

Jairzinho Lopes Pereira

Augustine of Hippo and Martin Luther on Original Sin and Justification of the Sinner



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For Alex and Lore
who are sunrise and warmth
and deserve better

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Foreword by Risto Saarinen

The relationship between Augustine and Luther belongs to the perennial topics of theology. In recent years, the scholarship has focused on the different “Augustinianisms” available in late medieval and early modern theology. Thanks to the scholarship of Adolar Zumkeller, Leif Grane and Heiko Oberman, among many others, we can nowadays identify several different currents of reading Augustine in the Reformation period.

This valuable scholarship has not, however, succeeded in locating Luther’s theological origins to a particular school of Augustinian thought. Luther is influenced by Gregor of Rimini, Pierre d’Ailly and Johannes Staupitz, but he is also reading Augustine very originally and to suit his own purposes. Without denying the value of recent scholarship, we may therefore ask whether the immediate effect of reading Augustine’s texts is, finally, more significant to the emergence of Luther’s theology than the somewhat vague background of alleged late medieval Augustinianisms. Should today’s scholarship again pay more attention to Luther’s immediate reading of Augustine, leaving the influence of late medieval currents in the background?

Such considerations led me to supervise the dissertation of Jairzinho Lopes Pereira, a young scholar from Cape Verde who, after studying Augustine at the University of Coimbra, started his postgraduate studies at the University of Helsinki. Knowing that Mr. Lopes Pereira had a strong background in Augustine but was a newcomer to Reformation studies, I thought that he would be a suitable person to ask the question of the immediate relationship between Augustine and young Luther regarding the issues of sin and justification.

The present book is a result of this exercise. In addition to its proper research theme, the work witnesses how a young Roman Catholic scholar, coming from Latin (rather than German or English) academic tradition, familiarizes himself with the theology of Luther. A valuable feature of this book is the link that the Latin research tradition, strong in Augustine but less advanced in Reformation theology, establishes with the prevailing currents of Luther studies.

Between 2007 and 2012, I had the privilege of supervising two young scholars

who know much more about Augustine than I do myself. The other one is Timo Nisula, whose dissertation *Augustine and the Functions of Concupiscence* is now also available in English (Vigiliae Christianae Supplements 116, Brill 2012). My initial expectation was that the Roman Catholic scholar Lopes Pereira would defend a more optimistic view of the Christian's struggle with sin than the Lutheran theologian Nisula would.

In reality, the result is quite the opposite. Nisula concludes that even the late anti-Julianic Augustine has a robust conscience and remains confident that the sin can be to some extent overcome already in this life. Lopes Pereira, on the other hand, claims that the young Luther is a true follower of late Augustine and that both teach permanent sinfulness and the lack of human freedom. My own position in this matter is somewhere between these two young scholars; I have attempted to lay it out briefly in my *Weakness of Will in Renaissance and Reformation Thought* (Oxford 2011).

While it cannot be generally recommended for young scholars to oppose their *Doktorvater*, I have in this case been very glad to have students and co-workers who courageously develop their own position and are not satisfied with the received wisdom of their teachers. Dr. Lopes Pereira's study also strengthens my conviction that the young monk Luther was not merely continuing some less known traditions of late medieval Augustinianism but that he initiated a new Augustinian theological current. The driving force of this new current was Luther's first-hand acquaintance with Augustine's anti-Pelagian and anti-Julianic texts.

Acknowledgements

To Augustine of Hippo is often attributed the saying “The World is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page”. In the last five years my research took me to several countries. If each of these countries is the equivalent of a few pages of a book, I am glad to say I had the privilege to meet numerous people who made these pages wonderful and unforgettable ones. Many people have helped, encouraged, guided, taught and inspired me throughout these years of research which now result in the present dissertation. To all of them I owe my deep gratitude.

The trip has been long! It was in 2004, during the third year of my studies at the University of Coimbra (Portugal) that I started conceiving the possibility of research on Saint Augustine and Martin Luther in the context of a post-graduate programme. I shared my plans with Professor Mário A. S. de Carvalho. In him I found full support and all the motivation one can ask for. Professor Carvalho promptly guided me in the task of writing the research project from which the present dissertation was developed. His kindness and willingness to help and guide; together with his refined personality and rare academic and pedagogical skills inspired me then even as they do now. More than the strict academic issues, with Professor Carvalho I learned that being a good teacher implies being a good person, one who pays attention to those around us. For this ethical reference, too, I am most grateful.

