



The Influence of Origen on Augustine: The Question of the Infinity of God

Damian Mrugalski OP¹

Abstract: There is a belief among scholars of Augustine's philosophy that he derived the notion of the positively understood infinity of God from Plotinus. Another *opinio communis* holds that Origen inherited a negative understanding of infinity from the ancient philosophers and therefore considered God's power to be finite. This paper aims to demonstrate that both opinions are erroneous. Although Augustine was familiar with Plotinus' thought, his reflections on the infinity of God have more in common with the theses put forward by Origen than with Neoplatonism. In both authors, the issue arises when they are commenting on the same biblical passages, and both authors wrestle with the same aporia caused by accepting the doctrine of God's infinite power and knowledge. If, according to Aristotle's logic, infinity cannot be encompassed by anything, can the divine intellect encompass infinite ideas? Both authors answer this question in the affirmative. The article posits that Augustine may have adopted the doctrine of the infinity of God directly from Origen, since he had access to many of his works translated into Latin, or through Novatian and Hilary of Poitiers, as they were both influenced by Origen's thought.

Keywords: Augustine; Origen; Plotinus; Novatian; Hilary of Poitiers; infinity of God; knowledge of God; actual infinity; negative theology; Neoplatonism; philosophy of God; patristic philosophy

Origen's influence on Augustine's thought is still an open question. There is no doubt that Augustine was familiar with some of Origen's writings. This is evidenced by statements made in the late writings by the Bishop of Hippo, where the Alexandrian is mentioned by name, and his controversial claims are criticised². Meanwhile, Augustine's correspondence with Jerome indicates that Augustine was initially interested in Origen's thought. For this reason, he urged the translator to make the hith-

¹ Damian Mrugalski OP PhD, Assistant Professor, The Catholic Academy in Warsaw – Collegium Bobolanum, Warsaw, Poland; e-mail: mmichop@gmail.com; ORCID: 0000-0002-8689-9832.

² Cf. Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* XI 23; XXI 17; Augustinus, *Retractiones* I 7, 6; Augustinus, *De Haeresibus* 43; Augustinus, *Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* V 47.

erto untranslated works available to Latin-speaking readers³. In the 20th century, scholars researching the question believed that Augustine did not have access to any of Origen's works before 390, due to his insufficient command of Greek. This *opinio communis* was challenged by G. Heidl who proved in his monograph on the influence of Origen's thought on the young Augustine that it was the reading of Origen's writings that led Augustine to conversion⁴. The *Libri pleni*, mentioned in his early works, are precisely the *Homilies on the Song of Songs* and the *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, translated by Jerome in 383, three years before Augustine's conversion⁵. Heidl's monograph inspired scholars to re-examine the question of Origen's influence on Augustine. Thus, I. Ramelli addressed the question of apokatastasis and proved that Augustine's early writings contain the same claims on universal salvation which can be found in the works of Origen⁶. However, following the dispute with Pelagius, the Bishop of Hippo abandoned the faith of his youth and criticised the concept of apokatastasis in his late works. Meanwhile, D. Keech, who studied the reception of Origen's exegesis of the *Epistle to the Romans* by the Bishop of Hippo, concluded that "Augustine fought the heresy of Pelagius with the orthodox exegesis of Origen"⁷. Thus, the influence of Origen's thought and exegesis is evident both in Augustine's early and late works. However, due to the Origenist controversy, which broke out in 393 in Palestine and reached the Latin West around 397, the Bishop of Hippo, being "politically correct", was no longer willing to mention Origen by name⁸. If he ever did that, it was only when he criticised Origen's controversial claims⁹. In this study, I will seek to expand the scope of

³ Cf. Augustinus, *Ep.* 28 = Hieronymus, *Ep.* 56. Cf. also Augustinus, *Ep.* 40, 6, 9, where Augustine asks Jerome to explain to him clearly the actual doctrinal errors that caused Origen to deviate from legitimate faith.

⁴ Cf. G. Heidl, *The Influence of Origen on the Young Augustine: A Chapter of the History of Origenism*, Piscataway 2009.

⁵ Cf. Heidl, *The Influence of Origen on the Young Augustine*, p. 7-17.

⁶ Cf. I.L.E. Ramelli, *Origen in Augustine: A Paradoxical Reception*, "Numen" 60 (2013) p. 280-307.

⁷ D. Keech, *The Anti-Pelagian Christology of Augustine of Hippo, 396-430*, Oxford 2012, p. 141.

⁸ For this reason, in his *Confessions*, written at the time of the fierce controversies over Origen, Augustine makes no mention of his encounter with the thought. Cf. Heidl, *The Influence of Origen on the Young Augustine*, p. 65.

⁹ Cf. V. Grossi, *L'origenismo latino negli scritti agostiniani: dagli origenisti agli origeniani*, "Augustinianum" 46/1 (2006) p. 51-88, where the author points to several

previous research on Origen's influence on Augustine, focusing solely on the question of the infinity of God. This question is extremely important, both to the "young" and to the "old" Augustine; as he mentioned in his *Confessions*, before his conversion, he shared the Manichaean belief that God is infinite in the material sense. After his conversion, however, he began to believe that God is infinite in the sense of being entirely incorporeal.

Yet, the problem of the infinity of God in Augustine's thought did not attract much attention among scholars of the last century. The issue was raised in just a few articles and was mentioned in some monographs on Augustine's thought. The latest and fairly comprehensive discussion of this topic is to be found in the article *Infinity in Augustine's Theology* by A. Drozdek¹⁰. However, like other scholars, this author suggests that Augustine adopted this doctrine from Plotinus¹¹. In this article, I intend to demonstrate that the biblical texts cited by the Bishop of Hippo, which pointed to the infinity of God and the difficulties related to this concept, which he pondered, show more affinity with the claims found in Origen's texts than with Neoplatonic philosophy. So far, none of the contemporary scholars have undertaken to examine the question of Origen's potential influence on the concept of the infinity of God in Augustine's thought. This is probably because many monographs, handbooks, and encyclopaedias of philosophy and theology express the belief that Gregory of Nyssa was the first among Christian theologians who began to think of God in terms of infinity. Meanwhile, Origen still operated within the framework

stages of Augustine's relation to Origen. The first of these would be curiosity, followed by admiration, and, finally, by hostility. The latter surfaced only after Pelagianism was condemned.

¹⁰ Cf. A. Drozdek, *Infinity in Augustine's Theology*, in: *The Infinity of God: New Perspectives in Theology and Philosophy*, ed. B.P. Göcke – C. Tapp, Notre Dame 2019, p. 37-53. As far as the previous research on the question of the infinity of God in Augustine's thought is concerned, it is neither extensive nor exhaustive, although it must be noted that Augustine himself would not address this topic frequently or extensively. Cf. É. Gilson, *L'infinité divine chez saint Augustin*, in: *Augustinus Magister: Congrès international augustiniien*, v. 1, Paris 1954, p. 569-574; P. Hadot, *La notion d'infini chez saint Augustin*, "Philosophie" 26 (1990) p. 58-72; L. Sweeney, *Divine Infinity in Greek and Medieval Thought*, New York 1992, p. 365-383; A. Drozdek, *Beyond Infinity: Augustine and Cantor*, "Laval théologique et philosophique" 51 (1995) p. 127-140.

¹¹ Cf. Drozdek, *Infinity in Augustine's Theology*, p. 38-40 and 46-47; R.J. Teske, *To Know God and the Soul: Essays on the Thought of Saint Augustine*, Washington 2008, p. 148-151.

of Aristotle's ideas and understood infinity in negative terms¹². Whatever is infinite is unfinished, and therefore imperfect. Therefore, God, being perfect, cannot be infinite. This frequently repeated view is erroneous, which I have proved in some of my earlier studies¹³. In reality, though, Origen frequently speaks of the infinity of God, the infinity of His power and wisdom. Before Origen, similar claims were made by Philo and Clement of Alexandria, while, after Origen, arguments in favour of the infinity of God were formulated by Novatian and Hilary of Poitiers, who were influenced by Origen. Even if Augustine did not have access to all Latin translations of Origen's works, he was certainly familiar with the works of Latin authors such as Novatian and Hilary of Poitiers. He even cited the latter a few times by name.

¹² See É. Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, New York 1955, p. 38; H. Crouzel – M. Simonetti, note 2, in: Origène, *Traité des principes*, v. 2: *Commentaire et fragments*, SCh 253, Paris 1978, p. 213; M. Simonetti, *Dio (Padre)*, in: *Origene. Dizionario. La cultura, il pensiero, le opere*, ed. A. Monaci Castagno, Roma 2000, p. 120; A.W. Moore, *The Infinite*, London – New York 2001, p. 43-47; C. Moreschini, *Storia della filosofia patristica*, Brescia 2005, p. 136; L. Neidhart, *Unendlichkeit im Schnittpunkt von Mathematik und Theologie*, v. 2: *Historischer und theologischer Teil*, Göttingen 2008, p. 534; W. Achtner, *Infinity as a Transformative Concept in Science and Theology*, in: *Infinity: New Research Frontiers*, ed. M. Heller – W. Hugh Woodin, Cambridge 2011, p. 27-28; D.B. Hart, *Notes on the Concept of the Infinite in the History of Western Metaphysics*, in: *Infinity: New Research Frontiers*, ed. M. Heller – W. Hugh Woodin, Cambridge 2011, p. 266-267; S. Lilla, *Aristotelianism*, in: *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity*, v. 1, ed. A. Di Berardino, Downers Grove 2014, p. 231. It is worth adding that in some contemporary monographs on the infinity of God in ancient and medieval thought, though the question of the infinity of God in Origen's work is omitted, the prevailing view is that it was only Plotinus who introduced the positive understanding of the infinity of God into the philosophical discourse and that Christianity addressed the question after him. See Sweeney, *Divine Infinity*, p. 6-9 and 546-547; F. Krainer, *The Concept of the Infinity of God in Ancient Greek Thought*, in: *The Infinity of God: New Perspectives in Theology and Philosophy*, ed. B.P. Göcke – C. Tapp, Notre Dame 2019, p. 21-36.

