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Reading Augustine's *Confessions* in Normandy in the 11th and 12th Centuries

Lire Les Confessions de saint Augustin en Normandie aux XI^e et XII^e siècles

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Abstract:

Scholars such as Pierre Courcelle have observed an intensification in interest in Augustine's *Confessions* in medieval Europe after the 11th century. This intensification was manifested in Normandy in two ways: first, in the early 11th century, Abbot John of Fécamp drew extensively from Augustine's *Confessions* in his own *Confessio Theologica*; and second, book lists and extant manuscripts from the Norman monastic world show a marked increase in the number of copies of *Confessions* in Normandy by end of the 12th century. This article offers, for the first time, both an analysis of how John of Fécamp used Augustine's work in his own *Confessio* and an interpretation of the manuscript evidence for the diffusion of *Confessions* in Normandy. This study hopes to demonstrate how an analysis of contemporary intellectual interpretations of texts in Normandy can be used alongside paleographical examination of surviving copies to uncover both the ways in which and the reasons for which books circulated among the monastic houses.

Keywords: John of Fécamp, *Confessions*, St. Augustine of Hippo, monastic manuscript culture, monastic contemplation, 11th-century, 12th-century, *Confessio Theologica*, monasticism, Paris, BnF, ms lat. 1916

Résumé:

Des chercheurs, tel Pierre Courcelle, ont observé un regain d'intérêt pour Les Confessions de saint Augustin dans l'Europe médiévale après le XI^e siècle. Ce renouvellement d'intérêt est attesté en Normandie de deux manières: d'abord, au début du XI^e siècle, l'abbé Jean de Fécamp s'est largement inspiré des Confessions de saint Augustin dans sa propre Confessio Theologica; ensuite, les listes de bibliothèques et les manuscrits subsistants issus du monde monastique normand attestent une croissance exponentielle du nombre des Confessions dans la Normandie jusqu'à la fin du XII^e siècle. Cet article propose, pour la première fois, une analyse de la façon dont Jean de Fécamp a utilisé le travail d'Augustin dans sa Confessio, et une interprétation des indices que constituent les exemplaires normands des Confessions. Cette étude s'attache à démontrer comment en Normandie, les interprétations intellectuelles des textes par des contemporains peuvent être jointes à l'examen paléographique des manuscrits, pour comprendre la manière dont les livres ont circulé entre les bibliothèques monastiques, et les raisons de cette diffusion.

Mots-clés: Jean de Fécamp, Confessiones, saint Augustin d'Hippone, manuscrits monastiques, contemplation monastique, XI^e siècle, XII^e siècle, Confessio Theologica, monachisme, Paris, BnF, ms lat. 1916

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Introduction¹

Many scholars have observed that, during the 11th and 12th centuries, there was a marked increase in the number of copies of Augustine's *Confessions* produced in western Europe². The Norman monastic world was no exception³. Three questions then arise: in the case of Normandy, where did this phenomenon begin, and why? How and to what extent did the text become disseminated throughout the monastic houses of Normandy? And how did the Normans read Augustine's text?

In the first part of this article, I will show how Augustine's *Confessions* was of particular interest to one influential Norman monk, John of Fécamp, abbot of Fécamp from 1028-1078. I will demonstrate the ways in which John systematically excerpted Augustine's text to form the backbone of his own *Confessio Theologica*. I will also show that John adopted Augustine's characterization of the relationship between the sinner and God, and in so doing John prescribed a method of contemplation and prayer. In the second part of this article, I will summarize what can be known about the presence of *Confessions* manuscripts both at Fécamp and elsewhere in Normandy. Building on the work of Geneviève Nortier, I will show which Norman monastic houses acquired copies of *Confessions*, and that, perhaps as a result of its abbot's interest, Fécamp was the first to possess a copy in the region. I will also examine the two Norman *Confessions* manuscripts that survive to establish what might have been a Norman recension of *Confessions* deriving from Fécamp's exemplar. Finally, I will examine a 12th-century *Confessions* manuscript of unattributed origin, and will posit its place in a Norman monastic *milieu* based on its handwriting, provenance, and the reflection of John's particular interpretation of *Confessions* in its marginal annotations. This study hopes to demonstrate how an analysis of contemporary intellectual interpretations of texts such as *Confessions* can be used alongside paleographical interpretations to uncover both the ways in which and the reasons for which books circulated among the Norman monasteries.

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 2. See WEBBER, 1996, p. 29-45; where she explains, on p. 40-43, that this was due in part to an increased interest in the writings of the Latin fathers in general, which she later corroborates in WEBBER, 1997, p. 191-205. See also COURCELLE, 1963, p. 254-256; DEKKERS, 1987, p. 458.
 3. NORTIER, 1971, p. 201; this will be discussed in more detail later on in the article.

Part I: John of Fécamp's reading and appropriation of *Confessions*

The first scholar to remark on the resurgence of interest in Augustine's *Confessions* was Pierre Courcelle⁴. Courcelle observed a Europe-wide revival of interest in text and claimed that, before the 11th century, *Confessions* was one of the least-read texts in the Augustinian corpus. When it was read, it was merely mined for doctrinal excerpts, and, apart from a limited number of exceptions, its manuscript presence was largely confined to *florilegia* of quotations of Augustine's writings⁵. Writers before the 11th century, like Isidore of Seville, John Scotus Eriugena, or Gottschalk of Orbais, tended to use *Confessions* in this way, excerpting the text when it provided a doctrinal explanation for a Christian phenomenon⁶. This was all transformed, Courcelle notes, in the 11th century. He argues that, starting with John of Fécamp, there was a change in the way that people read the text of *Confessions*: it was no longer simply a resource to buttress orthodoxy, but instead became of interest for its affect, its tone, and its prayerful nature. Courcelle observes that John obsessively adopted Augustine's manner of addressing God and his vocabulary of prayer, and that, thereafter, a multiplicity of authors did the same⁷.

Pierre Courcelle here refers specifically to John of Fécamp's extensive quotation of Augustine's *Confessions* in his chief *œuvre*, the *Confessio Theologica*, initially composed when he was prior of Fécamp between 1016-1028, and revised several times before his death in 1078⁸. First composed for his own monks when

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4. COURCELLE, 1963, p. 235-261. Courcelle's observation is corroborated by extant manuscript evidence of *Confessions*. In a study of extant early manuscripts of *Confessions*, Gorman demonstrates the numerical and geographical limits of the circulation of *Confessions* during the 10th century (GORMAN, 1983, p. 114-145). Judging from lists compiled by WILMART, 1932, p. 259-268, SKUTELLA, 1939, p. 70, VERHEIJEN, 1979, p. 87-96, GORMAN, 1981, p. 238-279, and GORMAN, 1983, p. 114-145, there are at least 22 extant manuscripts of *Confessions* from the 11th century, and at least 48 from the 12th.
 5. COURCELLE, 1963, p. 254.
 6. COURCELLE, 1963, p. 255, 262; KACZYNSKI, 2006, p. 118-119 also notes that Augustine was primarily read as an exegete in ninth-century St. Gall.
 7. COURCELLE, 1963, p. 263-264. Note that, after John, one of the authors who drew extensively from Augustine's *Confessions* was himself connected to a Norman abbey: Guibert of Nogent (d. 1124), once a monk at the Norman abbey of Saint-Germer-de-Fly, modeled his autobiography famously on *Confessions* (special thanks are due to Stéphane Lecouteux for pointing out the connection between Guibert and Normandy).
 8. WILMART, 1932, p. 350 posits the date of John's *Confessio* to be between 1016-1028, when John was still prior at Fécamp, because John refers to his need to be obedient his own abbot in his text (see edition by LECLERCQ, 1946, p. 134). Wilmart thus reasons that John could not yet have been abbot when he wrote his text. For more on the three recensions of the *Confessio*, see LECLERCQ, 1946, p. 37-44. Leclercq here notes that John likely wrote his first edition of the *Confessio*, called the *Confessio Theologica*, between 1016-1028, when prior; then his second, revised edition, the so-called *Libellus de scripturis et verbis patrum collectus ad eorum presertim utilitatem qui contemplative vite sunt amatores*, between 1030-1050, for the purposes of sharing it with monks and nuns elsewhere; and then his third, final edition, the so-called *Confessio Fidei*, around 1050, in response to the Berengar of Tours Eucharistic controversy. For the purposes of this article, I have only considered John's use of *Confessions* in the first recension of the *Confessio*, edited by Jean Leclercq (1946). More work needs to be done on these three recensions and the purposes

he was prior, and later sent to outside monasteries, convents, and pious members of the imperial family when he was abbot⁹, John's text is a prose treatise which is sprinkled with short prayers to facilitate proper contemplation of God. It is a text that was not for liturgical reading or scholarly instruction, but instead seems to have been for personal devotion and edification, usually circulating in small manuscripts that could easily have been placed in a pocket or carried on a person¹⁰. Over the course of three unnamed sections (a super-structure with Trinitarian resonances appropriate for the monastery La Trinité de Fécamp), John calls on his audience to soften their hearts and fully experience the suffering of their earthly condition in order to contemplate God more effectively. The first part of the work is an invocation of God and a definition and glorification of each member of the Trinity; the second part is an explanation of the mechanisms of redemption, and the need for faith, prayer, and a neglect of earthly things in order to achieve redemption; and the third part is a characterization of the ideal state of the contemplator, namely, crying, pleading, and praying for divine mercy and a vision of God that he will only achieve at the hour of his death.

Throughout his *Confessio*, John quotes both long and short passages from Augustine's *Confessions*, interweaving pieces of this text with his own. In manuscript copies of the *Confessio*, quotations from Augustine's text are not

of each of John's revisions; some of this will be considered in my forthcoming study. Note that John did not title his own work «*Confessio*». The title, «*Confessio Theologica*» comes from the rubric in a 12th-century manuscript of John's *Confessio* (Paris, BnF, ms lat. 1919), where the book is called «*liber confessionum*» (see fol. 1); this title was appropriated by Jean Leclercq for his edition. The title of the third recension of the *Confessio*, «*Confessio Fidei*», listed above, is also taken from the titular rubric of an 11th-century manuscript of John's work (Montpellier, Bibliothèque interuniversitaire, section de médecine, ms H309), added by a later medieval scribe (see fol. 1). There is no indication in the text of the *Confessio*, nor in the letters that John sent to the nun or to Empress Agnes along with his manuscript, that John assigned a title to the work; within his text, he merely refers to it as his «*libellus*», (the title given by Leclercq to the second recension of John's work).

