

# Heidegger and St. Augustine on Existence

*St. Augustine's Confessiones - Final Paper*

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## Preface

In the end, this examination has not only been an introduction in Augustinian thought, but challenged me to become familiar with the existential ontology of Martin Heidegger. I would especially like to thank prof.dr. Jan van Ophuijsen for his inspiring and erudite remarks during the seminars in which the *Confessiones* were read, prof.dr. Bert Blans whose contribution was as interesting as enjoyable, and several others for the opportunity to phrase and share my initial findings on this subject (*audiendo adiuvant*).

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# 1 Introduction

‘Restless is our heart’<sup>1</sup>. In the first lines of the Confessions, St. Augustine characterizes man as a being which is unable to find peace and fulfillment in a world of time, a creature of turmoil and movement: ‘I am a question to myself’<sup>2</sup>.

We are confronted with a mystery, according to Martin Heidegger in his magnum opus *Sein und Zeit*. Man is an existential mystery for himself, a mystery which incurs insecurity and restlessness. ‘Philosophy shows us the depths of this human restlessness; however, later philosophies seem to have forgotten this.’<sup>3</sup> It concerns a search for truth. This truth is not objective but related to oneself; it is only to be experienced by its occurrence<sup>4</sup>. Both Heidegger and St. Augustine<sup>5</sup> share this hermeneutical approach to truth. For St. Augustine this has a religious dimension. It is secularized by Heidegger in *Sein und Zeit*, where he interprets the radical uncertainty phenomenologically by showing the philosophical consequences for the interpretation for one’s self<sup>6</sup>.

It is difficult to indicate in what sense St. Augustine has influenced Heidegger’s views on existence in a historical way. St. Augustine sure has been an inspiration for many philosophers which have been of great importance on Heidegger’s thought, for example Husserl, Kierkegaard, Aquinas, Berson, Brentano, Cajetan, Calvin, Descartes, Dionysius, Duns Scotus, Hegel, Jaspers, Kant, Luther, Pascal, Scheler, Suarez, Wolff, and Zwingli. In order to clarify an historical influence, it is important to elaborate the parallels and differences between Heidegger’s conception of human existence and Augustine’s views first. This can be done by comparing the phenomena which they hold constitutive for existence.

Clarification of the parallels between both thinkers concerning the existential analytic is possible by elaborating the traces of St. Augustine in Heidegger’s writings. Most of Heidegger’s references to St. Augustine are to be found in his earlier works<sup>7</sup>. Two of the writings of young Heidegger are primarily concerned with St. Augustine, namely *Augustinus und der Neuplatonismus* and *Der Begriff der Zeit* (1924). The first is part of a course *Einleitung in die Phänomenologie der Religion* in 1920-1921. In this course, Heidegger attempts to theorize the comprehension of religious life from an ontological point of view by studying book X of the *Confessiones*<sup>8</sup>. The second work intends to elaborate a concept of time in keeping with the facticity of mankind’s being-there<sup>9</sup>. St. Augustine is also quoted six times directly in essential sections of Heidegger’s magnum opus *Sein und Zeit* (1928)<sup>10</sup>. Several of the newly published texts of the young Heidegger reveal a period of unsuspected richness. Therefore the recent publication of these

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<sup>1</sup> Confessiones I.1.1

<sup>2</sup> Confessiones X.33.50

<sup>3</sup> *Sein und Zeit*, p.2

<sup>4</sup> Grondin (1997)

<sup>5</sup> Grondin (1997)

<sup>6</sup> Grondin (1997)

<sup>7</sup> Capelle (2005), p.115

<sup>8</sup> Capelle (2005), p.125

<sup>9</sup> Capelle (2005), p.121

<sup>10</sup> De Paulo (2003), p.549

previously unpublished works justifies a renewed interpretation of his oeuvre<sup>11</sup>. It is expected that the reading of these old but new texts of Heidegger will transform the perception of his intellectual development<sup>12</sup>.

