history, however, Augustinianism is marked by its careful historical scholarship, by its desire for better texts, and its concern for proper documentation. The Augustinian Order provides a home for intensive historical research in the writings of St. Augustine, a research which bears fruit in the theological reflection of its doctors.

A more ambitious attempt at synthesis than Trapp's important essay is the lengthy article by Adolar Zum-

<sup>33</sup> Wilfrid Werbeck, "Jacobus Perez von Valencia, Untersuchungen zu seinem Psalmenkommentar," *Beitraege zur historischen Theologie* 28 (Tuebingen, 1959).

<sup>34</sup> Bernhard Lohse, "Moenchtum und Reformation, Luthers Auseinandersetzung mit dem Moenchtideal des Mittelalters (Goettingen, 1963).

<sup>35</sup> Marcus Ferdigg, O.F.M., *De Vita et Operibus et Doctrina Joannis de Paltz, O.E.S.A.*, Dissertation at the Antonianum (Rome, 1961). Since published in the *Analecta Augustiniana* 30 (1967), 210-321; 31 (1968), 155-318.

<sup>36</sup> John W. O'Malley, S.J., *Giles of Viterbo on Church and Reform. A Study in Renaissance Thought*, SMRT 5 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968); "Giles of Viterbo: A Sixteenth-Century Text on Doctrinal Development," *Traditio* 22 (1966), 445-450; "Fulfillment of the Christian Golden Age under Pope Julius II: Text of a Discourse of Giles of Viterbo, 1507," *Traditio* 25 (1969), 265-338.

<sup>37</sup> Damasus Trapp, O.E.S.A., "Augustinian Theology of the 14th Century: Notes on Editions, Marginalia, Opinions and Book-Lore," *Augustiniana* 6 (1956), 147-265.

keller, "Die Augustinerschule des Mittelalters: Vertreter und philosophisch-theologische Lehre," in the *Analecta Augustiniana* for 1964.<sup>38</sup> Zumkeller accepts Trapp's periodization of the theology of the Augustinian Order and his stress on the importance for the Augustinians of a critical-historical method. Nevertheless, even before that historical consciousness is fully developed, the Augustinian Order shows "ein klar ausgeprägtes augustinisches Element,"<sup>39</sup> reflected in the independence of Giles of Rome from the teaching of his master, St. Thomas Aquinas. The historical consciousness which marks the modern Augustinian school, beginning with Gregory of Rimini, intensifies but does not initiate the Augustinianism of the Augustinian Order.

This common Augustinian element which binds together the Augustinianism of Giles of Rome with the Augustinianism of Gregory of Rimini, Zumkeller, following A. Trapè, characterizes as a stress on the primacy of love and on the primacy of grace.<sup>40</sup> The Augustinians stressed the primacy of love when they gave preference to the good over the true, to the will over the intellect. Augustinians called theology an effective science and *caritas* its goal. The subject of theology is God as *glorificator*, and the essence of eternal blessedness is an experience more aptly described as an act of will rather than an act of intellect.

A stress on the primacy of grace meant at the very least a tendency to attribute as much significance as possible to the divine initiative in human

redemption and as little as possible to the activity of human nature. The Augustinians came down heavily on predestination *ante praevisa merita* and on original sin. They denied that it was possible to merit first grace and affirmed in the strongest possible way the necessity of grace for morally good acts. When forced to make a choice, the Augustinians tended to stress the personal relationship to God which is established in grace rather than to accent the more abstract notion of grace as a *habitus*. The Augustinians wish to stress *gratia increata*, grace as the personal presence of the Spirit, even when they do not give up the idea of grace as *gratia creata*, the habit of love. These motifs, which are present from the very first, are heightened in intensity, following the compilation of the *Milleloquium* and the theological activity of Gregory of Rimini. The Augustinians are strongly oriented toward Scripture and the Fathers and sense the importance of exact quotation in theological exposition. Though the Augustinians quote their own doctors and are conscious of a theological identity over against the other orders, they are marked more by their source studies in Augustine than by their loyalty to the opinions of Giles of Rome.