¹³ Cf. D. Mrugalski, *Nieskończoność Boga u Orygenesza: Przyczyna wielkiego nieporozumienia*, *VoxP* 67 (2017) p. 437-475; D. Mrugalski, *Potentia Dei absoluta et potentia Dei ordinata u Orygenesza? Nowa próba wyjaśnienia kontrowersyjnych fragmentów De principiis*, *VoxP* 69 (2018) p. 493-526; D. Mrugalski, *Agnostos Theos: Relacja między nieskończonością a niepoznawalnością Boga w doktrynach medioplatoników*, "Roczniki Filozoficzne" 3 (2019) p. 25-51; D. Mrugalski, *The Notion of Divine Infinity and Unknowability: Philo, Clement, and Origen of Alexandria in a Polemic with Greek Philosophy*, in: *Hellenism, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity: Transmission and Transformation of Ideas*, ed. R. Fialová – J. Hoblik – P. Kitzler, Berlin – Boston 2022, p. 69-84.

1. The infinity of God in Origen's thought

In this paragraph, I will not address the question of the erroneous opinions of some scholars, who maintain that Origen shared a negative understanding of the concept of infinity, which was characteristic of Greek philosophy before Plotinus. As mentioned above, this problem was exhaustively discussed in my other publications¹⁴. I will only remark that these scholars have based their view on two passages preserved in the *Letter to Manes* by Emperor Justinian¹⁵, which, as they admitted, are not very reliable. To understand Origen's statements on the infinity of God correctly, we need to view them in the context of very important distinctions that the author makes at several points in his writings, and which he clearly explains. The distinction in question is that between theology and economy, or between the essence of God and the power of God¹⁶. Thus, according to the Alexandrian, when the Scripture refers to God in a theological way, referring to the essence of God, or to God in himself (τὸν θεὸν καθ' ἑαυτόν), it states that "there is no end to his greatness (μεγαλωσύνης αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔσται πέρας)"¹⁷. However, when it refers to God in an economic way, referring to God acting in the world, or to his power, it depicts God in a finite way, speaking and acting like a human being. Thus, in his essence, God is infinite, as well as incorporeal, almighty, invisible, and simple¹⁸. Although

¹⁴ Cf. footnote above. It is worth adding that the negative understanding of infinity as something imperfect is to be found, above all, in Aristotle's thought. However, the infinity of the first principle was already discussed by the Presocratics. For more information on the subject, see A. Drozdek, *In the Beginning Was Apeiron: Infinity in Ancient Philosophy*, Stuttgart 2008. Nevertheless, in the Presocratic thought, infinity is understood in the material sense. A positive understanding of infinity, referring to the power of an incorporeal and transcendent God, emerges when Greek philosophy meets biblical thought, that is, in Hellenistic Judaism. Cf. D. Mrugalski, *The Platonic-Biblical Origins of Apophatic Theology: Philo of Alexandria's Philosophical Interpretation of the Pentateuchal Theophanies*, VV 41/3 (2023) p. 499-528. The doctrine was subsequently adopted by the Christian theology. Cf. Mrugalski, *The Notion of Divine Infinity and Unknowability*, p. 69-84.

¹⁵ See Justinianus Imperator, *Epistula ad Mennam Constantinopolitanum*, Mansi IX 489 = Origenes, *De principiis* II 9, 1, Sch 253, p. 211-212; Justinianus Imperator, *Epistula ad Mennam Constantinopolitanum*, Mansi IX 525 = Origenes, *De principiis* IV 4, 8, Sch 269, p. 262-263.

¹⁶ Cf. Origenes, *In Ieremiam homiliae* 18, 6; Origenes, *In Genesim homiliae* 3, 1-2.

¹⁷ Ps 144:3 [LXX]; cf. Origenes, *In Ieremiam homiliae* 18, 6, Sch 238, p. 198.

¹⁸ Cf. Origenes, *In Genesim homiliae* 3, 2, GCS 29, p. 39: "Nos sicut incorporeum esse Deum et omnipotentem et invisibilem profitemur"; Origenes, GCS 29, p. 41: "Simplex

God is sometimes compared to created beings, these comparisons are always limited and inadequate. This is because a finite creature cannot be compared to the One who “infinitely transcends the created nature (τῷ ἀπείρῳ ὑπεροχῇ ὑπερέχοντι πάσης γεννητῆς φύσεως)”¹⁹. Being absolutely incorporeal and simple, God has no characteristics that could circumscribe or limit him in any way (*circumscribi uel inhiberi*)²⁰. He has no material location, physical size, corporeal shape or colour²¹. The latter statement seems to be a polemic with the claims made by Aristotle who, considering the issue of infinity in his *Physics*, stated that location, surface, or form are what encomasses a given being and what makes it finite²². For infinity by its very nature cannot be encompassed by anything. For this reason, according to Aristotle, who did not accept the existence of forms separate from matter, no infinite being can actually exist²³. Meanwhile, to Origen, incorporeal God is a being that is not encompassed and not limited by anything. This is presumably the reason why he has doubts about whether God should be understood as substance or rather as something that exists above substance since substance is something that has a form or is a form²⁴.

Although the distinction between God’s essence and God’s power may suggest that the latter is finite, Origen makes further distinctions,

namque est illa substantia et neque membris ullis neque compagibus affectibusque composita, sed quidquid divinis virtutibus geritur, hoc ut homines possint intelligere aut humanorum membrorum appellatione profertur aut communibus et notis enuntiatorum affectibus”; Origenes, *De principiis* I 1, 6, SCh 252, p. 100: “Non ergo corpus aliquod aut in corpore esse putandus est deus, sed intellectualis natura simplex, nihil omnino in se adiunctionis admittens; uti ne maius aliquid et inferius in se habere credatur, sed ut sit ex omni parte μὴ ἄς, et ut ita dicam ἐνάς, et mens ac fons, ex quo initium totius intellectualis naturae uel mentis est”.

¹⁹ Origenes, *Contra Celsum* III 77, SCh 136, p. 174.

²⁰ Origenes, *De principiis* I 1, 6, SCh 252, p. 100.

²¹ Origenes, *De principiis* I 1, 6, SCh 252, p. 100: “Mens uero ut moueatur uel operetur, non indiget loco corporeo neque sensibili magnitudine uel corporali habitu aut colore, neque alio ullo prorsus indiget horum, quae corporis uel materiae propria sunt”. Cf. also Origenes, *Homiliae in Genesim* 13, 3, GCS 29, p. 118: “non in loco aliquo quaeram Deum (...). Non ergo in loco neque in terra habitat Deus”; Origenes, *De oratione* 23, 1-5; Origenes, *Contra Celsum* VII 34.

²² Cf. Aristoteles, *Physica* 204b; 205a-206a; 207b. It is worth adding that Origen’s predecessor, Clement of Alexandria, who explicitly used the term ἀπείρος to refer to God, stated that God is infinite, as He is absolutely simple, indivisible, has no dimensions and no shape. Cf. Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromata* V 81, 6, GCS 15, p. 380.

²³ Cf. Aristoteles, *Physica* 203a-208a.

²⁴ Cf. Origenes, *Contra Celsum* VI 64; Origenes, *Commentarii in Ioannem* XIII 21, 123; Origenes, *De oratione* 27, 8.

which imply that God's power can also be considered infinite. It is the distinction between the absolute and the ordered power of God, or, according to later terminology, the distinction between *potentia dei absoluta et potentia dei ordinata*. According to the Apostle Paul's statement, the Power and Wisdom of God is, for Origen, the Only-Begotten Son of God, Christ²⁵. He is considered as eternally existing in God and, at the same time, is eternally generated or eternally begotten by the Father; He is Power and Wisdom in the absolute sense (καθάπαξ ἢ ἀπόλυτον)²⁶ and has the same substance as the Father, or even, as Origen says in *De principiis*, He is the substance of God itself (*ipsa dei substantia*)²⁷. Thus, the Son is infinite as is the Father²⁸. Meanwhile, when He is considered as acting in the world, He is the Power and Wisdom of God adapted to the capacities of the creatures that receive it, and therefore, in a sense, finite²⁹. This is also the way Origen understands the incarnation of the Son, which was a kind of limitation on infinity. Placing the Son in "a tiny form of the human body" was intended to demonstrate "the infinite and invisible greatness of God the Father present in Him" to the people³⁰.

²⁵ Cf. 1Cor 1:24; Origenes, *De principiis* I 2, 1; Origenes, *Commentarii in Ioannem* I 22, 140; I 34, 248.

²⁶ Origenes, *Commentarii in Ioannem* I 34, 245-248, SCh 120, p. 180-182.

²⁷ Origenes, *De principiis* I 2, 8, SCh 252, p. 126. Cf. also Origenes, *De principiis*, I 2, 6, SCh 252, p. 122: "quae imago etiam naturae ac substantiae patris et filii continet unitatem". Edwards even argues that Origen used the term ὁμοούσιος to describe the unity of the nature of the Father and Son. However, the term has been translated in various ways, which is exemplified by the texts cited above. Cf. M.J. Edwards, *Did Origen Apply the Word 'homoousios' to the Son?*, JThS 49 (1998) p. 658-670.

²⁸ Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* I 3, 7, where it is stated that there are no differences in the essence of each of the persons of the Trinity.

²⁹ This does not mean, however, that the Power, which is the Son acting in the world, is finite by its nature, but that it can be revealed in a finite manner. Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* I 2, 9, SCh 252, p. 130, where two Powers of God are mentioned; one unbegotten and the other begotten but, as Origen stresses, equally eternal and immeasurable (*immensa*). Many passages can be cited here that mention God's power, for which anything is possible (*omnia possibilis sunt*) on the one hand, and, on the other hand, a certain measure of power (μέτρον τῆς δυνάμεως), which is managed by the Logos acting in the created world, or the Logos adapting its form to certain situations. Cf. Origenes, *Contra Celsum* III 70; V 23-24; Origenes, *Commentariorum in Matthaëum series* (Matt 26, 42) 95; Origenes, *Commentarii in Matthaëum* XI 17; Origenes, *Commentarii in Ioannem* I 10, 60-63; Origenes, *In Genesim homiliae* 14, 1.

