



THREE MOVEMENTS IN AUGUSTINIAN PEDAGOGY



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Abstract

Augustinian pedagogy emerges from Saint Augustine's evolving thoughts about the nature of teaching and learning. Various texts written over almost 40 years: The Teacher (389 AD), Instructing Beginners in Faith (400 AD), Letter #118 (410 AD), and Teaching Christianity (Books 1 – 3 in 396-397 AD and Book 4 in 426-427 AD) suggest three movements in his thought that have relevance for contemporary educational theory and practice.

Key Words: Saint Augustine, Augustinian, Pedagogy, Education, Teaching, Learning

Introduction

A study of Saint Augustine of Hippo's writings on teaching and learning reveals three movements. Each of these three movements comprise a shift or change in his perspective on the purpose and practice of teaching, as well as on the essence of learning.

These movements are not sequential or linear, that is, they do not successively replace and supplant each other in Augustine's thought and practice. Rather each movement opens up a new perspective that Augustine then explores and integrates into his ever-evolving pedagogy. The changing circumstances in Augustine's responsibilities over the course of his life provided him new insights into the challenges of teaching, and new ways of understanding the complex dynamics involved in learning. The three movements identified in this paper are: from rhetoric to reflection; from pedagogue to pilgrim teacher; and, from persuasion to conversion. Together, they provide new ways of understanding the dynamic nature of Augustinian pedagogy and its relevance for today.

There are innumerable social, cultural and political differences between the 21st century and the 4th-5th century Roman Empire in which Augustine studied and taught, not the least of which is technology. However, basic questions perdure. What constitutes learning? What is the role of a teacher? What is the nature of the relationship between student and teacher? What motivates our teaching and our learning? An analysis of the three movements in Augustine's pedagogy reveals some of the answers he proposes to these enduring questions about teaching and learning, answers that can enrich 21st century pedagogy.

Several key texts help trace this evolution of Augustinian pedagogy. Those texts are *De magistro*—*The Teacher* (389 AD), *De catechizandis rudibus*—*Instructing Beginners in Faith* (400 AD), his letter to Dioscorus (Letter #118 in 410 AD), and *De doctrina christiana*—*Teaching Christianity* (Books 1–3 in 396–397 AD and Book 4 in 426–427 AD). There will also be references to teaching found in *Confessions* (398–400 AD).

First Movement: From Rhetoric to Reflection

Shortly after retiring from his teaching post in Milan and returning to North Africa, Augustine wrote *De magistro*—*The Teacher* (389 AD). It is a dialogue between Augustine and his sixteen-year-old son Adeodatus about teaching and learning.¹

It would be another ten years before Augustine would write *Confessions* (398–400 AD), the classic review of his life in light of his faith. However, one can read *De magistro* as a proto-confessional text in which Augustine reviews and questions the very premise of his early profession as teacher and public orator. The

¹ The text is fraught with tragedy. Sometime during or shortly after its composition, Augustine's son died (*Confessions* 9.6.14).

textstrikes a dissonant chord as it raises radical questions about teaching and learning.

De magistro presents two different but related arguments. The first is about the very tools of the teacher's trade: words. Augustine devotes most of the first twelve of the dialogue's fourteen chapters to an analysis of the nature of words and signs, their relationship with knowledge, and their role in learning.² The second argument builds on the first. Augustine concludes that it is impossible to teach another person to understand anything by telling them about it with words—an astonishing claim from the former rhetorician of Milan who describes himself in book 9 of *Confessions* as a “word-peddler.”³

The Inadequacy of Words for Teaching. Augustine's deconstruction of teaching begins, then, with this upending of words. In his lively exchanges with Adeodatus, Augustine takes the reader through what the British philosopher Miles Burnyeat called a “bewildering sequence of about-turns...”⁴ Augustine and Adeodatus “play together” throughout their

² Augustine's pedagogy is influenced by his epistemology or theory of knowledge. Drawing from and critiquing Platonic and Stoic theories of knowledge, Augustine develops a Christian epistemology. See *Confessions* books 10 and 11 and *De trinitate* books 8 – 15. For an overview see R. A. Markus, *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, ed. A. H. Armstrong (Cambridge 1970) pages 348-353, 362ff, and Robert Crouse, “Knowledge,” in *Augustine Through the Ages*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald, OSA (Wm.B. Eerdmans, 2009), pages 486-488.