9. Sometime between 1030-1050, John sent a copy of his *Confessio* to an anonymous nun (possibly from the abbey of Notre-Dame-aux-Nonnains, a Benedictine abbey in Troyes and the only abbey for female religious with a mention of John of Fécamp in its necrology; see BULST, 1973, p. 160). Around 1063-1064, he sent a copy to the Holy Roman Empress Agnes. For more on these actions, including editions of the letters that John sent to these women with his writings, see LECLERCQ, 1946, p. 205-218; for more on John's relationship with female religious, see McNAMER, 2009, p. 59-77. John's writings were also present in male monastic houses: there were, for example, an 11th-century copy of John's *Confessio* at the monastery of St. Arnulf in Metz (currently Metz, Bibl. mun., 245) and an 11th-century copy of extracts of the *Confessio* at Bec in Normandy (currently Paris, BnF, ms lat. 13593; note that, while this text is sometimes called the «*Reclinatorium anime*», it corresponds with the first part of John of Fécamp's *Confessio*); both houses were well-connected to Fécamp's monastic network. No copy of John's writing survives from Fécamp (nor is an exemplar mentioned in the inventories of the manuscripts of the abbey), but the influence of his ideas is very present in the liturgical, intellectual, and devotional culture of that monastery. For more on the dissemination and influence of John's writings in his own house of Fécamp, and in the surrounding male monastic houses, see my forthcoming study.
10. Metz, Bibl. mun., 245, for instance, is long and narrow, measuring 17.39 cm x 31.75 cm (6.85 in x 12.5 in); Paris, BnF, ms lat. 13593, is as small as a book of hours, measuring 15.24 cm x 20.32 cm (6 in x 8 in).

highlighted in any way (as was generally the norm at this date for all but the *lemmata* in glosses and commentaries)¹¹, and run seamlessly into John's own words. Thanks to the edition of Jean Leclercq¹² (and later addenda provided by Pierre Courcelle¹³) we are aware of these quotations. Until now, however, scholars have described only in general or partial terms the method employed and principles underlying John's use of *Confessions*. Philip Cary, Peter Brown, and Pierre Courcelle have briefly elaborated on John's adoption of Augustine's « inner self »¹⁴; Hugh Feiss and Gérard Mathon have noted the similarities between John's description of heaven and Augustine's¹⁵; Jean Leclercq observed that John takes from Augustine's example the « désir de la stabilité en Dieu, [l']amour fervent du Christ, [l']humilité grace à laquelle... le pécheur prend conscience de sa misère »¹⁶; and Teresa Webber has argued that an interest in *Confessions* went hand-in-hand with an interest in patristic texts at monasteries like Fécamp in the Central Middle Ages¹⁷. But there is much more to John's method and reason in employing *Confessions*. For while John does adopt Augustine's tone, and his vision of heaven, and his notion of 'inwardness', and his desire for God, and indeed peppers his text with prayers from *Confessions* so that his words « are the words of the fathers »¹⁸ – he is also doing something more: he is reorganizing and excerpting the text in order to interpret *Confessions* as an advice-manual for the proper contemplation of God.

John is interested in how Augustine's *Confessions* defines the sinner's experience of, approach to, and problems accessing God. John focuses on parts of *Confessions* that allow him to define a contemplative approach to God, an approach that takes into account what John sees as the largest obstacle to contemplation, namely, the weaknesses of the sinner. John quotes extensively and exclusively from those passages of *Confessions* that pertain to the problems encountered during contemplation; so much so that, if one only knew Augustine's text through John's excerpts, one would neither expect the text to be a narrative biography, nor would one get a strong sense of Augustine's doctrinal or exegetical expositions. One would instead think that Augustine's text was a manual for contemplation. And, while we cannot ignore the fact that John adopts

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11. For a list of manuscripts of John's work, see HURLBUT, 1943, p. V, 13 and p. V, 17. None of these manuscripts sets apart quotations from Augustine's *Confessions* from the rest of John's text.
 12. LECLERCQ, 1946.
 13. In COURCELLE, 1963, p. 262-263, Pierre Courcelle lists several additional citations of *Confessions* from John's *Confessio* in his footnotes.
 14. CARY, 2000; BROWN, 1967; COURCELLE, 1974-1975.
 15. MATHON, 1967; FEISS, 2000.
 16. LECLERCQ, 1946, p. 64.
 17. WEBBER, 1996 & 1997.
 18. « *Dicta mea dicta sunt patrum. Sic ista quae dicimus, lege ut putes te patrum verba relegere, et toto mentis adnisi quas vales actiones gratiarum tuo redemptori alacriter sinceriterque persolve.* » Taken from Part I of John's *Confessio Theologica*, LECLERCQ, 1946, p. 121. All Latin quotes from *Confessio Theologica* hereafter will be from the Leclercq edition, and will simply be listed as CT, p. 121. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

Augustine's tone throughout his work¹⁹, he relies on *Confessions* for so much more than tone, or prayerfulness, or vocabulary: he reorganizes Augustine's ideas so that they form the backbone for his own method of contemplation.

Before analyzing the structure of the *Confessio*, it may be helpful to outline the way that John quotes Augustine. John's argument has eight sub-sections, each of which incorporates a group of quotations from Augustine, all on a certain theme²⁰. These quotations are then responded to and elaborated upon, with quotations from the bible, the liturgy or the church fathers, and with John's own words and prayers.

The following quotation from page 170 of Leclercq's edition of John's text, for instance, illustrates how this works. The bold text is a quotation from Augustine's *Confessions* (Book 1.4.4-23); the bold, italicized text is a quotation from the matins hymn *Te decet laus*²¹; the remainder is composed by John:

Most sweet, most benign, most loving, most dear, most sweet, most precious, most desiring, most lovable, most beautiful, most pleasing, most bright, most splendid, sweeter than any honey, whiter than any milk or snow, sweeter than any nectar, more precious than any pearl or gold, dearer to me than all the riches of the world and all the wealth of the kingdoms: and what do I say?... What do I say when I say such things? I say what I am able, but I do not say what I ought. Would that I were able to express such things as those hymn-singing choirs of angels! O how freely I would pour out myself wholly in your praises night and day! But since I am not able to express such things, will I then be silent? Who, O Christ, is able to praise you worthily? Even the talkative are mute, when they speak your praises. But what should I do, I, a needy human being, who wants both to praise you well and to love you exceedingly? I will say in the meantime what I am able, until you command me to come to you and to dwell in the marvelous house of your magnificence, where I may be able to say what both befits you and is proper to me. And therefore I ask, O Holy One, that you regard not so much what I say now, as

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19. As Courcelle says, John's approach to God is certainly obsessive, direct, pleading, panting, pathetic, repetitive, circular, and desperate in tone – and is therefore, in all these ways, Augustinian. Passages such as this one show just how much John adopts Augustine's tone: « Oh how immense is your goodness! O how it is admirable the richness of your charity! Sweet infinity, when will I see you? When will I appear in front of your face? When will I be satisfied by your beauty? When will you tear me away from this obscure prison so that I can bless your name, and when, henceforth, will I not be pierced by pain? When, when will I pass in this admirable house of joy that never ends, where there are echoes of cries of joy under the tents of the just? » [« *O quam magna multitudo dulcedinis tuae. O quam mira beatitudo charitatis tuae. Dulcissime, quando te videbo? Quand apparebo ante faciem tuam? Quando satiabor de pulchritudine tua? Quando educes me de hoc carcere tenebroso ut confitear nomini tuo, ita ut deinceps non compungar? Quando, quando transibo in illam admirabilem sempiterni gaudii domum, ubi personat vox laetitiae in tabernaculis iustorum?* » (CT, p. 148)].
20. These sub-sections are not noted with chapter divisions or the like in John's *Confessio*; rather, they are sub-sections that I have identified by paying attention to John's use of Augustine's *Confessions*.
21. Leclercq's critical apparatus has been invaluable for noting the range of works that John excerpts and incorporates into his *Confessio*. This citation is identified in a note on LECLERCQ, 1946, p. 170.

what I want to say. For I want to speak of you as is right, as is fitting, *since praise befits you, song befits you*, every honor is owed you²².

This is a particularly compact example of how each of the sub-sections of John's text works: John starts with a passage from Augustine's *Confessions*, and then builds on it with his own observations and elaborations, as well as with quotations from elsewhere which are thematically similar. Each quotation (or series of quotations) from Augustine thus guides the meditations and argument of each sub-section of John's work²³.

In quoting *Confessions*, John frequently manipulates Augustine's text, and in so doing, often changes its emphasis – or meaning altogether. Take, for example, this comparison between the quotation found on pages 121-122 of Leclercq's edition of John's *Confessio*, and the same quotation in its original context in Augustine's *Confessions* (See Table 1).

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22. « *Dulcissime, benignissime, amantissime, carissime, suavissime, praeciosissime, desiderantissime, amabilissime, pulcherrime, iucundissime, clarissime, splendissime, omni melle dulcior, omni lacte et nive candidior, omni nectare suavior, omni margarito et auro preciosior, omnibus mundi divitiis cunctisque regnorum opibus mihi carior: et quid dico?... Quid dico cum talia dico? Dico quod valeo, sed non dico quod debeo. Utinam possem talia, qualia illi hymnidici angelorum chori. O quam libentissime me in tuis laudibus nocte et die totum effunderem... Sed quia talia non possum, nunquid tacebo?... Quis digne te, Christe, laudare potest? Loquaces etiam muti sunt, cum tuas laudes dicunt. Sed quid faciam ego exiguus homo, qui te et valde laudare, et nimium diligere volo? Dicam interim quod valeo, donec iubeas me venire ad te, et mirabilem domum magnificentiae tuae inhabitare, ubi possim dicere quod et te decet et me oportet. Et ideo rogo pie, ne respicias tantum ad id quod modo dico, quantum ad id quod dicere volo. Volo enim de te dicere sicut oportet, sicut decet, quia te decet laus, te decet hymnus, tibi debetur omnis honor » (CT, p. 170).*
23. One might even say that these sections appear to indicate that John read *Confessions* and then recorded his thoughts stemming from his contemplation of Augustine's text, as in the style of *lectio divina*. For more on how John's *Confessio* reflects a style of reading, see my forthcoming study.

Table 1

Quotation from Augustine's <i>Confessions</i> (10.43.69)	Same quotation from <i>Confessions</i> as presented in John's <i>Confessio</i> (CT, p. 121-122)
<p>«For you will cure all of my diseases through him who sits at your right hand and intercedes with you for us. Otherwise I would be in despair. Many and great are those diseases, many and great indeed. But your medicine is still more potent. We might have thought your word was far removed from being united to mankind and have despaired of our lot unless he had become flesh and dwelt among us.»²⁴</p>	<p>«Certainly my infirmities, O Lord, are many and great; great they are, and many. I know and I confess that the prince of this world [Satan] holds many things in me. But I ask you, most holy Lord, free me through our Redeemer sitting at your right hand, in whom he was able to find nothing [belonging to Satan]... Free me, I beg, from my sins and my vices, my faults and my negligence, and fill me with your holy virtues, and cause me to be strong in good morals, and cause me to persevere in holy works until the end according to your will.»²⁵</p>

24. All quotations in English from the standard edition of Augustine's *Confessions* (i.e. not John's quotations of *Confessions* in his *Confessio*) are taken from the Chadwick translation listed in the bibliography. The Latin of this passage from Augustine is: «...*quod sanabis omnes languores meos per eum qui sedet ad dexteram tuam et te interpellat pro nobis; alioquin desperarem. Multi enim et magni sunt idem languores, multi sunt et magni, sed amplior est medicina tua. Potuimus putare verbum tuum remotum esse a coniunctione hominis et desperare de nobis, nisi caro fieret et habitaret in nobis.*» All Latin quotes from the standard edition of Augustine's *Confessions* are taken from the O'Donnell edition listed in the bibliography.

