

**THE DYNAMISM OF  
*IMAGO DEI* IN AUGUSTINE'S  
ANTHROPOLOGY AND TRINITY:  
A STUDY ON *DE TRINITATE* XIV – XV**

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**I. Introduction**

This article is a summary of my ThM Thesis in Alliance Bible Seminary: The dynamism of *imago Dei* in Augustine's anthropology and Trinity: A Study on *De Trinitate* XIV – XV.<sup>1</sup> In the thesis, I have focused on patristic study as well as theological exploration on Augustine's concept of *imago Dei* in *De Trinitate*, with my special attention on BK XIV – XV. My question of research centers on the dynamism of Augustine's *imago Dei*: to demonstrate that it is a dynamic concept, to see how dynamic it is in both ontological and

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epistemological perspectives, and then how such dynamic characteristic formulates his anthropology and Trinity.

Here in this article, while I would sum up all my argument points, my attention would be put on the theological perspectives. In exploring on the dynamism of *imago Dei*, my thesis is that such dynamism is built upon an ontological-epistemological paradigm, such that Augustine's *imago Dei* enables Augustine to speak of relationality. Man is aligned to God through the dynamic *imago Dei*. Moreover, the Trinity could be understood through the dynamic interactions between the *imago Dei* and God. My thesis would be built up in the following ways: First, I will point out the importance of Augustine's *imago Dei* in both theological and philosophical fields, leading us to see the relevance and urgency in exploration of Augustine's *imago Dei* doctrine. Secondly, I will conduct literature review on the dynamism of *imago Dei*, especially focusing on *De Trinitate*. Such a review will help us to see how the ontological-epistemological paradigm should emerge in supplementing the current scholarly works. Thirdly, I will build up my arguments from the following perspectives: (1) lexicon analysis on the words *imago* and *imago Dei*, (2) investigation on the noetic background of Augustine's *imago Dei*, (3) structural analysis of *imago Dei* doctrine in BK XIV – XV, (4) exploration of Augustine's *imago Dei* in both man and God. Fourthly, after demonstrating the dual dimension in Augustine's *imago Dei*, I will bring out its theological implications, especially in its possibilities in the relational perspectives. I will also make a final reflection on the nature of *imago Dei* standing on Protestant's viewpoint, to investigate the tensions in making such relationality, and to explore the way out.

This research is based on a profound study of Literature — primary and secondary resources of Augustine. The primary sources would focus the text of *De Trinitate*, mediated through three English translations — The *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* version (NPNF) translated by Arthur West Haddan, The *Fathers of the Church* (FC)



version translated by Stephen McKenna, and the *The Works of Saint Augustine* version (WSA) translated by Edmund Hill. While I mainly use the FC version, the other two versions would also be referred in case of ambiguities of the texts. In examining lexicons, I would refer to the Latin version *Corpus Christianorum, series Latina* (CCL) with the help of the translations. I would also do lexicon analysis on some important words or concepts with the research tool of *Corpus Augustinianum Gissense*.

## II. Augustine's *Imago Dei*: Its Importance and Relevance

Augustine's *imago Dei* is not a concept of his own. Instead, it is a biblical notion rooted in Genesis and Pauline theology.<sup>2</sup> Such concept is so important to a Christian understanding of man that it attracts almost every great theologian's attention all over the periods. What is

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<sup>2</sup> The explicit texts for the *imago Dei* concept are mainly seated in Genesis and Pauline letters, as follows (NIV Bible version):

Genesis –

Ge 1:26, "Then God said, 'Let us *make man in our image*, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'"

Ge 1:27, "So God created man *in his own image*, in the *image of God* he created him; male and female he created them."

Ge 9:6, "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the *image of God* has God made man."

Pauline letters –

1Co 11:7, "A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the *image and glory of God*; but the woman is the glory of man."

2Co 4:4, "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the *image of God*."

Col 1:15, "He is the *image of the invisible God*, the firstborn over all creation."

Col 3:10, "and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the *image of its Creator*."

man? What differentiates us from other creatures? What is the core value of man being man? In Christianity, all such questions should be reflected basing on the fact that man is *imago Dei* — man as the image of God. In Augustine, *imago Dei* is not just a matter of anthropology. He links it also to Trinity. How can we understand God? As man is *imago Dei*, Augustine thinks that we cannot search God outwardly over the world — we should look inside (*interiore modo*) instead. Moreover, Augustine even thinks we can see the Trinitarian God with this method. To him, the psychological triads can in some sense image the Trinity because man is *imago Dei*. Therefore the analogy between man and God, mediated through the notion of *imago Dei*, provides a way not only in understanding man, but also the Trinity. We can say, in Augustine's system, understanding man is parallel to understanding God, and vice versa.

Such an Augustinian tradition of linking self to God exerts a great influence to the western theology and philosophy. In the field of theology, two great Protestant theological giants — John Calvin and Karl Barth, both cannot neglect Augustine's *imago Dei* concept in doing their theological reflections. In Calvin, we can find that Augustine's *imago Dei* concept, mediated by the self-God relation, has deeply affected Calvin's approach to God's knowledge. Calvin's concept of *cognitione Dei ac nostri*<sup>3</sup> is surely developed from Augustine's *Noverim me, noverim te*,<sup>4</sup> although with the order reversed. And it is widely recognized that Calvin's theological reflection starting from the knowledge of God is based on Augustine's self-knowledge reflection.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, Karl Barth seems to be

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<sup>3</sup> That is, without knowledge of God there is no knowledge of self, see John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol 1, trans. F.L. Battles (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960), 35-37.

<sup>4</sup> *Soliloquia*, II, I, 1.

<sup>5</sup> George H. Tavard, *The Starting Point of Calvin's Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 6-7.

more negative to Augustine's analogical way in approaching *imago Dei*, but still we can see that he cannot overlook Augustine's method. For example, *Vestigium Trinitatis* section in his *Church Dogmatics* spends a great deal in Augustine's *imago Dei*.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, in the field of philosophy, we can also easily see that the modern philosophy borrowed a great deal from Augustine. The father of modern philosophy, Rene Descartes, starts from an Augustinian premise, the personal experience, to reconstruct the philosophical methodology in asserting reality. With a striking parallelism between the writings of Descartes and some of Augustine's statements about the certitude of self-knowledge in Book X of the *De Trinitate*, Augustine has been regarded as the forerunner of Descartes' *Cogito, ergo sum* ("I think, therefore I am").<sup>7</sup> Also during the current discussion of modern self, Augustine again plays an important role. In his widely acclaimed *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, Charles Taylor regards Augustine's inwardness (esp. Ch. 7 "Interiore Homine") as a bridge between Plato and the modern self,<sup>8</sup> a concept that is closely linked to Augustine's *imago Dei*.

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<sup>6</sup> According to Luigi Gioia's interpretation, Church Dogmatics's *Vestigium Trinitatis* section (I.1, 333-347) is borrowed from the *De Trinitate* and the doctrine implied by this terminology is located especially in books 9 to 11. Luigi Gioia, *The Theological Epistemology of Augustine's De Trinitate* (Oxford Univ Press, 2008), 12.

<sup>7</sup> The relationship between Augustine's *cogito* and Descartes' *cogito* has been fully discussed in recent decades. Examples are Gareth B. Matthews, *Thought's Ego in Augustine and Descartes* (London: Cornell University Press, 1992); Stephen Menn, *Descartes and Augustine* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

<sup>8</sup> "On the way from Plato to Descartes stands Augustine. Augustine's whole outlook was influenced by Plato's doctrines as they were transmitted to him through Plotinus... Henceforth, for Augustine, the Christian opposition between spirit and flesh was to be understood with the aid of the Platonic distinction between the bodily and non-bodily," Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1989), 127.

In recent decades, Augustine's *imago Dei* comes into a more fierce discussion. With the psychological triads — "mind – knowledge – love," "memory – intellect – will," Augustine has started a new way of speaking Trinity among his contemporaries, which has unquestionably effected a unique contribution to the western Trinity tradition. However, this way of speaking also put Augustine into the centre of serious criticisms in modern theological discourse. On one hand he is criticized as formulating a model of the Trinity based on abstract, Neo-platonic conception of the mind,<sup>9</sup> a way which would "psychologize" God and would potentially generate a type of onto-theology.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, this psychology model seems to minimize the significance of history and the incarnation, neglecting the economy of salvation. More than that, modern theology tends to adopt a Greek/Latin paradigm in understanding Trinity. Greek starts with the reality of distinct persons (*de Deo Trino*) whereas Latin starts with the unity of the divine nature (*de Deo Uno*).<sup>12</sup> With the influence

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<sup>9</sup> One of the first recent Western theologians to voice suspicions of the Augustinian tradition is Karl Rahner. See Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, ed. & trans. by Joseph Donceel (London: Burns and Oates, 1970), 17. Also see Drayton C. Benner, "Augustine and Karl Rahner on the Relationship between the Immanent Trinity and the Economic Trinity," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9:1 (2007): 24-38.

<sup>10</sup> The term "onto-theology" generally refers to a type of theology in which the metaphysical category of "being" is given a preeminent place in descriptions of God and creation. The term has two modern sources: Kant and Heidegger. For Kant, it is a subcategory of a type of theology that derives from reason (as opposed to revelation). For Heidegger, the term is synonymous with metaphysics and characterizes all attempts to describe God and reality according to a reified, abstract concept of "being". See Matthew Drever, "The Self Before God? Rethinking Augustine's Trinitarian Thought," *Harvard Theological Review* 100:2 (2007): 234.

<sup>11</sup> Drever, "The Self Before God?" 234.

<sup>12</sup> This is already a common understanding, see Michel Barnes, "Augustine in Contemporary Trinitarian Theology," *Theological Studies* 56(1995): 237-39 ; Drever, "The Self Before God?" 234-35.

of Colin Gunton<sup>13</sup> and Zizoulas<sup>14</sup> on contemporary theology stage, Augustine becomes the main culprit for the inability of western theology. Gunton proposes that Augustine's psychology analogy is the source of western individualism. The over-emphasis on the individual mind in the system leads to an individualistic anthropology. As lacking in the interest of communities, it also blocks any real expression of personal communion in God, and hence leads to the unknowability of God.<sup>15</sup> He prefers the Cappadocians to Augustine, in that he found relationality as a great source for remedying the western pitfalls. Some other theologians like LaCugna,<sup>16</sup> David Brown<sup>17</sup> are still developing their arguments within this Greek/Latin paradigm.

Such a discussion environment makes Augustine's *imago Dei* highly relevant. We can say that Augustine's psychological analogies are built upon the base of his *imago Dei* doctrine. A thorough investigation on *imago Dei* would provide a better picture on this issue. Do psychological analogies necessarily imply a parallelism between man and God? Should these analogies be accused of leading to individualistic anthropology? All these questions cannot be fairly answered without due attention to Augustine's view of *imago Dei*.

Augustine's *imago Dei* spreads widely among his various writings: *Confessiones*, *De Genesis ad Litteram*, *De Civitate Dei*, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, *Epistulae*, *De Diversis Quaestionibus*

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<sup>13</sup> For example, Colin Gunton's *The One, The Three, The Many, God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (London: T & T Clark, 1991).

<sup>14</sup> John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985).

<sup>15</sup> Colin Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," *SJTh* 43 (1990): 33-58.

<sup>16</sup> Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991).

<sup>17</sup> David Brown, *The Divine Trinity* (La Salle: Open Court, 1985).

*LXXXIII*, and *De Trinitate*, etc.<sup>18</sup> I choose *De Trinitate* (esp. BK XIV and BK XV) as main text of study because of its unique role in Augustine's system. As begun around AD 399 and finished AD 422/6, *De Trinitate* not only opens a new way of speaking Trinity, it also covers the whole mature stage of Augustine's theology, and therefore could display a substantial and coherent thought on Trinity. *De Trinitate* has also been shown to share some linkage with *Confessiones* and *De Civitate Dei*. It would be a very good entry point to Augustine's whole system. Moreover, our investigation would mainly focus on the dynamic perspective of *imago Dei* in *De Trinitate*. Facilitating man to see Trinity in *interiore modo*, his *imago Dei* is predominated by a dynamic impression — a change within man and God. The dynamic perspective would be our key issue in investigating *imago Dei*, and our exploration its significance to anthropology and Trinity.

### III. Literature Review

In reviewing secondary literature on *imago Dei* of *De Trinitate*, I found that they can be classified as four main groups: (1) gender issue,

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<sup>18</sup> J. Heijke, "St Augustine's comments on *imago Dei* : An Anthology from all his Works exclusive of the *De Trinitate*," *Class. Folia, Suppl.* 3 (1960): 1-95. According to Heijke's study, the occurrences are as follows:

*Confessiones*: III, 12; VI, 4; XI, 11; XIII, 12; XIII, 32; XIII, 35; XIII, 47.