In an address to the Fourth International Luther Congress entitled, "Headwaters of the Reformation: *Initia Lutheri—initia reformationis*," Heiko Oberman attempted to apply the results of this research on late medieval Augustinianism to the question of Luther's early theological development.<sup>41</sup> Though Oberman made use of the research of Trapp and Zumkeller, he was interested, like Mueller, to show a line of influence within the Augustinian Order, beginning with Gregory of Rimini and culminating in the theology of Martin Luther. As the father of the modern Augustinian school, Gregory combines

<sup>38</sup> Adolar Zumkeller, "Die Augustinerschule des Mittelalters: Vertreter und philosophisch-theologische Lehre," *Analecta Augustiniana* 27 (1964), 167-262; "Das Ungenuegen der menschlichen Werke bei den deutschen Predigern des Spätmittelalters," *Zeitschrift fuer katholische Theologie* 81 (1959), 265-305.

<sup>39</sup> Zumkeller, "Augustinerschule," p. 193.

<sup>40</sup> Zumkeller, "Augustinerschule," p. 194.

<sup>41</sup> Footnote 8 above.

three elements: nominalism, which shapes "the prolegomena of the *schola moderna Augustiniana*" and thus secures "the bridge to the world of the senses, of science and of experienced reality;"<sup>42</sup> humanism "as the quest for the *mens Augustini* by returning to the *fontes Augustini*;"<sup>43</sup> and Augustinianism reflected in Gregory's single-minded stress on justification *sola gratia*.<sup>44</sup> All three elements—nominalism, humanism, and Augustinianism—are mediated to Luther by a line (by no means unbroken) which one can trace in his own order. This modern Augustinian school or *via Gregorii* is given a new direction by Luther and becomes the *vera theologia* of the circle of theologians at the University of Wittenberg.<sup>45</sup>

When Luther was called to teach philosophical ethics on the faculty of arts in 1508, he was obliged by the statutes of the University of Wittenberg to teach according to the *via Gregorii*. Whereas earlier historians had tended to regard this requirement only as an obligation to teach according to the *via moderna*, Oberman wishes to see in it the obligation to teach according to the principles of the *schola Augustiniana moderna*.<sup>46</sup> This means for Oberman far more than the requirement to teach nominalist philosophy. The *via Gregorii* embraces elements of humanism and theological Augustinianism as well.

The Augustinian line within the Augustinian Order which interests Oberman begins with Gregory of Rimini, the *Doctor authenticus* whose teaching was propagated within the

order by Dionysius of Montina and Hugolino of Orvieto.<sup>47</sup> In Augustinus Favaroni (d. 1443) Oberman finds an ecclesiology which is the "allegorical counterpart to the tropological *commercium admirabile* between Christ and the believer,"<sup>48</sup> which is such a striking element of the treatise by Staupitz on predestination and which occurs at roughly the same time in Luther. The tradition of affective meditation, which is opposed to the speculative mysticism of Eckhart, is preserved for Luther by Jordan of Saxony, Ludolf of Saxony and John of Paltz.<sup>49</sup> Oberman even finds foreshadowings of Staupitz' reinterpretation of *gratia gratum faciens* as the grace which makes God pleasing to us in the sentence of Jordan of Saxony: "Omnia quae Christus passus est ita debent homini esse accepta et grata, ac si pro ipsius solummodo salute ea sit passus."<sup>50</sup>

According to Oberman, there are "at least four potential agents of transmission of the indicated Augustinian tradition:"<sup>51</sup>

1. The library at Wittenberg had copies of both the *De gestis Salvatoris* by Simon Fidati of Cassia and a manuscript (the only known surviving copy) of the *Sentences Commentary* of Hugolino of Orvieto.<sup>52</sup> Since these books were accessible, Luther could have read them. And each in its own

<sup>47</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," p. 47. "We can say, however, that already in the earliest documents Luther thinks and writes as if Favaroni, Gregory of Rimini, and Jacobus Perez combine in constituting his working library. Above all, this tradition is personified in Johann von Staupitz to whose impetus Luther felt so deeply indebted and who for his part was willing to attest to his role as forerunner of the *vera theologia* . . ."

<sup>48</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," pp. 32-33. Oberman here cites the texts of Favaroni quoted by Zumkeller, "Augustinerschule," pp. 237-238, though the conclusions which he draws concerning these texts advance beyond Zumkeller.

<sup>49</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," pp. 34-35.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," p. 36.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," p. 43.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," pp. 31-32, 42.

<sup>45</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," pp. 47-48: "Hence there exists the optimal chance to do justice to the *initia Lutheri* when we see his development and discovery as that of the Augustinian monk finding and founding a new direction for the former *via Gregorii*."