³ *venditor verborum* (*Confessions* 9.5.13)

⁴ Miles F. Burnyeat, “Wittgenstein and Augustine: De Magistro,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes*, 1987, Vol 61 (1987) pages 1 – 24; see page 14.

conversation,⁵ “fencing with words.”⁶ With Augustine sometimes teasing, and Adeodatus always attentive, they explore logical detours and linger in cul-de-sacs of Platonic epistemology and Stoic semiology.

Emerging from this maze of philosophical zigzags, Augustine concludes with the disconcerting claim that words teach us nothing. We do not learn the nature of something because a teacher tells us the word for it. Rather, we learn what something is through experience, by perceiving the thing itself through our senses or first-hand experience, and then associating the word with it.⁷ The name of a thing is secondary, an association we eventually make after some effort in associating the sound with the reality.⁸ Words are subsequent to our experience of reality. A word does not impart immediate knowledge of that for which it stands. It functions to aid our recall of something we have already experienced, and to guide us in further exploration of our experience.⁹

⁵ *fortasseludamus (De magistro* ^{8.21})

⁶ *Nam ex quo inter nos verba iaculamur (De magistro* ^{10.31})

⁷ “Before discovering it [res/the thing itself], the word was only a sound so far as I was concerned. I came to know it [the word] as a sign [signum] when I discovered the reality of which it is a sign. And I learned what this reality was, not, as I have said, by any sign, but by looking at it. Hence, it is more a matter of the sign [or word] being learned from the thing we know, than it is of the knowing the thing itself from the manifestation of the sign [or word] (De magistro ^{10.33}).”

⁸ “What’s in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet (William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, Scene I).”

⁹ Burnyeat (¹⁹⁸⁷) suggests that Augustine’s emphasis on the surety of knowledge gained through sense perception should be read in light of his recently written *Contra academicos—Against the Academicians* (³⁸⁶.⁷ AD) in which he argues against academic skepticism (Burnyeat, page 8). We learn what a thing is not from being told its name, but from our first-hand, empirical experience of it. We see, hear, smell, touch or taste something and so gain reliable knowledge of its existence, place and function in the world.

Adeodatus sums up Augustine's "argument with words" when he tells his father: "I myself have come to learn through the suggestive power of your words that words merely stimulate a person to learn, and that the words of the speaker seldom reveal his thoughts to any great extent..."¹⁰ The words of a teacher are not precious vessels carrying draughts of knowledge to thirsty students. They are rather goads, reminders, suggestions, warnings, or prompts whose function is to lead students to inquire.¹¹

Ratio: the locus of learning. In chapters twelve to fourteen of *De magistro*, Augustine shifts his focus. He moves from an analysis of words to an analysis of learning and teaching. Following the Platonic tradition, Augustine identifies learning as an interior process within the learner, the exercise of *ratio* or reasoning. The teacher's words, spoken or written, serve the learning process insofar as they stimulate a person to enter the interior court of reason and inquiry. Words have value only when they invite students to go within their own minds where the real learning takes place in the appeal to reason. "Those who are known as pupils reflect within themselves whether what has been said is true, contemplating, that is, that inner truth according to their capacity. It is then that they learn."¹²

¹⁰ *De magistro* 14, 46.

¹¹ *Sed fortasse ad quaerendum ad moneri* (*De magistro* 11, 36). Augustine's critique of words and of learning in *De magistro* re-emerges ten years later in *Confessions* 1, 8, 13.

¹² *De magistro* 14, 45.

