



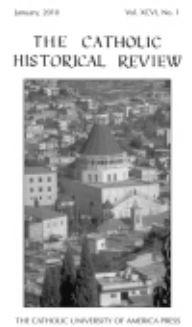
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*"Augustinianism": Studies in the Process of Spiritual  
Transvaluation (review)*

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85 (Review)

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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### General and Miscellaneous

*"Augustinianism": Studies in the Process of Spiritual Transvaluation.* By J. D. Green. [Studies in Spirituality, Supplement 14.] (Leuven: Peeters. 2007. Distrib. in the U.S. by David Brown Book Co., Oakville, CT. Pp. viii, 113. \$70.00 paperback. ISBN 978-9-042-91976-1.)

*Augustinianism* is a term that arouses a range of expectations, from a form of Christian Platonism to Jansenism. This book is not at all about Augustinianism in such a sense. Rather, J. D. Green sees the heart of St. Augustine's thought as a capacity for transformation, or as he puts it, "transvaluation." In the case of Augustine himself, this is the transvaluation of late-antique philosophy by the Gospel that is found in Augustine's own spiritual journey and in the way he introduces his congregation in Hippo to this journey of transformation—essentially, the reformation of the image of God in their lives as a result of grace. He focuses on the *Confessions* and the *De Trinitate* for his exposition of the return of the triune image of God found in the soul and of the transformation achieved as the mind comes to remember, understand, and love God, and then briefly explores how this pattern is found in the *Discourses on the Psalms*. The following three chapters of the book take as examples of this "Augustinianism" Pope and Saint Gregory the Great, William of St. Thierry, and Walter Hilton—all thinkers and even mystics whose thought was deeply influenced by their reading of Augustine. What Green concentrates on, however, is Augustinianism in his own sense: the transvaluation we find in their thought. With Gregory, this transvaluation is found in his rethinking the traditional theme of the active and contemplative lives; with William in the transformation from the traditional Benedictinism that he pursued most of his life to the contemplative Cistercian ideal of his revered friend, St. Bernard; while Hilton, in the rapidly changing world of the late-fourteenth century and the decline of Scholasticism, recovers in a new idiom the transformation of the image in "thought and feeling" through a life of prayer. What is original about Green's book is not found at the level of interpretation—he knows and makes good use of the most widely respected scholarly literature—but in the perspective he brings to his exposition in finding in the notion of transvaluation the heart of the Augustinian inheritance. The result is a wise and compelling book.

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