

Kevin G. Grove, *Augustine on Memory*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology, Oxford University Press, New York 2021, pp. 266

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“Dulcis Iesu memoria – O Jesus, memory of sweetness”, sings the Church in a hymn of the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord. The memory of Jesus is sweetness and softness for Christians. Remembering Jesus and remembering in Jesus is much more than a mental exercise: it is a way of uniting ourselves to Him and entering into communion with others. The sweetness of the memory of Christ was one of the themes dearest to Augustine of Hippo. Memory includes much of his philosophy of mind, for memory is not just a distinct faculty of the soul but the mind itself. In memory, “Ibi mihi et ipse occurro meque recolo” (*Confessions* 10, 8, 14) i.e., “And there I come to meet myself. I recall myself”.

Kevin G. Grove, a priest of the Congregation of Holy Cross, is an assistant professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame. He is the author of *Augustine on Memory*, a work that treats this classic theme of Augustine from a new perspective and seeks to complete the classical vision that has been given on this subject so far. Indeed, while *Confessions* 10 and *Trinity* 9, 10, 11, and 14 have often been the main sources of Augustine’s classic studies of memory (from the psychological-pedagogical and anthropological-theological approaches respectively), the use of the *Sermons*, especially *Expositions of Psalms*, as primary sources in this study, is an important novelty of Grove’s work.

The author describes the book’s primary claim as follows: “memory is the heart of shared life in the whole Christ. Memory draws forward time-bound past grace and confession such that Christ is in some way acting in the present. Likewise, memory can draw backward traces of future Sabbath rest or the heavenly Jerusalem, traces given not from history but from grace” (p. 2). We are thus faced with a concept of memory that is not limited, as might be imagined, to the past, but is projected into the future. The human memory becomes a participation in the memory of Christ: “When the whole Christ remembers (and forgets), it does so only to become ever more that which it recalls: the image of God being renewed in human persons” (p. 3).

The book studies three aspects or, rather, stages of memory in Augustine: *The Beginning of Memory* (part 1, p. 23-82), *The Work of Memory* (part 2, p. 83-183) and *The End of Memory* (part 3, p. 185-226). The first part's fundamental source is, alongside his first works, the *Confessions*. The second part attempts to link, mainly through his *Sermons*, the two phases of memory: the beginning in the self and the end in the Trinity. The third part is primarily based on Augustine's reflections on the *Trinity*.

Part 1 is divided into two chapters that show the intimate link between the anthropological mediation of memory and Christ's salvific mediation. In chapter 1 (p. 25-56), Grove summarizes the earliest writings of the Bishop of Hippo spanning from 386 to 391. Through the analysis of some passages of chapters 7, 10 and 11 of the *Confessions*, he especially stresses the mediation role of memory: it works as a kind of bridge between soul and body, time and wisdom, the human meditation and Christ's salvific mediation. "Memory holds out great initial promise as the anthropological mediator that will make possible a coherent consciousness of mind and body" (p. 55). Human memory, no matter how ultimate it is, fails to coherently sustain a sense of self. In the second chapter (p. 57-82), Grove shows how in Augustine's preaching the self comes to be mediated by the *Christus totus*, ascended into Heaven as mediator, saving and transforming the failure pointed out in the first chapter. The insight about memory and Christ in the *Confessions* presents the *whole Christ* as a path to God. "Christ's mediation has made possible and sustained the shift from the individual to the whole Christ and is described by Augustine as transfiguration" (p. 82).

In the four chapters of the second part concerning *The Work of Memory*, the distance between the self of the early Augustine and the late contemplation of the Trinity is set forth. It is because they describe the daily exercise and dynamic activity of the *Christus totus*. Chapter 3 (p. 85-111) deals with the figure of Idithun, a name occurring in the first verse of three Psalms (39, 62 and 77), characterized as the 'leaping across psalmist'. This is an image of the body of Christ, who leaps all the way from the human to the divine, from the individual to the communal, and back while remembering, forgetting, speaking and keeping silent. In chapters 4 and 5 which form a diptych, the self reemerges as constituted in the whole, uncovering its Christological identity in the practice of remembering and forgetting together. In Chapter 4 (p. 112-140), Grove shifts from memory as exercise to memory as existence in the whole Christ. It explores remembering both backwards as well as forward in time, simultaneously participating in three temporal realms: past, present and future. Chapter 5 (p. 141-157) presents,