This process of interior reasoning, the exercise of *ratio*, is a work of integration. It begins with a gathering of facts and data points. Reason then examines possible connections among those facts and data, searching for relationships, patterns and logical links.¹³ The understanding gained from *ratio* emerges in the learner's interior movement from discrete parts toward a sense of the whole.¹⁴ The exercise of reason entails the inner construction of a Gestalt within which information is received, compared, evaluated, judged and deemed reasonable in light of integrating principles operative in the mind of the learner. A teacher may encourage this appreciation of the interrelatedness of the various aspects of the subject under consideration. However, integrative understanding can only happen within the learner's interior cloister of reason.¹⁵ Through the exercise of *ratio* a learner becomes his or her own "authority" insofar as the deep learning and understanding that is the fruit of reason convinces a person of the authenticity of a claim, or the probability of its truth.¹⁶

¹³ The learner must go within (*intus*) to accomplish the work of understanding (*intellegeret scire*). In *De utilitate credendi* Augustine uses the words *intellegeret* (to understand) and *scire* (to know) interchangeably.

¹⁴ *De magistro* 12.40.

¹⁵ For a comprehensive neurological and anthropological theory of the importance of the integration that comprises understanding, see Iain McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2012).

¹⁶ See Richard M. Jacobs, OSA, "Augustine's pedagogy of Intellectual liberation: Turning students from the "truth of authority" and returning them to the "authority of truth."

"In Kim Paffenroth and Kevin Hughes (eds.), *Augustine and Liberal Education* (London: Ashgate Press), page 111-123.

Illuminatio. The learner is not alone in the exercise of *ratio*. Building on a Platonic understanding of the soul, Augustine affirms *ratio* as the aspect of a person that reflects and images the Eternal Principle of intelligibility, the Divine Logos. *De magistro* climaxes with the claim that the integrative understanding acquired in deep learning is an exercise of the part of the person that intersects with the Divine.¹⁷

It is in this context of *ratio* as a capacity of human beings created in the image and likeness of God that Augustine proposes his idea of *illuminatio*, Divine illumination.¹⁸ When we examine ideas and experience “with our intellect and reason,…” we do so by consulting that “inner light of truth” by which the “inner person is enlightened and made happy.”¹⁹ The interior work of deep learning, as Augustine understands it, is not an exercise in isolation, such as Descartes' *cogito*.²⁰ When a person withdraws into the contemplative regions of the mind to consider a topic or a truth claim, the very exercise of reason entails an encounter with the Divine Logos, the creator and source of rationality in the universe.

¹⁷Plato associated this illumination with the pre-existence of the soul before birth into the material world and the memories of that pre-incarnate existence that persist in the soul (cf. *Phaedo*). Augustine rejects the pre-existence of the soul as he develops his epistemology. Cf. Robert Crouse, pages 486-488.

¹⁸The idea of the divine illumination of the mind appears early in Augustine's writings in 386 in *Soliloquies--Soliloquiorum Libri Duo*. Cf. *Soliloquies* 1.8.5; see also his *Eighty-Three Diverse Questions* 46.

¹⁹*De magistro* 12.40.

²⁰For an overview of the relationship between Augustine's epistemology and Descartes' *cogito*, see Thomas Martin, OSA, *Our Restless Heart: The Augustinian Tradition* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2003), pages 143-147.

What Augustine proposes in the final chapters of *De magistro* is a pedagogy that differentiates between information and understanding, data and context, exterior speaking and interior reflection. The teacher is midwife to the discovery, integration and comprehension that occurs within the learner, made possible by the creator's gift of ratio. This first movement in Augustinian pedagogy, from rhetoric to reflection, is realized in the student's encounter with and guidance from the "Inner Teacher."²¹

Second Movement: From Pedagogue to Pilgrim Teacher

Augustine's second movement, from pedagogue to pilgrim teacher, emerges in various letters, sermons and books written after *De magistro*. The English word pedagogue implies a strict or pedantic approach to teaching, a stern exercise of pedagogic authority. Alternatively, the term pilgrim, as applied to a teacher, evokes a sense of accompaniment or companionship. This second movement marks a change in the teacher's self-understanding, a change that adopts humility, love and lifelong learning as key pedagogical virtues and essential characteristics of the pilgrim teacher as opposed to the more authoritarian stance of the pedagogue.

²¹*Secretum illud oraculum* (*De magistro* ^{14, 46}).

