



COLECCIÓN
**ESTUDIOS
AGUSTINIANOS**

LIBROS DE INVESTIGACIÓN

Agustín de Hipona como *Doctor Pacis*
estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo

Augustine of Hippo as *Doctor Pacis*
Studies on Peace in the Contemporary World

Volumen 2



COLECCIÓN
**ESTUDIOS
AGUSTINIANOS**

LIBROS DE INVESTIGACIÓN

Agustín de Hipona como *Doctor Pacis* estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo

Augustine of Hippo as *Doctor Pacis* Studies on Peace in the Contemporary World Volumen 2

Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendímez, Carlos Alberto Villabona Vargas
(Editores académicos)



CENTRO DE PENSAMIENTO
AGUSTINIANO

Editorial
UNIAGUSTINIANA

Agustín de Hipona como *Doctor Pacis*: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo, vol. 2

© Editorial Uniagustiniana, Bogotá, 2019

© Anthony Dupont, Joseph Grabau, Piotr M. Pacionek, Bart van Egmond, Dagmar Kiesel, Jonathan P. Yates, Paul van Geest, Matthew Drever, Pierre-Paul Walraet, Thomas Clemmons, Miles Hollingworth, Makiko Sato, Matthew A. Gaumer, Kevin G. Grove (autores)

© Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendímez, Carlos Alberto Villabona (editores)

Centro de Pensamiento Agustiniiano

ISBN obra completa (impreso): 978-958-5498-18-1

ISBN obra completa (digital): 978-958-5498-21-1

ISBN volumen 2 (impreso): 978-958-5498-20-4

ISBN volumen 2 (digital): 978-958-5498-23-5

DOI: 10.28970/9789585498235

Editorial Uniagustiniana

Ruth Elena Cuasialpud Canchala, Coordinación Editorial y de Difusión

Catalina Ramírez Ajiaco, Mariana Valderrama Leongómez, Asistencia editorial

Evaluación por pares

Recepción: noviembre de 2017

Evaluación: diciembre de 2017 - marzo de 2018

Aprobación: mayo de 2018

Proceso de edición

Corrección de estilo, Hernando Sierra

Traducciones, Priy Bharti

Diseño y diagramación, CMYK Diseño e Impresos S.A.S.

Impresión, CMYK Diseño e Impresos S.A.S.

Imagen de portada: *Augustine gives the manuscript to God in the City of God while Alaric enters Rom.* North French School (1400 c.)-Paris, Bibl. Nat., Fr. 23, f. 2.

Sede Tagaste, Av. Ciudad de Cali No. 11B-95

coor.publicaciones@uniagustiniana.edu.co

Impreso y hecho en Bogotá, Colombia. Depósito legal según Decreto 460 de 1995.

La Editorial Uniagustiniana se adhiere a la iniciativa de acceso abierto y permite libremente la consulta, descarga, reproducción o enlace para uso de sus contenidos resultado de procesos investigativos, bajo la licencia Creative Commons: Reconocimiento-NoComercial-SinObraDerivada 4.0 internacional. <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

Agustín de Hipona como *Doctor Pacis*: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo/Nello

Cipriani [y otros]; compilador Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendímez, Carlos Alberto Villabona Vargas. -- Bogotá: Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2019.

2 volúmenes; 23 cm.

ISBN 978-958-5498-18-1 (obra completa)

1. Agustín, Santo, Obispo de Hipona, 354-430- Pensamiento filosófico. 2. Teología dogmática 3. Bien y mal. I. Cipriani, Nello, autor. II. Dupont, Anthony, compilador. III. Eguiarte Bendímez, Enrique A, compilador. IV. Villabona Vargas, Carlos Alberto, compilador.

189.4 cd 22 ed.

A1628591

Contenido / Content



Introduction Introducción	Augustine of Hippo as Politician. Political Practices at the Service of Christian Ideals Agustín de Hipona como político. Prácticas políticas al servicio de los ideales cristianos <i>Anthony Dupont, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium</i>	9
--	---	---

PART I | PARTE I

Augustine's Thought, Work and Life
Aproximación a la vida, obra y pensamiento de Agustín

Chapter 1 Capítulo 1	"On the Way to Truth and Peace" (<i>ep.</i> 33, 6): Augustine's Anti-Donatist Readings of John 14: 27a En el camino de la verdad y la paz. Lecturas anti-donatistas de san Agustín de Juan 14, 27a <i>Joseph Grabau, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium</i>	41
Chapter 2 Capítulo 2	Augustine's Anthropological Hermeneutic and Political Thought in Dante Alighieri's <i>De Monarchia</i> La hermenéutica antropológica de Agustín y su pensamiento político en <i>De Monarchia</i> de Dante Alighieri <i>Piotr M. Paciorek, Independent researcher, United States of America</i>	69
Chapter 3 Capítulo 3	"To be One Heart and Soul in God". Augustine on Peace within the Family "Un solo corazón y una sola alma en Dios". Sobre la paz en la familia en Agustín <i>Bart van Egmond, Independent researcher, Netherlands</i>	93
Chapter 4 Capítulo 4	Inner Peace and Personal Identity. Reflections on the Unity of the <i>Confessions</i> Paz interior e identidad personal. Reflexiones sobre la unidad en las <i>Confesiones</i> <i>Dagmar Kiesel, Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany</i>	115

Chapter 5	<i>Ipse Enim est Pax Nostra: Ephesians 2:14 in the Preaching</i>	159
Capítulo 5	of St. Augustine <i>Ipse Enim est Pax Nostra: Ephesians 2,14 en la predicación de san Agustín</i> <i>Jonathan P. Yates, Villanova University, United States of America</i>	



PART II | PARTE II

Augustine's Influence in the Contemporary World
La influencia de Agustín en el mundo contemporáneo

Chapter 6	<i>Magnum Beneficium est Pax, sed Dei Veri Beneficium est</i>	195
Capítulo 6	(<i>civ.</i> , 3.9). Augustine's Realism, Strategy, and Insight into Human Motives as a Prelude to Peace at All Levels of Human Existence <i>Magnum beneficium est pax, sed Dei veri beneficium est (civ., 3.9).</i> El realismo, la estrategia y la comprensión de las motivaciones humanas de san Agustín como preludio a la paz en todos los niveles de la existencia humana <i>Paul van Geest, University of Tilburg, Netherlands</i>	
Chapter 7	The Soul in Pieces and its Quest for the Peace of Christ	215
Capítulo 7	El alma en pedazos y su búsqueda de la paz de Cristo <i>Matthew Drever, University of Tulsa, United States of America</i>	
Chapter 8	'Live Together in Peace on the Way to God.' The Rule of Augustine as a 'Rule of Peace'	235
Capítulo 8	"Vivir juntos en paz en el camino de Dios". La regla de Agustín como una "regla de paz" <i>Pierre-Paul Walraet, Order of the Holy Cross, Italy</i>	
Chapter 9	On the Two Wills: Augustine against Agonism toward Peace	265
Capítulo 9	Sobre las dos voluntades: Agustín contra el agonismo hacia la paz <i>Thomas R. Clemmons, The Catholic University of America, United States of America</i>	
Chapter 10	Politics, Peace and Predestination	291
Capítulo 10	Política, paz y predestinación <i>Miles Hollingworth, Independent researcher, United Kingdom</i>	

Chapter 11	How do We use Our Words in the World where Lies are Rampant?	321
Capítulo 11	From Augustine's Argument on Lying ¿Cómo usamos nuestras palabras en un mundo donde las mentiras son rampantes? El argumento de Agustín sobre la mentira <i>Makiko Sato, University of Toyama, Japan</i>	
Chapter 12	Peace through Order: Applying Augustine's Concepts of Society,	341
Capítulo 12	Security, and Conflict in a Disordered World La paz a través del orden: la aplicación de los conceptos de Agustín de sociedad, seguridad y conflicto en un mundo desordenado <i>Matthew A. Gaumer, United States Army, United States of America</i>	
Chapter 13	Practicing Peace, Preaching Psalms: The Centrality of the	357
Capítulo 13	<i>Enarrationes in Psalmos</i> to Augustine's Developing Theological Understanding of Peace Practicando la paz, predicando los salmos: la centralidad de las <i>Enarrationes in Psalmos</i> para la comprensión del desarrollo teológico de Agustín sobre la paz <i>Kevin G. Grove, University of Notre Dame, United States of America</i>	

Augustine of Hippo as Politician. Political Practices at the Service of Christian Ideals

Debate is ongoing about Augustine's political philosophy, and more particularly about his views on the relations between Church and State. This volume brings together a number of contributions that examine Augustine's theoretical views on the subject. The current chapter tests Augustine's political theory against his own practice. How did Augustine actually relate to the politics, civil authorities, and power relations of his time?

Church and State were not fully separate institutions or autonomous spheres in the early fifth century as they currently are in our Western society. First, bishops in those days were not isolated individuals.

A bishop in those days was a very great man. Even if he lived with his clerics in a monastic community, he did not in any way resemble a metropolitan in old Czarist Russia; he did not, like the latter, live withdrawn from the world in his monastic residence in some provincial town, nor was he, again like the latter, on certain specified occasions received politely but with unmistakable coolness by the governor, who invariably kept up running conversation right through the liturgy. Nor must we think of a French bishop of the time following on the separation of Church and State, when a bishop might be honoured if he possessed some special personal quality, but was normally completely ignored. It would be truer to say that Augustine was the secret or, rather, the openly revered spiritual governor of the town (van der Meer "Augustine" 265).¹

In addition, there were personal contacts between the ecclesiastical and political-administrative hierarchies. Thus Augustine maintained friendly re-

¹ Lancel has written that had Augustine not been elected a bishop, he would have been able to dedicate himself fully to study and community life as he himself initially desired, and he would therefore have been no more than a Christian intellectual, without any lasting impact, with at most a moral responsibility: "It may seem paradoxical, but it was only by placing himself fully at the service of the Church that Augustine placed himself at the service of his times, and of Africa, with all that this entailed" (15).

lations with Macedonius and Marcellinus, imperial functionaries in North Africa, and with Boniface and Darius, military attachés who worked in the African province. This cooperation involved more than simply personal ties. The governments of the Catholic Church and of the Roman Empire worked together closely and intensively. Augustine himself pointed to the substantial interconnectedness between Church and State: “Church and state must learn to know and understand each other; and in order to attain this, they must become united with each other. For they have one origin, i.e. justice; one common goal, i.e. order and peace” (qtd. in Duijnste 253). According to Augustine, Church and State were independent spheres that were simultaneously interconnected. Augustine wrote that the Church is useful for the civil society, because it is a school of ethics (*mor.*, 1, 46), civic virtue (*ep.*, 138, 15), and fraternity (*mor.*, 1, 63). In short, Augustine thought Christians were the State’s best citizens.² In practice, the Church, and Augustine as one of its bishops, also exercised functions on behalf of the State, such as the administration of justice in civil trials, and care for the poor and for orphans. Conversely, the State assisted the Church by giving support and protection. The apostolate of the State Church was supported financially by the State (Duijnste 282-315). Moreover, the State guaranteed the unity of the Church, and thus religious peace in the Empire, by protecting it against all non-Christian and dissenting Christian movements.

Bishops became politically active after the Edict of Milan (312) afforded Christianity freedom of religion, and certainly after the elevation of Christianity to the status of State religion by the Emperor Theodosius (391). This must not be seen as an attempt by the bishops to acquire secular power. In fact, it was the opposite. The Roman Empire appealed to the Church’s hierarchy for help. As the Roman Empire slowly collapsed and the imperial administration became unable to safeguard the unity of the empire, this appeal by the emperor to the Church became even more insistent:³

² “Indeed, though Augustine is sometimes questioned by his correspondents about the compatibility of Christian teaching and public duty (*ep.* 136.2), he in fact argues that Christians indeed make the best citizens, precisely because of their principled understanding of the human condition and the role of political authority in human communities, and because they obey the law out of a religious duty (*epp.* 137.5.17; 138.2.9-10). In numerous places Augustine argues that the city would be much better off, even in earthly terms, if all the citizens were Christian (*epp.* 91.6; 138.2.15; *civ.* 2.19; *conf.* 3.8.15-16)” (Dougherty 194-195).

³ “We must assess Augustine’s views in the light of the situation of his time. It cannot be denied that as the old Roman Empire slowly collapsed the emperors assigned great power to the Church in order to save their own power. If the Church therefore exercised certain secular functions in Augustine’s time, this was not due to its thirst for power, but to the

The secular power observed that the taxes were no longer coming in, the finances of the State were in bad shape, the courts were losing influence, the governors in the provinces were exceeding their authority. Therefore the people sought support from the Church, because it was able to weather all storms (Duijnstee 256).

The bishops took on secular tasks that were bestowed upon them by the civil authorities. In Augustine's time, bishops had various institutional responsibilities towards, and relations with the civil authorities. Thus they were in touch with the various levels of government and administration (municipal, provincial, imperial) and with the various jurisdictions (political, military, legislative, ecclesiastical).

Augustine did not write any treatise on political theory, or a practical handbook on Church-State relations. Nor did he leave any political memoirs. He wrote an account of his conversion in the *Confessiones* when he had just been consecrated a bishop. His ministry as a bishop, and therefore also his relations with the political world, had yet to start at that point. For a reconstruction of Augustine's actual relations with the State we must therefore search for traces in a variety of sources. One important source is the biography of Augustine written by Possidius (*Vita Augustini*), a good friend of Augustine's who lived with him for a long time and subsequently became Bishop of Calama. This source is somewhat limited by its genre, as it is conceived as a hagiography and does not contain many factual details about Augustine's relations with the political authorities. Possidius's *Vita Augustini* has therefore been read in conjunction with Augustine's correspondence (*epistulae*), particularly the letters that Augustine himself exchanged with the civil authorities of his time. This information has then been complemented with a number of clues from his sermons and other writings.

This source material offers two ways to approach the analysis of Augustine's specific dealings with politics, and each one illustrates the two roles that Augustine fulfilled: the administration of justice—Augustine as a judge and as a pastor, and theological controversies—Augustine as a theologian and as a Church leader.

secular power's weakness, which imposed these functions upon it. As we shall see, Augustine was no admirer of these responsibilities and would have preferred to see the Church remain within its own sphere" (Duijnstee 245-246).

Judicial Responsibilities⁴

Ever since the Emperor Constantine, bishops had the right and even the responsibility to give judgment in civil trials. In 318, the episcopal courts had been given the same legal jurisdiction as the civil courts.⁵ The bishop's civil jurisdiction was known as the *audientia episcopalis*. Historians of Roman law are not agreed on whether this episcopal jurisdiction in the late Roman Empire was limited to ecclesiastical cases and arbitration between Christians, or whether it was truly on a par with the civil courts both as regards competency and actual functioning.

Whatever the precise historical and legal answer to this question may be,⁶ the reality is that Augustine had to deal with a dizzying array of legal cases which he had to resolve. Possidius tells us in *Vita Augustini* (19) that Augustine acted as a judge in civil cases in his episcopal town of Hippo. Every morning—and often even part of the afternoon—Augustine, surrounded by his secretaries, held session in the *secretarium* of his church. The sources show that he had to rule on a wide range of cases: usually related to property rights, contracts, and successions. He also presided over cases concerning the status of slavery and accusations of adultery. Other examples are a case in which Augustine was the judge of a Donatist bishop who had broken the ban on rebaptism, and of imperial functionaries who had infringed the right of asylum (Dodaro “Church” 177). Both members of his own denomination and other (non-Catholic) citizens of Hippo—including pagans, schismatics, and heretics—appeared before his court.

Augustine was entitled to give judgment—for instance by imposing fines, and, for Christians, the sentence of excommunication (*ep.*, 153, 21). He did not hesitate to impose the punishment of flogging, though in moderate form (*ep.*,

⁴ This chapter is based primarily on the following studies: Dodaro (“Between the two cities” 99-115); Dodaro (“Church” 176-184); Raikas 459-481; van der Meer (“Augustine de zielzorger” 244-245).

⁵ Frederick van der Meer has described this evolution in somewhat oversimplified fashion: “... the legal procedure of the time, with its sanctions and its appeal to force, had been replaced by a procedure in which persuasion and good counsel played a determining part. ... Judicial authority was beginning to pass from the strict representative of the laws of the Empire to the mild man who judged issues by a purely religious yardstick” (“Augustine” 260).

⁶ “However, the lack of precise information concerning the specific nature of the majority of legal cases brought to Augustine makes it difficult to know in each case whether he was exercising civil or ecclesiastical jurisdiction and whether, in either case, he was acting as arbiter or as judge” (Dodaro “Church” 177).

133, 1, 2; 134; *ep. Divjak*, 8; 9, 2; 10, 3-4).⁷ Imperial law stipulated that clerics could only be tried by an ecclesiastical court. The sentences that could be imposed upon clerics were excommunication or dismissal from the clerical state, and Augustine did actually impose these sentences (*ep.*, 65, 77-78; 106 s., 355; *Divjak* 20). Augustine himself emphasised that a bishop-judge should exercise evangelical gentleness (*mansuetudo*) in administering justice, and should observe moderation in sentencing (*en. Ps.*, 50; s., 13). He pointed in this context to a difference with the civil courts, which set greater store by the deterrent effect of the punishment. Bishops should pass sentence from a different perspective, oriented to the moral conversion of the convicted person (*ep.*, 134, 3-4).

Two important legal issues frequently facing Augustine's episcopal court were slavery and the ecclesiastical right of asylum.⁸ Slavery was permitted under Roman law. Possidius writes that Augustine often used Church funds to redeem slaves (*Vita Augustini* 24). Augustine did not contest the existence of slavery. On the one hand this can perhaps be explained through the importance which he attached to the existing order and to stability. Augustine rejected every form of injustice, but was certainly not moved by any desire to reform the whole of earthly society: "With regard to social theory, therefore, Augustine in no way could be classified as a social reformer; he rather was a most effective spokesperson for the social and political establishment" (Mathisen "Society" 806). On the other hand, Augustine's insight into the dire economic conditions of his time was sufficiently great to understand that slavery for many people offered greater social security than freedom in poverty (s., 21, 6; 356, 3-7; *en. Ps.*, 99, 7). These dire economic circumstances—especially towards the end of Augustine's life, when the Roman Empire was slowly but surely disintegrating—are clearly evident in his newly discovered letters (*Epistulae Divjak*). These also show that Augustine, as a judge, had to rule on the legal status of slaves (*ep. Divjak*, 8; 10; 24). His court most frequently had to deal with the legal distinction between born slaves and temporary slaves. Temporary slaves were originally free citizens, who of their own free will had sold their labour for a certain amount of time and thus acquired the status of slaves. This distinction had consequences for children handed over as temporary slaves by their parents when these parents died. The question was whether the status of these children changed due to the death of their parents, i.e. from temporary to permanent slaves (*ep. Divjak*, 1; 4; 24; 83). Augustine vehemently resisted the abuses committed by slave traders in North Africa, who violently abducted

⁷ See also Houlou (5-29).

⁸ See di Berardino (731-733); Mathisen ("Roman" 733-735).

free citizens, forcing them into slavery. He sent his friend and fellow bishop Alypius, who had legal training, to the court of Ravenna with the purpose of search for a legal text issued by the Emperor Honorius which gave bishops the authority and jurisdiction to act against these crimes by the slave traders (*ep. Divjak*, 10). In *ep. Divjak*, 10, Augustine pointed out that this was the responsibility of public authorities and functionaries, who had the task of applying this law against forced slavery, and of preventing Africa from being emptied of its inhabitants (*ep. Divjak*, 10, 3). The Bishop of Hippo not only confronted the civil authorities with their responsibility, he also contended that the abuses were due to the fact that the existing legislation was not being applied by the functionaries of the State, insinuating that they had been bribed for this reason (*ep. Divjak*, 10, 4-8).

Churches were entitled to offer asylum to any accused person, and thus to postpone the verdict or the execution of the sentence. There was only one exception: no asylum could be granted to tax dodgers. The emperor only granted this full right of asylum (which the Council of Carthage had already demanded in 399) in 419. This initial exception to the right of asylum is further illustration of the unfavourable economic circumstances in the Roman Empire in the early fifth century. The economic crisis, in combination with high taxes, had caused financial hardship for many. Roman law allowed debtors who were in default to be punished legally (often with corporal punishment) at the behest of their creditors. However, these debtors could then seek Church asylum. In Hippo, too, this right of asylum belonged to the jurisdiction of the bishop (Augustine). He granted asylum to Fascius, a parishioner of Hippo, when the latter faced this kind of punishment due to his failure to pay outstanding taxes (*ep.*, 268). Augustine intervened in a similar way in favour of Faventius, a tenant farmer from Hippo, who had been unlawfully imprisoned by Florentius, an officer, as a result of a financial suit against Faventius. Augustine invoked the existing legal procedures for his ruling. In other words, Augustine used existing legislation to prevent the unjust treatment of the accused (*ep.*, 113-116).

Through the work of individual bishops, with Augustine as a clear example, and also through communal action—for instance the African councils during Augustine's time—the Church fought political and social injustices and demanded administrative reforms from the State, such as reform of the laws on slavery or asylum. This is the context in which the Council of Carthage's demand (in September 401) for the appointment of a *defensor civitatis* must be seen. A *defensor civitatis* was a functionary, an ombudsman as it were, who defended the rights of the poorer classes and protected them from exploitation. In 409

Honorius granted the right to choose a *defensor civitatis* to the clergy, together with the bishop and the important citizens. Thus the Church authorities caused the secular power to develop a new civil office focused on social justice, and the same Church also bore responsibility for the appointment of the holder of this new office. Augustine wrote to Alypius in 420 asking him to make the case in Ravenna for a *defensor civitatis* for the city of Hippo (*ep. Divjak*, 22).⁹

Augustine's interventions on behalf of convicts must be seen in the same context (*ep.*, 100; 133; 134; 139; 151; 153; 155). These interventions were not the result of his jurisdiction, because they did not appertain to the bishop's legal rights or responsibilities. Augustine himself confirmed this. He explained that he made these interventions purely out of pastoral concern and religious compassion (*ep.*, 154, 4-6). When Macedonius, the Catholic imperial emissary for Africa, inquired whether Augustine was planning to turn these interventions into a customary right of the Church—Macedonius was doubtful as to whether this was a requirement of religion—Augustine denied this. All he wanted to do is mediate in capital cases, to avoid the supreme punishment as it did not lead to repentance. Augustine believed that the purpose of punishment was to reform criminals, not to destroy them. He emphasised in his letter that it was the task of bishops to plead before public officeholders in favour of convicts, in order to ensure that unjust excesses would be avoided in the just execution of punishments (*ep.*, 151). Thus Augustine asked Donatus and his successor Apringius, the proconsuls responsible for Carthage and Hippo, not to impose capital punishment upon Donatists convicted of murder (*ep.*, 100; 134). He banned capital punishment and torture from his own court, and advised others to follow suit. Augustine's purpose in doing so was not to interfere as a bishop in the judicial independence of the public authorities or to arrogate this authority to himself. Instead, as a pastor, he wished to guarantee that the evangelical values would also be respected in that independent sphere.¹⁰

⁹ In Africa, the position of *defensor ecclesiae* was also common: laymen who represented the local church communities in court cases and administered the land owned by the Church.

¹⁰ On the basis of this dual interpretation of the episcopal office as a judge and as a pastor, Augustine assumed responsibility not just for the city of Hippo, but also for the surrounding countryside. "It was a semi-feudal world of poor peasants who were dependent on masters and mistresses who applied the legal rules according to their own interpretation. Augustine used the privileged relations which he necessarily had as a bishop with these *domini* and *dominae* to improve the plight of the serfs." Thus Augustine wrote *ep. Divjak*, 14, to Dorotheus, a senator and landowner, because one of the latter's agents had raped a religious sister (Lancel 18).

Augustine dedicated much of his mornings to the administration of justice, although he had not been trained for this.¹¹ Yet he made efforts to become acquainted with Roman law, and his personal studies gave him wide-ranging knowledge of it.¹² He regarded this as a form of pastoral ministry, in order to guarantee that he would exercise Christian justice in his own judicial practice. Nor did he hesitate to use the expertise of people who had received legal training. On slavery, for instance, he consulted the Roman lawyer Eustochius (*ep. Divjak*, 24) and Alypius.

The traces of Augustine's legal career that we have do not testify to a well-developed, premeditated programme for the good administration of justice and just governance. Instead, they show how Augustine, moved by the ideal of justice, was confronted on a daily basis with all kinds of contested issues and with concrete forms of injustices. In dealing with these cases, he tried to use the existing judicial structures to promote social justice on the basis of his evangelical inspiration.

Appeals to the Power of the State to Defend Catholic Orthodoxy

In practice, the Church gave support to the civil authorities, for instance in the form of episcopal jurisdiction and care for the poor and for orphans. In the eyes of the Church, the relationship was mutual. Thus the State had the responsibility to finance the Church's apostolate. And it was also incumbent

¹¹ Knowledge of Roman law was not easy to acquire in Augustine's time because imperial legislation had not yet been codified. This only happened after Augustine's death (*Codex Theodosianus*, 15 February 438/1 January 439). In other words, Roman law was often a complex tangle for Augustine's contemporaries. No one could know all the laws that had been promulgated. In addition, the promulgation of a law did not necessarily mean that it would be actually applied (for instance because a pagan provincial governor refused to apply repressive measures against non-Catholics), or even that it could actually be applied. The *Edict of Unity* was promulgated in 405, and was applied only a few months later in Carthage. In Hippo, by contrast, this law had not yet been applied two years later (*ep.*, 86; 89; s., 299B, 9). See also di Berardino (731-732). Augustine shows that he had the legal knowledge necessary to live in a Roman city (*ep.*, 34; 35, 3; 91, 8), and had knowledge of the laws on personal freedom and judicial procedure (*ep.*, 115), and of the legal context of property rights (*ep.*, 83). See also di Berardino (733).