In 1995 *Augustinus und der Neoplatonismus* is published for the first time<sup>13</sup>. It is one of the early Freiburg readings (1920-1921) in which Heidegger offers a foundation for philosophy as a hermeneutical-phenomenological science, the primordial science of factual life<sup>14</sup>. In order to thematize factual life, Heidegger performs a phenomenological reading of book X of the *Confessions* as a starting point. This phenomenological interpretation is aimed at understanding, as opposed to historical classification<sup>15</sup>. Several studies in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century are dismissed by Heidegger as Platonic philosophies of history, because they consider historical time as a chronological order. The *how* of being of life itself remains concealed by this object-historical approach.

This *how* of being has a structure in which the execution of this life is concerned by its own being. Life lives only out of itself. Life in such an executing historical structure is called *factual life* or *life in historical facticity*<sup>16</sup>. The categorical refusal to integrate *concern* as an object of history is expressed by Heidegger's concept *Bekümmern*. Heidegger considers the object not according to its ontic place (the fact of its being given) but to its ontological determination. The methodological purpose of his phenomenological interpretation is to lay out the phenomena which are important for the problem of the sense of being which is indigenous to the concept of life. For Heidegger, his phenomenological reading 'might give insight to the bottom of the problem of levels of being, and so to free oneself from the axiological hierarchization of the Neoplatonic tradition, and the faculty psychology we inherited from the Greeks'<sup>17</sup>. Therefore, a balanced representation of St. Augustine's thought has not been the primary aim of Heidegger's analysis.

To contribute to the recent discussions concerning St. Augustine's influence on Heidegger, Heidegger's phenomenological reading of book X of St. Augustine's *Confessiones* is elaborated in the next chapters. A number of philosophical correspondences between the early Heidegger and Augustine in their understanding of the existence as well as several important differences are clarified by comparing their existential-ontological phenomena. First, St. Augustine's concept of existence as stated in book X is expounded (chapter 2). Then, several phenomena of existence as indicated by Heidegger are compared to St. Augustine's views (chapter 3). Also the several major differences between Heidegger's and Augustine's views on existence are elaborated (chapter 4), in order to state several conclusive remarks on the parallels between Heidegger and St. Augustine (chapter 5).

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<sup>11</sup> Capelle (2005), p.115

<sup>12</sup> Derrida's response to Philippe Capelle, in: Capelle (2005), p.124

<sup>13</sup> Blans (2005)

<sup>14</sup> Von Herrmann (2001), p.113

<sup>15</sup> Kisiel (1993), p.195

<sup>16</sup> Von Herrmann (2001), p.115

<sup>17</sup> Kisiel (1993), p.213

## 2 St. Augustine on existence

In order to clarify parallels with Martin Heidegger, St. Augustine's views on existence as stated in book X of the *Confessiones* will be expounded first. In book X, St. Augustine no longer relates to the past but tells what he is now ('what I am in the very time of the making of my confessions')<sup>18</sup>. 'I will therefore confess what I know and do not know about myself.' What is certain to St. Augustine is his love of God. 'But what do I love, when I love God?'<sup>19,20</sup>. This question takes St. Augustine in the first instance to the problem of memory and identification, however finally truth is to be found in the occurrence of life. The question what God is and how truth can be achieved as a goal in and with God, shifts to an attitudinal one. An existential stance, an openness to truth is a condition for the occurrence of the *vita beata*, the good life. This existential condition is thematized by his concepts of *molestia*, *curare*, *tentatio* and *continentia*.

'One experiences oneself in his memory, one occurs to oneself there'<sup>21</sup>. This is why St. Augustine initially searches God in his memory, being 'the fields and roomy chambers of memory, where are the treasures of countless images, imported into it from all manner of things by the senses.'<sup>22</sup> 'And this thing is the mind, and this I myself am.'<sup>23</sup> 'There also I meet myself and recall myself, what I have done, when and where I did it and how I was affected when I did it (...) and on the basis of this, I meditate upon future actions and events and hopes as if they were present now'<sup>24</sup>. However, since also animals have memory, St. Augustine has to go beyond to find God, and he asks himself how he can be found, when he's not in *memoria*. 'I will pass beyond memory also, but where shall I find Thee, O Thou truly good and assured sweetness? But where shall I find Thee? If I find Thee without memory, then am I unmindful of Thee. And how now shall I find Thee, if I do not remember Thee?'<sup>25</sup> St. Augustine questions what concept or memory is guiding when he seeks God, and on which the basis he can decide it is what one truly has sought when God is found.