The Humility of a Teacher. In the year 410, Augustine received a letter from a certain Dioscorus, a Greek who was studying in North Africa.²² He wrote asking Augustine to help him understand some fine points in Cicero's philosophy before he made his return home.

Augustine reacts strongly to the pedantic style of the letter from Dioscorus. His letter of response immediately raises the issue of intellectual pride. Augustine affirms that many Platonists had converted to Christianity.²³ However, as Augustine saw it, the very essence of their conversion required that these philosophers humble themselves by acknowledging that God humbled himself in Christ. Only this act of faith and humility transforms philosophy into Christian wisdom. Dioscorus must do the same. The way to true wisdom is not a pedantic trek through philosophical niceties. It is through humility. The only way of arriving at truth is to imitate divine humility.

That first way is humility; the second way is humility, and the third way is humility, and as often as you ask, I would say this. It is not that there are no other commandments that should be mentioned, but unless

²² Letter 117.

²³ The so-called Platonism or Neo-Platonism of the 4th century, as found in the writings of Plotinus, Porphyry and others, was a "synthesis of Platonic, Aristotelian, Stoic and Pythagorean elements. It dominated the pagan philosophical world from the beginning of the third to the sixth century A.D." (John. J. O'Meara, *The Young Augustine* (New York: Alba House, 2001: Second Revised Edition), page 130).

humility precedes and accompanies and follows upon all our good actions..., pride tears the whole benefit from our hand when we rejoice over some good deed.²⁴

The essence of pedagogical humility for Augustine is consistent with and emerges from the understanding of learning that he introduces in *De magistro*. A teacher, after providing a conducive and creative environment for learning, must stand as humble witness to the interior change and hidden ferment that constitutes real learning in the student.

A teacher is an authority figure. Yet, the whole process of learning is successful only when each student, by consulting the inner light of learning, becomes convinced of the authenticity of the subject at hand. Each student must become an “authority” in him or herself, in the sense that interior learning subjects what is heard from the exterior authority of the teacher to a comprehensive internal review that establishes the “authority of truth.” Learning requires the courageous step from the “truth of authority,” that is, the “authoritative word” of the teacher, to the “authority of truth,” the more comprehensive and integrated experience conceived in the interior and illumined exercise of *ratio*.²⁵

²⁴ Letter 118.3.22. See also *Confessions* 7.9-15, 20.26, and *City of God* 10.28-29, 18.41. In *Confessions* 9.4.7 he critiques his own early writings (the *Cassiciacum* dialogues) as having “a whiff of scholastic pride” about them.

²⁵ Jacobs, pages 111-123.

The humility of teaching is this willingness to exercise the authority of instruction heuristically, knowing that the presentation of material is penultimate. A teacher must allow and encourage students to exercise the authority of reason. This is not easy. Many students hesitate to make that turn within. In addition, the ubiquitous distractions students today face from social media can exasperate a teacher, and lead to the temptation to prize the “truth of authority” beyond its usefulness, or even abandon all hope that students will ever reach into the “authority of truth.” An essential virtue is necessary to sustain the teacher in the way of humility, and to help the teacher rise to the challenging, counter-cultural task of inviting students make the turn within. It is the virtue of love.

Love. In this second movement in Augustinian pedagogy, from pedagogue to pilgrim teacher, love emerges as the central virtue: the teacher's love for students. *De magistro* is bathed in the love of Augustine for his son and conversation partner Adeodat us. In a book about teaching, which Augustine wrote around the year 400, *De catechizandis rudibus* — *Instructing Beginners in Faith*, Augustine extends the teachers' love to encompass all their students.²⁶ In this book, Augustine responded to a Catholic deacon by the name

²⁶ Augustine's teaching of ordered love is the proper context for his counsel that teachers love their students (*De doctrina christiana* 1.27.28; 28.29).

²⁷ One can easily transpose the principles of teaching found in *De catechizandis rudibus* into other teaching contexts, so that Augustine's advice in this text becomes available not just to catechists for religious instruction, but to all teachers across the curriculum.

of Deogratias in Carthage, who had for many years the responsibility of instructing those interested in becoming Christians.²⁷

Deogratias wrote to Augustine asking for help and guidance. He had grown weary of teaching.²⁸ He believed his lecturing to be often distasteful and wearisome—not only to his students, but even to himself.²⁹ Augustine replied with a book that presents the positive virtues of a teacher. The first of these is love.