In 2006 the adventure started. After a short passage to Paris, I arrived in Helsinki. There I met my supervisor, Risto Saarinen. Only his excellent guidance enabled me to overcome most of my limitations as a beginner. I run out of words to express my gratitude for Professor Saarinen’s readiness in helping and guiding me.

This long trip was also funded by several institutions. My gratitude goes to Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian which funded my trip to Paris in summer 2006 in order to prepare the research plan. My gratitude extends to Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia, Helsingin Yliopiston Tiedesäätiö (Research Foundation of the University of Helsinki) and Suomen Kulttuurirahasto (Finnish Cultural

Foundation) for funding the research the result of which I now present. Among the institutions I want to thank are also the Lestadion residence in Helsinki which sheltered me for more than 2 years; the directory boards of Martin Luther Bund in Erlangen; as well as those of the residences of Institut für Ökumenische Forschung in Strassbourg and Paus Adrianus VI College, in Leuven.

Throughout these years I have enjoyed the support and encouragement of many people in different Universities and Centre of Study. I would like to give my special thanks to my esteemed teacher Maria Helena Coelho (University of Coimbra) with whom I took my first steps in the study of Augustine (by then I was studying the Augustinian monks of Santa Cruz de Coimbra and Saint Augustine's doctrines on death and suicide). My special thanks go to Professor Isabelle Bochet (Institut des Études Augustiniennes/Institut Catholique de Paris); Professor Jacques-Noël PÉRÈS (Institut Protestant de Théologie de Paris); Professor Theodor Dieter (Institut für Ökumenische Forschung, Strasbourg); Professor Berndt Hamm (Faculty of Theology of Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg); and Professor Andreas Grote (*Zentrum für Augustinus-Forschung* in Würzburg). A special note here goes to Professor Mathijs Lamberigts (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven) who patiently and indefatigably read my manuscripts regarding Augustine over and over again, and dedicated a considerable time to discussing this work with me. I cannot imagine the present study without his suggestions and corrections.

I would also like to thank Sister Timothy Prokes, FSE, who dedicated a considerable time to revising the manuscript. Due to the commitment of this noble soul my text reached a clarity that it would never have reached if it was only my feeble knowledge of English language on display. The authors I am occupied with in the present study might promptly accuse me of Pelagianism, but I cannot help feeling that Sister Prokes' noble gesture towards me will not go unnoticed in the eyes of the Creator of us all. Any errors and mistakes, however, which may have been added to the text after her language revision, are my own.

My words of gratitude also go to Professor Sameli Juuntunen who supervised my work in my first year in Helsinki, and my colleague Aaro Rytönen for his dedication in solving all the bureaucratic problems regarding my trip to Germany. I should also record my words of gratitude to my godmother, Maria Manuela Lucas, for her guidance at Alma Mater Conimbricensis. Her comfort in hard times and her motherly love and concern with which she covers me as a hen covers her chicks nurtured me all the way. I also thank my fellow researchers in Helsinki, especially Pekka Karkkainen and dear friends and doctoral students in Coimbra: Joana Duarte Bernardes, Victor Barros and my German friend Martin Ruben Schmidt for all those innumerable hours of sharing.

The last eighteen months of my research was carried out essentially at Augustijns Historisch Instituut (Leuven, Heverlee), a paradise for any Augustinian

scholar. I am grateful to the librarians Geert Van Reyn and Anneke Goovaerts for the impeccable way they assisted me in my work. To the old and wise monk Jules Beullens, OSA who daily opened the door for me (having done it, many times, hours before the opening time and waited for me hours after the closing time), my ineffable gratitude.

I also wholeheartedly thank the hospitality and kindness of my friends Kaija and Manu Herd, in Iisalmi, Finland. Those days I spent in their lovely home, away from the academic context, were refreshing and unforgettable. I also do not want to forget my coach Helge Lindström for all his support inside and outside the running track, especially his patience in making all those sacrifices to prevent the daily training from interfering with my research.