¹² Thus Augustine quoted laws that would otherwise have fallen into oblivion, for instance in *ep. Divjak*, 24, 10. He has also given us the most precise description of the legal procedure of *manumissio in ecclesia*, the process in which a slave owner freed his slave through the mediation of the Church (s., 21, 6; 185).

upon the State to safeguard orthodoxy from anything that was non-Christian and non-Catholic (Dodaro “Church”). After the creation of a State Church, motivated particularly by the political desire to guarantee unity, peace, and stability (in religious affairs also) in the empire, successive emperors issued laws that increasingly suppressed anything that was not Christian and Catholic. The bishops of North Africa often appealed to this legislation, requested the stricter application of these laws, or even demanded more stringent measures. This legislation was directed primarily against the pagans, Jews, Manichaeans, Donatists, and Pelagians. Thus the Council of Carthage asked the emperor to outlaw statues of pagan deities, temple sacrifices, and pagan festivals on Sundays and Christian feast days, to protect converts to Christianity, and to remove all idols from the city (15 June and 13 September 401). Augustine himself asked the civil authorities for protection of the Christians against pagans (*ep.*, 50), and defended imperial measures against the pagans (*cons. ev.*, 1, 22; 1, 41; *c. litt. Pet.*, 1, 9, 15). Anti-Jewish laws were every more frequently adopted in the Roman Empire, but there is no indication that Augustine supported these anti-Jewish edicts or himself asked for their application. It is true, however, that Augustine supported the imperial laws against Manichaeism, a sect of which he himself had been a member in his younger years (*c. Faust.*, 5, 8; *c. litt. Pet.*, 3, 25, 30; *c. Felic.*, 1, 12; 1, 14; 2, 1). The bishops of North Africa first asked Ravenna for protection of the Catholic bishops against the Donatists, who sometimes used violence, then requested the emperor to compel the Donatist bishops to take part in public debates with their Catholic counterparts, and finally, after the emperor’s denunciation of Donatism, asked for the punishment of refractory Donatists. Augustine and his North African colleagues, confronted with a reluctant pope, succeeded in convincing the emperor to denounce Pelagianism as a heresy, which meant that the existing anti-heresy laws could be used against Pelagianism. According to Augustine, this oppression of pagans and heretics ought to happen with the moderation of a good housefather, who never hesitated to chastise his children out of love (*s.*, 302, 19; *ep.*, 138, 14; 140, 7-10; 153, 17; 173, 3; 185, 21-23), but never lost sight of mercy either, in order to avoid excesses (*s.*, 13, 9; *ep.*, 86; 100; 133, 1-2; 134, 2-3; 139, 2; 204, 3). Just as for criminals, Augustine accepted the principle of punishment, on the condition that moderation was observed.

In sum, the Church, the North African episcopate, and Augustine appealed to the secular arm of the law for the management of religious affairs. We will now look at two examples: Augustine’s involvement in the Donatist and Pelagian controversies.

The Donatist Controversy¹³

The Donatist schism had existed for more than a century, dividing North African Christianity into two camps that were—sometimes literally—at daggers drawn with each other. Donatism denied the validity of the sacraments celebrated by clerics (the so-called *traditores* and *lapsi*) who had avoided martyrdom during the time of the persecutions of Christians by collaborating with the pagan civil authorities. Donatists endeavoured to create a pure and elitist Christianity, and they advocated a strict separation between the Church and the world, between Church and State. Anything within the Church was holy and pure. Everything outside it was sinful and to be rejected. In addition to this theological component, Donatism was also a nationalist movement, a social and political protest movement: poor versus rich, countryside versus city, African Christianity versus a Romanised Church. Despite imperial persecutions in the periods between 317–320 and 346–348, the schism continued and flourished in North Africa.

In Augustine's time, this Donatism had developed into the dominant Christian denomination in North Africa. Augustine responded on substance to Donatism in various writings: *Contra Epistulam Parmeniani* (400), *De Baptismo* (400–401), *De Unitate Ecclesiae* (401), *Contra Cresconium* (405), *Breviculus Conlatio-nis cum Donatistis* (411), *Contra Gaudentium* (420). These writings responded to the Donatist accusations against the Catholics, and refuted their claim to be the one true (martyrs') Church. Augustine also had real-life encounters with Donatists; thus there was a Donatist antibishop in his own city. Two dimensions can be discerned in Augustine's actual dealings with the Donatists in the context of his relations with the civil authorities: his requests for political support against the Donatists, and—after the denunciation of the Donatists—his plea to the same authorities for moderation in punishment.

Appeal for Government Support Against the Donatists¹⁴

A first tactic that Augustine applied in his struggle against Donatism was to appoint reliable friends to the sees of surrounding dioceses: Alypius in

¹³ On the Donatist controversy see Frend ("Donatismus" 128–147); Maier ("Le dossier du Donatisme 1" 303–361; "Le dossier du Donatisme 2" 361–750); Markus 284–287; Tenström; Willis.

¹⁴ See particularly Hermanowicz "Possidius and the legal"; "Possidius of Calama" 83–220; Gaumer.

Thagaste, Severus in Mileve, Possidius in Calama. The same concern to form a united front against Donatism caused the Catholic bishops to hold a plenary council every year in Carthage (Munier and Sieben 1085-1107; Merdinger 248-250). This enabled them to speak with one voice against the Donatists, and to appeal with one voice to the emperor. During these councils, great emphasis was also placed on discipline among the Catholic clergy, in order to obviate any Donatist criticism. The regular occurrence of these councils emboldened the Catholic bishops in their struggle against Donatism. One example is that the council decided, in 401, to send out missionaries to convert Donatists to Catholicism.

This Catholic proselytism, and the constant danger for the Donatists that the anti-heresy laws might (once again) be applied to them made the Donatist camp nervous. Polemics and apologetics increased sharply on both sides. *Circumcelliones*, a violent rebel movement linked to Donatism, attacked Catholic clergy and State functionaries (*cath. fr.*, 19, 50; 20, 54; *Cres.*, 3, 42, 46). Major disturbances occurred. In order to restore the peace, the Catholic bishops decided to organise a public debate with the Donatists. Augustine and Aurelius therefore invited the Donatist bishops to attend the 403 Council of Carthage. However, when the Donatists refused to participate in this debate, the Catholics made a first appeal to the civil power. At the Catholics' behest, the proconsul Septimus compelled the Donatists to participate. However, this did not contribute to restore order; on the contrary, Possidius, a friend of Augustine's and the Bishop of Calama, was attacked by a gang of *circumcelliones* led by a Donatist priest. The case went to court. The proconsul Septimus decided that Crispinus, the Donatist bishop of this priest, was responsible for the crimes of his priest. Furthermore, Septimus ruled that Crispinus was guilty of heresy according to the 392 law of the Emperor Theodosius, and that he had to pay a fine (*Cres.*, 3, 47, 51). This was the first time Theodosius's anti-heresy laws were used against the Donatist Church, and the first time the Donatists were designated as heretics and enemies of the State. But Augustine and Possidius were not unreservedly happy with this ruling. The Donatists were always eager to present themselves as the martyrs' Church, oppressed by the Roman State. Were Crispinus actually to have to pay this fine, this would only strengthen this self-image, and encourage further violent reprisals by the *circumcelliones*. Nevertheless, before they were able to prevent the execution of the sentence, Crispinus appealed to the court in Ravenna. The imperial court confirmed the punishment and even doubled the fine.

In the meantime, the riots and the raids by the *circumcelliones* continued apace. Augustine and the African bishops in general opposed large-scale and heavy persecution of Donatism, because this would fuel the movement's claims to martyrdom and resistance against the "Roman oppressor" (claims which can partially explain its initial success), possibly leading to a revival of Donatism. The 405 Council of Carthage therefore opted not for violent repression, but for the imposition of fines and the forfeiture of property and of the succession rights of Donatists, in conformity with the Theodosian laws. In the spring of the same year, the Emperor Honorius issued the *Edict of Unity*, in which he decreed the unity of all the churches in Africa and simultaneously condemned the Donatists as heretics. The application of this law saw the confiscation of Donatist property, the exiling of Donatist clergy, the abrogation of Donatist property rights, and the banning of the Donatist practice of rebaptism.

However, the Donatists did not disappear, and in fact their new martyrdom caused a revival. In the year 410, when Alaric, the Visigoth leader, was menacing Italy and Rome, the importance for the Emperor Honorius of North Africa being quiet and stable only increased, as he required a possible place of refuge for the Roman Empire. He therefore sent the Catholic count (*comes*) Marcellinus to North Africa with the express task of eradicating Donatism for once and for all, no matter the cost. With this purpose in mind, Marcellinus convened a general African council in Carthage for 1 July. To prevent the Donatists from boycotting the council, he returned previously confiscated basilicas to them, much to the Catholics' annoyance. The Donatists responded positively to his gesture, and attended the council with a delegation of 284 bishops. But the council turned out totally different from what they had expected. They wanted open debate with the opportunity to explain their point of view, in the hope of undoing the *Edict of Unity*. Marcellinus had in fact lured them to the council to invite them to convert to Catholicism. He was planning to issue a final condemnation of Donatism if they were to refuse. After an extremely brief council, Marcellinus decided in favour of the Catholics. This decision was immediately imposed upon the entire province. The Donatist bishops appealed to the emperor, but in vain. The Emperor Honorius adopted further anti-Donatist measures, but he avoided capital punishment so as to preclude new Donatist claims of martyrdom.

During the 411 Council of Carthage, the religious and secular authorities joined forces to bring about the end of Donatism as an institutional group, as an organised denomination. Donatist possessions were confiscated and many Donatist communities were forced to join Catholic communities. Al-

though it was now officially banned, Donatism disappeared only very slowly. It continued to lead a clandestine existence, especially in the countryside and in family contexts, surviving the collapse of the Roman Empire in Africa after the Vandal invasion. Augustine was strongly conscious of this at the end of his life (*Io. ev. tr.*, 10, 5; *ep.*, 185, 7; 30).¹⁵ Small pockets of Donatism perhaps still existed in North Africa when Islam arrived.

Plea for Moderation in the Punishment of Donatists¹⁶

Ever since the Emperor Constantine, the State had sought the punishment of the Donatists, ranging from restrictions on citizenship rights to execution (Grasmück). Augustine strongly opposed the execution of capital punishment and of torture. Augustine wrote to the proconsul Donatus, who had been sent to North Africa with the task of suppressing the Donatists, that he should not be motivated by the desire to kill Donatists, despite the nature of their crimes, but that he should offer prayers for them (*ep.*, 100). In a similar vein, Augustine wrote to the tribune Marcellinus, who had to judge the *circumcelliones* who had murdered a Catholic priest, not to apply the law of equal retaliation (*ep.*, 133). According to Augustine, the fundamental purpose of punishment is to convert those who err, to bring them back onto the straight and narrow path. This result cannot be obtained by imposing capital punishment. Augustine also warned against executing pagans who had attempted to restore pagan worship and had committed acts of violence against Catholics (*ep.*, 91, 1; 104, 1).

Augustine rejected capital punishment and the practice of torture as a matter of principle.¹⁷ Initially he even repudiated any form of coercion of *haeretici* and *schismatici*. He wrote to Maximinus that he favoured the peaceable exchange of views with the Donatists, and that he was consequently planning to postpone discussions with them until the armed force was no longer in the vicinity (*ep.*, 23, 7). He did not want to coerce the Donatists to return against their will, but wanted to convince them of the truth of the Catholic faith (*ep.*, 34, 1). Augustine forbade a father to force his Donatist daughter to return to the Catholic Church. According to Augustine, the woman could only return to the

¹⁵ See also *c. Gaudentium*, 1, 23, 26.

¹⁶ This section is based largely on Dupont (30–47).

¹⁷ In an early work Augustine did not yet oppose the death penalty and/or torture due to his desire for order in society: *ord.*, 2, 4, 12 (November 386–March 387): “What is more horrid than a public executioner? And yet he has a necessary place in the legal order, and he forms part of the order of a well-governed society.”

Catholic Church if she wanted to do this and desired it herself (*ep.*, 35, 4).¹⁸ Initially, Augustine even opposed applying the imperial anti-heresy legislation. In a letter to Januarius, he explained why he did not apply the existing laws in the name of charity and leniency. The same letter reveals that Augustine was willing to countenance only the imposition of a fine in cases of proven acts of violence against Catholics, whereas the law of Theodosius stipulated that all heretics had to pay this fine anyway (*ep.*, 88, 7).

The year 400 saw a change in Augustine's attitude. From that point on, he accepted the use of coercive measures as stipulated in the imperial legislation, and he justified the use of them (Brown 382-391; Burt 25-54; Himbury 33-37; Gaumer and Dupont 345-371; Jans 133-163; Lamirande). In *ep.*, 185, addressed to the tribune Boniface, Augustine explained that the Donatists must be treated by the Church and the State like doctors treat their patients, that they must be rebuked like disobedient sons are by their father, corrected like wives by their husbands. The idea that no one must be forced to accept the faith against their will remained a crucial aspect for Augustine (*c. Gaud.*, 1 8; 1, 28). Conversion requires interior assent, which can, however, be furthered by external coercion (*s.*, 112, 8). This coercion, as a last resort, must be accompanied by teaching with a view to accomplishing the interior conversion (*ep.*, 93, 2). Augustine never tired of exhorting the imperial functionaries whose responsibility it was to administer justice and to do so with mildness and leniency (*ep.*, 153).

Augustine himself also proposed a number of punitive measures: the abrogation of certain citizenship rights, a ban on worship and on rebaptism,¹⁹ the confiscation of Donatist ecclesiastical properties (*c. litt. Pet.*, 1, 102; *c. Gaud.* 1, 50-51; *c. ep. Parm.*, 2, 18-20), the declaring null and void of Donatist wills (*s.*, 47, 22). He accepted the imposition of fines, provided that the convicted persons would still have enough money to support themselves (*ep.*, 104). He also accepted flogging, a customary practice in schools and before the episcopal courts, given that this served to discover the guilty party as quickly as possible, thus avoiding the risk of punishing the innocent (*ep.*, 133, 2).

Augustine's change of attitude was perhaps due to the failure of his peaceful attempts. One of his own priests, Restitutus, was murdered by the *circumcel-*

¹⁸ Augustine opposed forced conversions in order to avoid false conversions. He summarised in *retract.*, 2, 5, by recalling that he had confessed to the Donatists in the lost *Contra Partem Donati*: "it has never pleased me that schismatics are forced to return to the community under coercion by the civil authorities."

¹⁹ This measure was stipulated in the edict of 12 February 405.

liones. His good friend Possidius became the victim of an attack. Augustine himself only barely escaped an ambush. His acceptance of coercive measures against the Donatists was founded on the desire to protect the Catholic community against Donatist violence (*ep.*, 185, 18). He articulated the rationale for his appeal to the secular power and argued that the civil authorities, the State, had the duty to act in religious affairs, as they must pursue the good of their subjects. As Christians, they were held to defend the highest good, i.e. the faith and the unity of the faithful. Because the emperor was a Christian, he could not content himself with measures that eradicated violence, but must also prevent error (*ep.*, 185, 2). This argument rests upon the interpretation of schism or heresy as a *crimen*, which, like all other crimes, falls under the emperor's and the public authorities' judicial power. The Donatists, as a matter of principle, advocated the strict separation between the religious and the secular, between Church and State.²⁰ But Augustine argued, in rather polemical tones, that the repressive intervention of the civil power was justified, because the Donatists themselves accepted it. Thus their "founder" Donatus himself had argued his case before the emperor. The Donatists had themselves appealed to the imperial authorities, the secular power. They had been the first to address their petitions to the imperial court. Augustine recalled that the Donatists had collaborated with the oppressive government during the persecutions of the Christians under Julian the Apostate (*ep.*, 93, 12). The Donatists also supported the imperial repression of the pagan cult (*c. Gaud.*, 1, 51; *ep.*, 93, 10). The Maximianists had effected a split within Donatism, and these Maximianists had themselves been prosecuted in the courts by the Donatists. In other words, Augustine accepted—both in theory and in practice—the intervention of the State in religious issues whenever the Church requested the State to do so (Frend "Augustine" 49-73).

²⁰ Donatist thought can be summarised as "separatist", as it used schemes of opposition and separation. In theory, the Donatists wanted full separation between Church and State, so as to avoid contamination of the holy community by contact with the impure world. Augustine recognised the Church and the State as independent spheres, which are, however, mutually connected here on Earth, and Augustine also realised that the earthly Church was situated in the concrete world. Furthermore, the Donatists were convinced that the African Church was the only true Church. Augustine, by contrast, regarded the *Catholica* as a universal bond between all churches worldwide. Finally, the Donatists were moral elitists as they believed that all sinners had to be expelled from the Church community, leaving only the saints. Augustine countered with the notion of the Church as a *corpus (per)mixtum*: within the Church there are both sinners and non-sinners. He doubted also whether anyone could truly be totally without sin (see the section "The Pelagian Controversy"). Moreover, he believed God alone had the right to separate the just from the sinners.

The Pelagian Controversy²¹

The Donatist controversy was concerned mainly with ecclesiology (“what is the true Church community?”) and with sacramentology (“who are the true ministers?”). The Pelagian controversy was a fundamental theological debate about the relationship between grace and human freedom, about whether it is possible to lead a sinless life, about the meaning of human mortality, and about the question whether there was such a thing as the transmission of an original sin. In the following outline of Augustine’s attitude to politics in this controversy, the various theological positions defended will also be mentioned and briefly explained.

The controversy began when Caelestius, a follower of Pelagius, arrived in Carthage after the fall of Rome. He asked to be ordained to the priesthood (Honday 271-302; Bonner 693-698; Lamberigts 129). This request was refused, because he had contended that children are born without original sin, and that the reason for infant baptism was not therefore the remission of sin. In 411, a council met in Carthage which condemned Caelestius.²² Augustine did not attend this council, but when he was appraised of the views of Pelagius and Caelestius, he wrote a number of treatises in which he defended the necessity of infant baptism on account of the *peccatum originale* that rests upon every human since Adam’s fall. He also proved that *impeccantia*, the possibility of living without sin, is impossible, precisely because of every human being’s original sin. Two of these writings from the early phase of the Pelagian controversy were addressed to Marcellinus, the imperial emissary who had denounced Donatism: *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* (411-412) and *De spiritu et littera* (spring 412). The tone of *De natura et gratia* (415), Augustine’s answer to Pelagius’s *De natura*, was still polite rather than polemical, and it focused on the theological issue at stake.

This tone soon changed when Pelagius, who had moved from Rome via Carthage to Palestine, received the support of bishops in the East. The North African bishops had sent envoys to Palestine to denounce Pelagius’s and

²¹ This chapter is based on Carefoote; Lamberigts 363-375; Wermelinger. For an overview of the history and theological content of the Pelagian controversy, see the first chapter of Dupont (“Gratia”).

²² This Carthaginian council accused Caelestius of six errors: 1. Adam was created a mortal; 2. Adam’s sin affected only himself; 3. Children are born in a prelapsarian condition; 4. Humanity does not die because of Adam’s sin; 5. The law, just like the Gospel, gives access to heaven; 6. There were people without sin before Christ.

Caelestius's heterodoxy. A synod in Jerusalem (28 July 415) decided that Pelagius was innocent, and shortly afterwards a synod in Diospolis (December 415) acquitted Pelagius of the charge of heterodoxy. News of this acquittal was received as a bombshell in Carthage. Provincial councils were convened immediately in Carthage and Milevis in the later summer of 416. The North African council fathers decided to appeal to the Bishop of Rome, Innocent I, and sent him three letters.²³ In short, the African bishops argued that the bishops in Diospolis had been insufficiently informed and had been misled by Pelagius. The three letters then expressed great respect for the *sedes* of Rome, without however assigning any primacy to this Roman see (Marschall 127-150). They regarded Rome more as an equal see, which was subject, just like the see of Carthage, to the higher authority of Scripture. They did not seek the judgment of Rome as such (as if Rome were a higher authority), but Rome's help (as an equal partner). As far as the theological substance is concerned, the Pelagians were accused in these three letters of denying that infants must be baptised in order to be saved (*ep.*, 175, 6).²⁴ The Pelagians were also accused of promoting human freedom to the extent of leaving no room for God's grace (*ep.*, 175, 2; 176, 2).²⁵ Pope Innocent replied in three letters of his own (27 January 417) (*ep.*, 181; 182; 183).

Pope Innocent (pontificate: 402-417) was attempting to expand the primacy of Rome (Lamberigts "Innocent I"; "Innocentius"). He considered that the episcopal see of Rome had a unique position, because in the West the Gospel had been preached from Rome. He entertained the view that the Western churches should follow Rome in the field of discipline, and that Rome was the highest court of appeal for *causae maiores*. This Roman primacy was by no means self-evident yet in the early fifth-century Church, let alone a reality. The letters of the North African bishops drew Innocent into the Pelagian

²³ The *corpus* of African letters to Innocent consists of three letters: Council of Carthage: *ep.*, 175; Council of Mileve: *ep.*, 176; and the letter written by Augustine, Aurelius of Carthage, Alypius of Thagaste, Possidius of Calama and Evodius of Uzalis: *ep.*, 177. The bishops of Rome during Augustine's life time were: Damasus (366-384), Siricius (384-399), Anastasius (399-401), Innocent (402-417), Zosimus (417-418), Boniface (418-422), and Celestine (422-432).

²⁴ It must be mentioned here that no "Pelagian" denied the necessity of infant baptism. They did however refuse to associate this necessity with the existence of an inherited original sin.

²⁵ This was not entirely fair of the North African bishops. In fact, Pelagius and Caelestius did not deny the necessity of grace (in Christ). They did, however, attack the idea that additional grace was necessary due to some kind of original sin. See also Dupont ("Die Christusfigur" 321-372).

controversy. His letters show that Innocent's answer, and the condemnation of Pelagius and Caelestius which it contained, was based solely on the files that the Africans sent him. The main emphasis of his letter was the *auctoritas* of Rome. Whereas the Africans had approached him as an equal partner, he distorted this equal approach to make it look like the consultation of a higher authority. Thus he wrote that the council of Carthage had acted rightly by submitting the Pelagian issue to his judgment, even though this had not in fact been the Africans' intention.²⁶ In the same breath, Innocent presented Rome as the source (*natalis fons*) for all the churches, implying that the opinion of Rome was binding on all the churches. Finally, he condemned Caelestius and Pelagius because they regarded human freedom as equal to God's grace, and regarded divine assistance as superfluous (*ep.*, 181, 8). Innocent tellingly said nothing about the issue of the *peccatum originale*, which was a crucial factor in the Africans' rejection of Pelagianism. The conclusion must be that for Innocent Church politics were more important than theology. Innocent used the Pelagian controversy to underline papal authority, and was more interested in the support of the entire African episcopate than in the standpoints of two theologians who lacked influence (Wermelinger).

Carthage appealed to Rome in 416. The North African bishops had not needed Roman support before, in 411, when they had condemned Caelestius. When handling the Donatists, Carthage had equally operated entirely without recourse to the bishop of Rome.²⁷ The acquittal in Diospolis, however, necessitated a Church political change of attitude. This acquittal threatened the legitimacy and orthodoxy of the African Church. The reversal of a condemnation for heterodoxy inevitably raises questions about the orthodoxy of the authorities responsible for issuing the initial condemnation. Faced with the patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Africans did not feel strong enough. They needed a new ally: Rome. For reasons of self-interest, Carthage recognised the authority of Rome in a very limited way. The approval given by this Roman authority afforded greater legitimacy to their own conciliar decisions. That

²⁶ "Significantly, the Fathers had merely asked him to confirm their denunciation of Pelagianism, but Innocent treated their request as a plea for an authoritative papal decision" (Merdinger "Roman" 728).

²⁷ The councils of Carthage had regularly consulted the bishops of Rome on whether converts from Donatism might be admitted to the Catholic clergy. Pope Siricius did not reply to this query (393 and 397). Pope Anastasius answered that it was not permitted. But the Council of Carthage, going against this papal advice, decided to permit it on the basis of an evaluation of individual cases. Despite the fact that they ignored the papal decision, the North African bishops ensured that their relations with Anastasius were cordial.

this recognition must not be equated with full submission to papal authority is evident from the relationship between the African bishops and Innocent's successor, Zosimus, whose authority they did not automatically recognise.

Pope Innocent I died on 12 March 417. Augustine was under the impression that the Pelagian controversy had been definitively settled (s., 131, 10: "causa finita"). Six days later, however, the Greek-speaking Zosimus was elected bishop of Rome (Merdinger "Roman" 728-729). Caelestius and Pelagius appealed to the new pope, who acquitted them on 21 September 417 of the charge of heresy and rehabilitated them. It is striking that this pope and his theologians did not object to Caelestius's proposition that children are born without original sin, which involves a rejection of the doctrine of original sin. What is more, Pope Zosimus in his letters *Magnum Pondus* and *Postquam a Nobis* (addressed to Paulinus of Milan, Heros, and Lazarus among others) strongly criticised the accusers of Caelestius and Pelagius. Just like his predecessor, Zosimus founded his authority to rule in this matter on the special authority of the see of Peter. In his letters to the African episcopate, Innocent had stressed the formal right of the see of Peter to take doctrinal decisions for the universal Church. Zosimus used the same authority to take a contrary decision. The North Africans, however, informed the pope that they were not planning on changing their view, and that they were maintaining their condemnation. The pope replied that he was not planning to change his acquittal either, again underlining the authority of Rome. He incidentally also indicated that his decision had been based on more thorough study than his predecessor's had been. Innocent had based himself solely on the letters from the North African bishops. Zosimus, together with his theologians, had meticulously studied both camps' propositions, had interrogated Caelestius himself when he was in Rome, had perused the writings of Caelestius and Pelagius, and consulted other bishops and theologians. Both "camps" were becoming entrenched in their positions.