³⁰ Origenes, *De principiis* I 2, 8, SCh 252, p. 128: "filius dei breuissimae insertus humani corporis formae ex operum uirtutisque similitudine dei patris in se immensam

Of course, we are not talking about corporeal greatness here, but about the greatness of his power, which Origen mentions a bit earlier. Similarly, in the *Homilies on the Song of Songs*, the Saviour coming down to earthly matters is compared to a small drop that has trickled down “from the great power and great divine majesty”³¹. Although referring to the issue of the absolute Power and Wisdom of God in the *Commentary on the Gospel of John* Origen does not explicitly state that it is infinite, such a statement is to be found in the *Homilies on Numbers*, where the notion of infinity is combined with the concept of unknowability. Since God’s Wisdom is infinite, the process of its discovery by man can never end³². A similar theme appears in *De principis*, where, while interpreting Apostle Paul’s exclamation “Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out!”³³. Origen states that no man “even when aided and enlightened in mind by God’s grace, will ever be able to reach the final goal (*ad perfectum finem*) of his inquiries”³⁴. As far as the infinite Wisdom of God is concerned, getting to know certain Divine issues, which is the end of a certain process of cognition, in fact, becomes the beginning of a new path of cognition, the end of which again becomes a new beginning, and so on *ad infinitum*³⁵.

atque inuisibilem magnitudinem designabat”. It is worth adding that, in the same paragraph, Origen uses an interesting example, which, in a sense, also points to the infinity of God. He compares God to a statue “which encompasses the whole world with its vastness and, due to its size, cannot be seen by anyone”. However, it is possible to make another statue, which is much smaller in size but similar to that infinite statue in every other way, so that it can be grasped by the sight and that its form can be seen. The incarnate Logos is precisely such a finite statue. Though he is enclosed in a finite body, he demonstrates the infinite power of God in his works and power. Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* I 2, 8, SCh 252, p. 126.

³¹ Cf. Origenes, *In Canticum canticorum homiliae* 2, 3, SCh 37 bis, 110: “si ergo uideris Saluatorem meum ad terrena et humilia descendentem, uidebis, quomodo a uirtute magna et maiestate diuina ad nos modica quaedam stilla defluerit”.

³² Cf. Origenes, *In Numeros homiliae* 17, 4, SCh 442, p. 288: “Eorum uero qui sapientiae et scientiae operam nauant, quoniam finis nullus est – quis enim terminus Dei sapientiae erit? – ubi quanto amplius quis accesserit tanto profundiora inueniet, et quanto quis scrutatus fuerit tanto ea ineffabilia et incomprehensibilia deprehendet; incomprehensibilis enim et inaestimabilis est Dei sapientia”.

³³ Rom 11:33.

³⁴ Origenes, *De principiis* IV 3, 14, SCh 268, p. 391, tr. G.W. Butterworth, p. 413.

³⁵ Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* IV 3, 14, SCh 268, p. 391. Similar statements on the infinity of Divine Wisdom are made by Philo of Alexandria and Clement of Alexandria,

The infinity of Divine Wisdom, which contains infinite ideas, provokes a certain *aporia* related to Aristotle's logic. Since infinity cannot be encompassed by anything, as this would mean it is no longer infinite, can it be encompassed by the Divine Mind? Origen was aware of this *aporia*, which is evidenced by his statement made in the *Commentary on Genesis* transmitted in the *Philocalia*:

And we must first observe that if we believe the mind of God to be great enough to embrace the perfect knowledge of every individual existence, so that not the least ordinary occurrence escapes His Divinity, this belief involves the tenet, not demonstrably certain (οὐ μὴν ἐναργῆ τὴν ἀπόδειξιν), but held as being consistent with the eternity of God's understanding, which transcends all nature, that His knowledge includes ideas that are numerically infinite (ἄπειρα ἀριθμῶ)³⁶.

Meanwhile, in the *Commentary on the Psalms*, he states, while referring to a similar problem:

Thus the stars are numbered, the infinite multitude of saints is numbered. One Christ alone cannot be numbered. "Great is our Lord, and great is his power, and of his wisdom there is no number" (Ps 146:5). Great power: Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1Cor 1:24). And His wisdom has no number. Christ is wisdom, and only wisdom cannot be numbered (*et una sapientia non potest numerari*)³⁷.

The above statements refer to God's omniscience but also to God's omnipotence. The number of created beings, the number of saints, and the number of events that occurred in history are finite and countable. However, God's omniscience encompasses the future, and therefore also the beings that will be created through God's omnipotence, and

whose writings were well-known to Origen. Cf. Philo Alexandrinus, *De posteritate Caini* 151-152; Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromata* IV, 156,1-157,1.

³⁶ Origenes, *Philocalia* 23, 20, SCh 226, p. 198, tr. G. Lewis, p. 193.

³⁷ Origenes – Hieronymus, *Tractatus sive homiliae in Psalmos* 146, 4-5, CCL 78, p. 331 (own translation). Although the authorship of this treaty used to be ascribed to Jerome, it has been sufficiently proven that the treaty was written by Origen and translated by Jerome. Cf. V. Peri, *Omellie origeniane sui Salmi. Contributo all'identificazione del testo latino*, Città del Vaticano 1980.

the graces that God will grant in the future³⁸. Although, according to Origen, the world will have an end, even in the apokatastasis when “God will be all in all” (1Cor 15:28), Divine Wisdom, Power, and Goodness will be constantly active; God will never cease to bestow goods on his creatures³⁹. This is because the One who exists since eternity and for eternity (ἐξ ἀπείρω ἐπ’ ἄπειρον), writes Origen in *De oratione*, can grant us “far more than we could ever ask for or imagine” in the future (Eph 3:20). He can even do things that “surpass ‘what no eye has seen, what no ear has heard’ and that surpass ‘what no human mind has conceived’ (1Cor 2:9)”⁴⁰. Thus, also in the ages to come, God will continue to show the “immeasurable riches of his grace (τὸ ὑπερβάλλον πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ)” (Eph 2:7)⁴¹. For this reason, the Wisdom and the Power of God, which is Christ, is infinite and uncountable. However, Origen stresses that this cannot be demonstrated by logical proof (ἀπόδιξις) but is the object of faith.

The actual number of created beings is, however, finite. Also in the beginning, God created a finite number of beings, which Origen states referring to a passage in Wis 11:20 [LXX]: “by measure and number and weight you ordered all things”⁴². He supplements this claim with the following arguments: 1) infinity cannot be encompassed, comprehended, or understood (*ubi finis non est, nec conpraehensio ulla vel circumscriptio*

³⁸ This claim is also expressed in the homily on Psalm 76 preserved in a recently discovered manuscript (*Codex Monacensis Graecus 314*) that contains Origen’s homilies written in Greek. Commenting on the verse Ps 76:20: “In the sea was your way, and your paths in many waters, and your footprints will not be known”, and, at the same time, referring to the passage in Rom 11:33: “Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and how his roads are not to be tracked”, Origen states: “As much as a human being wants to find out how to grasp the tracks of God, he is not enabled to track down everything; for example, what does God intend in the limitless age (εἰς τὸν ἄπειρον αἰῶνα), or what did he intend from the limitless age (ἐκ τοῦ ἀπείρου αἰῶνος)?”. Cf. Origenes, *In Psalmos homiliae, Homilia IV in Psalmum LXXVI*, 212-213, GCSNF 19, p. 349, tr. J.W. Trigg, p. 285.

³⁹ Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* I 2, 10. Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* I 4, 3, where there is a reference to the eternal, creative, beneficent, and caring power of God. Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* II 11, 1-7, where Origen argues that in life after death the souls of the saved continue their search for truth under the guidance of the Logos, and receive divine nourishment according to the measure that finite creatures are able to receive.

⁴⁰ Origenes, *De oratione* 27, 16, GCS 3, p. 375.

⁴¹ Origenes, *De oratione* 27, 15, GCS 3, p. 374.

⁴² Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* II 9, 1; IV 4, 8.

esse potest)⁴³; 2) if the world was infinite, God would not be able to encompass it, govern it, or know it (*quodsi fuerit, utique nec contineri uel dispensari a deo quae facta sunt poterunt*)⁴⁴; 3) God encompasses everything and is not encompassed, or comprehended, by anything (*virtute enim sua omnia conpraehendit, et ipse nullius creaturae sensu conpraehensus est*)⁴⁵; 4) only God knows and penetrates Himself (*illa enim natura soli sibi cognita est*)⁴⁶. The claim of God's finite power does not appear in this argument. The claim that God has to be finite in order to know Himself also does not appear, although the above-mentioned scholars have reached such conclusions. On the contrary, since infinity encompasses everything and since it cannot be encompassed by anything, it is precisely God, who encompasses everything and cannot be encompassed by anything Himself, that is infinite⁴⁷. If the world was infinite, it would, in a sense, be identical with God, or would encompass God, which is an obvious absurdity. In the above statements, Origen points to the fundamental difference between the transcendent God and the world that He created, which is precisely the difference between infinity and finiteness. As far as the question of God's knowledge of Himself, or the question of the interpenetration of the Persons of the Trinity, is concerned, it could be the topic of a separate study. At this point, suffice it to say that Origen makes another distinction here, this time concerning epistemology. He argues that knowledge in the conceptual sense, or encompassing a given thing by a notion or definition (which is expressed by the verb *conpraehendo*/καταλαμβάνω), is one thing, while knowledge in the sense of penetrating a certain truth (which is expressed by the verb *cognosco*/

⁴³ Origenes, *De principiis* II 9, 1, SCh 252, p. 352; cf. Origenes, *De principiis* III 5, 2, SCh 268, p. 222.

⁴⁴ Origenes, *De principiis* II 9, 1, SCh 252, p. 352; cf. Origenes, *De principiis* III 5, 2, SCh 268, p. 220-222.

⁴⁵ Origenes, *De principiis* IV 4, 8, SCh 268, p. 420.

⁴⁶ Origenes, *De principiis* IV 4, 8, SCh 268, p. 420.