God therefore needs to be outside the memory, the mind. But can one go beyond consciousness, St. Augustine questions. How can God be sought without memory? Memory seems to be indispensable for searching. 'For when I seek you, my God, I seek the happy life. I will seek you that my soul may live. For my body lives by my soul, and my soul lives by you.'<sup>26</sup> 'How, then, do I seek a happy life, seeing that it is not mine till I can say, "It is enough!" in that place where I ought to say it?'<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Confessiones X.3.4; GA60, p.128

<sup>19</sup> Confessiones X.6.8

<sup>20</sup> Confessiones X.7.11

<sup>21</sup> Confessiones X.16.25

<sup>22</sup> Confessiones X.8.12

<sup>23</sup> Confessiones X.17.26

<sup>24</sup> Confessiones X.8.14

<sup>25</sup> Confessiones X.17.26

<sup>26</sup> Confessiones X.20.29

<sup>27</sup> Confessiones X.20.29

The sense of the real implicit within leads St. Augustine to a new concept of existence. The *vita beata* is not defined by content, as initially intended. The question had changed from what the happy life is, to *how one can come* to the happy life. To seek life as such is the leading tendency.

*How* the happy life is alive in us in the search for it will expose *what* is intended by the *vita beata*. It is given in a *delectatio*, a delight. It is a delight because of the ‘joy in truth’<sup>28</sup>. ‘And the happy life is this: to rejoice unto Thee, in Thee, and for Thee; this it is, and there is no other.’<sup>29</sup> ‘Truth is God himself’<sup>30</sup>. Since the happy life is a *how* of experiencing, the individual who experiences it is always actively involved. The happy life takes shape only in the strong will and intense desire for it. It is not an object and cannot be appropriated from others. The happy life is to be found in oneself, as a tendency or gravity of the soul which draws it and directs it. It is dependent on the *how* of the questioning posture<sup>31</sup>. St. Augustine confesses: ‘Late did I get to the level of factual life where I put myself in the position to love you.’<sup>32</sup> ‘A happy life is the joy of truth’<sup>33</sup>, but ‘Perchance I am deceived’<sup>34</sup>. St. Augustine implies all want the happy life, and no one wants to be deceived themselves. However some people ‘hate truth when it reprehends them.’<sup>35</sup> Not all humans want the happy life strongly enough; often they settle for lesser delights which are within their reach<sup>36,37</sup>. But even in closing off against truth, man loves truth more than error, and thus makes an effort at the *vita beata*<sup>38</sup>.

The possibility of conversion is disclosed by being a being of care. This care is disclosed by anxiety. The anxiety is the result of the call of conscience by the grace of God. This conversion by a conscious experience can be illustrated by book VIII of *Confessiones*: ‘Ponticianus told us this story and as he spoke you, O lord, turned me back upon myself. You took me from behind my own back, where I had placed myself because I did not wish to look upon myself. You stood me face to face with myself, so that I might see how foul I was, how deformed and defiled, how covered with stains and sores. I looked, and I was filled with horror, but there was no place for me to flee to away from myself.’<sup>39</sup> ‘What was there that I did not say against myself? With what scourges of self-condemnation did I not lash my soul, so that it would follow me as I strove to follow after you? Yet it drew back; it refused to go on, and it offered no excuses for itself. All arguments were used up, and all had been refuted. There remained only speechless dread and my soul was fearful, as if of death itself, of being kept back from that flow of habit by which it was wasting away unto death.’<sup>40</sup> Anxiety or restlessness discloses the human being in its radical dissipation, and opens up the human being radically in its own freedom as a fallen, worldly mortal creature. By this, it makes possible the experience of fear.