I cannot and I do not want to forget the contributions of the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit for my education in Cape Verde. My spiritual father Adélio Cunha Fonte, a man that God put in my path, is responsible for practically everything good I have accomplished in my life, including my academic achievements. To my primary and high school teachers from whom I often received words of encouragement and who showed great interest in the progress of my research (a particular mention to Maria Fernanda Marques, Rosa Morais, Inácio Carvalho, Belmiro Ramos, and Marilene Pereira my teachers at Liceu Domingos Ramos) I record here my deep gratitude.

Last, but definitely not least, my most special words of gratitude go to my wife Lore Lieve Raes, this *rarissima avis* who gave the lion's share regarding the support I enjoyed in my research. Only I and she know how bravely and patiently she shared the burden of my work since we decided to share each other's life.

Leuven, March 8th, 2013.

Abstract

This study analyses the relationship between Augustine and Luther in their understandings of the doctrine of Original Sin and the justification of sinners, taking as its main source Augustine's writings addressed against Julian of Aelclanum as well as Luther's *Lectures on Romans*. I argue that the radical anthropological and soteriological insights with which Augustine opposed the theologians associated with fifth century Pelagianism are the key for understanding the early stages of Luther's call for Reformation of the doctrine of the Catholic Church regarding Original Sin and justification.

The study commences with a preliminary discussion on the terminology linked with Augustine's definition of sin. I claim that the Augustinian concept of sin was defined in intimate connection with a concept he inherited from his contact with neo-Platonism – the concept of order. Sin is disorder. Original Sin was an expression of disorder which implanted disorder in the very core of human nature. This was a line of thought that Luther fully endorsed. The young Luther's doctrine of Original Sin, I point out, is essentially Augustinian.

Although Augustine did not invent the doctrine of Original Sin, he certainly brought a new way of understanding the implications of the Adamic Fall in the human-divine relationship and in the salvation of human beings. I explain that whether Augustine first outlined his radical approach to salvation through the gracious mercy of God and only then developed his theological formulation of Original Sin (or came to it in the reverse order) may be open to dispute. What is certain is that the way Augustine approached the gravity of Original Sin is in harmony with the way he approached the issue of justification of the sinner and the salvation process as a whole.

One of the main theses maintained in this study is that the way Augustine approached human beings and their salvation put him on a collision course with the very tradition of the Church Fathers he so eagerly claims to defend. Augustine's understanding of human salvation, I explain, constitutes a break with the patristic tradition precisely because he took the notion of a general condemnation in to radical consequences. After some hesitations in the initial years

of his literary career, Augustine broke with the line of thought according to which humans start their salvation by turning to God and God then accomplishes their salvation. This turning point was crystallized in two major works authored by the Church Father, *Ad Simplicianum* and *Confessiones*. In these two works Augustine unequivocally claims that the very first step one takes towards God is itself a divine gift. The very will to believe is God's grace. This assessment constituted a break with the traditional view of the Fathers on the issue of salvation.

It is precisely this crucial detail that explains Luther's reliance upon Augustine. Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone was essentially a deliberate attempt to recover the old Augustinian claim according to which both the beginnings and the accomplishment of the salvation process belong to God and only to God. This is a crucial point because in this assessment lies the main reason why Luther preferred Augustine to any other Church Father. It was based on this Augustinian defence of the radical gratuity of the salvation process that Luther relied to oppose the Nominalist axiom *facientibus quod in se est Deus non denegat gratiam*. The teaching of the Fathers according to which human beings start and God accomplishes the process of salvation may have seemed to Luther dangerously close to the teaching of the *recentiores doctores* he so vehemently opposed.

I show my opposition towards the trend within modern Lutheran scholarship to argue that the young Luther's doctrine of justification found its inspiration elsewhere, not in Augustine's anti-Pelagian writings. Against the common argument that while Augustine taught justification by grace and by love, Luther taught justification by faith alone, I argue that such a claim is not consistent with the evidence in the sources by showing significant affinities between Augustine and Luther's positions. Augustine, some scholars argue, never conceived justification as *fides Christi*, but rather as a transformation of the human will or disposition for God's commands. A closer look into the two theologians' understandings of justification would suggest otherwise. Augustine taught justification by grace as well as justification as *fides Christi*. Luther taught justification by faith, justification as a declaration of righteousness on account of the *fides Christi*, but his doctrine of justification went beyond a mere declaration of righteousness. For both Augustine and Luther, justification starts with the bestowal of the grace of faith and keeps manifesting itself through moral progress throughout the entire earthly life of the justified sinner.