⁴⁷ Cf. Origenes, *De oratione* 23, 1-5, which contains a commentary on the Lord's Prayer, and more specifically on the words: "who art in heaven". According to Origen, God, of course, does not dwell in heaven: "Since, in that case, as contained God will be formed to be less than the heavens because they contain Him. Whereas the ineffable might of His godhead demands our belief that all things are contained and held together by Him (περιέχεσθαι καὶ συνέχεσθαι)". Origenes, *De oratione* 23, 1-5, GCS 3, p. 349-350. Cf. also Origenes, *Contra Celsum* VII 34, SCh 150, p. 90, where it is mentioned that God contains everything but is not contained by anything Himself (οὐδὲν ἔστι τὸ περιέχον τὸν θεόν).

γινώσκω as well as *intellego/voέω*) is another⁴⁸. God cannot be encompassed by any notion. God and His Wisdom are *incomprehensibilis* and *inaestimabilis*⁴⁹. This, however, does not imply that the Son cannot know the Father. On the contrary, only the Son knows (*cognoscit*) the Father, and only the Spirit penetrates (*scrutatur*) everything, even the depths of God⁵⁰.

2. Reception of Origen's thought in the West before Augustine

Origen's ideas were known to the Latin West long before Augustine's conversion. It was probably in the second half of the 3rd century AD when Latin writers who still knew Greek, could read Origen's writings and use them in their work. Although M. Simonetti believes that we have no certain information about Origen's writings being used this was in the 3rd century AD, except for some analogies in the ideas that appear in *De Trinitate* by Novatian⁵¹, G. Heidl has even proposed the claim that Novatian was the first translator of Origen's works and the author of the first compilation of excerpts from his works⁵². What Origen and Novatian certainly have in common is the series of statements in favour of transcendence, incorporeality, simplicity, and unknowability of God⁵³, as well as the concept of the infinity of God,

⁴⁸ Cf. Origenes, *Commentarii in Ioannem*, passage 51, GCS 10, p. 495; Origenes, *Contra Celsum* VI 62; Origenes, *De principiis* I 1, 5; I 1, 9; Origenes, *Commentarii in Ioannem* I 27, 187.

⁴⁹ Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* I 1, 5, SCh 252, p. 96; Origenes, *In Numeros homiliae* 17, 4, SCh 442, p. 288.

⁵⁰ Cf. Matt 11:27; 1Cor 2:10; Origenes, *Contra Celsum* VII 44; Origenes, *De principiis* I 1, 8; I 3, 4; IV 4, 8; Origenes, *Commentarii in Ioannem* I 24, 146; II 28, 172.

⁵¹ Cf. M. Simonetti, *Origene in Occidente prima della controversia*, "Augustinianum" 46/1 (2006) p. 26.

⁵² This scholar identified passages and compilations of texts from the lost *Commentary on Genesis* by Origen and contrasted them with Novatian's statements. Cf. Heidl, *The Influence of Origen on the Young Augustine*, p. 237-272.

⁵³ Cf. Novatianus, *De Trinitate* 5, 6; 6, 5; 7, 1-5; Origenes, *De principiis* I 1, 1-2; I 1, 5; Origenes, *In Genesim homiliae* 3, 2. It is worth adding that Novatian refers to the same biblical texts, which Origen referred to when he argued in favour of God's incorporeality; namely, John 4:24: "God is a Spirit"; Deut 4:24: "God is a consuming fire", and 1 John 1:5: "God is light". He also claims that their texts should not be understood in a corporeal sense.

which scholars tend to overlook. In his work *De Trinitate*, Novatian makes a distinction, characteristic of Platonism, between a being that is real, unchangeable, and eternal, and a being that is in the process of becoming, and destructible⁵⁴, and then states that the real and highest being, namely God, must be one. This is because the very term “highest” (*summum*) implies not only that there is nothing higher than this being, but also that it has no equal (*parem non habet*)⁵⁵. After that, he adds: “There cannot be two infinites (*nec duo infinita esse possunt*), as the very nature of things dictates. And that is infinite which neither has any sort of beginning nor end”⁵⁶. Further on in his text, Novatian explains that infinity encompasses everything but cannot be encompassed by anything itself. If God did not encompass everything, He would not be God. If, however, some other power encompassed Him, He would also not be God, but that which would encompass Him would be God⁵⁷. These explanations are interesting because they appear as part of the “proof” of the oneness of God rather than of His infinity. The infinity of God’s nature and power is assumed here as if it were an obvious thing. If God is infinite, which is obvious, there can be nothing equal to Him. The second part of this statement does not seem to be that obvious, and therefore is explained in the following way; according to logic, there can be no *duo infinita*, as infinity encompasses everything. Novatian’s argument sheds new light on Origen’s claim made in the controversial passages of *De principiss* II, 9,1 and IV, 4,8, in which some scholars find a claim on the finite power of God. In fact, the Alexandrian, like Novatian, accepts the infinity of God as an obvious thing and explains why God created a finite world in a similar vein. If the world was infinite, the world would encompass God instead of being encompassed by Him. Meanwhile, it is God who *virtute sua omnia conpraehendit, et ipse nullius creaturae sensu conpraehensus est*⁵⁸. Novatian’s statement conveys exactly the same meaning. It is worth adding that Novatian, like Origen, derives the claim of the impossibility of conceptually knowing and naming what God is from the concept of infinity. A concept and a name encompass something that can, by its nature, be encompassed (*ex naturae suae condicione comprehenditur*). Meanwhile, the infinite

⁵⁴ Cf. Novatianus, *De Trinitate* 4, 6-7.

⁵⁵ Cf. Novatianus, *De Trinitate* 4, 8, CCL 4, p. 18.

⁵⁶ Novatianus, *De Trinitate* 4, 9, CCL 4, p. 18.

⁵⁷ Cf. Novatianus, *De Trinitate* 4, 9, CCL 4, p. 18.

⁵⁸ Origenes, *De principiis* IV 4, 8, Sch 268, p. 420.

nature of God cannot be encompassed by anything; neither by a concept nor by a name⁵⁹.

In the first half of the 4th century AD Origen's influence on the Western thought is beyond doubt. It becomes apparent in the works and translations by Hilary of Poitiers, which was attested to by ancient writers⁶⁰. As far as the infinity of God in Hilary's thought is concerned, although a few studies have been written about it, none of them has taken notice of the possibility of Origen's influence on the doctrine formulated by the Bishop of Poitiers on this matter⁶¹. Meanwhile, already at the beginning of his work *De trinitate*, Hilary criticised those who "enclosed the Lord of the universe and Father of infinity (*infinitatis parentem*) in the confines of metal, stone, or wood"⁶². A similar critique is to be found in Origen who, on this occasion, also uses the term ἄπειρος, which corresponds to the Greek term *infinitus*, when referring to the transcendent nature of God⁶³. According to Hilary, the infinity of God is also evidenced by the biblical statement made in Exod 3:14 "I am who I am", as to exist means to last forever, to be unchanging, and therefore to have no beginning and no end⁶⁴. Also in this case, we can find an analogous thought in Origen's writings⁶⁵. Although Hilary's statement refers to infinity in the temporal sense, while speaking of the nature of the Father in whom everything has its source in book II of *De Trinitate*, he states that God is infinite because He encompasses ev-

⁵⁹ Cf. Novatianus, *De Trinitate*, 4, 10-11, CCL 4, p. 18. Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* II 9, 1; III 5, 2.

⁶⁰ Cf. Hieronymus, *De viris illustribus* 100; Hieronymus, *Epistula* 112, 20. Following his exile to Phrygia in 356, Hilary came into direct contact with the works of Origen. He translated some of them and used others in his works. Cf. Simonetti, *Origene in Occidente*, p. 27-30.

⁶¹ Cf. J.M. McDermott, *Hilary of Poitiers: The Infinite Nature of God*, VChr 27 (1973) p. 172-202; M. Weedman, *The Polemical Context of Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrine of Divine Infinity*, JECS 18/1 (2010) p. 81-104; J.A. Mercer, *Divine Perfection and Human Potentiality: The Trinitarian Anthropology of Hilary of Poitiers*, Oxford 2019, p. 55-98. As far as the latter monograph is concerned, Mercer dedicated one chapter of his study to the question of Origen's influence on Hilary's thought, however, he focused primarily on the concept of *generatio aeterna* of the Son by the Father, and on cosmological and soteriological themes. Cf. Mercer, *Divine Perfection and Human Potentiality*, p. 17-30.

⁶² Hilarius, *De Trinitate* I 4, CCL 62, p. 4.

⁶³ Cf. Origenes, *Contra Celsum* III 77, Sch 136, p. 174.

⁶⁴ Cf. Hilarius, *De Trinitate* I 5-6, CCL 62, p. 5.

⁶⁵ Cf. Origenes, *De oratione* 24, 2-3, GCS 3, p. 354 where, quoting a passage from Exod 3:14, Origen reaches the conclusion that God is immutable and eternally unchanging: "αὐτός ἐστιν ἄτρεπτος καὶ ἀναλλοίωτος αἰεί".

everything but cannot be encompassed by anything Himself⁶⁶. Meanwhile, further on in his argument from the premise of the infinity of God's nature, he derives the conclusion on its unknowability. The finite human mind cannot encompass, that is, conceptually comprehend and adequately name, the infinite. However, this does not mean that the infinite Father is not knowable to the Son or that the Son cannot know the Father. On the contrary, "no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son" (Matt 11:27)⁶⁷. The same biblical quote also appears in Origen's writings, in the context of the reflection on the unknowability of the infinite⁶⁸. According to Hilary, God's power is infinite too. This claim appears in his *De Trinitate*, which quotes biblical passages from Isa 40:12 and Isa 66:1-2, that speak of the great hand of God that has built everything and holds everything in its grasp⁶⁹, but also in his *Tractatus super Psalmos*, where he comments on the statement made in Ps 144:3: "magnus Dominus et laudabilis nimis et magnitudinis eius non est finis"⁷⁰. Both passages also mention that infinity surpasses the cognitive capacity of the finite mind. Unfortunately, Origen's commentary on Psalm 144 has not been preserved. However, scholars have no doubt that in his *Tractatus super Psalmos*, Hilary closely followed Origen's commentary⁷¹. The quote from Ps 144:3 was preserved in Origen's *Homilies on Jeremiah*, in the place where he makes a distinction between theology and economy, which was discussed above⁷². It follows from his statement that the expression *magnitudinis eius non est finis* is a theological claim,

⁶⁶ Cf. Hilarius, *De Trinitate* II 6, CCL 62, p. 42-43: "Infinitus quia non ipse in aliquo, sed intra eum omnia. Semper extra locum, quia non continetur. (...) ei esse sine fine est".

