

Augustine on the Friendship and the Ascent Towards God¹

Naoki KAMIMURA, Tokyo Metropolitan University

INTRODUCTION

During his long life Augustine's evaluation of friendship remained firm and constant. "Augustine will never be alone."² Examples of his appreciating friendship from his youth would be found in the *Confessions*, in which friendship is one of the principle motifs of his mind. In the villa of Verecundus at Cassiciacum, and in the successive settlements at Thagaste and Hippo, Augustine had always had a group of friends who, providing one another with valuable help, espoused the ideal of divine contemplation. The fruits and difficulties of friendship in his later life would be clear in some of his letters which expressed his affectionate relations with friends.

Although Augustine did not write any systematic treatises on friendship, a good deal of his reflection permits us to draw from it his ideas about friendship. The study of Augustine's thought of friendship has focused on three pivotal problems, that is the influence of the Classical theory on his scheme, the characteristics of his views, and its evolution in his works.³ In what follows (1) I will explore the development of his understanding of the friendship and its source. (2) I will notice his descriptions on the ascent of the soul. What significance does it hold for the basis of friendship? (3) Finally, I shall explain a shift in the way in which Augustine dealt with the foundation of

¹ Abbreviations:

amic. = Cicero, *Laelius, on Friendship & The Dream of Scipio*, ed. J. G. F. Powell, Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1990.

conf. = *Œuvres de saint Augustin*, 13-14, éd. A. Solignac et al., Bibliothèque Augustinienne (= BA), Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1962.

mor. = *Sancti Augustini Opera*, ed. J. B. Bauer, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (= CSEL), 90, Wien: Tempsky, 1992.

s. dom. m. = *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Opera: De sermone domini in monte libros duos*, ed. A. Mutzenbecher, Corpus Christianorum series latina (= CCL), 35, Turnhout: Brepols, 1967.

vera rel. = *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Opera*, ed. I. Martin et K. D. Daur, CCL, 32, Turnhout: Brepols, 1962: pp. 187-260.

² P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*, London: Faber & Faber, 1967, p. 61.

³ For some important references on friendship in Classical and Augustinian thoughts, see D. X. Burt, *Friendship and Society: An Introduction to Augustine's Practical Philosophy*, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999; J. T. Lienhard, "Friendship with God, Friendship in God: Traces in St. Augustine", *Collectanea Augustiniana, Augustine: Mystic and Mystagogue*, ed. F. Van Fleteren et al., New York: Peter Lang, 1994, pp. 207-229; M. A. McNamara, *Friendship in Saint Augustine*, Fribourg, Switzerland: The University Press, 1958; J. F. Monagle, "Friendship in St. Augustine's Biography: Classical Notion of Friendship", *Augustinian Studies* 2 (1971) pp. 81-92; T. J. Van Bavel, "The Influence of Cicero's Ideal of Friendship on Augustine", *Augustiniana Traiectina*, Communications présentées au Colloque International d'Utrecht 13-14 novembre 1986, édit. par J. den Boeft et J. van Oort, Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1987, pp. 59-72; C. White, *Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 1992.

friendship, which is tied in some way to the love of neighbour. The examination of this subject will concern his early writings up to the *Confessions* (397/401), especially around the time when his group attempted to found a coenobitic life at Thagaste (388-391) and then he was ordained to the priest at Hippo (January 391). For what I intend to do in this paper is to clarify the context of his changing view on friendship, in which the early Augustine addressed himself to a transformation of the mould into which he was no doubt about being able to pour his future.

THE SOURCE OF FRIENDSHIP

Augustine reviews his moral past in the *Confessions* and carefully puts friendship on a high place. In the middle of his account of the pear-theft with his boyhood friends, he speaks about the “brightly lit pathway of friendship”.⁴ But also he attributes the theft of the pears to friendship too unfriendly: “Friendship can be a dangerous enemy”.⁵ What does Augustine think of friendship and its source?

