

Was Julian Right? A Re-Evaluation of Augustine's and Mani's Doctrines of Sexual Concupiscence and the Transmission of Sin

Part I

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Abstract

The article focuses on the question: Was Julian of Eclanum (c. 380-454) right in accusing Augustine (354-430) of still being a Manichaean, based on his view of sexual concupiscence and the transmission of (original) sin? In order to find an answer to this (still hotly debated) question, a sketch of Augustine's acquaintance with Manichaeism is first provided. Thereafter follows the (first ever) overview of the Manichaean doctrines of the origin of sexual concupiscence, its distinctive features, and its role in the transmission of sin. The third part of the article focuses on the essentials of Augustine's views of sexual concupiscence and the transmission of original sin, in particular as they were expounded (and further developed) in his controversy with the 'Pelagian' bishop, Julian of Eclanum. It is concluded that, in particular, Augustine's stress on the 'random motion' (*motus inordinatus*) as typical of the sinfulness of the sexual concupiscence is strikingly similar to the Manichaean views on the subject. In this respects, then, Julian seems to be right. Finally, some preliminary remarks are made on early Jewish and Jewish-Christian views of sexual concupiscence and (original) sin which may have influenced not only Mani and his followers, but also Augustine and his precursors in the tradition of Roman North Africa.

Keywords

Augustine – Mani – Julian of Eclanum – Sexual Concupiscence – Random Motion – Original Sin

Introduction

Many excellent studies have been published on Augustine's doctrines of marriage, sexuality, original sin, and baptism. One issue, however, has continued to emerge time and again ever since the first critical remarks of Augustine's contemporary, Julian of Eclanum: May we discern any influence of Manichaeism in Augustine's view of *concupiscentia sexualis* and, consequently, on his opinions of marriage, the propagation of original sin, and the necessity of infant baptism?

This paper focuses mainly on the first question. It starts with a short survey of Augustine's knowledge of Manichaeism. Thereafter follows an exposition of the teachings of Mani and his disciples concerning *concupiscentia sexualis*. The third part describes the essentials of Augustine's view of sexual concupiscence and the transmission of sin. Finally, some concluding remarks and tentative observations are made.

I: Augustine and Manichaeism

It is an established fact that Augustine was a Manichaean from his nineteenth to his twenty-eighth years.¹ This period lasted from 373 to 382. Initially, his reading of Cicero's philosophical proreptic, the *Hortensius*, caused a revival of the Christian impressions of his youth. A reversion to his former faith turned out to be impossible, however, as the traditional and legalistic Christianity of Africa did not appeal to Augustine; instead, he became deeply affected by a highly

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¹ *Conf.* 4,1: 'Per idem tempus annorum novem, ab undevicensimo anno aetatis meae usque ad duodetricesimum, seducebamur et seducebamus...'

spiritual Christianity proclaimed by Manichaean missionaries. In this new form of Christian belief, the Old Testament was put aside for its non-spiritual and loathsome character, while Christ was honoured as the Teacher of Wisdom, the Enlightener guiding the believer to true knowledge. The Manichaeans also claimed to offer a rational religion, without annoyances to the intellect. They presented a radical and—at first glance—easy solution to problematical questions such as: *unde malum? unde homo? unde peccata?*² ‘Within a few days’³ Augustine, the young intellectual searching for truth, joined them as an *auditor*.

This status of being a ‘Hearer’ should by no means be underestimated. The position of the Manichaean *auditores* was comparable to that of the catechumens in the Catholic church. Yet their catechumenate did not only consist of doctrinal initiation, fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. The *auditores* were required to take care of the material well-being of the *electi*: they supplied them with food and shelter. It was this very function that gave them an indispensable place in the Manichaean church, while their taking part in everyday social life made them pre-eminently fit for missionary work.⁴ Augustine himself provides unique evidence for this: in a short time he persuaded his benefactor Romanianus; a friend who died young; his friends Alypius, Nebridius, Honoratus, Fortunatus, Profuturus, and also another Fortunatus to join the sect.⁵

Indeed, the young Augustine professed his new belief with enthusiasm. But to what extent did he become acquainted with its full teachings and various writings? It is a striking that, in his accounts of his Manichaean conversion he never makes mention of being convinced by reading Manichaean works. In the *Confessions*, he does mention Cicero’s *Hortensius*; subsequent Scriptural readings (which eventually proved disappointing); later on certain works of the ‘Platonists’ and, in the days immediately preceding and following his ‘Catholic’ conversion, especially some Pauline epistles. With regard to his Manichaean conversion, neither the *Confessions* nor his other works mention such a reading. One may assume that, for political reasons in particular, the Manichaeans did not hand over their books to prospective proselytes.

Yet, already the young Augustine will have become profoundly acquainted with Manichaean teachings by reading Manichaean texts himself. He makes explicit mention of such a reading in the *Confessions*⁶ and, moreover, he states there that he fully believed in the tenets of the ‘sect’.⁷ In this context, the answer of the African bishop to whom Monnica turned for advice is also important: her son will find out the ‘error and wickedness’ of the Manichaeans *legendo*, ‘by reading’.⁸ The most plausible interpretation of this *legendo* is that it relates to Manichaean writings. Furthermore, the same bishop reported that, ‘as a young boy’ (*parvulus*) consigned by his seduced mother to the Manichaeans, he himself had read and copied almost all the Manichaean books.⁹ It thus appears that a prominent Christian from Augustine’s close surroundings was familiar with the Manichaean writings. We get the same impression of the young Augustine: he was a dedicated Manichaean who felt deeply attracted to their Christological piety¹⁰ and sang their songs.¹¹

² Cf. e.g. *De duab. an.* 10; *De agone* 4.

³ *De duab. an.* 1.

⁴ Cf. H.J. Polotsky, A. Böhlig, *Kephalaia*, Bd. I, I. Hälfte, *Manichäische Handschriften der Staatlichen Museen Berlin*, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 1940, 216-218; see also J. Ries, ‘Commendements de la justice et vie missionnaire dans l’église de Mani’, in: M. Krause (ed.), *Gnosis and Gnosticism*, Leiden: Brill 1977, 93-106.

⁵ P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de saint Augustin*, Paris: De Boccard 1968², 68-70; W.H.C. Frend, ‘Manichaeism in the Struggle between Saint Augustine and Petilian of Constantine’, *Augustinus Magister*, II, Paris: Études Augustiniennes 1954, esp. 861 and 865.

⁶ *Conf.* 5,6; 5,12; 5,13.

⁷ E.g. *conf.* 3,11: ‘... volantem autem Medeam ... non credebam; illa autem credidi. Vae, vae!’

⁸ *Conf.* 3,21.

⁹ *Ibid.*: ‘simul etiam narravit se quoque parvulum a seducta matre sua datum fuisse manichaeis et omnes paene non legisse tantum verum etiam scriptitasse libros eorum ...’.

¹⁰ Cf. J.P. de Menasce, ‘Augustin manichéen’, *Freundesgabe für Ernst Robert Curtius*, Bern: Francke 1956, 79-93; E. Feldmann, ‘Christus-Frömmigkeit der Mani-Jünger. Der suchende Student Augustinus in ihrem “Netz”’, in: E.

Clearly, Augustine had been a Manichaean for a long period of time. The exact length of this period, however, is still a contested matter. In any case, he was an adherent of Manichaeism from 373 to 382. In the summer of 382, bishop Faustus, celebrated among the Western Manichaeans, arrived at Carthage and shortly afterwards Augustine met the man from whom he expected so much. However, the meeting became a disappointment, and his doubts about the truth of the Manichaean doctrines increased. But even in the summer of the following year—at that time, Augustine was living in Rome—he was frequently in the company of the disciples of Mani.¹² As late as the autumn of 384,¹³ it was the Manichaeans who acted as his mediators with Rome's city prefect Symmachus for his appointment at Milan.¹⁴ Concerning his departure for the imperial residence, Augustine reports that its aim was also a loosening of his ties with the Manichaeans.¹⁵ The nine years, which he himself mentions as the period spent among the disciples of Mani,¹⁶ should be regarded with some reserve: it must have been at least ten years. Is this the later Catholic bishop speaking, whose intention it is to make the number of years spent in error as small as possible? Or does the number nine in the *Confessions* mainly have a symbolic denotation: nine as the number of imperfection?¹⁷

It appears certain that Augustine stayed among the Manichaeans for about a decade and, already as their *auditor*, became familiar with their books and teachings. Moreover, later in life, as a Catholic presbyter and bishop, he studied Manichaean writings. His profound knowledge of Manichaeism is apparent, for instance, in his book against Mani's *Epistula fundamenti*;¹⁸ in his lengthy work *Against Faustus*;¹⁹ and in his debates with other Manichaean contemporaries.²⁰ In an antithetical way, Manichaean influence is evident in Augustine's biblical interpretation: his repeated attention to the very first chapters of *Genesis*; the life and deeds of the Hebrew patriarchs; the genealogical tables of Jesus; the harmony of the Old and New Testament.²¹ Time and again in his explanation of the Bible, he feels compelled to refute Manichaean opinions. But there is a more direct and lasting influence as well. What he reports in hindsight about his very first work, *De pulchro et apto*, makes quite clear that it was permeated with a Manichaean mode of thought.²² If then, already in his own days, the Italian bishop Julian of Eclanum stated that his views of *concupiscentia sexualis* and original sin were affected by Manichaeism, this problem deserves serious consideration.

