Dante and the Sin of Satan: Augustinian Patterns in *Inferno* XXXIV. 22-27*

Kathleen Verduin

As Dante stands weak and frozen before the towering figure of Satan at the core of Hell, his horror is so profound that he tells us he can find no words to express it, even at the more serene distance of his perspective as Poet:

Com' io divenni allor, gelato e fioco,
nol dimandar, lettor, ch'i non lo scrivo,
però ch'ogni parlar sarebbe poco. (*Inf.* XXXIV. 22-24)¹

As always, Dante's sense of things "ov'è piú bello / tacer che dire" (*Purg.* XXV. 43-44) is unerring, and he deserves Francis Fergusson's praise for having brought his readers in these lines to what Fergusson calls "the *terminus ad quem* of the *Inferno*, a pole of experience beyond the resources of art."² Little imagination is needed to understand why the Pilgrim's sensations at this point should be ineffable. Yet in spite of having just insisted in line 24 on the inadequacy of words to describe his feelings, Dante immediately tantalizes the reader's speculation with what seems a highly provocative statement in lines 25-27:

Io non mori', e non rimasi vivo:
pensa oggimai per te, s'hai fior d'ingegno,
qual io divenni, d'uno e d'altro privo.

Significantly, the passage in question contains a direct address to the reader, a device Dante often employs, as Erich Auerbach has pointed out,³ to alert the reader to greater attention: and it seems therefore incumbent upon us to apply such "fior d'ingegno" as we possess to a further exploration of what is meant by the Pilgrim's suspension between life and death. At first reading, we may conclude that the Pilgrim's strange condition in some ways evokes a universal human experience, and that we are merely being invited to remember moments of numbed terror in our own

lives as a way of empathizing with the Pilgrim at a crucial point in his journey.⁴ To think our experience of these lines complete because we have felt an emotional response, however, is surely to ignore the theological complexity of Dante's poem: for the vision of Satan is not simply an isolated moment in the Pilgrim's journey, but recalls and consummates those images of evil which he has already beheld. As such, it is also the culmination of the Pilgrim's journey into self, and its meaning is inextricably bound up with the deeper importance of the Pilgrim's role.

I

Any interpretation of the *Commedia* must come to terms with the nature of Dante's function as protagonist. In his essay "Dante the Pilgrim: Everyman as Sinner," Lawrence Baldassaro argues that it is proper to see the Pilgrim not simply as an individual, but as an Everyman, a representative of fallen humanity — since, as the first line of the *Inferno* is careful to point out, this is not only Dante's journey, but ours.⁵ The descent into Hell, then becomes an exploration not only of those sins peculiar to the historical Dante Alighieri, but of every crime potential in that fallen human nature which Dante shared with all of Adam's seed, the "mal seme d'Adamo" (*Inf.* III. 115). It is the nature of Hell, says Baldassaro, "that the sinner's condition is a static representation of the sin itself; each sinner represents a state of the soul, frozen forever in its act of sin. . . . What [these sinners] can do . . . is act as a mirror, allowing the Pilgrim to see in them the possibilities of his own stagnation, of his own static existence in a state of sin" (p. 67). And the acts Dante performs in Hell, Baldassaro insists, "are not the reactions of the Poet; rather, they are the mimetic reactions of the Pilgrim to the particular atmosphere of each circle of sin and represent his symbolic participation in those sins" (p. 69). Without such an active and dramatic participation in the sins successively portrayed, according to Baldassaro, the Pilgrim would be nothing more than a passive observer of the corruption of others; and his knowledge of evil would remain detached and intellectual rather than the existential conviction of sin which is prerequisite to salvation.⁶

While it is not my purpose to recapitulate Baldassaro's discussion, I would like to build on its foundation and extend it to what I think must be its logical conclusion. For in the light of Baldassaro's thesis that the Pilgrim sustains an active and participatory role throughout *Inferno*, and that his journey is intended to sound