Augustine’s mature thought of friendship is found in the *Confessions* IV.⁶ He tells in detail the close friendship formed with an unnamed young man, calling it “had been sweet to me beyond all the sweetnesses of life that I had experienced”.⁷ In the midst of his story, Augustine presents a clear definition of friendship and its relation to the love of neighbour.

it was less than a *true friendship* which is not possible unless you bond together those who cleave to one another by the love which ‘is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us’ (Rom. 5:5).⁸

‘Happy is the person who loves you’ (Tobit 13:18) and his friend in you, and his enemy because of you (Matth. 5:44).⁹

When he qualifies friendship as “true”, he implies all differ from this one are false and empty.¹⁰ The love that flows from the gift of the Holy Spirit lays the foundation for the true friendship. It is not the human beings but God’s grace that gives the solid basis for

⁴ *Conf.* 2.2.2; BA 13, p. 334: “luminosus limes amicitiae”; Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. by H. Chadwick, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 24.

⁵ *Conf.* 2.9.17; BA 13, p. 358: “o nimis inimica amicitia”; trans. of H. Chadwick, 1991, p. 34. Cf. M. A. McNamara, *Friendship in Saint Augustine*, 1958, pp. 40-41; L. Ferrari, “The Pear-Theft in Augustine’s *Confessions*”, *Revue des études augustiniennes* 16 (1970) pp. 233-242; J. J. O’Donnell, *Augustine: Confessions*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, vol. 2, p. 127.

⁶ Cf. M. A. McNamara, *Friendship in Saint Augustine*, 1958, pp. 198-203; J. T. Lienhard, “Friendship with God, Friendship in God”, 1994, pp. 210-211.

⁷ *Conf.* 4.4.7; BA 13, p. 418: “[amicitia mea,] suavi mihi super omnes suavitates illius uitae meae”; trans. of H. Chadwick, 1991, p. 57.

⁸ *Conf.* 4.4.7; BA 13, p. 418: “*uera amicitia*, quia non est uera, nisi cum eam tu agglutinas inter haerentes sibi caritate diffusa in cordibus nostris per spiritum sanctum, qui datus est nobis”; trans. of H. Chadwick, 1991, p. 56. (italics mine).

⁹ *Conf.* 4.9.14; BA 13, p. 432: “beatus qui amat te et amicum in te et inimicum propter te”; trans. of H. Chadwick, 1991, p. 60.

¹⁰ Augustine grasps the significance of friendship by the words *amicus* / *amicitia* in the *Confessions* I-IX: see J. J. O’Donnell. *Confessions*, 1992, vol. 2, p. 109.

it. And he explicitly appeals to Romans 5:5 as a proof-text to justify the empowerment of love of God.¹¹ Thus, the love for God in one's friends is the best way to love them properly. This is the meaning of the double commandment to love God and your neighbour (Matth. 22:37-40). God is to be loved above all else and one's neighbour is to be loved in God. Friendship seems to be subsumed under the second part of the commandment by virtue of its spiritual source.

But what about the dissolution of their friendship? It was unlikely that their intense relations would come to an end. Since friendship implies a lasting love, it would never be dissolved by trivial matters. Hence, it is noteworthy that he was alienated from his "other self"¹² by two accidents, that is his friend's refusal to "laugh with me [Augustine] about the baptism"¹³ and the death of his friend. How does these two elements, the conflict concerning baptism and the death of one's friend, affect the preservation of friendship?

Augustine's descriptions of friendship have much in common with pagan thoughts. To his confidant above mentioned, he applies Horace's felicitous phrase, "He was half my soul".¹⁴ Also he refers to the mythical devotion of Orestes and Pylades which was taken to represent the ideal friendship¹⁵. As Cicero does, Augustine speaks about the affection which unites friends by the term *benevolentia*.¹⁶ In addition to a one-sided feeling of benevolence, both authors reflect on the reciprocity of friendship by using the same term, such as *amare* and *amari*.¹⁷

The fact that he persists in using Classical language relating to friendship is also shown by some earlier texts. In the *Contra Academicos* (386-387), he refers with approval to Cicero's definition of friendship as follows:

friendship has been correctly and properly defined as *agreement on human and divine matters combined with charity and good will*.¹⁸

¹¹ As to the use of the Romans 5:5 in the works of Augustine, see A.-M. La Bonnardière, "Le verset paulinien Rom., v. 5 dans l'oeuvre de saint Augustin", *Augustinus Magister*, 2, Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1954, pp. 657-665.