on the other hand, the work of forgetting. It moves from forgetting Christ to forgetting in Christ. As for remembering, oblivion develops an essential role in Christian life. It has a double dimension as well: forward (extension) and backward (distension). “Forgetting is the ongoing work of enabling the whole Christ, with respect to individual vocation and station, to continue on pilgrimage together” (p. 157). Finally, Grove discusses memory and the life of grace in Augustine in chapter 6 (p. 158-183). Remembering and forgetting form a binary construction that supplies language to hold together any number of oppositions in Christ. Grove revisits four central Augustinian binaries: lyre and psaltery (images of the life of the faithful configured to Christ from both ‘above’ and ‘below’), labor and rest, solitude and communion, and praising and groaning. Through these contrasting experiences, “members of Christ’s body learn together how to live the contradictions of human life not as the despair of distention but as hopeful extension into the fullness of grace” (p. 182).

The third part of the book, *The End of Memory*, comprises chapters 7 and 8, and discusses the intellectual and personal consequences of the work of memory. Chapter 7 (p. 187-212), connects the whole Christ as passing by through this world to the Trinity. The author reaches the conclusion of the importance of the Augustine’s preaching on memory in the intermediate period between the *Confessions* and the *Trinity* to understand his idea of memory in the last stage of his writing career. In fact, without the *Sermons*, one may reach the conclusion that memory is healed in Christ, but “how [this] precisely happens in Christ’s body – and how Augustine himself came to that realization – remains unexplained” (p. 212). The final chapter (8, p. 213-226) moves from the intellectual to the personal in memory. It rereads Psalm 50 throughout Augustine’s preaching and taking his death into account. In Augustine’s preaching, the *Miserere* psalm, in which memory and forgetfulness intertwine, was not only an instrument for self-examination of conscience but also a way to draw him and his congregants out of themselves and further into the whole Christ of which they were members. It is noteworthy that, according to Possidius’ *Life of Augustine*, this Psalm was pasted on the wall of his room when he was dying.

Probably the most important contribution of Grove’s book consists in connecting the anthropology of memory in Augustine’s early works, especially in the *Confessions*, with the theology of memory at the end of his life, as we read in the *Trinity*. Grove bridges this twenty-year gap through the study of the preaching of the Bishop of Hippo, showing how Augustine weaves a relationship between memory, grace, salvation, and the Christ’s

existence. The author employs a clear methodology which allows the reader to enter easily into the universe of the Bishop of Hippo. In particular, he engages four areas within Augustinian studies: memory, interiority, preaching, and Christology.

Augustine once preached to his community that it should progress *non memoria, sed vita*. In the end, memory is not just a matter of memorization. It configures one “to existence mediated by Christ and its communal fullness forever. The work of remembering of forgetting ends in becoming Christ together” (p. 226).

Tatiana Krynicka, *Święty Mikołaj z Myr Licyjskich w świetle greckich i łacińskich źródeł starożytnych i średniowiecznych*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk 2022, ss. 210

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Pani Tatiana Krynicka, profesor Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, znana w środowisku polskich patrologów m.in. z prac poświęconych Izydoro wi z Sewilli, tym razem w swojej najnowszej książce daje czytelnikom znakomite kompendium wiedzy o słynnym i zazwyczaj bardzo lubianym świętym – Mikołaju z Myr Licyjskich (w Polsce szczególnie obecnym w grudniowym kalendarzu) – ubogacone przekładami źródłowych tekstów greckich i łacińskich mówiących o nim, także pieśni z zapisem nutowym, który powstał do tego zbioru – muzyka do pieśni została specjalnie skomponowana przez Patryka Dopke, absolwenta Gdańskiej Akademii Muzycznej i organistę w Bazylice Mariackiej w Gdańsku.

Autorka rozpoczyna fragmentem kontakionu ku czci świętego w przekładzie o. Romana Piętki. Słusznie zauważa, jak wiele już napisano o św. Mikołaju, chociaż jego życiorys słabo jest znany. Autorka opracowania znakomicie wykorzystuje swój warsztat badawczy jako filolog, teolog, historyk. Przywołuje najistotniejsze źródła oraz teksty poświęcone świętemu (np. biografie, modlitwy, opisy cudów dokonanych za Jego wstawiennictwem), przypomina Mikołaja Pinarskiego i dzieje połączenia jego biografii z życiorysem świętego o tym samym imieniu, rozwój kultu, znaczenie podczas chrystianizowania ludów słowiańskich w IX wieku, zwłaszcza na Rusi, o także o jego