the depths of the self as well, it seems to me that the Pilgrim's posture before Satan assumes greater importance. For is not Dante's condition as he trembles neither alive nor dead a mirror image of the state of Satan himself — stationary, indeed trans-fixed, "da tutti i pesi del mondo costretto" (*Par.* XXIX. 57)? Hardly alive in any proper sense of the word, yet suffering vividly?⁷ It is perfectly correct, of course, to emphasize that Satan's essence is parodic — a grotesque simulation of the glory of God. Yet further reading indicates that elsewhere in the *Commedia* Dante also draws attention to the condition of Satan as one of death in life. Satan's only other undisguised appearance, in Canto XII of the *Purgatorio*, presents him as entombed. More significant, I think, are the parallels between Dante's portrayal of Satan and the Pilgrim's earlier encounter with Farinata, who in various subtle ways resembles Satan. In *Inferno* X Virgil tells Dante, "Vedi là Farinata che s'è dritto / da la cintola in sú tutto'l vedrai" (vv. 32-33). Likewise, in Canto XXXIV, we see only the upper portion of Satan's form: "lo 'mperador del doloroso regno / da mezzo 'l petto uscía fuor della ghiaccia" (vv. 28-29). Similar gestures are attributed to each: for as Farinata, even as Dante watches him, "levò le ciglia un poco in suso" (X. 45), so Satan is he who "contra 'l suo fattore alzò le ciglia" (XXXIV. 35). In his arrogance — "com'avesse l'inferno a gran dispetto" (X. 36) — Farinata reflects and prefigures his master the devil, but it should also be noted that they are perhaps most alike in the nature of their *contrapasso*: for the *sepolcro* to which Farinata's heresy has eternally doomed him appears provocatively emblematic of the life-in-death which is Satan's, and indeed that of all the damned.

In its interwoven themes of pridefulness and living death, the meeting with Farinata, I think, anticipates Dante's later confrontation with Satan, and encourages us to look beyond the startling horror of Satan's appearance to perceive that diminished existence which he has chosen. We may further consider the teaching of Augustine in *The City of God* concerning the punishment both of fallen men and fallen angels, words arrestingly similar to Dante's description of Satan's circumstances:

Sicut anima creata est immortalis, quae licet peccato mortua perhibeatur carens quadam vita sua, hoc est Dei Spiritu, quo etiam sapientur et beate vivere poterat: tamen propria quadam, licet misera, vita sua non desinit vivere; quia immortalis est creata. Sicut etiam desertores angeli, licet secundum quemdam modum mortui sint peccando; quia fontem vitae deseruerunt, qui Deus est, quem potando, sapienter beatque poterant vivere: tamen non sic mori poterunt, ut omnino desisterent vivere atque sentire; quoniam immortalis creati sunt.⁸

If, as Augustine suggests in this passage, the ultimate consequences of sin are the same for fallen man as for fallen angel, it does not seem inappropriate that the mortal Pilgrim, blindstruck and shivering, should share for one awful moment the punishment of Satan — or that this moment, when he wavers giddily between life and death, should constitute his final participation in the sins of Hell. In medieval theology, moreover, the Fall of Man was linked repeatedly with the Fall of Satan in an effort to isolate and convict the free act of will that had precipitated both. It was by an uncompelled act of choice, St. Anselm writes in a statement which is typical, that the first man and the apostate angel fell: "*Per liberum arbitrium peccavit apostata angelus sive primus homo, quia per suum arbitrium peccavit, quod sic liberum erat, ut nulla alia re cogi posset ad peccandum.*"⁹ In *De Libero Arbitrio*, Augustine teaches that both man and Satan fell through pride: "*Et hoc est, Initium omnis peccati superbia; et, Initium superbiae hominis apostatare a Deo (Eccli. X. 15, 14). Superbiae autem diaboli accessit malevolentissima invidia, ut hanc superbiam homini persuaderet, perquam sentiebat se esse damnatum.*"¹⁰ We may recall also that the primal sin of Lucifer and of Adam as well, understood another way, was in the case of both a desire to be as God: for the Serpent's promise to Eve, "*eritis sicut dii, scientes bonum et malum*" (Genesis 3. 5), anticipates the words from the Book of Isaias which were traditionally attributed to Lucifer: "*super astra Dei exaltabo solium meum; sedebo in monte testamenti in lateribus aquilonis; ascendam super altitudinem nubium: ero similis Altissimo*" (Isaias 14. 13-15).¹¹

Such passages as these decrease the moral distance between angelic and human error by tracing each to a common origin in prideful rebellion. While Satan as a fallen angel may belong to an order of being wholly removed from the Pilgrim's humanity, the difference between their sins is quantitative rather than qualitative: no matter what their respective offenses, each in his own way has substituted worship of self for submission to God. Swept into the horror of his vision, participating in the essentially deathful condition of the devil, the Pilgrim is therefore being brought to the very ground and basis of the meaning of evil. For in this convergence of sinful man and sinful angel, an archetype is realized; we are led in a sense all the way back to Eden, to be reminded not only of Satan's role in man's first sin and of that death which is the inseparable component of the forbidden fruit, but of the profound truth that all human error is ultimately nothing other than just what the Pilgrim's experience suggests: a union and comingling with the Satanic essence.