¹² *Conf.* 4.6.11; BA 13, p. 426: "ille alter eram"; trans. of H. Chadwick, 1991, p. 59.

¹³ *Conf.* 4.4.8; BA 13, p. 420: "et illo inrisuro mecum baptismum"; trans. of H. Chadwick, 1991, p. 57.

¹⁴ Horace, *Odes*, 1.3.8 in the *Conf.* 4.6.11; BA 13, p. 426: "dimidium animae meae".

¹⁵ The episode of Orestes and Pylades is taken up by Cicero in the *Laelius de amicitia*, 7.24; trans. of J. G. F. Powell, 1990, pp. 38-40.

¹⁶ *Conf.* 4.9.14; BA 13, p. 432: "nihil quaerens ex eius corpore praeter indicia beniuolentiae". Cicero, *Laelius de anima*, 6.20; trans. of J. Powell, 1990, p. 36: "Est enim amicitia nihil aliud nisi omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum cum benevolentia et caritate consensio."

¹⁷ *Amic.* 97; trans. of J. Powell, 1990, p. 70: "in qua nisi, ut dicitur, apertum pectus videas tuumque ostendas, nihil fidum, nihil exploratum habeas, ne amare quidem aut amari, cum id quam vere fiat ignores". *Conf.* 2.2.2; BA 13, p. 334: "Et quid erat, quod me delectabat, nisi amare et amari?"

¹⁸ *Contra Academicos* 3.6.13; *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Opera*, ed. G. M. Green, CCL, 29, Turnhout: Brepols, 1970, p. 42: "quidem amicitia rectissime atque sanctissime definita est rerum humanarum et diuinarum cum beniuolentia et caritate consensio"; Augustine, *Against the Academicians and the Teacher*, trans. by Peter King, Indianapolis - Cambridge: Hackett, 1995, p. 64. This phrase is cited from Cicero's *De amicitia*, 6.20.

In the unfinished exegesis on Genesis (393/394), he asserts that friendship is effected by the similarity of character.¹⁹ His idea that stresses the shared interests and unity reminds us of the Ciceronian attachment.¹⁹ Also in *De diversis quaestionibus* 83 (388/396), Augustine qualifies friendship as the mutual desire of two persons to do good to each other because they love each other.

Friendship is the disinterested desire for good for that person whom one loves, together with a reciprocal desire on his part.²⁰

These references show us the continuity of Augustine's Classical view on friendship from the Cassiciacum dialogues to the *Confessions*.

1. Friendship is defined as agreement on both divine and human things. It is subordinate to wisdom. For he also approves of Classical definition of wisdom, that is "the knowledge of human and divine matters".²¹
2. Augustine demands the involvement of benevolence in friendship. Benevolence is indispensable to friendship, for, not necessarily mutual affection, it wishes the well-being of another person, which is an essential element of friendship.
3. The emphasis on the unity among friends, which is put forward by Classical writers, is appreciated by Augustine in different strands. The sharing of interests and mutual love are required to conduct the unity of individuals in the ideal of friendship. The reciprocal characteristics are explicit in his descriptions.

Apart from such coherence, however, there is somehow a definite change in his understanding of its source within these times. In his earlier works Augustine determines the mutual love as the basis of friendship. But the further consideration seems not to be evident from his writings. He follows Cicero's view.²² Cicero regards nature and virtue as the foundation of friendship. For nature creates the desire for love and benevolence among individuals.²³ Also, virtue is almost equal to nature, since it is realised by one's living consistently with nature. At the same time in the *Confessions*, as we have seen, Augustine admits that such a friendship was dissolved by the disagreement on divine matter, that is the conflict concerning baptism, however human matters, common interests and shared activities, were constituted. Likewise, the death of his friend ended up their friendship, since the mutual love could be no more. Hence, within his earlier thought before the *Confessions*, we suppose the shift from a nature-oriented source of

¹⁹ *Gn. litt. in p.* 16.59; *Sancti Augustini Opera*, ed. I. Zycha, CSEL, 28.1, Wien: Tempsky, 1894, p. 500: "immo porro animarum ... aliarum cum aliis amicitia similibus actiones atque uirtutes".