The North African bishops concluded that they had to change tactics again in order to vindicate their position. Messengers were sent from North Africa to the imperial court in Ravenna. The condition of the empire was far from stable and prosperous at the time. Britain had been lost, the barbarians were on the offensive in Gaul, and Spain was in trouble. In other words, the Emperor Honorius could not afford religious unrest in North Africa, all the more so as peace had only recently been restored after the Donatist controversy. In addition, the empire was strongly reliant both economically and militarily on North Africa. This province was the granary of Italy, and it also supplied

horses for the emperor's cavalry, and he needed a well-equipped army in troubled times. Religious calm had to be restored whatever the cost. The Emperor Honorius therefore intervened personally, without consulting the pope, and condemned Pelagius and Caelestius (edict of 30 April 418), expelling all their adherents from Rome. This decision was not inspired primarily by any doctrinal concerns on the part of the emperor, but by the political imperative to guarantee stability.²⁸ The emperor decided to back the strongest party, i.e. the influential African episcopate, at the cost of a small group of idealists without any great political influence. The wording of the imperial condemnation was similar to that of the councils of Carthage (both the 411 condemnation of Caelestius and the reaction to the acquittal at Diospolis (415) in 416), and of the African letters to Rome: the Pelagians were misleading the ordinary faithful by teaching that Adam had been created as a mortal (i.e. that his mortality was not the result of his sin), and that Adam's sin had no consequences at all for his progeny. The North African bishops explicitly referred to these two points in a new condemnation (issued by the council of Carthage on 1 May 418). Anyone who taught that Adam had been created a mortal, that infant baptism was not necessary, or anyone who held a reduced concept of grace, was excommunicated. This plenary council, in which more than two hundred bishops participated, sent this decision to Zosimus and told him that they would henceforth abide by Innocent's, rather than Zosimus's own decisions. The emperor once again confirmed his position in edicts against the Pelagians issued in June 419. He did not contact the bishop of Rome even once throughout the affair.

This alliance between Carthage and Ravenna forced Pope Zosimus to rethink his stance. Zosimus grudgingly accepted the African viewpoint (21 March 418). He condemned Pelagius and Caelestius in a letter addressed to all the Italian bishops (*Epistula Tractoria* of later June 418), not on the basis of any substantive reasons, but because he wished to avoid total political isolation.²⁹ Yet he refused to subscribe to the African doctrine of original sin in this letter of condemnation. Zosimus condemned Pelagius and Caelestius, did not deny the necessity of infant baptism (neither had Pelagius and Caelestius, as a matter of fact), but refrained from teaching the doctrine of original sin. He remained

²⁸ "Having recently witnessed the devastating effects of Donatist fanaticism, Honorius was not inclined to tolerate another movement whose teachings might ignite further civil disorder" (Merdinge "Roman" 729). An underlying explanation for this denunciation can perhaps be found in the fact that Pelagianism is sometimes associated with social critiques of wealth, and could therefore be regarded as a destabilising factor. See also Kessler.

²⁹ "To put the matter bluntly, Zosimus changed his mind for purely political reasons" (Lamberigts 372).

silent particularly about the African interpretation of infant baptism, i.e. that infants should be baptised to remit original sin (which had been present since their birth). Innocent had never confirmed this doctrine of original sin, which held that children were born in sin, either. Zosimus felt compelled to condemn the Pelagians not by force of argument, but by political motives.³⁰ For this reason, a number of Italian bishops led by Julian of Aeclanum refused to sign Zosimus's letter of condemnation (Lamberigts "Iulianus" 453–508). Julian of Aeclanum clearly pointed out that Rome's about-face had been due entirely to political pressure, and he proved to be well acquainted with the intensive correspondence between Carthage and Ravenna. Julian even accused the African bishops of having bribed the imperial court with horses (*Ad Florum*, 1, 74; 3, 35). This accusation of corruption was never proven, and Augustine stringently denied it, but—leaving the specific accusation aside—the Roman cavalry was certainly dependent on African horses after the supply from Spain dried up, and Italy was also economically dependent on this province. The following two popes, Boniface and Celestine, supported the African viewpoint and dedicated their pontificates to combatting Pelagianism.

As the protagonist of the African episcopate, Augustine was very much at the forefront of this struggle against Pelagianism. He responded to the substance of the Pelagian claims and played an important role in the reaction against them. He also defended the imperial condemnation of Pelagianism (*nupt. et conc.*, 2, 3, 9; *grat. Chr.*, 2, 17, 18). Thus Augustine appealed both to the ecclesiastical and to the civil authorities to solve a doctrinal issue. The Africans initially attempted to resolve the problem themselves. When they were faced with an opposing ecclesiastical authority, the patriarchate of Jerusalem, they sought support—under Augustine's leadership—from the civil power. This recourse to the civil authorities was a third option—after their own efforts had failed, and the ecclesiastical authority of Rome had turned against them. What is striking is that Pope Innocent and the Emperor Honorius, who supported the Africans, were uninterested in the substance of the issue. The only party who did take an interest, Zosimus, refused to back them. The Africans' tactical power play

³⁰ Augustine would later act at Zosimus's behest out of gratitude for this reversal, in an ecclesiastical conflict in Mauretania Caesariensis, where a certain bishop Honorius wanted to swap sees, something which was not permitted under canon law. When feelings became too heated in Mauretania, Augustine submitted the case to Pope Boniface (*ep. Divjak*, 22; 23; 23A). Similarly, Augustine submitted the case of Antoninus, the bishop of Fussala whom Augustine deposed on account of his avarice, to Pope Celestine (*ep.*, 209; *ep. Divjak*, 22). Apparently the North African bishops also appealed to the pope in disciplinary issues, in addition to the doctrinal question of Pelagianism.

ultimately forced him to concede. Perhaps the Africans' zeal can be explained by their fear of a new schism so soon after Donatism, a controversy that had driven the North African province to the brink of a civil war, and by the fact that their struggle against Donatism had turned the North African episcopate into a well-organised body.

When Augustine became a bishop, the Donatist controversy had been around for some time. Cooperation between the State and the Catholic Church in this conflict was also a long-established reality by the time of his appointment. Augustine placed himself in an existing policy, legitimated the conduct of the Catholic hierarchy and of the imperial administration *vis-à-vis* the Donatists, and provided theological justifications for this response. The Pelagian controversy, on the other hand, arose during Augustine's episcopate. The course he took was his own. Augustine was at the forefront of the intellectual rejection of Pelagianism. This is evident from his many anti-Pelagian treatises, sermons, and letters. It is also clear from the African council documents of the time. The strong similarities which exist between these and Augustine's own writings point to Augustine's authorship of these conciliar documents, for instance of the council's letters to Innocent and Zosimus. The fact that Augustine shaped the contours of the case against the Pelagians implies, as his letters show, that he played an important role in the actual move against the Pelagians, in the successive appeals to Rome and Ravenna, in seeking papal and imperial support for the condemnation of Pelagianism. As has been seen, Augustine's reaction to Pelagianism was largely his own choice. He chose the same approach he had used in the struggle against Donatism, repression with state support, presumably as a result of the traumatic experience that he and his fellow bishops had had with Donatism.

Augustine as a Bishop *vis-à-vis* the State

According to Duijnsteek (257-258),

The good relations between Church and State in the days of the Bishop of Hippo also had their drawbacks. Conscious of their own impotence, and convinced of the Church's influence, the emperors were all too eager to use this influence for their own purposes, which posed a threat to a healthy cooperation on the basis of mutual independence. Too many secular tasks were entrusted to the bishops, so that in certain respects they in fact became servants of the State. The Church was invited on the basis of her authority to assume and guarantee a number of public tasks, such as the protection of the poor and of orphans,

judicial authority and the administration of justice in civil cases, the defence of the city.

Augustine accepted this mutual utilitarian understanding between Church and State. The State used the Church's well-organised, hierarchical and mobile structure. The Church, in its turn, assumed responsibility for official commissions and used the facilities that the Roman Empire had to offer. Augustine assumed the secular responsibilities that were assigned to him, but he did not allow himself to be reduced to an uncritically obedient servant of the State.

The first way to approach Augustine's attitude to politics is that of his involvement in the administration of justice. As a judge, Augustine himself exercised civil authority. He did not ask for this, but he fulfilled this task conscientiously. In order to be able to take decisions that were legally right, he studied Roman law. He was guided in his interpretation and execution of the civil law by the law of the Gospel. This is where the roles of judge and pastor converged. As a judge, he endeavoured to judge moderately. He petitioned civil and military authorities to exercise the same moderation. These interventions were not based on any legal power of intervention that bishops might have had, but derived from the pastoral responsibilities of the episcopal office. As a pastor, he asked that the authorities should not follow the letter of the law, but should be clement with a view to the conversion of the convicted person. He did this both for criminals and for Donatists, which is another way in which the two ways—judicial authority and theological controversy—converged.

As a practicing judge, Augustine accepted the existing body of legislation. He also called for the civil obedience of Christians to the Roman State. But this obedience was not blind or unquestioning. To put it differently, Augustine only approved of obedience to the State if the State in its turn was obedient to the highest authority, that of God. This is a theme that recurs frequently in his sermons on the feasts of martyrs. It is a characteristic of martyrs that they disobeyed the (pagan) State that attempted to force them to commit apostasy, thus preserving their faith intact, even though this resulted in death. In the sermons on the martyrs, Augustine contended that obedience to the civil authorities was premised on the strict condition that these authorities should not violate divine commandments (s., 62).³¹ The martyrs' resistance to the State, however, was peaceful resistance. Martyrs resisted the injustice that forbade them to profess their God and forced them to commit idolatry (for

³¹ For Augustine's theology of martyrdom see Leemans and Dupont (365-379).

instance by sacrificing to the emperor), but they did not therefore take up arms. Thus Augustine in s., 302, condemned the murder of a corrupt imperial civil servant in Hippo by pointing to the examples of the martyr Laurence and of Christ. Both resisted injustice, but without using violence. According to Augustine there was always an existing political order, which Christians were called to respect (this civil obedience was based on the exhortation of Rom., 13, 1). If this political order was the author of injustice, peaceful resistance was the only permissible response for Christians, as the examples of Christ and Laurence show. This peaceful resistance testified to a higher justice. Augustine thought it was impossible to obtain a just system through violence, which was always fundamentally unjust in his eyes.

Although Augustine was a protagonist in the struggle against the Donatists and despite the fact that he legitimated the imperial repression of the Donatists, he himself resisted the state by refusing to tolerate capital punishment. Thus Augustine coupled his request to the proconsuls Donatus and Apringius not to execute Donatist murderers with the threat that Catholics would refuse to cooperate in such executions, as this policy could not bring reconciliation but would lead only to further entrenchment of the two camps. The underlying proposition is that violence does not solve violence, but only breeds further violence. This example also demonstrates that Augustine followed politicians, but not uncritically. Whenever the civil authorities took unwise decisions, he did not hesitate to threaten a boycott. Nor did he fear criticizing holders of public office: "A certain Romulus, whom he himself had baptized, was threatened by him in a letter with 'wrath that is piling up before the judgement seat of God', because he was squeezing double the taxes due from some wretched *coloni*" van der Meer "Augustine" 262). The senior military officer Boniface, whom he had previously congratulated on halting the Moors who had invaded North Africa, received a strong rebuke from Augustine in 425/426 because he was unable to prevent the Moors from plundering Numidia. Augustine's critical attitude with regard to political leaders was founded on his basic conviction that Christ was the only true leader of society, both the current society and the society which is to come. Only Christ is the founder of justice. Augustine thought that political leaders should imitate Christ's example, especially by practicing the virtue of humility, so that they would not indulge in self-glorification, and would continue to critically assess their own actions on a moral basis. Augustine respected the existing political order, participated in political decision making, but was never uncritical. He recognised the value of a legal framework, and furthered correct knowledge of this judicial

system, but also regarded this framework as subject to the requirement of justice. Thus he used the same pericope of Rom., 13, 1-7 to legitimate the obedience that was incumbent upon Christians to the civil authorities, and to remind political leaders of their duty to govern justly and mercifully (Dodaro “Church” 182).³² Augustine took his commitment to the civil society and the secular State very seriously. He regarded the intrinsic purpose of the earthly society and the earthly state (*civitas terrena*)—the promotion of peace and justice—as very valuable. But he did not regard this earthly peace and justice, the politics of the here and now, as absolute values. Ultimately, despite Augustine’s own struggle against concrete instances of injustice, Augustine continued to regard earthly politics as inevitably imperfect. It is evident from Augustine’s *De civitate Dei* that he had relinquished the ancient notion of a Christian empire as an instrument for the salvation of humanity after the fall of Rome. Political aspirations and realisations were always temporary and fleeting. Human life within this *civitas terrena*, this earthly dispensation, was no more than a *peregrinatio*, a pilgrimage. Real happiness transcended these temporary and fleeting things.³³

Augustine also assumed his responsibilities as a theologian and Church leader: the truth of the faith and the unity of the Church could not be compromised. He did not hesitate to appeal to the civil authorities in the pursuit of this goal. In fact, he even ventured to deploy the civil authority, the emperor, against an ecclesiastical authority such as Pope Zosimus. This appeal to the secular arm of power was inspired on the one hand by Augustine’s concern for the preservation of order and peace, and on the other by his faith in the rights of truth. Yet

³² “True political justice requires that each person be ‘given his or her due’, a principle which necessitates that society also practices true worship or piety (*vera pietas*) in order to ‘give to God what is due’ (*civ.* 19.21). This true worship, which is constitutive of justice, also requires that political leaders and citizens acknowledge their moral failings openly and pray for the forgiveness of their sins, while at the same time they extend forgiveness to their enemies (*civ.* 19.27; cf. 5.24, 26). Only Christ, who alone is both just (*solus justus*) and justifying (*justificans*), can establish and rule society justly (*civ.* 17.4; cf. 2.21; 10.24; 20.6). Political leaders who would act justly ought to imitate Christ’s example—in particular, his mercy toward sinners (s. 13; *ep.* 153; *en.* Ps. 50)” (Dodaro “Justice” 483).

³³ “Augustine’s political thought, therefore, reminds us of the contingency of political achievements, and that any outcome will not likely endure as long as expected or longed for. Human beings are permanently caught in the tragic situation of longing for true happiness, but they face the mysterious impossibility of not being fully capable of attaining it. This does not mean that political activity is fruitless; it means only that the fruition of our greatest longings lies elsewhere, an insight achieved only by thinking and acting in the world, and by discovering that such longings reorients our being in the world. Between our political activities and that fruition, we long and live in hope” (Heyking 260-261).

this aspiration of Augustine's was not absolute either. He rejected the idea that humans should be converted forcibly, against their will. He also condemned anything that compromised the physical integrity of human beings.

In short, Augustine recognised the value of the political system. This served to safeguard the good ends of earthly life, i.e. peace and justice. But Augustine believed this earthly peace and justice were reflections of the heavenly peace and justice, which are the foundation of earthly order and stability. Augustine, himself a civil functionary in his capacity as a judge, and a practitioner of Church politics as a bishop, shaped his responsibilities and his dealings with the temporal sphere on the basis of his love of God; therefore he called on Christian politicians to adopt the same orientation. Augustine's theoretical views on the civil society, on politics, and on the secular State are in harmony with his actual experience of, and practical dealings with them.

Anthony Dupont, PhD.

*Research Professor of Christian Antiquity
Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium
anthony.dupont@kuleuven.be*



Works Cited

- Bonner, Gerard. "Caelestius." *Augustinus-Lexikon*, vol. 1, Basel, 1992, pp. 693-698.
- Brown, Peter. "St. Augustine's Attitude to Religious Coercion." *The Journal of Roman Studies*, 54, 1964, pp. 107-116.
- Burt, Donald X. "Augustine on the Morality of Violence: Theoretical Issues and Applications." *Congresso internazionale su S. Agostino nel XVI Centenario della Conversione Rome*. 1987, pp. 25-54.
- Carefoote, Pearce James. *Augustine, the Pelagians and the Papacy: An Examination of the Political and Theological Implications of Papal Involvement in the Pelagian Controversy*. Unpublished dissertation, KUL, Leuven, 1995.
- Dodaro, Robert. *Between the Two Cities: Political Action in Augustine of Hippo*, edited by John Doody, Kevin L. Hughes and Kim Paffenroth, Oxford, 2005, pp. 99-115.
- . "Church and State." *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Cambridge, Grand Rapids, 1999, 176-184.
- . "Justice." *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Cambridge, Grand Rapids, 1999, pp. 481-483.
- Di Berardino, Angelo. "Roman Laws." *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Cambridge, Grand Rapids, 1999, pp. 731-733.
- Dougherty, Richard J. "Citizen." *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids, Cambridge, 1999, pp. 194-196.
- Duijnste, Xaverius Petrus. *St. Aurelius Augustinus over Kerk en Staat*. Tilburg, 1930.
- Dupont, Anthony. "Die Christusfigur des Pelagius. Rekonstruktion der Christologie im Kommentar von Pelagius zum Römerbrief des Paulus." *Augustiniana*, vol. 56, no. 3-4, 2006, pp. 321-372.
- . *La Gratia en los Sermones ad Populum de san Agustín durante la controversia pelagiana. ¿Acaso los diversos contextos proporcionan un punto de vista diferente?* Bogotá, Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2016.
- . "Religieuze Verdraagzaamheid bij Augustinus. Een Intrigerende Verandering in Augustinus' Verhouding Tot de Donatisten. Van Vredelievende Overreding naar de Rechtvaardiging van Dwangmaatregelen." *Augustinus in Confrontatie met het Heden*, edited by B. Bruning, Leuven, Oorlog en Vrede, 2006, pp. 30-47.
- Frend, William H. C. "Donatismus," *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, vol. 4, no. 25, 1959, pp. 128-147.
- . "Augustine and State Authority. The Example of the Donatists." *Agostino d'Ipbona Quaestiones Disputatae*, Palermo, 1989, pp. 49-73.

- Gaumer, Matthew Alan. *Ad Romam: A Study of the Development of Political Theology in the Donatist Controversy. How a Form of North African Christianity Utilized, Defied and Was Defeated by the Roman Empire*. Unpublished dissertation, Leuven, KUL, 2008.
- Gaumer, Matthew Alan and Anthony Dupont. "Coerción Religiosa patrocinada por el Estado: su Contexto Norteafricano Donatista y el Cambio de la Actitud de Agustín hacia Aquélla." *Augustinus*, vol., 54, no. 2, 2009, pp. 345-371.
- Grasmück, Ernst Ludwig. *Coercitio. Staat und Kirche im Donatistenstreit*. Bonn, 1964.
- von Heyking, John. *Augustine and Politics as Longing in the World*. Columbia, London, Columbia, 2001.
- Hermanowicz, Erika T. *Possidius and the Legal Activities of the North African Episcopate*. Oxford, Oxford Early Christian Studies, 2008.
- . *Possidius of Calama. A Study of the North African Episcopate*. Oxford, Oxford Early Christian Studies, 2008.
- Himbury, M. "Augustine and Religious Persecution." *St. Augustine-The Man who Made the West*, edited by M. Garner and J. S. Martin, Melbourne, 1990, pp. 33-37.
- Honnay, Guido. "Caelestius, Discipulus Pelagii." *Augustiniana*, vol. 44, 1994, pp. 271-302.
- Houlou, Alain. "Le droit Pénal chez Saint Augustin." *Revue d'Histoire Droit*, vol. 52, 1974, pp. 5-29.
- Jans, H. "De Verantwoording van Geloofsdwang Tegenover Kettters Volgens Augustinus' Correspondenties." *Bijdragen*, 12, 1961, pp. 133-163.
- Kessler, Andreas. *Reichtumskritik und Pelagianismus. Die pelagianische Diatribe de divitiis: Situierung, Lesetext, Übersetzung, Kommentar*. Freiburg, Academic Press, 1999.
- Lamberigts, Mathijs. "Caelestius." *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Cambridge, Grand Rapids, 1999, p. 129.
- . "Co-operation Between Church and State in the Condemnation of the Pelagians." *Religious Polemics in Context*, edited by T. L. Hettema and A. van der Kooij, vol. 11, 2004, pp. 363-375.
- . "Innocent I." *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Cambridge, Grand Rapids, 1999, pp. 473-474.
- . "Innocentius episcopus Romanus." *Augustinus-Lexikon*, vol. 3, Basel, 2006, pp. 613-619.
- . "Julianus IV (Julianus von Aeclanum)." *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, vol. 19, pp. 483-508.
- Lamirande, Émilien. *Church, State and Toleration: An Intriguing Change of Mind in Augustine*. Villanova, 1975.
- Lancel, Serge. "Een Afrikaanse Bisschop in Dienst van Zijn Volk." *Sint Augustinus*, edited by Tarsicius J. van Bavel, Brussels, 2007, pp. 13-23.
- Leemans, Johan and Anthony Dupont. "El Martirio Cristiano en la Antigüedad Tardía: Pluriforme y Ejemplar." *Augustinus*, vol. 61, 2016, pp. 365-379.

- Maier, Jean Louis. "Le Dossier du Donatisme. 1. Des Origines à la Mort de Constance II." *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, vol. 134, Berlin, 1987, pp. 303-361.
- . "Le dossier du Donatisme. 2. De Julien l'Apostat à Saint Jean Damascène." *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, vol. 135, Berlin 1989, pp. 361-750.
- Marschall, Werner. *Karthago und Rom. Die Stellung der Nordafrikanischen Kirche zum Apostolischen Stuhl in Rom.* *Päpste und Papsttum*, vol. 1. Stuttgart, 1971.
- Markus, Robert A. "Donatus, Donatism." *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Cambridge, Grand Rapids, 1999, pp. 284-287.
- Mathisen, Ralph W. "Roman Legal System." *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids, Cambridge, 1999, pp. 733-735.
- . "Society, Social Thought." *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Cambridge, Grand Rapids, 1999, pp. 803-806.
- Merdinger, Jane E. "Councils of North African Bishops." *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Cambridge, Grand Rapids, 1999, pp. 248-250.
- . "Roman Bishops." *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Cambridge, Grand Rapids, 1999, pp. 727-730.
- Munier, Charles and Sieben, Hermann-Josef. "Concilium (concilia)." *Augustinus-Lexikon*, vol. 1, Basel, 1992, pp. 1085-1107.
- Raikas, Kauko K. "Audientia Episcopalis: Problematik zwischen Staat und Kirche bei Augustin." *Augustinianum*, vol. 37, 1997, pp. 459-481.
- Tenström, Emin. *Donatisten und Katholiken: Soziale, Wirtschaftliche und Politische Aspecten einer Nordafrikanischen Kirchenspaltung.* Götteborg, 1964.
- Van der Meer, Frédéric. *Augustinus de Zielzorger*, vol. I, pp. 244-245.
- Van der Meer, Frédéric. *Augustine the Bishop: the Life and Work of a Father of the Church.* London, 1961.
- Wermelinger, Otto. *Rom und Pelagius. Die theologische Position der Römischen Bischöfe im Pelagianischen Streit in den Jahren 411-432.* *Päpste und Papsttum*, vol. 7. Stuttgart, 1975.
- Willis, Geoffrey. *Saint Augustine and the Donatist Controversy.* London, S.P.C.K., 1950.

 **PART I | PARTE I**

**Augustine's Thought,
Work and Life**

Aproximación a la vida,
obra y pensamiento de Agustín

**“On the Way to Truth
and Peace” (ep. 33, 6):
Augustine’s Anti-Donatist
Readings of John 14: 27a**

En el camino de la verdad y la paz.
Lecturas anti-donatistas de san
Agustín de Juan 14, 27a

1

Joseph Grabau,
Catholic University of Leuven , Belgium



Abstract

This chapter traces the development of Augustine's discourse on peace in light of anti-Donatist polemics found in both his earlier letters and formal treatises. First, it presents evidence of Augustine's effort to secure peace in North Africa from his letters; and second, the author focuses on Augustine's appeal to the Latin text of John 14:27a in light of contemporary social and ecclesial unrest. Whereas the first point of departure asks how Augustine's thoughts on upholding the public order appear at the level of social and political reflection, the second dimension turns to examine the concurrent role of biblical interpretation to a similar, yet distinct end. Both were essential forms of expressing his disagreements with Donatist views. In this way, the chapter demonstrates how the anti-Donatist message of peace was delivered along at least two supporting avenues: 1. Of promoting social stability through networking and letter exchange; and 2. Of promoting ecclesial unity and fidelity to Christ via biblical support. For Augustine, the *pax Christi* as described in this verse of the Gospel of John—unlike the *pax Donati*—provided for an authentic common good within time and history, as well as in the light of eternity. A Donatist notion of peace would appear to rest upon undervaluing the secular order and limited interpretation of John 14: 27a. In describing the Johannine gift of Christ as *pax temporalis*, however, Augustine remained aware that any form of peace achieved in the present was to be regarded as a passing and imperfect anticipation.

Keywords: biblical interpretation, Donatism, letters of Augustine, religious polemic.



Resumen

Este capítulo describe el desarrollo del discurso de san Agustín sobre la paz a la luz de las polémicas anti-Donatistas presentes en sus cartas como en sus tratados formales. Primero, se estudia la evidencia de los esfuerzos de Agustín para asegurar la paz en el norte de África a partir de sus cartas; segundo, el autor se centra en la apelación de san Agustín al texto latino de Juan 14, 27a en relación al descontento social y eclesial contemporáneo. El primer punto de partida es analizar cómo los pensamientos de san Agustín sobre la defensa del orden público aparecen en el nivel de la reflexión social y política, mientras que en un segundo momento se centra en examinar el papel de la interpretación bíblica frente a un fin similar, aunque con elementos diferenciadores. Ambos aspectos eran formas esenciales de expresar los desacuerdos de Agustín con los puntos de vista Donatistas. De esta manera, el capítulo demuestra cómo se transmitió el mensaje de paz anti-Donatista en al menos dos vías de apoyo: (1) promover la estabilidad social a través de redes sociales y el intercambio de cartas; y (2) promover la unidad eclesial y la fidelidad a Cristo a través del apoyo bíblico. Para Agustín, la *pax Christi*, tal como se describe en este versículo del evangelio de Juan, a diferencia de la *pax Donati*, aportó un auténtico bien común dentro del tiempo y la historia, así como a la luz de la eternidad. Una noción Donatista de paz parecía menospreciar el orden secular y la interpretación limitada de Juan 14, 27a, sin embargo, al describir el don Juanino de Cristo como *pax temporalis*, Agustín era consciente de que cualquier forma de paz lograda en el presente debía considerarse como una anticipación pasajera e imperfecta.