⁶⁷ Cf. Hilarius, *De Trinitate* II 6, CCL 62, p. 42-43.

⁶⁸ Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* IV 4, 8. Cf. also Origenes, *De principiis* II 9, 1, III 5, 2; Origenes, *De oratione* 23, 1-5, Origenes, *Contra Celsum* VII 34.

⁶⁹ Cf. Hilarius, *De Trinitate* I 6.

⁷⁰ Cf. Hilarius, *Tractatus super Psalmos* 144, 6, CCL 61B, p. 271: "Haec Dei prima et praecipua laudatio est, quod nihil in se mediocre, nihil circumscriptum, nihil emensum et magnitudinis suae habeat et laudis. Virtus ejus opinione non clauditur, locis non continetur, nominibus non enuntiatur, temporibus non subditur: artus ad id sensus noster est, ingenium hebes est, sermo mutus est. Finem magnificentia ipsius nescit: et aliquam ementiendi se opinionem immensa magnitudo non patitur. Extenta ubique, extenta semper est, hanc habens infinitatis suae laudem: caeterum omnem intelligentiam infinitae hujus in se qualitatis excedens".

⁷¹ Cf. Simonetti, *Origene in Occidente*, p. 28-30; Mercer, *Divine Perfection*, p. 18-19.

⁷² Cf. Origenes, *In Ieremiam homiliae* 18, 6, cited above.

and therefore describes the essence of God. It is also worth noting that Hilary, following Origen, also develops the doctrine of *generatio aeterna*, or the eternal generation of the Son by the Father, which points to the temporal infinity of the Father and Son. This question becomes extremely relevant in the era of the Arian controversy, as Arius, and later Eunomius, linked the notion of being ungenerated with the essence of God; in that case, only God the Father could be infinite in every sense. Meanwhile, the Son, being generated, had his origin in the Father⁷³. For this reason, Hilary, more than Origen, emphasised the infinity of the nature and power of God, although, as we have seen, similar themes appear in Origen's thought. According to Hilary, God is God and Father in infinity. If one subtracts some time from the Son, and therefore if, as the Arians suggest, one assumes that He began to exist in time, then one subtracts time from the Father as well. For this would mean that for some time the Father would not have the Son. Although He would still be God in infinity, He would not be such as the Father (*non tamen et Pater in ea fuerit infinitate qua Deus est*)⁷⁴.

3. The infinity of God in Augustine's thought

In the monograph on Origen's influence on the young Augustine, G. Heidl states that Augustine, following Origen in his early writings, "accepted the philosophical principle that every intellect including that of God is limited"⁷⁵. To support his claim, the scholar quotes passages from *De principiis* II 9, 1 and IV 4, 8, which were mentioned above, as well as the following statement made by Augustine in *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*:

Everything which understands itself comprehends itself. But what comprehends itself is limited with respect to itself. Now the intellect understands itself. Therefore it is limited in respect to itself. Nor does it wish to be without

⁷³ Cf. K. Kochańczyk-Bonińska – M. Przyszychowska, *Incomprehensibility of God and the Trinitarian Controversy of the Fourth Century*, VoxP 61 (2014) p. 239-247.

⁷⁴ Cf. Hilarius, *De Trinitate* XII 32, CCL 62A, p. 604-603. For more on this subject cf. M. Weedman, *The Trinitarian Theology of Hilary of Poitiers*, Leiden 2007, p. 136-147; 180-195; Weedman, *The Polemical Context*, p. 92-96; Mercer, *Divine Perfection*, p. 13-70.

⁷⁵ Cf. Heidl, *The Influence of Origen on the Young Augustine*, p. 186.

limits, although it could be, since it wishes to be known to itself, for it loves itself⁷⁶.

The passages cited by Heidl, both from Origen and from Augustine, do not in any way mention the finite character of the Divine intellect. It is true, however, that both Origen and Augustine believe that infinity cannot be encompassed and that, in consequence of this, it is unknowable. However, both thinkers relate this claim to the finite intellect of creatures rather than the intellect of God. Moreover, both before his conversion and after, Augustine believed that God is infinite. His conversion was linked to his discovery of the incorporeality of God. As a Manichaean, he believed that God is infinite in the sense of material extension⁷⁷. He was to arrive at the new, incorporeal understanding of the infinity of God by hearing the words “I am that I am” (cf. Exod 3:14) in his heart⁷⁸. Augustine refers to this voice again in the final part of his *Confessions*, where he states:

Loud and clear have you spoken to me already in my inward ear, O Lord, telling me that you are eternal, and to you alone immortality belongs, because no alteration of form, no motion, changes you. Nor does your will vary with changing times (...). Again, Lord, loud and clear have you spoken to me in my inward ear, to tell me that you have made all natures and substances which are not what you are and yet have being; that alone is not from you which has no being. You have told me also that if our will moves away from you, who are, toward anything which less truly is, that movement is transgression and sin⁷⁹.

As has been stated above, Augustine, who was writing his *Confessions* as a bishop at the time when the Origenist controversy became no-

⁷⁶ Cf. Augustinus, *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus* 15, CCL, 44A, p. 21: “Omne quod se intellegit, comprehendit se; quod autem se comprehendit, finitum est sibi; et intellectus intellegit se, ergo finitum est sibi. Nec infinitus esse vult, quamvis possit, quia notus sibi esse vult; amat enim se”, tr. D.L. Mosher, p. 44.

⁷⁷ Cf. Augustinus, *Confessiones* VII 1, 1-2; VII 5, 7; VII 14, 20; VII 20, 26. For more on this subject cf. also S. Macdonald, *The Divine Nature*, in: *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. E. Stump – N. Kretzmann, Cambridge 2001, p. 71-90; Teske, *To Know God and the Soul*, 33-36 and 139-151; B. Dobell, *Augustine's Intellectual Conversion: The Journey from Platonism to Christianity*, Cambridge 2009, p. 8-12 and 208-210.

⁷⁸ Cf. Augustinus, *Confessiones* VII 10, 16.

⁷⁹ Augustinus, *Confessiones* XII 11, 11, CCL 27, p. 221-222, tr. M. Boulding, p. 318.

torious also in the West, did not make any mention of his early fascination with Origen. However, it is possible to find some references to the Alexandrian's thought in the text cited above. He also believed that God does not change and is not subject to development⁸⁰, and he made a similar connection between the statement made in Exod 3:14 and the concepts of God's eternity, incorruptibility, immutability, and holiness. Also, according to Origen, sinners distance themselves from the 'One who is' and move towards non-being, because evil is non-being⁸¹. Meanwhile, after Origen, as has also been noted above, the statement from Exod 3:14 is cited by Hilary in the context of a discussion on the infinity of God⁸². Of course, the concepts of God's incorporeality and infinity are to be found also in Plotinus' thought; they were considered by Augustine during his reading of *Libri platoniorum*, which he mentions in *Confessions*⁸³. However, the Platonists' books could not have been the only reason for Augustine's conversion to Christianity. He mentions in *De ordine* that he was also familiar with *libri maiores nostri*, or books by Christian authors⁸⁴. It is possible that some works by Origen and Hilary were among them⁸⁵. If we accept the claim made by G. Heidl that the *libri pleni*, which contributed directly to Augustine's conversion, were precisely the *Homilies on the Song of Songs* and the *Commentary on the Song of Songs* by Origen,

⁸⁰ Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* I 2, 10.

⁸¹ Cf. Origenes, *De oratione* 24, 2-3; Origenes, *In Epistulam ad Romanos libri* IV 5, 12-13; Origenes, *Commentarii in Iohannem* II 13, 95-96; Origenes, *De principiis* I 3, 6.

⁸² Cf. Hilarius, *De Trinitate* I 5-6.

⁸³ Cf. Augustinus, *Confessiones* VII 20, 26. Cf. also Teske, *To Know God and the Soul*, 149: "That Augustine learned from the books of the Platonists how to conceive of God and the soul as incorporeal beings seems beyond doubt. That it was through Augustine that the whole Western Church came to an idea of God and the soul as spiritual seems equally beyond doubt". Such radical claims are impossible to uphold. While it is difficult to deny the influence of Platonic philosophy on Augustine's thought, as I have demonstrated in earlier paragraphs, the doctrine of God's incorporeality was known in the West through the works of Novatian and Hilary of Poitiers, as well as through the works of Origen translated into Latin.

⁸⁴ Cf. Augustinus, *De ordine* I 11, 31.

⁸⁵ Cf. Heidl, *The Influence of Origen on the Young Augustine*, p. 24-26. Even if Augustine did not initially have access to all of Origen's works, due to his poor command of Greek, he certainly had access to the works of Hilary of Poitiers, which, as has been demonstrated above, included Origen's ideas. In fact, Augustine mentions Hilary's name multiple times and cites his works. Cf. Augustinus, *De Trinitate* VI 10, 11; XV 3, 5; Augustinus, *Contra Iulianum* II 26; II 28-30; Augustinus, *Ep.* 180, 3.

translated by Jerome in 383⁸⁶, then it is worth noting that a significant part of the Prologue to this work was dedicated to the spiritual, not the corporeal, reading of the Scripture. It states that God Himself is incorporeal and incorruptible and that this God loves all that is spiritual; that the love featured in the Song of Songs is to be understood in the spiritual sense, and that the lives of the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are a symbol of the journey of a man ascending towards the spiritual reality⁸⁷. This is the teaching that Augustine may have had in mind also when he was arguing with the Manichaeans, which can be seen in the work *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*. In it, he accuses the Manichaeans of an inability to see the spiritual and mystical meaning of the Old Testament⁸⁸. In the same work, he also asks the question concerning the infinity of God: *Deus finem habet, aut infinitus est?*⁸⁹. According to Faustus, the Christian God is finite because He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which means that He has power over those who bear the sign of circumcision. Augustine replies to this accusation in the Origenian spirit, encouraging his adversary to purify his material and corporeal image of God through faith⁹⁰. Once he has done so, he will see his questions in a different way. He will no longer ask whether the One who is not contained in any space is finite, or whether the One who is perfectly known only by the Son is infinite, or how the One who is unbounded is limited, or how the One who is the measure of all things is infinite⁹¹. In these questions resound the echoes of the themes raised by Origen, mentioned above. According to Origen and Augustine, God, being infinite, cannot be encompassed

⁸⁶ Cf. Heidl, *The Influence of Origen on the Young Augustine*, p. 7-17.