<sup>46</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," pp. 38-40, 42.

peculiar way represents elements of the *via Gregorii*, the modern Augustinian school.

2. It is possible that, during the years when Luther was writing his first lectures on the Psalms, he may have made use of the commentary on the Psalms by the Augustinian, Jacobus Perez of Valencia (d. 1490).<sup>53</sup> Perez agrees, as Wilfrid Werbeck has convincingly shown,<sup>54</sup> with Gregory of Rimini and his disciples on many questions.

3. In addition to Bartholomaeus von Usingen, Luther's teacher at Erfurt, who stressed the importance of Gregory of Rimini,<sup>55</sup> John of Staupitz was a particularly important channel of late medieval Augustinianism for Luther.<sup>56</sup> While Staupitz was, to use the phrase of Jeremias,<sup>57</sup> Luther's *Schueler* as well as his *Vater*, his decisive impact on Luther is beyond dispute. Luther claims that it was Staupitz who led him to the discovery of the meaning of *vera poenitentia*.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, after the period of the Tuebingen sermons (1497-98), we find in Staupitz "the *acceptatio* doctrine as part of the *sola gratia*, combined with the tropological application of Favaroni's theme' of the exchange of *iustitia* and *peccata* between Christ and the believer."<sup>59</sup>

4. A fourth channel of possible influence was Andreas Bodenstein of Carlstadt. Carlstadt dedicates his commentary on the *De Spiritu et Littera* to Staupitz and indicates that Staupitz frees him from scholasticism "by showing 'Christi dulcedinem' in the right relation of spirit and letter."<sup>60</sup>

Carlstadt had lectured on Thomas Aquinas according to the principles of Capreolus. Since Capreolus saw as a major task the importance of bringing Gregory of Rimini and Thomas Aquinas into harmony with each other, he quotes long sections of Gregory of Rimini in his *Defensiones*.<sup>61</sup> Thus *via* Carlstadt, Gregory of Rimini exercises an influence on the development of the *vera theologia* at Wittenberg.

Oberman summarizes his position by observing:

Taking stock of this cumulative, admittedly circumstantial evidence, we can point to the *schola Augustiniana moderna*, initiated by Gregory of Rimini, reflected by Hugolino of Orvieto, apparently spiritually alive in the Erfurt Augustinian monastery, and transformed into a pastoral reform-theology by Staupitz, as the *occasio proxima*—not *causa!*—for the inception of the *theologia vera* at Wittenberg.<sup>62</sup>

### III. SOME OBJECTIONS

It may seem ungracious to suggest that there are difficulties with the proposed solution to the question of the relationship between Luther and the late medieval Augustinians outlined by Oberman. It is a bold and imaginative application of the results of late medieval research to one of the perennially puzzling issues of Luther scholarship.<sup>63</sup> And it may well be, in

<sup>61</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," p. 38.

<sup>62</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," p. 41.

<sup>63</sup> There is, of course, the further methodological question whether one should proceed by comparing the modern research on late medieval Augustinianism (which may or may not be the theology of the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine as Luther himself perceived it) with Luther's theology at an early stage of his development or whether one should take as his point of departure Luther's own comments on the theologians of his tradition. Leif Grane, with whom I am inclined to agree, is very much of the opinion that we must begin with Luther's texts, with his own comments on the late medieval scholastic tradition as he perceives it and only move in the second place to modern

<sup>53</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," p. 37.

<sup>54</sup> Werbeck, *Perez*, pp. 210-258.

<sup>55</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," p. 39.

<sup>56</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," p. 37.

<sup>57</sup> Note the title of the book: Alfred Jeremias, *Johannes von Staupitz, Luthers Vater und Schueler* (Berlin, 1926).

<sup>58</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," p. 37.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," pp. 37-38.

spite of the objections which can be raised against them, that the fundamental intuitions of Mueller and Oberman are correct and only require a tightening of the evidence adduced to support them. Nevertheless, there are problems with the thesis as it presently stands.