I also try to shed some light upon the old discussion regarding Augustine's reading of Gal. 5:6. I argue that this passage was used by Augustine with no other purpose than to characterise the the genuine Christian faith, the justifying faith. Augustine's reading of Gal. 5:6 does not collide with Luther's doctrine of justification by faith. The essence of Augustine's doctrine of justification states that

humans are justified through or by the grace of faith (*gratia fidei*). Faith is not acquired by any merit, so it is a grace, that is, freely given. Justification is entirely God's doing since it begins once one is bestowed with the grace of faith and proceeds, impelled by the grace of perseverance (which is deep down what Augustine called *gratia cooperativa*, a reality not absent in Luther's understanding of the justification process). The Augustinian notion of grace is a very comprehensive one. Grace assumes many forms. Among its main expressions, according to Augustine, are the gifts of faith, hope and love. Luther did not deviate from this path. Perhaps there is only a slight difference in emphasis. Augustine elected love as the great distinctive characteristic of justifying faith, while Luther selected humility. For both theologians, however, faith is the only source of justification. This faith would obviously be useless without love, hope and humility. After all, without these ingredients it would not be the justifying faith.

Introduction

1. Why Augustine and Luther? Why were Original Sin and justification chosen as the topics of this study?

The easiest task of a student of Saint Augustine and Martin Luther is to justify the pertinence of studying them both. The task of providing a reason for studying these two representatives of Western Christian theology becomes even easier when the issues under consideration are those such as Original Sin and the justification of the sinner.

It is difficult to exaggerate Augustine's influence over Western theology, especially concerning the Mediaeval and Reformation periods. Modern research on Mediaeval theology tends to regard some crucial discrepancies between Mediaeval theological schools as no more than nuances, some more important than others, incorporated into a sort of a common "Augustinian" tradition. The Bishop of Hippo's contribution to the shaping of Western Christian dogmatics was truly decisive. But it was with the African Church Father that leading issues such as Original Sin, justification, election, predestination and grace started to be major theological issues. All these issues were of paramount importance in Mediaeval and Reformation theology and were largely discussed in the assemblies of Trent. Today, these same issues may not be less important for the Christian faith than they were in those past centuries.

In the Mediaeval and Reformation contexts, i.e. between the fifth and seventeenth centuries, Augustine was a sort of centre of gravity around which Western theological production gravitated. "There is, at least since the apostles," wrote the great Historian of Christian doctrine Jaroslav PELIKAN, "no figure in Christian history who has so dominated a millennium with his teachings as Augustine did. How he was understood (or misunderstood) and how he was transmitted (or superseded) is, therefore, a central element in the story".¹ It is,

¹ Pelikan, 1978, viii.

perhaps, for all these reasons that the same scholar defined Mediaeval theology as “a series of footnotes to Augustine”.² I believe that Augustine deserves scholarly interest for the simple fact that he remains unavoidably at the heart of most theological and moral issues of the corpus of Christian doctrine.³

As for Luther, well Luther was Luther! He marked an entire period. To this period historiography decided to give the name “Reformation”. Luther may be regarded as a protagonist or initiator of a process that led, in many ways, to a major turning point in the history of the West. On account of the impact of Luther’s call for Reformation, the Christian faith, the doctrine of the Church, politics, and society were never to be the same again. Luther, however, would never have been who he was without Augustine. It is perhaps due to this very fact that both the Church Father and the Reformer’s teachings are until now of crucial importance in Western Christian theology. If a reason would be needed to prove this, it would suffice to say that their teachings are extremely important, for instance, for the ongoing Roman Catholic-Lutheran ecumenical dialogue. I believe that all these reasons are enough to claim the pertinence of studying these two major figures of Christian history.

Why focus on justification and Original Sin in Augustine and Luther? The pertinence of discussing the issue of justification in contemporary Christian theology is beyond question. Justification is, after all, the *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*. It is perhaps for this very reason that several Christian confessions acknowledge the importance of coming to an understanding on this vital theological matter. The point I am trying to make is this: the issue of justification has proven to be a subject of argument.

Why Original Sin? If not for many other reasons, because in Augustine’s theology as well as in that of Luther, the issue of justification remains unintelligible if dissociated from the Adamic Fall and its implications for humanity.