25. «*Languores quippe mei, Domine, multi sunt et magni, magni sunt et multi. Scio et fateor quia multa in me habet princeps huius mundi. Sed rogo te, piissime Domine, libera me per sedentem ad dexteram tuam Redemptorem nostrum, in quo nihil suum potuit invenire... Libera quaeso, a peccatis et vitiis, culpis et negligentis meis, et reple me tuis sanctis virtutibus, et fac me bonis pollere moribus, et fac me in sanctis perseverare operibus usque in finem secundum tuam voluntatem*» (CT, p. 121-122).

In looking at these two quotations, we see that John changed the language somewhat, and, significantly, has put all talk of Christ as redeemer at the end, whereas in Augustine's text the promise of redemption opens the passage. This, of course, could be due to John having misremembered the order of the text. But John's additions to the quote indicate that the changes are intentional. The Augustinian text assures the sinner's redemption from its very beginning, never entering into despair. John's text, however, does not see this as a guarantee; it instead emphasizes from the start the enormity of his sins. And then, instead of being assured of salvation, as Augustine is in his version of the text (in the left column, above), John begs for salvation from Christ, asking for liberation from his sins, begging for the medicine that is presented as certain by Augustine. Thus, through this example, we can see that the quotations from Augustine in the *Confessio Theologica* are not only excerpted by John in blocks, but are sometimes twisted and truncated in order to effect a specific meaning – John's specific meaning.

Understanding the liberties John could take when quoting Augustine, we may now return to his use of Augustine as the organizing framework in structuring his own work. John divides his work into three separate parts, within which is argument is presented in eight sub-sections. These are not delineated in the manuscript, but are evident from John's deployment of Augustine's *Confessions*, and the structure of the argument.

John orders the quotes from *Confessions* to form an argument about the process of the proper contemplation of God. Sections one through four read as a manual for contemplation. The first section prescribes the first stage of contemplation of God: the invocation of the divine, the call to prayer. The second acknowledges the difficulty of the rigors of contemplation. The third provides a solution to the difficulties of contemplation by advising a method, in two parts: the sinner must force himself inside himself, inside his own heart, where a sinner can confront and acknowledge his sinfulness in order to better repent and prepare himself to see God (section 3A). Once inside the heart, and in touch with God, the sinner then hopes to be so inebriated with love for God that he abandons all of his worldly cares and focuses on prayer to God without cease (section 3B). The fourth section defines the stability of the heavenly reward that the sinner is striving towards through contemplation, and seems to promise that, in these four steps, one can achieve the goals of contemplation.

With the help of the charts below, I will outline and further explain these sections and their themes. The charts provide a description of each section's theme, an Augustinian quotation from the section that defines the theme, and a quotation from John's original writing that elaborates upon the theme. As noted above, the 'Augustinian' quotation is not always presented word-for-word as found in the *Confessions*, but rather John's version of Augustine, perhaps manipulated intentionally (See Tables 2, 3, 4a&b, 5).

Table 2

Section Number	Description of section's theme	<i>Confessions</i> quotation(s) as it appears in this section	Sample of John elaborating on theme of the section
One Leclercq edition ca. p. 110-121 ²⁶	Call to prayer and invocation of God.	«But how shall I call upon my God, my God and my Lord? Surely when I call on him, I am calling on him to come into me. But what place is there in me where my God can enter into me?» ²⁷ (<i>CT</i> , p. 110-111; <i>Confessions</i> 1.2.2-3)	«You I invoke into my soul. Enter, I ask, into it and join it to yourself, that you may possess it without stain or wrinkle. You are my living and true God, my holy Lord, my great king. You with my lips and with my heart and with every strength by which I am strong I praise, I bless, and I adore. You I invoke, to you I cry with a great cry in my whole heart.» ²⁸ (<i>CT</i> , p. 110)

26. Note that these sections are not rigid schema, but instead represent the general structure and argument of the work. The page ranges included, therefore, represent the general sections of John's *Confessio Theologica*.

27. The corresponding Latin text reads: «*Sed quomodo invocabo Deum, et Dominum meum quoniam utique in me ipsum voco eum, cum invoco eum? Et quis locus in me est, quo veniat in me Deus meus?...*» (*CT*, p. 110-111). As for all parts of the *Confessio* quoted in this article, the English translations here are usually mine, but I have sometimes drawn upon Chadwick's translation of the standard edition to modify my translation of John's quotations from *Confessions*.

28. «*Te quidem invoco in animam meam. Intra, rogo, in eam et, coapta eam tibi, ut possideas illam sine macula et sine ruga. Tu es deus meum vivus et verus, Dominus meus pius, rex meus magnus. Te labiis et corde et omni qua valeo virtute laudo, benedico atque adoro. Te invoco, ad te clamo clamore magno in tota corde me*» (*CT*, p. 110).

Table 3

Section Number	Description of section's theme	<i>Confessions</i> quotation(s) as it appears in this section	Sample of John elaborating on theme of the section
Two Leclercq edition ca. p. 121-135	The difficulty of a sinful, imperfect person calling upon a perfect God.	« How you have loved us, good shepherd!... Many and great are my diseases, great they are, and many. I know and I recognize that the prince of this world [Satan] holds many things in me.» ²⁹ (<i>CT</i> , p. 121-122; <i>Confessions</i> 10.43.69)	«[I worship you,] One God, from whom we are, through whom we are, in whom we are. From whom we have departed, to whom we have become dissimilar.» ³⁰ (<i>CT</i> , p. 117) «But I ask you, most holy Lord, free me through our Redeemer sitting at your right hand, in whom he was able to find nothing of his own [belonging to the prince of this world]. . . . Free me, I beg, from my sins and my vices, my faults and my negligences, and fill me with your holy virtues, and cause me to be strong in good morals, and cause me to persevere in holy works until the end according to your will.» ³¹ (<i>CT</i> , p. 122)

29. «*Quomodo nos amasti, pastor bone!...Languores quippe mei, Domine, multi sunt et magni, magni sunt et multi. Scio et fateor quia multa in me habet princeps huius mundi...*» (*CT*, p. 121-122). The words in bold here are from Augustine's *Confessions*, to which John has added a further sentence.
30. «*Unum deum a quo sumus, per quem sumus, in quo sumus. A quo discessimus, cui dissimiles facti sumus.*» (*CT*, p. 117). This is very reminiscent of the famous quotation of Augustine's *Confessions* in 10.27.38 (not quoted by John, but perhaps paraphrased here): «You were within me, and I was not with you. These lovely things kept me far from you.» («*Mecum eras, et tecum non eram. Ea me tenebant longe a te...*»).
31. «*Sed rogo te, piissime Domine, libera me per sedentem ad dexteram tuam Redemptorem nostrum, in quo nihil suum potuit invenire... Libera quaeso, a peccatis et vitiis, culpis et negligentis meis, et reple me tuis sanctis virtutibus, et fac me bonis pollere moribus, et fac me in sanctis perseverare operibus usque in finem secundum tuam voluntatem*» (*CT*, p. 122).

Table 4a

Section Number	Description of section's theme	<i>Confessions</i> quotation(s) as it appears in this section	Sample of John elaborating on theme of the section
Three Leclercq edition ca. p. 135-157	3A ³² : A sinner must allow God to enter into his heart, and keep his heart focused on God and not on earthly possessions. This focus on God will un-harden the heart, allow the sinner to feel repentant for his previous obsession with earthly goods, and will cause tears to flow.	3A: «I ask that you come into my heart and intoxicate it, inebriate it with your goodness, so that I forget the evils I have done and embraced my one and only good, yourself.» ³³ (CT, p. 144; <i>Confessions</i> 1.5.5)	3A: «May the Spirit of God, the good teacher and illuminator of mother church, who produces tears from a hard heart and gives to the penitent fruits worthy of repentance, descend into my heart, in order that he may strike from this heart of stone and iron wateredness above and wateredness below . . . Or if you lack the grace of tears, at least groan without ceasing.» ³⁴ (CT, p. 152)

32. 3A & 3B (see Table 4b) are not two separate sections because they do not succeed each other (in the way that one, two, and three do), but rather co-exist within the same section of John's text (section three) before being followed by section four. This is also the case with section six (see below). I have here split them into 3A and 3B because their emphases are different, albeit related and intertwined.

33. «*Rogo, in cor meum et sobria ebrietate, voluptatis tuae inebria illud, ut obliviscar ea quae facta sunt quae enim videntur temporalia sunt et unum bonum meum amplectar te*» (CT, p. 144).

34. «*Spiritus Dei, bonus doctor et illuminator matris ecclesiae, qui ex duro corde producit lacrimas, et date paenitentibus dignos paenitentiae fructus, descendat in cor meum, ut cudat ex eo saxeo et ferreo irriguum superius, et irriguum inferius... Aut si deest tibi gratia lacrimarum, saltem geme sine cessatione*» (CT, p. 152).

Table 4b

Section Number	Description of section's theme	<i>Confessions</i> quotation(s) as it appears in this section	Sample of John elaborating on theme of the section
Three Leclercq edition <i>ca.</i> p. 135-157	3B: Upon opening his heart to God, the sinner will be granted access to an unceasing desire for God, and that unceasing desire will provide a constancy and a restfulness not otherwise accessible to changeable sinners.	3B: « Finding himself at the port of security and cheerfulness, he rejoices to escape the agitated sea of this life, to escape from the troubles and dangers that one might attribute to death rather than life: for man is born miserable, lives in pain and sin, and dies in suffering. » ³⁵ (<i>CT</i> , p. 149; paraphrase of <i>Confessions</i> 1.6.7)	3B: « Awake, O Lord, rouse, I ask, rouse always and everywhere my torpor with your prods and cause me to seek your face with my whole heart, with my whole soul, with my whole strength all the days of my life. » ³⁶ (<i>CT</i> , p. 132)

35. « *Vidensque se in portu securitatis et laetitiae, gaudet evasisse iam turbulentum pelagus huius vitae miserae et periculosae, quae potius mors dicenda est, quam vita* » (*CT*, p. 149).

36. « *Excita, domine, excita, quaeso, excita semper et ubique torporem meum tuis stimulis et fac me toto corde, tota anima, totis viribus exquirere faciem tuam cunctis diebus vitae meae* » (*CT*, p. 132).

Table 5

Section Number	Description of section's theme	<i>Confessions</i> quotation(s) as it appears in this section	Sample of John elaborating on theme of the section
Four Leclercq edition ca. p. 157-161	Having completed steps one through three, a sinner can finally achieve a vision of God and the heavenly Jerusalem. (Ultimately this section serves as a false climax.)	«With these comforting details causing me to forget my many miseries here on earth, finally in you I see my true peace and I rest in it. Oh eternal truth, true charity, and dear eternity! You are my God: after you I sigh day and night. He who knows you knows the truth, knows eternity.» ³⁷ (CT, p. 161; amalgam of <i>Confessions</i> 1.13.21, 7.10.16, and 13.14.15)	«The king of kings himself is in the midst of you, and his children surround him. For in that place the choirs of holy spirits are hymn-singing, the phalanx of prophets is foreseeing, the number of the apostles is judging, the army of innumerable martyrs is triumphing, the convent of holy confessors is sacred, the crowd of blessed monks is most strong...» ³⁸ (CT, p. 157)

37. «*Quibus tandem refocillatus deliciis, multarum miseriarum oblitus mearum, super altitudinem terrae in te vera pace quiesco. O aeterna veritas, et vera caritas, et cara aeternitas! Tu es deus meus: tibi suspiro die ac nocte. Qui novit te, novit veritatem, novit aeternitatem*» (CT, p. 161).