1. The first difficulty has to do with the circumstantial nature of the evidence used to support the hypothesis first proposed by Mueller and refined by Oberman. What has been demonstrated is not a line of influence stretching from Gregory to Luther, but only similarities in thought between certain selected Augustinian theologians and the accessibility of the results of their theological reflections in the library at Wittenberg.<sup>64</sup>

scholarship on late medieval theology "Historisch gesehen kann man die verschiedenen Fragen ueber Luthers Verhaeltnis zur mittelalterlichen Tradition nicht durch Vergleich von umfassenden Lehrkomplexen bewaeltigen. Schon 1935 hat Paul Vignaux diese Methode preisgegeben, um statt dessen eine eingehende Textanalyse zu fordern. Mit ausgangspunkt in Luthers *eigenen* positionen will Vignaux ueber die Mutmassungen hinaus zu einer unmittelbaren Konfrontation Luthers mit den von ihm behandelten Theologen durchdringen. Vignaux' Methode blieb aber eine Zeitlang fast unbeachtet. Weiterhin wurden die tatsaechlich vorliegende Texte, worin sich Luther auf die jeweils behandelten Theologen bezieht, nicht Zentrum der Untersuchungen, sondern bloss Belegstellen fuer verschiedene im voraus konzipierte Auffassungen ueber 'Luther', bzw. den oder die mittelalterlichen Theologen, um die es ging." Leif Grane, "Luthers Kritik an Thomas von Aquin in De captivitate Babylonica," *ZKG* 80 (1969), p. 2.

<sup>64</sup> Grane against Zumkeller, and now Oberman, is pessimistic about the results of this line of inquiry. In spite of the fact that Hugolino of Orvieto, Gregory's illustrious disciple, is in the library at Wittenberg, proof of the influence of Gregory on Luther is still lacking for the earliest period of Luther's development. "Doch nicht einmal unter dieser Voraussetzung kann gesagt werden, dass es bisher gelungen sei, Auswirkungen dieser Kenntnis von Gregor waehrend der Jahre festzustellen, in denen die theologische Auffassung Luthers ausgeformt wurde . . . . Anderer Meinung ist A. Zumkeller . . . . Fuer seine Annahme, dass Luthers Kampf gegen den

That is an important fact to be taken into account by historians. Nevertheless, circumstantial evidence for parallels and accessibility does not by itself prove influence.

To throw the matter even more in doubt, Luther does not quote the theologians—Simon, Hugolino, and Perez<sup>65</sup>—whose works were accessible to him. If Luther is in fact a representative of the *schola Augustiniana moderna*, one of whose distinguishing marks is great care in the accurate citation of sources and a concern to quote the theologians of its own order, this silence is—to say the least—remarkable. Fundamental sources of Luther's thought, especially when those sources are in his own order and when Luther is not bashful in his later life to praise the theologians who helped him on his way,<sup>66</sup> are not cited, either in his early works or in his *Tabletalk*. If—*argumentum e silentio*—Luther is in fact decisively influenced

'Pelagianismus' der Ockhamisten Anregung von Gregor erhalten hat, weist Zumkeller aber nur auf die Bemerkung ueber die Leipziger Disputation, WA 2, 394 hin." Leif Grane, "Gregor von Rimini und Luthers Leipziger Disputation," *Studia Theologica* 22 (1968), p. 31.

<sup>65</sup> Werbeck makes it quite clear that all that can be demonstrated at the moment is the *possibility* of the use of the commentary on the Psalms by Perez, not the fact of its use. See Perez, p. 47. According to Ebeling, Luther specifically cites in his first lectures on the Psalms: Augustine, Cassiodorus, the Glosa Ordinaria, the Glosa Interlinearis, Peter Lombard, Hugh of S. Caro Card., Nicholas of Lyra, Paul of Burgos, Matthias Doering, John of Turrecremata, and Faber Stapulensis. Gerhard Ebeling, "Luthers Auslegung des 14. (15.) Psalms in der ersten Psalmenvorlesung im Vergleich mit der exegetischen Tradition," *ZThK* 50 (1953), p. 280, footnote 1.

<sup>66</sup> The frequent references in this connection to Staupitz are well known. While Luther acknowledges that he received everything from Staupitz ("Ex Erasmo nihil habeo. Ich hab all mein ding von Doctor Staupitz; der hatt mir occasionem geben." *WATR* 1 Nr. 173 Feb. or Mar. 1532), he remarks wryly that had he only read Wessel Gansfort earlier, his enemies would have seen "Lutherus omnia ex Vvesselolo hausisse." (*WA* 10.2.317)

by these representatives of the *via Gregorii*, then Luther decisively departs from the *via Gregorii* by not acknowledging that fact.