²⁰ Cf. *Amic.* 20.74; 25.92; *De officiis*, 1.17.56. *diu. qu.* q. 31, 3; BA, 10, éd. G. Bardy et al., Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1952, p. 94: "Amicitia, voluntas erga aliquem rerum bonarum, illius ipsius causa quem diligit, cum ejus pari voluntate"; Saint Augustine, *Eighty-Three Different Questions*, trans. by David L. Mosher, The Fathers of the Church, 70, Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1982, p. 60.

²¹ Cf. *Contra Academicos*, 1.6.16; CCL 29, p. 12: "sapientiam esse rerum humanarum diuinarumque scientiam"; *De trinitate*, 14.1; Cicero, *Tusculanae Disputationes* 4.26.57; *De officiis* 2.2.5.

²² Cf. T. J. Van Bavel, "The Influence of Cicero's Ideal of Friendship on Augustine", 1987, pp. 62-64.

²³ *Amic.* 32; J. Powell, 1990, p. 4: "ipsi autem intellegamus natura gigni sensum diligendi et benevolentiae caritatem".

friendship to a spiritual one, in which friendship seems to be converged into love of neighbour. How does Augustine change his view on its foundation? Why does he consider its source to be spiritual?

Compared to the shift from one type of its basis to another, there seems to be a similar transition, in which Augustine shows the ascent of human soul towards God. To appreciate how he moderates an idea about its source, let us look at the ascent of soul within his early times.

THE ASCENT OF SOUL

The ascent of human soul, proceeding from the sensible things to the contemplation of God, appears repeatedly in his works. Augustine shares the characteristics of the exhortation to spiritual ascensions with his biblical (*cantica graduum* in Psalms 119-133), Classical (Varro's encyclopaedic work and various doxographies), and Plotinian (*Enneads* 1.6, *On Beauty*) predecessors.²⁴ Of his descriptions, I shall focus upon two works, *De vera religione* and *De sermone domini in monte*. For in these works Augustine intensively develops his thought of human ascensions towards God.²⁵

The descriptions of the ascent of soul in *De vera religione*, which is the last of his works prior to his ordination to the priesthood (written c. 390 at Thagaste), occur repeatedly within the latter half, though they differ from one another in details.²⁶ Of these repetitions, we will consider one of the most distinctive and septenary ascensions, in which two types of spiritual life appear in the economy of salvation. The former represents the life of "the old, exterior or earthly man"²⁷ divided into various successive ages (*vera rel.* 26.48). The latter, opposed to the former, denotes "the new man, the inward and heavenly man"²⁸ by spiritual advancement (26.49). The seven stages of the ascent are stated as follows:

1. Soul is subjected to the authority of the scripture.
2. Soul tends towards divine things, forgetting human affairs.
3. Soul prevails over the passions in conflict with carnal appetites.
4. Soul accomplishes its perfection much more resolutely.

²⁴ Cf. G. Madec, "Ascensio, ascensus", *Augustinus-Lexikon*, vol. 1, fasc. 3, ed. Cornelius Mayer, Basel: Schwabe, 1988, col. 466; F. Van Fleteren, "Ascent of the soul", *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. A. D. Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids, Mich.- Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1999, pp. 63-64.

²⁵ With regard to another enumerations of the seven steps, e.g. *De quantitate animae* 33.70-76; *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* 1.25.43. For its details, see C. van Lierde, "The Teaching of St. Augustine of the Gifts of the Holy Spirits from the Text of Isaiah 11:2-3", trans. by J. Schnaubelt and F. Van Fleteren, *Collectanea Augustiniana. Augustine: Mystic and Mystagogue*, eds. F. Van Fleteren et. al., New York: Peter Lang, 1994, pp. 5-110.

²⁶ Cf. F. Van Fleteren, "Augustine's *De vera religione*. A New Approach", *Augustinianum* 16 (1976) pp. 475-479.

²⁷ *vera rel.* 26.49: CCL 32, p. 218: "ueterem et exteriorem et terrenum"; Augustine, *Earlier Writings*, trans. by John H. S. Burleigh, The Library of Christian Classics, 6, London: SCM Press, 1953, p. 249.

²⁸ *vera rel.* 26.49: CCL 32, p. 218: "nouus homo et interior et caelestis"; trans. of J. Burleigh, 1953, p. 249.