38. «*Ipse rex regum in medio tui, et pueri eius in circuitu eius. Sunt etenim ibi hymnidici sanctorum spirituum chori, providus prophetarum cuneus, iudex apostolorum numerus, innumerabilium martyrum victor exercitus, sanctorum confessorum sacer conventus, beatorum monachorum fortissima turba...*» (CT, p. 157). Please note that the passage not in italics is a citation of Gregory the Great, *Hom. Evang.* 1.14.5.

John thus builds a program of contemplation in sections one through four, allowing the sinner gradually to climb the ladder to God. Yet, the genius of John, and his most skillful deployment and manipulation of Augustine's text, is seen in sections five through eight. While sections one through four of John's work provide a linear ascent to the vision of God, stage five represents an about-face, a regression to stage two, a break-down of confidence³⁹. The fears voiced in section two of the text have been brought to bear, and have interrupted the vision of God. Therefore, throughout section five, the sinner wallows in self-pity, falling farther and farther from section four's vision of God and unable to lift himself up (See Table 6).

39. This about-face actually imitates the structure of Augustine's own *Confessions* text. Books I-IX of *Confessions* detail Augustine's path to conversion, which models a progressive ascent to « confessing » to the Christian God. Book X, however, begins with an about-face, reversing this progression: « And sometimes you cause me to enter into an extraordinary depth of feeling marked by a strange sweetness. If it were brought to perfection in me, it would be an experience quite beyond anything in this life. But I fall back into my usual ways under my miserable burdens. I am reabsorbed by my habitual practices. I am held in their grip. I weep profusely, but still I am held. Such is the strength of the burden of habit. Here I have the power to be, but do not wish to be. There I wish to be, but do not have the power » (10.40.65). [« *Et aliquando intromittis me in affectum multum inusitatum introrsus, ad nescio quam dulcedinem, quae si perficiatur in me, nescio quid erit quod vita ista non erit. Sed recido in haec aerumnosos ponderibus et resorbeor solitis et teneor et multum fleo, sed multum teneor. Tantum consuetudinis sarcina digna est! Hic esse valeo nec volo, illic volo nec valeo, miser utrobique.* »] This quality of Book X is noted by BROWN, 1967, p. 150. The fact that John does a similar turn in his own work might indicate that, even though he quotes only excerpts of *Confessions* here, he had a deep familiarity with the structure of the whole text as it proceeds from beginning to end; perhaps this indicates that John had read the book sequentially at some point.

Table 6

Section Number	Description of section's theme	<i>Confessions</i> quotation(s) as it appears in this section	Sample of John elaborating on theme of the section
Five Leclercq edition <i>ca.</i> p. 161-169	Relapse. Sinner falls from being focused on vision of God, reminded of his insecurities. (This is a regression to Section Two.)	« See, I love you, and if it is too little, let me love you more strongly. I can conceive no measure by which to know how far my love falls short of that which is enough to make my life run to your embraces, and not to turn away until it lies hidden in the secret place of your presence. » ⁴⁰ (<i>CT</i> , p. 162; <i>Confessions</i> 13.8.9)	« “[My soul] is still sad because it slips back and becomes a deep abyss, or rather feels itself still to be a deep abyss... Why are you sad, O my soul, and why do you disturb me? » ⁴¹ (<i>CT</i> , p. 161)

40. « *En amo: et si parum est, amem validius. Non possum metiri ut sciam quantum desit mihi amoris ad id quod sat est ut currat vita mea in amplexus tuos, nec avertatur donec abscondatur in abscondito vultus tui* » (*CT*, p. 162).

41. « *Et adhuc tristis est, quia relabitur, et fit abyssus, quin potius sentit adhuc esse se abyssum... Quare tristis es anima mea, et quare conturbas me?* » (*CT*, p. 161).

Section five, therefore, leaves the sinner in despair. Section six, however, reminds the sinner of the prescriptions of this contemplative method already detailed in section three, and therefore reassigns the sinner to get in touch with his heart (section 6A). Section six also elaborates on section 3B's promise of constancy by providing a further instruction in 6B: in order to keep God in one's heart constantly, a sinner can meditate on the suffering crucified Christ, or he can partake in the Eucharist. These steps, with the help of tears, will keep the contemplator focused more effectively on God (See Tables 7a&b).

Table 7a

Section Number	Description of section's theme	Confessions quotation(s) as it appears in this section	Sample of John elaborating on theme of the section
Six Leclercq edition ca. p. 169- 174	6A: A reminder of the contemplative task at hand, the one that will reignite the cycle of ascent: allowing God to enter into the sinner's heart. (This parallels section 3A.)	6A: « The love of the world is only night and obscurity. It is agony and blindness; and God overwhelms the evil-doers who take it into their power with torments and makes them suffer so that they never rest in peace. Your love is true and holy, and it fills the souls that it possesses with sweetness and peace; and illuminates them with a lively clarity of interior vision. It is the most sweet bread, it sates the palate of my heart so that [my heart] feels the sweetness of your love.» ⁴² (CT, p. 172; Confessions 7.16.22)	6A: « I ask you by the mystery of your holy incarnation and nativity, pour a multitude of your sweetness and love into my breast, so that I might neither desire nor think anything earthly or fleshly, but may love only you, think only you, desire only you, hold only you in my heart and in my mouth. May you alone be my zeal and my exultation, my delight and my meditation. Let me meditate on you by day, let me address you through sleep in the night.» ⁴³ (CT, p. 172) 6A: « I, humble, beseech you, write with your finger on my breast the sweet memory of your mellifluous name, so that I never forget it and never can erase it. Write on the tablets of my heart your commandments and your will, your law and your ordinances: in order that I may have always and everywhere before my eyes you, the Lord of immeasurable sweetness, and your precepts. How sweet are your words to my mouth. Give me a firm memory, so that I do not forget them.» ⁴⁴ (CT, p. 172)

42. « Amor mundi nox est et caligo. Anxius est, et caecus: et miseros quos possidet, graviter torquet, et non patitur eos quietos esse. Amor tuus verus et sanctus animas quas tenet dulcedine simul et quiete replet, illuminans eas intimae visionis perspicua luce. **Panis dulcissime sana palatum cordis mei, ut sentiat suavitatem amoris tui** » (CT, p. 172). The quotation from Augustine's *Confessions* is given in bold both here and in the chart above; I have excerpted John's introduction in order to provide his context for this quotation.

43. « Rogo te per mysterium sanctae incarnationis et nativitatis tuae, infunde multitudinem dulcedinis et caritatis tuae pectori meo, ut nihil terrenum aut carnale desiderem vel cogitem, sed te solum amem, te solum cogitem, te solum desiderem, te solum habeam in corde et in ore. Tu solus sis studium et exultatio mea, iucunditas et meditatio mea. Te mediter per diem, te alloquar per soporem in nocte » (CT, p. 172).

44. « Te supplex deprecor, scribe digito tuo in pectore meo dulcem memoriam tui melliflui nominis nulla unquam oblivione delendam. Scribe in tabulis cordis mei mandata et voluntatem tuam, legem et iustificationes tuas: ut te immensae dulcedinis dominum, et praecepta tua semper et ubique habeam prae oculis meis. Quam dulcia faucibus meis eloquia tua. Da mihi tenacem memoriam, ut non obliviscar ea » (CT, p. 172).

Table 7b

Section Number	Description of section's theme	Confessions quotation(s) as it appears in this section	Sample of John elaborating on theme of the section
Six Leclercq edition ca. p. 169- 174	6B: One can unceasingly maintain God in one's sights: by crying profusely, by meditating on the suffering of Christ, and by consuming the Eucharist. (This parallels, but transforms, section 3B, which was just about the need for unceasing worship of God.)	6B: «My god, charity, exquisite honey, milk of children, you are the food of the strong; make me grow in you so that with a purified palate, ⁴⁵ I can eat you.» ⁴⁶ (CT, p. 175; <i>Confessions</i> 10.16.7)	6B: «Not as yet in the sacrament, by which in this moment your members are united, as long as is drunk what poured from your side... so that we have no need of any mysteries in that clear contemplation of your unchangeable truth.» ⁴⁷ (CT, p. 174) 6B: «By that most holy effusion of your precious blood, by which we are redeemed, give me contrition of heart and a fountain of tears.» ⁴⁸ (CT, p. 173) 6B: «You, sweetness itself, give me the grace of tears, sign of your love, viaticum and consolation of my pilgrimage. Just as the deer longs for springs of water, so my sinful soul longs and thirsts for you, God of living springs. O Spring of Life, from which drink the angelic spirits and the souls of the just, give me a delightful drink, and satisfy the thirst of my heart from you, that from my belly may flow living waters.» ⁴⁹ (CT, p. 173)

45. «Palate» here might refer to both the appetite for the Eucharist and the «palate of the heart» (see above, «*palatum cordis*»).

46. «*Caritas deus meus, mel dulce, lac niveum, cibus es grandium: fac me crescere in te, ut sano palato possis manducari a me*» (CT, p. 175).

47. «Non adhuc in sacramento, quo in hoc tempore consociantur membra tua, quamdiu bibitur quod de latere tuo manavit... ut in illa perspicua contemplatione tuae incommutabilis veritatis nullis mysteriis egeamus.» (CT, p. 174).

48. «Pulcherrime, rogo te per illam sacratissimam effusionem praetiosi sanguinis tui, quo sumus redempti, da mihi cordis contritionem, et lacrimarum fontem» (CT, p. 173).

49. «Suavissime, da mihi gratiam lacrimarum, signum amoris tui, viaticum et solatium peregrinationis meae: ut quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desideret et sitiatis ad te deum fontem vivum peccatrix anima mea. Fons vitae, ex quo bibunt angelici spiritus, et iustorum animae, da mihi potum delectabilem, et satia sitim cordis mei ex te, ut de ventre meo fluant aquae vitae» (CT, p. 173).

With such a spiraling structure (one that promises linear ascent, then sharply descends, then modifies its instructions in order to ascend again), John's contemplative method is not presented as a cold, idealized prescription. It is instead presented in real-time, as a sinner might actually experience an attempt to meditate on the divine, complete with insecurities and failed attempts, occasional descents in the ascent to God. This is part of the ingenuity of the text: the sinner's weakness is exposed (section two), and then, just when weakness seems to have been defeated and heaven seems to be possible (section four), weakness unexpectedly rears its ugly head (section five), creating an honest picture of a sinner's tumultuous attempt to enter into contemplation.

This tumult does not just serve to imitate the emotional experience of the sinner. It also allows John to make an argument for a method of contemplation, and to teach a concluding lesson in sections seven and eight. Thanks to section five, setbacks become part of the process of contemplation for John, allowing him to acknowledge, in section seven, «in this present life... it is truly impossible... to achieve perfection» (see chart section seven for full quote and citation). By including the setback in section five, John modifies the expectations with which he began in section one, and shows that, while unceasing praise might not be possible because of the frail human condition, what God wants is, at least, an unceasing engagement in this cycle of contemplation, a cycle which includes relapse and weakness as well as focus and ascent.