II

It is further appropriate with reference to an Augustinian tradition that the Pilgrim's successive encounters with sin should culminate in an intense experience of what can only be termed non-being. For throughout his works, partly in an effort to refute Manichean dualism, Augustine defines evil in negative terms as "privatio boni," an absence of good: "Quid est autem aliud quod malum dicitur, nisi privatio boni?"¹² Speaking in the *Confessions* of his youthful sins, Augustine can therefore see them as a mere parody of life: "o putredo, o monstrum vitae, et mortis profunditas!"¹³ To choose the evil, as did Adam, as do all men unredeemed by Christ, is consequently and immediately to "tend toward extinction":

At enim aversio ipsa a ratione per quam stultitia contingit animo, sine defectu ejus fieri non potest: si enim magis est ad rationem conversus, eique inhaerens, ideo quod inhaeret incommutabili rei quae est veritas, quae est maxime et primitus est; cum ab ea est aversus, idipsum esse minus habet, quod est deficere. Omnis autem defectus tendit ad nihilum; et interitum nullum magis proprie oportet accipi, quam cum id, quod aliquid erat, nihil fit. Quare tendere ad nihilum, est ad interitum tendere. Qui cur non cadat in animum, vix est dicere, in quem defectus cadit. Dantur hic caetera: sed negatur esse consequens interire id quod tendit ad nihilum, id est ad nihilum pervenire.¹⁴

And if the mind in its vanity imitates God, Augustine writes, it becomes in its self-aggrandizement paradoxically diminished: "Si autem tanquam obvius placet sibi ad perverse imitandum Deum, ut potestate sua frui velit, tanto fit minor, quanto se cupit esse majorem."¹⁵ Here again, human perversity finds a prototype in Satan, who, Augustine says, "minus est quam fuit, quia eo quod minus erat frui voluit, cum magis voluit sua potentia frui, quam Dei. Quanquam enim non summe, tamen amplius erat, quando eo quod summe est, fruebatur, quoniam Deus solus summe est."¹⁶ As evil is essentially a *privatio*, an emptiness, so Augustine implies that Satan's condition is one of incompleteness. Hence, we may assume, the essential invidiousness of the Satanic hunger to absorb all the souls of men into the vacuum which is himself.¹⁷ In a passage that adumbrates the gelid images of Cocytus and in several other ways might serve as a gloss on *Inferno* XXXIV, Augustine writes concerning Satan:

libeatque nos amari et timeri, non propter te, se pro te; atque isto modo sui similes factos secum habeat, non ad concordiam charitatis, sed ad

consortium supplicii, qui statuit sedem suam povere in aquilone, ut te perversa et distorta via imitanti (*Isaia*. XIV. 13-15), tenebrosi frigidique servirent.¹⁸

What the Pilgrim must be made to understand, then, is that to unite one's will with Satan rather than with God is to be swallowed up into a condition that is tantamount to extinction: "cum mors ipsa sit non diligere Deum, quod nihil est alium quam ei quidquam in diligendo atque sequendo praeponere."¹⁹ Thus Dante's immersion into the nature of sin climaxes in what is both its end and its origin: and he tastes, for a dizzying instant, that deathful state which is both the wages of sin and the just retribution of Satan's disobedience. It is when the reader has understood the import of this moment that he may appreciate the potency of Virgil's terse comment, "tutto avem veduto" — we've seen it all (*Inf.* XXXIV. 69). By a masterful union of human and angelic sin, Dante has brought his Pilgrim as far as he can go into the essence of evil, and prepared him for that other climactic vision which is still in store for him. For we may finally compare this scene from *Inferno* XXXIV with its counterpart in the *Paradiso*. In the center of the Empyrean, gazing into the celestial rose, Dante is as transfixed and still as in the depths of Hell, and, in a different way, beyond both life and death. Again, language fails — "Da quinci innanzi il mio veder fu maggio / che'l parlar ch'a tal vista cede" (*Par.* XXXIII. 55-56) — but this time the vision is one of love rather than fear, and the union one of life rather than death.