Furthermore, similarities in thought are not by themselves sufficient to establish lines of influence. To take an example of this which comes readily to mind, it can be demonstrated without much difficulty that Staupitz agrees with the late medieval Augustinian nominalist, John Pupper of Goch (d. 1475), on twelve crucial theological issues. On at least nine of those issues Staupitz is in fundamental disagreement with Thomas Aquinas.<sup>67</sup> Yet in spite of his overwhelming agreement with Goch against Thomas, Staupitz has been influenced by Thomas and is completely oblivious of the existence of the writings of John Pupper of Goch.<sup>68</sup> Agreement does not prove influence; neither does disagreement disprove it. There must be acknowledgement of sources, quotation of them, some kind of tangible evidence in the texts themselves before historians can claim influence. This kind of tangible evidence has, by and large, not yet been produced.

2. There are even more difficulties with the hypothesis that Staupitz is the mediator of the *via Gregorii*, the modern Augustinian school, to Luther. While Staupitz is in agreement with Gregory on many questions<sup>69</sup>—

though he differs with him on several as well<sup>70</sup>—he does not quote Gregory of Rimini but repeatedly turns to Giles of Rome and Thomas of Strassburg, representatives of the older Augustinian school. To be sure, he does quote John of Paltz, but while Paltz is important as a representative of affective mysticism, he is hardly a radical Augustinian in his theology.<sup>71</sup> The strongest Augustinian opinions which Staupitz cites are those of Augustine himself, supported, of course, by copious citations from the first Gregory, Pope Gregory the Great.<sup>72</sup>

Staupitz does fit the general characteristics of the Augustinian Order as those characteristics are sketched by Zumkeller and Trapp. He is widely read in Augustine and in the sermons on *Hiob* quotes Augustine 163 times from 24 works.<sup>73</sup> He is attached to the opinions of Giles and of Thomas Aquinas, though without becoming a Thomist. When he differs with Thomas—and those differences are fundamental—he cites Jean Gerson<sup>74</sup> and not Gregory of Rimini as the support for his deviation. Except for his wide reading in Augustine and his partiality to certain nominalist ideas, Staupitz

*acceptatio divina*, and denial of virtue apart from grace.

<sup>67</sup> For example, reprobation *ante praevisa demerita*, all epistemological questions, the rejection of *gratia creata*, the redefinition of *gratia gratum faciens*, and the identification of *prima gratia* with predestination. For a discussion of theological issues in Gregory and Staupitz see the literature cited above in footnotes 4, 5, 17-20, 28, 30, 38.

<sup>71</sup> A point which Oberman also makes, "Headwaters," p. 36.

<sup>72</sup> The fullest treatment of the sources which Staupitz quotes is found in Wolf, *Staupitz und Luther*, pp. 23-25. Jeremias observes in *Staupitz*, p. 87: "Von den Augustinischen Schriften sind ihm besonders geläufig: die Psalmenkommentare, das Enchiridion, die Buecher ueber die Dreieinigkeiit und die Konfessionem."

<sup>73</sup> Wolf, *Staupitz und Luther*, p. 23.

<sup>74</sup> Staupitz, *Hiob* (1497-8) 23.186.41-187.3. See my *Misericordia Dei*, pp. 27, 106-107.

<sup>67</sup> The comparison between Staupitz and Goch and the evidence supporting it are given in my article, "Libertas Christiana: Studies in the Theology of John Pupper of Goch (d. 1475)," *Harvard Theological Review* 65 (1972), 191-230.

<sup>68</sup> For the relation of Staupitz to Giles of Rome and Thomas Aquinas, see Ernst Wolf, *Staupitz und Luther*, pp. 27-29, 80-82, 219-220. Wolf overestimated the importance of Thomas and Giles for Staupitz (on this point see *Misericordia Dei*, pp. 22-28), nevertheless Staupitz does rely on them, especially in matters of epistemology.

<sup>69</sup> For example, predestination *ante praevisa merita*, the dialectic of the *potentia dei absoluta* and the *potentia dei ordinata*, the doctrine of

appears to be more of a representative of the *schola Augustiniana antiqua* than of *via Gregorii*.