5. Soul has peace and tranquility inasmuch as the body has been subjected to reason.
6. Soul attains complete transformation into the eternal life.
7. Eternal rest and perpetual beatitude.

Soul directs itself to God and seeks its own purification. Humbly subject to the law of God, soul undertakes the difficult task and ties the carnal appetite down to reason. In the process of purification, soul learns to penetrate spiritual realities and trains its fortitude. With all the movements of the mind, soul finally approaches its purification and holds fast to the contemplation of wisdom.

It appears that the Letter to Ephesians stands behind these passages.²⁹ Although only two phrases are revealed, that is “the new nature” (Eph. 4:24)³⁰ expresses the spirituals, and the “mature manhood” (Eph. 4:13)³¹ concerns spiritual advance in the fourth stage, the context of Ephesians, which calls for the spiritual progress of “the new man” through the unifying gift of the Holy Spirit, is such that it does not seem haste to think that Augustine has it in mind. The continuation of Eph. 4:25-32 shows the ascension “with his neighbor” (Eph. 4:25) by the preserving unity of the Holy Spirit. This movement concludes with “and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you” (Eph. 4:32). It could be that Augustine represents his perception that, based on the unity created by the Holy Spirit, the love of neighbour plays an essential part in the human progress towards God.

Another example showing how Augustine develops his view is taken from *De sermone domini in monte* (written in c. 393). After his ordination, Augustine is concerned primarily with the study of the scripture. His first extended exegesis on the New Testament affirms that the eight maxims (Matth. 5:3-10) relate to the ascent of the soul, that leads it subject to the beatitude. It would be summarised as follows:³²

1. “Blessed are the poor in spirit”, he, dreading death and punishment, is converted to God through humility = Gift of fear.
2. “Blessed are the meek”, he becomes meek and is rendered docile, and subjected to the authority of the scripture = Gift of Piety.
3. “Blessed are those who mourn”, he understands the divine commandment of the scripture, and laments its loss of the supreme good = Gift of Knowledge.
4. “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness”, he extricates himself from worldly entanglement and turns to love of the eternal = Gift of Fortitude.
5. “Blessed are the merciful”, he continues the work of his purification. The struggle

²⁹ Cf. CCL 32: p. 281, nn.

³⁰ Eph. 4:24: and put on *the new nature*, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (RSV; italics mine).

³¹ Eph. 4:13: until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, *to mature manhood*, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ (RSV; italics mine).

³² Cf. *s. dom. m.* 1.2.4-4.12.

will never succeed unless he is helped by someone more powerful than himself. Thus, he should help someone weaker than himself, if he wishes to be aided by someone higher = Gift of Counsel.

6. "Blessed are the pure in heart", he, once his heart has been purified, attains a contemplation of the supreme good and understands the spiritual = Gift of Understanding.
7. "Blessed are the peacemakers", he contemplates truth and receives the likeness of God = Gift of Wisdom.

There is an important element in his interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount which must be indicated, such as the point that the order of the seven gifts in Isaiah is put into reverse.³³ Why does he refer to the order of the enumeration in Isaiah? Because he comprehends the progress towards a knowledge of God in light of the gradually ascending steps. So, it follows that the prophet Isaiah, descending from his contemplation of God, shows the seven gifts for guidance on people's ascent. Augustine believes that the contemplative union with God is possible for the human beings in this life, as did a few apostles and prophets in the Old Testaments receive a momentary glimpse into the divine.³⁴ Thus, all are interpreted from the viewpoint of his confidence in the perfection of the ascent in this life.

Augustine grasps that the Sermon on the Mount centres around Christ's message of a perfect standard of the Christians.³⁵ On the basis of such understanding, he regards eight assertions (Matth. 5:3-10) as the summary of the Sermon. And the significance of the number seven bears his interpretation. He understands the number seven symbolically for the totality of things in order to designate perfection.³⁶ Since the eighth maxim which concludes the series returns to the starting-point and is taken as a recapitulation of the first, Augustine compares the correspondence between the first seven beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-9 and the sevenfold operations of the Holy Spirit in Isaiah 11:2-3 (LXX).³⁷

When we compare these two formulations of the ascension, it can be seen how in Augustine's thought they come to be more closely linked to the operation of the Holy Spirit. His thought changes to the point when it harmonises with and is inspired by