Così la mente mia, tutta sospesa,
mirava fissa, immobile ed attenta,
e sempre del mirar faceasi accesa.
A quella luce cotal si diventa,
che volgersi de lei per altro aspetto
è impossibil che mai si consenta. (*Par.* XXXIII. 97-103)

Without having experienced on his pulses and his nerves that anti-life which is Hell, the Pilgrim would not have been ready to understand what Beatrice tells him of the life-giving plenitude of God:

Non per aver a sé di bene acquisto,
ch'esser non può, ma perché suo splendore
potesse, risplendendo, dir: 'Subsisto.' (*Par.* XXIX. 13-15)²⁰

These two culminating visions toward which the Pilgrim is led and by which he is momentarily absorbed, that of Satan the De-

stroyer and of God the Creator, loom before Pilgrim and reader as the ultimate polarities of the universe; they guide us to perceive that in Dante's eye the distinction between Heaven and Hell is as fundamental as the difference between life and death, between being and non-being, between existence and nothingness. Again, Augustine's words are pertinent, for as he contemplates the nature of God, he too is drawn into awareness of the vital link between God's existence and his own: "Non ego essem, Deus meus, non omnino essem, nisi esses in me. An potius non essem, nisi essem in te, ex quo omnia, per quem omnia, in quo omnia (*Rom. XI, 36*)? Etiam sic, Domine, etiam sic."²¹ The writings of Augustine, therefore, may be taken to underlie the Pilgrim's experience in *Inferno* XXXIV. 22-27, as indeed they do throughout Dante's poem. As the Augustinian pattern of conversion is implicit in the journey from Hell to Paradise, so Augustine's meditations on the meaning of good and evil, on the essence both of the Satanic and the divine, shape and inform the Pilgrim's apprehension of those same entities, and provide us with another sense in which the *Commedia* may be termed an Augustinian confession.

Hope College

NOTES

* A version of this paper was read at the Sixteenth International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, May 7, 1981.

- 1 All quotations from Dante are from *The Divine Comedy*, trans. with commentary by Charles S. Singleton, Bollingen Series LXXX (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970-75).
- 2 Dante, *Masters of World Literature Series*, ed. Louis Kronenberger (New York: McMillan, 1966), pp. 126-27.
- 3 See "Dante's Addresses to the Reader," *Romance Philology*, VII (1954), 268-78; rpt. in *American Critical Essays on the Divine Comedy*, ed. Robert J. Clements (New York: New York University Press, 1967), pp. 37-51.
- 4 While praising the power of these lines, few critics have interpreted them as suggesting more than a state of mind on the part of the Pilgrim. See *La Divina Commedia*, commento di Tommaso Casini, sesta edizione (Firenze: Sansoni, n. d.), p. 328; Bruno Nardi, *Il Canto XXXIV dell'Inferno*, Casa di Dante in Roma Series (Roma: Società Editrice Internazionale, 1952), p. 8; *La Divina Commedia*, a cura di Natalino Sapegno, Vol. I, *Inferno* (Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1955), p. 380; *L'Ottimo commento della Divina Commedia* (Pisa: Presso Niccolò Capurro, 1827), Tomo I, p. 580; Giorgio Petrocchi, *Il Canto XXXIV dell'Inferno* (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1963). Two critics who attest to the significance of the passage are Robert Hollander, who points out that Dante's suspension between life and death recalls his condition in Canto I (*Allegory in Dante's Commedia* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969], p. 306), and John Freccero, who interprets the scene as signifying the death of the old Adam and the emergence of the new, converted self: "the change from one form to the other requires first a mutation from black to non-black, *corruptio* of the old, and then a mutation point from non-white to white, *generatio* of the new. The zero point is neither