Dassmann, K.S. Frank (eds.), *Pietas. Festschrift für Bernhard Kötting*, (JbAC, Erg. Bd. 8), Münster: Aschendorff 1980, 198-216.

¹¹ *Conf.* 3,14. See also *Conf.* 10,49 for Augustine's acquaintance with Manichaean songs; cf. e.g. *c. Faust.* 15,5.

¹² *Conf.* 5,18 and 19.

¹³ Cf. for the date Courcelle, *Recherches*, 79 n. 1.

¹⁴ *Conf.* 5,23: '... ego ipse ambivi per eos ipsos manichaeis vanitatibus ebrios ...'.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*: '... quibus ut carerem ibam, sed utrique nesciebamus ...'.

¹⁶ *Conf.* 3,20; 4,1; 5,10; cf. *De ut. cred.* 1,2: '... annos fere novem ...'.

¹⁷ L.C. Ferrari, 'Augustine's "Nine Years" as a Manichee', *Aug(L)* 25 (1975), 210-216.

¹⁸ See e.g. E. Feldmann, *Die 'Epistula Fundamenti' der nordafrikanischen Manichäer. Versuch einer Rekonstruktion*, Altenberge: Oros Verlag 1987; cf. Feldmann, *Der Einfluss des Hortensius und des Manichäismus auf das Denken des jungen Augustinus von 373*, I-II, Münster: Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität 1975 (dissertation in typescript), I, 239-357.

¹⁹ See for instance J.P. Maher, 'Saint Augustine and Manichean Cosmogony', *AS* 10 (1979) 91-104, who rightly emphasises that Augustine in *c. Faust.* 15,6 sums up exactly the same five Sons of the Living Spirit, and in the same order, as *Keph.* XXXIII (ed. Polotsky, p. 91). Nevertheless this does not automatically mean, as Maher supposes, that Augustine was acquainted with the *Kephalaia*.

²⁰ See *c. Fel.*, *c. Fort.*, *c. Sec.*; in this context we may also refer to his refutation of certain *disputationes* of Mani's disciple Adimantus in *c. Adim.*

²¹ E.g. A. Allgeier, 'Der Einfluss des Manichäismus auf die exegetische Fragestellung bei Augustin', in: M. Grabmann & J. Mausbach (eds.), *Aurelius Augustinus. Die Festschrift der Görres-Gesellschaft zum 1500. Todestage des heiligen Augustinus*, Köln: J. P. Bachem 1930, 1-13; Chr. Walter, *Der Ertrag der Auseinandersetzung mit den Manichäern für das hermeneutische Problem bei Augustin*, München: Dissertationsdruck Schön 1972.

²² *Conf.* 4,24-27: opposite to a *mens sine ullo sexu*, a *monas*, there is a *substantia et natura summi mali*, not derived from God, a *dya*, *ira in facinoribus*, *libido in flagitiis*.

II: Manichaeism and sexual concupiscence

The very negative view that Mani and his followers held of *concupiscentia sexualis* already becomes apparent from a brief outline of the Manichaean myth. I shall first sketch a few main points of this myth and then proceed to a more detailed analysis of the most relevant prooftexts. It should be noted that, as regards the basic facts, the Manichaean sources from East and West are strikingly similar.

In their myth, Mani and his followers propagated a cosmogony of an absolutely dualistic nature: evil is an eternal cosmic force, not the consequence of a Fall. Two kingdoms, that of light and that of darkness, good and evil, God and matter, are implacably opposed. In the first, the Father of Greatness rules; and in the struggle against the kingdom of darkness He brings forth primordial Man. When this creature threatens to be vanquished in the struggle, there follows a second emanation: the Living Spirit comes into existence. She directs her call of salvation to primordial Man and saves him from matter. But the soul of primordial Man is left behind; the world is arranged by the Living Spirit as a mixture of light and darkness, good and evil. The movement towards the kingdom of light is brought about through a subsequent emanation, the Third Ambassador, who sends Jesus to Adam and Eve to give them γνῶσις. There are also other Apostles of light such as Seth(ēl), Enos, Enoch, Noah, Sem, the Buddha, and Zarathustra. In the end comes Mani, as the Paraclete promised by Jesus. The final destination of world history is the separation of light and darkness, so that the primordial state of things can be restored. This will be the case when all the redeemed particles of light have returned to the kingdom of light and the damned have been locked up upon the ‘clod’,²³ together with the already enclosed prince of darkness, his henchmen, matter, and concupiscence (Pers. Āz; Gr. ἐπιθυμία; Lat. *concupiscentia*). From this point onwards, the two kingdoms will be separated for ever.

While these are only some of the main features of the very complicated myth, they are sufficient to reveal its typically ‘gnostic’ character: the νοῦς (i.e., the revelation from the other world) saves the ψυχή (the divine spark in man) from the ὕλη (evil matter). The myth may also be regarded as the expression of a ‘self’-experience: what happens in the macrocosm happens in a similar way in the microcosm which the human person is, and vice versa. Mani and his followers were fully aware of the lust in humanity which darkens the intellect. In the realms of human unconsciousness, sexual passion churns and strives for gratification: the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit—the light-νοῦς—is held captive in the sinful flesh, which consists of evil matter.

A closer examination of the myth may further illustrate this. The kingdom of darkness is the realm of matter. It is dominated by the prince of darkness, who is the product of (and even identified with) evil matter. This powerful realm of ὕλη is striving to penetrate and vanquish the kingdom of light. Matter is random motion, the continuous struggle of the countless demons inhabiting the kingdom of darkness. They squirm around, fight, and devour each other. Owing to an accidental shift of these movements, the prince of darkness reaches the upper limit of his territory. He perceives the radiance of the light; his lust arises to vanquish the kingdom of light and he attacks it.

What happens in the macrocosm is a mythical projection of a psychological process. The human body is ὕλη and the ὕλη is ἐπιθυμία, *concupiscentia*, evil desire and lust (ἡδονή). This manifests itself in the sexual impulse, the *libido*. Sexual lust stirs up the human person; it operates destructively like a devouring demon and strives for gratification. Lust has its origin in the darkness of the unconscious or semi-conscious; its aim is the conquest of the pure light of the consciousness.

The sexual essence of the myth also comes to the fore elsewhere. The Third Ambassador appears either as a radiant nude or as the Virgin of Light, i.e., in a male form to the female

²³ Called by the Greek and Syriac writers βῶλος, by the Latin and Arabic authors *globus* and *massa* respectively.

demons of darkness and in a female form to the male ones. The concupiscence of the demons is stirred up and induces them to pour out the devoured light, which is now mixed with their semen, on to the earth. In this way the vegetable and animal worlds come into existence as a mixture of light and darkness. Because concupiscent matter is afraid that its prey—the captured particles of light—will escape, it also takes measures of its own. In order to bind light with stronger ties, it decides to create something that will be the opposite of the divine creation. Two demons, often named as the male Ashaqlūn and the female Namrāēl (or Nebrōēl),²⁴ devour all their children in order to absorb as much light as possible. Subsequently, they copulate and bring forth the first humans: Adam and Eve or—as they are usually named in the Middle Persian sources—Gēhmurd and Murdiyānag. The human being is the product of cannibalism and sex and still bears the marks of this origin.

This pessimistic view of the human body and its concupiscence may be illustrated from a variety of Manichaean texts. The Coptic *Psalm-Book* repeatedly speaks of ἡδονή and ἐπιθυμία²⁵ in a negative way and usually in an explicitly sexual sense. One example:

The care of my poor body (σῶμα) has made me drunk in its drunkenness.
 Its demolitions and its buildings have taken my mind (νοῦς) from me.
 Its plantings and its uprootings—they stir up trouble for me.
 Its fire, its lust (ἡδονή), they trick me daily.²⁶

In the Coptic Manichaean *Homilies* the body with its ἐπιθυμία is cursed:

I w[ill - -]

[- -] my body and condemn it: ‘You are cursed, oh bo[dy]
 [- -] Your desire (ἐπιθυμία) is condemned in you [- -]
 [- -] again. Your demons will enter
 [- -] you have tortured me and caused me to weep [- -]
 [- -] every year. I do not worship you
 [- -] you have brought them upon me. You are cursed! [- -]
 [- -] he who formed you [is c]ursed!
 [- - de]sire (ἐπιθυμία) ²⁷

In the Coptic *Kephalaia*—discourses of a didactic nature which to an important degree go back to Mani himself²⁸—there is much evidence of the perniciousness of the sexual ἐπιθυμία and ἡδονή; continence (ἐγκράτεια) is therefore exalted. Ardour and lust (ἡδονή) lodge in men and women

²⁴ As in the Syriac report of Mani’s cosmogonic teachings by Theodor bar Khoni, Nestorian bishop of Kashkar in Iraq, in his *Book of Scholia* (8th c.), which report mainly consists of Syrian extracts from Mani’s original writings. See e.g. A.V.W. Jackson, *Researches in Manichaeism*, New York: Columbia University Press 1932 (repr. Delhi: Facsimile Publisher 2016), Part IV: ‘Theodor bar Khoni on Mani’s Teachings translated from the Syriac with Notes’, 221-254 (249 on Ashaqlūn and Namrāēl/ Nebrōēl, and some variants of their names).