⁸⁷ Cf. Origenes, *Commentarium in Canticum Canticorum*, Prologus 1, 4-6; 2, 3-7; 2, 28; 3, 15-20.

⁸⁸ Cf. e.g. Augustinus, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* XXII 6-10. It is worth noting that in this text, Augustine explains to the Manichaeans that the term "light", which refers to God in the Bible, is to be understood in the spiritual, not corporeal, sense. It is the same for the expression "reflection of eternal light" (cf. Wis 7:26) which, according to Augustine, is to be understood as referring to the Wisdom of God. Similar arguments and similar biblical quotes can be found in Origen's writings. Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* I 1, 1-5; I 2, 5-9.

⁸⁹ Augustinus, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* XXV 1, CSEL 25/1, p. 725.

⁹⁰ An encouragement to such purification and to a spiritual reading of the Scripture, including the lives of the patriarchs, is also to be found in Origen's writings. Cf. Origenes, *Commentarium in Canticum Canticorum*, Prologus 1, 4-6.

⁹¹ Cf. Augustinus, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* XXV 2, CSEL 25/1, p. 727-728.

by anything, and although He is infinite, He is known by the Son⁹². It is worth adding that at the time of writing of *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, Augustine had access to a large proportion of the Latin versions of Origen's homiletic writings and, possibly, also to the work *De principiis*, which was translated in 398 by Rufinus⁹³. In his later work, *De Genesi ad litteram*, Augustine returns to the theme of incorporeality and infinity of God, which is linked to it:

The God who alone has immortality and dwells in light inaccessible, whom no human being has ever seen or can see (1Tm 6:16), is not contained in any place whether of finite or infinite space, nor altered by the passage of times, whether finite or infinite. For there is nothing in the substance by which he is God that is smaller in the part than in the whole, as must be the case with things that are in place; nor was there in his substance anything that is not there now or that will be and is not yet, as is the case with natures which can experience the changes and chances of time⁹⁴.

This statement is found in the context of Augustine's reflections on the question of Divine providence. Unfortunately, Origen's *Commentary on Genesis* has not been preserved; however, in his *Homilies on Genesis*, also in the context of reflections on the question of Divine providence,

⁹² According to A. Drozdek, Augustine did not reply to Faustus' question of whether God is infinite, because he pondered the question himself. The scholar suggests that perhaps he was considering an alternative possibility; namely, that God is "above the infinite and the finite". Cf. Drozdek, *Infinity in Augustine's Theology*, p. 49-50. In my opinion, Augustine, annoyed by Faustus' fairly "crude" accusation, which derived the conclusion that God's power is finite from the sign of circumcision, stated that he would not consider this issue until his adversary understood the spiritual and mystical meaning of Old Testament symbols. Therefore, he continued his argument by referring to earlier parts of the same work, which touch on the spiritual reading of the Old Testament. At the same time, however, he indicated that there were far more serious problems involved in the question of God's infinity and that they could be addressed only once one would accept the concept of incorporeality of God's nature. Augustine considered these problems when he familiarised himself with Origen's works.

⁹³ Cf. Heidl, *The Influence of Origen on the Young Augustine*, p. 65. Let us add that, in the introduction to his translation of *De principiis*, Rufinus informs us that Jerome "translated into Latin more than seventy books by Origen, which he called homiletic books, and some commentaries on the writings of the Apostle". Cf. Origenes, *De principiis*, Praefatio Rufini 2, Sch 252, p. 70.

⁹⁴ Augustinus, *De Genesi ad litteram* VIII 19, CSEL 28, p. 258, tr. E. Hill, p. 368.

similar statements on the incorporeality and simplicity of God have been made⁹⁵. Moreover, when he speaks about the activity of God in *De principiis*, Origen states that God “does not need physical space in which to move and operate, nor does he need a magnitude discernible by the senses, nor bodily shape or color, nor anything else whatever like these, which are suitable to bodies and matter”⁹⁶. Also in Origen’s thought, we can find the distinction between God who transcends “all sense of meaning, not only temporal but also eternal”, and creation, which is subject to change in time⁹⁷. It is also worth noting that the *Philocalia* contains a passage preserved from Origen’s *Commentary on Genesis* that was cited above, in which it is stated that infinite ideas are contained in God’s mind, as God’s knowledge encompasses everything, including the past and the future⁹⁸. This statement, in a way, corresponds to the second part of the text by Augustine, cited above, according to which, in the substance of God, “there was anything that is not there now or that will be and is not yet”.

Commenting on the statement from Ps 144:3-4: “Magnus Dominus et laudabilis valde et magnitudinis eius non est finis”, Augustine states that God is unknowable because of His infinity:

And we are bidden to praise him whom we cannot comprehend. If we could comprehend him, there would be a limit to his greatness; but because his greatness is without limit, we can comprehend something of God, but never the whole. Since this is so, since we are weak and fall far short of his grandeur, let us look to what he has made, so that we may be strengthened by his goodness. As we contemplate his works let us praise the worker, the maker for what is made, the creator for his creation, passing in review all the things known to us, things plain to see⁹⁹.

Further on in his statement, Augustine argues that admiring and studying the works created by God reveals to man the immense goodness and boundless greatness (*immensa bonitas et interminabilis magnitudo*) of God. However, it does not lead to conceptual knowledge of the essence of His nature. A similar reasoning is to be found in Origen’s *De principiis* where, although the term *infinitus* is not used in relation to God’s

⁹⁵ Cf. Origenes, *In Genesim homiliae* 3, 2.

⁹⁶ Origenes, *De principiis* I 1, 6, SCh 252, p. 100, tr. G.W. Butterworth, p. 14.

⁹⁷ Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* IV 4, 1. Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* I 3, 4.

⁹⁸ Cf. Origenes, *Philocalia* 23, 20, cited above.

⁹⁹ Augustinus, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 144, 6, CCL 40, p. 2091, tr. M. Boulding, p. 383.

nature, it is still described as *incomprehensibilis* and *inaestimabilis*¹⁰⁰. However, the verse of Ps 144:3, commented on by Augustine, appears in Origen's work when he makes the distinction between theology and economy, discussed above¹⁰¹, and in the *Commentary on the Psalms* by Hilary, which was influenced by an analogous commentary written by Origen. In the latter, we can find a reasoning that is strikingly similar to that presented by Augustine¹⁰².

To Augustine, as earlier to Origen and Hilary, Christ is the Power and the Wisdom of God (cf. 1Cor 1:24). Although He is generated, He is co-eternal with the Father. On this occasion, all these three thinkers developed the concept of *generatio aeterna* of the Son by the Father, which was first developed and argued by Origen. This topic is discussed by Augustine, above all, in his *De Trinitate*, in the context of the anti-Arian polemic. In this case, it is difficult to argue that Augustine drew his arguments directly from Origen, as at the time of the Arian controversy, this concept appears in the works of numerous defenders of the Nicene doctrine, which is attested by Augustine himself¹⁰³. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the metaphors that appear in the argumentation, such as e.g. the eternal reflection of eternal light, and the cited biblical quotes, can be found in Origen's work¹⁰⁴. In this context, Augustine also argues that the Son does not differ from the Father, not only in the temporal sense but also in every other sense. He has the same substance, and therefore is also infinite:

But here in material things, one is not as great as three together, and two are more than one. In that highest Trinity, however, one is as much as three together, and two are not more than one. And they are infinite in themselves. And so each is in each, all are in each, each is in all, all are in all, and all are one¹⁰⁵.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* I 1, 5-6, SCh 252, p. 96-98.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Origenes, *In Ieremiam homiliae* 18, 6, cited above.

¹⁰² Cf. Hilarius, *Tractatus super Psalmos* 144, 6, cited above.

¹⁰³ Augustine himself informs us that he was familiar with the arguments of Christian authors in favour of the eternity of the Father and Son, which were made as part of the anti-Arian polemic. Cf. Augustinus, *De Trinitate* VI 1, 1, CCL 50, p. 228: "Et hinc nonnulli nostri adversus Arianos hoc modo ratiocinati sunt".

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Augustinus, *De Trinitate* VI 1, 1-1, 3, 5; Origenes, *De principiis* I 2, 1-13; IV 4, 1.

¹⁰⁵ Augustinus, *De Trinitate* VI 10, 12, CCL 50, p. 242-243, tr. S. McKenna, p. 214. Also according to Origen, there are no differences in the substance of each of the persons of the Trinity. Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* I 3, 7.

However, the influence of Origen's thought on Augustine's doctrine of the infinity of God is most evident in the chapter of Book XII of his *De civitate Dei* titled: "Against Those Who Assert that Things that are Infinite Cannot Be Comprehended by the Knowledge of God"¹⁰⁶. This issue was addressed by many philosophers, including Aristotle, who believed that infinity cannot be encompassed by anything, and the Stoics. Arguing against such views, Augustine first observes that, according to the Scripture, God created a finite number of creatures (cf. Wis 11:20 [*Vlg.* 11:21]; Isa 40:26) and that God knows all the things that He created (cf. Matt 10:30). Although the number of created beings is finite, the Wisdom of God has no limits, which, according to Augustine, also finds confirmation in the Scripture (cf. Ps 146:5). Although this seems to contradict Aristotle's logic, Augustine argues that God can even know infinity:

Although, then, there is no definite number corresponding to an infinite number, an infinity of numbers is, nevertheless, not incomprehensible to Him of whose intelligence 'there is no number' (Ps 146:5). It follows, then, that since whatever is comprehended by knowledge is limited by the very comprehension of the one who knows, in some ineffable way, all infinity is made finite by God since in His knowledge it is not incomprehensible. Now, if the infinity of numbers cannot be beyond the limits of the knowledge of God which comprehends it, who are we little men that we should presume to put limits to His knowledge, as is done by those who argue that, unless the same pattern of temporal events is repeated in identical cycles, God can neither foresee what He creates with a view to making it, nor know it after He has made it? The fact is that God, whose knowledge is simple in its multiplicity and one in its diversity, comprehends all incomprehensible things with an incomprehensible comprehension. And this is so true that, even if He willed to keep on endlessly creating one new and dissimilar thing after another, not one of them could possibly seem new and unexpected to Him, nor would He foresee them merely, as it were at the last moment, but by His foreknowledge He would have them before Him throughout all eternity¹⁰⁷.