- black nor white: 'Io non mori', e non rimasi vivo' (*Inf.* XXXIV. 25). . . . Satan is the zero point where corruption meets generation, which is to say, the pilgrim's regeneration" ("The Sign of Satan," *Modern Language Notes*, 80 [1965], 19-20).
- 5 *Dante Studies*, 92 (1974), 63-76.
 - 6 In his dissertation, "Dante's Participation in the Sins of the *Inferno*" (Indiana University, 1972), Baldassaro traces Dante's acts of participation from their inception in Canto II, where the Pilgrim's timidity mirrors the "ignavi" he will later encounter, to what Baldassaro proposes is the culminating participation in Canto XXXIII, where Dante literally betrays Alberigo by failing to chip the ice from his eyes. Although Baldassaro recognizes that Dante's wavering between life and death is important, he associates it with the condition of the frozen traitors in *Giudecca* (Canto XXXIII): "Thus, the Pilgrim's ultimate condition in Hell is like that of the sinners in the very last region. At the same time, it represents the last step in his negative progression in the ninth circle. . . . Now, he is silent and motionless, and his frozen countenance represents the final experience of sin, which is the total negation of good and the lack of all human warmth" (pp. 187-88).
 - 7 On the suffering of devils, see Aquinas in the *Summa Theologiae*, Ia, lxiv, 3.
 - 8 *De Civitate Dei*, XIII, xxiv, 6, in Migne, *Patrologiae Latinae*, Vol. XLI, Col. 402. "The soul has been created immortal, and therefore, although by sin it may be said to die, and does lose a certain life of its own, namely, the Spirit of God, by Whom it was enabled to live wisely and blessedly, yet it does not cease living a kind of life, though miserable, because it is immortal by creation. So, too, the rebellious angels, though by sinning they did in a sense die, because they forsook God, the Fountain of life, which while they drank they were able to live wisely and well, yet they could not so die as to utterly cease living and feeling, for they are immortal by creation" (*The City of God*, trans. Marcus Dods [New York: Hafner, 1948], p. 556). Cf. *De Trinitate*, XIV, iv, 6 (*PL*, Vol. XLII, Col. 1040): "Nam sicut ipsa immortalitas animae secundum quemdam modum dicitur: habet quippe et anima mortem suam, cum vita beata caret, quae vera animae vita dicenda est: sed immortalis ideo nuncupatur, quoniam qualicumque vita, etiam cum miserrima est, nunquam desinit vivere. . . ." "We can speak of the soul's immortality only in a qualified sense, for there is a death of the soul, when it is without that bliss which must be accounted its true life. We call it immortal, because even in utmost wretchedness it never ceases to live a life of a sort" (*Augustine: Later Writings*, trans. John Burnaby, Library of Christian Classics Series, Vol. VII [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1955], p. 102).
 - 9 *De Libertate Arbitrii*, II (*PL*, Vol. CLVIII, Col. 492): "The apostate angel and the first man sinned by their own choice, which was so free that it could not be compelled by any other thing to sin" (trans. mine).
 - 10 III, xxv, 76 (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, Col. 1308). "Pride is the beginning of all sin, and the beginning of man's pride was the revolt from God (*Eccl.* 10. 12-13). To the devil's pride was added malevolent envy, so that he persuaded man to show the same pride as had proved the devil's damnation" (*Augustine: Earlier Writings*, trans. John H.S. Burleigh, Library of Christian Classics Series, Vol. VI [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953], p. 216).
 - 11 "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit in the mountain of the covenant, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the most High" (Douay version).
 - 12 *Enchiridion*, XI (*PL*, Vol. XL, Col. 236): "What is called evil in the universe is but the absence of Good" (*Basic Writings of St. Augustine*, ed. Whitney J. Oates [New York: Random House, 1948], Vol. I, p. 662). Cf. *Confessionum*, VII, xii-xiv (*PL*, Vol. XXXII, Cols. 743-44); also *De Civitate Dei*, XI, ix (*PL*, Vol. XLI, Col. 325): "Mali enim nulla natura est; sed amissio boni, mali nomen accepit." "For evil has no positive nature; but the loss of good has received the name 'evil'" (Dods translation, p. 447).