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<sup>28</sup> Confessiones X.23.33

<sup>29</sup> Confessiones X.22.32

<sup>30</sup> Confessiones X.24.35

<sup>31</sup> GA60, p.150

<sup>32</sup> Confessiones X.27.38

<sup>33</sup> Confessiones X.23.33

<sup>34</sup> Confessiones X.32.48

<sup>35</sup> Confessiones X.23.34

<sup>36</sup> Von Herrmann (2001), p.120

<sup>37</sup> Pöggeler (1964), p.38

<sup>38</sup> GA60, p.148

<sup>39</sup> Confessiones, VIII.7.16

<sup>40</sup> Confessiones, VIII.7.18

For Augustine, the average everydayness is characterized as *perversio*, the basic characteristic of factic life is anxiety. Two kinds of anxiety are distinguished: worldly fear of things (*timor castus*) and eternal fear of God (*timor servilis*). In anxiety and through the agency of others, the human being starts its ontological pilgrimage through the *perversio-conversio* project<sup>41</sup>. In one's search one is led by the concern about one's own life, aimed at living in truth. It stands toward oneself in the pressure of care. Without this intentionality, which is determined by care, the *vita beata*<sup>42</sup> can not be.

The goal of care is delight: 'each strives in his concerns and thoughts to attain his delights'<sup>43</sup>. These delights are experienced as joy in truth (*gaudium de veritate*)<sup>44</sup>. Two basic phenomena of care can be distinguished, namely use (*uti*) and enjoyment (*frui*). Both phenomena indicate care of the human being over one's own life as the fundamental drive, a care which is the result of the restlessness incurred by the call of conscience: using, coping with what life brings (*uti*), and enjoying (*frui*). The eternal unchangeable things are to be enjoyed without reference to something else, whereas the object of *uti* is sought for the sake of something else<sup>45</sup>. The *fruitio dei*, enjoying the eternal things, is the central orientation of St. Augustine's on life itself. The present life consists of trouble and toil, but in hope and in *fruitio dei* it consists of rest and quietude.

In his state of *perversio*, man is dissipated into the many. Life is a hardship, a constant falling in *perversio*, and has to be endured. 'Thou enjoyest us to endure them, not love them', 'I struggle daily'<sup>46</sup>, 'the daily assault of temptations.'<sup>47</sup> This trial is about losing or gaining one's self, that is, finding one's way to God<sup>48</sup>. *Perversio* is in the enjoyment of things that should be used, or in the use of things that should be enjoyed. In one's aim for delight one is tempted to enjoy worldly pleasures which should be endured in order to enjoy what should be enjoyed: the *fruitio dei*. It is in this *deflexus*, led by delight, that the factic life develops itself out of itself.

*Continentia* is the countermovement of the dissipated life. 'For in continence are we bound up and brought into one, whence we were scattered abroad into many.'<sup>49</sup> By continence, man is brought into the One<sup>50</sup>. *Continentia* is alive in decisive hoping. The *continentia* is expected by God, however can only be executed when what has to be executed has been given by God. 'Verily, Thou commandest that I should be continent from the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life'<sup>51</sup>.

Here St. Augustine follows John 2:15-17 by distinguishing three general types of temptation (*concupiscentia*): the temptation of the flesh (*concupiscentia carnis*), the temptation of the eyes (*concupiscentia oculorum*), and worldly ambition (*ambitio saeculi*). The first temptation encompasses five aspects: longing for carnal desire, eating and drinking, scent, lust for the ear, and sensorial lust of the eyes<sup>52</sup>. *Concupiscentia oculorum* consists mainly of curiosity<sup>53</sup>. The *ambitio saeculi* is a perversion by

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<sup>41</sup> De Paulo, p.560

<sup>42</sup> Kisiel (1993), p.199

<sup>43</sup> Kisiel (1993), p.201

<sup>44</sup> Confessiones X.23.33

<sup>45</sup> Kisiel (1993), p.201

<sup>46</sup> Confessiones X.31.43

<sup>47</sup> Confessiones X.37.60

<sup>48</sup> Confessiones X.35.54

<sup>49</sup> Confessiones X.29.40

<sup>50</sup> Confessiones X.29.40

<sup>51</sup> Confessiones X.30.41

<sup>52</sup> Von Herrmann (2001), p.124

concerning mainly for one's own life: 'It concerns the desire of man to be feared and loved, just for the joy of it, which can't be said to be a real enjoyment.'<sup>54</sup>