Therefore, John concludes, «it is truly impossible to achieve perfection», and he goes on to suggest that even a vision of God might be too much for the imperfect sinner to expect. But contemplation is not fruitless: there is a promise of «quiet», «calm», and freedom from the «weight of our mortal condition.» The contemplative method will liberate the sinner from his mortal chains, and will get him closer and closer to approaching heaven, though never perfectly achieving it. Unlike in section four, where the sinner attempts to gain a vision of God, only to realize that it is too much for his mortal mind, here the sinner realizes that contemplation is the highest achievement of this life, and that a vision of God must wait (See Table 8).

Table 8

Section Number	Description of section's theme	<i>Confessions</i> quotation(s) as it appears in this section	Sample of John elaborating on theme of the section
Seven Leclercq edition ca. p. 174-182	The soul re-ascends, and achieves the silence of liberation from human concerns and the nearness of God. (This parallels, but transforms, section four.)	«Behold, when my soul hopes for and applies itself to the contemplation of God according to its capacity, in order to merit and proclaim your glory, Lord, the burden of the flesh becomes less overwhelming; the din subsides; the weight of our mortal condition and of our miseries no longer engulf the spirit as they ordinarily do; all is quiet, all is calm. The heart burns, the soul is inundated with joy, the memory is full of vigor, the intellect is clear, and the spirit, wholly embraced with the desire of contemplating your beauty, feels transported with love to the invisible world.» ⁵⁰ (CT, p. 182; amalgam of <i>Confessions</i> 10.23.26 and 10.25.1)	«In this life, at least, saturated [as it is] with miseries and errors, it is impossible to achieve the perfection of the contemplative life.» ⁵¹ (CT, p. 174) «For since we are placed in the midst of snares, we easily grow cold in our heavenly desire. We require a constant shelter, in order that we, once we have awakened after falling away, may run back to you. But forgive me, I ask, O Lord, forgive me, a most unworthy and unhappy slave, [for] speaking with you too long about you. Forgive me, a wretch, O Holy One. For it was from excessive love of your name that I opened my lips to you...» ⁵² (CT, p. 182)

50. «*Ecce dum divinae theoriae mens mea suspirat, et tuam, domine, prone pro captu suo meditatur et loquitur gloriam, ipsa carnis sarcina minus gravat: cogitationum tumultus cessat: pondus mortalitatis et miseriarum more solito non hebetat; silent cuncta; tranquilla sunt omnia. Cor ardet; animus gaudet; memoria viget; intellectus lucet; et totus spiritus ex desiderio visionis pulchritudinis tuae accensus, in invisibilium amorem rapi se videt*» (CT, p. 182).

51. «*In hac quidem vita miseriis erroribusque plenissima haberi non potest contemplativae perfectio vitae*» (CT, p. 174).

52. «*Quoniam enim in medio laqueorum positi sumus, facile a caelesti desiderio frigescimus. Assiduo itaque indigemus munimento, ut expergefacti ad te nostrum verum et summum bonum, cum defluximus, recurramus. Sed ignosce, rogo, Domine, ignosce mihi indignissimo et infelici tecum de te diutius colloquenti servo. Ignosce, pie, mihi misero. Amore enim tui nominis nimio labia mea tibi aperui*» (CT, p. 182).

Section seven therefore establishes the sinner as permanently imperfect, and as never being able to achieve a vision of God because of this imperfection. Taking this into account in his closing invocation of God in section eight (which neatly mirrors his opening invocation in section one), John modifies his praise with a phrase from Augustine, promising God only praise « such that my tongue can offer you. » By the end of his *Confessio*, John has lost the unrealistic expectation of perfected praise that he had in section one. Instead, he has paired the overly ambitious expectations of the first half of the text (sections one through four) with the more modified expectations of the second half (sections five through eight), and expects only to do the best his limited self can in praising God (See Table 9).

Table 9

Section Number	Description of section's theme	<i>Confessions</i> quotation(s) as it appears in this section	Sample of John elaborating on theme of the section
Eight Leclercq edition ca. p. 182-183	Closing call to prayer and invocation of God. Admits the invocation is as imperfect as the sinner, but it is, after all, only «such that my tongue can offer you.» (This parallels, but transforms, section one.)	«I beg you with this offering of praise such that my tongue can offer you , from the love in my heart.» ⁵³ (CT, p. 183; <i>Confessions</i> 5.1.1)	«Look with a bright face upon this service which I offer you of my scarcity, and as a worthy propitiation, O benign lover of men, accept so small a confession of my faith... Unto you I render what is in me – sacrifices of praise from the gift of your mercy. I render, therefore, I render thanks to you the creator God from your own gifts, and humbly do I speak with the prophet: you have worked all our works in us.» ⁵⁴ (CT, p. 183)

53. Note that here again the quote from Augustine is in bold, to distinguish it from its surrounding context. «*Rogo, sacrificium laudis de manu linguae meae, de cordis amore*» (CT, p. 183).

54. «*Respice sereno vultu ad hoc meae exiguitatis quod tibi offero munus, et dignabili propitiatione tantillam fidei meae confessionem accipe, benigne amator hominum... En tibi reddo ea quae sunt in me vota laudationis ex misericordiae tuae dono. Reddo itaque, reddo tibi creatori deo de donis tuis gratias, et suppliciter cum propheta dico: omnia opera nostra operatus es nobis*» (CT, p. 183).

This is why Augustine's *Confessions* is such an apt guiding text for John: the exposed frailty of the speaker in Augustine's text is what John is interested in, both intellectually and emotionally. John struggles with the fact that perfection is impossible in this life, and what patristic work shows that vulnerability better than Augustine's *Confessions*? The false climax of section four, the deep insecurity of section five, and the concluding adjustments of expectations in sections seven and eight all mimic the real experience of a sinner – and of Augustine in *Confessions*. John's conclusion, that one needs to be satisfied with the inadequacy of a sinner's praise, and that the sinner's inadequacy (sections two, five, seven) is integral to contemplation, acknowledges an insurmountable imperfection that the greatest desire for monastic perfection could not cure. With the help of quotations from Augustine's *Confessions*, John imitates the highs and lows of confidence and despair, which is, to him, the experience of contemplating God⁵⁵.

Part II: The role of Fécamp as a source for Norman monastic interest in *Confessions*

Fécamp was one of the more powerful monasteries of the Norman houses in the mid-11th century, situated in the shadow of the Duke of Normandy's castle. It was the first Norman house to reform according to the liturgical standards of William of Volpiano⁵⁶; from the surviving evidence, it seems to have had the largest library of all the houses, and often appears to have acted as the source for the dissemination of texts around Normandy⁵⁷; and it had extensive land holdings around the region that further entrenched its power⁵⁸. John was the prior of Fécamp from 1016 to 1028, and then, for fifty years after, until 1078, the abbot of this influential Norman monastery. He sent copies of his *Confessio* to monks, nuns, and dignitaries

55. Coda: it is interesting to note John's invention in his *Confessio*. In section 6B, for instance, John elaborates on the ways one can allow God to enter into one's own heart. One way John prescribes is by literally ingesting God when receiving the Eucharist: taking the presence of God into one's body during the sacrament is a powerful ritual that literalizes how John wants the sinner to keep God metaphorically in his own heart (see the first quote of section 6B). Even more memorably, John suggests that the sinner can keep God in his heart by meditating on the crucified Christ. In a series of affective passages, John conjures up the image of the crucifixion, and asks this gruesome, wounded Christ to wound the sinner's own heart so that he will cry and repent perpetually (see the final two quotations in section 6B). In his text, John builds a parallel between Christ's bleeding wounds and the sinner's crying. John proposes a new way to follow Augustine's prescriptions concerning the heart: to inscribe God on one's heart by wounding one's heart with the image of God suffering on the cross; to imbibe and ingest God in the sacrament of the Eucharist to literalize the adoption of God inside one's heart; and to perpetuate tears in order to remain focused on the depravity of the earthly, sinful self. There is not time to go into the effect and purpose of this imagery here, but it will be a major focus of my forthcoming study.

56. BULST, 1984, p. 317.

57. NORTIER, 1971, p. 54, notes that, because of its 11th-century holdings, even by the 12th century, Fécamp likely had more books than any other house in Normandy. According to book lists alone, Fécamp had 176 volumes by the end of the 12th century, while Bec had 166, St. Évreault 153, and Lyre 137.

58. See, among other studies, POTTS, 1997b.

around the Norman world and beyond, including the Holy Roman Empress⁵⁹. It is worth asking, then, if his interest in Augustine's *Confessions* as expressed by the *Confessio* could have initiated the interest in this text elsewhere. To do this, we must examine the manuscript evidence. Although there is insufficient evidence to draw any firm conclusions, what evidence does suggest is that John may indeed have been the originator of interest in the *Confessions* in Normandy.

According to the available manuscript and documentary evidence, there were at least seven copies of Augustine's *Confessions* in Norman monastic libraries. The work can be confirmed to have been in the holdings of at least four Norman monastic libraries by the 12th-century⁶⁰: Fécamp⁶¹, Jumièges⁶², Bec, and St. Évrault. Another Norman copy of *Confessions* is listed in a catalogue from around 1200, probably from Notre-Dame d'Eu or Bayeux⁶³. Even later evidence demonstrates that it was also present by the later Middle Ages at the monasteries of St. Ouen⁶⁴ and Lyre⁶⁵ but at what dates the copies were acquired cannot be known. Of these seven *Confessions* manuscripts whose existence within the

59. See discussion of John's *Confessio Theologica* in Part I above.

60. This information is taken from the medieval Norman monastic book lists discussed in NORTIER, 1971. Fécamp's 12th-century book list (contained in Paris, BnF, ms lat. 1928, fol. 180r) lists *Confessions* at entry number 17. St. Évrault's 12th-century book list (contained in Paris, BnF, ms lat. 10062, fol. 80v) lists the work at entry number 57. Bec also possessed at least one copy by the later 12th century according to a 12th-century list (of the books given by Philip of Harcourt, the bishop of Bayeux, in 1163, Avranches, Bibl. mun., 159, fol. 2v), which lists *Confessions* at number 11 of that record. No medieval book lists survive from Jumièges, but an 11th-century manuscript of *Confessions* is extant from Jumièges (see discussion below).

61. AVRIL, 1964, p. 522-25. Avril confirms that the manuscript is from Fécamp (not Blangy) and from the mid-11th century based on script comparisons with several other 11th-century Fécamp manuscripts. Though the extant *Confessions* manuscript from Fécamp is from the 11th century, it is not listed in an 11th-century book list from Fécamp (in Rouen, Bibl. mun., 1417 [U45], fol. 55v), but only in the 12th-century list mentioned in the footnote above. Its omission from the early Fécamp book list could indicate that the list itself was made before the acquisition of the manuscript; but Betty Branch reasons the list was made sometime between 1050-1075 (BRANCH, 1979, p. 162), and it seems likely that the manuscript itself was actually made before 1051. Therefore, the exclusion of this manuscript from the list could indicate that the list is not a full representation of the holdings of the library, or could indicate that the manuscript was not in the library during the time the list was made. Perhaps, for instance, it was in the hands of the abbot John, or elsewhere outside of Fécamp, on loan as an exemplar, perhaps at Jumièges; see further, below.