Palabras claves: Polémica religiosa, Donatismo, interpretación bíblica, cartas de san Agustín.



Sobre el autor | About the author

Joseph L. Grabau [joseph.grabau@kuleuven.be]

He is currently a postdoctoral researcher in theology and Augustinian studies at Catholic University of Leuven (KU Leuven) (Belgium). He has received his Ph.D in theology at KU Leuven, as well as the M.A. in theology from Villanova University, the M.A. in classics from the University of Kentucky, Lexington, and the M.A. in philosophy from The Catholic University of America, Washington D.C.



Cómo citar en MLA / How to cite in MLA

Grabau, Joseph L. "On the Way to Truth and Peace" (ep. 33, 6): Augustine's Anti-Donatist Readings of John 14: 27a" *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendimez y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2019, pp. 41-68, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.1

As many sources demonstrate, Augustine was a man of peace. Even when he later allowed for possible intervention of the Roman authorities, Augustine still sought a peaceful reconciliation with his Donatist opponents. In an early (395/396 A. D.) letter to the Donatist Bishop of Hippo, Procleianus, for example, written in the first years of his own ministry as the “Catholic” bishop of the city, Augustine spoke in conciliatory, even endearing terms, of how both men ought to guide and correct their flocks, so that “by our unfeigned charity, they may be recalled from error and dissension to the way of truth and peace (*in veritatis et pacis itinera*)” (*ep.*, 33,6, trans. Parsons). This pastoral ideal of appealing to his opponent’s humanity, however, was informed by a biblical, Christological principle found in the words of John 14: 27, which Augustine cites to the Donatist bishop in the opening of his letter:

Therefore, as far as the Lord will give me strength, I will search out and discuss with you the cause, the origin, and the nature of the sad and lamentable division which has arisen in the Church of Christ, to which he said, “My peace I give unto you, my peace I leave you” (*ep.*, 33, 2).¹

How, Augustine implies, could the followers of Christ nullify and revoke the gift of this peace even in their treatment of one another?

Clearly, the broken peace of the Church in North Africa was a pervasive problem of pastoral concern that threatened not only the integrity of those who identified as Christ’s followers, but also the stability of Roman society. In the same letter (*ep.*, 33, 5), Augustine laments,

You see with what wretched foulness the families of the Christian home are defiled. Husbands and wives agree about their bed and disagree about the altar of Christ. They swear by Him in order to have mutual peace, but they cannot have it in Him. Sons share one home with their parents, but they do not share the same house of God. They wish to receive the inheritance of those with whom they quarrel about the inheritance of Christ; slave and master tear asunder the common God who “took the form of a servant” (Phil 2:7) that He might free us all from slavery... what injury has Christ done to us that we tear His members apart?²

¹“Quod te multum gaudeo nostrae humilitati offerre dignatum neque ullo modo possum tantam occasionem benigni animi tui deserere, ut, quantum vires dominus praeberre dignabitur, quaeram tecum atque discutiam, quae causa, quae origo, quae ratio in ecclesia Christi, cui dixit: pacem meam do vobis, pacem meam relinquo vobis” (CSEL 34, 2; 19).

²“Vides, quanta et quam miserabili foeditate christianae domus familiaeque turpatae sint. Mariti et uxores de suo lecto sibi consentiunt et de Christi altari dissentiunt: per illum sibi

As unflattering as these details may be, for Augustine they were simply the symptoms of a deeper problem, which lay at the root of disagreement between “Donatists” and “Catholics.” The *causa, origo, and ratio* of the African schism was “a dispute about our very Head.”³ Yet the result, described briefly in this letter and explored at length in modern scholarship (Frend 1952; Shaw), was a state of disarray and conflict. Indeed, by the time of Augustine, what began as an ecclesial dispute in the early fourth century had reached such levels of intensity that imperial intervention became increasingly necessary.

Rather than rehearse the so-called Donatist controversy in broad outline, I propose instead to build upon Augustine’s comments in *ep.* 33 to Proculianus, as a point of departure for his thought on peace in the historical context of North African religious polemics. Jennifer Ebbeler has recently provided an able and insightful point of departure for studies of Augustine’s use of letter writing in relation both to polemical concerns and biblical exegesis.⁴ With the principles established by her work in mind, in the first section I aim to indicate the various audiences to which Augustine wrote as he was administering, instructing and intervening in the midst of the religious and social conflict.⁵ As he addressed individuals from distinct social backgrounds, Augustine adapted his message about peace and presentation of the many concerns arising in light of the Donatist-Catholic schism. The evidence seems to point toward the early development of his thought on *bellum iustum*, although I make no remarkably new claims; yet my reason for introducing this material is rather to situate Augustine’s rhetoric about peace and violence within his own social milieu, thus further anchoring his exegesis appropriately.

iurant, ut inter se pacem habeant, et in illo habere non possunt; filii cum parentibus unam domum habent suam et domum dei non habent unam; succedere in eorum hereditatem cupiunt, cum quibus de Christi hereditate rixantur; serui et domini commune deum diuidunt, qui formam serui accepit (Phil 2:7), ut omnes serviendo liberaret; honorant nos vestri, honorant vos nostri; per coronam nostrum nos adiurant vestri, per coronam vestram vos adiurant nostri; omnium verba suscipimus, neminem offendere volumus; quod nos solus Christus offendit, cuius membra laniamus?” (CSEL 34, 2; 22).

³ “Non de auro, non de argento, non de fundis et pecoribus, pro quibus rebus cotidie submisso capite salutamus, ut dissensio hominum terminemus, sed de ipso capite nostro tam turpis inter nos et perniciose dissension est” (*ep.*, 33, 5) (CSEL 34, 2; 22).

⁴ See especially in relation to Donatism her chapter on the controversy as it appears in selected letters of Augustine (151-189).

⁵ Here, I also have in mind work on textual communities and social identity, as found especially in the chapters of the volume edited by Richard Miles: Miles, “Textual Communities and the Donatist Controversy” (249-283), and Rebillard, “Augustine in Controversy with the Donatists before 411” (297-316).

In the second section, I transition to consider Augustine's exegesis of a single verse—John 14: 27, which he had already identified in the mid-390s as a key biblical locus for discussion with Donatist leaders. This study, in contrast to the somewhat expansive overview of the previous section, offers a detailed account of how Augustine processed his mediation efforts in light of the testimony of the scriptures, and the light of Christ, by reference to a single Johannine saying of Jesus. In line with much of his anti-Donatist argumentation elsewhere, for example in the early tractates on John (*Io. ev. tr.*, 1-16), Augustine's sacramental theology, in particular his doctrine of baptism, is entirely Christ-centred.⁶ This feature shines forth clearly in his readings of John 14: 27a, frequently joined with favourite Pauline passages such as Ephesians 2: 14, in which we witness a consistently anti-Donatist, polemical use of the Latin text. My modest purpose here is simply to suggest how Augustine's discourse on peace as a secular virtue dove-tailed with his engagement with Donatist positions on ecclesial communion and self-definition. Does Augustine present a uniform teaching on this "Johannine"/anti-Donatist peace; or could one detect possible waves of diachronic variance and (subtle) shifts of opinion?

Peace and Violence in the Anti-Donatist Letters of Augustine⁷

Early evidence from Augustine's episcopal career, when he first encountered Donatism and engaged in debate with Donatist bishops, may appear to suggest just how friendly his efforts of correction and reconciliation were. Although he remains sensitive to the significant division among so-called "Christians"

⁶ For example, "Now whereas John had received a baptism that would properly be called John's, the Lord, Jesus Christ, however did not wish to give his baptism to anyone, not that no one might be baptized with the Lord's baptism, but that the Lord himself might always be baptizing. This was done so that the Lord might baptize also through ministers, that is, that those whom the Lord's ministers were going to baptize, the Lord, not they, would be baptizing. For it is one thing to baptize in the role of a minister; another to baptize with power" (trans. Rettig). "Quoniam ergo acceperat Iohannes baptismum, qui proprie Iohannis diceretur; dominus autem Iesus Christus noluit baptismum suum alicui dare, non ut nemo baptizaretur baptismi domini, sed ut semper ipse dominus baptizaret: ita actum est, ut et per ministros dominus baptizaret, id est, ut quod ministerium domini baptizaturum errant, dominus baptizaret, non illi. Aliud est enim baptizare per ministerium, aliud baptizare per potestatem" (*Io. ev. tr.*, 5, 6, 1) (CCSL 36; 43).

⁷ While writing this chapter, I presented a draft of the following section at the 52nd International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, for M. Djuth's pre-arranged session, "Augustine's Correspondence: Networking from North Africa."

in North Africa, Augustine nevertheless regards his Donatist counterpart, the bishop Procleianus, as something akin to a co-worker in shepherding the people of God, “on the way to truth and peace” (*ep.*, 33, 6). Yet this conciliatory nature was not always evident, whether in Augustine’s letters or anti-Donatist treatises, especially in view of the much-studied question of his changing positions on religious coercion (Brown 1964). In this section, I wish to outline in broad fashion the contours of this difficult area of interpretation for scholars of Augustine, in order to ask the question of how his reading of John 14: 27a may have changed ever so slightly over the same period. Is it possible to index a growing frustration on the part of the (Catholic) bishop of Hippo, even when he turns to explain an otherwise benign verse of the Scriptures? Any possible suggestion I might venture in this direction will require an initial survey of how Augustine’s thought on peace and violence may have evolved over the course of his role in the Donatist controversy.

Status Quaestionis

At least two studies on the relation between Augustine’s letters and the City of God have been undertaken: the more significant being that of Prete, who in 1968 demonstrated a broad connection along the lines of “good and evil, and the two cities”, “the city of God and the Roman empire”, “the earthly city and the state”, “pagan and Christian religion”, “eschatology”, and “the superiority of divine peace to human peace” (Morán 169-170). Courcelle (264-265) summarizes the study’s results, as identifying a profoundly spiritual vision of “truth”, “happiness” and “God”, as well as the deeply human concerns for “death”, the “fall”, “prayer” and the nature of “time.” Of course, as another scholar writes, “the correspondence of Saint Augustine constitutes, as we know, an irreplaceable resource for knowledge of the man, his life, his activity, and his thought.” Yet, I would like here to highlight ways in which these personal letters on coercion seem to anticipate a particular, widely discussed element of the City of God, that of the “just war” (*civ.*, 19, 15)—a work dedicated to Flavius Marcellinus, who figured prominently in Augustine’s anti-Donatist letters on religious coercion.

For better or worse, Augustine of Hippo is often credited as a major player in developing the concept, made popular in Western political thought at least since the time of Thomas Aquinas, yet with clear precedent in earlier authors.⁸

⁸ For evidence of Augustine’s own literal mention of the phrase, see *civ.* 19, 15 (CCSL 48, 682): “Nam et cum iustum geritur bellum, pro peccato e contrario dimicatur; et omnis victoria,

A number of recent studies, which tend to view Augustine and the concept of “just war” unfavourably—blaming him and his “bad idea” for contemporary invasions, for example—seem to assume a more static view of Augustine’s own development.⁹ Yet even scholars of Augustine have been tempted to such a synchronic reading, failing to distinguish the context and growth of his thought and pastoral efforts.

The antecedent of what becomes perhaps his final expression of anything that would approximate a theory of *bellum iustum* in the *City of God* was, among other competing pressures, his thought on religious coercion—which, as Peter Brown’s important paper given at Oxford in 1963 pointed out, turned principally on his encounter with the “Donatist” Church in North Africa.

Yet, in contrast to any static view, Brown was quick to observe that on the topic of “coercion” (*correptio*, “rebuke”; not *cohercitorio*, “restraint” or “punishment”)—as with most any other topic of theological interest or otherwise—, “never appears as a ‘doctrine’ in a state of rest: it is marked by a painful and protracted attempt to embrace and resolve tensions” (Brown 107).¹⁰ Brown adds, that in addition to Donatism, the “sudden collapse of paganism” in the fourth century was a contributing factor to Augustine’s apparent “optimism” in the early years of his correspondence with Donatist leaders between A. D. 392-402, until his eventual transition to the more harsh view in support of any intervention after A. D. 405, and final attitude IN A.D. 420 as a “harsh and cold victor.”¹¹ Yet, this sharp distinction in the chronology of Augustine’s attitudes

cum etiam malis provenit, divino iudicio victos humiliat vel emendans peccata vel puniens.” On the inseparable relationship between “war” and “peace,” see above at *civ.* 19, 13 (CCSL, 48, 679): “Sic est quaedam pax sine ullo bello, bellum vero esse sine aliqua pace non potest.” Many studies on Augustine and *bellum iustum* are to be found; e. g., see Weithman “Augustine’s Political Philosophy (234-252); and “Augustine and Aquinas” (353-376).

⁹ See, for example, Bourgeois (449-474); Reed and Ryall; Messina and de Paulo; and Wynn. For a more contextual, historical approach, on the other hand, which I hope to develop here, see Markus; and Langan (19-38).

¹⁰ See also Gaumer (171-203); and Gaumer as well as Dupont (345-371). Henry Chadwick (113) remains correct in his statement that, “in later ages [Augustine’s] arguments came to be disastrously exploited by inquisitors, ecclesiastical and secular, who neglected his crucial proviso that the form of correction must be seen to be a loving familial chastisement, a minimal force, absolutely excluding torture or death even for cases of violence.”

¹¹ Brown writes (109), for example: “The historian of the Later Roman church is in constant danger of taking the end of paganism for granted. Yet the fate of paganism filled the imagination of the Christian congregations; and the place of the bishop in Roman society, indeed, the whole sense of direction of his church, was intimately linked with the fortunes of his traditional enemies—the pagan gods.”

on coercion and violence is largely external to the bishop of Hippo—since it was in A. D. 405 that imperial laws were established—the edict of unity, established by Honorius, identifying the “Donatists” as dissident Christians, and therefore criminals to the empire (Shaw 516).

Thus, rather than psychologise Augustine, as Brown may have done in his earliest work, including his biography on Augustine, the degrees of continuity amidst change, particularly on the issue of coercion and state-sponsored violence, may indicate not only the internal path of Augustine’s own thought, but also reflect the social realities in which he participated. In this respect, I wish to explore and contextualise a limited number of Augustine’s letters, especially those prepared after A. D. 400, during the phase of his most intensive anti-Donatist rhetoric, and before A. D. 427, by which time he had completed the final books of the *City of God*.

Overview of Relevant Epistolary Evidence

In addition to the nine letters written to opposing bishops highlighted in Brown’s early essay, Augustine would write on Donatism, in relation to the use of force—to other important audiences in the first and early-second decade of the 5th-century A. D.¹² These included fellow Catholic Christians, at least one pagan and one ex-Donatist, and, finally, Roman officials of his region. This last group was, in fact, the largest, and drew Augustine’s attention increasingly in later years surrounding the Conference at Carthage of A. D. 411, when Donatism was declared illegal by the imperial authority. It also offers another possible connection with “just war” and the thesis I would like to develop, in that presiding at the event was a certain Roman “tribune and notary” by the name Flavius Marcellinus, to whom Augustine would eventually dedicate his work, the *City of God*, and with whom he shared a correspondence on, following the successful verdict of A. D. 411 (*epp.*, 128-129, 132-139, 143, 151, 165). A relatively modern French dissertation has argued that “Donatism” was remarkably downplayed in letters between Augustine and Marcellinus, despite their value as evidence for exchange of Roman learning and civic virtue (Moreau 3-181).¹³ Nevertheless, the link with religious “coercion” and the question of “just” violence is unquestionable, as one finds also in the much later *ep.* 185 to Boniface; so how do these letters function within the three-fold scheme of Augustine’s

¹² For basic overview of the letters of Augustine, see the introduction and bibliography in “Saint Augustine Letters.”

¹³ See also Sabine (212).

audiences? What shades of continuity and difference may be found on the question of apparent sanctioned violence?

Though the three major audiences of Donatist bishops, fellow Catholics and Roman leaders overlap slightly in their chronology of when Augustine was actively corresponding with each, there is a clear developing line of preference to move from his religious rivals, to his religious friends, and finally the “secular” authority. Along the same trajectory, as scholars seem to agree, Augustine develops an increasing affinity for the use of violent means to achieve just ends, which at first glance might seem unexpected in light of the gift of Christ’s peace to his apostles described in the Gospel of John.

To adjust the parameters of Augustine’s development on religious coercion and violence as elements of what may be called “precursors” to a full-blown “just war” theory, I would also like to acknowledge and test a methodology and set of working assumptions already set in place by Brent Shaw and Éric Rebillard in their separate monographs, published in the past decade. These authors, in a relatively harmonious way, propose to view the various strata and layers of Roman society as multiple “identities”, which implies both individual and group identities. As Shaw rightly observes, “given the plurality of identities from which an individual might choose or have activated in a given situation, being Christian was only one (Shaw 772).” Thus, Augustine was both Roman and Catholic, and his correspondence with Roman officials and other Christians variously relies upon both of these identities, in addition to that of his being from North Africa; while in his approach, Rebillard wishes to suspend judgment about the objective fact of social identity or identities, in order to question, “when and how individuals do form groups, when attempts to form a group fail (5)” Thus, I will hold up three distinct social markers, and suggest how Augustine activates certain social identities depending on his audience—pagan or Christian, or “dissident.” These modes of discourse, however, may not be self-sustaining, nor entirely separate one from the other.

“Fellow Catholics”, “Fellow Saints”?

Letters to “fellow” Christians on the topics of religious coercion and the relationship between justice, apparent violence, and love are by contrast relatively fewer in number. The most prominent of which is likely letter 95, to Paulinus of Nola and Therasia, written in the second half of A. D. 408. Here, Augustine’s concerns also touch upon a deeply spiritual and existential question of death, resurrection, and eternal life. These probing meditations are designed

as response to the issue of punishment, which Augustine reminds Paulinus and Therasia is ultimately for the good of those punished. This element refers both to the purpose of punishment, as well as to the need for setting it within proper limits. Human life is rather difficult, Augustine acknowledges, and often seems like a constant struggle and even form of warfare (Job 7: 1). Yet in encounter with Donatists or pagans, Augustine develops a complete picture of the nature of temporal punishment, and its theological value, especially in relation to the practice of Christian charity and justice, as well as in relation to a more lasting, eternal punishment.

Educated pagans, former Donatists?

Augustine also wrote on the theme of coercion with educated pagans, as well as former Donatists. To Vincent, in *ep.* 93, Augustine wrote before A. D. 411, that love for one's enemy may include acts of violence against him, such as God's behavior toward Paul at his conversion. Similarly, to the pagan Nectarius in *ep.* 91, Augustine showed preference for the correction of punishment, over a false show of mercy: "There are ways in which evil men are open to punishment by Christians but only out of kindness and to their own benefit and improvement" (91, 9).¹⁴

Roman Tribunes and Proconsuls

The letters to Roman officials about Donatism and coercion are slightly more complex, in part since each correspondent occupied multiple social, political and religious identities, with overlapping or conflicting spheres of influence.

In *ep.* 89, to Festus, imperial representative (A. D. 406), Augustine's goal is to discuss the correction of non-Catholics, whether pagan or "Donatist", which he claims is "pleasing to God." To support himself, Augustine gives a history of the Donatist movement, and highlights that they have "separated themselves from the peace of the Church." Because of his audience, the imperial official Festus, Augustine gives priority to explanation of the "extra-ecclesial" reality of Donatism, and the need for a proper response on the part of ruling authorities. As a key element of this history, Augustine mentions the long-standing legal context and standing of the Donatist churches—in particular, their prior appeals to the emperor for judgment, dating back to the earliest years of the movement in the early 4th-century.

¹⁴ See Eno (309).

The measure of punishment is not directly addressed, as the purpose of this letter seems rather to be establishing the setting for religious conflict in North Africa, for a Roman representative less familiar with the social and political milieu, not to mention the inter-ecclesial discord. Though Augustine mentions baptism as a defining feature of the disagreement between Catholics and Donatists, and even indicates prominent biblical verses central to their respective baptismal theologies, Augustine's frame of reference is instead the "secular" and especially legal context: because the Donatists resist "reason" and "authority," Augustine must meet with Festus in person to prepare an improved response.

Brent Shaw highlights the need for such a form of explanation on the part of a local bishop for the sake of imperial officials: "Being a transient figure, the governor was not always well versed in local affairs. He often came from outside Africa and would face a myriad of local problems that were peculiar to the region and about which he would have to be educated (Shaw 499)." Yet a response to open conflict was called for, as Augustine had described in his *Contra Cresconium*, written in the same year, on dissident practice of violence (521-522).¹⁵

Shaw describes four major cases of dissident violence in A. D. 403, which were attacks of "dissident Christians" on *servi Dei*: the Catholic bishop of Thubursicu Bure, Augustine the Catholic bishop of Hippo himself, Possidius, the Catholic bishop of Calama and Augustine's biographer, and Maximianus, the Catholic bishop of Bagaï. Another series of major cases involving Restitutus, a Catholic priest of Victoriana, Marcus, another Catholic priest from Casphaliana, and Marcianus, the Catholic bishop of Urga, occurred in the years immediately following, A. D. 405-406 (Shaw 522-531). Portions of these stories appeared in a dossier prepared for the imperial court at Ravenna, and Augustine would repeat them in his letter to Boniface, more than a decade later (Shaw 532).¹⁶

In letter 128, to Marcellinus, Augustine balances these two perspectives: that of the secular-legal context and sensitivity to a fellow Christian audience. Here, he speaks of the aftermath of the Conference of A. D. 411 in Carthage, and the need for protection against Donatists violently protesting the outcome. The legal history of appeal to Christian emperors, Augustine traces all the way back to the case of Caecilian, in the first part of the 4th-century. On the whole, the extended correspondence between Augustine and Marcellinus that

¹⁵ See *Cresc.* 3, 43, 47 (CSEL 52, 454-455).

¹⁶ See *ep.* 185, 29, 30 (CSEL 57, 27-28).

remains bears distinctive markings of a public letter, written for the benefit of all in the region, for the purpose of advancing the Christian peace. Likewise, letter 129 again refers to public records and the legal history of imperial intervention. Moreover, it solidifies the reader's impression of a clear alliance between Augustine and Marcellinus.

Written in the same year, letters 132 and 133 are increasingly diplomatic. In *ep.* 133 (late A. D. 411), again to *Marcellinus*, who was set as judge over *Circumcelliones* who had murdered a Catholic priest, Augustine argues that he should not apply the law of equal retribution. Rather, he argues for moderation and restraint: a Christian judge must respond as a loving father. The tone of this letter reveals the immense influence of Augustine had on Marcellinus as a bishop (*ep.*, 133, 3).

Letter 134, written at the same time (late A. D. 411) to *Aspringius*, brother of Marcellinus and a Christian judge of sorts—his official title was “proconsular governor” —, again qualifies the use of “torture” and discipline. In this instance, Augustine intercedes for the sake of preventing capital punishment, which he argues should—perhaps, *fortasse*—only occur in the most extreme circumstance. Instead, Augustine recommends the reading of court records which detail the legal history of public complaints by Donatists (*ep.*, 134, 4).¹⁷ Yet unlike the administration of a Christian church, Augustine remarks, a public State must revert to the use of fear as a deterrent against anti-social behavior (Shaw 504). Referring to the entire series of letters written by Augustine in the aftermath of A. D. 411, Shaw (715) claims that dissident (“circumcellion”) violence was the key reason for a Catholic bishop to consent to such penalty.

Preliminary Conclusions

As the progression through Augustine's career and various correspondents may well suggest, based on the evidence presented above, the Bishop of Hippo seems to have entered a sequence of connected phases of his thought on how Donatism itself was an affront to peace and stability in the Roman provinces of northern Africa. In the simplest of terms, Augustine came to favor the intervention of imperial authorities increasingly, especially after 400–402 A. D. when he began to prepare his key anti-Donatist writings. The nearly affectionate tone of address one finds in *ep.* 33 to the Donatist Bishop of Hippo in 395/396 A. D. has all but disappeared by the time of his appeal to Boniface

¹⁷ “Legenda sunt gesta ad sandandas animas.”

more than twenty years later, after the Conference of Carthage in 411 A. D., where Donatism received “final” imperial disapproval.

In the following section, I propose to address the concurrent development of Augustine’s Johannine exegesis, conditioned by his prolonged encounter with the Donatist party. It would be unfair and dishonest to map a steady decline in early optimism with respect to Augustine’s reading of John, yet it is true that John 14: 27a remained a constant ally which he summoned in his debate with the Donatists. In short, his early pastoral affection for Christ and his followers—expressed characteristically in *ep.* 33, 5–6—never wavers; though his sharp disagreement with Donatist ecclesiology and social praxis likewise remained firm and unmoving.

John 14: 27 in Augustine’s Anti-Donatist Writings

The appearance of this particular verse solely within a limited context of Augustine’s anti-Donatist polemic may not be possible to prove conclusively. Enough evidence exists, however, to indicate that even from an early date, the verse occupied a central position in the polemical exegesis of Augustine, and most likely also his opponents (Tilley 81). One is tempted to point out the irony of such a verse standing between opposing Christian parties; yet, doing so would possibly over-trivialize a grave situation in which violent means to violent ends was always a real possibility, and peace a fragile balance that was frequently threatened.