²⁵ See the—for these words complete—index in C.R.C. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, Part II, *Manichaean Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Collection*, Vol. II, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 1938, 3*. Cf. S. Clackson a.o., *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts*, I, *Texts from the Roman Empire*, Turnhout: Brepols / NSW Australia : Ancient History Documentary Research Center, Macquarie University 1998, 68 and 69.

²⁶ *Psalm-Book* 152,14-17 (transl. Allberry).

²⁷ N.A. Pedersen, *Manichaean Homilies. With a Number of hitherto unpublished Fragments* (CFM, Series Coptica 2), Turnhout: Brepols 2006, 6,1-9. Cf. H.J. Polotsky, *Manichäische Homilien*, vol. I, *Manichäische Handschriften der Sammlung A. Chester Beatty*, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 1934, 6,1-9.

²⁸ Cf. A. Böhlig, ‘Probleme des manichäischen Lehrvortrages’ (1953) and ‘Eine Bemerkung zur Beurteilung der Kephalaia’ (1938), in: Böhlig, *Mysterion und Wahrheit*, Leiden: Brill 1968, 228-224 and 245-251; see also Böhlig, *Die Gnosis*, III, *Der Manichäismus*, Zürich-München: Artemis Verlag 1980, esp. 50.

and urge them on against each other.²⁹ Ἐπιθυμία is the goddess of the body, but her φαντασία have become an abomination to the true Manichaean:

Yet, now, by the
power of the Light Mind (Νοῦς) that has suffused him and
lived in the body he has humbled lust (ἐπιθυμία), the goddess of the bo-
dy. The parades of lust (ἐπιθυμία) have become loathsome
in the presence of the righteous person.³⁰

One should have control of one's sexual organs and subdue ἐπιθυμία.³¹ The true catechumen lives in his house as if in an inn and his wife is a stranger to him;³² on the fifty Sundays of the year, he fasts and abstains from the ἐπιθυμία of his wife in that he keeps his bed pure through continence (ἐγκράτεια).³³ The ideal, however, is the virginal person (παρθένος), who has never associated himself with a woman and has never been defiled by intercourse (συνουσία); he who does not possess this state ought to be 'continent' (ἐγκρατής).³⁴

The Middle Persian and the Parthian texts from Turfan again and again mention the human body and sexual desire in an utterly negative way. From the various fragments of a cosmogonic text (Γ III 260 = M 7980-M 7984), the central role of sexual desire, personified in the demon Āz, emerges clearly.³⁵ Two quotations may suffice, both stemming from the narrative about Gēhmurd and Murdiyānag:

And just as Āz herself, from the very beginning, had taught lasciviousness and mating to the demons and she-devils, the demons of wrath, monster demons and archdemons in that Hell of Darkness, her own habitation, so she continued to teach lasciviousness and mating to the other male and female monster demons and archdemons that had fallen from the firmament to earth. (Her aim was) that they be excited and unite with intertwined bodies and bring forth dragon offspring which she (Āz) would take away, devour and then form from them the two (first human) beings, male and female.³⁶

Concerning Gēhmurd's body we read among other things:

And into it (the body) she (Āz) also sowed desire and lust, covetousness and (the urge to) mate ...³⁷

The first woman's body, so it is stated, was in an even sorrier state.³⁸ Further on in M 7983, the text states regarding human beings in general, that:

²⁹ *Keph.* 26,15-17 (ed. Polotsky, cf. n. 4). Cf. for instance *Keph.* 27,3-4 and 48,27.

³⁰ *Keph.* 143,4-8 (ed. Polotsky). Transl. (with some modifications in the lay-out) as in I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher. The Edited Coptic Manichaean Texts in Translation with Commentary*, Leiden-Boston: Brill 1995 (repr. 2016), 150.

³¹ *Keph.* 172,10-13.

³² *Keph.* 228,22 ff.

³³ *Keph.* 233,5-7.

³⁴ *Keph.* 249,21-27, ed. A. Böhlig, *Kephalaia*, Bd. 1,2. Hälfte, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 1966. See also for ἐγκρατής *Keph.* 248, 12 ff. and for ἐγκράτεια *Keph.* 192,9; 212,26; 229,21; 233,7. Cf. Clackson a.o., *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts*, I (n. 24), 66.

³⁵ F.C. Andreas & W. Henning, 'Mitteliranische Manichaica aus Chinesisch-Turkestan', I, *SPAW* 1932, 177-201; cf. M. Boyce, *A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian*, Leiden/Téhéran-Liège: Brill/Bibliothèque Pahlavi 1975, 100-101; M. Hutter, *Manis kosmogonische Šābubragān-Texte*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1992, 83-84

³⁶ Andreas & Henning, *Mir. Man.*, I,194. Cf. Hutter, *Manis kosmogonische Šābubragān-Texte*, 84. English translation H.-J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road. Gnostic Texts from Central Asia*, San Francisco: Harper 1993, 232.

³⁷ Andreas & Henning, *Mir. Man.*, I,196. Cf. Hutter, *Šābubragān-Texte*, 87-88. Translation: Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road*, 233.

(a)ll people that are born in the world, both male and female, are created by
 Āz.³⁹

Chinese texts give a similar picture. The Chinese *Hymnscroll*, found near Dunhuang and preserved in London, speaks of the devil of concupiscence;⁴⁰ the body as the microcosmic realm of desire and lust;⁴¹ the body as a mass of fire.⁴² In a prayer to Jesus it runs:

Ich bete jetzt inbrünstig und flehe herzlich:
 Bitte, befreie mich von dem Fleischeskörper, dem giftigen Feuermeer,
 Das unaufhörlich springt, wogt und wallt,
 In dem Seeungeheuer auf- und untertauchend Schiffe verschlingen.⁴³

Due to the experience of sexual concupiscence, Manichaeism was characterised by a profound sense of sin, demonstrated in particular by the various confessional texts. Even in the Elect, who possesses the redeeming gnosis, the Āz holds sway; hence the Elect has to confess his sin time and again:

First of all, I am sinful because of the incorrect moribund thought,⁴⁴ which is the root of the following: If I should have thought greedy, unruly, shameless or bad thoughts against the admonitions of the three supervisors; if I should have been stimulated by the power of greed, inflamed by evil lust, consumed by the devouring fire (of greed)⁴⁵

Especially the Manichaean Hearer feels himself to be besieged by Āz:

My God, we are encumbered with defect and sin, we are great debtors.
 Because of the insatiable and shameless Āz demon we in thought, word and deed, likewise looking with its hands, (and) walking with its feet, incur constant and permanent agony on the light of the Fivefold God in the dry and wet earth, the five kinds of living beings (and) the five kinds of herbs and trees.⁴⁶

A final source that merits our special attention is Alexander of Lycopolis' treatise *Critique of the Doctrine of Mani*.⁴⁷ This work, probably written shortly before 300 C.E., i.e., only about twenty years after Mani's death, contains important information. The Platonist Alexander obtained first-

³⁸ Andreas & Henning, *Mir. Man.*, I,198. Cf. Hutter, *Šābubragān-Texte*, 93-94. Klimkeit, *Gnosis*, 234: 'Then she (Āz) ensured that (such a) spirit should fill her, (so that) she would become (even more) thievish and sinful, lascivious and covetous, and (so that) she would deceive this man [sc. Gēhmurd = Adam] by lust'.

³⁹ Andreas & Henning, *Mir. Man.*, I,202. Cf. Hutter, *Šābubragān-Texte*, 107-108. Translation: Klimkeit, *Gnosis*, 235.

⁴⁰ H 21 a and 77d; E. Waldschmidt & W. Lentz, *Die Stellung Jesu im Manichäismus (APAW 4)*, Berlin: Akademie-Verlag 1926, 101 and 110.

⁴¹ H 40d; Waldschmidt & Lentz, *Stellung*, 104.

⁴² H 19b; 29d; 32a; 47d; 363c; Waldschmidt & Lentz, *Stellung*, 100, 102, 103, 105, 120.

⁴³ H 19 a-d; Waldschmidt & Lentz, *Stellung*, 100.

⁴⁴ I.e., the 'enthymēsis of death', which is often mentioned in apposition to Āz.