*De Genesis ad Litteram*: III, 19; III, 20; III, 22; VI, 12; VI, 19 VI, 27; VII, 22; IX, 17; X, 2-3; XI, 42; XII, 7; XII, 31.

*Enarrationes in Psalmos*: XXIX, 2; XXXII, 2; XXXIV, 2; XXXV, 11; XLII, 6; XLVIII, 1; XLVIII, 2; XLIX, 2; LIV, 3; LVII, 1; LVII, 11; LXIII, 11; LXVI, 4; LXX, 2; LXXV, 3; XCII, 1; XCIV, 2; CI, 1; CII, 3; CIII, 4; CXVIII, 18; CXXXVIII, 14; CXLV, 5; CXLVI, 18.

*Epistulae*: XI, 3; XXIII, 1; LV, 11; LV, 20; XCII, 3; CXX, 2; CXX, 3; CXX, 4; CXLVII, 19; CLXIX, 1; CLXIX, 2, etc.

*De Diversis Quaestionibus LXXXIII*: Q. 12; Q. 18; Q. 23; Q. 51, 1-4; Q. 58, 2; Q. 67, 4; Q. 74.

*De Trinitate*: IV, 7; VII, 2; VII, 5; VII, 12; XI, 8, etc.

(2) overall description of *imago Dei*, (3) *imago Dei* as a change inside man (dynamic in ontological sense), (4) *imago Dei* as a tool for knowledge of God (dynamic in epistemological sense). The gender issue is quite irrelevant to our discussion. Their focus is a matter of way in responding to feminism in patristic study. What they attempt to justify is that, Augustine treats man and woman with equal values, and that 1Co11:7<sup>19</sup> can be reconciled to Ge1:26-27<sup>20</sup> in Augustine's thought. That is, male and female were made in God's image.<sup>21</sup> In the overall description category, we can only find two works: Heijke's twin articles "St. Augustine's Comment on *imago Dei*: An anthology except *De Trinitate*" & "The Image of God according to St. Augustine (*De Trinitate* excepted),"<sup>22</sup> and Sullivan's book *The image of God: the doctrine of St. Augustine and its influence*.<sup>23</sup> As an overall description, they provide quite a comprehensive viewpoint on *imago Dei*.

Apart from the first two categories, I found that most scholars confine *imago Dei*'s dynamism to the third category — understanding as a change inside man (an ontological perspective). We can say that they centre on the anthropological implications and treat *imago Dei* as a reform notion. Scholars like Gerhart B. Ladner, Gerald Bonner, Thomas A. Fay, and Walter H. Principe all line in this trend. Ladner

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<sup>19</sup> 1Co 11:7, "A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is glory of man."

<sup>20</sup> Ge 1:26-27, "Then God said, 'Let us *make man in our image*, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'" "So God created man *in his own image*, in the *image of God* he created him; male and female he created them."

<sup>21</sup> David V. Meconi, "Gender and *imago Dei* in Augustine's *De Trinitate* XII," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 74 (2000): 47; Richard J. McGowan, "Augustine's Spiritual Equality: the Allegory of Man and Woman with Regard to '*imago Dei*,'" *REAug* 33 (1987): 257-58.

<sup>22</sup> J. Heijke, "St Augustine's comments on *«imago Dei»* : An Anthology from all his Works exclusive of the *De Trinitate*," *Class. Folia* Suppl. 3 (1960): 1-95; J. Heijke, "The image of God according Saint Augustine (*De Trinitate* excepted)," *Class. Folia* 10 (1956): 3-11.

<sup>23</sup> John Edward Sullivan, *The Image of God : The Doctrine of St. Augustine and Its Influence* (Iowa : Priory Press, 1963).

has linked the *imago Dei* to Augustine's creation doctrine such that *imago Dei* is a lifelong process of formation in response to the Creator's calling. It is not only a restoration of man's stage to Adam's sinless condition before his fall, but can proceed further to a better situation.<sup>24</sup> Bonner has focused on *imago Dei* as a participation in God. In his case, he has aligned closely to the Eastern Greek tradition of deification. Augustine's dynamic *imago Dei* is just like Athanasius's deification.<sup>25</sup> Fay focused more on realization of human potentialities. Augustine's *imago Dei* is dynamic in the sense that its life journey sets to approach God. He has also emphasized the man's imitation to the Son as the latter is the perfect *imago Dei*.<sup>26</sup> Principe has shifted the focus to word study, pointing out that the dynamic nature of *imago Dei* is displayed already in the verbal form of the words. The terms of *memoria*, *intellegentia* and *amor/dilectio* almost exists in verb forms like *etiam meminisse, et intellegere, et amare a quo facta est*, etc,<sup>27</sup> and therefore dynamic in nature.

Although with their contributions, all such discourses miss the point that Augustine's *imago Dei* also contains the epistemological

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<sup>24</sup> Gerhart B. Ladner, "St. Augustine's Conception of the Reformation of Man to the Image of God," *AugMag* II (Paris, Etudes Augustiniennes, 1954): 867-78; Gerhart B. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform: Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers* (Harvard Univ. Press, 1959). c.f. Chapter One – "Literature Review."

<sup>25</sup> Gerald Bonner, "Augustine's Conception of Deification," *Journal of Theological Studies* 37 (1986): 369-86; Gerald Bonner, "Augustine's Doctrine of Man: Image of God and Sinner," *Augustinianum* 24:3 (1984): 495-514; Gerald Bonner, "The Spirituality of St. Augustine and its Influence on Western mysticism," *Sobornost* 4 (1982): 143-62. c.f. Chapter One – "Literature Review."

<sup>26</sup> Thomas A. Fay, "'Imago Dei': Augustine's Metaphysics of Man," *Antonianum* 49 (1974): 173-97. c.f. Chapter One – "Literature Review."

<sup>27</sup> According to Principe's analysis, all of the terms *memoria*, *intellegentia* and *amor/dilectio* refer to verb forms, like *etiam meminisse, et intellegere, et amare a quo facta est* (XIV, 15), *meminerit itaque Dei sui ... eumque intellegat atque diligit* (XIV, 15), *si eius non meminit, eumque non intellegit nec diligit* (XIV, 16), *diligit, meminit, intellegit* (XIV, 18), see Walter H. Principe, "The Dynamism of Augustine's Terms for Describing the Highest Trinitarian Image in the Human Person," *Studia Patristica* XVII, Part Three, 1292-93.



dimension. This link has been implied by some scholars like like Etienne Gilson, Frederick Van Fleteren, Basil Studer, Rowan Williams, Lewis Ayres, and Luigi Gioia, to which I classify as the fourth category — *imago Dei* as a tool for knowledge of God (epistemological perspective). Gilson and Van Fleteren treat *imago Dei* highly related to our contemplation to God,<sup>28</sup> and regard *interiore modo* — a way for becoming *imago Dei* — as an approach to the knowledge of God.<sup>29</sup> Studer, Williams and Ayres form up a Christological trend of reading *De Trinitate*.<sup>30</sup> They point out the importance of the role of God during Augustine's psychological discussions. Therefore "remembering God – understanding God – loving God" is regarded as *imago Dei*, is not due to the fact that they are a model of mind — with three clearly delimitable capacities. The reason is due to their mental activities displayed — the activities with projection to God.

In light of the linkage between *imago Dei* and knowledge of God that have been pointed out by the scholars, we can have new resources in revising the nature of *imago Dei*'s dynamism. Instead of just staying of the ontological approach of treatment, such works have enlightened us to see that the epistemological concern could be of equal

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<sup>28</sup> Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 187.

<sup>29</sup> Van Fleteren, "Thematic Reflections on the *De Trinitate*," *Proceedings of the PMR Conference 12-13* (1987-88): 223-24. See also Van Fleteren, "*Per Speculum et in aenigmate*: The Use of I Corinthians 13:12 in the Writings of St. Augustine," *AugStud* 23 (1992): 69-91.

<sup>30</sup> Representing works are as follows: Studer, *The Grace of Christ and the Grace of God in Augustine of Hippo*, "History and Faith in Augustine's *De Trinitate*;" Williams, "The Paradoxes of Self-knowledge in the *De Trinitate*," "*Sapientia* and the Trinity: Reflections on the *De Trinitate*;" Ayres, "The Fundamental Grammar of Augustine's Trinitarian Theology," "The Discipline of Self-knowledge in Augustine's *De Trinitate* Book X," "The Christological Context of Augustine's *De Trinitate* XIII."

importance in forming up the dynamism of *imago Dei*. The dynamism on one hand could be regarded as a growth in man in ontological sense (reformation, deification, moral imitation, etc), while on the other hand, it could also be regarded as a man's growth of knowledge to God in epistemological sense! We are not difficult to see that the texts in *De Trinitate* readily provide enough resources for us to go on that direction. For example, the *imago Dei* is displaying dimensions of *capacitas Dei* and *participatio Dei*<sup>31</sup> — the former referring to an ontological matter and the latter as a more existential notion which could encapsulate both ontological and epistemological matter. Moreover, we can also see the issues involve how Augustine understands the relation between *scientia* and *sapientia* of man (BK XIV) and *sapientia* of God (BK XV). Clearly, under such premise, the dynamic *imago Dei* cannot just stay within the ontological structure of human mind, it necessarily touches the interaction between man and God. Such interaction, to Augustine, is often mediated through the mirror in an enigma (1Co 13:12), in which *imago Dei* is a tool to know God. In that sense, the starting point of this thesis is that the dynamism of *imago Dei* should be treated with due weight given to both ontological and epistemological sense. The focus then would be on how the two dimensions are related to each other, and on how they shape up the *imago Dei*'s dynamism.

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<sup>31</sup> Trin. XIV, 15 (FC,432): "Hence, this trinity of the mind is not on that account the image of God because the mind remembers itself, understands itself, and loves itself, but because it can also remember, understand, and love Him by whom it was made." ... "Or to express this more briefly, let it worship the God who was not made, but by whom it was made so that it is capable of Him and can be a partaker of Him."

## IV. Lexicon Analysis on *Imago* and *Imago Dei* <sup>32</sup>

### 1. Lexicon Analysis on *Imago*

The word *imago* appears 320 times in *De Trinitate*, an amount which already could show it a significant term in the work. This amount is far more than other terms that Augustine uses to describe Christ or God, like *forma* with 198 entries, and *exemplum* with 41 entries.

In our analysis, we can categorize *imago* into three main areas: the image related to the Son [image-Son] (39), the image related to bodies [image-bodies] (68) and the image of God [image-God] (216). The category image of God accounted around to 67.5 %, being the main part in the use of *imago*. Before we drill into such part, we would first try to see the other two uses, that is the image-Son and image-bodies, so that we can see any of their relevance to the image-God (image of God). By definition, image-Son refers to the texts in which *imago* is linked to the Son or Christ, like *verbum et imago*, *imago filii*, *imagine filii*, *ad imaginem filii*, etc. Image-bodies refers to the texts in which *imago* is generally related to corporeal things, the object outside and the image formed inside through memory, like *imagines corporum*, *imaginem corporis quae inest in memoria*, *imaginibus sensibilibus*, *imagines rerum*, *imagines sonum*, etc. Image-God refers to the texts in which *imago Dei* (of various forms) appears explicitly, or the texts in which *imago Dei* can be implicitly implied through the context or some word use, explicit forms are *imago Dei*, *imagine Dei*, *imaginem Dei*, *imagini Dei*, *imagine Dei*, whereas implicit forms include *imago Trinitatis*, *imagine Trinitatis*, *imaginem Trinitatis*, *imago creatoris*, *sui creatoris imaginem*, *ad imaginem* [Ge1: 26], etc.

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<sup>32</sup> A very brief lexicon analysis is provided here, helping us to see the importance of the concept *imago* and *imago Dei* in *De Trinitate*. A more elaborated analysis, please refer to Chapter Two of my ThM thesis.