Overview of the textual evidence

Between his first arrival back to North Africa in the late 380s and his final days as bishop at Hippo in 430, Augustine left for his contemporary and future readers a wide range of citations for John 14: 27a, on the gift of Christ’s peace to the apostles. Recorded in his “Farewell discourse”, the words were firmly established in the Christian mind from an early stage, as even today they are accompanied by the giving of a “sign of peace” which they precede. While the form “peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you” (RSV) may be the most familiar today, and reflects the word order of Greek manuscripts for the New Testament, the Latin text of Augustine’s bibles was often given with the clauses reversed: “My peace I give you, my peace I leave you” (*pacem meam do vobis, pacem meam relinquo vobis, ep.* 33, 2). Like many verses of the Latin bible in the history of its transmission (Houghton 2016), however, variance at

times occurred—in the case of Augustine, as for other Latin exegetes, perhaps due to his use of a “mental text” or local copies of the bible (Houghton 2008).¹⁸ This feature affected the word order, including the presence or absence of key words, such as the absence of *meam* at *Io. ev. tr. 77, 4*—where, incidentally, the order of clauses is also reversed—which then offers Augustine opportunity for what is a form of *ex tempore* theological speculation about the precise wording of each clause, and why one should merit Christ’s use of *meam*, while the other should not.¹⁹ This type of variation seems to occupy Augustine’s attention only rarely.

en. Ps. 10, 6 (392 A. D.)

In one of the earliest available references to John 14: 27a, Augustine already conceives of the verse’s potential in Donatist debate. Here, he blames his rivals for violating the very peace of Christ through their “unspeakable dissent” (*quam vos nefanda dissension volastis*, CCSL 38; 79). From the first verse of this psalm, Augustine’s mind is fixed on the Donatists, the *pars Donati* (10, 5), against which he holds up the model of the imperfect Church, for which the moon is an allegorical figure. His mention of the minority group, the *circumcelliones*, in section 5 may stand out as the immediate focus of his attention in the following section 6, where he speaks of the division in the terms given above. To shift the blame entirely on this group within the Donatist party, however great their actual measure of guilt, would in the very least misrepresent Augustine’s positions here. “If Macarius or Caecilian have offended you, why do you destroy the peace of Christ,” Augustine asks his Donatist opponents.

en. Ps. 28, 11 (392 A. D.)

Writing at nearly the same time as the previous Psalm commentary, Augustine on a separate occasion turned to reference the same phrase from John 14: 27a. In this instance, as the first quotation which does not come from the text of the Psalm, the words of Christ giving his peace also close this reflection. When Augustine reads that “The Lord will bless his people in peace” (*dominus ben-*

¹⁸ For example, in his 400/403 A. D. work against Petilian (c. *litt. Pet.*, 2,49), Augustine includes a citation which instead reads, “*pacem meam do vobis, pacem meam dimitto vobis.*” The same occurs at *util. ieiun.* 13, written some years later in 408 A. D.

¹⁹ “*Sed quid est ubi ait: pacem relinquo vobis, non addidit meam; ubi vero ait: do vobis, ibi dixit meam? Utrum subaudiendum est meam, et ubi dictum non est, quia potest referri ad utrumque etiam quod semel et quaerendum, et ad quod pulsantibus aperiendum?*”

edicet populum suum in pace, CCSL 38; 171), he recalls that the Lord, that is, Christ himself, dwells in peace and gives it to his those who are his own. Like many of his meditations on the Psalms, here Augustine contemplates the person of Christ and his relation to his people. With no direct reference to Donatism, Augustine nevertheless references a common feature of North African ecclesiological typology, for which the followers of Christ in his “Church” were like the ark of Noah in the midst of the world. Commenting on Ps. 28: 10, Augustine remarks: “Dominus ergo primum inhabitat diluuium huius saeculi in sactis suis, tamquam in arca, ita in ecclesia custoditis.” Thus, when he turns to the final verse of the Psalm, Augustine recalls that, “the Lord will give power to his people in the midst of the storms of this world and whirlwinds of the battle” (author’s translation). Building upon the notion of an eschatological peace, Augustine explains that the Lord “has not promised peace to his people in this world”, in a probable reference to John 16: 33, and its mention of the *pressuram in mundo* to be faced by Christ’s followers. Nevertheless, turning back to the text of John 14: 27a, Augustine maintains that the Lord has given his peace as the words of the Latin verse make clear. A tension between the present and future continues, however, as Augustine only applies the words of Christ in John 14: 27a to a future tense verb of Ps. 28, 11b, “dominus benedicet populum suum in pace.” Here, Augustine does not spell out the meaning of a temporal peace which Christ gives to his followers to enjoy in this life, as he will explore in ensuing decades (*Io. ev. tr.*, 10, 4-7 and 25, 12, 3). It seems that Augustine is working out how to manage the imperfection of the present, in light of such passages in the Scriptures, as well as how to interpret John 14: 27a—or any other biblical reference to “peace”—in light of his developing theology of time, the fall, sin and grace, Christ, his Church, and the hope of salvation.

Io. eu. tr. 10, 4-7 (406/407 A. D.)

In another case, some years later, Augustine merely speaks of the “peace of Christ” (*pacem Christi*), meaning he does not directly cite from the words of John 14: 27a. Like the entire series of his first sixteen tractates on John, however, as a number of recent studies have pointed out (Drecoll; Ployd), Augustine has in mind a clear Donatist target. Here, the peace of Christ is the result of redemption by his blood, and is immediately contrasted with the temporal and transitory things “of this world” (*in hoc saeculo*, *Io. ev. tr.* 10.6, CCSL 36; 103). Yet Augustine applies this need for Christ’s redemption and peace directly to the “those in the church who seek their own [good], and not that of Jesus Christ.” He goes on to point out how each side of the Donatist debate had its

own primate, including for example Carthage, Mauritania, and Numidia. The immediate origin of the language of “peace” may in fact arise here from the text of the Psalm quoted by Augustine throughout (Ps. 34: 27), however the reference to John 14: 27a in light of his earlier association with Donatism and Christ’s peace in works mentioned above may well suggest that he has the same verse near to mind when launching these remarks. His evaluation of the Donatist episcopacy and view of the Church is profoundly dismissive, and held up in sharp contrast to the ideals Augustine draws from reference to Paul and the Psalms.

s. *Gulef.* 28, 3 (14 September 410 A. D.)

Only a few short years later, however, Augustine turns to the text of John 14: 27a with some noteworthy extended attention. Verses from Matthew and Paul’s letter to the Romans appear, as Augustine holds up the wonders of grace and (true) faith. He quickly names the *Donatistae*, who falsely claim—so Augustine writes—that the authority of Cyprian applies to their positions. In order to refute this claim, Augustine holds up the Latin text of Christ’s words in John 14: 27a, “*pacem meam do vobis, pacem meam relinquo vobis*” (MA 1; 537). “A disciple of Christ is neither a Donatist or heretic,” he explains, “just as a disciple of Christ is no enemy of peace.” Augustine then considers the example of Judas, whom Christ permitted to join him at the table on the night on which he was betrayed. The point seems to be that Judas was not pre-ordained to commit treason in this way against the Lord, but rather that he separated himself from Christ, “*Iudas se ipse separavit a domino.*” Thus, in line with the Christological hermeneutic of the voice crying out in the Psalms, “*cum his, qui oderunt pacem, eram pacificus*” (Ps. 119: 7), Augustine explains how Christ tolerated such an extreme action by one of his followers. In short, he did not will any separation, but rather desired unity and sought to protect his peace, as the words of the Gospel declare.²⁰ As Augustine tells his audience, he says these things for the sake of protecting the peace from the “*haereticos... qui se ab ecclesia catholica separaverunt,*” even daily, and yet are falsely calling themselves *catholica* (s. *Gulef.*, 28, 4) (MA 1; 537-8). In this context, writing in the immediate context leading up to the decisive Conference at Carthage of 411 A. D., Augustine goes on to proclaim that the Donatists, “are not *falsi christiani*, but are altogether not *christiani* at all! (s. *Gulef.*, 28, 4) (MA 1; 538).” In the round

²⁰ “*In illo ergo tolerate usque in finem vehementer commendavit dominus Iesus Christus, non esse faciendam separationem, sed unitatem esse diligendam, pacemque servandam*” (s. *Geulf.*, 28, 3 (MA 1; 537).

dismissal of Donatism that follows, Augustine holds in mind the peace (and passion) of Christ, with constant reference to the teaching of Cyprian. Delivered on the feast day of the saint, Augustine asks his audience to “keep in mind the teaching of Christ, and to hold the example of Cyprian in our hearts... so that we may not fear ‘such men’, nor remain silent in their presence about our faith and hope” (s. *Gulef.*, 28, 7 (MA 1; 541) author’s translation).

As a whole, the sermon is as much a praise of Cyprian and diatribe against the Donatist as it is a linked sequence of biblical citations brought to light in order to construct an ever-deepening case against the “heretics” of North Africa. With the imperial conference soon to be called at Carthage the following summer, mere months away, Augustine seems to have been at the height of his anti-Donatist polemic, and near the end of his patience! None of the fraternal spirit of charity evidenced in *ep.* 33 to Procleianus the Donatist Bishop of Hippo some fifteen years in the past yet remains; rather, Augustine’s audience is—presumably, at any rate—entirely made up of Catholic believers, whom he exhorts with the encouragement of Christ and the Scriptures and instructs with a profound anti-Donatist sentiment.

Io. eu. tr. 77.3-5 (410s A. D.)

In the course of his *Tractates on John* (*Io. ev. tr.*), when Augustine turns to comment directly on the Latin text of John 14: 27a some years later, he perhaps surprisingly does not bother to mention the Donatist controversy at all. Nor does he indicate the importance of this passage to him in earlier years. Instead, in what is a more restrained manner, he cites the prophet Isaiah as the immediate echo of Christ’s words in the Gospel of John:

“Peace I leave you,” he says, “my peace I give you.” This is what we read in the prophet, “peace upon peace” (Is 57:19, LXX); he left us peace as he was on his way, he will give us his peace upon his return *in fine*. Peace he leaves with us in this world, *his* peace he will give to us in the world that is to come.²¹

As he expands this distinction, which largely turns on the lack of *meam* in the first clause of Christ’s words in John 14: 27a, Augustine trades heavily on the temporal form of peace received by Christians *in hoc mundo* (or *saeculo*), and

²¹“Pacem, inquit, relinquo vobis, pacem meam do vobis. Hoc est quod legimus apud prophetam: pacem super pacem; pacem nobis relinquit iturus, pacem suam nobis dabit in fine venturus. Pacem nobis relinquit in hoc saeculo, pacem suam nobis dabit in futuro saeculo” (*Io. ev. tr.*, 77.3) (CCSL 36; 521).

its difference from the eternal peace to be enjoyed in the time that is yet to come. “We do not have that kind of peace now,” Augustine says, “which is why we must still pray in our hearts, ‘forgive us our debts’” (*Io. ev. tr.*, 77, 4 (CCSL 36; 522)).²² The peace enjoyed today is not complete (*sed non est plena*), because a perfect harmony does not exist—either within one’s own self, or between individuals of the community, as much as they seek to love one another.

Most likely, especially in this instance, the later words of John 14: 27, “*non quomodo mundus dat, ego do vobis*,” have informed Augustine—at least in part—as he formulated his shifting approach to the verse as a whole. The reality of lived experience, perhaps, after long debates with unrelenting opponents, was enough to convince Augustine that the peace he dreamed of, and which he so boldly upheld in his letter to the Donatist bishop of his own city, would never be realized completely, without additional future intervention. The peace of this world cannot be true peace (*pax vera*) without true harmony (*vera concordia*) (*Io. ev. tr.*, 77, 5) (CCSL 36; 522). Yet even the peace which Christ leaves his beloved family the Church, by whatever degree or grade more perfect, nevertheless remains only an anticipation of the eschatological peace. Augustine’s response is to trust, not in the peace which the world gives, which seeks the mere absence of war and disturbance, but in the peace of the one by whom the world was made (Jn., 1: 5), “so that we may live in harmony, with our hearts joined together, and so that we may lift up our heart as one, lest in the world it be destroyed.”²³ This clear shift of interpretation may mark a new phase of maturity in Augustine’s reading of John, and of his handling of the issue of Donatism, or it may simply signal a new turn of his attention toward the future, independent of his longstanding disagreements with his North African peers.

c. Gaud. 1, 27 (419 A. D.)

Finally, in his last major work written against the Donatists, Augustine again refers to the Latin text of John 14: 27a when quoting the words of his

²² Augustine continues: “Est ergo nobis pax aliqua, quoniam condelectamus legi dei secundum interiorem hominem; sed non est plena, quia videmus aliam legem in membris nostris, repugnantem legi mentis nostrae. Itemque inter nos ipsos est nobis pax, quia invicem nobis credimus quod invicem diligamus; sed nec ipsa plena est, quia cogitationes cordis nostri invicem non videmus, et quaedam de nobis quae non sunt in nobis, vel in melius invicem vel in deterius opinamur” (*Io. ev. tr.*, 77.4) (CCSL, 36; 522).

²³ “Nos ergo, carissimi, quibus Christus pacem relinquit, et pacem suam nobis dat, non sicut mundus, sed sicut ille per quem factus est mundus, ut concordis simus, iungamus invicem corda, et cor unum sursum habeamus, ne corrumpatur in terra” (*Io. ev. tr.*, 77, 5) (CCSL 36; 522).

addressee, Gaudentius, a Donatist bishop of Thamugadi who was present for the meetings of 411 A. D. at Carthage. This passage offers some of the clearest evidence in the Augustinian corpus of a pro-Donatist reading of John 14: 27a, and of Augustine's own direct response to such a challenge. The words of Gaudentius understandably contrast the *pax saeculi* with the *pax Christi*, in that each aims for separate ends through distinct means: the one, so that war may not exist between nations, established by a kind of mutual agreement; the other, as an invitation that does not compel those who are unwilling.²⁴ Augustine, taking some displeasure in this slight to his honor, explains that the Donatist bishop is misrepresenting facts, when he seems to imply that Augustine's reliance upon coercion was in fact at odds with the *pax Christi*, which never compels the unwilling (*non cogit invitos*). The fact that any Donatist would consider himself (or herself) compelled by the external agency of the Roman authorities, Augustine suggests, is proof that the opposing party "does not know the Scriptures, or the power of God" (c. *Gaud.*, 1, 28) (CSEL 53; 226). Turning to the text of the Gospel of Luke, Augustine recalls the parable in which the master tells his servant to "go out into the streets and hedges, and compel them to go in so that my house may be filled" (Lk. 14: 21-23). The use of the Latin phrase, *compelle intrare*, was a well-used point of reference for Augustine, by which to define his evolving views of coercion. As he says here, "We understand the 'streets' to mean heretics, and the 'hedges' as those in schism." Extending the Lucan parable of Jesus, Augustine asks his fellow North African, "Why should you be amazed, if not in the case of physical want of food but rather spiritual famine one comes to the table who is neither led in freely, nor compelled with undue force (*nec volenter impulsus*)?" Augustine is not willing to accept an accusation that his own pastoral model—developed over the course of the Donatist controversy, and outlined above—should deviate from the ideals of Christ. Yet neither does Augustine spend his careful distinction between Christ's peace "left" (*relinquo*) for his followers in the world and his peace that he "gives" (*do*) only upon his return. His effort, rather, is to argue, with apparent success on the merit of biblical precedent, against a view that the mere fact of being a freely entered arrangement entirely typifies Christian "peace."

²⁴ "Sed belliferae, inquit, pacis cruentaeque unitatis se incolas iactant. Audiant dominum dicentem: pacem meam do vobis, pacem relinquo vobis; non sicut saeculum dat ego do vobis. Saeculi enim pax inter animos gentium dissidents armis et belli exitu foederatur; domini Christi pax salubri lenitate tranquilla volentes invitat, non cogit invitos" (c. *Gaud.*, 1, 27) (CSEL 53; 225).

Peace in the John Commentaries and Anti-Donatist Corpus

Augustine would revisit the concern for Christian peace, and its relation to civil society's equal need for stability, any number of occasions within his anti-Donatist polemical corpus. It was in many ways one of the recurring themes of his episcopal ministry, and perhaps one might even say central to his vocation that he responds to the forms of ecclesial crisis threatening him and his contemporaries. There is a need for greater attention to the scope and depth of Augustine's interest in peace throughout his *Tractates on John*, as well as the entire anti-Donatist corpus, for many of the reasons I have sought to address here. The use of John 14: 27a, and various strands of Pauline ecclesial thought, served Augustine well throughout his preaching and polemical career, with some noteworthy directions of interpretation that may have been influenced by external factors or simply the passing of time and growing maturity of a young North African bishop. It does seem, on the basis of this limited study, that Augustine's readings of John 14: 27a may have grown increasingly eschatological, with hopes for reconciliation with the Donatists eventually pushed to the side. How this picture might look when fully fleshed out, and in dialectic with the eventual production of the *City of God* and its theological and social positions, requires far greater space and time that present circumstances will permit. Before reaching my general conclusions, however, I would like to point out two final Johannine references to "peace", which bear upon the foregoing discussion.

Io. ev. tr. 103, 3

First, in a reference to John 16: 33—a verse which I have not explored in detail here, precisely because it was not one that occupied nearly as much attention in Augustine's exegetical activity—found in one of his later *Tractates on John*, Augustine finally holds up the significance of Christ's words here. As the culmination of his "farewell discourse", verses of the preceding passage in the Gospel of John establish a context of hope in the midst of future suffering: "An hour is coming, when each one of you will be scattered to his own place, and you will leave me alone" (John 16: 31). Yet, Christ continues: "I have spoken these things to you, so that in me you may have peace. You will have trouble (*pressuram*) in the world; but take heart (*confidite*), for I have overcome the world" (John 16: 33; *Io. ev. tr.*, 103, 3 (CCSL 36; 600)). One might expect such a verse should hold Augustine captive with speculation, however that seems not to have been the case elsewhere. Here, his explanation is rather straightfor-

ward, explaining that although the disciples were separated, they nevertheless went in the peace of Christ, with him as their refuge and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Unlike previous interpretations of John 14: 27a, this reading of John 16: 33 does not qualify the present gift of peace, which here is accompanied by the gift of the Holy Spirit (*dato quippe illis spiritu sancto*), but rather upholds the sufficiency of Christ's presence even in his absence, for the trouble to be faced by his followers while still in the world. This apparent difference does not disqualify my suggestions about a developing reading of the Johannine peace of Christ, but may reflect either a distinct approach to this verse (John 16: 33), or the more pastoral approach of encouraging Christian believers to endure and carry on in the world, in the strength and peace of Christ. To diminish the efficacy, even in rhetorical terms, of that peace might leave his audience less than inspired.

Io. ev. tr. 25, 12, 3

Finally, by contrast, I would like to return to an earlier tractate, for the reason that I believe Augustine's insight is a valid explanation of the themes outlined above, and because I would like to suggest that this reference should also be included in a discussion of Augustine's anti-Donatist, Johannine concept of peace, in all the course of its development. In a passing turn of phrase, Augustine writes of Moses that through him the people of Israel were promised,

A kingdom, and a land flowing with milk and honey, *temporalis pax*, the abundance of daughters and sons, health of the body, and many other things—all of them temporal, however, as a figure for the spiritual things to come, because they were promised to the "old man" in the "old testament" (*Io. ev. tr.*, 25.12) (CCSL 36; 254).

As he goes on to explore the meaning of Christ's reference in John 6: 27 to the *cibus non qui perit, sed qui permanet in aeternum*, Augustine further develops the contrast—yet similarity—between Moses and Christ. In one respect, this image bears resemblance to the imperfect view of the peace left for Christ's followers in this world, imperfect because it signals something greater. In that way, the analogy also calls to mind the eschatological interpretation of John 14: 27a, for just as the people of Israel anticipated a fullness yet to be realized, even in the present world—according to Augustine—the experience of peace is not yet complete (*plena*). This sacramental and typological interpretation of Moses, and of the words of John 6: 27 and surrounding verses are, like John 14: 27a and John 16: 33, small yet significant parts of a larger net-

work of biblical references which Augustine drew upon in his own Scriptural imagination.

General Conclusions

In the first section, by discussing the anti-Donatist letters of Augustine, and those which otherwise addressed the troublesome area of violence, coercion and the need for peace, this chapter has offered one possible reading of the epistolary corpus on these issues. Yet its primary goal was to establish the personal network in which Augustine lived and wrote, as context for his developing interpretation and deployment of a certain Johannine verse. The words of Christ's gift of peace were at the heart of Christian liturgy and might be seen as a possible answer to the social "problem" of religious dissidence, difference and conflict. Although Augustine saw at an early stage the relevance of John 14: 27a for his discussions with Donatist leaders, and frequently launched rhetorical pleas against the *pars Donati* based upon these words of Christ, his approach at times could be seen as somewhat divisive. To be fair, a pro-Donatist reading of the same verse was previously in circulation, and even as late as the 410s continued to be put to use by the Donatist bishop Gaudentius. At times, Augustine seems to develop his own approach to the verse, featured especially in his later readings. On other occasions, however, he seems to recycle the old, exclusivist claim to Christ's peace which already existed a generation before, opposing the peace of Christ with the peace of Donatus. Such terms of comparison do not diminish Augustine's achievement, which becomes a rather complex interpretation that weaves his Christology and sober observations with a wide array of biblical allusions and references. It does leave open the question, what other possible voices from North Africa might have said about the verse, whether in the century before Augustine's ministry, or in those that followed.

On the one hand, distinguishing Augustine's audience in the first section allows one to identify specific features common to each group of addressee, such as the Roman officials, fellow Catholic Christians, or other dissident Christians, such as the "Donatists." For each of these three major categories, Augustine in general does display a unique form of argumentation about the use of violence and coercion, which establish the fundamental principles at work in the development of his thought through the *City of God*, which I have taken for granted rather than exploring exhaustively. At the same time, distinguishing these three major groups remains problematic, for the divisions are in fact

not exclusive: most Roman authorities addressed by Augustine self-identified as Christians, and the same is true of the Donatists, who rather viewed themselves as Catholic Christians, not criminals or schismatics.

Augustine himself, to a certain extent, also transcended those same boundaries—in virtue of his own commitment to social order as a Christian bishop. In his letters, both public and private, Augustine participates in a wider form of civic discourse, which he helped to create and promote in his dealings with Roman officials, the Donatists, and like-minded Catholic believers.²⁵ I would like to suggest that his biblical interpretation, as evidence in the second section above, also participated in such a form of discourse, yet remained situated on a boundary that included North African traditions of interpretation and social dialogue.

²⁵ See Shaw (512) on the relationship of Augustine to legal discourse in his many public trials held against the Donatists.



Works Cited

- Augustine of Hippo. "Saint Augustine: Letters, Volume I (1-82)." *Fathers of the Church*, vol. 12, translated by Wilfrid Parsons, Washington, D.C., CUA Press, 1951, pp. xi-xxii.
- Bourgeois, Frank. "La théorie de la guerre juste: un héritage chrétien?" *Études théologiques et religieuses*, vol. 81, pp. 2006, pp. 449-474.
- Brown, Peter. "St. Augustine's Attitude to Religious Coercion," *The Journal of Roman Studies*, vol. 54, n.o 1-2, 1964, pp. 107-116.
- Reed, Charles and Ryall, David. *The Price of Peace: Just War in the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Chadwick, Henry. *Augustine of Hippo: A Life*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Courcelle, Pierre. *Jugements de Rufin et de Saint Augustin sur les Empereurs du IVe Siècle et la Défaite Suprême du Paganisme*. "Revue des Études Anciennes." vol. 71, n.o 1, 1969, pp. 264-265.
- Drecoll, Volker. "Christology and Anti-Heretical Strategies in the *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus*." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 48, n.o 1, 2017, pp. 247-261. doi: 10.5840/augstudies2017101039.
- Dekkers, Eligius and Fraipont, Jean, editors. *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Enarrationes in psalmos I-L*, CCSL 38, Turnhout, Brepols, 1956.
- Dupont, Anthony. "Gratia in Augustine's *Sermones ad Populum* during the Pelagian Controversy. Do Different Contexts Furnish Different Insights?" *Brill's Series in Church History and Religious Culture*, vol. 59, Leiden, Brill, 2012.
- Ebbeler, Jennifer. *Disciplining Christians: Correction and Community in Augustine's Letters*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Eno, Robert B. "Epistulae." *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids, MI, Cambridge, U.K., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999.
- Frend, William H.C. *The Donatist World: A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1952.
- Gaumer, Matthew. "The Evolution of Donatist Theology as Response to a Changing Late Antique Milieu." *Augustiniana*, vol. 58, n.o 3-4, 2008, pp. 171-203.
- Gaumer, Matthew and Dupont, Anthony. "Understanding Augustine's Changing Justification for State-Sponsored Religious Coercion and its Context within Donatist North Africa." *Augustinus*, vol. 54, 2009, pp. 345-371.
- Goldbacher, Alois, editor. *S. Aurelii Augustini Hipponiensis episcopi Epistulae (ep. 31-123)*, CSEL 34/2, Vienna.