⁴⁵ M 131; W. Henning, *Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch (APAW 10)*, Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften / Walter de Gruyter 1937, 43. Cf. M 801; Henning, *Bet- und Beichtbuch*, 38. Translation: Klimkeit, *Gnosis*, 149.

⁴⁶ XⁿASTVĀNĪFT, ch. XV C; ed. J.P. Asmussen, XⁿASTVĀNĪFT. *Studies in Manichaeism*, Copenhagen: Munksgaard 1965, 198-199. Cf. for 'the insatiable and shameless Āz demon' also XⁿASTVĀNĪFT XII B and XV B.

⁴⁷ A. Brinkmann (ed.), *Alexandri Lycopolitani contra Manichaei opinioniones disputatio*, Lipsiae: Teubner 1895 (repr. Stuttgart: Teubner 1989); translation and commentary by P.W. van der Horst and J. Mansfeld, *An Alexandrian Platonist against Dualism*, Leiden: Brill 1974 and by A. Villey, *Alexandre de Lycopolis, Contre la doctrine de Mani*, Paris: Cerf 1985.

hand knowledge of Manichaeism at Egyptian Lycopolis through his contacts with Papos and Thomas, missionaries sent out by Mani himself, and their disciples.⁴⁸ As regards Manichaean sexual ethics, Alexander states:

One has to abstain from marriage and love-making and the begetting of children, lest, because of the succession of the race, the power⁴⁹ should dwell in matter for a longer time.⁵⁰

About matter (ὕλη) and the lust (ἡδονή) and desire (ἐπιθυμία) lodging in it, Alexander remarks:

What, moreover, is the origin of lust (ἡδονή) and desire (ἐπιθυμία)? For these they call evil par excellence; lust and desire constitute their principal reasons for hating matter (ὕλη).⁵¹

The Coptic noun *THYAH* occurs many times in the Manichaean *Psalm-Book* and on almost every page of the *Kephalaia*. In these texts, which seem to have been written shortly before Augustine's lifetime, matter is the evil principle; its characteristic nature is wildly burning fire in the physical and cosmological sphere, while in the psychological sphere it is lust and desire. This lust and desire burns like a powerful fire in the human body which is matter.

In the texts from Turfan, we have just found concupiscence personified in the female demon *Āz*; both in the microcosm and macrocosm, she is the preeminent representative of—and often even identical with—evil matter. In all of these texts, a squirming, random motion is the typical feature of fire, lust and desire (*Āz*).⁵² In the same vein, the Egyptian philosopher Alexander identifies this as the Manichaean view of evil matter: ὕλη is

τὴν ἐν ἐκάστῳ τῶν ὄντων ἄτακτον κίνησιν:⁵³ the random motion in each of the beings.

Of course it should be asked whether Alexander is at this point passing on Manichaean information literally, or interpreting it philosophically in his own way. The characterisation of ὕλη as ἄτακτος κίνησις reminds one of philosophical terminology.⁵⁴ But Plato (*Timaeus* 30A) and—in his wake—later philosophers such as Atticus and Numenius, describe the state of affairs before the demiurge created order as ἄτακτος κίνησις. In Manichaean circles, however, *matter* is regarded as the absolute evil that cannot possibly be organised and therefore remains in random motion. Alexander illustrates this difference when he remarks:

He [sc. Mani] does not speak of matter in Plato's sense, which would mean defining it as that which becomes all things when it assumes quality and shape (...) nor in Aristotle's sense, namely as the element in relation to which form

⁴⁸ More on the context of the philosopher Alexander and the only writing of his that came down to us, in e.g. J. van Oort, 'Alexander of Lycopolis, Manichaeism and Neoplatonism' in: K. Corrigan & T. Rasimus (eds.), *Gnosticism, Platonism and the Late Ancient World. Essays in Honour of John Turner*, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2013, 275-283, and my forthcoming chapter 'Alexander von Lycopolis' in Chr. Horn a.o. (eds.), *Grundriß der Geschichte der Philosophie—Philosophie der Antike, Band 5: Philosophie der Kaiserzeit und Spätantike*, Basel: Schwabe Verlag.

⁴⁹ Sc. of lust and desire.

⁵⁰ Brinkmann 7,21-24; translation in accordance with van der Horst & Mansfeld, 57.

⁵¹ Brinkmann 22,5-7; cf. van der Horst & Mansfeld, 78.

⁵² Cf., int. al., also *Psalm-Book* 9,17,21 and *Keph.* 30,12 – 34,12.

⁵³ Brinkmann 5,7-8.

⁵⁴ Cf. Mansfeld in van der Horst & Mansfeld, 13-19; Villey, 128 ff. and 211 ff., and my two articles just referred to in n. 48.

and privation occur. He means something entirely different, for it is the random motion within each individual being which he calls matter.⁵⁵

Alexander does not interpret Manichaean doctrine in his own way. Further on in his treatise, he appears to be quite able to use the notion ἄτακτος κίνησις in his philosophical exposition.⁵⁶ But in defining ὕλη as ἄτακτος κίνησις, he gives an apt rendering of the Manichaean view. It is even highly probable that he adopted this description of ὕλη from his Manichaean informants. In any case, the existence of the concept in Manichaeism is confirmed by fragment M 33 from Turfan,⁵⁷ and reported by the Catholic bishop Serapion of Thmuis (4th cent.) and the Muslim author Šahrastānī (12th cent.).⁵⁸ Moreover, Titus, the Catholic bishop of Bostra (4th cent.), hands down that Mani himself saw matter in this way:

Ἦν γὰρ ποτε, φησὶν, ὅτε ἡ ὕλη⁵⁹ ἠτάκτει καὶ ἐγέννα, καὶ ἠὺξάνετο, καὶ διετέλει πολλὰς προβαλλομένη δυνάμεις.⁶⁰

For once there was a time, he [sc. Mani] says, when⁶¹ matter was in disorder, and it engendered and increased and continued to put⁶² forward many powers.

In summary, it may be concluded that, in Manichaeism,

- a. sexuality is referred to in a highly negative way;
- b. sexual desire is the primordial sin and the punishment for sin, which procreates itself by means of the copulation;
- c. sexual concupiscence is pre-eminently typical of the kingdom of darkness, the realm of evil, i.e. matter (ὕλη); its distinctive feature is random motion.

III: Augustine on sexual concupiscence and the transmission of sin

As regards Augustine on this topic, we should begin by noting that he wrote about the good of marriage (as in *De bono coniugali*). Already in this respect he differs totally from the Manichaeans. Moreover, he was acutely aware of and fiercely opposed their negative view of marriage and

⁵⁵ Brinkmann 5,3-8; cf. van der Horst & Mansfeld, 52-53.

⁵⁶ Cf. e.g. L. Troje, Zum Begriff ΑΤΑΚΤΟΣ ΚΙΝΗΣΙΣ bei Platon und Mani, *Museum Helveticum* 5 (1948) 96-115.

⁵⁷ Andreas & Henning, *Mir. Man.* III (*SPAW* 1934), Berlin: De Gruyter 1934, 876.

⁵⁸ Serapion of Thmuis, *c. Man.* 31,8-9 and 33,3-4, ed. R.P. Casey, *Serapion of Thmuis, Against the Manichees* (Harv. Theol. Studies 15), Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1931, 47 and 49; Šahrastānī, ed. W. Cureton, *Muhammad al-Sharastāni, Book of Religious and Philosophical Sects*, London: Society for the Publication of Oriental Texts 1846 (repr. Leipzig: Harrassowitz 1923; Piscataway: Gorgias Press 2002), 296 (German transl. in T. Haarbrückner, *Religionsparteien und Philosophen-schulen (Schahrastāni's Kitāb al-milal wa'l-nihal)*, Halle: C.A. Schwetschke 1850, I,287).

⁵⁹ H. Schaefer argued that already Mani used the word ὕλη; see H.H. Schaefer, 'Urform und Fortbildungen des manichäischen Systems' (1924-1925), repr. in *idem, Studien zur orientalischen Religionsgeschichte*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1968, 62. See also *Acta Archelai* (cf. A. Adam, *Texte zum Manichäismus*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1969², 58), the report of Severus of Antioch concerning Mani's *Book of the Giants* (Adam, *Texte*, 11-15), the *Chronicon maroniticum* (Adam, *Texte*, 75) and Theodor bar Kōnai's *Liber scholiorum* (Adam, *Texte*, 77). Also Augustine reports this notable fact; see Faustus in *c. Faust.* XX,1 and 3: 'bonis omnibus principium fateor deum, contrariis vero hylen; sic enim mali principium ac naturam theologus noster appellat'.

⁶⁰ Cf. Titus of Bostra, *c. Manich.* I,17, eds. A. Roman & Th.S. Schmidt in *Titus Bostrensis Contra Manichaeos Libri IV Graece et Syriace* (CCSG 82), Turnhout: Brepols 2013, 39. See also A. Roman, Th.S. Schmidt & P.-H. Poirier, *Titus de Bostra, Contre les Manichéens. Introduction, traduction, notes et index* (Corpus Christianorum in Translation 21), Turnhout: Brepols 2015), 109, who translate: 'Car il fut un temps où, dit-il, la Matière était désordonnée et elle engendrait, s'accroissait et continuait à produire de nombreuses puissances'.