## 2. Lexicon Analysis on *Imago Dei*

Explicit image-God amounts to 70 entries, summing up as around 32% of the total *imago Dei* (217). Such explicit entries exist in the following forms: *imaginem Dei*, *imaginis Dei*, *imagine Dei*, *imagini Dei*. Their distributions are as follows:

Image forms	Verses
Imaginem Dei (36)	IV, 7 x2; VII, 5; IX, 2; XI, 18; XII, 6 x2; XII, 7 x2; XII, 8 x4; XII, 9 x2; XII, 10 x6; XII, 12 x3; XII, 19; XIV, 4; XIV, 6; XIV, 11 x2; XIV, 22 x2; XV, 5; XV, 10; XV, 14; XV, 39; XV, 44
<i>imago Dei</i> (26)	VII, 5; VII, 12 x2; XI, 1; XI, 8; XII, 4 x2; XII, 9 x3; XII, 10 x5; XII, 12; XIII, 26; XIV, 4; XIV, 6; XIV, 22; XV, 5; XV, 11; XV, 14; XV, 17 x2; XV, 25
Imaginis Dei (2)	XII, 5; XV, 20
Imagine Dei (5)	XII, 10; XIV, 6; XIV, 20; XIV, 24; XV,5
Imagini Dei (1)	XIV,6

If we count both the implicit and explicit form of *imago Dei*, it would sum up to 216 entries. Moreover, we would see that *imago Dei* is mainly scattered in the latter half of *De Trinitate*, especially in BK XII, BK XIV and BK XV. The distribution is as follows:

### *Distribution of Image-God (Explicit and Implicit)*

Book	Verses	Number
BK I	I, 14 I, 18	2
BK II	—	
BK III	—	
BK IV	IV, 7 x2	2
BK V	—	

BK VI	—	
BK VII	VII, 5 x2 VII, 12 x19	21
BK VIII	—	
BK IX	IX, 2 x3 IX, 18	2
BK X	X, 19 x2	2
BK XI	XI, 1 x2 XI, 8 x2 XI, 18 x1	5
BK XII	XII, 4 x2 XII, 5 XII, 6 x7 XII, 7 x8 XII, 8 x6 XII, 9 x10 XII, 10 x14 XII, 12 x9 XII, 16 XII, 19 XII, 21	60
BK XIII	XIII, 26	1
BK XIV	XIV, 4 x4 XIV, 6 x13 XIV, 10 x3 XIV, 11 x8 XIV, 13 IXV, 15 x2 XIV, 16 x2 XIV, 18 XIV, 19 x2 XIV, 20 x3 XIV, 22 x12 XIV, 23 x4 XIV, 24 x3 XIV, 25 x4	62

BK XV	XV, 1 XV, 5 x6 XV, 10 XV, 11 x3 XV, 14 x10 XV, 16 x2 XV, 17 x2 XV, 20 x4 XV, 21 XV, 25 XV, 39 x3 XV, 43 x12 XV, 44 x6 XV, 45 XV, 49 XV, 50 x3	56
Total entries		216

### 3. Summations and Implications on the Lexicon Analysis

The above lexicon analysis has at least brought us to a few conclusions:

(1) *Imago* is an important word, with an amount far more than other terms used in depicting God or Christ.

(2) Within the uses of *imago* entries, image of God (i.e. image-God in the above analysis) accounts to the largest amount. That means, the major use of *imago* is pointing to image of God. Such use may not appear explicitly as image of God (of various forms) in *De Trinitate*, but through contextual analysis, we can see that many *imago* are actually referring to image of God, and such implicit image-God constitutes the major portion. As such, although the explicit image-God accounts for only 70 entries, total image-God could account up to 216 entries.

(3) The other uses of *imago*, mainly as image-Son and image-bodies, although not pointing to image of God directly, nevertheless shows their intimate relation to it. Image-Son first points out that the Son is the true Image which is of same essence to God, and secondly image-Son is usually discussed together with man as image of God. From both these two dimensions, it is not difficult to see their relations to man as image of God. As for image-bodies, its two uses are referring to the image of corporeal things and referring to the activities of the inner man. The first one is mainly treated as a tool for the outer man's triad, and the second one is even discussing how man imaging God in BK XV, both of which sufficiently show their relevancy to man as image of God. Therefore, we could say that almost all entries of *imago* in *De Trinitate* are bearing with special meaning — referring to image of God or its relevant matters.

(4) Image of God can be found mainly in the latter half of *De Trinitate*. We can see that BK VIII - XIII (except XII) are the minor parts; BKXII, XIV, XV are almost of equal weight, and accounted to more than 80% of the total entries. But as BK XII is related to man and woman relationship, which is not our main concern, BK XIV – XV should be regarded as the main texts in speaking about the image of God.

## **V. *Imago Dei*'s Dynamic Background: Noetic Tradition in the Psychological Triads**

### **1. Augustine's Psychological Triads**

In speaking *imago Dei*, we would necessarily touch upon the so-called psychological triads, which are scattered throughout the latter

half of *De Trinitate*. In general, the psychological triads can refer to:<sup>33</sup>

1. "lover – love – loved" (*amans, amatus, amor*) [VIII, 14].
2. "mind – knowledge – love" (*mens, notitia, amor*) [IX, 3].
3. "memory – understanding – will" (*memoria, intelligentia, voluntas*) [X, 11, 7].
4. "the body that is seen – vision – attention of the mind" (*corpus quod videtur – visio – animi intentio*) [XI, 2, 2].
5. "body retained in memory – inner vision – will" (*corpus quod in memoria manet – visio interna – volitio*) [XI, 9].
6. "knowledge to faith – thinking – love" (*scientia (fidei), cogitatio, amor*) [XIII, 20, 26].
7. "remembering itself – understanding itself – loving itself" (*memoria sui, intelligentia sui, voluntas sui*) [XIV, 9].
8. "remembering God – understanding God – loving God" (*memoria Dei, intelligentia Dei, amor Dei*) [XIV, 12, 15].

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<sup>33</sup> I know that there are some authors who would identify the triad patterns that are different from this, and mine may not be the most comprehensive one, but I think the members outlined here are the most important ones. And they also fit the discussion of this thesis. Some other examples of the triad pattern include Yves Congar's, as follows:

1. *amans, amatus, amor* (VIII, 10, 14; cf. IX, 2, 2).
2. *mens, notitia, amor* (IX, 3, 3).
3. *memoria, intelligentia, voluntas* (X, 11, 7).
4. *res (visa), visio (exterior), intentio* (XI, 2, 2).
5. *memoria (sensibilis), visio (interior), volitio* (XI, 3, 6-9).
6. *memoria (intellectus), scientia, voluntas* (XII, 15, 25).
7. *scientia (fidei), cogitatio, amor* (XIII, 20, 26).
8. *memoria Dei, intelligentia Dei, amor Dei* (XIV, 12, 15).

See Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit (vol III): The River of Life Flows in the East and in the West* (New York: Seabury, 1983), 89.



It is obvious that the psychological triads are closely related to *imago Dei*. Almost every time when Augustine mentions *imago Dei* during BK VIII – XIII, it refers to the psychological triads:

BK IX,2 <sup>34</sup>	Referring to the trinity concluded in BK VIII, namely "lover, what is loved, and love," and regarding it as an imperfect image.
BK IX,18 <sup>35</sup>	Referring to another trinity by focusing on mind as subject: "mind, itself knowledge, its love."
BK X,19 <sup>36</sup>	Referring to trinity: "memory, understanding, and will," and regarding it as imperfect image.
BK XI,1 <sup>37</sup>	Start the journey of trying to trace the Trinity in outer man, i.e. through bodily senses, which is not the image of God.
BK XI,18 <sup>38</sup>	In the end of BK XI, confesses that image of God cannot be sought in the outer man, and now turn back to the inner man to search the image of God.

<sup>34</sup> *Trin.* IX, 2 (FC, 271): "We are not speaking of heavenly things, not yet of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but of this imperfect image, which is an image nevertheless, that is, of man. For the weakness of our mind perhaps gazes upon the image more familiarly and more easily."

<sup>35</sup> *Trin.* IX,18 (FC, 289): "And so there is a certain image of the Trinity : the mind itself, its knowledge, which is its offspring, and love as a third ; these three are one and one substance. "

<sup>36</sup> *Trin.* X, 19 (FC, 312): "Should we now, therefore, exert ourselves to the utmost of our mental powers, and ascend to the supreme and highest essence of which the human mind is an imperfect image, but yet an image? ... For we made the following discovery about the nature of the mind through its own memory, understanding, and will..."

<sup>37</sup> *Trin.* XI, 1 (FC, 319): "Let us endeavor, therefore, to discover, if we can, any trace at all of the Trinity even in this outer man, not that he himself is also in the same way the image of God."

<sup>38</sup> *Trin.* XI, 18 (FC, 340-341): "Therefore, time admonishes us to seek this same trinity in the inner man, and to endeavor to proceed within, from the animal and carnal man, of whom I have been speaking for so long, who is called the outer man. We hope to be able to find there a trinity which is an image of God."

BK XIII,26 <sup>39</sup>	Referring to the triad of faith: "remembering, contemplating, and loving of the faith," but state that this triad is still not the image of God.
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It seems that Augustine tries to view each psychological triad with some criteria, to see whether each fits to be the *imago Dei*, even though only the last triad "remembering God – understanding God – loving God" is the true image. What is the nature of the triads? Why are they arranged in such pattern? Only few scholars have touched these issues.<sup>40</sup> Here I would bring out one issue that is important in understanding the psychological triad pattern, and so the nature of the dynamic *imago Dei* — the noetic tradition of psychological analogies.

## 2. Background of Psychological Triads: Noetic Tradition

The most well known of Augustine's psychological triads are "mind – knowledge – love" and "memory–understanding–will." As

<sup>39</sup> *Trin.* XIII, 26 (FC, 409): "Whatever ideas are in the mind of a believing man from this faith and from such a life when they are contained in the memory, examined in the recollection, and accepted by the will, form a trinity of its own kind. But the image of God about which, with His help, we shall afterwards speak is not yet in it."

<sup>40</sup> Scholars who have touched the psychological pattern include Yves Congar, Sullivan, and Lewis Ayres, etc.

Yves Congar has just made the outlines of the triads without much explanation. The outline has already been show in n.220. See Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit (vol III): the River of Life Flows in the East and in the West* (New York: Seabury, 1983), 89.

Sullivan has tried to systemize the triads in two hierarchies: vestiges of the Trinity and image of the Trinity. The former refers to three triads: Trinity in external vision (visible object – act of vision – attention of the mind), Trinity in internal vision (memory – internal vision – the will) and Trinity of Faith (highest form in *ratio inferior*); the latter refers to another three triads: "*mens, notitia sui, amor sui*", "*memoria, intelligentia, voluntas sui*", "*memoria Dei, intelligentia, voluntas*". See Sullivan, *The Image of God*, 85-161.

Lewis Ayres has tried to put the triad cluster into the pro-Nicene context. To him, the psychological triads are a common means, both to Greek and Latin fathers of that age, to illustrate the God-man analogy. See Ayres Lewis, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2006), 289-92.

representing figures, they have shown us the characteristics in forming up the triad and their close affinities to the notion of mind. Such characteristics could be traced back to the long ancient tradition in noetic triad "esse–vivere–intelligere," the background of which is useful for us in understanding the rationale behind Augustine's psychological triads, and therefore the *imago Dei* doctrine. From Ancient Greek to Augustine, the noetic tradition can be classified into three stages.

### a. Noetic Triad in Vertical Hierarchy: Plato and Plotinus

The early appearance of noetic triad could be traced to Plato and Plotinus. Plato's *Sophist* shows the flow of the triad background, in which the triad of "being-life-mind" comes to a forming stage: "Are we to be so easily persuaded that motion, life, soul and mind have no real place in that which fully is — no, neither life itself nor intellection — and the Being stands unmoved in high and holy isolation, devoid of Mind?" (*Sophist* 248e-249a).<sup>41</sup>

Such notion of being involving life and mind in *Sophist*, as David Bell points out, could be even traced back to the idea in the pre-Socratic Anaxagoras.<sup>42</sup> This notion has been further developed by Plotinus in his three hypostases of the Plotinian hierarchical scheme — "One–Mind–World Soul," especially in *Enneads* I, 6.7, V, 4.2, V, 6.6.<sup>43</sup> This scheme is strongly vertical in that each succeeding level is dependent on its prior "for a perfection and a unity which it lacks or has devolved into powerlessness."<sup>44</sup> Many would use "emanation" or

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<sup>41</sup> Edwards, "Porphyry and the Intelligible Triad," 15.

<sup>42</sup> David N. Bell, "Essere, vivere, intelligere": the Noetic Triad and the Image of God," *Recherches de theologie ancienne et medievale* 52(1985): 6.

<sup>43</sup> Edwards, "Porphyry and the Intelligible Triad," 14.

<sup>44</sup> Peter Manchester, "The Noetic Triad in Plotinus, Marius Victorinus, and Augustine," in *Neoplatonism and Gnosticism*, ed. Richard Wallis (Albany : State Univ. of New York Pr., 1992), 209.