- Halton, Thomas, editor. *Saint Augustine: Tractates on the Gospel of John 1-10. Fathers of the Church*. Translated by J. Rettig, vol. 78, Washington, D.C., The Catholic University of America Press, 1988.
- Hermanowicz, Erika. *Possidius of Calama: A Study of the North African Episcopate in the Age of Augustine*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Houghton, Hugh. *Augustine's Text of John: Patristic Citations and Latin Gospel Manuscripts*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- . *The Latin New Testament: A Guide to its Early History, Texts, and Manuscripts*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Langan, John. "The Elements of St. Augustine's Just War Theory." *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, vol. 12, 1984, pp. 19-38.
- MacCormack, Sabine. "Classical Influences on Augustine." *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1999, p. 212.
- Markus, Robert. "Saint Augustine's Views on the Just War." *Sacred and Secular: Studies on Augustine and Latin Christianity*, Aldershot, Variorum, 1983.
- Messina, Patrick and de Paulo, Craig. "The Influence of Augustine on the Development of Just War Theory." *Augustinian Just War Theory and the Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq: Confessions, Contentions, and the Lust for Power*, edited by Patrick Messina, Craig de Paulo and Daniel Tompkins, Bern, Peter Lang, 2011.
- Miles, Richard. "Textual Communities and the Donatist Controversy." In *The Donatist Schism: Controversy and Contexts*, edited by Richard Miles, pp. 249-283. Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2016.
- Moreau, Madeleine. "Le Dossier Marcellinus dans la Correspondance de Saint Augustin." *Recherches Augustiniennes et Patristique*, vol. 9, 1973, pp. 3-181
- Morán, J. "Prete, S. La Città di Dio nelle Lettere di Agostino." *Augustinianum*, vol. 9, 1969, pp. 169-170.
- Nehring, Przemysław, Stróżyński, Mateusz, Toczko, Rafał, editors. *Scrinium Augustini. The World of Augustine's Letters*. Turnhout, Brepols, 2017.
- Ployd, Adam. *Augustine, the Trinity, and the Church: A Reading of the Anti-Donatist Sermons*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Rebillard, Éric. *Christians and Their Many Identities in Late Antiquity, North Africa, 200-450 CE*. Cornell, Cornell University Press, 2012.
- . "Augustine in Controversy with the Donatists before 411." In *The Donatist Schism: Controversy and Contexts*, edited by Richard Miles, pp. 297-316. Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2016
- Shaw, Brent. *Sacred Violence: African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Tilley, Maureen. *The Bible in Christian North Africa: The Donatist World*. Minneapolis, MN, Fortress Press, 1997.

- . "Gaudentium, Contra." *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopaedia*, edited by Allan Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids, MI, William B. Eerdmans, 1999.
- Weithman, Paul. "Augustine and Aquinas on Original Sin and the Function of Political Authority." *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, vol. 30, n.o 3, 1992, pp. 353-376.
- . "Augustine's Political Philosophy." *Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, edited by Eleonore Stump, Norman Kretzman and David Meconi, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 234-252.
- Willems, Radbodus, editor. *Sancti Aurelii Augustini In Iohannis euangelium tractatus CXXIV*, CCSL 36. Turnhout, Brepols, 1954.
- Wynn, Phillip. *Augustine on War and Military Service*. Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2013.

**Augustine's Anthropological
Hermeneutic and Political
Thought in Dante Alighieri's
*De Monarchia***

La hermenéutica antropológica
de Agustín y su pensamiento político
en *De Monarchia* de Dante Alighieri

2

Piotr M. Paciorek
Independent researcher, United States of America



Abstract

This essay aims to evaluate the concept of peace that Dante Alighieri inscribed in *De Monarchia*, a work that is recognized as one of the major achievements of medieval political philosophy. Articulating peace as the main component of the Christian civilization of Western Europe, Dante remained under the influence of Aristotelian ethical and political thought, ancient Christian theologians, and the great authority of Augustine of Hippo. Since ancient thinkers believed that anthropological concepts should be subject to any socio-political investigation, peace, too, was examined from an anthropological perspective. Aristotle's anthropological hermeneutic employed the triad of body-soul-spirit to understand human nature and exposed the notion of universal peace to mean *caritas*, unity, and justice. Relying on Aristotle's triad and overall hermeneutic, Augustine's anthropological exploration of human nature is a metaphorical portrait of man in a constant struggle for harmony between soul and body, a harmony which could then be projected in society under governing nations. Guided by this initial examination of the Augustinian and Aristotelian hermeneutic, this essay explores *De Monarchia* in depth, so as to demonstrate Augustine's impact and inspiration on Dante's monarchical beliefs. The inquiry herein will specifically outline how Dante applied Augustine's concept of peace to his current socio-political system, both among individuals and particular communities.

Keywords: Aristotle, Augustine, Dante, Homer, Marsilius of Padua, William of Ockham.



Resumen

Este ensayo se centra en evaluar el concepto de paz que Dante Alighieri inscribió en *De Monarchia*, una obra reconocida como uno de los principales logros de la filosofía política medieval. Articulando la paz como el componente principal de la civilización cristiana de Europa Occidental, Dante se mantuvo bajo la influencia del pensamiento ético y político aristotélico, de los antiguos teólogos cristianos y de la gran autoridad de san Agustín de Hipona. Dado que los pensadores de la época creían que los conceptos antropológicos debían basarse en cualquier investigación sociopolítica, la paz también se examinaba desde una perspectiva antropológica. La hermenéutica antropológica de Aristóteles empleó la tríada de cuerpo-alma-espíritu para comprender la naturaleza humana, y expuso la noción de la paz universal como *caritas*, unidad y justicia. Basándose en la tríada de Aristóteles y en la hermenéutica general, la exploración antropológica de san Agustín de la naturaleza humana es un retrato metafórico del hombre en una lucha constante por la armonía entre el alma y el cuerpo, una armonía que luego podría proyectarse en la sociedad bajo las naciones gobernantes. Guiados por este examen inicial de la hermenéutica agustiniana y aristotélica, este ensayo explora en profundidad *De Monarchia* para demostrar el impacto e inspiración de san Agustín en las creencias monárquicas de Dante. La investigación aquí mencionará específicamente cómo Dante aplicó el concepto de paz de san Agustín en su sistema sociopolítico, tanto entre individuos como comunidades particulares.

Palabras clave: Agustín, Aristóteles, Dante, Homero, Marsilio de Padua, Guillermo de Ockham.



About the author | Sobre el autor

Piotr M. Paciorek [pacvin2003@yahoo.com]

M.A. in Theology, S.T.L. in Church History; Ph.D. in Theology, Catholic University of Lublin, Poland; D.E.A. Intensive Advanced Study in the Didactics of Languages and Culture University of Sorbonne Paris III. He taught at Ave Maria University, FL; Saint Thomas University, Miami, FL; SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, Orchard Lake MI; St. Vincent De Paul Regional Seminary, Boynton Beach FL; St. John Vianney College Seminary, Miami, FL.



How to cite in MLA / Cómo citar en MLA

Paciorek, Piotr. "Augustines Anthropological Hermeneutic and Political Thought in Dante Alighieri's *De Monarchia*." *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendimez y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2019, pp. 69-92, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.2

Law is a form of order, and good law must necessarily mean good order; but an excessively large number cannot participate in order: to give it order would surely be a task for divine power, which holds even this universe together.
Aristotle Pol., VII, iv, 5 (LCL, 264,554-5)

The term *anthropological hermeneutic* describes the method which can guide our understanding of the notion of universal peace in the political thought of Dante's *De Monarchia*. The foundation of anthropological hermeneutic begins with the philosophical understanding of "the human being," especially of his nature in a metaphysical context. The ontological structure of the human being became a pattern for ancient methodology and its principles. We call this method "the anthropological hermeneutic" because it considers the entire ontological composition of the human person. The anthropological system regards the combination of the three conceptual realities of man: body, soul, and spirit. These constitute a unified whole and a harmonious integrity of the human being. The Aristotelian triad of body-soul-spirit describes the one harmonious concord of the whole living being.¹ In his philosophy, Augustine delineates this distinctive ontology of created being: "These whole nature of a human being is, of course, spirit, soul, and body (*an. orig.*, IV, 2, 3) (CSEL 60, 383; WSA I, 23, 534)".² By the triangular prism of philosophical anthropology we can approach and evaluate the system of universal peace which consists of perfect harmony among the people of the earthly society; between divine and human authority—the Prince of Heaven and the earthly prince; and between Church and State, emphasizing the status of the Roman Prince and the Roman Pope in the Roman Empire. Inspired by the features of medieval cosmology, founded on the two hemispheres (celestial and terrestrial), which are divided by the horizon of eternity, Dante aimed to find the resolution of the political universal peace.³ In this medieval cosmology, the human soul is situated in the horizon of being, which separates time from eternity, because it is related to eternity from below and yet is above time. The etymological origin

¹ See *Dante Monarchy* I, 2; 32-33.

² "Natura certe tota hominis est spiritus, anima et corpus; quisquis ergo a natura humana corpus alienare vult, desipit".

³ Circulated under Aristotle's name, the anonymous *Liber de causis* is quoted in *Dante Monarchy* III, 16, 3; 91). See *The Book of Causes (Liber de causis)* 2, 22; 21: "Indeed, the being that is after eternity and beyond time is Soul, because it is on the horizon of eternity from below and beyond time." See Philo Judaeus I, 16, 86; 148-51.

of *hermeneutic* as “interpretation”, “explanation” or “translation”, reveals that hermeneutic is a methodological rationalistic speculation, as well as a valuable strategy, in the interpretation of the concept of universal peace, which Augustine describes as *caritas*, unity and justice. The medieval political treatise *De Monarchia* is situated between the Aristotelian hermeneutic and the writings of Augustine, to whom Dante expresses his highest consideration (*Monarchy* III, 3; 68). Aristotle declares “that man is by nature a political animal” (*Pol.*, I, I, 9-10) (LCL 264,8-11).⁴ The aim of *De Monarchia* seeks to present man’s welfare as consisting in living in peace, and in that form of government and social institution which secure this mode of life.

In his theological reflection on the Trinity, Augustine provides an essential definition that in the Trinity exists the “peace of unity” or *pax unitatis* (*Io. ev. tr.*, 14, 9) (CChr. SL 36,147; FC 79,73). Was Dante—expressing by way of syllogisms—inspired by Augustine, when he pronounced that in God all principles form an absolute unity? (*Monarchy* III, 12, 11; 86). The three coeternal principles, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are in total reality one God and one substance. The Father is the principle of the Trinity. The unity of the divine nature and the distinction between the three Persons is describes thus, “... in their relations to each other in the Trinity, if the begetter is the Principle of the begotten, then the Father is the Principle of the Son since He begot Him” (*trin.*, V, 14, 15 (CChr. SL 50, 222; FC 45,193; WSA I, 5,199).⁵ The Principle is one omnipotent God, the tri-potent Father, Son and Spirit (*ord.*, II, 5,16) (CChr. SL, 29,116). For Saint Augustine, the Father is the principle and the Son is the principle (*Pater principium et Filius principium*).⁶ God is to be understood as the beginning. The theological paradigm of the Trinity was thus for Dante the argument for universal peace in his current socio-political system. It is also a theological postulate that creation should imitate the Creator, and that unity, in the highest degree, is realized in God. Dante trans-

⁴ Aristotle recognized that man is a politically active citizen of the State. See also *Pol.*, VII, II, 2 (LCL 264,538-41). On the political context of Aristotle’s thought see Riesbeck.

⁵ “Ad se autem invicem in trinitate si gignens ad id quod gignit principium est, pater ad filium principium est quia genuit eum.”

⁶ See *Io. ev. tr.*, 39, 1 (CChr. SL, 36,345; FC 88,116): “Si se dixit Dominus esse principium, quaeri potest utrum et Pater principium sit. Si enim Filius principium est qui habet Patrem, quanto facilius intellegendus est deus Pater esse principium, qui habet quidem Filium cui Pater sit, sed non habeo de quod sit? Filius enim Patris est Filius, et Pater utique Filii Pater est; sed Deus de Deo Filius dicitur, lumen de lumine Filius dicitur; Pater dicitur lumen, sed non de lumine; Pater dicitur Deus, sed non de Deo. Si ergo Deus de Deo, lumen de lumine, principium est, quanto facilius intellegitur principium lumen de quo lumen, et Deus de quo Deus?”

ferred the “peace of unity” in the Trinity to the level of humankind, which is seeking “the calm of universal peace” (*Monarchy*, I, 16, 2; 28). Dante came to the conclusion that a monarch is the image of the Divine unity, so that humankind is made one through him.⁷ Anthropological hermeneutic, focusing on the harmonious Trinitarian unity, renders the interpretation of peace as inner divine love and unconditional love toward the humankind. As a philosopher of history, Dante, however, perceives in the divine love the pattern for human society in the Roman Empire. Dante articulates the blessing of universal peace in the “fullness of time”, when the Son of God –the “Messianic Prince of Peace” (Is. 9: 5-6)– took on human form for man’s salvation. It was a unique period of perfect peace among individuals and particular communities, and consisted of a perfect monarchy, during the rule of Emperor Augustus (*Monarchy* I, 16, 1-2; 28).⁸ This spiritual interpretation of ancient history, formulated during the Middle Ages, was characterized by a spiritual glorification and poetical idealization.

As a political philosopher, using the rules of syllogistic argument, Dante argues for the necessity of a universal monarchy, as a means to establish universal peace in the secular commonwealth. There can only be one supreme ruling power responsible for stable government, as guarantor of peace in the universal empire. Aware of the fundamental problems of the political and social order, Dante recognizes that every person is inseparable from the social environment and from the political ideal of the general welfare.

And just as the lesser parts which make up the human race are well adapted to it [the whole universe], so it too can be described as being well adapted to its whole; for its parts are well adapted to it in relation to a single principle... and so absolutely speaking it too is well adapted to the universe (or to its ruler, who is God and Monarch) in relation to a single principle, i.e. one ruler. And thus it follows that monarchy is necessary to the well-being of the world (*Monarchy*, I, 7; 12).

⁷ See Carlyle and Carlyle 115-6: “Dante gives other reasons for holding that the whole human race should be under one ruler; as, for instance, that it is the purpose of God that every created being should be in the divine likeness, as far as his nature will permit, and that therefore the human race is best disposed when it is most like to God; and as the essence of unity (‘vera ratio unius’) is in the Deity, it is likest Him when it is most one, and this can only be when it is subject to one ruler (‘princeps’)”.

⁸ See also *Monarchy* II, 10, 4-10 (58-60).

Dante, in agreement with Aristotle, states that the well-being of single individuals constitutes the purpose and well-being of the State.⁹ All human energies should be directed to an ideal of happiness, which is valid for all humankind, for the individual as well as for the State.

It is incontestable that when Dante was writing his treatise, his concept of universal peace was challenged by the indigenous political situation in the State, which provoked the major intellectual and political controversies of the 13th and 14th centuries. Dante's *De Monarchia*, consisting of three books, reveals a great deal about the political and religious affairs of the late Middle Ages, which separated the secular State from religious authority. Dante is forward-looking in his socio-political concept of the political autonomy of the world-State as a logical necessity. The doctrinal dispute appeared between the two political factions: the papal and the pro-imperial and anti-papal party: the Guelph party of Pope John XXII (1316-1334) and the Ghibelline party supported the Holy Roman Emperor Louis IV of Bavaria in his conflict with the Avignon popes. Within the historical context, the realization of peace in the Roman Empire is confronted with the new political circumstances. As regards the political situation of his own time, the general tendency of the treatise is mostly pro-imperial, as it elucidates the need for secular power.

Both parties realized that peace—and the welfare of peace and order—was the main component of the Christian civilization of Western Europe. In opposition to the pro-papal party, the imperial party claimed that universal peace could be accomplished on the base of fundamental political Aristotelian principles. The pro-imperial reform party was also supported by the political medieval philosopher Marsilius of Padua (c. 1275-c. 1343). His work *Defensor Pacis* (“Defender of Peace”), written in 1324, extends the tradition of Dante's *De Monarchia*.¹⁰ The political treatise *Defensor Pacis* influenced the conciliar movement which declared the authority of the General Councils of Christians as superior to that of the Roman bishop (2, 21; 287-98). Marsilius appeals to the authority of Aristotle's *Politics* a propos of the law-making power resides in the people. According to this position, the human authority to make laws belongs only to the entire body of citizens. The prince, sovereign governor, rules by the authority of the whole body of citizens. In the *Defensor Pacis*, Marsilius is concerned with the general causes of civil peace

⁹ See Aristotle *Pol.*, III, IV, 3 (LCL 264,200-1): “The good life then is the chief aim of society, both collectively for all its members and individually...”

¹⁰ See Marsilius of Padua. *The Defender of Peace (Defensor Pacis)*. Translated by Alan Gewirth, New York, Harper Torchbooks: Harper and Row, 1967.

and conflict and wants to demonstrate the independence of the Holy Roman Empire from the temporal power of the papacy. In practice, the secular Christian ruler, who acts as the people's representative, has the right to call General Councils as the supreme authority in the universal Church. Other representatives of the Ghibellines were the spiritual Franciscans, such as the English Franciscan friar and scholar William of Ockham (c. 1280–c. 1349), who argued for peaceful separation of the spiritual and earthly rule and opposed the Church's interference in worldly affairs. Marsilius of Padua and William of Ockham were the first medieval authors to advocate a form of Church and State autonomy, and of the rights of the spiritual and temporal powers.

It is necessary to take into consideration the important descriptions and insights from his preceding writings, which guided Dante towards the concept of universal peace. In his previous work *Divina Commedia* (*Divine Comedy*), he placed John XXI "Pietro Spano" in his *Paradiso's* Heaven of the Sun, along with the spirits of other great religious scholars. One of the most scholarly pontiffs in papal history, John XXI, would be the only pope whom Dante depicted as residing in Paradise. His reign was characterized by attempts to promote peace and justice. In this historical context, Dante, seeking the benefits of peace and order, proclaimed the necessity of a single supreme Christian ruler, monarch or emperor in the commonwealth, and this monarchy's relationship to the universal Church as the leading light and guide to eternal peace.

One of the most basic challenges in medieval political philosophy is to explain the nature and function of the universal emperor and the supreme pontiff. In order to resolve the division between the Roman Prince and the Roman Pope, Dante argues with the supporters of hierocratic opinion, who introduced the Biblical metaphor that God created "two great lights", the sun and the moon (Gn. 1: 16; Ps. 136: 7-9). The hierocratic argument of the sun and moon is completely untenable, since those two lights existed before man's creation. At a time when, as still sinless, man didn't need controlling powers. These two lights, "a greater light and a lesser light," allegorically signify the two kinds of power: the spiritual and the temporal.¹¹ In his monarchical

¹¹ See Dante *Monarchy* III, 1,5; 64; III, 4,2; 69; III, 4,12; 71. See also Augustine *conf.*, XIII, 18, 23 (CChr. SL 27,254): "Quoniam quidem alii datur per spiritum sermo sapientiae tamquam luminare maius propter eos, qui perspicuae veritatis luce delectantur tamquam principio diei, alii autem sermo scientiae secundum eundem spiritum tamquam luminare minus, alii fides, alii donatio curationum, alii operationes virtutum, alii prophetia, alii diiudicatio spirituum, alteri genera linguarum, et haec omnia tamquam stellae."

beliefs, Dante made an essential distinction between the temporal realm and the spiritual realm (*Monarchy*, III, 4, 20; 72). He regarded the relationship between the Roman Prince and the Roman Pope as a common unity (*Monarchy*, III, 12, 8; 85). He sought to resolve the division, and prevent it from going in two directions—implying two authorities, and two governments. He proposed the possible coexistence and a system of reciprocal co-equality, as well as uniformity in purpose, in order to provide the proportionate services to the society. Dante regarded the medieval emperor as supreme arbiter in order to settle the dispute between the Roman Pope and the emperor. He supported this argument by a quotation from Aristotle, who claims that the plurality of authority represents disintegration and disorder, and it is better for humankind to be ruled by one than by many, an opinion which Aristotle borrowed from Homer.¹² Dante followed the Aristotelian governing principle that plurality involves conflict, defect, and disorder.¹³ Thus, according to Dante, “whoever embodies imperial authority is not allowed to divide the empire” (*Monarchy*, III, 10,9; 82).

Dante denied that the pope,

As God’s vicar, had the authority to give and take away temporal power and transfer it to someone else, so now too God’s vicar, the head of the universal church, has the authority to give and to take away and even to transfer the scepter of temporal power; from which it would undoubtedly follow that imperial authority would be dependent in the way they claim (*Monarchy*, III, 6,2; 73-4).¹⁴

In this moment, Dante confront a formal error of hierocracy, where the pope, as the highest authority, appoints the emperor, but he doesn’t embrace the opposite situation, where the emperor, as the highest authority, has a strong influence in the election of the pope.

Dante proposes a new solution. The supreme pontiff and the emperor are separate but equal, each supreme in his own domain: the one in the spiritual and the other in terrestrial realm. Dante proclaimed the spiritual power of

¹² See Dante *Monarchy*, I, 5; 10; I, 14; 25. See also Aristotle *Pol.*, IV, IV, 4 (LCL 264,302-3); Homer *Il.*, II, 204 (LCL 170,76-7): “No good thing is a multitude of lords; let there be one lord, one king...” See also Aristotle *Metaph.*, XII, X, 14 (LCL 287,174-5). According to Suetonius, the Roman Emperor Domitian (81-96 A. D.) used this sentence as his political *principium*, see Suetonius *Dom.* VIII,12 (LCL 38,346-7).

¹³ See Aristotle *Metaph.*, X, VI, 6 (LCL 287,32-3).

¹⁴ See also *Monarchy* III, 15, 9; 90-1: “...the power to confer authority on this earthly kingdom is in conflict with the nature of the church...”

the Roman Pope thus: “The supreme Pontiff, [is] the vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ and Peter’s successor...” (*Monarchy*, III, 3,7; 66). In respect to the temporal power of the Roman Prince, “imperial authority derives directly from the summit of all being that is from God” (*Monarchy*, III, 13,1; 86). In his political theory, deeply rooted in his personal convictions, Dante claims that the secular authority of the emperor is not dependent on the pope, but comes directly from God, without the intervention of the Church. As Gilson concluded, “Dante’s Pope is entirely without control of any temporal power (184)”. Neither the Emperor nor the Pope may aspire to the exercise of this twofold authority (186). Dante refutes the hierocratic opinion that all Christian kings should be obedient to the supreme pontiff as to Christ himself. In practice, he rejects that temporal power should be subordinate to ecclesiastical power. Dante argues against particular opponents who recognizes that “the authority of the empire is dependent on the authority of the church”, claiming that they use, in Aristotelian terms, an invalid syllogism (*Monarchy*, III, 4, 1; 69). Here, Dante appeals to the authority of Augustine in quoting from *De civitate Dei*¹⁵, (Dan. 7, 7-9) and *De doctrina christiana*¹⁶, (cited hereafter *doctr. chr.*) with respect to methodology, as he articulates that people who reach these conclusion are mistaken, and are incorrect in the interpretation of sacred Scripture. Syllogistic arguments in regard to mystical or allegorical interpretation (Gn. 1: 16) can be erroneous. Augustine states that “Allegory occurs when words seem to point to one thing, while they signify something else to the mind” (*en. Ps. 103, 1,13*) (CChr. SL 40, 1486; WSA III, 19,123).¹⁷ The allegorical sense emerges when the text produces an image, which calls to mind a reality that is the object of faith. Dante cites Augustine, according to whom in the prophetic history of the sacred Scriptures all the events narrated are symbolic, and can be approached by diligent historical research with exactitude concerning past events, but also with the forecast of things to come. It is possible in the historical narratives of the biblical account to discover the correct facts or prophecies of the future. In this way Dante refutes the opinion that the two lights allegorically signify two kinds of power, since this is incompatible with the intention of the original writer. It is his major

¹⁵ See Dante *Monarchy* III, 4, 6-11; 70-1; Augustine *civ. XVI*, 2 (BA 36,184-7; CSEL 40.2,127; FC 14,489-90). Augustine’s explanation is reminiscent of 2 P. 1, 20-21, so that the interpretation of scriptural prophecy is not a matter of private comment, because it was written under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁶ See Augustine *doctr. chr. I*, 36, 41 (CChr. SL 32, 30; WSA I, 11, 124).

¹⁷ “Et sic multa aliud videntur sonare, aliud significare; et vocatur allegoria. ...Ergo quod dicimus allegoriam figuram esse, sacramentum figuratum allegoria est.”

contention that the temporal realm does not owe its existence and authority to the spiritual realm. Dante also rejected other allegorical interpretations in his polemic with the supporters of the hierocratic theory of two powers, who use other arguments apart from the biblical account of “two swords” (Lk. 22: 38), as a refiguration of these two powers (*Monarchy*, III, 9,12; 77-80).

Nevertheless, Dante is attempting to protect temporal divinely appointed rulers, who would serve the interest of the people and protect the common benefit.¹⁸ This idea of Aristotle, according to which the purpose of government is the rational fulfillment of humans’ natural desire for a “sufficient life” was developed in Marsilius’ *Defensor Pacis*. Dante pretends to argue for a universal monarchy, in order to temper the political authority of the papacy, which is based on the claim to plenitude of power in ecclesiastic and civil affairs—spiritual as well as temporal—of the Roman bishop over the power of the Roman prince and principality. Thus, he articulates imperial supremacy over the Church. The claim to plenitude of power not limited by human law stimulated the rise of the medieval theory of Papal Monarchy, which consists of imperial prerogatives and privileges based on the so-called “donation of Constantine”, papal absolutism, and universal hegemony (*Monarchy* III, 10; 80-3; III, 13, 7; 88). Marsilius describes the secular State as the defender of universal peace, which is the most essential benefit of human society. In *De Monarchia* there is a hostility felt toward the papacy, because papal interventionism in political affairs has disturbed civil life instead of promoting peace (*Monarchy*, III, 3; 66). The medieval Church should maintain its original position of noninvolvement in the political order, and promote the spiritual welfare of its citizens. Universal peace is the consequence of the restoration of political order, in the purpose to establish the stability and harmony of the human society, which is impossible without unity and justice. Thus, “the foundation of the empire is human right”, and “the empire is not allowed to do anything which is in conflict with human right” (*Monarchy*, III, 10, 8; 82). His views on the origin, on moral nature and the function of the State are Aristotelian. The purpose of the well governed State is to promote the most ideal mode of life, and to educate its citizens, so that they become good and virtuous men.¹⁹ Here is an echo of the Aristotelian remark that the unity of the political community is formed by education, as well as by moral and political virtues, which make the society morally good and without these there can be no justice, peace or happiness

¹⁸ See Aristotle *Pol.*, II, VI, 20 (LCL 264,144-5).