⁶¹ Perhaps one may also translate: since, seeing that (Lat. quandoquidem).

⁶² Or: throw.

abhorrence of procreation.⁶³ Yet, even in his own lifetime, suspicions were raised concerning Manichaean influence on his own view of sexual concupiscence. Apart from his dualistic doctrine of the two *civitates*,⁶⁴ several modern scholars see a (possible) influence of Augustine's Manichaean past especially in his views on sexuality and the propagation of sin.⁶⁵ A thorough comparison with and argumentation from Manichaean sources remain lacking; hence an overview of essential Manichaean texts has just been provided.

In Augustine's own days, it was the Italian Catholic bishop, Julian of Eclanum, who accused him of Manichaeism because of his opinions on sexual concupiscence, marriage and original sin. Julian's criticism even culminated in the venomous remark:

Si mutabit Aethiops pellam suam aut pardus varietatem, ita et tu a Manichaeorum mysteriis elueris.⁶⁶

If the Ethiopian will change his skin or the leopard its spots, only in that case you will be able to cleanse yourself from the Manichaean mysteries.

According to ecclesiastical tradition, Julian was as a 'Pelagian'. It is not my intention to give a sketch of Augustine's controversy with the Pelagians and his views of marriage, sexuality, original sin and baptism which developed in the wake of this controversy. Much excellent work has been done in this regard, ranging from the distant past to the modern day. My focus here falls in particular on parallels and other similarities (perhaps even identities) between Augustine's views and Manichaeism.

It should be noted that Julian, when reproaching Augustine for Manichaeism, did not place a speculative lable on him, but had solid knowledge of what he was talking about.⁶⁷ He knew at least the outlines of the Manichaean myth;⁶⁸ he was acquainted with Manichaean ritual practices;⁶⁹ and he relates that one day he argued about the origin of sin with Augustine's friend Honoratus, 'a Manichaean like you'.⁷⁰ Moreover, he had an intimate knowledge of Mani's *Epistle*

⁶³ E.g. in *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum*.

⁶⁴ Cf. J. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon. A Study of Augustine's City of God and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities*, Leiden etc.: Brill 1991 (repr. Leiden-Boston: Brill 2013), esp. 201-207.

⁶⁵ Among others: A. Bruckner, *Julian von Eclanum. Sein Leben und seine Lehre*, Leipzig: Hinrichs 1897, 66-68; A. von Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, III, Tübingen: Mohr 1910⁴ (repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1964), 211; E. Buonaiuti, 'The Genesis of St. Augustine's Idea of Original Sin', *HTR* 10 (1917) 162; A. Adam, 'Das Fortwirken des Manichäismus bei Augustin' (1958), in: Adam, *Sprache und Dogma*, Gütersloh: Mohn 1969, 141-166; K. Rudolph, *Die Gnosis. Wesen und Geschichte einer spätantiken Religion*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1977, 394 and 414 (Engl. translation by RMcL Wilson as *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, San Francisco: Harper 1987, 370 and 390; see also Rudolph's pertinent remarks in his 'Augustinus Manichaeus: das Problem von Konstanz und Wandel', in J. van Oort a.o. (eds.), *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West*, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2001 (repr. 2012), 1-15); L. Scheffczyk, *Urstand, Fall und Erbsünde. Von der Schrift bis Augustinus*, Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder 1981, 205; W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, London: Darton, Longman & Tod 1984, 679. Etc.

⁶⁶ *Op. imp. c. Iul.* 4,42.

⁶⁷ See e.g. M. Lamberigts, 'Was Augustine a Manichaean? The Assessment of Julian of Aeclanum', in van Oort a.o. (eds.), *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West*, 113-136. Cf. *idem*, 'The Philosophical and Theological Background of Julian of Aeclanum's Concept of Concupiscence', in T. Fuhrer (ed.), *Die christlich-philosophischen Diskurse der Spätantike*, Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag 2008, 245-260 and *idem*, 'Iulianus Aeclanensis', *Augustinus-Lexikon*, 3, fasc. 5-6, Basel: Schwabe 2008, 836-847.

⁶⁸ E.g., *Op. imp.* 1,49.

⁶⁹ *Op. imp.* 6,23.

⁷⁰ *Op. imp.* 5,26.

to *Menoch*.⁷¹ Julian quoted from the work before Augustine had even heard of it.⁷² Furthermore, he was well informed about Mani's *Epistula fundamenti*.⁷³

Although in the initial period of the Pelagian crisis, questions concerning sexuality, marriage and the transmission of original sin were not prominent, they were certainly present. As early as in the winter of 411-412, Augustine says in *The Punishment and Forgiveness of Sins and the Baptism of Little Ones* that original sin reveals itself in the disobedient excitation of the members:

Quod igitur in membris corporis mortis huius inoboedienter movetur totumque animum in se deiectum conatur adtrahere et neque cum mens voluerit exurgit neque cum mens voluerit conquiescit, hoc est malum peccati, cum quo nascitur omnis homo.⁷⁴

The fact, then, that the ardour of concupiscence stirs disobediently in the members of this body of death [cf. Rom 7:24], that it tries to cast down and draw the whole mind to itself, that it does not arise when the mind wants and does not quiet down when the mind wants, is due to the evil of sin with which every human being is born.⁷⁵

Concupiscence as 'the law of sin' is present even in little children:

Concupiscentia igitur tamquam lex peccati manens in membris corporis mortis huius cum parvulis nascitur, in parvulis baptizatis a reatu solvitur, ad agonem relinquitur, ante agonem mortuos nulla damnatione persequitur; parvulos non baptizatos reos innectit et tamquam irae filios, etiamsi parvuli moriantur, ad condemnationem trahit.⁷⁶

Concupiscence, then, remains in the members of this body of death as the law of sin [cf. Rom 7:23-24]. It is present in the little ones at birth, though its guilt (*reatus*) is removed when little ones are baptised. It remains for the (spiritual) combat (of the adult believer), but it does not punish with damnation those who die before engaging in that combat. It holds unbaptised little ones enmeshed in guilt and draws them to damnation, like children of anger [cf. Eph 2:3], even if they die as little ones.⁷⁷

Further on in the same work, Augustine remarks:

.... sic eorum per quos nascuntur caro peccati traicit in eos noxam, quam nondum vita propria contraxerunt.⁷⁸

... so the sinful flesh of those through whom they are born transmits to them a guilt (*noxam*) which they have not yet contracted in their own life.⁷⁹

In support of his view that children are born with original sin, in this work already Augustine invokes Job 14:4-5 ('None of us is clean from sin, even if one's life lasts only a single day'⁸⁰) and

⁷¹ With Geoffrey Harrison and Jason BeDuhn, 'The Authenticity and Doctrine of (Ps.?) Mani's *Letter to Menoch*' in P. Mirecki & J. BeDuhn (eds.), *The Light and the Darkness. Studies in Manichaeism and its World*, Leiden etc. 2001, 128-172, I think this letter is best considered to (mainly) be a genuine work of Mani's.

⁷² *Op. imp.* 3,166 and 172 ff.; 4,109.

⁷³ *Op. imp.* 3,186.

⁷⁴ *De pecc. mer.* 1,57.

⁷⁵ Transl. mainly in accordance with R.J. Teske, *The Works of saint Augustine. A Translation for the 21st Century*, Part I, Volume 23, *Answer to the Pelagians*, I, Hyde Park, New York: New City Press 1997, 65.

⁷⁶ *De pecc. mer.* 2,4.

⁷⁷ Transl. mainly in accordance with Teske, *Answer to the Pelagians*, I, 80.

⁷⁸ *De pecc. mer.* 3,2.

⁷⁹ Transl. mainly in accordance with Teske, *Answer to the Pelagians*, I, 118.