"chain of being" to give the sense of this verticality. In such a hierarchy, just as Plotinus's late successor Proclus has explained, it displayed a vertical degree of importance: "Among these principles Being will stand foremost; for it is present to all things that have life and mind ... but the converse is not true ... Life has the second place; for whatever shares in mind shares in life, but not conversely, since many things are alive but remain devoid of knowledge. The third principle is Mind; for whatever is in any measure capable of knowledge both lives and exists."<sup>45</sup>

### b. Noetic Triad in Horizontal Hierarchy: Porphyry and Victorinus

The noetic triad has become important to Christian theology through the influence of Porphyry and Marius Victorinus. In Plotinus, "One-Mind-World Soul" has not shown a very clear parallel counterpart to "*esse-vivere-intelligere*" yet, neither has he made a complete rationale of their interaction.<sup>46</sup> However, this noetic triad "*esse-vivere-intelligere*" becomes three formal and distinct hypostases when it comes to Porphyry in his *Commentary on the Parmenides*.<sup>47</sup> And it is widely recognized that the Porphyrean ideas had deeply affected Marius Victorinus's use of the noetic triad in Trinitarian doctrine.<sup>48</sup>

The "*esse-vivere-intelligere*" triad first appeared with Victorinus in *Ad Candidum* 2.22, but its origin is found early in *Candidus* I 3.16.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Edwards, "Porphyry and the Intelligible Triad," 14.

<sup>46</sup> Edwards, "Porphyry and the Intelligible Triad," 14.

<sup>47</sup> Bell, "*Essere, vivere, intelligere*," 7; for a more detailed discussion also see M.J. Edwards, "Porphyry and the Intelligible Triad," 14-25.

<sup>48</sup> I take David Bell's point that the precise extent of the influence of Porphyry is still a subject of discussion, so using "Porphyrean ideas" would be better "the influence of Porphyry," see Bell, "*Essere, vivere, intelligere*," 13.

<sup>49</sup> Mary T. Clark, "Victorinus and Augustine: Some Differences," *AugStud* 17 (1986): 149.

Victorinus picks up the noetic triad not because it is a famous topic in his time, but that he wants to lay out some horizontal dialectic for Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the wake of the catastrophic wrong-headedness exposed by the Arian controversy.<sup>50</sup> Manchester explains, the error of Arianism is to think that the systematic question of the distinction between First and Second in the Neoplatonic hypostatic series has anything to do with the "three hypostases" of the Christian trinity.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, instead of a vertical hierarchy, Victorinus tries to expound the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit of the Christian scriptures as "*esse-vivere-intelligere*" in a horizontal scheme in which equality could be asserted between them, and he identifies *esse* as Father, *vivere* as Son and *intelligere* as Holy Spirit.<sup>52</sup>

### c. Augustine's Own Psychological Triads: From Noetic Triads to Mind-centred Triads

It is sure that Augustine has come across noetic triad, and it is most probably through the works of Marius Victorinus. The first evidence is that the noetic triad of "*esse-vivere-intelligere*" appears in BK X of *De Trinitate* both explicitly and implicitly (and we would explain it in more detail afterwards). Secondly, Augustine's dispute of treating the Spirit as the "mother of the Son" in BK XII, 5-8, as

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<sup>50</sup> Manchester, "The Noetic Triad in Plotinus, Marius Victorinus, and Augustine," 214.

<sup>51</sup> Manchester, "The Noetic Triad in Plotinus, Marius Victorinus, and Augustine," 215.

<sup>52</sup> And such horizontal dialectic relationship can be shown in creation. Being for Marius is a potentiality (not actuality) that requires doing in the act of creation. According to John, God in action is the Logos, and this Logos is "life" and the "light of men". God must "be", therefore, in such a way that life in action is already implicated in that being, and implicated not just in anticipation but in enactment. See Manchester, "The Noetic Triad in Plotinus, Marius Victorinus, and Augustine," 215.

Manchester has rightly pointed out, also shows that he is in conscious conversation with Marius Victorinus.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, in *De Civitate Dei* X, 23 & 29, he has also commented on Porphyry and Plotinus's use of noetic triad.<sup>54</sup>

However, when the noetic triad comes to Augustine's hand, it starts into a new direction. Augustine has shifted the focus into the mind, like "mind-knowledge-love," "memory-understanding-will." Bell explains that such a tendency could be traced to the fact that the mind (the Second hypostasis) is generally regarded as a place where all three hypostases of the noetic triad reach their perfection and goal.<sup>55</sup> And the mind is a special hypostasis, as man and man alone participates fully in mind and because mind comprehends and perfects life and being, it follows that man contains all things, and that by examining himself he may come to experience not only himself but everything else as well.<sup>56</sup>

And it is the characteristic of Augustine that he always moves towards this definition. He begins his analysis with simple being, but concludes it with mind. In BK X, 11-16 of *De Trinitate*, we can see

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<sup>53</sup> Marius embraces the view that the Spirit is the "mother of the Son" with enthusiasm, whereas Augustine, seems to have Marius's very argument in view but cites it without attribution in *Trin.* XII,5-8, like *Trin.* XII, 5 (FC, 346-47): "But all the other statements are indeed so absurd, nay so false, that they can be refuted very easily. For I omit such a thing as to regard the Holy Spirit as the mother of the Son of God and the spouse of the Father; for it will perhaps be answered that these things offered us in carnal matters by arousing thoughts of corporeal conceptions and births." The relevant passages of Victorinus are *Adv. Ar.* I, 51, 58, 64.

<sup>54</sup> For example, see *Civ. Dei* X, 23 (ML, 327-28): "And what he as a Platonist means by "principles," we know. For he (Porphyry) speaks of God the Father and God the Son, whom he calls (writing in Greek) the intellect or mind of the Father; but of the Holy Spirit he says either nothing, or nothing plainly, for I do not understand what other he speaks of as holding the middle place between the two. For if, like Plotinus in his discussion regarding the three principal substances, he wished us to understand by this third the soul of the nature, he would certainly not have given it the middle place between these two, that is, between the Father and the Son."

<sup>55</sup> Bell, "Essere, vivere, intelligere", 11.

<sup>56</sup> Bell, "Essere, vivere, intelligere", 12.

how he uses the noetic triad in illustrating mind as the center. In BK X, 11-12 he starts to deal with the command of "know yourself," in which he says that we should not do the seeking as if we were withdrawing from itself, but instead we should withdraw from the sensible things attached that blurs the real self.<sup>57</sup> Then, he says that such kind of seeking is different from treating the self as a kind of object, (even as spiritual objects). But that "the mind knows itself" is addressed to a mind which "knows, lives, and is." It knows it is; knows it lives; knows it understands:

BK X, 13: "Let not the mind then add another thing to that which it knows itself to be when it hears that it should know itself. For it knows with certainty that these words are said to itself, that is, to itself that is, lives, and understands. ... It, therefore, knows that it is, and that it lives in such a manner as the understanding is and lives."<sup>58</sup>

No one can doubt such noetic dimension of the mind, because even if he doubts it, the very fact of doubting shows that there is a mind to doubt it, this doubting mind lives and is.<sup>59</sup> And in the following argumentation, as Bell has pointed out, Augustine regards mind as the culmination of *esse* and *vivere*, and is best analyzed as *memoria*, *intellectus*, and *voluntas*, which has come to the foreground

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<sup>57</sup> *Trin.* X, 11 (FC, 305).

<sup>58</sup> *Trin.* X, 13 (FC, 307). It would be fruitful for us to note also Augustine's discussion in *Confessions* of this topic. See *Conf.* XIII, xi, 12 (Chadwick, 279):

"These three aspects of the self are very different from the Trinity, but I may make the observation that on this triad they could well exercise their minds and examine the problem, thereby becoming aware how far distant they are from it. The three aspects I mean are being, knowing, willing. For I am and I know and I will. Knowing and willing I am. I know that I am and I will. I will to be and to know. In these three, therefore, let him who is capable of so doing contemplate how inseparable in life they are: one life, one mind, and one essence, yet ultimately there is distinction, for they are inseparable, yet distinct. The fact is certain to anyone by introspection."

<sup>59</sup> *Trin.* X, 14 (FC, 308).

in BK X, 17-19.<sup>60</sup> For example, in the passage of BK X, 18: "Since these three, the memory, the understanding, and the will, are, therefore, not three lives but one life, not three minds but one mind, it follows that they are certainly not three substances, but one substance."<sup>61</sup> "Memory–understanding–will" is closely embedded into the scheme of life (*vivere*), mind (*intelligere*), and substance (*esse*).

Bell has pointed out, it is Augustine's intention to reject a direct copying of the noetic triad and restrict himself to mind,<sup>62</sup> because he wants to maintain a clear Creator–creature distance.<sup>63</sup> If we identify both the Trinity and the soul with *esse*, *vivere*, and *intelligere*, it is all too easy to see the one as being identical to the other and to blur the distinction between the creature and the Creator. Therefore, mind can be regarded as image of God because of its characteristic of human noetic life in parallel to the divine noetic triad,<sup>64</sup> and that is why Augustine takes the *interiore modo* to seek God the Trinity.

### 3. Summations and Implications

The noetic tradition helps us to see some characteristics of the psychological triad pattern, and also its relation to *imago Dei*.

First, although Augustine's psychological triads seem staying within the psychological faculties of man, their origins from the noetic triad shows us that they have a close relationship in illustrating the interrelation of God the Trinity. We can see that no matter in Plotinus

<sup>60</sup> Trin.X, 17-19 (FC, 310-13).

<sup>61</sup> Trin.X, 18 (FC, 311)

<sup>62</sup> Bell, "'Essere, vivere, intelligere'," 21.

<sup>63</sup> Bell, "'Essere, vivere, intelligere'," 40.

<sup>64</sup> Manchester, "The Noetic Triad in Plotinus, Marius Victorinus, and Augustine," 217.



or Porphyry-Marius, although with their different emphases on the hierarchy direction, with the former on vertical direction and the latter horizontal, their focuses are the same — on the interaction between the three hypostases. And such interaction is being identified as parallel to the inner relation and activities of God the Trinity. Therefore, in viewing Augustine's psychological triads, we should not only focus on the triad elements themselves, but also their interaction, and their possible implications to God the Trinity.

Secondly, Augustine has succeeded in linking the noetic triad to mind. It is an advanced step in the development, as he has managed to transform the psychological triads from a mere speculation to the experience level. In the past, the triad like "One–Mind–World Soul" or "*esse–vivere–intelligere*" belongs to a speculation attempt to explain the mysteries of cosmology, without any solid evidence from the tangible world (or they do not think it is possible). However, in Augustine's case, he restrains such triad to the mind's functions/activities, which provides more solid evidence to the legitimacy of the triad. How can he establish such a linkage? It is through the concept of image of God (*imago Dei*): Man is the image of God, therefore the activities of man can somewhat reflect God the Trinity. In that sense, Augustine's *imago Dei* doctrine is necessarily twisted with his psychological triads. And we could say that the pattern of psychological triads is built upon this *imago Dei* link. They take a role in showing the relationship between man and God, and also God the Trinity Himself.

Thirdly, in understanding the *imago Dei* doctrine, it is therefore important for us to analyze the psychological-triads-pattern. And in such analysis, we can expect its development in two dimensions. First, Augustine has to show how the psychological triads fit the criteria of being image of God, and he could only do so by establishing an ontological parallel between man and God. This development direction, in my further analysis, would be attributed as the ontological dimension. On the other hand, Augustine's psychological triads, just

like its noetic origin, may have a tendency to illustrate God by themselves. That means the epistemological function is the focus. It includes how the triads elements are being identified as God the Trinity themselves, and how their interaction implicates God's inner activities. In such sense, the *imago Dei* doctrine does not just focus on the level of man, but also on the attempt in illustrating God. Analysis in such trend would be called epistemological dimension.

## VI. *Imago Dei's* Dynamism Shown in Structural Level (BK XIV - XV)

*Imago Dei's* dynamism is not only shown through its noetic background, it can also be seen in structural analysis of BK XIV and XV. These two sections — BK XIV and BK XV — are seldom treated as a coherent part in the scholarly works. Many would simply regard BK XIV as a discussion on man, whereas BK XV, on God. Such a division leads many scholars to terminate *imago Dei's* discussion in BK XIV. They can only see the importance of *imago Dei's* in man, staying unaware of its significance to God. For example, John Cavadini treats the latter half of *De Trinitate* as two ascents in BK VIII & BK IX-XIV respectively. The first ascent in BK VIII is "recorded in language very similar to Augustine's account of his own first encounter with divine 'light' in BK VII of the *Confessiones*,"<sup>65</sup> whereas in the second ascent (BK IX - XIV), it is an extended attempt to ascend slowly to "contemplation through a consideration of our own created minds."<sup>66</sup> Cavadini emphasizes the failure shown in the

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<sup>65</sup> John C. Cavadini, "The Structure and Intention of Augustine's *De Trinitate*," *AugStud* 23 (1992): 107.

<sup>66</sup> Cavadini, "The Structure and Intention of Augustine's *De Trinitate*," 108.

ascents,<sup>67</sup> and BK XIV is the climax because it shows an even more spectacular failure in that "the image of God we bear in our minds has become radically disfigured through sin."<sup>68</sup> Then, in Cavadini's view, BK XV can only be regarded as a summary without any extra content added. Other scholars, like Gerald Bonner<sup>69</sup> and Fay<sup>70</sup>, etc, focus on Augustine's saying on the real *imago Dei* as "remembering God-understanding God-loving God," which comes to the very centre in BK XIV (like BK XIV, 15<sup>71</sup>) and so ends there.