What has not been sufficiently discussed in the writings on Staupitz is that the two most important writings which we have from his hand are sermons on Job and sermons on Paul.<sup>75</sup> Staupitz exegetes the Old Testament poetical book of Job with the aid of Gregory the Great and—what is perhaps even more important to note!—with the aid of Augustine's *Enarrationes in psalmos*. In this Augustinian interpretation of the Old Testament, Staupitz develops themes which assist him in his interpretation of Paul. It is *via* Augustine and the Old Testament that Staupitz turns to Paul. His sermons breathe the atmosphere, not only of Augustine's interpretation of the Psalms, but also of the Augustinian homiletical literature in general.

It is therefore not surprising that one can find in Augustine himself, especially in his sermons and commentaries on the Old Testament, many of the themes which are also distinctive of Staupitz' theology and which Oberman claims to find in Favaroni and Jordan of Saxony. It is possible that they are in all three, because they are first in Augustine, and their presence may not prove influence by the *via Gregorii* but only influence by a common source, the Augustine

whose *mens* is the special concern of the *schola Augustiniana antiqua et moderna*. That Staupitz, Favaroni, and Jordan agree may in the last analysis be evidence that the historical scholarship of the Augustinian Order, the return *ad fontes Augustini*, issued in important theological conclusions.

Augustine makes the point in his sermons that the property of man is his sin, untruth, and death.<sup>76</sup> The property of God is His goodness, truth, and life. Man with his property possesses God and is possessed by Him. Christian experience may be summed up as this possession of God, whom one possesses only as one renounces the possession of oneself. In this possession of God a marvelous exchange takes place. What is properly God's—namely, life—becomes man's; and what is properly man's—namely, death—becomes God's. Augustine describes this exchange in these words:

God died, that an exchange might be effected by a kind of heavenly contract, that man might not see death. For Christ is God, but He died not in that Nature in which He is God. For the same Person is God and man; for God and man is one Christ. The human nature was assumed, that we might be changed for the better, He did not degrade the Divine nature down to the lower. For He assumed that which was not, He did not lose that which He was. Forasmuch then as He is both God and man, being pleased that we should live by that which was His, He died in that which was ours. For He had nothing Himself, whereby He could die; nor had we anything whereby we could live. For what was He Who had nothing whereby He could die? *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.* If thou seek for anything in God whereby He may die, thou wilt not find it. But we all die, who are flesh; men bearing about sinful flesh. Seek out for that whereby sin may live; it hath it not. So then neither could He have death in that which was

<sup>75</sup> The *Libellus* also includes themes from the Old Testament, especially Isaiah, The Song of Songs, and the Psalms, from John and the Synoptic Gospels, but the Pauline themes dominate. It is clear after reading this powerful treatise why Staupitz, who based them on sermons preached in Nuremberg, was hailed at Nuremberg as a second Paul. According to Jeremias, *Staupitz*, p. 36: "Die Advents predigten Staupitz' in der Nuernberger Augustinerkirche Dezember 1516 wurden zu einem der bedeutungsvollsten Ereignisse seines Lebens. Man sagte: so etwas sei noch nicht dagewesen. Man erwartete das Hoehchste von Staupitz. Man sagte in Nuernberg: 'Dieser Staupitz ist's, der Israel erloesen wird!' Man nannte diesen 'Schueler' des Paulus' einen 'Herold des Evangeliums und der wahren Theologie.'"

<sup>76</sup> Serm. 32.10.10. *PL.* 38.202. In Ps. 145.11. *PL.* 37.1891.

His own, nor we life in that which was our own; but we have life from that which is His, He death from what is ours. What an exchange! What hath He given and what received? Men who trade enter into commercial intercourse for exchange of things. For ancient commerce was only an exchange of things. A man gave what he had and received what he had not . . . . And who can enumerate all these exchanges? But no one gives life to receive death. Not in vain then was the voice of the Physician as He hung upon the tree. For in order that He might die for us because the Word could not die, *The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us* . . . . Peter put his trust in Him, and tottered; but notwithstanding he was not disregarded and left to sink, but was lifted up and raised. For his trust whence was it? Not from anything of his own; but from what was the Lord's.<sup>77</sup>

There in Augustine's sermons on the New Testament is the *commercium admirabile*. To be sure the marriage metaphor is not employed as it is in Staupitz<sup>78</sup> and Luther,<sup>79</sup> nor is the exchange an exchange of *peccata* and *iustitia* but rather of death and life. Nevertheless, there is an exchange of properties between Christ and the Christian which takes place in the experience of faith. The incarnation, which is itself a *commercium admirabile*, is tropologically applied to the believer. The humanity which was assumed was *my* humanity; the death which was destroyed was *my* death. When Staupitz uses the idea of the heavenly exchange between Christ and the Christian, he may in fact be doing nothing more than adapting an important theme from the homiletical literature of St. Augustine.