Let us first observe that, in his reflections on the infinity of God's wisdom and knowledge, Augustine refers to the same biblical passages

¹⁰⁶ Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* XII 19, CCL 48, p. 375: "Illud autem aliud quod dicunt, nec Dei scientia quae infinita sunt posse comprehendi".

¹⁰⁷ Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* XII 19, CCL 48, p. 375-376, tr. G.G. Walsh – G. Mo-nahan, p. 280-281.

that were cited by Origen when he was referring to the question of infinity; namely, Wis 11:20¹⁰⁸ and Ps 146:5¹⁰⁹, which refer to the finite number of creatures and to the wisdom of God that has no number. Both thinkers are convinced that God is omnipotent and omniscient, which means that God's power and knowledge encompass absolutely everything. Both thinkers also ponder the issue of whether this "everything" can mean infinity, that is, whether one infinity can encompass another infinity. According to Origen, since "God comprehends all things, it follows from this very fact that they can be comprehended that they are understood to have both a beginning and an end (*quia omnia conpraehendit, supereset ut eo ipso quo conpraehendi possunt, et initium habere intellegantur et finem*)"¹¹⁰. For that which has no beginning and no end is incomprehensible. The same claim was accepted by Augustine, who stated that even an infinite number which God, being omniscient, has to know, and, all infinity in general, is, as it were, finite to God, because it is encompassed by God's knowledge (*quapropter si, quidquid scientia conprehenditur, scientis conprehensione finitur: profecto et omnis infinitas quodam inefabili modo Deo finita est*)¹¹¹. The passage from Book III of Origen's *De principiis* cited above makes no mention of the infinite number which becomes, as it were, finite, to the knowledge of God. However, the problem of infinity being encompassed by God's wisdom was relevant to Origen, which was discussed in the first paragraph of this text. He stated that the Divine mind contains "numerically infinite ideas". According to Origen, this claim cannot be substantiated by a logical proof, but it is related to the belief in the transcendence and omnipotence of the Divine Mind, which knows all events and all things, including those that happened in the past and those that will happen in the future¹¹². Augustine's reasoning is similar. Although an infinite number of created things does not actually exist, God actually knows not only the things that have existed in the past, that exist in the present, and that will exist in the future, but also the things that could exist owing to his omnipotence. Augustine too, like Origen, is aware that his claim of the infinity existing actually in God's

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Origenes, *De principiis* II 9, 1; IV 4, 8, cited above.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Origenes – Hieronymus, *Tractatus sive homiliae in Psalmos* 146, 4-5, cited above.

¹¹⁰ Origenes, *De principiis* III 5, 2, Sch 268, p. 222, tr. G.W. Butterworth, p. 313.

¹¹¹ Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* XII 19, CCL 48, p. 375.

¹¹² Cf. Origenes, *Philocalia* 23, 20; Cf. also Origenes, *In Numeros homiliae* 17, 4, cited above.

Mind contradicts the evidence provided by philosophers, which he states explicitly in an earlier chapter of the same book: “My faith is not unsettled by any of the philosophers’ arguments, not even by the supposedly most pointed objection that the Infinite cannot be comprehended by any amount of knowledge, and, therefore, that God’s knowledge is no more than the finite ideas of all His finite creations”¹¹³.

There is no doubt that at the time of writing *De civitate Dei* Augustine was familiar with Origen’s ideas contained in *De principiis*. Origen’s name, as well as the Greek title of his work *περὶ ἀρχῶν* are mentioned earlier, in Book XI of *De civitate Dei*, which critiques the theory of the pre-existence of souls, and of their fall¹¹⁴. Despite the critique of his controversial claims, Origen is here recognised by Augustine as a man of great knowledge and trained in ecclesiastical science (*hominem in ecclesiasticis litteris tam doctum et exercitatum*)¹¹⁵, which suggests an old, and perhaps even still ongoing, fascination with his thought, which Augustine, being a “politically correct” bishop, would not admit. As far as the passage on infinite ideas contained in God’s mind, taken from Origen’s *Commentary on Genesis* and cited in the Greek *Philocalia* is concerned, G. Heidl has proved that Latin compilations of excerpts from this commentary circulated in the Western world even before Augustine’s conversion¹¹⁶. Moreover, even in the same work *De civitate Dei*, Augustine refers to Origen’s exegesis of difficult passages in Genesis, and accepts the Alexandrian’s solutions with approval¹¹⁷. The conviction about God’s radical transcendence and incorporeality, as well as the struggle with aporias provoked by the concept of the infinity of God, which we can find in Origen’s thought, must have impressed Augustine when he was young and when he was old. This is clearly evidenced by the aforementioned chapter of Book XII of *De civitate Dei*, in which the tension between the logic of ancient philosophers concerning infinity and the biblical faith in God’s omnipotence and omniscience becomes apparent. On this occasion, Augustine does not refer to Plotinus but to the essential truths of the Christian faith, confirmed by the relevant passages of Scripture. The background to these reflections is, of course, a philosophical

¹¹³ Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* XII 18, CCL 48, p. 373, tr. G.G. Walsh – G. Monahan, p. 276.

¹¹⁴ Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* XI 23, CCL 48, p. 341.

¹¹⁵ Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* XI 23, CCL 48, p. 342.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Heidl, *The Influence of Origen on the Young Augustine*, p. 237-289.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Augustinus, *De civitate Dei* XV 27, CCL 48, p. 495.

problem, however, it is a problem related to the philosophy of Aristotle rather than Plotinus, as Plotinus' infinite One does not think¹¹⁸. Meanwhile, the question of "encompassing" infinity appears in Aristotle's thought and is taken up, and criticised, by Origen. However, the latter, like Augustine, apart from arguments of faith, does not have sufficient philosophical arguments to reject the claim that infinity cannot be encompassed by anything, including God's incorporeal intellect. The only arguments that remain are therefore the faith that the omnipotent God can do what He wants to do and that the omniscient God actually knows what He will do and what He could do through his omnipotence. Thus, God's knowledge also encompasses infinity.

4. Conclusions

As far as the question of infinity of the incorporeal and transcendent God is concerned, many scholars are convinced that Augustine borrowed it from Plotinus, which is to be evidenced by the statement about his reading of the *libri platoniorum*, found in *Confessions*. Due to the absence of research into the positively understood infinity of God before Plotinus, this claim became a kind of *opinio comunis* among scholars. Meanwhile, the doctrine of the infinity of the transcendent God was present in the East since the very beginning of the encounter of biblical thought with Greek philosophy. It reached the West with the writings of Novatian and Hilary of Poitiers, who were influenced by Origen's thought, and with the Latin translations of Origen's writings dating from the time before Augustine's conversion. In his early writings, Augustine mentions *libri pleni* which, according to Heidl, are to be identified with Origen's *Homilies on the Song of Songs*, and *libri maiores nostri*, which could be, among others, the writings of Hilary of Poitiers, whose name was mentioned in Augustine's writings a number of times. All these writings emphasise God's transcendence, incorporeality, and infinity. This doctrine appears in the works of Christian authors alongside the exegesis of certain biblical passages. One of these passages is Exod 3:14, where God says about Himself: "I am who I am". This sentence was allegedly heard by Augustine when he was pondering the question of whether God is finite or infinite in the sense of physical

¹¹⁸ Cf. Plotinus, *Enneades* VI 7, 37-38.

dimensions. Other biblical passages supporting the infinity of God, cited by Origen and Hilary of Poitiers, and then by Augustine, include Ps 144:4: “Magnitudinis eius non est finis” and Ps 146:5: “Sapientiae eius non est numerus”. From these statements, they derive the claim on the infinite power and wisdom of God, as well as the thesis that God is unknowable to the finite human intellect. For in fact, according to Aristotle’s logic, infinity cannot be encompassed by anything. Although God’s power is infinite, it has brought a finite world into existence. Origen repeated this claim several times in his works, citing the following passage from the Wis 11:20: “omnia mensura et numero et pondere disposuisti”. Augustine shares this view, citing the same passage from the Scripture. Although both Origen and Augustine do not doubt that God encompasses all beings He created with his power and wisdom, both ponder the question of whether God’s knowledge can also encompass infinity. This question arises in two contexts; the discussion of the trinitarian doctrine and the discussion of the doctrine of creation. As far as the former is concerned, both Origen and Augustine recognise the Son as God’s infinite Wisdom, and, following the statements made in the Scripture, they claim that only the Son knows the Father and that only the Spirit penetrates everything, including the depths of God (cf. Matt 11:27; 1Cor 2:10). The mutual knowledge of the persons of the Trinity, each of which is infinite, follows from the unity of God’s nature and points to a certain interpenetration of the persons whose nature is intelligible, rather than to a conceptual or definitional knowledge. Meanwhile, as far as the latter question, that is, the knowledge of an infinite number of beings or events in the created world, is concerned, both Origen and Augustine believe that God knows not only the beings that have existed or exist actually in a limited number, but also the events and beings that may come into existence through his omnipotence. Thus, both thinkers claim that God’s knowledge actually encompasses infinity. Although this claim cannot be substantiated with logical proof, as it contradicts the logic related to infinity, both maintain that it follows from the belief in transcendence, omnipotence, and omniscience that characterise the Divine Mind.