These temptations can lead to the perversion concerning *uti* or *frui*, since their enjoyment is not aimed at the one truth, but scattered along worldly pleasures. Each of the three levels of temptation contains a characteristic way for the self to loose itself, but also to find itself through the self-examination (*exploratio*)<sup>55</sup>, when involved in the process of restraintment and containing these addictions. 'Once again let me more diligently examine myself.'<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Confessiones X.35.55

<sup>54</sup> Confessiones X.36.59

<sup>55</sup> Confessiones X.37.62

<sup>56</sup> Confessiones X.37.62

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### 3 Parallels between St. Augustine and Heidegger

In this chapter Martin Heidegger's view on existence is paralleled to St. Augustine views as expounded in chapter 2. Several parallels to St. Augustine are elaborated, concerning factual life experience, *perversio* and *conversio*, anxiety and fear, care, *defluxus* and *continentia*, and *concupiscentia*.

As Heidegger notes in his Freiburg lecture *Augustinus und der Neoplatonismus*, the point of departure of the path of philosophy is the factual life experience<sup>57</sup>. Factual life experience is the attitudinal, falling, relationally indifferent, self-sufficient concern for significance<sup>58</sup>. The world becomes accessible through factual life experience. It is characteristic for factual life experience that one does not experience the way of experiencing. How one stands in regard to things or the manner of experiencing is not co-experienced. Therefore, factual life experience manifests an indifference with regard to the manner of experiencing. For Heidegger facticity concerns the basic original constitution of that which is there and which is thought of as such. This concept on facticity is tied to St. Augustine's *facticia est anima*<sup>59,60</sup>. Also in *Sein und Zeit* Heidegger clearly recognizes the existential analytic which is intrinsic to the *Confessiones*<sup>61</sup>. He stresses it is necessary to begin the analysis with that which is ontically proximal, starting from the own average everydayness of perversion<sup>62</sup>.

Heidegger considers the human being as thrown in the world. Everyday Being-in-the-world is concerned as being in a constant descent, turning away from the authentic self. This not only parallels to the doctrine of original sin, but also St. Augustine's notion of human restlessness. Heidegger seems to have secularized St. Augustine's conception of *perversio* in order to address the everydayness of human existence phenomenologically (fallenness)<sup>63</sup>. In the experience of average everydayness, we are lost in the publicity of the 'they' (*das Man*). This worldliness is a constitutive part of being human<sup>64</sup>. The existential analytic must arise in the experience of this everydayness. In the tension between *conversio* and *perversio*, the human being is a being of restlessness in its ontological condition. In one's fallenness one turns away from the discovery of an authentic self. The possibility of authentic conversion is for Augustine only possible by the grace of God<sup>65</sup>, however in Heidegger's thought it is inflicted by the call of consciousness.

Restlessness defines the human being ontologically and is phenomenologically revealed in human fallenness, worldliness and run from selfhood, which signifies the ontological descent from Being<sup>66</sup>. Restlessness shows up in anxiety. Heidegger states 'the turning-away of falling is grounded rather in

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<sup>57</sup> GA 60, p.10

<sup>58</sup> GA 60, p.16

<sup>59</sup> Capelle (2005), p.120

<sup>60</sup> Blans, (2003)