62. An extant 11th-century manuscript of *Confessions* from Jumièges contains an ownership note in it from the 12th century on fol. 214v, locating that book at Jumièges from at least that date. It is not listed in the list of books given by abbot Alexander (fl. 1198-1213) to Jumièges in 1171 (conserved in Vaticano [Città del], Reg. lat. 553, second part, fol. 8; see NORTIER, 1971, p. 149), and may well have been in the monastery before the time of the abbot's gift.

63. DOLBEAU, 2004, p. 355-56.

64. It is possible that the manuscript from St. Ouen dated from the 11th- or 12th-century also, but, its manuscripts no longer being extant, we cannot be sure. All we know is that by the late 14th-century, St. Ouen had a copy of *Confessions*: our earliest book list from St. Ouen is from between 1372-1378, contained in Rouen, Arch. Dép. Seine-Maritime, 14H17, fol. 7v, a register of loans made between 1372-1378 from the library. On that list, *Confessions* is listed as article number 36 (according to DUBOIS, 2001, p. 12-14).

65. The manuscript was recorded at Lyre in a 17th-century list of manuscripts from that monastery, in Paris, BnF, Dupuy 651, fol. 252r-252v, listed as «*D. August. Lib. Confess.*» on fol. 252v.

Norman monastic world can be demonstrated, we know of the survival of only two: the one from Fécamp (Vaticano [Città del], Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 755), which is today fragmentary⁶⁶ and the one from Jumièges (Rouen, Bibl. mun., 82 [A208]). I have attempted to locate the present whereabouts of the other five using post-medieval book lists. Unfortunately, by the time the Maurists got to the libraries of St. Évrout, Bec, and St. Ouen in the 17th century, there was no longer record of *Confessions* manuscripts⁶⁷. Only Lyre's copy of *Confessions* survived at its motherhouse to be viewed by the Maurists – and it, now, cannot be located⁶⁸. It is important to note that the Maurists also remained unaware of the copies of *Confessions* at Fécamp and Jumièges⁶⁹, copies that we know had been at these two houses in the 11th and 12th centuries; this shows that we cannot interpret the absence of *Confessions* on the Maurists' lists to mean anything but that these manuscripts had perhaps left their monasteries before the Maurists arrived; they may well still be extant but unidentified. Nevertheless, the two manuscripts alone may tell us quite a bit about how *Confessions* was disseminated in Normandy.

First, it is likely that the Fécamp manuscript, Vaticano, Reg. Lat. 755, was in Fécamp due to John's interest in the text. It is definitely a manuscript from the 11th century, made sometime before 1051⁷⁰. That it was certainly copied in this period makes the Fécamp *Confessions* one of the earliest manuscripts to be copied in the Fécamp scriptorium during John's time as prior (fl. 1016-1028) or abbot (fl. 1028-1078). While many of the early manuscripts copied in the Fécamp scriptorium were typical for a monastery forming its library in the early 11th century⁷¹, *Confessions* is a more unusual choice at this early period⁷² – perhaps

66. The fragment itself forms a separate quire at fol. 100-105. It is bound with a collection of Carolingian fragments and only contains the last few pages of *Confessions* (from the middle of 13.33.48 to 13.35.50).

67. Paris, BnF, ms lat. 11645 is a 17th-century book list by the Maurists, made while they were compiling material for their editions of the works of Saint Augustine. Paris, BnF, ms lat. 11645 contains a library book list of the Augustinian holdings of St. Évrout starting at fol. 291, St. Ouen at fol. 368, and Bec at fol. 244-248 and fol. 373; *Confessions* is not listed among the 17th-century holdings of any of those monasteries. Note also that Paris, BnF, ms lat. 11647, the Maurists' tome dedicated to editing manuscripts of *Confessions*, does not refer to any Norman manuscripts except for that from Lyre (see footnote below). Special thanks to Monique Peyrafort for pointing me towards this resource.

68. Lyre's manuscript is listed as « B.3 » on fol. 380 of BnF, ms lat. 11645.

69. Paris, BnF, ms lat. 11645 does not mention a copy of *Confessions* at Fécamp (whose Augustinian manuscripts are listed on fol. 227-228 and fol. 351-352) nor at Jumièges (whose manuscripts are listed on fol. 367).

70. While Avril dates this manuscript to the mid-11th century, there is a possibility we may be able to narrow its date of production even further. At the end of the text of *Confessions*, in a second hand, a *vita* of St. Berthe of Blangy has been added (on fol. 101-105). Cassandra Potts observes that the feast of St. Berthe of Blangy was adopted at Fécamp between 1031-1051 (POTTS, 1997a, p. 29), after John received the donation of the estate of Blangy from Roger, count of Pol. Therefore, this *vita* may have been added to the *Confessions* manuscript during the time of Berthe's adoption in the Fécamp liturgy, before 1051.

71. Most of the manuscripts contain patristic works; for more on this, see: WEBBER, 1997, p. 197-199; WEBBER, 1996, p. 41; BRANCH, 1979, p. 166-167. I will, however, reexamine the collection of the Fécamp scriptorium – and discuss whether or not it is really typical – in my forthcoming study.

72. COURCELLE, 1963, p. 235-261. See note 4 above.

a special request, rather than a requirement. Just before the production of the manuscript, John was writing his own *Confessio Theologica*, relying heavily on Augustine's text as a model (as we have seen above). The fact that *Confessions* was an uncommon choice for a monastic library at this time, the fact that John was in a position of unique power in the monastery, and the fact that his chief work is based on the *Confessions* all together lead me to conclude that the presence of *Confessions* at Fécamp may have been due to John. He may well have requested the work; or his writings and general influence may have inspired its selection.

Our second extant manuscript, Jumièges' copy of *Confessions* (Rouen, Bibl. mun., 82 [A208]), indicates that Fécamp may have played a role in the wider dissemination of *Confessions* around the Norman world, for the Fécamp manuscript (or its exemplar) evidently served as the exemplar for the Jumièges manuscript. The Jumièges codex has been dated to the late 11th-century on paleographical grounds, making it later than the Fécamp codex⁷³. In both copies the text ends incomplete at «hoc praeoquatur nobis vox libri tui, quod et nos post opera nostra ideo bona valde»⁷⁴, and thereby omit the final lines of *Confessions*. In the Fécamp copy, this is not due to loss – the text is followed by an explicit, and there is at least three-quarters of a page remaining, so the text was not truncated for space (a St. Bertha of Blangy *vita* was, after all, later added in that blank space in a second hand). In the Jumièges copy, the text is likewise, followed immediately with an explicit, with space to spare as well⁷⁵. So, at the very least, the two copies are very closely related. But the possibility that the Jumièges scribe may have used the Fécamp copy as an exemplar arises when one collates the two manuscripts. In 13.31.46 of *Confessions*, Augustine repeats *bonum est* in eight different parallel phrases for rhetorical emphasis; in the Fécamp manuscript, these *bonum est* phrases exist in their totality; in the Jumièges manuscript, on the other hand, some are missing. In the Fécamp copy, certain of these *bonum est* phrases are vertically aligned. It is very easy to imagine the scribe of the Jumièges manuscript, in copying that text, accidentally skipping ahead, from one *bonum est* phrase to a later one⁷⁶. This clue suggests that the Jumièges scribe could have been copying from (and at times miscopying from) the Fécamp manuscript.

73. There are two parts to today's Rouen, Bibl. mun., 82: one from the 12th century (fol. 1-128v), and one from the 11th century (fol. 129-216), in which one finds the Jumièges *Confessions* manuscript (fol. 129-214v).

74. *Confessions* 13.35.50. Note that chapters 13.37.52 and 13.38.53 are therefore omitted.

75. Cross-checking this Fécamp-Jumièges recension with those noted by WILMART, 1932, p. 259-268, SKUTELLA, 1939, p. 70, VERHEIJEN, 1979, p. 87-96, GORMAN, 1981, p. 238-279, and GORMAN, 1983, p. 114-145, it seems that the fragmentary ending in the Fécamp and Jumièges *Confessions* manuscripts does not appear in any other extant *Confessions* manuscript.

76. The scribe of fol. 214 of the Jumièges manuscript omits the lines that are not in italics. «*Ita quidquid in spiritu dei vident quia bonum est, non ipsi sed deus videt, quia bonum est. Aliud ergo est ut putet quisque malum esse quod bonum est, quales supra dicti sunt; aliud ut quod bonum est videat homo quia bonum est, sicut multis tua creatura placet, quia bonum est, quibus tamen non tu places in ea, unde frui magis ipsa quam te volunt; aliud autem ut, cum aliquid videt homo quia bonum est, deus in illo videat quia bonum est, ut scilicet ille ametur in eo quod fecit...*».

Judging from these two extant manuscripts, and from manuscript book lists of the other Norman libraries, it would appear that Fécamp may have been the first community in Normandy to possess a copy of the *Confessions*. This raises the question, where did Fécamp get its exemplar from? Did this recension with the incomplete ending start with a scribal error at Fécamp? Or was it already in the manuscript that Fécamp used to make its copy? Unfortunately, we can only hypothesize about the origins of Fécamp's exemplar⁷⁷. Nevertheless, if Fécamp was the first community to possess the *Confessions* in Normandy⁷⁸, it may also have played a role in disseminating the manuscript within the Norman monastic world. While we cannot confirm whether or not the 12th-century copies from Bec (where a fragmentary copy of John's *Confessio* also existed)⁷⁹, St. Évrout, Lyre, and St. Ouen were representative of this Norman recension, it is highly likely that they derived their exemplars either directly or indirectly from Fécamp or Jumièges⁸⁰.

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77. While it is impossible to know for sure, one possibility might have been that Fécamp used an exemplar from St. Bénigne de Dijon. St. Bénigne was the house from which both John and his predecessor William of Volpiano came; the ties between these two houses were very strong (for more on this, see Stéphane Lecouteux's article on the confraternities of Fécamp in this dossier of *Tabularia*). Moreover, there is a letter, from ca. 1001-1002/1004, between the priors of Fécamp and St. Bénigne, noting that there were manuscript exemplars from St. Bénigne at Fécamp (the letter is preserved in a 17th-century edition in Paris, BnF, coll. Bourgogne 11, fol. 745r-745v; many thanks to Stéphane Lecouteux for this reference). In addition, there was indeed an 11th-century manuscript of *Confessions* from St. Bénigne that the Maurists knew in the 17th century but that has since been lost. This manuscript's existence is noted in Paris, BnF, ms lat. 11645 on fol. 379 and it is listed in the 1621 book list of St. Bénigne de Dijon compiled by Johannes Bouhier and found in Paris, BnF, ms lat. 17917 on fol. 162. It should be noted, however, that, in Paris, BnF, ms lat 11645, the Maurists record textual variations all the way through to the last lines of the St. Bénigne *Confessions* manuscript, and these demonstrate that the text was complete in this; therefore, if Fécamp did use it as an exemplar, the defective ending was introduced in the Fécamp copy. For more on this manuscript, see GORMAN, 1981, p. 243-244. Unfortunately, no other significant common errors are present between the Fécamp *Confessions* and Maurists' readings of the St. Bénigne *Confessions* that could help in connecting the two manuscripts.
78. The main period for the formation of the libraries of the other four monasteries in question post-dated that of Fécamp, which further supports this possibility. NORTIER, 1971, p. 34, 99, 124, 183.
79. Bec is the only Norman house known to have a copy of excerpts of the *Confessio Theologica*, (Paris, BnF, ms lat. 13593), so Augustine's *Confessions* might have had particular resonance there.
80. There has not been a systematic study of the circulation of copies and dissemination of texts around the Norman monastic world since Genevieve Nortier's, but it is generally understood that the monasteries borrowed from each other's libraries. For example, in the case of Jumièges, I have already identified four books in addition to Rouen, Bibl. mun., 82 that used Fécamp manuscripts as exemplars: Rouen, Bibl. mun., 474 (A225), 428 (A346), 1123 (U61), and 488 (U103). The abbeys of Jumièges and St. Évrout both adopted the customs of Fécamp, and it likely that exemplars were borrowed from Fécamp (in the case of Jumièges) and from Jumièges (in the case of St. Évrout) (GAZEAU, 2007, t. II, p. 238). Jumièges' manuscripts have been studied as possible exemplars for the manuscripts of Bec (GRAMMONT, 1954, t. II, p. 209-222); Nortier discusses how exemplars for Lyre's manuscripts often came from Bec or St. Évrout (NORTIER, 1971, p. 45, 125-126, 130, 148, 185); and Alexander remarks on how the Norman monks moved between different Norman monasteries during the courses of their lifetimes, sometimes carrying manuscripts along with them (ALEXANDER, 1970, p. 83-84).