Psalm 50 (51),7 ('See, I was conceived in iniquities and my mother conceived me in transgressions').⁸¹ Earlier in the work, he had already invoked the virgin birth of Christ, who was conceived 'without *libido*':

... sic omnes filios mulieris, quae serpenti credidit, ut libidine corrumperetur, non liberari a corpore mortis huius nisi per filium virginis, quae angelo credidit, ut sine libidine fetaretur.⁸²

Thus all the children of the woman (sc. Eve) who believed the serpent, so that she was corrupted by lust (*libido*), are set free from this body of death only through the Son of the Virgin who believed the angel so that she gave birth⁸³ without lust (*libido*).⁸⁴

Moreover, in this first work against the Pelagians, several issues which engaged Augustine during the rest of his life already appear. Main questions are: Why do believers, who have been regenerated by baptism, not beget regenerated children?⁸⁵ Is the soul propagated or not?⁸⁶

The anti-Pelagian works of the following years do not offer substantially new points of view.⁸⁷ After that time, Augustine increasingly focuses on the question of how original sin is transmitted. He also asks himself in detail how sin in paradise effected our sexuality, and in what way Adam and Eve could have obeyed the command to multiply if they had not fallen. In this context the best known and, in Western history, most influential expositions are found in Book XIV of his *City of God*. Here, Augustine states first of all that in paradise Adam and Eve, not agitated by 'the disorders of the body' (*perturbationes animorum*), lived happily and quietly.⁸⁸ This condition would have been permanent if they had not fallen. *Libido*, however, became the punishment for the sin of disobedience:

In eius (sc. libidinis) quippe inoboedientia, quae genitalia corporis membra solis suis motibus subdidit et potestati voluntatis eripuit, satis ostenditur, quid sit hominis illi primae inoboedientiae retributum.⁸⁹

For in its disobedience, which subjected the sexual organs solely to its own impulses and snatched them from the will's authority, we see proof of the retribution imposed on man for that first first disobedience.⁹⁰

Post peccatum quippe orta est haec libido.⁹¹

It was, in fact, after the sin that this lust arose.⁹²

The most characteristic feature of this sexual concupiscence or *libido* is its random motion:

⁸⁰ In the Latin translation available to him; cf. LXX.

⁸¹ *De pecc. mer.* 3,13.

⁸² *De pecc. mer.* 1,56.

⁸³ Or: *conceived*.

⁸⁴ Transl. mainly in accordance with Teske, *Answer to the Pelagians*, I, 65.

⁸⁵ Cf. *De pecc. mer.* 2,39.

⁸⁶ Cf. *De pecc. mer.* 2,59.

⁸⁷ See e.g. *De perfectione iustitiae hominis* (c. 415); *De natura et gratia* (415); *De gestis Pelagii* (417).

⁸⁸ *DCD* 14,10.

⁸⁹ *DCD* 14,20.

⁹⁰ Transl. in accordance with H. Bettenson in *Augustine, Concerning the City of God against the Pagans*, Harmondsworth etc.: Penguin Books 1976, 582.

⁹¹ *DCD* 14,21.

⁹² Transl. Bettenson, *Augustine, City of God*, 583. Cf. e.g. XIV, 23: 'si libido non fuisset, quae peccato inoboedientiae retributa est' and the earlier characterization of *libido* in XIV,17 as 'quaedam impudens *novitas*'.

Cum igitur sint multarum libidines rerum, tamen, cum libido dicitur neque cuius rei libido sit additur, non fere adsolet animo occurrere nisi illa, qua obscenae partes corporis excitantur. Haec autem sibi non solum totum corpus nec solum extrinsecus, verum etiam intrinsecus vindicat totumque commovet hominem animi simul affectu cum carnis appetitu coniuncto atque permixto, ut ea voluptas sequatur, qua maior in corporis voluptatibus nulla est; ita ut momento ipso temporis, quo ad eius pervenitur extremum, paene omnis acies et quasi vigilia cogitationibus obruatur.

(...) et cum (libido) tota plerumque menti cohibenti adversetur, nonnumquam et adversus se ipsa(m) dividitur commotoque animo in commovendo corpore se ipsa non sequitur.⁹³

We see then that there are lusts for many things, and yet when lust is mentioned without the specification of its object the only thing that normally occurs to the mind is the lust that excites the indecent parts of the body. This lust assumes power not only over the whole body, and not only from the outside, but also internally; it disturbs the whole man, when the mental emotion combines and mingles with the physical craving, resulting in a pleasure surpassing all physical delights. So intense is the pleasure that when it reaches its climax there is an almost total extinction of mental alertness; the intellectual sentries, as it were, are overwhelmed.⁹⁴

(...) and although on the whole it (sc. the *libido*) is totally opposed to the mind's control, it is quite often divided against itself. It arouses the mind, but does not follow its own lead by arousing the body.⁹⁵

Merito huius libidinis maxime pudet, merito et ipsa membra, quae suo quodam, ut ita dixerim, iure, non omni modo ad arbitrium nostrum movet aut non movet, pudenda dicuntur, quod ante peccatum hominis non fuerunt (...) turpis nuditas nondum erat, quia nondum libido membra illa praeter arbitrium commovebat⁹⁶

It is right, therefore, to be ashamed of this lust, and it is right that the members which it moves or fails to move by its own right, so to speak, and not in complete conformity to our decision, should be called *pudenda* ('parts of shame'), which they were not called before man's sin (...) (Before the Fall,) nakedness was not yet disgraceful, because lust did not yet arouse those members independently of their⁹⁷ decision⁹⁸

Pudet igitur huius libidinis humanam sine ulla dubitatione naturam, et merito pudet. In eius quippe inoboedientia, quae genitalia corporis membra solis suis motibus subdidit et potestati voluntatis eripuit, satis ostenditur, quid sit hominis illi primae inoboedientiae retributum.⁹⁹

⁹³ DCD 14,16.

⁹⁴ Marcus Dodds, in his widespread translation (as in Ph. Schaff, ed., *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, First Series, Vol. II: *St. Augustine's City of God and Christian Doctrine*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 1979, 275), plainly renders the just quoted full Latin sentence as: 'So possessing indeed is this pleasure, that at the moment of time in which it is consummated, *all mental activity is suspended*' (my italics).

⁹⁵ Transl. Bettenson, *Augustine, City of God*, 577.

⁹⁶ DCD 14,17.

⁹⁷ I.e., of the first humans according to the tradition of Gen. 1-3.

⁹⁸ Transl. Bettenson, *Augustine, City of God*, 578. Perhaps Dodds more literal translation (*Augustine's City of God*, 276) is to be preferred here; in any case, he is more felicitous in his unequivocal rendering of the last quoted Latin sentence: '... nakedness was not shameful, because not yet did lust move those members *without the will's consent*'.

⁹⁹ DCD 14,20. Cf. e.g. DCD 14,19 (*in fine*), 23 (*in medio*) and 26.

Human nature then is, without any doubt, ashamed about lust, and rightly ashamed. For in its disobedience, which subjected the sexual organs solely to its own impulses and snatched them from the will's authority, we see a proof of the retribution imposed on man for that first disobedience.¹⁰⁰

Augustine concedes that, in paradise, sexual propagation would indeed have taken place, but without random sexual desire or lust. There would not have been a struggle between *libido* and *voluntas*; instead, the sexual organs would have been entirely obedient to the will.¹⁰¹

This view was developed by Augustine in his other writings and maintained in his controversy with the Pelagians. At first he taught that in paradise there was only a spiritual marriage without any sexuality.¹⁰² After a brief period of obvious doubt,¹⁰³ he adopted the view—mainly brought on by the sharp opposition of Julian—that, in order to carry out the command of Gen 1:28, there should have been sexual union in paradise¹⁰⁴ and even a certain *libido*; the latter, however, was always under the strict control of the will.¹⁰⁵

So far some of the main lines of Augustine's doctrine of sexual concupiscence and the transmission of original sin. One cannot say that significant changes in his view emerged later on. In the struggle with Julian, Augustine felt obliged to articulate his opinions more sharply and, at the same time, increasingly tried to defend himself against the charge of Manichaeism by evoking a number of predecessors in the Catholic Christian tradition.¹⁰⁶ After all, he only succeeded in respect to his notion of (original) sin, the necessity of baptism and the sinfulness that remains in man even after baptism—not, however, for his opinion that original sin is propagated through random sexual desire. The Pelagians, for their part, and Julian in particular, persisted in arguing that Augustine's understanding of original sin as contaminating posterity via its transmission through the sexual act, should be considered a relapse into Manichaeism. Again and again this accusation crops up in the words quoted from Julian in Augustine's *Against Julian* and, in particular, in the *Unfinished Work*.¹⁰⁷ But it also occurs, for example, in an earlier work such as *On Marriage and Concupiscence*.¹⁰⁸ In *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* (420 or 421) it is already expressed clearly:

Dicunt etiam, inquit (sc. Julian), motum genitalium et commixtionem coniugum a diabolo fuisse repertam et propterea eos qui nascuntur innocentes reos esse et a diabolo fieri, non a Deo, quia de hac diabolica commixtione nascuntur. Hoc autem sine aliqua ambiguitate Manicheum est.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁰ Transl. Bettenson in *Augustine, City of God*, 582.

¹⁰¹ Cf. *DCD* 14,23; 24; 26.

¹⁰² E.g. *De Gen. c. Man.* 1,20 (c. 388-389).

¹⁰³ E.g. *De bono coniug.* 2 (c. 401); *De Gen. ad litt.* 3,33 (c. 410).

¹⁰⁴ E.g. *De Gen. ad litt.* 9,6 (c. 410); *De pecc. mer.* 1,3 and 5; 2,40 (411-412). But without *libido*: *De pecc. mer.* 2,36; *DCD* 14,21 ff. (c. 420); *De nupt. et conc.* 2,36 (c. 420); *De gratia Chr. et de pecc. orig.* 2,40 (425).