<sup>61</sup> De Paulo (2003), p.550

<sup>62</sup> De Paulo (2003), p.550

<sup>63</sup> De Paulo (2003), p.553

<sup>64</sup> De Paulo (2003), p.553

<sup>65</sup> De Paulo, (2003),p.561

<sup>66</sup> De Paulo (2003), p.557

anxiety, which in turn is what first makes fear possible.<sup>67</sup> Heidegger makes a distinction between anxiety and fear. This is comparable to St. Augustine's distinction between *timor castus* and *timor servilis*. Anxiety is not concerned with fear of entities in the world, but reveals the movement of the human being in turning away from *perversio*. According to the Augustinian, Pascalian and especially Kierkegaardian notion, anxiety is that what makes problematic, what makes the questioning for our being in the world worthwhile. Anxiety is one of the most important instruments which makes conscious the ontical character and context and confronts it with the ontological. For Heidegger, anxiety is experienced in being-towards-death. By experiencing death in presence, one is receptive to the call of consciousness. Anxiety is a sign of authenticity, of the denial of them-being<sup>68</sup>. It also discloses the human being as a being of care, and discloses the possibilities to strive for authenticity<sup>69</sup>. Heidegger praises St. Augustine for having seen the radical uncertainty and dissipation. Part of this dissipation is the uncertainty whether one lives his life authentically or inauthentically<sup>70</sup>.

'But in anxiety lies the possibility of a disclosure which is quite distinctive, for anxiety individualizes. This individualization brings Dasein back from its falling, and makes manifest that authenticity and inauthenticity are possibilities of its Being.'<sup>71</sup> As a fallen human being which finds itself thrown in the world in its average everydayness, the self in anxiety is a being of care. The human being converts to human wholeness in authentic resoluteness. This conversion is the result of a call of conscience which is experienced in the *perversio*. This can be paralleled with St. Augustine's turn to God, which by grace is given to the dissipated being. For Heidegger anxiety is, in the end, fear of death. He states the anthropology of Christian theology has always thought life in combination with death. Heidegger cites Luther: 'To die, means to feel the presence of death. In being towards death (*zum Tode sein*), factual existence can hear the decisive call of conscience.' This leads to the acknowledgement of care<sup>72</sup>. The concept of care as the Being of *Dasein* constitutes a secularization and synthesis of the concept of *cura* with Augustine's notion of *caritas*<sup>73</sup>.

As stated above, for Heidegger the human being is constantly struggling between *conversio* and *perversio*, turning to the self and falling out of it, dissipating into the many. The human being is constantly falling from its authentic self to a worldly self with dissipated love of things. Heidegger's *continentia* is the existential historical countermovement in factual life against the dissipation into the many (*defluere in multis*), fading away in the many worldly significances<sup>74</sup>. This can be seen parallel to St. Augustine's conception of the *continentia* of loving God and *defluxus*, a dissipation of love for the many.

The *Confessiones* point the human being to the futural being in its closing hope of eternal peace in God. Parallel to this view of St. Augustine, Heidegger states that in resoluteness the human being can achieve wholeness in Being-one's-self while remaining a being-in-the-world. Authenticity is a kind of conversion of Dasein in its self-understanding as temporal care in Being-toward-death. Authentic resoluteness is no emancipation from fallenness but rather a modified way of Being-in-the-world. The hope, the wait for the

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<sup>67</sup> Being and Time, p.230

<sup>68</sup> Steiner (1994), p.110

<sup>69</sup> De Paulo (2003), p.560

<sup>70</sup> Grondin (1997)

<sup>71</sup> Being and Time, p.237

<sup>72</sup> Pöggeler (1963), p.43

<sup>73</sup> De Paulo (2004), p.561, n. XLII

<sup>74</sup> Von Herrmann (2001), p.123

arrival of the Lord is not an event, but a mode of existence, which confronts us with our factual uncertainty. Temptation as the characteristic feature of the life in concern keeps life between losing and winning oneself. Both these possibilities constitute the facticity of life<sup>75</sup>.

Heidegger derives his thoughts on the three *concupiscentia* from St. Augustine. When giving in with the *concupiscentia*, one loses oneself by dissipating into the many worldly meanings. The largest temptation for Heidegger is that the human being conceals itself for itself, since it is permanently tempted to flee for its radical uncertainty into dissipation<sup>76</sup>. In this *perversio*, the human being discloses the world in its utter absorption with its things.

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<sup>75</sup> Von Herrmann (2001), p.129

<sup>76</sup> Grondin (1997)

## 4 Differences between St. Augustine and Heidegger

Despite the strong similarities between the existential ontologies of St. Augustine and Martin Heidegger as indicated in the previous chapter, several differences are to be expounded.