³³ Cf. *s. dom. m.* 1.4.11, CCL 35, p. 9: "Videtur ergo mihi etiam septiformis operatio spiritus sancti, de qua Esaias loquitur, his gradibus sententiisque congruere. Sed interest ordinis: nam ibi enumeratio ab excellentioribus coepit, hic uero ab inferioribus". As to the earlier patristic interpretations of the Isaiah 11:2-3 in the Latin Fathers, e.g. Tertulian, *Adversus Marcionem* 5.17.5; Ambrose, *De spiritu sancto* 1.16.158. Cf. A. Zumkeller, *Augustine's Ideal of the Religious Life*, trans. by E. Colledge, New York: Fordham University Press, 1986, pp. 175-177.

³⁴ With regard to Augustine's belief on the possibility of human perfection in this life, cf. F. Van Fleteren, "The Cassiciacum Dialogues and Augustine's Ascents at Milan", *Mediaevalia* 4 (1978) pp. 59-82.

³⁵ Cf. *s. dom. m.* 1.1.1; see also St. Augustine, *The Lord's Sermon on the Mount*, tr. by John J. Jepson, Ancient Christian Writers, 5, New York: Newman Press, 1948, p. 180, n. 17; p. 203, nn. 92-93.

³⁶ Cf. *s. dom. m.* 1.3.10; 2.2.25.87.

³⁷ Augustine adopts the *Vetus Latina*, based on the Septuaginta, not the *Vulgata*: cf. Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem* 3.17.3; 5.6.4; Cyprian, *Ad Quirinum* 2, 11; Novatian, *De trinitate* 29.12.

some scriptural passages. However, it is more interesting to our consideration that Augustine comes to incorporate the admonition of the need for love of neighbour into the ascent of the soul. He presents it on the fifth level, that is one is urged to help his weaker neighbour so that he himself may receive help from God to overcome his own weakness. Here, love of neighbour has the indispensable role in human perfection towards God.

A SUGGESTED EXPLANATION: FRIENDSHIP IN THE ASCENT OF THE SOUL

His descriptions of the ascents confirm its correspondence with the gifts of the Holy Spirit during a few years between *De vera religione* and *De sermone domini in monte*. We have assumed the changing in view on the source of friendship at some point within his early works. If we find the occurrence of the relationship between love of neighbour and friendship, its connection will also answer for the way how he changes the perspective on the basis for friendship. In the last section of this paper I shall offer a hypothesis as to the shift in view, which involves (1) Augustine's speaking of the principal figure of the neighbour, (2) his stating that there are different kinds of love in a hierarchy of their object, and (3) his regarding the dissolutive elements of friendship as the necessary conditions of the spiritual life.

As to the question of neighbourhood, it is clear that in his early works Augustine regards it as the *anima / animus* and, consequently, as every human beings.³⁸ Because all they have soul by virtue of their humanity, all are neighbours. At the time of his stay at Cassiciacum and shortly afterwards at Rome, Augustine continues to approach the nature of man's relation to God. Friends are regarded as co-inquirer along the road to the wisdom.³⁹ Any broader thinking on the relations with his companions seems to be lacking. In the following period, however, Augustine frequently reminds us that a person's neighbour is every other person.⁴⁰ In *De vera religione* (390), the relationships among human beings are based upon a common human nature:

Human nature is to be loved whether it be perfect or in process of becoming perfect, but without any condition of carnal relationship.⁴¹

Augustine realises that all share the human nature. This leads to the idea that the love of neighbour prevails over the natural closeness of family, friends, and associates. In

³⁸ R. Canning, *The Unity of Love for God and Neighbour in St. Augustine*, Heverlee-Leuven: Augustinian Historical Institute, 1993: 167 sqq. Cf. H. Pétré, *Caritas: Étude sur le vocabulaire latin de la charité chrétienne*, Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, fasc. 22, Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1948, pp. 156-158.

³⁹ For the references to the imagery of fellow seeker, e.g. the protreptic preface-letters of the Cassiciacum dialogues offer it repeatedly within themselves.

⁴⁰ Cf. *De musica* 6.14.46: "tenet ordinem, seipsa tota diligens quod supra se est, id est deum, socias animas tamquam seipsam".