Indeed, it is beyond doubt that BK XIV and XV are laid with different accents. We can easily see that BK XIV concerns more on establishing a theological anthropology, whereas BK XV focuses more on the Trinity. However, this does not necessarily mean that they are two separate sections. Instead, if we trace on the argument building in the two books, we can see a very smooth flow of thought. Moreover, we can also see that the two books share the same theme in discussing *imago Dei*'s dynamism — the *sapientia*. The observations are elaborated as follows:

### 1. Continuity in Argument Flow of BK XIV to BK XV

BK XV is continuing the argument flow of BK XIV and the previous books. In the very beginning of BK XV, in proposing his

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<sup>67</sup> Cavadini, "The Structure and Intention of Augustine's *De Trinitate*," 106-8.

<sup>68</sup> Cavadini, "The Structure and Intention of Augustine's *De Trinitate*," 108.

<sup>69</sup> Gerald Bonner, "Augustine's Doctrine of Man: Image of God and Sinner," *Augustinianum* 24:3 (1984): 495-514.

<sup>70</sup> Thomas A. Fay, "'*imago Dei*'. Augustine's Metaphysics of Man," *Antonianum* 49 (1974): 173-97.

<sup>71</sup> The first time Augustine speak about the real *imago Dei* is in the following passage. *Trin.* XIV, 15 (FC, 432): "Hence, this trinity of the mind is not on that account the image of God because the mind remembers itself, understands itself, and loves itself, but because it can also remember, understand, and love Him by whom it was made. And when it does so, it becomes wise; but if it does not, even though it remembers itself, knows itself, and loves itself, it is foolish. Let it, then remember its God, to whose image it has been made, and understand Him and love Him."

program of seeking God, Augustine describes this as seeking anything above the mind: "If we, then, seek anything above this nature, and seek truly, then it is God, namely, a nature that is not created but creates."<sup>72</sup> That means, he treats the discussion of BK XIV in mind as a basement for his further discussion. And such trend can also be detected already in BK XIV, where even in discussing the so-called true *imago Dei*, Augustine always maintains the linkage to God the Trinity, like his saying of "God Himself, therefore, is the highest wisdom, but the worship of God is the wisdom of man about which we are now speaking."<sup>73</sup> Investigating real *imago Dei* actually implies a foresight of seeking God the Trinity.

Moreover, we should note that in coming into the centre of discussion of BK XV, Augustine has spent quite a long passage in summarizing the line of argument of the previous fourteen books in BK XV, 4-5.<sup>74</sup> Augustine regards this as useful for the further argumentation in BK XV, because this is done "in order that what follows may not be so far away from what precedes that the study of what follows may bring about the forgetfulness of what precedes..."<sup>75</sup> Therefore, it is not difficult to see the continuity in the flow of argument between BK XIV and BK XV.

<sup>72</sup> *Trin.* XV, 1 (FC, 451).

<sup>73</sup> *Trin.* XIV, 1 (FC, 412); another example is like: *Trin.* XIV, 1 (FC, 411): "We are now to treat of wisdom, not that of God which is undoubtedly God – for His only-begotten Son is called the Wisdom of God – but we shall speak about the wisdom of man, yet of true wisdom which is according to God..."

<sup>74</sup> *Trin.* XV, 4-5 (FC, 453-57).

<sup>75</sup> *Trin.* XV, 4 (FC, 454).

## 2. The Theme of *Imago Dei* through Wisdom

Although the highest *imago Dei* ends in BK XIV, I would say that the theme of *imago Dei* carries on to BK XV. We can see the term *imago* carries equal weight in both books,<sup>76</sup> in which such large amount of entries in BK XV would already imply its importance there. And we also have to note that in BK XV, Augustine likes to use the phrase 'through the enigma', which actually is referring to *imago Dei*. If we count this in, then the discussion of *imago Dei* in BK XV even exceeds that of BK XIV. Therefore, I am convinced that BK XIV and BK XV exist in a continuance through the theme of *imago Dei*.

Such theme of *imago Dei* is a paradigm of wisdom searching. If we look at this angle, then the continuity of the two books would become quite clear. As stated, BK XIV begins the search of *sapientia* (wisdom) of man with first its comparison to *scientia* (knowledge) of man (i.e. faith-triad). Such *sapientia* of man is mediated through "remembering God – understanding God – loving God" of the mind. Then when it comes to BK XV, actually Augustine goes on to discuss the *sapientia* that is God. In seeing through the enigma, Augustine makes the comparison with *sapientia* of man the real *imago Dei*. Therefore, it is a progress from *sapientia* of man to *sapientia* of God. The paradigm can be shown as: from *scientia* of man to *sapientia* of man to *sapientia* of God. In this sense, what is the *imago Dei*? It is not just that of itself being "remembering God – understanding God – loving God," but also that it is a tool in mediating "Wisdom–Knowledge–Love."

The unity of BK XIV and XV is important to *imago Dei*'s dynamism. It brings out a great implication that *imago Dei*'s role in

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<sup>76</sup> The Lexicon Analysis section: image of God in BK XIV accounts to 62 entries, whereas in BK XV accounts to 56 entries.

man as well as that in God are never two separate issues. The dynamic *imago Dei* aligns man and God together. The dynamism could be perceived in a broader sense. It is not just an effect of change in man or in God, but an effect to both. It is also dynamic in the sense that constructing anthropology can at the same time be a journey to God.

### VII. *Imago Dei's* Dynamism in Both Man and God

The dynamism of *imago Dei* comes to a more explicit sense when we come to BK XIV & XV of *De Trinitate*. This dynamism is both ontological and epistemological in nature, not that ontological in BK XIV and then epistemological in BK XV, but that both ontological and epistemological in each stage (each book). In BK XIV, Augustine starts in ontological sense, in that *imago Dei* is the *sapientia* growing towards the *sapientia* of God. But such an ontological trend is then twisted with the epistemological nature, as the shift from man to God is a kind of mind-centered shift, "remember God – understand God – love God" is triggered by noetic elements of the mind. In BK XV, the order is reversed, we can say that Augustine starts in epistemological sense but ends in ontological implication. First, the dynamism is epistemological in nature, as Augustine's concern there is not on man but God. *Imago Dei* is a kind of epistemological tool in gaining the knowledge of God the Trinity. But in illustrating the Trinity through the *imago Dei's* dynamism, that is, through the likeness and unlikeness between man and God, we find that the dynamism brings out an ontological significance. The likeness between man and God implicates an ontological criterion of being a real *imago Dei* and also the ontological framework of God's nature. Therefore, we can say that Augustine's *imago Dei* is totally an ontological and epistemological twist. We would elaborate the dynamism in two aspects: *imago Dei's* dynamism in man and *imago Dei's* dynamism in God.

### 1. *Imago Dei*'s Dynamism in Man

In BK XIV, *imago Dei*'s dynamism is displayed mainly through the change in man, and is an important section to Augustine in his *imago Dei* doctrine. It is not difficult to see that BK XIV is the place where Augustine's *imago Dei* flourishes. From the lexicon analysis, we can see that *imago Dei* amounts to 62 entries in BK XIV, the highest hits among the fifteenth books of *De Trinitate*. Furthermore, *imago Dei* here is a dynamic notion. This dynamism is achieved by the fact that Augustine links *imago Dei* and *sapientia* (wisdom) closely together, and through such *sapientia*, the *imago Dei* can be renewed or transformed.<sup>77</sup>

At the very beginning, Augustine has already confined his discussion in BK XIV to the *sapientia* of man,<sup>78</sup> which according to him can also be considered to be the worship of God.<sup>79</sup> More than that, this *sapientia* has a linkage to God in order to make *imago Dei* dynamic. In BK XIV, 3, Augustine states that "the wisdom is the science of human and divine things,"<sup>80</sup> and that this *sapientia* is to be true wisdom only when it comes from God. Augustine states clearly that "this wisdom is so called the wisdom of man, as to be also that of God."<sup>81</sup> If it is only human wisdom, it is in vain. Instead, only a participation in the eternal light would make man become wise.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> *Trin.* XIV, 22-26 (FC, 441-49).

<sup>78</sup> *Trin.* XIV, 1 (FC, 411): "We are now to treat of wisdom, not that of God which is undoubtedly God – for His only-begotten Son is called the Wisdom of God – but we shall speak about the wisdom of man, yet of true wisdom which is according to God, and is the true and principal worship of Him."

<sup>79</sup> *Trin.* XIV, 1 (FC, 411): "(This wisdom)... they called it piety, *pietas*, while among the Greeks the more usual name for piety was eusebia; ..., so that it should rather be called the worship of God [Dei cultus]."

<sup>80</sup> *Trin.* XIV, 3 (FC, 413).

<sup>81</sup> *Trin.* XIV, 15 (FC, 433).

<sup>82</sup> *Trin.* XIV, 15 (FC, 433).

Therefore, through the notion *sapientia*, Augustine manages to discuss the *imago Dei* not in a static sense, but always dynamic and in front of God. *Imago Dei* is a matter of man, but it is a matter of man in front of God. This enables Augustine's *imago Dei* being developed always in a dynamic sense.

Moreover, the dynamism should be further elaborated in the issue of mind's projecting to God. As have been stated, many scholars have emphasized that the real *imago Dei* can only be realized when man comes out of himself and reaches the stage of "remember God – understand God – will God" in BK XIV, 15. However, how should we understand such a shift? Does it mean a pure ontological change, or something more should be noted in the shift? I propose that the shift is not pure ontological, but also involves the noetic dimension of the mind. Therefore the *imago Dei*'s dynamism is ontologically and epistemologically bound.

The emergence of epistemological dimension lies in the fact that the self plays a crucial role in the shift. If we study BK XIV more closely, it is not difficult to detect that Augustine tends to place the self in a highly related position to God instead of emphasizing their distance. Even I would say, self and God is not so much as two separated objects, but can be regarded as one. How can I say this? I find the support in the fact that not only "remember God – understand God – love God" could be regarded as *imago Dei*, but in "remember itself – understand itself – love itself." Augustine himself has justified this point in BK XIV, 11 (although often neglected in scientific studies):

BK XIV, 11: "But we have now finally arrived at that point in our discussion where we begin to consider the principal part of the human mind, by which it knows or can know God, in order that we may find therein an image of God. ..."

"Behold! The mind, therefore, remembers itself, understands itself, and loves itself; if we perceive this, we perceive a trinity, not yet God



indeed, but now finally an image of God."<sup>83</sup>

Augustine points out in these passages that when the mind remembers, understands, and loves itself, it is already an image of God. If this is the case, then how should we understand the shift in the dynamism? BK XIV, 11, together with BK XIV, 15, would tend to lead us to an implication that, the subject involved in being *imago Dei* is not God, but the mind! The shift would be probably not on the concern of ontological issue only, but also an epistemological one. It is the shift in the attentiveness of the mind, the noetic change of the mind that enable the mind to be in some time the *imago Dei*, and some time not the *imago Dei*. That is, the dynamism should be a mind-centered dynamism.

In this mind-centered dynamism, the epistemological elements are displayed in two perspectives: mind's "remember – understand – love" logic, and mind's self-knowing and self-thinking. In analyzing the use of "remember–understand–love," we can see that Augustine has applied the three elements to different objects other than self and God, like faith and outer things. That means, 'remember – understand – love' does not only represent an ontological structure of the mind in some sense, it is a logic Augustine used to illustrate the mind's different situations, to see whether they can meet oneness and threeness at the same time. For example, the faith – triad in BK XIV, 1-6 has shown us that Augustine's main concern for *imago Dei*'s candidacy is not on the object of "remember – understand – love," but the object's relation to mind, or we could say, the mind's status. Then, how could we differentiate mind's status of "remember itself – understand itself – love itself" from that of "remember God – understand God – love God"? Through a very sophisticated and

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<sup>83</sup> *Trin.* XIV, 11 (FC, 425-26).

complicated analysis, Augustine finds a parallelism of the difference to that of mind's self-knowing and self-thinking respectively. And the *imago Dei* is an issue relating to mind's status — to be the most real *imago Dei* when mind is involved in actual thinking of God, and to be *imago Dei*'s candidate due to its ability shown in self-knowing.