A phenomenological approach proved to be useful to understand the relevance of confessional style. However, Heidegger has a formal approach to the phenomena of factual life. Heidegger's sense of Hermeneutic formality was predominant in his elaboration of hermeneutic phenomenology in the academic year 1920-1921<sup>77</sup>. By these schemata he aims to conceptualize the phenomena of factual life. Heidegger's formal analysis might therefore be less expressive than a confessional, reflexive, contemplative work as the *Confessiones*. Unlike for example, Lyotard, who has written about St. Augustine in the style of confession and prayer<sup>78</sup>, Heidegger does not fit himself into the style of St. Augustine. Therefore, several characteristics of St. Augustine's views are necessarily underexposed in Heidegger's examination.

A second remark concerns Heidegger's translation of St. Augustine's hermeneutic of life aimed at God to a hermeneutic of life aimed at death. According to Heidegger, Christian theology has always considered death in thinking life, and existence can only be understood as possibility just because of its coincidence with death as ultimate possibility. However, it is possible this shift from a hermeneutics of God to a hermeneutics of death will change the phenomena constitutive for factic life as formalized by Heidegger.

Third, as a result of this change in the hermeneutic approach to life, temporality has predominantly positive role in Heidegger's thought, since it enacts the potential for authenticity. For St. Augustine temporality has a negative connotation since only eternal things are to be enjoyed (this negative view on temporality is weakened by St. Augustine's approach to incarnation as stated in book XII). Although Heidegger makes an original contribution by this interpretation, it deviates from St. Augustine's thought.

Fourth, the quiescence which St. Augustine shares with Neo-platonic views<sup>79</sup> is criticized by Heidegger. According to Heidegger, St. Augustine is disloyal to himself by neglecting factual life experience in the quiescence of the *fruitio dei*. By emphasizing the quiescence to the detriment of the dread of God which will endure forever, he disrupts the delicate balance between *continentia* and *defluxus*<sup>80</sup>. Heidegger rejects this concept of eternity, being a concept of speculative metaphysics. He criticizes St. Augustine's perception concerning the ultimate goal, finding rest in God, because of its neglect of factual life experience. Heidegger seems to interpret this rest in the Aristotelian way of being a goal. However, for St. Augustine the notion of finding rest in and with God is not necessarily an existential stance. Since this rest is constantly challenged by temptation, quiescence cannot be found in this life. St. Augustine states this several times in the *Confessions* which obsoletes Heidegger's criticism to a certain extent. Nevertheless, it is clear quietude has a more central position in St. Augustine's thought than it has in Heidegger's.

Fifth, St. Augustine considers Being as permanently present. For Heidegger, this adopted Neoplatonic metaphysical notion conceals the fact that factual life essentially is based on unobjectifiable 'historical'

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<sup>77</sup> Kisiel (1993), p.218

<sup>78</sup> Blans (2003)

<sup>79</sup> Pöggeler (1963), p.39

<sup>80</sup> Kisiel (1993), p.218

execution (*Vollzug*). Since metaphysical thought considers Being as continuously being-present, it can not suffice for the temporality essential to the execution of factual life. Such a metaphysical language forces to submit all attempts to maintain diversity in language.

Sixth, Heidegger's secular de-metaphysicalized translation of Augustinian concepts alter the meaning of the phenomena of factual life experience. He objects to the Neoplatonic abstractions and metaphysical presuppositions, and only utilizes the concept of factual life experience for his existential ontology. The involvement with God is secularized in his phenomenological approach. For St. Augustine God, which has been present all the time, has to be invoked by man (*invocare*). In a dialectic of searching and finding, this search for God is continuously deepened<sup>81</sup>. This parallels Heidegger's search for authenticity, where for man it is never clear whether he is being authentic or not. What moves the Augustinian being to continence is the experience of being with God, however it is not clear why for Heidegger man should live in awareness of death and in authenticity, an expression of a merely philosophical pathos (later, Heidegger will strongly reduce the importance of the notion of authenticity and emphasizes acquiescence). Also St. Augustine's Christian conception of *perversio*<sup>82</sup> and the notion of *continentia* are secularized in Heidegger's thought. They are understood as the existential historically determined countermovement in factual life against the dissipation into the many (*defluere in multis*), fading away in the many worldly significances<sup>83</sup>.