Love transforms the learning environment. Inspired by his own faith in divine love, Augustine asserts that every student wants to be loved, that is, wants to be valued and respected. Certainly, teachers themselves also want to be loved and “gratified with the zealous attention” of their students and “feel greater affection for those students who pay attention.”³⁰ However, it is more important that teachers love their students. When a student realizes that the teacher values her or him, they respond with enthusiasm. The value and respect of a teacher helps students overcome the fear they may experience in a classroom.³¹ Previous experience in the classroom can leave students—and teachers—weakened and with a broken spirit, dejected and with a sadness that pervades their whole attitude toward education.³²

²⁸ *De catechizandis rudibus* 1.1.

²⁹ *De catechizandis rudibus* 2.3.

³⁰ *De catechizandis rudibus* 4.7.

³¹ *De catechizandis rudibus* 5.9.

³² *De catechizandis rudibus* 10.14.

A charitable attitude and demeanor toward students opens up the affective dimensions of learning. Rather than a tedious accumulation of dry facts, learning becomes a delight in new understanding, encouraged by a teacher who embodies charity and thereby emboldens students. Augustine uses maternal images to express the importance of love in teaching. Teaching, especially teaching new and difficult material, resembles a mother who softens and masticates morsels of food in her own mouth so that her infant can then receive and digest pieces of nourishment.³³ The teacher is like the mother hen who protects her chicks by covering them with her spreading feathers.³⁴ Love for students can enliven the teacher as well:

When often we feel it very wearisome to go over repeatedly material which is thoroughly familiar to us,... then we should endeavor to treat students with a brother's, a father's, and a mother's love; and, if we are united with them in heart, to us no less than to them will these things seem new. For so great is the power of asympathetic disposition of mind, that as they are affected while we are speaking, and we are affected while they are learning, we have our dwelling in each other. Thus, at one and the same time, they as it were

³³ De catechizandis rudibus^{10, 15}.

³⁴ De catechizandis rudibus^{10, 15}.

speak what they hear, and we in them learn after a certain fashion what we teach. Is it not a common occurrence with us that when we show persons who have never seen certain spacious and beautiful tracts in cities or in fields, which we may pass by without any sense of pleasure because we are so accustomed to them, we find our own enjoyment renewed in their enjoyment of the novelty of the scene?³⁵

Within Augustine's exploration of pedagogical love, he introduces this idea of co-inhabitation. Student and teacher “have their dwelling in each other. Thus, at one and the same time, they as it were speak what they hear, and we in them learn after a certain fashion what we teach.” Teacher becomes learner; learner becomes teacher.

This “bond of love (*vinculum amoris*)” between teacher and student, which Augustine calls the “intimacy of friendship (*amiciores*),” casts a new light on the interior processes of ratio described in *De magistro*.³⁶ While each student must retreat into the soul, there to do the work of deep learning through reasoning illumined by divine wisdom, it is not so solitary an exercise as the description in *De magistro*

³⁵De catechizandis rudibus^{12, 17}.

³⁶Et tantomagis, quantosuntamiciores: quia per amoris vinculum in quantum in illis sumus, in tantum et nobis nova fiunt quae vetera fuerunt (De catechizandis rudibus^{12, 17}).

might imply. Pedagogical love is an invitation to share the interior work of learning between and among students and teachers. Learning that is animated by the teacher's love for students opens up the interior exercise of ratio to become a shared exercise. The interior contemplation of ideas becomes a communion of minds and hearts, even to the point of dwelling together in the *illuminatio* offered by the Divine Logos. In Augustinian terms, ratio and communio enrich each other, and both are enriched by the *illuminatio* of divine grace.