## 2. *Imago Dei*'s Dynamism in God

In BK XV, *imago Dei*'s dynamism is displayed in the form that it acts as an epistemological tool of man reaching God. This tool, during exercising its epistemological functions, also facilitates the ontological growth of man and an understanding to God's ontology, and therefore is epistemologically and ontologically bound in nature. First, in BK XV, 1-10, we see Augustine shifts the focus of *imago Dei* to its epistemological nature and links it to *sapientia* of God. This *imago Dei* link, in Augustine's hand, is paradoxical. He plays on the Bible verse Ps. 105:3 [Ps. 104:3-4]: "*Let the heart of those rejoice who seek the Lord; seek the Lord, and be strengthened; seek his face evermore*" to maintain such a paradoxical nature.<sup>84</sup> On one hand, God is incomprehensible because man has to seek His face evermore — the distance between man and God is maintained. On the other hand, the action of seeking evermore also implies that we can nonetheless seek something about God, Otherwise, we would not continue our seeking.<sup>85</sup> In that way, the ability of man to know God is also maintained. Moreover, the

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<sup>84</sup> The Bible verse appears first in BK I,5 (FC, 8), in which Augustine urges the reader to search God through the Bible. Then, in BK XV, 2-3 (FC, 452-53), this Bible verse turns to urge the reader to search God through within the man himself.

<sup>85</sup> *Trin.* XV, 2 (FC, 452) : "Why, then, does he so seek if he comprehends that what he seeks in incomprehensible, unless because he knows that he must not cease as long as he is making progress in the search itself of incomprehensible things, and is becoming better and better by seeking so great a good, which is sought in order to be found, and is found in order to be sought?"

knowledge of God — God's very content — can be secure through *imago Dei* implicitly (BK XIV, 7 – 10), in the way that we can not only understand God's oneness but also His threeness. We can do so, say knowing that God is "Wisdom – Knowledge – Love," because the *imago Dei* linkage ensures a real projection of our human experiences to God, and therefore the triad framework of *imago Dei* can be applied to God.

To Augustine, *imago Dei*'s dynamism in God does not stop here. In BK XV, 11 – 51, Augustine has attempted to illustrate our knowledge of the Trinity through *imago Dei*. He does it through comparing *imago Dei* to the Trinity. However, the way in comparison may shock many readers: It is not a structural comparison between each Person of the Trinity to their correspondences in *imago Dei*, but a dynamic framework in the following ways:

Verses	Likeness / Unlikeness	Comparison Details
BK XV, 11-13	Unlikeness	Overall comparison
BK XV, 17-22	Likeness and Unlikeness	Man's inner word vs Word of God;
Man's knowledge vs Knowledge of God		
BK XV, 23-26	Likeness and Unlikeness	Man's word-knowledge relationship vs God's word-knowledge relationship
BK XV, 27-41	Likeness and Unlikeness	Will of man and Holy Spirit
BK XV, 42-45	Unlikeness	Overall comparison

In the table, I have categorized the comparisons into two sides — the likeness and unlikeness between them. We can see that Augustine's intention goes far beyond a comparison of a static triad framework between God and man. During the comparisons, we can see what Augustine actually compares, is the categories of word,

knowledge, and word – knowledge relationship between God and man, etc, which is surely out of any static perception to the triad framework of "Wisdom – Knowledge – Love" or "mind – knowledge – love." Moreover, with the two facets of comparisons — likeness and unlikeness — Augustine manages to touch both epistemological and ontological dimensions. First, in the unlikeness side, Augustine can illustrate how God's nature is unique — it is so unique that even *imago Dei* as the highest nature in the created world could show predominantly its unlikeness to God. In this way, the unlikeness provides the epistemological elements for him to reach God, because God is know through unlikeness of *imago Dei*. On the other hand, Augustine simultaneously emphasizes the likeness between God and *imago Dei*. In drawing such, he tries to bring in ontological force to the man, and even to God. Examples would be BK XV, 19-20<sup>86</sup> and BK XV, 23,<sup>87</sup> in which the former grounds man's morality to his inborn nature reflected through the knowledge – word relationship, while the latter illustrates solidly the ontological relation of Son to Father – Son is ontologically equal to Father — with the ideal knowledge – word relationship shown in God. Therefore, again, we can see *imago Dei*'s dynamism in God exists in both ontological and epistemological nature.

<sup>86</sup> Augustine brings up the 'word' to the centre in BK XV, 19-20. See *Trin.* XV, 19-20 (FC, 475-79).

<sup>87</sup> Augustine explicitly takes the word-knowledge relationship as a kind of comparing object, which occupies a substantial section in BK XV, 17-18, and then BK XV, 23-26. BK XV, 23 displays the word-knowledge relation within God Himself. See *Trin.* XV, 23 (FC, 486).

## VIII. Significance: Possibilities in Relational Perspective of *Imago Dei*'s Dynamism

### 1. Significance of *Imago Dei*'s Dynamism to Self – God Relation

We have shown in many ways that Augustine's dynamic *imago Dei* exists in both ontological and epistemological dimension. Such a dual dimension is important in aligning man and God together with an ontological-epistemological twist. The ontological dimension affirms it as a reality. It is a real nature in man. The epistemological dimension affirms it as an analogy. It is a projection to God the Trinity. As the two dimensions are twisted together, Augustine brings anthropology and Trinity to a very close relationship. We can say that Augustine's anthropology is a theological anthropology with grounds in trinity, and his trinity is an anthropological trinity with ground in human reflection. Such a twisting may help us rediscover the relationship between God and man, which involves his identity (anthropology) and our speakability of God (Trinity). In modern world, man tends to be self-affirmed, and God is unspeakable. These two tendencies make Christianity become irrelevant in this age. How to connect them together, either on the side of anthropology, or on the side of God, becomes one of our most important modern theological issues. One example is Eberhard Jungel's *God as the Mystery of the World*.<sup>88</sup> In this widely acclaimed monograph, what the theologian aims to achieve is also on God–man relation — how the Triune God interact with us to affirm our knowledge of God, and how we can find our Christian

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<sup>88</sup> Eberhard Jungel, *God as the Mystery of the Word: On the Foundation of the Theology of the Crucified One in the Dispute between Theism and Atheism*, trans. Darrell L. Guder (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983).

foundation on the transcendent God.<sup>89</sup> In Augustine, we can see that his *imago Dei* doctrine provides resources to tackle such interaction between man and God. Although his context is quite different from our modern age, his approach may bring us some lights to the issue.

Moreover, with such dynamism, Augustine can maintain a unique understanding on the self–God relation. Searching God cannot rely on the outside world, but on interiority of the self. Many scholars come up with different interpretations to this self–God relation. Some (like John Cavadini, Van Fleteren) may regard it as mystical ascent, which implies the interaction is unknown. Others like Philip Cary innovatively claim that Augustine's self is constructed as a place where God can sit in.<sup>90</sup> That means, the interior search can be done because there is an inner space created in the self.<sup>91</sup> But after our analysis of the *imago Dei* doctrine, we can see that self–God relation to Augustine is not a kind of spatial interaction. Instead, with the ontological and epistemological dimension hand in hand, Augustine can depict self and God as an inter-subjectivity relationship. In one of the last paragraphs of *De Trinitate* (XV, 44), we can see a conclusion of the interaction:

"If they did know this and did cleanse their hearts by an unfeigned faith, then they would perhaps perceive that He, of whom their mind is this mirror, is to be sought through this, and in the meantime seen through this, in whatever way He can, in order that He may be able to be seen face to face, who is now see through a mirror."<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Jungel, *God as the Mystery of the Word*, 3-14.

<sup>90</sup> Philip Cary, *Augustine's Invention of the Inner Self: The Legacy of a Christian Platonist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>91</sup> Cary, *Augustine's Invention of the Inner Self*, 125-39.

<sup>92</sup> *Trin.* XV, XV, 44 (FC, 511-12).

Here we can see that the *imago Dei*, the mirror, is not the mind alone, but a seeking mind (*conjiciens*). Van Bavel gives us a good explanation: seeing by conjecturing that which we now see only through an image; such is our knowledge in the interim.<sup>93</sup> What makes God become knowable to the self? It is never due to the static structure of the self. The analogy between self and God is always in an active sense. The activities of the mind, the ongoing seeking, make the *imago Dei* possible. Moreover, such an active mind also presupposes an existence of God. Gilson points out, the Augustinian metaphysics starts from the activities of the intellect — the intellect seeking truth.<sup>94</sup> But once the intellect conceives truth, it cannot be the immediate sufficient cause of its truth, and God's existence becomes necessary.<sup>95</sup> Therefore, the *imago Dei* doctrine always enables self as subject at the same time God as subject. And the *imago Dei* is actualized only when these two subjects are in active interaction.

## 2. Relational Perspectives in Augustine's Theology

The *imago Dei*'s dynamism, in its ontological and epistemological twist, could also open the possibilities of relational perspectives in Augustine's theology. The psychological triads of Augustine have long been accused of contributing to the western individualistic self staying on reflexive action as "remembering itself – knowing itself – loving itself." However, the dynamism could lead us to a new point of view. With a dynamic *imago Dei*, the relational perspective could lie in the complex interaction between man and God — the God–self relation,

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<sup>93</sup> Tarsius van Bavel, "God in between Affirmation and Negation According to Augustine," in *Collectanea Augustiniana*, vol. 2: *Augustine: Presbyter factus sum*, ed. J. T. Lienhard, E. C. Muller and R. J. Teske (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 1993), 84.

<sup>94</sup> E. Gilson, "Future of Augustinian Metaphysics," trans. E. Bullough, in *D'ary* (1945), 296-97.

<sup>95</sup> Gilson, "Future of Augustinian Metaphysics," 298.

although the tone may be somewhat different from that of the Eastern tradition emphasizing the communion within God the three Persons. The ontological and epistemological dimension twist would enable Augustine to expound the self beyond pure ontological boundaries. Mind or self, in light of *imago Dei* doctrine, cannot be any isolated autonomy leading to individualism. Moreover, ontology and epistemology, in Augustine's *imago Dei*, are merged together to make a man a relational man: man's structure is merged with activities, man's nature is merged with knowledge, and man's identity is grounded in God. I would explain the nature of the mind and the three pairs in more detail in the following.

#### **a. *Imago Dei* and a Relational Mind**

In Augustine, *imago Dei* is seated in mind, yet it goes beyond of framework of mind. In which part of the mind is *imago Dei* seated? It is an interesting question but may not be able to find an easy answer. On one hand, although the mind could be divided into the levels of *scientia* and *sapientia*, Augustine has reminded us in BK XII that the two levels are inter-related to each other. That means, mind itself is an indivisible whole. On the other hand, the *imago Dei* is embedded within the psychological triads, not through any of the individual triads, but through their patterns. That means, Augustine never said of any substance within man as *imago Dei*. The psychological triad "Mind – knowledge – love" is not *imago Dei* because it is an ontological counterpart to God's structure. It is only a direction for a real *imago Dei* to come. And when it comes to what Augustine regards as real *imago Dei* "remember God – understand God – will God," the ontological concern of self is shifted to an action to God. Such a relation between *imago Dei* and psychological triads have been explained through the ontological and epistemological characteristics of *imago Dei*'s dynamism. In light of this, what can we say about the nature of mind? I would say that it is totally relational. *Imago Dei* is



found in the mind, yet to be a site for *imago Dei* requires the mind to be relational. It has to fulfill the psychological triads in order to bring out *imago Dei*, or in other words, instead of being framed by structure, it should be identified with its unlimited mental activities. As such, a mind could never be an individual mind.

### **b. Structure and Activities: A Dynamic Analogy between God and Man**

In our analysis, we can see that *imago Dei* is an analogy. But it is not a static analogy in that we are searching for a pure structural comparison. If this is so, then Augustine can justly be accused of individualism because man's structure is the focus in exemplifying God.<sup>96</sup> However, through our studies, we can see the comparisons are a mixture of structures and activities. "Mind – knowledge – love" in some sense represents man's essence. But more importantly, when it brings out God's triad content as "Wisdom – Knowledge – Love," the comparisons are not structurally fit. Instead, we can see, from time to time, Augustine introduces activities in replacing the structure dimensions in BK XIV and XV. It is the mind's activities — mind's knowing and thinking — that trigger the shift from self to God in BK XIV, and it is the intra-relations instead of pure entities — like God's knowledge, word-knowledge relationship — are under discussion in

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<sup>96</sup> Colin Gunton quoted Christoph Schwoebel's point on individualism: "A starting point in substance, as distinct from one in the threefold economy, gives the whole development a radically different shape. He points out that individualism is engendered by the fact that for a substance it is of no concern whether it is exemplified by one, three or a hundred individuals. To demonstrate exemplification in one individual is quite sufficient, and on neoplatonic presuppositions necessary in the case of God." Colin Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," *SJTh* 43 (1990): 47 (n. 17). To me, what it means is that Gunton and Schwoebel take Augustine's comparison between God and man as a structural comparison. And the result is any one of man's individual structure can already display God, therefore, man can live alone with his own and no community is needed.