¹⁹ See Aristotle *Pol.* II.I.1-2 (LCL 264,68-9); See also *Pol.* III, V, 10 (LCL 264, 212-3): “...the state was formed not for the sake of life only but rather for the good life...”

on Earth (Pol., II, II, 10 (LCL 264,90-1). This personal and particular characteristic of citizens is that they possess a political conscience, and are disposed by justice, charity and the right love, to enjoy the promises to “live in peace”. The virtues of love and justice are the two component parts of peace:

Since among the other goods available to man living in peace is supremely important..., and justice principally and most effectively brings this about, love most of all will strengthen justice, and the stronger love is the more it will do so (*Monarchy*, I, 11,14; 18).²⁰

Common law is a rule to guide humans to live in peaceful relationships (*Monarchy*, I, 14, 7; 25). While justice stimulates one to live in peace, love inspires one to do justice: “Justice is a virtue that operates in relation to other people” (*Monarchy*, I, 11, 7; 17). Employing Augustine’s expression “charity or rightly ordered love” (*civ. XIV*, 7) (CChr. SL 48, 421-3; CSEL 40, 2,13; FC 14, 359-60),²¹ Dante states that charity is integrity in love, which refines and clarifies justice. A universal monarch exercises authority in “the habit of justice”, in which exists “rightly ordered love.” The medieval emperor must love the good of humankind more than any other; he must be the servant of all. The reason for this lofty pre-eminence is based on the nature of nobility possessing the attributes of moral and intellectual virtues in completeness.²² The reward of these moral and intellectual virtues, which seeks the good of the people, is found in the noble person in respect to universal domination. For it is proper that a noble people should be placed above others because they are eminently disposed to act in accordance with justice.²³ In Dante’s political concept, the emperor is identified with a sage, who is defined by the Stoics as a person of moral and intellectual perfection. The supreme monarch, ruling by his highest moral and intellectual faculties, is more ca-

²⁰ See this idea of the “good disposition” in Marsilius of Padua 1, 19, 2; 90: “For tranquility was the good disposition of the city or state, whereby each of its parts can perform the functions appropriate to it in accordance with reason and its establishment. ...These are the mutual association of the citizens, their intercommunication of their functions with one another, their mutual aid and assistance, and in general the power, unimpeded from without, of exercising their proper and common functions, and also the participation in common benefits and burdens according to the measure appropriate to each, as well as the other beneficial and desirable things...”

²¹ “Recta itaque voluntas est bonus amor.”

²² See Aristotle *Pol.*, I, V, 7 (LCL 264,62-3); V, VIII, 2 (LCL 264,438-9).

²³ The nature of nobility and the changing concept of nobility was the moral commonplace of the late Middle Ages—the strict antithesis between the nobility of birth and nobleness of soul. See Vossler 201-2 and 300-4.

pable than others of correct judgment and justice, and in consequence his actions are rightful.²⁴ Augustine had led Dante into a deeper consideration of the proper government of human affairs, as a necessary element of man's happiness or good (Bergin 177). But the idea is profoundly that of Augustine of the existence of human happiness in the present life and divine felicity in eternal life; in the eternal City of God and in the temporal city of this world, in the heavenly society and the earthly society. Humanity endeavors to achieve temporal peace in this world and eternal salvation in the next:

Now these two kinds of happiness must be reached by different means, as representing different ends. For we attain the first through the teachings of philosophy, provided that we follow them putting into practice the moral and intellectual virtues; whereas we attain the second through spiritual teaching which transcend human reason, provided that we follow them putting into practice the theological virtues, i.e. faith, hope and charity (*Monarchy*, III, 16, 8; 92).

At the end of the third book Dante returns to the anthropological interpretation, based on a twofold human nature—corruptible and incorruptible:

In order to understand this it must be borne in mind that man alone among created beings is the link between corruptible and incorruptible things; and thus he is rightly compared by philosophers to the horizon, which is the link between the two hemispheres. For if he is considered in terms of each of his essential constituent parts, that is soul and body, man is corruptible; if he is considered only in terms of one, his soul, he is incorruptible (*Monarchy*, III, 16, 3-4; 91).

Dante incorporated into his political thought the dualistic concept of the universe and its twofold stage of existence—temporal and eternal. If human nature is based on the twofold distinction between the soul and the body, the human goal must also be twofold:

Thus if man is a kind of link between corruptible and incorruptible things, since every such link shares something of the nature of the extremes it unites, man must necessarily have something of both natures. And since every nature is ordered towards its own ultimate goal, it follows that man's goal is twofold:

²⁴ See Aristotle *Pol.*, III, II, 5 (LCL 264,188-9): "Now we say that a good ruler is virtuous and wise, and that a citizen taking part in politics must be wise." See also Seneca *Ep.* 95, 57 (LCL 77, 92-5): "Peace of mind is enjoyed only by those who have attained a fixed and unchanging standard of judgment; the rest of mankind continually ebb and flow in their decisions, floating in a condition where they alternately reject things and seek them."

so that, just as he alone among all created beings shares in incorruptibility and corruptibility, so he alone among all created beings is ordered to two ultimate goals, one of them being his goal as a corruptible being, the other his goal as an incorruptible being (*Monarchy*, III, 16, 5-6; 92-3).²⁵

One final human goal is in accordance with his corruptible and mortal body, and another in accordance with incorruptible and immortal soul.²⁶

To accomplish earthly happiness and future felicity, humanity needs two guides, corresponding to these two goals: emperor and pope. Both leaders derive their authority from God superior power, and both are leading men to the respective values. While the emperor directs men to their temporal end, the pope directs men to their eternal end. Prue Shaw emphasizes in Dante's writing the fact of man's double nature: the combination in human beings of body and spirit, corruptible and incorruptible, as well as the ultimate goals proper to two natures, in the terms of anthropological hermeneutic:

Pope and emperor are what they are by virtue of their relationship to other people, which are relationships of authority, whereas man is a substance, defined in terms of his essential nature. As man, they are referred to a single man; as pope and emperor, they are referred not to a person, but to the principle of authority: either God himself, or some lower principle of authority emanating from him (Shaw XXVIII).

Both, pope and emperor, a master and a spiritual father, have to focus on uniformity; both are amenable to this principle of divine authority, which is eternal law. As Etienne Gilson notes: "For God is the measure and the supreme authority that governs, measures and judges all substances and all relationships" (Gilson 190).

The aim of the monarchy is to demonstrate the necessity of a single ruling power; a single governor, the world-ruler, capable of ordering the will of collective humanity, in peace and concord, and as the uniform movement of many wills due to the "unity of wills" (*Monarchy*, I, 15, 5; 26).²⁷ Dante introduces the triad of "being", "unity", and "goodness" as an orderly combination

²⁵ See Aristotle *Pol.*, VII, I, 2 (LCL 264,532-3): "For as regards at all events one classification of things good, putting them in three groups, external goods, goods of the soul and goods of the body, assuredly nobody would deny that the ideally happy are bound to possess all three."

²⁶ See Cic., *Fin.* IV.VII,16-18; 318-21

²⁷ See Aristotle *Pol.*, III, IX, 2 (LCL 264, 252-5); see also Augustine *conf.*, XIII, 9, 10 (CChr. SL 27, 246; Chadwick 278): "In bona voluntate pax nobis est."

of three principles.²⁸ Being precedes unity and unity precedes goodness. Being “one” is the foundation of being “good”. Thus, the well-being of humankind depends on the unity of its will. Dante asserts that, as humanity depends on complete unity of will, thus a single highest authority is essential to maintain fraternal harmony. In explaining it, Dante uses the anthropological paradigm of the unity and concord in soul and body, with the purpose to transpose it to the family, the city, the State and all humankind (*Monarchy*, II, 9, 2; 54).

In order to accomplish the political unity of humankind as the “universal community of the human race”, it is necessary that the collective effort of all humanity be properly coordinated. The duty of the citizen is to obey the commands of political authorities, in order to preserve the unity and cohesion of the entire State. The responsibility of the State is to maintain law, order, stability, and peace.²⁹ Dino Bigongiari perceives the obvious parallelism between Augustine’s concept of peace and Dante’s universal human community:

...Augustine’s grand conception of *peace* as the justification of *all* political regimes serves as the capstone of a theory of humanity properly organized for its universal task. The world should therefore constitute one single state. Each one of us is a *civis* of the universal *communitas*, which is fittingly called by Dante *humana civilitas* (XII).

Etienne Gilson describes the process of creation, this intellectual concept of Dante’s universal community, in the following terms:

In order... to conceive of the possibility of a universal temporal community, it was necessary to borrow from the Church its ideal of a universal Christendom and to secularize it. On the other hand, it was impossible to secularize this ideal without establishing philosophy as the basis of the universal community of all mankind, subject to the same monarch and pursuing the same form of happiness in obedience to the same laws (166).

Gilson reaches this conclusion, which is the foundation of Dante’s political theory: “No universal human community, no peace; no peace, no opportunity

²⁸ On the topic of the always associated predicates of being and unity see Aristotle *Metaph.* III, IV, 24-30 (LCL 271,133-5); IV, II, 6-10 (LCL 271,148-51); XI, I, 10-1 (LCL 287,56-7); XI, II, 8-9 (LCL 287,60-3); XII, IV, 3 (LCL 287,132-3).

²⁹ For different approaches to the concept of peace see Rouner “Religion, Politics” and “Celebrating Peace”; see also Siebers 115-130.

for man to develop to the highest pitch his aptitude for discovering truth or, consequently, to attain his goal” (170). Dante cannot think of the Roman Empire without its connection to Christendom.

Influenced by Aristotelian ethical and political thought, as well as patristic theology, Dante affirms that no single household or society can bring peace to realization. Universal peace is required to order the collective human will to the goal of realizing its intellectual potential, assigned by God to humanity (*Monarchy*, I, 4; 8-9). He emphasized the guidance of reason to know the divine natural law and the collective human will in respect to human or positive law, which is ethically binding on human society. Dante recognized, following the Stoic system of the law of nature, that is in conformity with the divine reason inherent in the unlimited potential of the human mind. He perceives the power of the human will in submission to the will of collective humanity, which is represented by the Roman prince. Thus, an individual man should act in conformity with the will of collective humanity. A universal human community does indeed appear necessary in order that man may attain his ultimate goal (Gilson 167). Man only develops his capacity in a society, rightly organized for his political, economic and spiritual welfare.³⁰ Man’s intellectual perfection requires universality, and this cannot be done without a unified direction by a single authority. Thus, mankind lives best under a single government, not only for the attainment of peace and justice, but for the realization of all his abilities, moral and intellectual, as found in human nature (*Monarchy*, I, 15; 26-7). The intellectual activities proper to humankind are under the control of wisdom, and almost divine are performed in the calm of tranquility and peace (*Monarchy*, I, 4, 2; 8).

Dante gives many reasons for universal peace. As A. J. Carlyle points out in his “Conception of unity of Europe”:

And just as each individual requires peace and quietness if he is to attain to perfection in knowledge and in wisdom, so too it is peace that enables the human race as a whole best to achieve its almost divine work. Universal peace is thus the best of those things which are ordered for our happiness (Carlyle and Carlyle 115).

Dante is arguing in favor of monarchy as the best form of secular well-ordered government. The provoking question arises: What does Dante mean by

³⁰ See Schindler; see also Boyle.

monarchy—a person or a principle? Is he arguing for solitary ruling civil power or the rule of universal law?

Universal peace is achieved only by the universal invariable rule, which insures justice by establishing the laws which promote the good of the commonwealth, as a kind of perfection, binding the humankind together and leading all toward peace. It would appear much more likely that Dante argues for one authentic law, which would lead all humanity to the ultimate goal of peace and freedom. The influence of Cicero serves to clarify the political thought of Dante. However, the following quotation is not found in his work:

And there will not be different laws at Rome and at Athens, or different laws now and in the future, but one eternal and unchangeable law will be valid for all nations and all times, and there will be one master and ruler, that is, God, over us all, for he is the author of this law, its promulgator, and its enforcing judge (Cicero *Rep.*, III, 22) (LCL 213,210-1).³¹

In the period of the adoption of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire, Augustine examined anew the fundamental issues of social and political life, particularly the early Church's attitudes toward the secular State and its political and legal activities, in promoting peace and justice. As Herbert A. Deane stated,

It is one of Augustine's great accomplishments that he formulated the Church's view of the state and political power in a manner which took into account both the traditional Christian attitudes which have been mentioned and the new situation in which the Church of the fifth century found itself (Deane 10).

In his evaluation of political and social ideas in the works of Augustine, Deane emphasized that the perfect peace occurs only in the heavenly homeland in "...the very society of saints, where there will be peace and full and perfect unity" (*Io. ev. tr.*, 26, 17) (CChr. SL 36, 268; FC 79, 274):

There is only one true republic in which perfect peace, harmony, justice, and satisfaction are assured to all the citizens; that society is the *civitas Dei*, which exists eternally in God's heaven and is the goal of God's elect while they sojourn as pilgrims in this sin-ridden, wretched earthly life (Deane 11).

³¹ "...nec erit alia lex Romae, alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia posthaec, sed et omnes gentes et omni tempore una lex et sempiterna et immutabilis continebit, unusque erit communis quasi magister et imperator omnium deus, ille legis huius inventor, disceptator, lator..." See also Lactantius *Inst. Div.* VI.8,6-9 (SC 509,184-7).

Augustine introduced his understanding of anthropological hermeneutic to explain the peace of two communities, in the eternal City of God and in the earthly society:

The peace, then, of the body lies in the ordered equilibrium of all its parts; the peace of the irrational soul, in the balanced adjustment of its appetites; the peace of the reasoning soul, in the harmonious correspondence of conduct and conviction; the peace of body and soul taken together, in the well-ordered life and health of the living whole. Peace between a mortal man and his Maker consists in ordered obedience, guided by faith, under God's eternal law; peace between man and man consists in regulated fellowship. The peace of a home lies in the ordered harmony of authority and obedience between the members of a family living together. The peace of the political community is an ordered harmony of authority and obedience between citizens. The peace of the heavenly City lies in a perfectly ordered and harmonious communion of those who find their joy in God and in one another in God. Peace, in its final sense, is the calm that comes of order. Order is an arrangement of like and unlike things whereby each of them is disposed in its proper place (*civ. XIX, 13*) (CChr.SL 48,678-9; CSEL 40.2,395; FC 24,217-8).³²

The series of definitions of peace present two aspects of individual and social human life in the *civ*. The anthropological description of peace, in harmonious arrangement, exemplifies the graduation from the material level, indigenous to its socio-political order, to absolute perfection in the heavenly society. The sequence has its origin from the peace of the body; the peace of the irrational and rational soul; the peace of the body and soul together; the peace between a mortal man and his Creator; the peace of people in relation to each other; the peace of the home, "family", the peace of the political community; and, finally, the peace of the heavenly city. Augustine's method of anthropological hermeneutic guides one gradually, step by step, with human intellect, toward deeper understanding of the complexity encompassed in the term of *peace*. Following Augustine's logical thought, which began with the peace and order of human body and soul, one is directed

³² "Pax itaque corporis est ordinata temperatura partium, pax animae irrationalis ordinata requies appetitionum, pax animae rationalis ordinata cognitionis actionisque consensio, pax corporis et animae ordinata vita et salus animantis, pax hominis mortalis et Dei ordinata in fide sub aeterna lege oboedientia, pax hominum ordinata concordia, pax domus ordinata imperandi atque oboediendi concordia cohabitantium, pax civitatis ordinata imperandi adque oboediendi concordia civium, pax caelestis civitatis ordinatissima et concordissima societas fruendi Deo et invicem in Deo, pax omnium rerum tranquillitas ordinis. Ordo est parium dispariumque rerum sua cuique loca tribuens dispositio."

towards law and order in the socio-political milieu: “Well then, now let us see what is due order in man himself. A nation is made up of men bound together by a single law, and this law, we have said, is temporal (*lib. arb.*, I, 7, 16, 52) (CChr. SL 29, 221; ACW 22,49).”³³ In every human being is inscribed the eternal law which governs the proper order: “Therefore, to explain shortly as far as I can the notion which is impressed on us of eternal law, it is the law by which it is just that everything should have its due order” (*lib. arb.*, I, 7,16, 52) (CChr. SL 29, 220; ACW 22, 49).³⁴ Although Augustine made a parallel distinction between human and divine law, for him the temporal law originates from eternal law: “I think you also see that men derive all that is just and lawful in temporal law from eternal law” (*lib. arb.*, I, 6,15, 50) (CChr. SL 29,220; ACW 22,49).³⁵

At the end of the Middle Ages, Dante maintained that the temporal power of the papacy pertains neither to natural law, or divine law, nor to universal agreement. He recognized Pope as the spiritual father of humankind. It would appear that Dante wished to reduce the question of the two powers to an Augustinian view of the world: a natural and supernatural order of creation. The order of nature (material) and the order of grace (spiritual), summarized by Augustine, “From God I received the gift of being, and from him I received the gift of being good” (*en. Ps.*, 58, 2, 11) (CChr. SL 39, 753; WSA III, 17, 177).³⁶ Man can only attain his supernatural goal by recourse to grace. Thus, spiritual guidance is incontestable. Yet Dante emphasizes the natural and political order much more than the order of the Church. Dante’s dream of the medieval emperor who would be able to unite all humankind in perfect peace, and to establish a secular empire of universal peace, to reside only in his political desire and imagination to be a Messianic prince of peace. His vision of freedom, peace, unity, and justice are thoroughly inscribed in this medieval worldview.

³³ “Age nunc, videamus homo ipse quomodo in se ipso sit ordinatissimus. Nam ex hominibus una lege sociatis populus constat, quae lex, ut dictum est, temporalis est.”

³⁴ “Ut igitur breviter aeternae legis notionem, quae inpressa nobis est, quantum valeo, verbi explicem, ea est, qua iustum est, ut omnia sint ordinatissima.”

³⁵ “Simul etiam te videre arbitrari in illa temporali nihil esse iustum atque legitimum quod non ex hac aeterna sibi homines derivaverint. Nam si populus ille quodam tempore iuste honores dedit, quodam rursus iuste non dedit, haec vicissitudo temporalis ut esset iusta ex illa aeternitate tracta est, qua semper iustum est gravem populum honores dare, levem non dare.”

³⁶ “Porro quia te nemo melior, nemo te potentior, nemo te in misericordia largior, a quo accepi ut essem, ab illo accepi ut bonus essem.”

We cannot negate the influence of Augustine on Dante's political thought. Karl Vossler remarks upon the essential difference between the civilization at the end of Christian antiquity and the medieval Christian civilization: "Augustine could not make the development of the Roman state diabolical enough; Dante cannot make it sufficiently divine" (Vossler 287). The political structure of the secular State is not the work of the evil one, nor a direct divine foundation, but arises out of the necessity of human interests and social life.

The eclectic system of Dante Alighieri is the resolution of a synthesis between the philosophical thought of Christian and classical writers. In the *De Monarchia*, the concept of political universal peace is a product of Aristotelian ethical and political thought, combined with its perception of Augustine's anthropological hermeneutic. The political philosopher, Dante, "a poet and political dreamer", accepted Augustine's concepts of earthly and heavenly happiness by recourse to the secular State and Church in this state (Vossler 286). He emphasized the positive relationship between the two powers in his idealistic concept of universal peace. Peace as the predominant component of Dante's concept of universal monarchy, interpreted by the prism of Augustine's anthropological hermeneutic, illumines the political understanding of human beings as citizens, as well as of human society, in relationship to the eternal ruler.

The fundamental component in the modern notion of peace is a return to the understanding of political philosophy exemplified by Aristotle, Augustine, and Dante. The practical requirement of peace is essential to the pursuit of human progress. Peace allows us to flourish in modern society and to grow in social relationships on the basis of personal involvement and commitment to intellectual and ethical goals. For Augustine, the Biblical statement "God is the author of peace" (1 Cor 14:33) implies a philosophical anthropology, because it concerns human existence and relations to each other. In Christian thought and spirituality there always exists continuing tension between the personal and communal aspect of peace.

Biblical theology as the basis for philosophical-theological anthropology reflects an essential voice as a guide to national and international relations in our contemporary political system. Both Augustine and Dante promote the idea that human beings have been created to live in community in a harmonious organized society, developing a political conscience and embracing justice, charity, and well-ordered love. Peace does not concern only eternity,

but has to do with temporal affairs, which are oriented to building up an earthly city. In the Christian view the creation of new human relations based on justice and peace gives much value to earthly and temporal affairs which include every aspect of existence. In their mutual relations, the human communities striving for goodness converge toward world peace. The world becomes less divided by choosing the paths most likely to lead to justice and peace. The inclination toward unification of people living on the same continent by creating one community which respects individual and collective identity, also the well-being of single individuals and society, undoubtedly leads to peace. Universal peace is the consequence of political order, which preserves stability and harmony in human society based on unity and justice.

In Dante's political thought, it is obvious that religion articulates the needs of society and has a valid voice in the political process, especially a healing role focusing on spiritual power in the relations between self and other. Religion effectively serves the cause of peace, helping to achieve social justice through the transformation of society, by correcting injustice in the concrete circumstances of actual life, challenging political doctrines and authority in the service to humankind, promoting equal economic standards and providing access to education for all. There is no denying that religion has a major social and political impact on political power guiding it to international harmony and reconciliation. Thus, recognition of religion in the political community enriches free and active social life. Moreover, in order to present a coherent vision of peace, the gaps in our understanding of the governance of modern and ancient civilizations from a Christian perspective should be bridged by combining the purest conceptualizations of love, unity, and justice.



Works Cited

- Aristotle. *Metaphysics*, translated by Hugh Tredennick, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1997.
- . *Politics*, translated by H. Rackham, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2005.
- Bergin, Thomas G. Dante. New York: The Orion Press, 1965.
- Bigongiari, Dino. "Introduction." On World-Government (*De Monarchia*) by Dante Alighieri, *The Library of Liberal Arts*, translated by Herbert W. Schneider, 2nd rev. ed., Indianapolis, New York, The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1957. pp. XI-XIV.
- Boyle, Nicholas. *Who Are We Now? Christian Humanism and the Global Market from Hegel to Heaney*. Notre Dame, Indiana, Notre Dame Press, 1998.
- Carlyle, Robert W. and Carlyle, Alexander J. "Political Theory from 1300 to 1600", *A History of Mediaeval Political Theory in the West*, vol. VI, Edinburgh, William Blackwood & Sons, 1962.
- Dante. *Monarchy*, translated and edited by Prue Shaw, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Deane, Herbert A. *The Political and Social Ideas of St. Augustine*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1963.
- Gilson, Etienne. *Dante and Philosophy*, translated by David Moore, New York. Harper Torchbooks, Harper and Row Publishers, 1963.
- Homer. *Iliad*, translated by Augustus Taber. Murray, 2nd ed., Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Lactance. *Institutions Divines*. Livre VI. Introduction, texte critique, traduction, notes et index par Christine Ingreneau (Sources Chrétiennes 509). Paris, Les Editions du Cerf, 2007.
- Lucius Annaeus Seneca. *Epistulae 93-124*, translated by Richard M. Gummere. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Marcus Tullius Cicero. *De finibus bonorum et malorum*, translated by Harris Rackham, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Marcus Tullius Cicero. *De re publica*, translated by Clinton Walker Keyes. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Marsilius of Padua. *The Defender of Peace (Defensor Pacis)*, translated by Alan Gewirth, New York, Harper Torchbooks, Harper and Row, 1967.
- Philo Judaeus. *De specialibus legibus*, translated by F. H. Colson. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1998.

- Riesbeck, David J. *Aristotle on Political Community*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016.
- Rouner, Leroy S., editor. *Religion, Politics, and Peace*. Notre Dame, Indiana, Notre Dame Press, 1999.
- . *Celebrating Peace*. Notre Dame, Indiana, Notre Dame Press, 1990.
- Shaw, Prue. "Introduction". *Monarchy, by Dante*, translated and edited by Prue Shaw, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996. pp. IX-XXXVII.
- Schindler, D. C. *Freedom from Reality: The Diabolical Character of Modern Liberty*. Notre Dame, Indiana, Notre Dame Press, 2017.
- Siebers, Tobin. "Politics and Peace". *The Subject and Other Subjects: On Ethical, Aesthetic, and Political Identity*. Ann Arbor, Michigan, University of Michigan Press 1998, pp. 115-130.
- Suetonius. *Domitian*, translated by J. C. Rolfe. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2001.
- The Book of Causes (Liber de causis)*. Mediaeval Philosophical Texts in Translation. Translated from the Latin with an Introduction by Dennis J. Brand, 3rd printing. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Marquette University Press, 2012.
- Vossler, Karl. *Medieval Culture: An Introduction to Dante and his Times*. vol. I., translated from the German by William Cranston Lawton, 4th printing. New York, Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1970.

“To be One Heart and Soul in God”. Augustine on Peace within the Family

“Un solo corazón y una sola alma en Dios”.
Sobre la paz en la familia en Agustín

3

Bart van Egmond
Independent researcher, Netherlands



Abstract

This essay describes how Augustine conceives of peace within the marriage of man and woman. According to Augustine, true peace is found where humans love the same goods in the right way. How does that work in marriage? First, the essay depicts the decline of the traditional understanding of marriage in Western societies. Subsequently, it treats Augustine's view of "marital peace" in three stages: before the fall, its corruption after the fall, and its redemption by divine grace. A final section answers the question: What present-day Christians can relearn from Augustine with regard to a peaceful relationship between husband and wife?