Cheerfulness. Augustine offers some advice about the atmosphere of the classroom. It should be a cheerful place. Teaching is irksome and learning wearisome in a room heavy with the resentfulness of a teacher and the fear of students. Augustine reminds Deogratias several times to check his attitude as a teacher. He urges Deogratias to “acquire cheerfulness.”³⁷ It is love that is the cure for weariness and fear; love that inspires cheer and begets energy. Even when troubling aspects of our personal or professional life might intrude into our teaching and weigh us down with worry and distraction, we should practice a loving discipline to keep such problems from invading the classroom and infecting the learning process.³⁸

³⁷ De catechizandis rudibus^{10, 14}

³⁸ Augustine writes movingly of how a teacher's personal problems can sometimes be an issue in the classroom, and so emphasizes the need for cheerfulness, based on faith and love (De catechizandis rudibus^{14, 21}).

Adaptability. In addition, the classroom should be adaptive. A teacher should be able to “read” students, identify their particular situations and motivations as far as possible—to accompany them. Augustine refers to his own experience and the kinds of students he has taught: some highly educated, some dull, some citizens and others immigrants, some rich and some poor, of varying ages and sex, from very different backgrounds and sects.³⁹ All are due the same love. However, the approach, style and pedagogical choices—what Augustine calls the “medicine” appropriate to each student—must vary according to their needs, situation and attitude. A responsive, observant teacher must express and exercise pedagogical love in various ways: sometimes gentle, sometimes severe, adapting and responding to the perceived needs of students, as a mother loves her very different children.⁴⁰

This second movement from pedagogue to pilgrim teacher highlights the insights into teaching and learning that Augustine gained in his new responsibilities as a Christian pastor, teacher and preacher. The way of humility, the essential pedagogical virtue of love, an attitude of cheerfulness, and the ability to adapt emerge as essential elements in his evolving understanding of pedagogy.

³⁹ De catechizandis rudibus^{15, 23}.

⁴⁰ De catechizandis rudibus^{15, 23}.

Third Movement: From Persuasion to Conversion

As a rhetorician, Augustine understood and practiced rhetoric based on what he had learned as a young man in Carthage. He had studied Cicero, the greatest Latin orator. Cicero named three goals of oratory and eloquence: to teach (*docere/probare*), to delight (*delectare*), to sway (*flectare/movere*) your audience.⁴¹ During his years of teaching in Carthage, Rome and Milan, Augustine practiced his own considerable skills as an orator to these three ends. His expertise and excellence carried him to the top of his profession as a rhetorician and teacher.

However, in Milan, as he was growing weary of his profession, Augustine met a group of Christian philosophers. Under the guidance of the priest Simplicianus, he began to read Neo-Platonic writings.⁴² This study resulted in a major shift in Augustine's intellectual priorities. Philosophy replaced rhetoric. When he returned to Africa, he rethought Ciceronian rhetoric in light of the Neo-Platonic philosophy he had learned in Milan. *De magistro* reflected this shift in intellectual priorities. It was Augustine's first attempt to forge a new, deeper, philosophical understanding of the use of words, the practice of oratory, and the dynamics of learning.

⁴¹ Cf. Cicero, *Orator*, XXI-XXII. In *Orator* Cicero presents a summary of his theory on rhetoric in *Orator*, XXI.

⁴² *Confessions* 7, 9, 13.

Of course, over the four decades of his teaching and preaching as a bishop, Augustine continued to draw upon his vast rhetorical training and experience. Even as he reconsidered the power and place of words in teaching and learning, he still employed his considerable skill as a trained rhetorician in his ministerial role. In book 4 of *De doctrinachristiana*, after many years of teaching and preaching, Augustine elaborated how he had retrieved and repurposed classical rhetoric. He comments on Cicero's three functions of rhetorical eloquence—to teach (*docere/probare*), to delight (*delectare*), to sway (*flectare/movere*). In so doing he pointedly re-focuses the third.⁴³

It is not enough simply to persuade (*flectare*) one's listeners. The third goal of preaching and teaching, Augustine argues, is not just to sway opinions, to win cases or to gain power. The Christian teacher or preacher has a responsibility to call others to a different way of learning and living: to move (*movere*) them.⁴⁴ Augustine bent his old master's language to his new Christian purpose. It is to get people to move on two fronts—to move within, into their own minds and hearts, and to effect real external change, in the ambit of their own behavior.⁴⁵

⁴³ *De doctrinachristiana*⁴, 12, 27, 26, 58.