Bibliography

Sources

- Augustinus, *Confessiones*, ed. L. Verheijen, CCL 27, Turnhout 1981, tr. M. Boulding, *The Works of Saint Augustine. A Translation for the 21st Century*, v. 1/1: *The Confessions*, Hyde Park 1997.
- Augustinus, *Contra academicos. De beata vita. De ordine. De magistro. De libero arbitrio*, ed. W.M. Green – K.D. Daur, CCL 29, Turnhout 1970.
- Augustinus, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, ed. J. Zycha, CSEL 25/1, Vienna 1892.
- Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, ed. B. Dombart – A. Kalb, CCL 48, Turnhout 1955, tr. G.G. Walsh – G. Monahan, Saint Augustine, *The City Of God. Books VIII-XVI*, Washington 1952.
- Augustinus, *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribusi*, ed. A. Mutzenbecher, CCL 44A, Turnhout 1975, tr. D.L. Mosher, Saint Augustine, *Eighty-three Different Questions*, Washington 1982.
- Augustinus, *De Genesi ad litteram*, ed. J. Zycha, CSEL 28/1, Lipsiae 1894, tr. E. Hill, *The Works of Saint Augustine. A Translation for the 21st Century*, v. 1/13: *On Genesis: On Genesis: A Refutation of the Manichees. Unfinished Literal Commentary on Genesis. The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, Hyde Park 2002.
- Augustinus, *De Trinitate*, ed. W.J. Mountain, CCL 50, Turnhout 1968, tr. S. McKenna, Saint Augustine, *The Trinity*, Washington 1963.
- Augustinus, *Enarrationes in Psalmos 101-150*, ed. D.E. Dekkers – I. Fraipont, CCL 40, Turnhout 1956, tr. M. Boulding, *The Works of Saint Augustine. A Translation for the 21st Century*, v. 3/20: *Expositions of the Psalms 121-150*, Hyde Park 2004.
- Augustinus, *Retractationes*, ed. A. Mutzenbecher, CCL 57, Turnhout 1999.
- Hilarius, *De Trinitate*, ed. P. Smulders, CCL 62-62A, Turnhout 1979-1980.
- Hilarius, *Tractatus super Psalmos 119-150*, ed. J. Doignon – R. Demeulenaere, CCL 61B, Turnhout 2009.
- Novatianus, *De Trinitate*, ed. G.F. Diercks, CCL 4, Turnhout 1972.
- Origenes – Hieronymus, *Tractatus sive homiliae in Psalmos*, ed. G. Morin – B. Capelle – J. Fraipont, CCL 78, Turnhout 1958.
- Origenes, *Commentarii in Ioannem*, ed. C. Blanc, Sch 120, Paris 1966; Sch 157, Paris 1970; Sch 222, Paris 1975; Sch 290, Paris 1982; Sch 385, Paris 1992.
- Origenes, *Commentarii in Ioannem: Fragmenta*, ed. E. Preuschen, GCS 10, Leipzig 1903.
- Origenes, *Commentarii in Matthaem*, XII-XVII, ed. E. Klostermann, GCS 40, Leipzig 1935; X-XI, ed. R. Girod, Sch 162, Paris 1970.
- Origenes, *Commentariorum in Matthaem series*, ed. E. Klostermann, GCS 38, Leipzig 1933.

- Origenes, *Contra Celsum*, ed. M. Borret, SCh 132, Paris 1967; SCh 136, Paris 1968; SCh 147, Paris 1969; SCh 150, Paris 1969.
- Origenes, *De oratione*, ed. P. Koetschau, GCS 3, Leipzig 1899, p. 295-403.
- Origenes, *De principiis*, ed. H. Crouzel – M. Simonetti, SCh 252, Paris 1978; SCh 253; Paris 1978, SCh 268; Paris 1980, SCh 269; Paris 1980, tr. G.W. Butterworth, Origen, *On First Principles*, Notre Dame 2013.
- Origenes, *In Genesim homiliae*, ed. H. de Lubac – L. Doutreleau, SCh 7bis, Paris 2003.
- Origenes, *In Ieremiam homiliae*, ed. P. Nautin – P. Husson, SCh 238, Paris 1977.
- Origenes, *In Numeros homiliae*, ed. L. Doutreleau, SCh 415, Paris 1996; SCh 442, Paris 1999; SCh 461, Paris 2001.
- Origenes, *In Psalmos homiliae*, GCSNF 19, ed. L. Perrone – M. Molin Pradel – E. Prinzi-valli – A. Cacciari, Berlin – München – Boston 2015, tr. J.W. Trigg, Origen, *Homilies on the Psalms: Codex Monacensis Graecus 314*, Washington 2020.
- Origenes, *Philocalia*, 21-27, ed. É. Junod, SCh 226, Paris 1976, tr. G. Lewis, Origen, *The Philocalia: A Compilation of Selected Passages from Origen's Works Made by St. Gregory of Nazianzus and St. Basil of Caesarea*, Edinburgh 1911.

Studies

- Achtner W., *Infinity as a Transformative Concept in Science and Theology*, in: *Infinity: New Research Frontiers*, ed. M. Heller – W. Hugh Woodin, Cambridge 2011, p. 19-51.
- Dobell B., *Augustine's Intellectual Conversion: The Journey from Platonism to Christianity*, Cambridge 2009.
- Drozdek A., *Beyond Infinity: Augustine and Cantor*, "Laval théologique et philosophique" 51 (1995) p. 127-140.
- Drozdek A., *In the Beginning Was Apeiron: Infinity in Ancient Philosophy*, Stuttgart 2008.
- Drozdek A., *Infinity in Augustine's Theology*, in: *The Infinity of God: New Perspectives in Theology and Philosophy*, ed. B.P. Göcke – Ch. Tapp, Notre Dame 2019, p. 37-53.
- Edwards M.J., *Did Origen Apply the Word 'homoousios' to the Son?*, "Journal of Theological Studies" 49 (1998) p. 658-670.
- Gilson É., *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, New York 1955.
- Gilson É., *L'infinité divine chez saint Augustin*, in: *Augustinus Magister: Congrès international augustinien*, t. 1, Paris 1954, p. 569-574.
- Grossi V., *L'origenismo latino negli scritti agostiniani: dagli origenisti agli origeniani*, "Augustinianum" 46/1 (2006) p. 51-88.
- Hadot P., *La notion d'infini chez saint Augustin*, "Philosophie" 26 (1990) p. 58-72.

- Hart D.B., *Notes on the Concept of the Infinite in the History of Western Metaphysics*, in: *Infinity: New Research Frontiers*, ed. M. Heller – W. Hugh Woodin, Cambridge 2011, p. 255-274.
- Heidl G., *The Influence of Origen on the Young Augustine: A Chapter of the History of Origenism*, Piscataway 2009.
- Keech D., *The Anti-Pelagian Christology of Augustine of Hippo, 396-430*, Oxford 2012.
- Kochańczyk-Bonińska K. – Przyszychowska M., *Incomprehensibility of God and the Trinitarian Controversy of the Fourth Century*, “Vox Patrum” 61 (2014) p. 239-247.
- Krainer F., *The Concept of the Infinity of God in Ancient Greek Thought*, in: *The Infinity of God: New Perspectives in Theology and Philosophy*, ed. B.P. Göcke – C. Tapp, Notre Dame 2019, p. 21-36.
- Lilla S., *Aristotelianism*, w: *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity*, v. 1, ed. A. Di Berardino, Downers Grove 2014, p. 228-235.
- McDermott J.M., *Hilary of Poitiers: The Infinite Nature of God*, “Vigiliae Christianae” 27 (1973) p. 172-202.
- Macdonald S., *The Divine Nature*, in: *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. E. Stump – N. Kretzmann, Cambridge 2001, p. 71-90.
- Mercer J.A., *Divine Perfection and Human Potentiality: The Trinitarian Anthropology of Hilary of Poitiers*, Oxford 2019.
- Moore A.W., *The Infinite*, London – New York 2001.
- Moreschini C., *Storia della filosofia patristica*, Brescia 2005.
- Mrugalski D., *Agnostos Theos: Relacja między nieskończonością a niepoznawalnością Boga w doktrynach medioplatoników*, “Roczniki Filozoficzne” 3 (2019) p. 25-51.
- Mrugalski D., *Nieskończoność Boga u Orygenesusa: Przyczyna wielkiego nieporozumienia*, “Vox Patrum” 67 (2017) p. 437-475.
- Mrugalski D., *Potentia Dei absoluta et potentia Dei ordinata u Orygenesusa? Nowa próba wyjaśnienia kontrowersyjnych fragmentów De principiis*, “Vox Patrum” 69 (2018) p. 493-526.
- Mrugalski D., *The Notion of Divine Infinity and Unknowability: Philo, Clement, and Origen of Alexandria in a Polemic with Greek Philosophy*, in: *Hellenism, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity: Transmission and Transformation of Ideas*, ed. R. Fialová – J. Hoblik – P. Kitzler, Berlin – Boston 2022, p. 69-84.
- Mrugalski D., *The Platonic-Biblical Origins of Apophatic Theology: Philo of Alexandria’s Philosophical Interpretation of the Pentateuchal Theophanies*, “Verbum Vitae” 41/3 (2023) p. 499-528.
- Neidhart L., *Unendlichkeit im Schnittpunkt von Mathematik und Theologie*, v. 2: *Historischer und theologischer Teil*, Göttingen 2008.
- Origène, *Traité des principes*, v. 2: *Commentaire et fragments*, ed. H. Crouzel – M. Simonetti, SCh 253, Paris 1978.

-
- Peri V., *Omellie origeniane sui Salmi. Contributo all'identificazione del testo latino*, Città del Vaticano 1980.
- Ramelli I.L.E., *Origen in Augustine: A Paradoxical Reception*, "Numen" 60 (2013) p. 280-307.
- Simonetti M., *Dio (Padre)*, in: *Origene. Dizionario. La cultura, il pensiero, le opere*, ed. A. Monaci Castagno, Roma 2000, p. 118-124.
- Simonetti M., *Origene in Occidente prima della controversia*, "Augustinianum" 46/1 (2006) p. 25-34.
- Sweeney L., *Divine Infinity in Greek and Medieval Thought*, New York 1992.
- Teske R.J., *To Know God and the Soul: Essays on the Thought of Saint Augustine*, Washington 2008.
- Weedman M., *The Polemical Context of Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrine of Divine Infinity*, "Journal of Early Christian Studies" 18/1 (2010) p. 81-104.
- Weedman M., *The Trinitarian Theology of Hilary of Poitiers*, Leiden 2007.