BK XV. Such a dynamic analogy would lead us to see that it is relational self — a self always embedded with activities.

### **c. Nature and Knowledge: A Dynamic Growth of Man**

*Imago Dei* empowers a dynamic growth of man. This dynamism mixes nature with knowledge together. To Augustine, man's growth is not only an ontological sanctification but also a growth in knowledge of God. Man's nature is then not a static entity, but a dynamic knowing being. This has been shown through our analysis on *imago Dei*'s effect to Augustine's anthropology. Augustine's vision of man is a moral anthropology, with the morality grounded ontologically in man's nature. In other words, man's very nature cannot stand as an isolated being. Being a man, he gets to know, and he gets to be moral when his knowledge of God grows. Moreover, such a dynamic growth ensures man's subjectivity. Although man is born tending to God by nature, the tendency is not a passive movement. Rather, it is man's real search of God and a real change of himself, because in the process the mind needs to be in an active knowing and thinking. The noetic elements secure the self moving in its consciousness. How can a knowing be a real knowing, then, unless man lives a relational life. That means, man's very nature requires him to aware of other's presence, he has to lives with the otherness.

### **d. Man and God: A Dynamic Relation between Anthropology and Trinity**

*Imago Dei* also facilitates a dynamic relation between anthropology and Trinity. Anthropology and Trinity should be two different categories in modern dogmas. Aligning them together would run the risk of blurring Creator-creature distinction, and may consequently ruin both doctrines. However, in Augustine, while in maintaining the orthodoxy, he tried to interpret one in light of the

other. This has been shown clearly in our analysis on *imago Dei*'s effect to the Trinity. God the Trinity is incomprehensible, yet it is knowable to a certain extent when we come through the tool of *imago Dei*. The ultimate purpose of *imago Dei* does not stay on portraying any transcendence of man, but on a projection to God the Trinity. What does that imply? On one hand, a real authentic anthropology would not be an isolated doctrine, as it can only find its place when it is used to express the Trinity; on the other hand, a real authentic Trinity is never a pure logic. Although being a mystery, the Trinity breaks into human knowledge through *imago Dei* — our very nature of being man. God would surely be a personal God, and a human God, otherwise, our nature can never envisage such knowledge. Such a dynamic relation, then, leads us to see that man must be relational. Man's identity is grounded in God.

## **IX. Final Reflection: The Nature of *Imago Dei* on Protestant's Viewpoint**

### **1. The Central Question: A Natural Theology or Not?**

After drilling into the phenomenon of the dynamism of Augustine's *imago Dei* doctrine, we would inevitably touch the issue on its nature: what is actually the nature of *imago Dei*? Or what the nature of human being is in its relation to God the creator? This kind of questions is especially important to us in our Protestant Tradition. Augustine's psychological approach to Trinity, beyond all doubts, sets to establish a bridge from human nature to Trinity. We have seen in the thesis how the bridge is built upon an ontological-epistemological motiv, a motiv that we conclude as linking up structure with activities, nature with knowledge, anthropology with Trinity. Such a close affinity

between man and God, however, would immediately get some Protestants agitated on the tendency of a natural theology. If Augustine is just a former Aquinas, who regards man's nature to be a direct contact to God, then no matter how dynamic Augustine's *imago Dei* doctrine is, it can only work within the framework of natural theology and could only contribute to Catholicism. In such case, Augustine's destiny in our reformation tradition could only be waning — he could only be "anathematized"!

Such worries of Protestants could be explicated in three ways. They are mutually related to each other, yet they deserve separate discussions to render a more detailed reflection on the issue. The first is the nature of analogy the *imago Dei* displays. If psychological triads could establish a direct projection to God, then is the proposed analogy seemingly a Catholic *Analogia entis* instead of *analogia fidei*? The second is Augustine's relation to Neoplatonism. The psychological triads, as the thesis has shown, are rooted in the Neoplatonic tradition. Does it mean that the Augustinian theology, especially in our case the *imago Dei* doctrine, is just an extension of the emanation dialectic of the One-Mind-Soul? Thirdly, under this trend, the Christological tone in Augustine is far lower than our modern emphases. It would then lead to another worry: without Christ's mediation, how can Augustine gain an authentic knowledge of God and a real relationship between man and God? I think these three sets of questions would help us think deeply on the same central issue: whether or not Augustine falls into natural theology. In my reflection, I strongly believe that Augustine would not fall into this snare. Although I admit that a strong tension exists, Augustine's theological elements could provide a way out. In the following, I would discuss along the above three sets of questions, and display the alternatives that Augustinian theology could provide.

## 2. *Analogia Entis* or *Analogia Fidei*

*Analogia entis* and *analogia fidei*, or analogy of being and analogy of faith, is a theological debate between the Catholic and Protestant camp in the twentieth century.<sup>97</sup> It centers on whether there can be any natural knowledge available to human person apart from Christian revelation. That is, is there any natural point of contact between human nature and the divine God? The *Analogia entis* approach would say Yes, whereas the *analogia fidei* would give the answer No. Although the issue could be traced back to its long tradition, the debate is actually a modern one. Only until the early twentieth century has the issue become an important Catholic-Protestant differentiation.<sup>98</sup> The Jesuit theologian Erich Przywara, with his famous work *Analogia entis*,<sup>99</sup> proposes that the term could stand for an explicit resolution to all fundamental theological questions, and therefore is an authentic Catholic approach to God – man relation. This proclamation has triggered quite a fierce reaction from the renowned Protestant theologian Karl Barth, who proposes that the God-man analogy should be instead understood as *analogia fidei*,<sup>100</sup> a phrase rooted in the Apostle Paul's admonition to the Christians in Rome in the *Epistle to the Romans* 12:6.<sup>101</sup> To Barth, there is no natural knowledge of man to God, or it would just be a

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<sup>97</sup> Many may think that the term has its long tradition back to Thomas Aquinas. But many scholars, like Laurence Paul Hemming and Niels C. Nielsen, have helped us see that Thomas Aquinas has never himself used the term. See Laurence Paul Hemming, "Analogia non Entis sed Entitatis: The Ontological Consequences of the Doctrine of Analogy," *IJST* 6:2 (2004): 118-29; Niels C. Nielsen, "Roman Catholic Magisterium and the Analogy of Being," *The Lutheran Quarterly* 8:3 (1956): 213-24.

<sup>98</sup> Nielsen, "Roman Catholic Magisterium and the Analogy of Being," 217.

<sup>99</sup> Erich Przywara, *Analogia Entis* (München: J. Kösel & F. Pustet, 1932).

<sup>100</sup> This phrase is especially developed in Karl Barth's *Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum* (London: SCM Press, 1960) and *Church Dogmatics I/1: The Doctrine of the Word of God* (London: T&T Clark, 1975)

<sup>101</sup> Ro 12:6, "We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith." (analogy of faith).

blasphemy to Christ. To him, *Analogia entis* should be even regarded as an invention of Anti-Christ.<sup>102</sup> Such issue also causes a split between Karl Barth and Emil Brunner, in which the former accuses the later of the *Analogia entis* approach.<sup>103</sup> These topics were then also revisited by the Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar in his ecumenical landmark, *The Theology of Karl Barth*.<sup>104</sup> All these debates have demonstrated the importance of this issue. And interestingly, both camps attempt to trace their tradition back to Augustine!<sup>105</sup>

With a view on all these modern theological disputes, we can now move our reflections on Augustine's own theology. Which one would Augustine choose in describing the human nature, *analogia entis* or *analogia fidei*? Would he accept a natural point of contact between man and God? Although he approaches the Trinity through an

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<sup>102</sup> Barth, *Church Dogmatics I/1*, xiii. Karl Barth here clearly states his viewpoint on *analogia entis*, which deserves a quotation: "I can see no third alternative between that exploitation of the *analogia entis* which is legitimate only on the basis of Roman Catholicism, between the greatness and misery of a so-called natural knowledge of God in the sense of the Vaticanum, and a Protestant theology which draws from its own source, which stands on its own feet, and which is finally liberated from this secular misery. Hence I have had no option but to say No at this point. I regard the analogia entis as the invention of Antichrist, and I believe that because of it it is impossible ever to become a Roman Catholic, all other reasons for not doing so being to my mind short-sighted and trivial."

<sup>103</sup> It is a famous debate in the twentieth century on *imago Dei*. Details pls refer to Emil Brunner's "Nature and Grace: A Contribution to the Discussion with Karl Barth" and Karl Barth's "No! Answer to Emil Brunner," in Emil Brunner and Karl Barth, *Natural Theology: Comprising "Nature and Grace" by Professor Dr. Emil Brunner and the reply "No!" by Dr. Karl Barth* (Mohr Siebeck, 2002).

<sup>104</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992).

<sup>105</sup> Przywara believes that *analogia entis* has appeared in at least six different forms in Roman Catholic interpretation, namely, early Patristic, Augustinian, Thomist, Scotist, Molinist, and that characteristic of the ideas of Newman. He especially makes Augustine fundamental to his defense of this position in his *Augustinus, Die Gestalt als Gefuge* (Leipzig, 1934). On the other hand, Barth argues that the analogy of faith is implicit in the theologies of Augustine, Anselm, Bernard of Clairvaux, Luther, and Calvin (CD I/1). See also Nielsen, "Roman Catholic Magisterium and the Analogy of Being," 215-17.

inward search, I would still maintain that Augustine prefers *analogia fidei* to *analogia entis*. We can see this preference clearly if we drill into some related elements in the disputes. First, as Von Balthasar has rightly pointed out, the *analogia entis* and *analogia fidei* is a question of relation between nature and grace, or between the order of creation and the order of salvation.<sup>106</sup> Epistemologically it becomes a matter concerning the relationship between faith and reason. A natural theology, or *Analogia entis*, would base a natural knowledge of God on the ability of reason. But it is not the case of Augustine. To him faith and reason are intertwined together. His often cited Bible verse Isaiah 7:9 (LXX and Vg.), "*Unless you believe you will not understand*", can lead us to see three basic points in the relationship between faith and reason<sup>107</sup>: (1) The attempt to gain knowledge or understanding without belief, as Porphyry and other proud philosophers do, is futile. (2) Faith is a stage on the way toward knowledge. It is not yet understanding, but it seeks understanding, and understanding is attained only through faith. (3) The quest for knowledge, under these conditions, is not only legitimate but gains an independent validity and moves beyond mere faith. Therefore, although Augustine upholds the value of reason, I believe he cannot accept its natural ability in gaining God's knowledge.

Moreover, we can find an explicit use of term *regula fidei* in Augustine's theology, a term that is same as *analogia fidei*.<sup>108</sup> Through *regula fidei*, he emphasizes that our knowledge of God is based on the Holy Scripture. Especially in the context Augustine's *imago Dei*

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<sup>106</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), 136-37.

<sup>107</sup> Eugene TeSelle, "Faith," in *ATA*, 348.

<sup>108</sup> Wieslaw Dawidowski, "*Regula Fidei* in Augustine: Its Use and Function," *AugStud* 35:2 (2004): 253.

doctrine — *De Trinitate*, we can see that to Augustine our authentic knowledge of Trinity is in some sense mediated by *regula fidei*. In searching the Trinity, Augustine sets up the programs with Bible interpretation (BK I - IV), and when it comes to the very last of BK XV, Augustine ends up with a prayer, in which he points out that again it is the *regula fidei* steering his direction: "... Directing my course according to this rule of faith, insofar as I could, and insofar as You made it possible for me, I sought You, and desired to see with my understanding that which I believed, and I have argued and labored much."<sup>109</sup> That means, the searching of Trinity, no matter through the logic approach (BK V – VII) or through the psychological approach (BK VIII – XV), Augustine understands these efforts not just as a mere speculation, but a searching directed under the Biblical teaching, under the *regula fidei*. How can a man like this believe in a natural knowledge of God without divine revelation? The emphases on faith and on bible would surely safeguard Augustine's theology against *Analogia entis*.

### 3. Neoplatonism or Christendom

The second related reflection is on Augustine's relation to Neoplatonism. A close affinity of Augustine's theology to Neoplatonism has indeed induced many's worries. If Augustine aligns himself too much with Neoplatonism, how can we make sure his theology is an authentic Christian thought rather than only an extension of the contemporary pagan philosophy? This is especially the case in the psychological triads. With *interiore modo*, man can

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<sup>109</sup> *Trin.* XV, 51: "Ad hanc regulam fidei dirigens intentionem meam quantum potui, quantum me posse fecisti, quaesivi te et desideravi intellectu videre quod credidi et multum disputaui et laboraui."



search God the Trinity. Such a paradigm shares similar methodology to Neoplatonism in depicting man's journey to God (the One), which would seemingly lead to a kind of natural theology or mysticism in which man can unite with God. *Interiore modo* is a dangerous approach, as it seems to presuppose a divine portion of man's nature. How can man reach God through the psychological triads? What is the content of the triads? If a man can search the Trinity within himself, then a straight forward implication can only be that a divine portion of God is originally implanted within each man, and the inward search is a kind of rediscovery of man's divinity. It could only be natural theology in that case, or even worse, a pan-theism!