⁴⁴ *Sicut est autem ut neatur ad audiendum, delectandus auditor; ita flectendus, ut moveatur ad agendum* (*De doctrinachristiana*⁴, 12, 27). Cicero uses both *flectare* and *movere* to describe the third goal of oratory. Following Cicero, Augustine also uses both, but emphasizes *movere*.

⁴⁵ Hildegund Muller, "Preacher: Augustine and His Congregation," in Mark Vesey, *A Companion to Augustine* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2012), page 307. Cf. *Teaching Christianity IV*, 17, 34.

Movere connotes the movement and change implied in conversion. Conversion in this context does not necessarily imply a change in religious affiliation, a common use of that word today. Rather, conversion has two Augustinian meanings when applied to the third goal of oratory. The first conversion or change is the critical move in learning which Augustine had identified in *De magistro*: the move within, to the interior cloister of reason, to the *secretum illud oraculum*, where deep learning occurs in the light of Divine Truth. Rhetoric should move one's listeners toward deeper, authentic learning, to arrive at the "authority of truth" through the integrating vision gained by introspection and divine illumination.

The second aspect of conversion in a pedagogical context is the move toward real change in values and behavior. Teaching, as well as preaching, must make a difference in the way people live.⁴⁶ Good teachers employ their rhetorical skill and professional tools in a loving fashion in order to move their students or their congregants not only inward to the secret recesses of their hearts and minds, but also outward where real change is evidenced in conduct, in decisions informed by justice and love. For the mature Augustine, rhetoric is ordered toward conversion of mind and of life.

⁴⁶ But if they do not know, they must, of course, be taught before being moved—
Si autem adhuc nesciunt, prius utique docendisunt quam movendi.... Swaying an audience is not
a matter of necessity—Et idem flectere necessitatis non est, quia non semper opus est....
What use will those two (to teach and to delight) be if this third (to move) is lacking—Quid
autem illa duo proderunt, si desit hoc tertium (De doctrina christiana^{4, 12, 28})?

The ultimate end of teaching is to move minds and hearts to imagine and implement possibilities opened up by love. The content of Augustine's faith as a Christian preacher and teacher has transformed the rhetorical tools he had once learned in Carthage and practiced in Milan. Book four of *De doctrina christiana* reaffirms and strengthens what Augustine had written almost 30 years previously in *De catechizandis rudibus*: love is the guide, the goal, the work (*opus*) of pedagogy.

Conclusion

These three different movements: from rhetoric to reflection; from pedagogue to pilgrim teacher; and, from persuasion to conversion identify key ingredients of Augustinian pedagogy. They emerged and evolved in response to the pastoral challenges and existential crises Augustine faced over more than three decades. Reflection on these movements within Augustinian pedagogy lead to a conviction that how we teach and learn must continue to develop in light of the unforeseen challenges we face and unexpected changes we must make. We must keep moving and adapting to the changing needs of our students and the world in which they live.

The challenge to keep our pedagogy vital and responsive can be heard in this excerpt from Augustine's sermon 169, especially if we insert "teacher" into the text:

Forge ahead, *teachers*; always examine yourselves without self-deception, without flattery, without buttering yourselves up. After all, there's nobody inside you before whom you need feel ashamed, or whom you need to impress. There is someone there, but one who is pleased with humility; let him test you. And you, too, test yourself. Always be dissatisfied with what you are, as a teacher, if you want to arrive at what you are not yet. Because wherever you are satisfied with yourself as a teacher, there you have stuck.... Always add some more, always keep on walking, always move ahead.⁴⁷

Movement itself is essential to the methodology of Augustinian pedagogy.

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City of God/De civitate dei

Confessions/Confessiones

⁴⁷ Sermon 169, 15, 18.

*Eighty-Three Diverse Questions / De
diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*

Letter 117 / Epistola 117

Letter 118 / Epistola 118

Sermon 169 / Sermo 169

Soliloquies / Soliloquiorum Libri Duo

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