<sup>77</sup> Serm. 80.5. *PL.* 38.496. Translation by R. G. Macmullen in *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament by S. Augustine*, Vol. 1 (Oxford, 1844), pp. 240-241.

<sup>78</sup> See my *Misericordia Dei*, pp. 90-91.

<sup>79</sup> H. A. Oberman, "'Iustitia Christi' and 'Iustitia Dei,' Luther and the Scholastic Doctrines of Justification," *HTR* 59 (1966), 1-26.

In the same way, Staupitz' reinterpretation of *gratia gratum faciens* as the grace which makes God pleasing to the Christian may be explained as a scholastic translation of the maxim developed by St. Augustine in his second discourse on Psalm 32 (33): "He pleases God who is pleased with God."<sup>80</sup> The mark of the justified man is that he is pleased with God. Because he is pleased with God, he praises Him. And that praise is itself pleasing to God.

The idea is, of course, central to Staupitz.<sup>81</sup> Justification is the restoration of the ability to praise God. The justified man praises God because he finds God pleasing to him. The grace which restores the *laus dei* is the *gratia gratum faciens*. Therefore it is the grace which makes God pleasing to the Christian and thus initiates the praise of God. There may, of course, be a much more complex history behind Staupitz' redefinition of *gratia gratum faciens*, and he may in fact prove not to be the first medieval theologian to define it that way. However, since—as Ockham taught us—that theory is best which explains the evidence with the fewest assumptions, I am inclined to regard it as nothing more than a scholastic translation of a maxim of St. Augustine taken from the *Enarrationes in psalmos*. It is evidence not of Staupitz' interest in Jordan of Saxony—a thesis which is debatable—but of his attachment to the *Enarrationes*—a fact which is beyond debate!

3. The suggestion that Carlstadt is one of the channels by which Gregory of Rimini enters the discussions of the *vera theologia* by the Wittenberg theologians is an interesting one and deserves further study. The usual channels cited for the influence of

<sup>80</sup> In Ps. 32, Second Discourse, Serm. 1.1. *PL.* 36.277.

<sup>81</sup> See my *Misericordia Dei*, p. 55, for a brief résumé on this point.

Gregory on Luther are Pierre d'Ailly,<sup>82</sup> who cites Gregory copiously because he likes him, and Gabriel Biel,<sup>83</sup> who quotes him just as copiously because he does not. Nevertheless, the really interesting question is not how Carlstadt relates to Gregory of Rimini, but how Carlstadt, Staupitz, and Luther relate to Augustine. Never are Luther and Staupitz more representative of their order than when they drive Carlstadt to the study of St. Augustine. It is Luther, functioning as a humanist scholar, who challenges the authenticity of a treatise alleged to have been written by Augustine.<sup>84</sup> He angers Carlstadt with his text-critical remarks and pushes him back *ad fontes Augustini*. When Carlstadt buys the new edition of Augustine's works in order to refute the Augustine scholarship of his younger colleague, he is led by a treatise of Staupitz to understand what is the *mens Augustini* and thereby to a fundamental reorientation of his own thought. It is as Augustine scholars—as humanists and as exegetes—that Staupitz and Luther force Carlstadt not to immerse himself in late medieval Augustinianism but in the sources themselves.

To be sure, the question how do Luther and Staupitz understand Augustine and to what extent is their approach to Augustine shaped by currents in their own time is an important one. Still, in our concern with hermeneutics and the proper approach to Augustine in the 15th and 16th centuries, we must not lose sight of

the text which is being interpreted. Luther and Staupitz lead Carlstadt into Augustine, but the conclusions to which Carlstadt comes are not the same as the conclusions of his colleagues.<sup>85</sup> The *vera theologia* is marked by a preoccupation with Scripture and St. Augustine, not identity of conclusions.

#### IV. DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

To some extent, of course, by indicating difficulties with the proposed solutions to the question of the relationship of Luther to the late medieval Augustinians, we have already drawn attention to several of the tasks which remain for further research. If it is to be demonstrated that Luther stands at the end of an Augustinian line within the Augustinian Order (the *via Gregorii*), then textual evidence of influence must be adduced to support that hypothesis. If that evidence cannot be produced or can only be produced for a few of the necessary connections, then perhaps this hypothesis should be set aside in favor of some other which explains the evidence more adequately. I do not have such a substitute hypothesis to propose and am willing to be convinced by the hypothesis as it stands. But more and better evidence must be discovered to support it.