Part III: Fécamp and the origin of Paris, BnF, ms lat. 1916

Intrigued as to the whereabouts of the four missing Norman codices, I began looking at unattributed manuscripts of *Confessions* from the Central Middle Ages to see if I could identify any of the missing Norman copies⁸¹. The investigation did yield one candidate: a 12th-century manuscript of *Confessions* (Paris, BnF, ms lat. 1916, hereafter called lat. 1916) that had been dated based on the basis of its script⁸², and tentatively placed at the Cistercian abbey of Mortemer⁸³. My examination of lat. 1916 revealed that this manuscript's marginal notations reflected a knowledge of John's interpretation of *Confessions*: *nota* marks in the manuscript's margins highlighted some of John's favorite passages, metaphors, and themes from Augustine's work. By augmenting this with a reexamination of the evidence from its provenance and from its paleography, we can tentatively place lat. 1916 in Normandy – and, perhaps surprisingly, not to Bec, St. Évrault, St. Ouen, or Lyre, but to the monastery of Fécamp. The argument based on this evidence proceeds only incrementally – establishing the place of origin and provenance of a manuscript is frequently a tentative endeavor, and, even with our additional knowledge of lat. 1916's annotations, our material evidence remains inconclusive.

There are certain indications that lat. 1916 once belonged to and was made at the monastery of Fécamp. In his article on the dispersal of the library of Fécamp, Stéphane Lecouteux lists this copy as a possible manuscript of the monastery because it was owned by Antoine de Mareste d'Alge, who owned many of the Fécamp manuscripts in the 17th century; Marie-Pierre Laffitte, a specialist in the manuscripts of Mortemer, agrees with Lecouteux's assessment⁸⁴. Aspects of its decoration and script suggest that lat. 1916 could be connected to Fécamp: while its initials are the kind of unflourished, block-letter initials that were copied throughout northern France in the 12th century⁸⁵, similar initials do appear in several Fécamp manuscripts. More conclusive, the scribal hand found throughout this manuscript is closely similar to the script found in the first pages⁸⁶ of a confirmed Fécamp manuscript dated to the late 11th/early 12th century (Rouen,

81. I compiled a list of unattributed 11th- and 12th-century manuscripts from the lists of medieval *Confessions* manuscripts published by WILMART, 1932, p. 259-268, SKUTELLA, 1939, p. 70, and VERHEIJEN, 1979, p. 87-96. I then looked at the majority of these manuscripts (in person or in microfilm) to see if I could find evidence of a Norman manuscript being among them. I also took note of when and how these manuscripts contained *nota* marks, in order to provide a comparison for this study (see more on this below).

82. *Catalogue général des manuscrits latins de la Bibliothèque nationale*, t. II, n° 1916, p. 237, notes that the script of this manuscript is dated to the 12th century.

83. BONDÉELLE-SOUCHIER, 1991, p. 228.

84. LECOUTEUX, 2007, p. 27-28. Mareste d'Alge's coat of arms appears rubbed-out on the last folio of lat. 1916, fol. 109. In note 46 of that article, Stéphane Lecouteux is joined by Marie-Pierre Laffitte in saying that lat. 1916 is one of six manuscripts collected by Mareste d'Alge between 1640-1645 (likely before he acquired the Mortemer manuscripts) that should be considered as having an origin at Fécamp (LAFFITTE, 2005, p. 199). For more on the Norman manuscripts collected by Mareste d'Alge, see DOLBEAU, 1988, p. 101-107 and LAFFITTE, 2014.

85. I would like to thank Marie-Thérèse Gousset for this attribution.

86. Namely, fol. 1-10v.

Bibl. mun., 492 [A105])⁸⁷. The hand of lat. 1916 and that of the first pages of Rouen, Bibl. mun., 492 share certain similar characteristics: the feet of each of their letters curl up ever-so-slightly to the right; their ascenders are both often slightly forked on h's, l's, and b's while more straight-backed on d's; their g's take the same shape, almost (but not quite) completing a figure-8; and they each use the same broad-nibbed pen and dark ink, causing a more calligraphic effect than a spidery or spindly one. The scribe of lat. 1916 uses abbreviations much more frequently (such as the *-us* abbreviation), than the scribe of Rouen, Bibl. mun., 492. Nonetheless, they might well be the same scribe.

Finally, the marginal annotations that reflect an interpretation of *Confessions* akin to John's contribute to locating lat. 1916 more securely within John of Fécamp's sphere of influence. The *nota* marks do not always highlight passages in Augustine's text that are identical to those excerpted and quoted by John in his *Confessio*⁸⁸; still, they are only present in the books that John quotes extensively, namely, Books I-II, VIII-X, XII-XIII. More importantly, the *nota* marks in lat. 1916 mark passages of Augustine's text that involve to the same contemplative issues that John emphasized in his *Confessio*.

To understand the use of *nota* marks in a medieval manuscript is a tricky business⁸⁹. There are several annotating hands in lat. 1916, and none of them write more than some combination of the letters 'n,' 'o,' 't,' and 'a' in their margins. Still, it is possible to discern from among the mix of notating hands a relatively uniform hand that appears to be the earliest, perhaps contemporary with our main scribal hand⁹⁰. His notation marks seem to have been for personal reading edification, as opposed to *lectio* marks indicating the text was read aloud⁹¹. In addition, our 12th-century annotator displays a particularly John-like focus⁹²: he noted Augustine's characterization of the tumultuous state of the sinner and Augustine's descriptions of weeping and contemplation of the cross.

87. BRANCH, 1974, p. 159. Rouen, Bibl. mun., 492 is a manuscript of Cassiodorus' *Expositio in Psalmos*.

88. They do quote John's passages on occasion – see note 93 below.

89. Michael Gullick has recently called for more attention to be paid to *nota* marks in manuscripts, observing that « not much attention has been paid to *nota* marks in Romanesque manuscripts... However, there is a Christ Church [Cambridge] manuscript of the early 12th century [that has many *nota* marks which the scribe copied from his exemplar along with the main text]... [this] therefore demonstrates that such *nota* were sometimes (at least) regarded as important. », GULLICK, 2008, p. 83.

90. There at least seven notating hands in this manuscript, ranging in date from the 12th through 17th centuries. Still, our 12th-century notator has marks whose character is easy to discern. They were all written with a narrow, sharp nib in a very controlled manner. Each forms an 'N' with an 'a' hanging off of the final, lengthened descender of the N. The 'a' is a slightly peaked, triangular, two-story miniscule 'a,' one which is comparable with the peaked 'a' found in the main 12th-century text of the manuscript. This similarity between a distinctive feature in both the main text and the notating hand allows us to date the notating hand as roughly contemporary with the main text.

91. Readings from *Confessions* were not prescribed in the Fécamp liturgy or the *lectiones ad prandium*, and the number and variety of hands in lat. 1916 indicate that the manuscript had many individual readers over time, who were interested in different aspects of the text.

92. The other annotators in Paris, BnF, ms lat. 1916 do not appear to have been nearly so consistent in the topics and themes to which they drew attention, highlighting at times random biographical

Both John of Fécamp and our annotator are interested in passages of Augustine's *Confessions* that detail the weakness of the sinner's will. The idea that God is «inside» the sinner while the sinner is «outside» himself (cf. section two of John's argument) is highlighted both in John and by our annotator (as shown in the examples in the first row of the chart below). The metaphor of man's sinfulness tossing him about like a ship on rough seas is present both in the annotations of lat. 1916 and in John of Fécamp (cf. section 3B of John's *Confessio*, and the second row of the chart below). Finally, the metaphor of God being the medicine for the disease of the sinner (cf. *Confessio* section two, and the final row on the chart below) is of interest both to John and the annotator – they both quote precisely the same passage from *Confessions* in this particular case.

The chart below juxtaposes the quotations from *Confessions* highlighted by the annotator of lat. 1916 with quotations from John's *Confessio Theologica*, in order to demonstrate the parallel interests between John and the annotator of lat. 1916 (See Table 10).

facts from Augustine's life (the names of Augustine's friends, the names of works Augustine read, when Augustine was baptized, etc.) or various doctrinal aspects of Augustine's text (Augustine on memory, Augustine on creation, etc.). Of the sample of the thirty-two French, English, German, and Italian 11th- and 12th-century manuscripts of Augustine's *Confessions* that I viewed, very few of them are annotated, and none of them highlighted passages of *Confessions* with the kind of focus of our 12th-century annotator, preferring to note only to the kinds of biographical and doctrinal interests we see elsewhere in lat. 1916. A wider study of notations in all *Confessions* manuscripts would have to be done, of course, to be sure that the annotator in lat. 1916 was so unique in his choice of passages to annotate.

Table 10

Paris, BnF, ms lat. 1916	<i>Confessio Theologica</i> ⁹³
«Lustful feelings are therefore dark feelings, and place [the sinner] far away from your face.» ⁹⁴ (1.18.29)	«From you we place ourselves far away, and from you we become dissimilar.» ⁹⁵ (CT, p. 117)
«The storm tosses the sailors, threatens shipwreck; all grow pale at approaching death; sky and sea are calmed, and they are exceedingly joyful, having once been exceedingly afraid.» ⁹⁶ (8.3.7)	«Finding himself at the port of security and cheerfulness, he rejoices to escape the agitated sea of this life, to escape from the troubles and dangers that one might attribute to death rather than life: for man is born miserable, lives in pain and sin, and dies in suffering.» ⁹⁷ (CT, p. 149; also incorporates a paraphrase of <i>Confessions</i> 1.6.7) «Thanks to your merits and your holy prayers we can enter happily on an intact ship and with an intact cargo, to the assured port of eternal glory.» ⁹⁸ (CT, p. 169)
«Hear me [God], through [Christ], the medicine for our wounds, who hung upon the wood and sits at your right hand to intercede for us...» ⁹⁹ (9.13.35)	«I beg [Christ], in his tenderness and goodness, he who is the medicine for our wounds, he who hung upon the wood and sits at [God's] right hand to intercede for us...» ¹⁰⁰ (CT, p. 132)

93. Quotations in bold in this column are direct quotations from Augustine's *Confessions* as excerpted by John in the *Confessio Theologica*.