¹⁰⁵ E.g. *C. duas ep. Pel.* 1,34-35; *c. Iul.* 4,57; 62; 65; 69; *Op. imp.* 2,122; 3,177; etc. See also the newly discovered letter to Atticus, *Ep.* 6*, 5 and 7 (c. 420-421) on the difference between *concupiscentia nuptiarum* (present in sinless paradise) and *concupiscentia carnis* (not present in sinless paradise).

¹⁰⁶ Best and nearly comprehensive treatment of (possible) predecessors still by Julius Gross in his *Entstehungsgeschichte des Erbsündendogmas*, I: *Von der Bibel bis Augustinus*, München/Basel: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag 1960, e.g. 114-121 on Tertullian; 121-122 on Cyprian; 230-237 on Ambrosiaster; 237-243 on Ambrose. On these and other pre-Augustinian authors, see also the pertinent remarks by Antoon A.R. Bastiaensen, 'Augustin et ses prédécesseurs latins chrétiens' in J. den Boeft & J. van Oort (eds.), *Augustiniana Traiectina. Communications présentées au Colloque International d'Utrecht, 13-14 novembre 1986*, Paris: Études Augustiniennes 1987, 25-57.

¹⁰⁷ See, among other places, only *Op. imp.* 1,24 and 115; 3,186-187; 4,45-64.

¹⁰⁸ E.g. *De nupt. et conc.* 2,38 and 49-50.

¹⁰⁹ *C. duas ep. Pel.* 1,10. Cf. for the accusation of Manichaeism 1,4 and 42; 2,1-2. In 4,3 Augustine says, that the evil of shameful concupiscence (*malum pudendae concupiscentiae*) is the source of our disorder (*unde confundimur*).

‘They (i.e., the Catholics who are in fact Manichaeans) also say’, he (Julian) claims, ‘that the movement of the sexual organs and the coupling of the spouses was an invention of the devil and that on this account newborn innocents are in fact guilty and are made by the devil, not by God, because they are born of this diabolic coupling. But this is beyond any doubt Manichaean doctrine’.

Much more could be said about Augustine’s and Julian’s views of sexual concupiscence. It could be pointed out, for example, that Julian assumes the validity of the medical theories of his day, according to which the *summa voluptas* of orgasm was necessary for conception;¹¹⁰ this *voluptas* must be good, or man could never have accomplished the command of Gen 1:28.¹¹¹ Besides, Julian considers sexuality amenable to the will and emphasizes its social function, i.e., the generation of posterity through the founding of a family.¹¹² Augustine, on the other hand, as a ‘new physician’ (*novus physicus*),¹¹³ does not share these views in like manner. He emphasises the fact that sexuality is an enduring impulse, which passion presents itself as ‘concupiscence of the flesh’ (*concupiscentia carnis*) and has to be fought continuously.¹¹⁴ The uncontrollable and irrepressible character of sexual concupiscence (*concupiscentia sexualis*) or fleshly lust (*libido carnalis*) reveals itself in particular through its random motion (*motus inordinatus* or *inmoderatus*).¹¹⁵

The foregoing provides the main features of Augustine’s points of view. In sum, it may be concluded that in his writings:

- a. *concupiscentia sexualis* / *libido carnalis*, which is beyond the control of the human will, is referred to in a highly negative way;
- a. this random *concupiscentia sexualis* is a punishment for primordial sin, and is transmitted as original sin by means of the human copulation;
- b. the sinfulness of *concupiscentia sexualis* is pre-eminently manifest in its randomness as *motus inordinatus* or *inmoderatus*.

IV: Conclusions and further remarks on the subject’s wider context in Judaism, Jewish Christianity and the pre-Augustinian African tradition

May Augustine’s view on sexual concupiscence be said to be in accordance with Manichaeism, then? Indeed, to a far-reaching extent our concluding answer should be in the affirmative. There is a large degree of agreement between the Church Father’s opinions and those of Mani’s. Both refer to sexual concupiscence in a highly negative way: it is sinful, a punishment for sin, and sin is propagated through it. The sinful nature of *libido* or *concupiscentia sexualis* is pre-eminently evident in its random motion (*ἄτακτος κίνησις*; *motus inordinatus*).

Should we also conclude that Julian was right in accusing Augustine of Manichaeism? This question is much harder to answer. The preceding investigation has shown that Julian is

¹¹⁰ See, e.g., Galen, *De usu partium* 14,10-11; Soranus, *Gynaecia* 1,37. Cf. *Sap. Sal.* 7,2 and Philo, *Leg. all.* 2,17: ‘... apart from pleasure (. nothing in mortal kind comes into existence’. Julianus *apud* Aug., *Op. imp.* 5,11: ‘vis illa voluptatis, confectrix commixtrixque seminum’.

¹¹¹ E.g. *c. Iul.* 5,22 and *Op. imp.* 1,39: ‘ad quorum conciliationem et ministerium et instrumentum pertinet a Deo instituta et benedicta sexuum cum voluptate commixtio’.

¹¹² For instance *c. Iul.* 4,7.

¹¹³ According to Julian, *Op. imp.* 5,11.

¹¹⁴ See, e.g., *Conf.* 10,42. Cf. *c. Iul.* 4,66-67.

¹¹⁵ *Inordinatus* and *inmoderatus* occur in the *corpus augustinianum* 71 and 125 times resp., usually related to the sexual impulse (*motus*, *concupiscentia*, *libido*, *cupiditas*, etc.) *Libido* and *concupiscentia* (and their related words) occur 1034 and 3032 times resp., usually as (or in connection with) sexual desire. These figures are based on my countings in the original Latin sentences and passages made available to me already in the 1980s by the collaborators of the *Augustinus-Lexikon*.

correct in pointing out concurrence. Even striking parallelism, however, does not necessarily imply a causal relationship, and this is what Julian thought he had perceived.

In the light of both a topical discovery and new views on the origins and early development of Christianity in Roman Africa, we may try to bring the issue further towards a possible solution. Here, the following brief and tentative observations may be made.

The discovery of the *Cologne Mani Codex*¹¹⁶ revealed beyond doubt¹¹⁷ that Mani grew up in a Jewish-Christian baptist milieu. Thus, he was subjected to Jewish-Christian influences since childhood.¹¹⁸ This background may explain several characteristics of his world religion, such as the important place assigned to Jesus;¹¹⁹ the abundance of biblical themes in Manichaean texts;¹²⁰ the idea that the true prophet reveals himself in various periods of history.¹²¹ The Jewish-Christian group of Mani's youth was absolutely averse to marriage and sexuality. The Muslim writer an-Nadim (end of 10th cent.) transmits that Mani's father, shortly after the birth of his son in April 216, joined the sect because of a revelation in which he was commanded to eat no meat, to drink no wine, and to have no intercourse with women.¹²² From the age of four, Mani lived in his father's sect and was educated in its encratic ideal. He must have been familiar with its negative view of marriage and sexuality since his childhood.

These Jewish-Christian baptists—almost certainly (a branch of) Elkesaites¹²³—were not alone in their views. Elsewhere in Jewish and Jewish-Christian circles there was also disapprobation at sexuality. I only mention here certain tendencies in Qumran and some related 'sects';¹²⁴ the fact that in the Greek *Apocalypse of Moses* (c. 19) it is observed, with reference to sin

¹¹⁶ Editio princeps: A. Henrichs & L. Koenen, 'Ein griechischer Mani-Codex (P. Colon. inv. nr. 4780)', *ZPE* 5 (1970) 97-216. Further provisional edition by Henrichs and Koenen, *ZPE* 19 (1975) 1-85; 32 (1978) 87-199; 44 (1981) 201-318; 48 (1982) 1-59. Facsimile edition: L. Koenen und C. Römer, *Der Kölner Mani-Kodex. Abbildungen und diplomatischer Text*, Bonn: Habelt 1985.

¹¹⁷ The evidently earlier (but all too often neglected) indication could be found in an-Nadim's report from the year 998 CE (on which below).

¹¹⁸ Jewish Christianity is defined here as that kind of archaic Christianity that was strongly influenced by Judaism. See for a discussion of the disputed term and relevant studies: van Oort, *Jersusalem and Babylon* (n. 63), 228 and 369-370.

¹¹⁹ See, e.g., Waldschmidt & Lentz, *Stellung Jesu* (n. 40); E. Rose, *Die manichäische Christologie*, Wiesbaden: Harassowitz 1979; J. BeDuhn, 'The Manichaean Jesus', in O. Hammer (ed.), *Alternative Christs*, Cambridge: CUP 2009, 51-70.

¹²⁰ A. Böhlig, *Die Bibel bei den Manichäern*, Münster: Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität 1947 (diss. in typoscript), first published in A. Böhlig, *Die Bibel bei den Manichäern und verwandte Studien* (eds. P. Nagel & S.G. Richter), Leiden-Boston: Brill 2012, 21-140; Böhlig, 'Christliche Wurzeln im Manichäismus' (1957/1960) in Böhlig, *Mysterion und Wahrheit* (n. 27), 202-221 and Böhlig, 'The New Testament and the Concept of the Manichean Myth', in A.H.B. Logan & A.J.M. Wedderburn (eds.), *The New Testament and Gnosis. Essays in honour of Robert McL Wilson*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1983, 90-104 (German text 'Das Neue Testament und die Idee des manichäischen Mythos', in A. Böhlig, *Gnosis und Synkretismus. Gesammelte Aufsätze zur spätantiken Religionsgeschichte*, II, Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck) 1989, 586-611).

