




Three Movements in Augustinian Pedagogy

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Augustinian Days in Carthage 2020

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Three Movements in Augustinian Pedagogy

- From Rhetoric to Reflection
 - From Pedagogue to Pilgrim Teacher
 - From Memory to Imagination and Implementation
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1. From Rhetoric to Reflection

- ***De magistro*** (389 AD)
- A “Confessional Text”
- Twofold Deconstruction / Disassembly
 - Of Words
 - Of Teaching
- “Before discovering it [*res*—the thing itself], the word was only a sound... I came to know the word as a sign [*signum*] when I discovered the reality of which it is a sign. I learned what this reality was not by any sign, but by looking at it.”

De magistro 10.33

1. From Rhetoric to Reflection

- ▶ Learning ~ an *interior* process within the learner
- ▶ Learning ~ a movement from discrete parts toward a sense of the whole
(...*de iisdem istis partibus interrogator, quibus illa summa constat* ~ *De mag* 12.40)
ratio ~ the construction of a *Gestalt*
- ▶ *Illuminatio* ~ (*in illa interiore luce veritatis*)
- ▶ Inner Teacher ~ (*secretum illud oraculum* ~ *De mag* 14.46)



2. From Pedagogue to Pilgrim Teacher

- ▶ Letter 118 to *Dioscorus* (410 AD)

- ▶ Humility

“That first way is humility; the second way is humility, and the third way is humility, and as often as you ask, I would say the same.”

Letter 118.22

- ▶ Teacher ~ exercise authority with humility

- ▶ From the “truth of authority” (the teacher)
to the “authority of truth” (which emerges in *ratio / illuminatio*)

2. From Pedagogue to Pilgrim Teacher

- ***De catechizandis rudibus*** ~ *On the Instruction of Beginners* (400 AD)
- The teacher's love for students (value and respect for students)
 - Creates enthusiasm
 - Transforms the learning environment
 - Opens up affective dimensions of learning
 - Embodies learning and emboldens students

2. From Pedagogue to Pilgrim Teacher

“When often we feel it very wearisome to go over repeatedly material which is thoroughly familiar to us,... then we should endeavor to treat students with a love like that of a brother, a father, and a mother. If we are united with them in heart, to us no less than to them will the subject matter seem new. For so great is the power of a sympathetic disposition of mind, that as they are affected while we are speaking, and we are affected while they are learning, **we have our dwelling in each other.**” *De cat rud* 12.17

➤ **Co-inhabitation**

- Bond of love (*vinculum amoris*) and Intimacy of friendship (*amiciores*)
- Interior contemplation of ideas becomes a communion of minds and hearts
- *Ratio* -> *illuminatio* -> *communio*
- Love “diagnoses” students to find the proper “medicine” for their situation.




3. From Memory to Imagination and Implementation

- ***De doctrina christiana*** ~ Teaching Christianity (Book 4 ~ 426 AD)
- To teach (*docere*) ~ To delight (*delectare*) ~ To sway (*flectare*)
- ***flectare* -> *movere*** (*De doc* 4.17.34)
- To inspire real change, guided by and oriented to love
- From the mastery of memorization and pride of performance to
- Rhetoric in the service of love and transformation of lives and society.



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Forge ahead, *teachers*; always examine yourselves without self-deception, without flattery, without buttering yourselves up. After all, there is no one inside you before whom you need to feel ashamed, or whom you need to impress. There is someone there, but one who is please with humility; let him test you.

And you, test yourself. Always be dissatisfied with what you are, *as a teacher*, if you want to arrive at what you are not yet. Because where you are satisfied with yourself *as a teacher*, there you get stuck....

Always add some more, always keep on walking, always move ahead.

Sermon 169.18