⁴¹ *vera rel.* 46.89; CCL 32, p. 245: "ipsa igitur natura humana sine carnali condicione diligenda est, siue sit perficienda siue perfecta"; trans. of J. Burleigh, 1953, p. 271.

enarratio II, sermo ad plebem of *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, dated to 392, he clearly defines the neighbour as follows:

Your neighbour is anyone who like you is descended from Adam and Eve. We are all neighbours according to the condition of our earthly birth.⁴²

These texts may conclude that any friendship is necessarily reduced to the love of neighbour. There would not be any place for an intimacy of friendship, if anyone who receives the divine commandment is to love all human beings equally.

But we admit another important element in Augustine's view on love within this period, that is his sentiment that each love is characterised by its different degrees. The different loves are defined by their proper objects. God is the ultimate object of love, while other loves are subject to that love. Such an idea contributes to the belief that all the creatures are good and yet to hold that some objects are more acceptable to love. In *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus manicheorum* (387/388), we find the interpretation of the latter half of the divine commandment.

Now you love yourself in a salutary manner only if you love God more than yourself. Therefore, what you do in your own behalf, you must do also for your neighbor, so that he, too, may love God with perfect love. But you do not love him as yourself unless you endeavor to lead him to the good which you yourself are pursuing.⁴³

One loves God for his own sake, and oneself and one's neighbours for His sake. The love of self is nothing other than the love for God. Otherwise Christ would have directed three orders, namely love of God, love of neighbour, and love of self. The view on the disparities among three kinds of love permits him to realise the different degrees of human love. It secures a particular place for friendship within the wider range of love of neighbour. In reverse, love of neighbour will be realised as the extended ideal of friendship as far as possible into all. Hence, friendship is esteemed as the inspiring moment in the human perfection, at the point where love of neighbour is located in the fifth of septenary steps. Since it is based on the spiritual gift, one loves God and one's friend with the same divine love.

Thought back to those dissolutive elements in the *Confessions*, that is the refusal of his friend's baptism and death of his friend, the former comes to be understood as the requisite condition of the spiritual ascension, but the latter remains its difficulty in this period. Because, in the descriptions of *De vera religione*, we have seen that the context of Ephesians 4 stands behind the ascending movements, in which the reference to baptism appears as follows:

⁴² *en. Ps.* 25, 2, *en.* 2.2; PL 36, col. 188: "Proximus tuus ille est, qui tecum natus est ex Adam et Eva. Omnes proximi sumus conditione terrenae nativitatis: sed aliter fratres illa spe coelestis haereditatis. Proximum tuum debes putare omnem hominem, et antequam sit christianus".

⁴³ *mor.* 1.26.49; CSEL 90, pp. 53-54: "Te autem ipsum salubriter diligis, si plus quam te diligis deum. Quod igitur agis tecum, id agendum cum proximo est; hoc est, ut etiam ipse perfecto amore deum diligit. Non enim eum diligis tamquam teipsum, si non ad id bonum ad quod ipse tendis, adducis"; Saint Augustine, *The Catholic and Manichaean Ways of Life*, trans. by D. A. Gallagher and I. J. Gallagher, The Fathers of the Church, 56, Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1966, p. 40.

put off your old nature which belong to your former manner (Eph. 4:22; RSV)

put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph. 4:24; RSV)

Moreover, the descending motif of the spirituals based on Christ's grace emerges from the preceding passages (Eph. 4:7-10), which will appear as the prophet Isaiah in the *De sermone domini in monte*. The theme of rebirth and rising again from death has influenced on Augustine's scheme of the ascension.⁴⁴ This movement presupposes the transfiguration of Christ's descending into the lower parts of the world. And human soul ascending from the sensible world is determined as the baptised one. It is not fully recovered from its own corruption by the rite of baptism. But it is entitled to climb up septenary steps as a catechumen,⁴⁵ and gradually cured by the process of purification. Thus, one of the seeming obstacles to friendship makes clear the requisite condition of the soul's progress towards its perfection.