¹²¹ See for instance *Ps. Clem., Hom.* 17,4 (eds. B. Rehm, J. Irmscher & F. Paschke, *Die Pseudoklementinen*, I, *Homilien*, Berlin: Akademie-Verlag 1969, 230) and *Rev.* 2,47 (eds. B. Rehm & F. Paschke, *Die Pseudoklementinen*, II, *Rekognitionen in Rufins Übersetzung*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1965, 80). Cf. H.J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums*, Tübingen: Mohr 1949, 98-116, 327 f., 335 ff.

¹²² Ibn An-Nadim, *Fihrist al-'Ulum*, ed. G. Flügel, Leipzig: Brockhaus 1862 (repr. Osnabrück: Biblio-Verlag 1969), 327-328; B. Dudge, transl., *The Fihrist of al-Nadim. A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, I-II, New York-London: Columbia University Press 1970, II, 773-774.

¹²³ Cf. J. van Oort, 'Elkesaites', *Religion, Past and Present* IV, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2008, 416.

¹²⁴ See e.g., for brief reference, the sub-lemma 'Sectarian Asceticism' (by F.F. Bruce) in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 3, Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House 1972, 680-681; more elaborate (and stressing the 'prophetic' and biblical dimension): B. Thiering, 'The Biblical Source of Qumran Asceticism', *JBL* 93 (1974) 429-444. A. Schremer, 'Celibacy', in J.J. Collins & D.C. Harlow (eds.), *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans 2010, 465-467, rightly stresses the fact that, in Qumran as well as among other Jews in the Second Temple Period, 'practised celibacy' should be considered 'a marginal phenomenon' (466).

in paradise, that sexual lust (ἐπιθυμία) is the root of all evil;¹²⁵ the view expressed in 2 *Baruch* (56,6) that the begetting of children and the sexual desire of parents are consequences of Adam's sin.¹²⁶ In 4 *Ezra* (3,20 ff.; 4,30 ff.) it is stated that Adam dressed himself with the evil heart (*cor malignum*) by giving in to the evil inclination (*yeşer hara*), also called 'the grain of evil seed' (*granum seminis mali*, 4,30) and 'the evil thought' (*cogitamentum mali*, 7,92); hence Adam became the cause of a hereditary propensity to commit sin, which sin is present in all his descendants.¹²⁷ Rabbinical sources reveal that this *yeşer hara*' was specifically associated or even identified with sexual desire and lust.¹²⁸ As far as I am aware, rabbinic writings make no mention of sin being transmitted by means of the sexual act. Erik Peterson, however, pointed out several years ago that in Jewish-Christian circles baptism was seen as a washing away of the sin of ἐπιθυμία (*concupiscentia*) or יצר הרע (*yeşer hara*).¹²⁹ In Roman Africa infant baptism appears to have been known to Tertullian and Cyprian and is therefore obviously based here on an ancient tradition.¹³⁰ The sermon *De centesima, sexagesima, tricesima*, traditionally handed down under Cyprian's name but probably older and certainly containing many archaic Jewish-Christian tenets,¹³¹ speaks of 'the sin of our first birth' (*delictum primae nativitatis*) which is washed away in baptism and—in connection with this *delictum*—the Latin sermon speaks of *libido* and *concupiscentia* which must be combated.¹³²

All these facts point in the direction of an earlier tradition which Augustine could have evoked for his views on *concupiscentia sexualis*, original sin and baptism. If, moreover, the view is correct that in African Christianity several Jewish and—connected with it—several archaic

¹²⁵ See L.S.A. Wells, 'The Books of Adam and Eve', in R.H. Charles (ed.), *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, II, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1913 (repr. 1977), 146: 'And when he (the serpent) had received the oath from me (sc. Eve), he went and poured upon the fruit the poison of his wickedness, which is lust, the root and beginning of every sin ...'; cf. M.D. Johnson, 'Life of Adam and Eve', in J.H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2, London: Darton, Longman & Todd 1985, 279. In a note, Johnson refers to *ApMos* 25:3 where it runs in his translation (283): 'and you (Eve) shall confess and say, "LORD, LORD, save me and I will never again turn to the sin of flesh".'

¹²⁶ See e.g. R.H. Charles, '2 Baruch', in *idem* (ed.), *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, II, 513; A.F.J. Klijn, '2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch', in J.H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1, London: Darton, Longman & Todd 1983, 641.

¹²⁷ See e.g. G.H. Box, 'IV Ezra' in Charles (ed.), *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, II, 563 ff.; cf. B.M. Metzger, 'The Fourth Book of Ezra', in Charlesworth (ed.), *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1, 529 ff.

¹²⁸ Cf. H.L. Strack & P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, IV/1, München: Beck 1928 (repr. 1975), 466-483. See further, among others: G.H. Cohen Stuart, *The Struggle in Man between Good and Evil. An Inquiry into the Origin of the Rabbinic Concept of Yeşer hara*, Kampen: Kok 1984; J. Cook, 'The Origin of the Tradition of the יצר הרע and יצר הטוב', *JSJ* 38 (2007) 80-91.

¹²⁹ E. Peterson, 'Die Behandlung der Tollwut bei den Elchasaiten nach Hippolyt' (1947), later in Peterson, *Frühkirche, Judentum und Gnosis*, Rom-Freiburg-Wien: Herder 1959, 221-235.

¹³⁰

¹³¹ On this sermon, see e.g. J. Daniélou, 'Le traité *De centesima, sexagesima, tricesima* et le judéo-christianisme latin avant Tertullien', *VC* 25 (1971) 171-181 and *idem*, *The Origins of Latin Christianity*, London / Philadelphia: Darton, Longman & Todd / The Westminster Press 1977, 63-92. Daniélou argues (on the whole convincingly, in my view) for a date of composition before Cyprian and in Roman Africa. A pre-Cyprianic date is contested on linguistic grounds by A.P. Orbán ('Die Frage der ersten Zeugnisse des Christenlateins', *VC* 30, 1976, 214-238), whose arguments are endorsed by e.g. Ronald E. Heine, 'The beginnings of Latin Christian Literature', in F. Young a.o. (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*, Cambridge: CUP 2004, 131. Acceptance of their view, however, would mean that typical Jewish-Christian elements were still prominent in the fourth century.

¹³² *De cent.* (ed. R. Reitzenstein, repr. in J.-P. Migne's *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina, Supplementum*, I, ed. A. Hamman, Paris: Éditions Garnier Frères 1958), 54,5-7: '... renouati per lauacrum uitale et delicto primae natiuitatis purgati uiuamus'; cf. for instance 62,30 ff. ('... renatus ex aqua et spiritu eras a natiuitate purgatus'; 63,1 ff. ('ad deprimentam libidinis aciem praedixit dicens: *Vtatur unus quisque uas in sanctimonio et honore, non in passione concupiscentiae sicut et gentes, quae ignorant deum*' [1 Thess. 4:4]; 64,11f. ('si ab opere iniusto per lauacrum uitale renouatus es ...')) See for some other examples from Jewish-Christian milieus the so-called Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* and *Recognitions* (e.g. *Ps. Clem., Hom.* 3,17 & 20; 11,26; *Rec.* 9,7,4-5 [ed. Rehm & Paschke, *Pseudoklementinen*, II, 261]: '... et ut in aqua regenerati per opera bona, ignem vetustae natiuitatis extinguerent. prima enim nostra natiuitas per ignem concupiscentiae descendit, et ideo dispensatione divina secunda haec per aquam introducitur, quae restinguat ignis naturam ...').

Jewish-Christian elements were originally strongly present and made their influence felt right down to Augustine's days,¹³³ it seems possible that this is the most influential source of the church father's doctrines.

However, much more research is required, in particular of the pre-Augustinian Christian tradition in Roman North Africa.¹³⁴ For the time being, we may conclude that Julian displayed keen insight in claiming that Augustine's views concurred with those of the Manichaeans. It seems that we may detect a relic of Augustine's Manichaean past in his strong emphasis on the random motion (*motus inordinatus*) as typical of the sexual concupiscence by which sin is transmitted.

¹³³ Cf. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon* (n. 63), esp. 365-371.

¹³⁴ I hope to come back to this matter elsewhere, also discussing the views of P.F. Beatrice, whose groundbreaking book *Tradux peccati. Alle fonti della dottrina agostiniana del peccato originale*, Milano: Vita e Pensiero 1978, recently became available for the English speaking world in the magnificent (and slightly updating) translation by Adam Kamesar: *The Transmission of Sin. Augustine and Pre-Augustinian Sources*, New York etc.: Oxford University Press 2013.