Seventh, For St. Augustine *memoria* has an important role in allowing the soul to open up to eternal truth. This concept is considered by Heidegger as over-determined by the (neo-) Platonic notion of *anamnesis*<sup>84</sup>. Heidegger believed St. Augustine unfortunately remained on the ontical and pre-ontological levels of analysis on this aspect (as a result of his adoption of Neo-Platonic categories in his mode of conceptualization)<sup>85</sup>. He criticizes St. Augustine's predominantly object-historical approach of one's access to *memoria*. Nevertheless, Heidegger states that radical existential movements can be distinguished in this mainly object-historical approach<sup>86</sup>.

Eighth, anxiety is the main mood for Heidegger. In St. Augustine's thought there also is enjoyment, since one is moved to the search to the *fruitio dei* by the delightful grace of God.

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<sup>81</sup> Confessiones 1.1.1: 'For those who seek shall find Him'

<sup>82</sup> De Paulo (2003), p.553

<sup>83</sup> Von Herrmann (2001) p.123

<sup>84</sup> Capelle (2005), p.122-123

<sup>85</sup> De Paulo (2003), p.550

<sup>86</sup> Von Herrmann (2001), p.118-119

## 5 Conclusion and recommendations

St. Augustine and Heidegger reveal a strong philosophical compatibility because of their hermeneutic approach to truth and because of their views on the phenomena which are constitutive for existence. Heidegger's methodological purpose of the ontological reading of the *Confessiones* was to illuminate these phenomena which are important for the sense of being that is characteristic for life<sup>87</sup>. Such a reading discloses strong parallels of St. Augustine with Heidegger's hermeneutical and existential conception. To a certain extent, Heidegger has discovered that and to what extent St. Augustine carries out a self-interpretation of his life and spirit as historical occurrence<sup>88,89</sup>. By not interpreting St. Augustine object-historically, Heidegger's phenomenological reading is close to this Augustinian approach, distinguishing himself from the *concupiscentia oculorum* of his own contemporary philosophers.

Heidegger tried to understand what theology is from an ontological point of view<sup>90</sup>, and his secularized existential ontology shows a strong compatibility with St. Augustine's theistic perspective. Presumably, there is a historical and hermeneutical influence of St. Augustine on the concepts of the early Heidegger. Nonetheless, Heidegger's attitude against theology seems to be ambivalent<sup>91</sup>, and his de-metaphysicalized existential ontology will probably lead to a different experience of life. Yet Heidegger's change from an analytic of the call of God to an analytic of the call of death can easily be translated back into Christian concepts<sup>92</sup>. Therefore the question still remains whether the thought of the young Heidegger, despite his denials, did not remain deeply Christian after all.

This paper has focused on book X of the *Confessiones*. Nevertheless, also several other writings of St. Augustine (like *Confessiones XI* or *De Civitate Dei*) may have influenced the early Martin Heidegger significantly. Furthermore, many of Heidegger's references have been influenced by St. Augustine too. In order to understand St. Augustine's influence on Heidegger more completely, the parallels and relations of Heidegger's philosophy with these other works and thinkers have to be studied more in detail. This will also provide additional insight in Heidegger's intellectual development. The parallels and differences identified in this paper can contribute to both goals. For one thing they surely expose: that Augustinian thought is resounded in the works of the early Martin Heidegger very lively.

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<sup>87</sup> Kisiel (1993), p.213

<sup>88</sup> Von Herrmann (2001), p.116

<sup>89</sup> Steiner (1994), p.101

<sup>90</sup> Capelle (2005), p.125

<sup>91</sup> Capelle (2005), p.123

<sup>92</sup> Derrida's response to Philippe Capelle. In: Capelle (2001), p.124

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