The origins of the doctrine of Original Sin almost fuse with the name of Augustine. Regarding the Church Father’s contribution for the definition of the doctrine of justification (the great cornerstone of Luther’s theology), Alister McGrath could not be more elucidative when he concludes that

2 Pelikan, 1971, 330.

3 The Cardinal Newman regarded the Church Father as the man who shaped Europe’s intelligence (Newman, 1968). The words recorded by Von Campenhausen in his *Lateinische Kirchenväter* regarding Augustine’s presence in, and influence over the Western theological tradition, remains accurate. “Augustin”, he writes, ist der einzige Kirchenvater, der bis auf diesen Tag eine geistige Macht geblieben ist. Er lockt Heiden und Christen, Philosophen und Theologen ohne Unterschied der Richtung und Konfession zur Beschäftigung mit seinen Schriften und zur Auseinandersetzung mit seinen Willen und seiner Person. Er wirkt zugleich auch mittelbar als bewußte oder unbewußte Überlieferung in den abendländischen Kirchen und durch sie im allgemeinen Kulturbewußtsein mehr oder weniger verändert und gebrochen fort”. Von Campenhausen, 1986, 151.

for the first 350 years of the history of the church, its teaching on justification was inchoate and ill-defined [...] Augustine's doctrine of justification is the first discussion of the matter of major significance to emerge from the twilight of the Western theological tradition, establishing the framework within which the future discussion of justification of humankind before God would be conducted⁴.

Augustine's strong presence and influence over the young Luther's theology *per se* is simply a fact. What is certainly a complex matter is to evaluate to what extent the Church Father's influence was decisive in the shaping of the reforming programme of the Wittenberg Professor, as well as the very nature of the same influence. How did it operate? In which circumstances and with which purpose did Luther use Augustine? *Which* Augustine did he rely on? In the attempt to provide a clear approach to Augustine's influence over Luther, some go to the point of asking whether Augustine was responsible (but not guilty) for the Protestant Reformation; or whether or not, through his doctrine of justification by faith, Luther did nothing else than betray Augustine after finding his own way with the Church Father's help⁵. The fact that these questions remain open justifies scholarly interest in both the Church Father and the Reformer.

2. Tasks, sources and methodological considerations

The first point of clarification that must be made here is the fact that this study is not primarily a comparative study between Augustine and Luther. This study consists in an analysis of the issues of Original Sin and justification in some specific writings authored by these two theologians. The analysis, however, is driven by the concern of clarifying whether the young Luther's doctrine of Original Sin and justification and, consequently, some of his core reforming insights, remained or not within the Augustinian framework. Accordingly, especially in the second part of this study, I will be discussing the Augustinian background of Luther's teachings on Original Sin and justification. What must be clear from the outset is the meaning of the term "Augustinian" in this study. Unless a different meaning is explicitly mentioned, the term "Augustinian" throughout this work refers only to Augustine himself.

Augustine worked on his extensive written legacy over a span of forty-four of the seventy-five years of his life. Luther's literary career was also long, having reached approximately four decades. Both Augustine and Luther had enough time to see their theological views undergoing a complex process of development and maturation. This means that significant corrections and adjustments were

⁴ McGrath, 2005, 38–39.

⁵ Olivier, 1996, 31.

part of the process. Thus, an important point that must be taken into consideration here is *chronology*, which, in the present case, makes all the difference when it comes to the theological development of both authors.

It is important for the reader to keep in mind that the present work covers a specific time span of the theological productions of both Augustine and Luther. Within this time span, specific works are taken as references⁶. The present study is occupied with the mature/old Augustine, the anti-Pelagian Augustine, namely the Augustine who opposed Julian of Aeclanum, and with the young Luther. Since both “old” and “young” can be broad terms, further clarifications may be needed. I will be dealing with Augustine’s writings produced in the course of his controversy with Julian of Aeclanum, covering the period of time from 418 – 430. These writings are the following: *De Nuptiis et concupiscentia*; *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum*; *Contra Iulianum* and the last of Augustine’s writings, *Opus imperfectum Contra Iulianum*, which death prevented him from concluding.