The fact that Augustine is deeply influenced by Neoplatonism is in no dispute. The event of 'quosdam libros Platoniorum' in Conf VIII, 2, in many scholars' viewpoints, is a great milestone to Augustine's intellectual development. Indeed, within the help of Neoplatonic ideas Augustine has succeeded to estrange himself from the materialistic understanding of God in the Manichean heresy.<sup>110</sup> He has also employed many similar themes in illustrating his Christian beliefs, like conception of beauty, vision of God, purification of the soul, etc.<sup>111</sup> However, if we think over Augustine's psychological triads, I think we can see Augustine's conscious deviation from Neoplatonism. One remarkable distinction between them would be their different understanding of the relationship between God and man. In Neoplatonism the relation is a mystical union, whereas in Augustine the otherness of God is consciously safeguarded. According to the Neoplatonic emanation, no matter how the three hypostases interact with each other, the ultimate aim is on a union of the three into the

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<sup>110</sup> Conf. VII,2 (Henry, 112).

<sup>111</sup> Anne-Marie Bowery, "Plotinus, *The Enneads*," in *ATA*, 655-56.

One.<sup>112</sup> However, an ontological union never comes in Augustine's case. The identities of the triad elements are always upheld, even when they go to the perfect stage. It is the case we see in "mind – knowledge – love," in which he says that when the triad elements are perfect they would be equal. The oneness still does not reduce the threeness.<sup>113</sup> Even more, when Augustine goes through the *interiore modo* through BK VIII – BK XV, the individualities of the triad elements are still maintained. We can see his effort easily when we realize what the later half of BK XV attempts to undertake — the differentiation between "beget" and "proceed" (BK XV, 45-50).<sup>114</sup>

Moreover, Neoplatonism could lead to mysticism due to its mystic understanding of God. The Neoplatonic God, the Ultimate One, is beyond being and non-being.<sup>115</sup> To Plotinus, only such a condition can represent the transcendence of the One. The One jumps out of all kinds of categorization. As a result, we can say that the One is unknowable and the soul can only approach it through mystical union. But it is never the case in Augustine. God is not beyond knowledge to Augustine. Although God is ineffable, yet He is not incomprehensible. It is the concept Augustine strives to explicate in BK XV through the biblical theme of "seek his face evermore."<sup>116</sup> More than that, we have

<sup>112</sup> *Enneads*, V.I, 1.

<sup>113</sup> *Trin.* IX, 4 (FC, 274): "Therefore, the mind itself, its love and its knowledge are a kind of trinity; these three are one, and when they are perfect they are equal. For if anyone loves himself less than he is – if, for example, the mind of man loves itself as much as the body of man is to be loved, whereas the mind is more than the body – he is guilty of sin and his love is not perfect." In explaining the perfection stage, Augustine resorts to the equality of the triad elements. And we can see the equality he refers to maintains the individuality of the triad elements, like 'love'.

<sup>114</sup> *Trin.* XV, 45-50 (FC, 513-22).

<sup>115</sup> *Enneads*, V.II, 1. An introductory of this concept, see J. M. Rist, *Plotinus: The Road to Reality* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 21-37.

<sup>116</sup> *Esp. Trin.* XV, 2-3 (FC, 452-53)

seen in the thesis that in maintaining the validity of the psychological triads to image God, Augustine employs the noetic tools of "the mind knows itself" and "the mind thinks itself." These noetic dimensions point to the fact that in Augustine's program of ascending to God is not mysticism, but is always a journey kept in rationalistic activities. Man can gain the vision of God (knowledge) only at a conscious thinking condition.

How do these differences help safeguard Augustine's psychological triads against the tendency of natural theology? Actually, the differences help us realize some characteristics of the psychological triads. First, they are not some divine implantations from God so that man can counterpart God. Rather, they are a framework of "threeness-in-oneness" that Augustine is in search. Second, Augustine is not just searching the natural "threeness-in-oneness" framework, as it would again fall into an attempt of natural knowledge of God. Instead, the searching is always kept in noetic activities — knowing and thinking. Through knowing and thinking, Augustine clearly points out that the "threeness-in-oneness" framework would come to perfection only when it is a God-directed knowing and thinking activities (remember God – understand God – know God). That means, "threeness-in-oneness" to Augustine is not an empty concept, but a concept that should be understood together with God. Although how Augustine can jump to the God-directed thinking is pending for further investigation, his intention is clear: the psychological triads are not pure Neoplatonic extensions, and should not be regarded as an attempt of natural theology.

#### 4. Christology or Pneumatology

In my understanding of Augustine's *imago Dei*, his anthropology is necessarily related to Christology. But the kind of relation would not be a kind like Christocentrism. It is especially true in establishing *imago Dei*'s relation to the Trinity through the notion of *sapientia*. As

such, I do not mean that we can overlook the salvation event of Christ to man. What I want to react against, is the overuse of the ontological paradigms of Christ's two nature in building all the theology. In the following, I would first briefly re-state my standpoint, and then explore a new perspective in understanding the *sapientia* of man – a way link to Pneumatology.

As we may see, the nature of *imago Dei* could help Augustine take a more balanced perception on Christology. Modern Christology or modern perception of Augustinian Christology, play too much on the ontological nature of Jesus Christ to maintain God's relevance to the world. They would say that, as Jesus Christ is human and God at the same time, a strong linkage has been established between the created nature and the divine nature. And in application we can then affirm the relationship between the world (created nature) and God (divine nature). However, such kind of relationship is too much radicalized that I believe it destroys the boundary between Creator and creation. In this case, world is not only upheld by God's divine power – world is intrinsically part of God! I have employed the *imago Dei* doctrine in responding to such pan-Christological reading of Augustine. Especially the paradigm of *scientia* – *sapientia* has been picked up for illustration. Some scholars like Lewis Ayres would say that Christ is also *scientia* and *sapientia*, so our movement from *scientia* to *sapientia* takes place within our participation in Christ.<sup>117</sup> But in my point of view, *scientia* – *sapientia* is a relationship between man and God. It would go too far if we rely too much on Christ's two natures. However, my interpretation also leads to a problem: how can the *sapientia* of man link to God? Does it propose also that there is a direct contact between man and God?

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<sup>117</sup> Ayres, "The Christological Context of Augustine's *De Trinitate* XIII," 111-39.

With the overwhelming interest in Christology, many neglect that in our relation to God, Holy Spirit also plays a very important role! In this case, I think the Third Person of the Trinity could lead a way out. Why the *sapientia* of man can link to God? It is not that within the nature of man some portion of divine *sapientia* is inherently implanted. It is, however, the *sapientia* being dynamically activated through the Holy Spirit. If we think over the nature of psychological triads, we can see that resources of that kind are highly available.

First, in elaborating the psychological triads, the third element — love or will — is always depicted as a link to uphold the relationship of the other two. This role is clear when Augustine illustrate the external and internal sight triads in BK XI – "the body that is seen – vision – attention of the mind" (XI, 2) and "body retained in memory – inner vision – will" (XI, 9). The internal relation of the triad could only be maintained with the bridge function of the third element. The "attention of the mind" keeps the vision, and the "will" sustain the memory.<sup>118</sup> The uniting work, to Augustine, resorts to the third elements. Then in the case of God – man relation, how can we neglect the possible bridging role of the Holy Spirit, the ultimate third element in God's Holy Triad?

Moreover, we can say that Augustine takes Holy Spirit as an important role in his epistemology through the notion of love. As we

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<sup>118</sup> *Trin.* XI, 5 (FC, 321): "But the will possesses such power in uniting these two that it moves the sense to be formed to that thing which is seen, and keeps it fixed on it when it has been formed. And if it is so violent that it can be called love, or desire, or passion, it likewise exerts a powerful influence on the rest of the body of this living being."

*Trin.* XI, 7 (FC, 325-26): "And what the intention of the will is towards a body that is seen, and the vision to be combined with it, in order that out of the three a kind of unity may arise there, even though they differ in nature, that the same intention of the will is towards combining the image of the body which is in the memory, and the vision of thought, that is, the form which the eye of the mind has taken into itself when it turns to the memory, so that here too a certain unity may be brought about from three..."

have shown in the thesis, while in shaping up his psychological triad cluster in BK VIII - X, at the same time Augustine also takes knowledge and love as the very centre of discussion. In the triad 'mind – knowledge – love', he especially illustrates the necessary unity of love and understanding in gaining knowledge. It is the force of love — the curiosity — that impels the mind to seek the full possession of that knowledge which it partially contains (BK IX, 4). Therefore, if we want to know God, we can make it through love. Furthermore, Augustine's illustration on love does not stay only on the human level. In BK VIII, he starts a discussion on the ontology of love, which leads me believe the implication is pointing to God. If this is so, we can explain why Augustine can hold that love can leads to know the unknown God — a theme that is quite mystical in BK VIII. To my interpretation, God's love is intrinsically implanted to the love of man, to the universal virtue of pursuing the good. And such kind of love can only be God-initiated.

More than that, the Holy Spirit is not only the Love but also the Gift. The love shares the attribute of gift that it is self-imparting.<sup>119</sup> It echoes the elaboration of BK XV in which Augustine consider Holy Spirit as agent of our transformation and of our participation in the life of God.<sup>120</sup> As Rowan Williams has rightly pointed out, the Holy Spirit is called love, not because the Spirit alone is love, but because the effect of the Spirit's work is the effect of love!<sup>121</sup> Why can man come to share the *sapientia* of God? It is done through man's growing in the desire of God (growth in love), in the process of which the Holy Spirit self-impart into man to make man a real *imago Dei – sapientia* and

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<sup>119</sup> I indebt this view to Rowan William exploration on sapientia. See Williams, "*Sapientia* and the Trinity: Reflections on the *De Trinitate*," 317-32.

<sup>120</sup> *Trin.* XV, 32-38 (FC, 496-505)

<sup>121</sup> Williams, "*Sapientia* and the Trinity: Reflections on the *De Trinitate*," 327.

love is inseparable. And therefore, although upholding a direct contact between *sapientia* of man and *sapientia* of God, Augustine's *imago Dei* can still escape from natural theology. The *sapientia* of man is not a natural implantation, but a divine activation through the endowment of Holy Spirit.

## ABSTRACT

This article is a study on Augustine's *imago Dei* concept, basing on *De Trinitate* BK XIV - XV. This concept originates from the Bible and is important to our interpretation of doctrine of man in all eras. It is especially the case in Augustine's theology. With *imago Dei*, Augustine builds up his well known psychological analogies — searching the Trinity through an inward search (*interiore modo*). Therefore, in Augustine's system, the concept *imago Dei* is important in our understanding of his anthropology, Trinity, and the God – man relation.

The way that Augustine can link *imago Dei* to psychological analogies, and so to both anthropology and Trinity, is through the dynamism of *imago Dei*. This research proposes that this dynamism exists in a dual dimension — ontological and epistemological. Such two dimensions are so inextricably bound together that enables Augustine to develop a growing anthropology and also establish a firm projection to Trinity through *imago Dei*. The significance of such dynamism is that it skillfully links anthropology and Trinity together, so that the psychological analogies are no longer regarded as an isolated inward search, but in the process of which displaying a kind of relationality between man and God.

## 撮 要

本文主要研究奧古斯丁神學中「神的形象」(*imago Dei*)這個概念，研究範圍集中於*De Trinitate*的卷十四及十五。「神的形象」這概念沿自聖經，是建構基督教人觀的一重要基石。對奧古斯丁而言，這概念尤為重要。透過「神的形象」所反映神與人的聯繫，他搭建出心靈類比這方法來理解三位一體。因此，在奧氏的思想系統中，「神的形象」不單停於人觀，這概念之重要性實在延至人觀、三一觀及神人關係。

奧氏搭建心靈類比，以至藉此開發其人觀及三一觀，乃源於對「神的形象」作一動態性的理解。對奧氏而言，「神的形象」是會成長的，不但如此，它更能從人一方伸延至上帝彼岸，因此是一動態觀念。本論文提倡，這動態性包括兩個向度——本體性及知識性。我們要從這兩個角度去理解奧氏的動態神的形象，並且在奧氏的闡述中，這兩個向度環環相扣，以致他能發展出一動態人觀，以及能從人的內在反照延伸至對上帝三位一體的真實理解。這動態觀念的重要性，在於巧妙地連結起奧氏的人觀及三一觀，以致我們不須將心靈類比



理解為一鼓吹個人主義的神學建構，而是從其過程我們能開發出一種新的神人關係性。