- 13 *Confessionum*, II, vi, 14 (PL, Vol. XXXII, Col. 681) "What an abomination! What a parody of life! What abysmal death!" (*Confessions*, trans. R.S. Pine-Coffin [Baltimore: Penguin, 1961], p. 50).
- 14 *De Immortalitate Animae*, VII, xii (PL, Vol. XXXII, Col. 1027). "For if the mind has more being when turned towards reason and inhering in it, thus adhering to the unchangeable thing which is truth, both greatest and first; so when turned away from reason it has less being, which constitutes a defection. Moreover, every defect tends toward nothing [non-being], nor do we ever speak more properly of destruction than when that which was something becomes nothing. Therefore, to tend toward nothing [non-being] is to tend toward destruction" (*Basic Writings of St. Augustine*, Vol. I, pp. 307-08).
- 15 *De Libero Arbitrio*, III, xxv, 76 (PL, Vol. XXXII, Col. 1308): "If the mind, being immediately conscious of itself, takes pleasure in itself to the extent of perversely imitating God, wanting to enjoy its own power, the greater it wants to be, the less it becomes" (Burleigh translation, p. 216).
- 16 *De Vera Religione*, XIII, xxvi (PL, Vol. XXXIV, Col. 133): "[He] became less than he had been, because, in wishing to enjoy his own power rather than God's, he wished to enjoy what was less. He never had that supreme existence, for that belongs to God alone, but he had an ample existence than he has now, when he enjoyed that which supremely is" (Burleigh translation, pp. 237-38).
- 17 In his Preface to *The Screwtape Letters* (New York: MacMillan, 1962), C.S. Lewis proposes that devils are motivated by fear of punishment and also by "a kind of hunger. I feign that devils can, in a spiritual sense, eat one another; and us. . . . It is (I feign) for this that devils desire human souls and the souls of one another. It is for this that Satan desires all his own followers and all the sons of Eve and all the host of Heaven. His dream is of the day when all shall be inside him and all that says 'I' can say it only through him. This, I surmise, is the bloated-spider parody, the only imitation he can understand, of that unfathomed bounty whereby God turns tools into servants and servants into sons, so that they may at last be reunited to Him. . ." (pp. xi-xii).
- 18 *Confessionum*, X, xxxvi, 59 (PL, Vol. XXXII, Col. 804): "He wants me to enjoy being loved and feared by others, not for your sake, but in your place, so that in this way he may make me like himself and keep me to share with him, not the true fellowship of charity, but the bonds of common punishment. For he determined to set his throne in the north, where, chilled and benighted, men might serve him as he imitates you in his perverse, distorted way" (Pine-Coffin translation, pp. 244-45).
- 19 *De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae*, XI, xix (PL, Vol. XXXII, Col. 1819) "For that with which we love God cannot die, except in not loving God; for death is not to love God, and that is when we prefer anything to Him in affection and pursuit" (*Basic Writings of St. Augustine*, Vol. I, p. 329).
- 20 Cf. *Confessionum*, I, iii (PL, Vol. XXII, Col. 662): "Capiunt ergone te coelum et terra, quoniam tu imples ea? An imples, et restat, quoniam non te capiunt? Et quo refundis quiddid impleto coelo et terra restat ex te? An non opus habes, ut quo quam continearis qui contines omnia; quoniam quae imples, continendo imples? Non enim vasa quae te plena sunt, stabilem te faciunt; quia etsi fragantur, non effunderis. Et cum effunderis super nos, non tu jaces, sed erigis nos: nec tu dissiparis, sed colligis nos." "Do heaven and earth then contain the whole of you, since you fill them? Or, when once you have filled them, is some part of you left over because they are too small to hold you? If, this is so, when you have filled heaven and earth, does that part of you which remains flow over into some other place? Or is it that you have no need to be contained in anything, because you contain all things in yourself and fill them by reason of the very fact that you contain them? For the things which you fill by containing them do not sustain and support you as a water-vessel supports the liquid which fills it. Even if they were broken to pieces, you would not flow out of them and away. And when you pour yourself out over us, you are not drawn down to us but draw us up to yourself: you are not scattered away, but you gather us together" (Pine-Coffin translation, p. 22).

- 21 *Confessionum*, I, ii (PL, XXXII, Cols. 661-62): "So, then, I should be null and void and could not exist at all, if you my God, were not in me. Or is it rather that I should not exist, unless I existed in you? For *all things find in you their origin, their impulse, the centre of their being* [Rom. 11. 36]. This, Lord, is the true answer to my question" (Pine-Coffin translation, p. 22).