94. «*In affectu ergo libidinoso, id enim est tenebroso, atque id est longe a vultu tuo*» (notated on fol. 7v).

95. «*Unum deum a quo sumus, per quem sumus, in quo sumus. A quo discessimus, cui dissimiles facti sumus*» (CT, p. 117). Quotations on a similar theme are highlighted in Paris, BnF, ms lat. 1916 on fol. 5v, 7v, 65v, and 76v.

96. «*Iactat tempestas navigantes minaturque naufragium; omnes futura morte pallescunt: tranquillatur caelum et mare, et exultant nimis, quoniam timuerunt nimis*» (notated on fol. 49).

97. «*Vidensque se in portu securitatis et laetitiae, gaudet evasisse iam turbulentum pelagus huius vitae miserae et periculosae, quae potius mors dicenda est, quam vita*» (CT, p. 149).

98. «*...ut vestris meritis vestrisque sanctis orationibus salva nave et integris mercibus securum perpetuae gloriae portum valeamus feliciter introire*» (CT, p. 169).

99. «*Exaudi me per medicinam vulnerum nostrorum, quae pependit in ligno, et sedens ad dexteram tuam te interpellat pro nobis*» (fol. 64v).

100. «*Per ipsam medicinam vulnerum nostrorum quae pependit in ligno, et sedet ad dexteram tuam atque interpellat pro nobis pietati bonitatisque tuae supplico*» (CT, p. 132). Quotes on a similar theme are highlighted in BnF, ms lat. 1916 on fol. 5v.

The above comparison demonstrates that both John and the annotator are interested in the same metaphors in Augustine's text. Such correspondence could be mere coincidence; after all, some of these metaphors appear in widely known texts like the psalms, sources other than Augustine that both John and the notator might recognize. But this coincidence seems less likely when we see that the annotator of lat. 1916, like John, is also interested in highlighting Augustine's contemplative prescriptions for combating the sinfulness of man. Both highlight Augustine's prescriptions for tears in *Confessions* (cf. sections 6A&B of John's *Confessio*); and both note that meditation on the cross and the participation in the Eucharist (cf. section 6B of John's *Confessio*) are keys to approaching heaven despite sinfulness (See Table 11).

Table 11

Paris, BnF ms lat. 1916	<i>Confessio Theologica</i> ¹⁰¹
«I cast myself down, I know not how, under a certain fig-tree, giving full vent to my tears; and the floods of my eyes gushed out an acceptable sacrifice to you.» ¹⁰² (8.12.28)	«Therefore I will be able to offer you each day, the tears from the eyes, the sacrifice of a broken spirit and a crushed heart.» ¹⁰³ (CT, p. 172-173)
«Hear me [God], through [Christ], the medicine for our wounds, who hung upon the wood and sits at your right hand to intercede for us...» ¹⁰⁴ (9.13.35) «But you strengthened me, saying, this is why Christ died for all, so that those who live may now no longer live for themselves, but for Christ who died for them... He has redeemed me with His blood. Let the proud not speak ill of me; because I meditate on my ransom, and eat and drink, and communicate it; [I am] poor, desiring to be satisfied by Christ, along with those who eat and are satisfied...» ¹⁰⁵ (10.43.70)	«You, beauty itself, I ask you by the holy effusion of your precious blood by which we are redeemed: give me contrition of heart and abundant tears.» ¹⁰⁶ (CT, p. 173) «[In the heavenly Jerusalem] it will no longer be in the sacrament which, in this life, we members are united each time that we drink that [blood] which flowed from your side... then and there, in the clear contemplation of you, the unchangeable truth, we will no longer need to have any mystery.» ¹⁰⁷ (CT, p. 174)

101. As above, quotations in bold in this column are direct quotes or paraphrases from Augustine's *Confessions* as excerpted by John in the *Confessio Theologica*.

102. «*Ego sub quadam fici arbore stravi me nescio quo modo et dimisi habenas lacrimis et pruperunt flumina oculorum meorum acceptabile sacrificium tuum*» (fol. 55).

103. «...*ut sacrificium spiritus contribulati et cordis contriti obortis lacrimis cotidie offeram tibi*» (CT, p. 172-173).

104. This quotation was used also in the chart above: «*Exaudi me per medicinam vulnerum nostrorum, quae pependit in ligno, et sedens ad dexteram tuam te interpellat pro nobis*» (fol. 64v).

105. «*Confortasti me dicens: ideo Christus pro omnibus mortuus est, ut et qui vivunt iam non sibi vivant, sed ei qui pro omnibus mortuus est... redemit me sanguine suo. Non calumniantur mihi superbi, quoniam cogito pretium meum, et manduco et bibo, et erogo et pauper cupio saturari ex eo inter illos, qui edunt et saturantur*» (fol. 80v).

106. «*Pulcherrime, rogo te per illam sacratissimam effusionem praetiosi sanguinis tui, quo sumus redempti, da mihi cordis contritionem, et lacrimarum fontem*» (CT, p. 173).

107. «*Non adhuc in sacramento, quo in hoc tempore consociantur membra tua, quamdiu bibitur quod de latere tuo manavit... ut in illa perspicua contemplatione tuae incommutabilis veritatis nullis mysteriis egeamus*» (CT, p. 174).

The examples presented in the two charts above demonstrate the similarities between the way that John quotes *Confessions* in his *Confessio* and the way the 12th-century *nota* marks in lat. 1916 highlight Augustine's text: both John and the annotator of lat. 1916 are interested in Augustine's treatment of the sinful nature of man, and in Augustine's prescriptions for salvation involving meditating on God with tears, contemplating the crucifixion, and partaking in the Eucharist. In contrast with *nota* marks in the other contemporary manuscripts of Augustine's *Confessions* that I have examined¹⁰⁸, lat. 1916's notations have a very specific focus that reflect an understanding of John of Fécamp's textual interpretation.

If it is accepted that the notations in lat. 1916 were inspired by the writings of John of Fécamp, then they strengthen the possibility that this manuscript was itself in Fécamp in the 12th century. If this was indeed the case, it would demonstrate that John's ideas remained alive within the religious and intellectual culture of his own monastery (even though no evidence survives of a copy of John's *Confessio* in Fécamp's medieval library). It also means that Fécamp produced a second manuscript of *Confessions* a century after producing its first (Vaticano, Reg. Lat. 755, discussed above). Why they would do such a thing remains a question: perhaps because Fécamp had misplaced (or loaned out, and never received back) its original 11th-century copy; perhaps because lat. 1916 was made at Fécamp but intended for another house, perhaps one of the four Norman houses whose 12th-century *Confessions* manuscripts are presently considered lost; or perhaps there was because a demand for a second copy in John's monastery¹⁰⁹.

While the arguments above from provenance, paleography, and intellectual evidence are persuasive, they are still by no means conclusive. Mareste d'Alge owned manuscripts from places other than Fécamp¹¹⁰; there is no illumination in lat. 1916 that might definitively connect the book to Normandy; and while the scribes in lat. 1916 and Rouen, Bibl. mun., 492 are very similar, they are not consistent enough in their letterforms to provide evidence for a certain match¹¹¹.

108. These only highlighted doctrinal points or random biographical events in Augustine's text. Cf. note 92 above.

109. This final idea would make *Confessions* one of only a handful of duplicate texts at the monastery, including the Vita of Mary of Egypt, the *Sententiae* of Isidore, and Augustine's *De symbolo* and *De duodecim abusivis saeculi* (for more on the meaning of these duplicate texts, see my forthcoming study). If lat. 1916 was a second copy of *Confessions*, this further emphasizes just how much influence John might have had in putting together the intellectual and devotional culture of the monastery.

110. LECOUTEUX, 2007, p. 4. It is possible that the abbey of Mortemer owned lat. 1916, and that a monk at that abbey familiar with John's work notated the manuscript.

111. For instance, while the scribe in Rouen, Bibl. mun., 492 creates g's that are nearly-closed figure-8's, like the scribe of lat. 1916, he also writes g's that are open, with no consistent pattern based on letter-position. (For examples of these inconsistencies within the boundaries of a particular page, see fol. 56v of Paris, BnF, ms lat. 1916 and fol. 1 of Rouen, Bibl. mun., 492.) It is therefore difficult to characterize a scribal alphabet for each manuscript that would be definitive (and thereby most useful for comparison).

Moreover, the text of *Confessions* contained in lat. 1916 is not from the 'Norman recension,' with the truncated ending present in *Confessions* copies from Fécamp (Vaticano, Reg. Lat. 755) and Jumièges (Rouen, Bibl. mun., 82 [A208]). This could, of course, simply mean that copies of *Confessions* circulating in Normandy did not all have this incomplete ending. But without positive evidence of this, the different ending could also serve as evidence that lat. 1916 is not Norman. Lastly, while my small study of annotation marks in a wide range of European 11th- and 12th-century copies of Augustine's *Confessions* indicates that our annotator's focus is unique save in John's work, it is possible that our annotator was from one of the houses influenced by John's writing outside Normandy¹¹².

Nevertheless, a clear impression emerges when all of the evidence is combined: the fact that the earliest Norman copy of *Confessions* appears to have been at Fécamp; the fact that John of Fécamp was an early reinterpreter of *Confessions*; the fact that *Confessions* was a rare text to be copying in the early 11th century; the fact that Fécamp's special interest in the text might have caused it to be disseminated around Normandy in the way that the Jumièges manuscript was copied from a Fécamp exemplar; the fact that lat. 1916's provenance and script tentatively link it to the monastery of Fécamp; and, finally, the fact that lat. 1916's earliest notation marks highlight passages of *Confessions* which reflect an understanding of John's interpretation of this text. In the case of lat. 1916, we must not just consider the manuscript's physical properties or its whereabouts over time, but also the textual interpretation evident in that manuscript's annotations and how it compares with the interpretation of that same text in the region of Normandy.

By piecing together more precisely the nature of John of Fécamp's interest in Augustine's *Confessions*, it is possible to shed more light on an 11th-century man's contemplative philosophy, and that philosophy's inspiration, structure, and ideology. By using paleography, provenance, and medieval book lists as evidence for Norman manuscripts, we may understand more about the patterns of circulation of books and the dissemination of texts between Norman monasteries. But, if we combine our newfound understanding of John's interest with manuscript evidence from Normandy, we can expand our criteria for determining which manuscripts form part of those patterns. More than that, we can begin to understand why and to what effect certain books circulated among Norman monastic libraries; and we can use manuscripts to reveal the extent and influence of Norman intellectual ideas.

112. Copies of John's writing from the 11th and 12th centuries survive from monasteries in Ripoll, St. Bénigne de Dijon, Metz, Troyes, and Zwettl, to name a few (see HURLBUT, 1943, p. V, 13 and p. V, 17 for the complete list). While the paleography of our book seems to indicate northern France, and not Ripoll or Zwettl, for instance, it is certainly possible the book be from a monastery in Troyes and not from Normandy, or that it was made in northern France and notated elsewhere.

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