As for Luther’s works, the analysis will focus on the Reformer’s *Lectures on Romans* (1515 – 1516). The other two early Pauline commentaries authored by the Reformer, that is, the *Lectures on Galatians* and the *Lectures on Hebrews*, as well as works such as *De duplici iustitia* (1519) and *De libertate Christiana* (1520) may occasionally be invoked to illustrate the line of reasoning I follow in this work. What Luther taught regarding Original Sin and justification in the aftermath of the assembly of Worms (1521) or in his harsh confrontation with Erasmus of Rotterdam, and in the years that followed, are beyond the scope of this study⁷.

From the methodological point of view, the dominant approach adopted in this work follows the pattern of a systematic approach. For the sake of both accuracy and clarity, a study like the present one requires, however, a combination of both historical consideration and systematic approach. It is obvious that both Augustine and Luther’s theologies cannot be understood unless duly contextualized in the development of the history of doctrine of the Christian Church. It is also crucial, however, to clarify an important point. The use of an

6 This point is of paramount importance especially when it comes to Luther’s use of Augustine and the nature of Luther’s own theological breakthrough. It is known to all scholars of Luther and his works that, for obvious reasons, Luther’s interest in the young anti-Donatist and anti-Manichean Church Father could not have been the same as the interest he showed in the old anti-Pelagian bishop. It may also be argued that the old Reformer’s enthusiasm towards Augustine may not have been as strong as it was in his youth.

7 For an excellent analysis of the development of Luther’s theology, from the early years to maturity, I suggest Lohse, 1995. On the particular issue of free will (a major point of friction between Luther and Erasmus of Rotterdam), the collection of studies edited by Werner Zager under the title *Martin Luther und die Freiheit* (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2010) is a good starting point.

historical approach in this study does not imply the predominance of an analysis based on the *development* of both Augustine and Luther's theology. The span of time chosen for both Augustine and Luther did not register significant alterations in their discussion regarding justification and Original Sin. When Augustine started his debate with Julian his insights on Original Sin and justification had long reached their final stage. In later works addressed against Julian, when it comes to the issues of Original Sin and justification, Augustine mostly repeated arguments and conclusions he had reached in the preceding years. Regarding Original Sin and justification the period of time between 418 and Augustine's death in 430, one would look in vain for significant changes in Augustine's thought.

In Luther's case it may have been different. The time span between 1515 and 1520 was frenetic and turbulent for the young Professor and Reformer. This was the period in which Luther's core Reformation insights were defined. For this period, a study of the *development* of the Reformer's thought would be entirely justifiable. As I have said, however, my focus will not be over this period, but rather on Luther's *Lectures on Romans*. I believe that, especially regarding the issue of Original Sin and justification, this work contains the first clear lines of Luther's Reformation theology. My discussion of Luther's doctrine of Original Sin and justification does not comprise a long period of time. For all these reasons, the historical approach in this work is not essentially based on the *development* of both theologians' doctrine of Original Sin and justification. The historical approach here means more a careful historical contextualization in order to provide an accurate account of the issues under consideration. Because this study has some concern in comparing the way the two theologians approached Original Sin and justification, the need of combining historical and systematic approaches becomes even imperative.

3. The outline of the study

This work is divided into two parts. The first part starts with a chapter that will review crucial terminology regarding Augustine's language of sin and its implications, with an emphasis on the concepts of order (*ordo*), love (*caritas/amor*), will (*voluntas*) and desire (*concupiscentia*).

Chapter 2 focuses on the relationship between Original Sin and Augustinian soteriology. In order to make Luther's use of Augustine's anti-Pelagian writings easier to understand (an issue addressed in the second part of this study) I shall chart the evolution of Augustine's early soteriological discourse (previous to 396). I shall then discuss how Augustine's understanding of the implications of Original Sin after 396 was intimately connected with the way he came to un-

Pereira demonstrates how Augustine came to break with the patristic soteriology and anthropological theology and adopted the radicalism of grace with which he faced the theologians associated with the fifth-century Pelagianism. It was precisely that radicalism of grace that made of Augustine Luther's favourite theologian. The same radicalism was adopted by Luther in his opposition to the *recentiores doctores*, the Nominalist theologians. Without overlooking the crucial role played by the Pauline corpus, the author says that Augustine's anti-Pelagian theses were at the core of the young Luther's soteriological and anthropological claims and were the driving force behind Luther's cry for reformation.

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