As to the latter obstacle, after his ordained to the priest, Augustine in turn comes to appreciate the impossibility of acquiring the contemplation of the truth in this life. The challenge to the difficulty of resolving one's inner struggle for the spiritual progress eventually takes the opportunity afforded by his another reading of the Pauline epistles from 393 onward.⁴⁶ It is in this way that Augustine is gradually led to see human relationships will be perfect only in heaven. His ideal would be no society in the earth but a heavenly community of the members of the *Civitas Dei*. At this point an eschatological perspective on human perfection will be settled. Friendship will not only survive the death of one's friend but also reach fulfilment in heaven.

CONCLUSION

Augustine had formed his attitude towards the whole of his life from the viewpoint of the spiritual exercise (*exercitatio animi*) pursued in the Platonic tradition of Late Antiquity.⁴⁷ Through the discipline of his intellectual programme which should have

⁴⁴ Concerning the significance of the descending motif in this period, cf. P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*, 1967, pp. 124-125, 151-152; K. Mizuochi, "Augustinus ni okeru Kami-ninshiki heno 7tsu no Reiteki-dankai" ("Augustine's Seven Spiritual Stages towards the Contemplation of God" in Japanese), *Tojyô*, 9 (1978) pp. 29-51.

⁴⁵ As to the imagery of baptism in Augustine's early works, I should further investigate the scriptural orchestration (Cf. A.-M. La Bonnardière) of the Eph. 4: 23-24 with I Cor. 15:42-50, Col. 3:9-10; cf. E. TeSelle, *Augustine the Theologian*, Eugene, Or.: Wipf & Stock, 2002, pp. 264-265 (= 1970 ed. by Herder).

⁴⁶ For the significance of Augustine's reading of the Pauline epistles within these times, cf. P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 1967, pp. 151-157; T. J. Van Bavel, "'Natural' and 'Spiritual' Relationships in Augustine", *Augustiniana*, 46 (1996) p. 216; *Engaging Augustine On Romans: Self, Context, and Theology in Interpretation*, ed. by D. Patte and E. TeSelle, Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press, 2002.

⁴⁷ Cf. P. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, trans. by M. Chase, Oxford: Blackwell, 1995; P. Hadot, *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique*, nouv. éd., Paris: Albin Michel, 2002. With regard to the related concept *otium liberale*, see also G. Folliet, "«Deificari in otio» Augustine, Ep. 10, 2", *Revue des études augustiniennes* 2 (1962) pp. 225-23; P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*, 1967, p. 121.

been brought to in the community-venture, what Augustine desired for himself would be pictured as follows:

And they [= peacemakers] are at peace with themselves who quell all the emotions of their soul and subject them to reason, that is, to the mind and spirit, and have their carnal passions well under control; these make up the kingdom of God. . . . And this is the peace which is given on earth to men of good will; *this is the life of a man who is rounded out and perfect in wisdom.*⁴⁸

In his early period, this ideal of the “perfect” which integrates the *sapiens* of the Classical culture with the “apostles” was believed to be reached in this life by the ascending movement of the baptised soul. Friendship was required by the soul to be one of the useful ladder of a vertical ascension. Augustine realised that such a spiritual dimension of friendship should be anchored to the grace of Christ whose significance of the descending movement had been exposed by the Pauline epistles. Hence, advancing his intensive exegesis on Pauline epistles, in which the difficulty of unresolved conflict between flesh and spirit gradually arose, Augustine’s motif of the spiritual exercise in this life had given way to his sentiment that the soul only yearns for this impossible perfection in heaven. Although Augustine continued to refer to friendship thereafter,⁴⁹ its value in the spiritual life blended into the background of love of neighbour, as his spiritual basis was inspired by the immeasurable will of God.

⁴⁸ *s. dom. m.* 1.2.9; CCL 35, p. 6: “Pacifici autem in semet ipsis sunt, qui omnes animi sui motus componentes et subicientes rationi, id est menti et spiritui, carnalesque concupiscentias habentes edomitas fiunt regnum dei, . . . Et haec est pax quae datur in terra hominibus bonae uoluntatis, *haec uita consummati perfectique sapientis*”; trans. of J. Jepson, 1948, pp. 15-16. (italics mine).

⁴⁹ Cf. J. T. Lienhard, “Friendship with God, Friendship in God: Traces in St. Augustine”, 1994, p. 224. n. 18.