There is also good reason to reopen the question of the relationship of Staupitz and Luther. Wolf approached the question of the influence of Staupitz on Luther from a point of view which now seems far too limited. Oberman has made an important beginning with the reexamination of this question by pointing out the striking parallel between Luther's letter of 1518, which emphasizes the centrality of Staupitz in Luther's discovery of the meaning of *vera poenitentia*, and Luther's reflections in 1545 about his discovery of the mean-

<sup>82</sup> Louis Saint-Blancat, "Recherches sur les sources de la théologie luthérienne primitive (1509-1510)," *Verbum Caro* 8 (1954), 81-91; "La théologie de Luther et un nouveau plagiat de Pierre d'Ailly," *Positions luthériennes* 4 (1956), 61-77; Horst Beintker, "Neues Material ueber die Beziehungen Luthers zum mittelalterlichen Augustinismus," *ZKG* 68 (1957), 144-148.

<sup>83</sup> Leif Grane, "Gregor von Rimini und Luthers Leipziger Disputation," *Studia Theologica* 22 (1968), 29-49.

<sup>84</sup> Gordon Rupp, *Patterns of Reformation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), pp. 55-63.

<sup>85</sup> See my *Misericordia Dei*, pp. 171-181.

ing of the *iustitia dei*.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, Oberman attempts to interpret Staupitz as a member of the Wittenberg circle of theologians to which Luther and Carlstadt also belong, thus emphasizing the role of Staupitz as a colleague as well as Luther's *Vater* and *Schueler*.

One is struck by the similarity, perhaps accidental, between Staupitz' theological career and the movement of Martin Luther toward the *vera theologia*. Staupitz begins his career by lecturing on the Old Testament. He interprets the Book of Job with the aid of the *Moralia* of Gregory the Great and the *Enarrationes in psalmos* of Augustine. In this Old Testament exegesis he develops themes which appear later in his writings, but especially in the Pauline exegesis of the *Libellus*. Scholastic references which abound in the sermons on *Hiob* and the *Decisio* very nearly disappear in the later writings where Scripture and St. Augustine are the real authorities. The atmosphere of the Pauline interpretation is the atmosphere of the Augustinian exegetical and homiletical writings in which the *laus Dei* is the dominant motif. It is the Augustinian exegesis of the Old Testament which is the door for Staupitz into the New Testament, but especially into the writings of St. Paul. To what extent this movement is important for Martin Luther is a question which remains to be investigated.

As every Luther scholar knows, the question of the relationship of Luther to late medieval Augustinianism is not simply a question of the relationship of Luther to the theological currents within his own order. Radically Augustinian positions are defended by theologians who belong to other

orders or to no order. Luther has praise for Jan Hus,<sup>87</sup> Wessel Gansfort,<sup>88</sup> and John Pupper of Goch,<sup>89</sup> even though he reads them after the main lines of his own early development are set. Nevertheless, the question how Luther perceives these theologians is an important index to his own understanding of the *mens Augustini*. Luther sees the *vera theologia* as continuous and discontinuous with the views of these late medieval Augustinians. What that perception implies is an important question which has not been given sufficient attention.

Finally, no one can feel at ease with the conclusions which are proposed about Luther and the late medieval Augustinians until there is more clarity about the much larger question, how is Augustine understood in the late Middle Ages—not how is he understood by a party of radical Augustinian theologians within or outside the Augustinian Order, but how is he perceived by all theologians, whatever their dogmatic stance? We cannot understand the significance of the interpretation of St. Augustine by, say, Gregory of Rimini until we can measure it against the interpretation of St. Augustine by Capreolus, d'Ailly, Biel, Panormitanus, Cusa, Petrarch, Gansfort, and many others who have thus far been left out of consideration. The question, Luther and the late medieval Augustinians, can only be given a satisfactory answer when we have achieved greater clarity about the question, Augustine in the later Middle Ages. On this larger question we have barely begun to work.

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<sup>87</sup> WA 29.50.

<sup>88</sup> WA 10.2.316 ff.

<sup>89</sup> WA 10.2.329 ff.

<sup>86</sup> Oberman, "Headwaters," p. 37.