Keywords: Augustine, headship, husband and wife, marriage, peace, sexual revolution, submission.



Resumen

Este ensayo describe cómo san Agustín concibe la paz dentro del matrimonio del hombre y la mujer. Según Agustín, la verdadera paz se encuentra donde los seres humanos aman los mismos bienes de la manera correcta. ¿Cómo funciona eso en el matrimonio? Primero, el ensayo describe el declive de la comprensión tradicional del matrimonio en las sociedades occidentales. Posteriormente, se trata la visión de san Agustín de la “paz conyugal” en tres etapas: antes de la caída, su corrupción después de la caída, y su redención por la gracia divina. Una sección final responde a la pregunta: ¿qué pueden aprender los cristianos actuales de san Agustín con respecto a una relación pacífica entre marido y mujer?

Palabras clave: San Agustín, revolución sexual, matrimonio, paz, esposo y esposa, jefatura, sumisión.



Sobre el autor | About the author

Bart van Egmond [bartvanegmond@gmail.com]

Bart van Egmond is minister of the Reformed Church (liberated) in Capelle aan den IJssel, the Netherlands. He studied theology at Kampen Theological University and the Free University Amsterdam. He completed his doctoral studies at Kampen Theological University and the Catholic University of Leuven. With Oxford University Press he published *Augustine's Early Thought on the Redemptive Function of Divine Judgement* (2018).



Cómo citar en MLA / How to cite en MLA

van Egmond, Bart. "To be One Heart and Soul in God". Augustine on Peace within the Family." *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendimez y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Unia-gustiniana, 2019, pp. 93-114, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.3

Introduction

Since the 1960s the traditional Christian understanding of marriage is on the decline. One of the reasons for this development probably is the emphasis in Western culture on the freedom of the individual and the satisfaction of personal desire. Traditional marriage required a lifelong bond of fidelity between one man and one woman, the raising of children, and contained particular roles of husband and wife. Personal freedom was found within these bonds of marriage. This traditional understanding of marriage became increasingly criticized as a patriarchal institution that suppressed human individuality, especially of women, and denied them the possibility of personal growth.

Today, the heritage of the sixties is palpable in our societies. There is a widespread fear of losing one's own freedom by binding oneself to another. This is why divorce rates are so high, and why many young people prefer a form of cohabitation before they marry, if they marry at all. Sociological research has demonstrated, however, that the ethic of self-actualization has many negative effects on personal well-being and on the well-being of society at large. It has not led to more happiness, but rather to more personal and societal problems (Eberstadt 21-25).

At the same time, the longing for enduring relationships remains. As Augustine already noted, people prove to be made for a life in communion, and the union between a man and a woman is the first natural form of this communal life (*bono coniug.* 1, 1). It is not surprising then, that in our culture scepticism about marriage coexists with a high veneration of romantic love. Philosopher Ernest Becker has even argued that the ideal of romantic love has replaced the afterlife in Western society. He has coined this "apocalyptic romanticism." The enduring love and ultimate happiness that people used to seek from God, they now seek in the relationship with their love partner (167-168). The relationship becomes an idol. We expect it to give us what only God can give. These high expectations of love relationships leads to disappointment between love partners, and subsequent break-ups or divorces.

Men and women in our societies long for true communion, but its individualism and "apocalyptic romanticism" stand in the way of finding it. This paradox illustrates what Augustine remarked in the *City of God*: "There is nothing so social by nature, so unsocial by its corruption, as [the human] race" (*civ.*, 12, 28) (CCL 48; 384).¹ Men and women long for true companionship, but sin keeps

¹ "Nihil enim est quam hoc genus tam discordiosum vitio, tam sociale natura" (NPNF 1/2; 243). Text editions were taken from *Corpus Augustianum Gissense*. Translations are my own, or were taken from the *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers* series (NPNF).

them from finding it. This essay explores Augustine's thought on what makes a well-ordered marriage, in which husband and wife find happiness and peace. The essay consists of three main parts. First, I will treat marriage before the fall, then I will treat the fall and its effects on the marital relationship, and finally, I address the restoration of marriage through grace. Last, I ask the question: What we can learn from Augustine?

Marriage Before the Fall

In Augustine's view, marriage is from the beginning a temporal institution.² God joined man and woman in order to mirror the unity of God and his people (*civ.*, 14, 23). This is the *sacrament* of marriage. Man and woman had to bring forth this people of God in time. When all the predestined were born and persevered in obedience until the end, they would be transferred into the state of immortality. At that moment, the sacrament of marriage would have reached its fulfilment in the eternal and unbreakable communion of God with his bride. Just like God created humans to keep themselves alive with food and drink, he created them to marry and procreate, but he did so in order to bring them into the eschatological condition in which food, drink and marriage will no longer exist (1 Cor. 6: 13; Mt. 22: 30).³

Union of Man and Woman

Augustine regards the union of man and woman as the first natural form of human friendship and communion (*bono coniug.* 1, 1). God created Adam and his wife to form an intimate, enduring and unbreakable companionship. God created the woman *from* the man (Gn. 2: 21) in order to indicate how dear this union should be to them (*civ.*, 12, 27; 14, 22; *Gen. litt.*, 3, 21, 34; *bono coniug.* 1, 1).⁴ They are not aliens to each other, but are each other's flesh and blood. Although the relationship between husband and wife is hierarchically ordered, this does not contradict the companionate character of their union. Augustine explicitly says that the woman was created from the side of the man in order to indicate that they are companions who walk side by side on the same path, pursuing the same goal. Augustine writes at the beginning of *De bono coniugali* (1,1):

² The literature on Augustine's view of marriage is extensive. The relationship between man and woman is treated in Børresen; an overview of the development of Augustine doctrine of marriage (with special attention to contextual influences) is given by Clark 139-162. See also Schmitt; Pereira; and van Bavel "Augustinus. Van liefde" 54-66.

³ See *Gn. litt.*, 9, 3, 7.

⁴ See also van Geest 187.

[God] did not create these each by himself, and join them together as alien by birth: but He created the one out of the other, setting a sign also of the power of union in the side, whence she was drawn. For they are joined to another side by side, who walk together, and look together whither they walk.

In order to form this companionship the man and the woman were both created in the image of God. Augustine emphasizes this at several places. The difference between man and woman only extends to the body, not to the soul. “In this grace”, that is the grace of the image of God, “there is no male and female” (*Gn. litt.*, 11, 42, 58). Both man and woman were created to know God with their minds and to subject their bodies to their mind in the service of God. Some have suggested that Augustine denies that the woman was created in the image of God, but this would contradict the entire idea of marriage as common service to God.⁵ Only if the man and the woman are both created in the image of God, they can obey Him together and serve each other in obedience to Him.

To be one heart and one soul in God (Act. 4: 32) is the one great goal of marriage. Augustine sees marriage as an institution, given by God and regulated by God, in which husband and wife serve God together through their distinct callings. In doing so they form one heart and one soul in Him. They are not primarily made for each other, but rather given to each other to love and serve God together. This is what makes them happy, and what makes them flourish as husband and wife. It is important to understand this, in order to value Augustine’s view of the roles of husband and wife, and the importance of procreation, which are so central in his view of marriage, but so different from the view that has come to prevail in the West. In the Western view happiness is sought in the partner, whereas the happiness of marriage that Augustine has in mind consists of enjoying God together, and the spouse in God.

Difference between Man and Woman

Having discussed the union between husband and wife and the purpose for which they were united, we now turn to the different roles that God gives man and woman in marriage. Augustine regards the husband as the head of the marriage bond. This idea of male headship is inherent to the sacramental meaning of marriage. From the beginning, the union between Adam and Eve signified the bond between God and the united souls of his people (*Gn. litt.*,

⁵ See for this feminist criticism, for example Ruether “The Liberation;” “Augustine, Sexuality.” For more nuanced accounts of Augustine’s view of the woman as image of God, see van Bavel “Augustine’s View on Women;” and Stark “Augustine on Women” 216-41.

11, 37, 50).⁶ This is a hierarchical relationship, in which God rules his people and gives them life, whereas his people subject themselves to God in trust and obedience (*bono coniug.*, 20; *nupt. et conc.*, 1, 9).⁷ The husband's relation to his wife and family should mirror the way in which God relates to his people. The husband is the primary agent in the process of procreation (although not without the woman), and he is called to care for his family and to rule them with benevolent authority, just as God rules his people.

Augustine (*Gn. litt.*, 11, 37, 50) describes this way of exercising authority with the apostle Paul as “service in love” (*Gal. 5: 12*). The husband has the responsibility to lead his wife and family in the worship of God, and defend them against the intrusion of sin. Augustine argues that several details in *Genesis 2* and *3* suggest this responsibility. God gave the commandment not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil specifically to Adam (*Gn. 2: 16-17*), probably in order to transmit it to his wife, who still had to be created. If she was already created, it is even more striking that God only addressed Adam when he gave the command. This even more underlines his primary responsibility as family-head to lead his wife in obeying this commandment.⁸ It seems also for this reason that God called Adam first to account after the fall. Although Eve had sinned first, Adam as the head of his wife had the primary responsibility to keep her away from sinning. Therefore, the order of justice (*ordo iustitiae*) required that Adam was called to account first, although he had sinned only after his wife had done so (*Gn. litt.*, 11, 34, 45).

⁶ In this passage, Augustine says that the rule of the man over his wife, and her service to him existed before the fall. They served each other through love, the husband ruling, the woman obeying. Only after the fall the servitude of the woman became a penal condition. But see Bennett 69, who argues that the hierarchical nature of marriage as such is a consequence of the fall.

⁷ Augustine stretches the comparison of God's relation to his creatures to the man's relation to his wife quite far. First of all, the man seems to represent the singularity of God over against the plurality of his creatures. Therefore, in the Old Testament, one husband could have many wives, without violating the nature of marriage. The man represents God, and the many women represent the many human souls that are bound together by God. Augustine also makes a connection between God's creative power, and the 'life-giving' power of the male seed. Many women can conceive of one man, but one woman cannot conceive of many husbands. This illustrates the power of the higher nature (*vis principiorum*) over inferior natures. The husband represents the one true God, who can make many souls fruitful. Elsewhere, Augustine argues that the law of nature requires that the higher reason rules over the lower reason. This means that man in general rules over the beasts, that parents rule their children, and that husbands rule their wives (*civ.*, 19, 15).

⁸ Augustine argues that this method of teaching (*disciplina*) is maintained by the apostle in the Church, when he says: “If they (women) want to learn something, let them ask their husbands at home” (*1 Cor. 14: 35*).

Having discussed the position of Adam, we now turn to Eve. Why was she created as distinct from the man and given to him as his helper? In order to understand Augustine's answer to this question, we need to understand a bit more about the position of human beings in creation. Augustine argues from *Genesis* 1 that God made man his co-worker. God rules his creation by natural and voluntary providence (Markus 88-92). By natural providence he himself gives life to all the creatures that he has made, but in his voluntary providence he uses the wills and actions of humans and angels to fulfill his purposes for creation (*Gn. litt.*, 8, 9, 17). These rational creatures are co-workers under God.⁹ Augustine argues that God used Adam and Eve in his providence, by giving them the task to increase and multiply and to rule and subject the Earth (*Gn.* 1: 27-28). The latter part of this commandment could be obeyed by Adam alone. According to *Genesis* 2: 9, God gives Adam the task to till the garden and thus discover the richness of creation (*Gen. litt.*, 8, 8, 15, 16). The first part of God's command, however, namely to increase and to multiply, could not be fulfilled by Adam alone. God created Eve for this specific purpose.

Genesis 2 states that God made a helper like Adam (*adiutorium similis ei*), but it does not say for what purpose Adam needed this helper. Searching for an answer to this question, Augustine denies that Adam needed her help to till the ground, as before the fall Adam did not yet experience any difficulty in his work. Moreover, if he needed help, a man would have been more suitable to him, because men are physically stronger than women. Neither did God make the woman to keep Adam company, Augustine argues. If that were the reason for the creation of the woman, it would have been more logical that Adam received the company of another man, "for how much more pleasantly (*congruentius*) would two friends live together, than a man and a woman, to associate and talk with each other" (*Gen. litt.*, 9, 5, 9) (CSEL 28, 1; 273).¹⁰ To modern ears this might sound harsh, but what Augustine is doing here, is to seek the specific reason why God made a *woman* for Adam. He does not deny that Eve helped Adam tilling the earth and that he found solace in her friendship, but this does not explain why God created another human being that only differed from the man with regard to the body. Augustine finds the most probable reason (*nihil*

⁹ In *Gen. litt.* 8, 8,15-16, Augustine refers to 1 Cor. 3: 6-9, for the concurrence of divine providence and human cooperation: "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants, nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow... We are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building."

¹⁰ "Quanto enim congruentius ad convivendum et conloquendum duo amici pariter quam vir et mulier habitarent?" Augustine's remark still raises the question, of course, why a man, before the fall, would converse more pleasantly with another man than with a woman.

aliud probabiliter occurit) for the creation of the woman qua woman in the begetting of children.

The Cooperation of Man and Woman in Marriage

God created Adam and Eve and gave them different roles to fulfill the divine purpose of marriage. The man is called to rule his wife and his family with benevolent authority, the woman was given to obey him with love, thus mirroring the unity of God and his people. At the same time she was given to him as an indispensable helper for the begetting and raising of children for the city of God.

With regard to the role of the woman as mother, feminists interpreters of Augustine have said that Augustine reduces the woman to a breeding-animal. This explanation of the creation of the woman seems so at odds with his view of the spouses as companions, expressed in *de bono coniugali* (Clark, 161). I think, however, that in Augustine's view companionship and procreation belong intimately together (Bennet 63-65). Man was created to love God and to fulfill his commandment. Part of this commandment was to fill the Earth with a human family. For this purpose, God made the woman from the side of the man, in order to make procreation possible. In other words, by creating the woman God made clear that his commandment could only be fulfilled through the companionship of man and woman, which they "exercise" in the act of procreation and the subsequent education and raising of children for Him (*Gen. litt.*, 8, 21, 33). Many modern readers have accused Augustine of a negative view of sexuality. His view of sexuality before the fall (free of what we would call "sexual arousal", and ruled by the rational will of man and woman) seems a rather technical act in which bodily or psychological pleasure is not allowed to play any role (Ranke-Heinemann qtd. in Lamberigts 175). This evaluation of Augustine's view of sex, however, is to be explained from a different evaluation of the *telos* of sexual intercourse between a man and a woman. Under the influence of the sexual revolution, sexuality has become emancipated from God and from nature.¹¹ It has become an act of mutual bodily and psychological satisfaction, disconnected from the purpose for which sexual intercourse was designed by God, namely to beget children for his kingdom.¹²

¹¹ See Kuby 179-180.

¹² To the extent that people connect sexuality to spirituality, they seek a kind of sublime experience in sexuality itself. The experience of the divine is sought in the sexual act itself. Augustine would deem this idolatry, the exchange of the creator and his creation. A popular

In Augustine's view, this experience of sexual intercourse misses the right end, if it is not ordered by the divine law. It reverses the order of creation, which commands that lower goods always serve higher goods (*bono coniug.*, 9, 9). In other words, the mind should serve God and the body should serve the mind that loves God. This means that husband and wife should have sexual intercourse in order to fulfill the divine purpose of this act, and use their bodies for that purpose. Augustine does not deny that even in paradise Adam and Eve had *concupiscentia carnis*, a bodily desire for sexual intercourse (*Ep.* 6*, 4-6),¹³ but this desire was subject to the law of the mind. It did not have a dynamic of its own, which battled against the law of the mind. Sex in paradise was well-ordered. Sexual intercourse was an expression of one will to serve God with the intention to beget children for Him, and to raise them for Him. Husband and wife offered their bodies to God for that purpose. What the spouses loved in each others was not their bodies *per se* (or any other external properties), but rather their mutual will to obey God both with their mind and their bodies (*nupt. et conc.*, 1, 15).¹⁴

The Fall and its Consequences

The distortion of the peace of the marriage bond did not start with Adam and Eve, but with the devil. The devil refused to accept his place in the divine order, and subsequently tried to persuade man to join him in his rebellion against God's order.

In the order of justice, God came to the man, with his commandment, so that the man would teach this commandment to his wife. The devil turns this order upside down. He comes first to the woman to tempt her to transgress the divine commandment, and then she tries to make her husband a companion in her disobedience. This must have been Satan's design. He knew that the woman had the heart of her husband. The bond of love with his wife, made him vulnerable to follow her in her sin. This is exactly what happens. Her husband, rather than persevering in obedience to God, and ruling his wife by guarding her against Satan and sin, listens to his wife, and becomes disobedient to God together with her.¹⁵ Adam knew that he disobeyed God in doing so,

book in which this spirituality is promoted (over against traditional Christianity), is Brown *The Davinci Code*.

¹³ See Lamberigts 184.

¹⁴ See van Bavel "Augustinus. Van liefde" 61.

¹⁵ See *Gn. litt.* 11, 42, 58 on the reason why the devil seduced Eve and not Adam. See also 1 Tim. 2, 13 ("Adam was not deceived, but the woman").

but he preferred the bond of peace with his wife to that with God. Augustine compares this behaviour with that of Salomon who was endowed with wisdom, which preserved him from the sin of idolatry. Nonetheless, Salomon followed his wives in their idolatry, because he did not want to disappoint them. He committed what he knew should not be done, in order not to grieve his “deadly sweethearts” (*mortiferas delicias*) (*Gen. litt.*, 11, 42, 59; *civ.* 14, 11). Both Adam and Salomon sinned from a “certain friendly benevolence, by which it happened that God was offended in order to avoid that a human being from being a friend became an enemy” (*Gen. litt.*, 11, 42, 59) (CSEL 28,1; 378).¹⁶ In doing so, Adam preserved peace with his wife, but it was an unjust peace. The instability of this peace, becomes apparent when God calls Adam to account for his disobedience. He transfers his guilt to his wife, and is unwilling to take responsibility for his own failure in exercising his headship over her (*civ.*, 14,14).

Through the first sin, peace with God was distorted, and as a punishment for that sin the man and the woman experience *concupiscentia carnis* in themselves. This is much more than misdirected sexual desire (Lamberigts 179). It is sinful desire as such that rebels against the law that God has ordained for the flourishing of human relationships. The next section discusses how this carnal concupiscence distorts the peace of marriage after the fall. Marriage remains a good, but the sinners who engage in marriage distort this good through their sin.

The Distortion of the Peace of Marriage

Augustine emphasizes that the institution of marriage remains a good after the fall, even if it is the marriage of unbelievers. God uses marriage in his providence to produce new life and to restrain man’s sinful nature. Augustine argues, for example, that the begetting of children stimulates the parents to take responsibility and work together (*bono coniugi.*, 3). Also the fidelity of husband and wife, albeit for the wrong reasons, has a certain civil goodness that contributes to the stability of society.¹⁷ Augustine also regards the patriarchal

¹⁶ “...amicali quadam benevolentia, qua plerumque fit ut offendatur Deus, ne homo ex amico fiat inimicus...”. See *civ.* 14, 13.

¹⁷ This does not mean that chastity in unbelievers is a genuine virtue, for “what comes not from faith is sin” (Rm. 14: 23). The chastity of unbelievers is sinful, because it is not motivated by the love of God, but rather by a desire for the praise of men, to avoid trouble, or to serve demons. Nonetheless, Augustine argues, one sin can suppress another sin (*nupt. et conc.*, 1, 4). Therefore, the chastity of unbelievers can contribute to the temporal peace of the earthly city.

structure of the family a providential means by which God preserves order in the world. He does not in the least justify the despotic rule of husbands and fathers in their households (*civ.*, 19, 14). Nonetheless, after the fall, the society of sinful men needs coercive power to preserve a certain degree of order. This also applies to the family. God uses the coercive power of the *pater familias* to preserve a kind of order that contributes to the stability of the earthly city. Thus, marriage after the fall is a means to contribute to the temporal peace of this fallen world.

At the same time, Augustine observes how sin distorts the peace of marriage and family. When something else than obedience to God's will becomes the object of human desire, this must necessarily lead to a distortion of God's order for marriage. First of all, this becomes apparent in the violation of fidelity. Whereas God intended the spouses to be faithful to each other in order to mirror the covenant between God and his people, sin sacrifices fidelity to something that it values more than obedience to God. This is the case, for example, in the gratification of sexual lust. If this becomes the highest object of desire, it might eventually lead to fornication. Augustine also points to another instance in which fidelity is sacrificed to another earthly good, namely procreation. When a man discovers that his wife is barren, he takes another wife to beget children, in order to realize his ideals, such as the preservation of his family-estate or the endurance of his family-name (*bono coniug*, 17).¹⁸ Thus misdirected human desire breaks the sacramental unity between husband and wife.

Augustine also observes how the harmonious cooperation of man and woman in the begetting of children becomes distorted by sin. As we have seen, God united husband and wife to sacrifice their bodies as living sacrifices to Him in the act of intercourse. In doing so, they would work together in the service of God, to beget children for Him. But after the fall, carnal concupiscence distorts the sexual act. It is no longer undertaken in order to obey God together, but to seek a certain earthly good for its own sake, for example, the gratification of bodily lust. Husband and wife use each other's bodies to find satisfaction for their carnal desires (*nupt. et conc.*, 1, 5). In this way, their companionship is seriously distorted. They no longer work together in the service of God, but use each other's bodies to serve their own desires. Augustine especially warns men not to possess their "vessel in desire as the heathens do" (I Tess. 4, 5). If they do so, they do not treat her as their wife (future mother),

¹⁸ Augustine justifies this behaviour with regard to the patriarchs in the Old Testament (for example Abraham and Hagar), because of the requirements of this dispensations within the divine economy. See further below.

but they abuse her as a prostitute. This way of using one's wife is the seedbed of infidelity and fornication, because the man seeks his own interests using his wife, rather than respecting her as his God-given helper in the service of God. In short, sin isolates sexual intercourse from the religious friendship and cooperation of husband and wife in the service of God, and makes it into an act in which individuals use each other for their own private interests. This is why Augustine says in the *Confessions* that he distorted the true bond of friendship through carnal lust (*conf.*, 2, 1, 3, 1).

Augustine sees the effects of the misdirected will in the way people treat the children that are conceived from sinful sexual intercourse. The distorted will that engaged in sexual intercourse, solely for the reason of bodily satisfaction, shows itself in the unwillingness to care for the children that are born from this sexual union. Spouses commit abortion or treat their children in an uncaring way once they are born (*nupt. et conc.*, 1, 17, 15). However, this does not mean that sexual intercourse that is engaged in for the sake of begetting children is good in and of itself, because the ultimate purpose for which people want to have children can be wrong. People get children in order to further their family-estate, or to serve the glory of the earthly city by offering their children to its service.¹⁹ Their care and sacrifices for their children can still be driven by carnal concupiscence. Augustine illustrates this in the *Confessions* where he describes how his parents, especially his father, saved a lot of money to enable Augustine to pursue a worldly career (*conf.*, 2, 5). For that purpose his parents even held him back from marriage, which could have restrained his sexual desires (*conf.*, 2, 8).

Although Augustine argues that God makes a right use of the sinful *pater familias* to preserve order in society, he simultaneously points out how fathers and husbands can use their authority in a sinful way and oppose the bond of peace that should tie husband and wife and father and children together. If they no longer regard themselves as vice-regent of God or Christ (the head of the man—1 Cor. 11: 3), tyranny and infidelity become normal for the behaviour of husbands and fathers. Rather than showing their wives the example of fidelity (being the head that should lead the body), they think their male position entitles them to be unfaithful to their wives (s. 9; 153, 3-7). And rather than using their paternal authority to educate and correct their children and slaves

¹⁹ On sons as means to preserve the economic interests of their father after the latter's death, see Shaw 20. Augustine refers to this in s. 21, 8 (to save for one's son as an excuse not to give your money to the poor); see also *civ.* 19, 1 (the pagan virtue of begetting sons for the sake of the city or the country).

in the service of God, they use it to make them obey their own sinful will (*civ.*, 19, 12).

Return of Peace Within Marriage

The grace of faith restores the bond of peace in marriage (*nupt. et conc.*, 1, 5),²⁰ because it makes the spouses willing again to obey the divine order of marriage, and to help each other obey this order. After the fall, however, the will has to cope with the reality of *concupiscentia carnis*. This makes Christian spouses co-operators in the battle of the Spirit against the flesh, for the sake of realising a unity of heart and soul in God.

A Christian marriage is meant to be a sacrament of the relationship between Christ and his people. What does it mean to preserve this unity and to embody it? For Christian spouses this means that they try to be faithful to each other. Augustine emphasizes that the husband, as the head of the marriage bond and the representative of Christ, has the primary obligation to be faithful to his wife. Rather than considering himself entitled to play around, he should love her as his own body (Ef. 5: 28), and exemplify in his behaviour what faithfulness means (*adult. coniug.*, 8, 9; s., 332, 4, 9). Furthermore, the spouses help each other to be faithful by conceding to sexual intercourse out of lust. Although Augustine emphasizes that Christian spouses should only have sexual intercourse in order to beget children, he knows the weakness of the flesh, and states that the spouses should not deny their bodies to each other, in order to help each other to be faithful and protect him or her from the temptation of adultery. In doing so, the spouses “bear each other’s burdens” as Paul commands Christians in Gal 6: 2. Augustine also argues that the spouses should never require celibacy of the other spouse if he or she is not yet ready for it. This might lead the other spouse into fornication, because he or she cannot sufficiently cope with the ardour of lust that is still present in the member of the body (*ep.*, 262, 1-2; *bono coniug.*, 3). For Augustine, the representation of the relationship between Christ and the Church is so important, that everything else is subservient to this primary goal of marriage.

With regard to sexual intercourse, Christian marriage differs from marriage before the fall. Before the fall, the union between husband and wife was intended to produce children for the city of God. Man ought to fill the Earth with God’s children, and thus cooperate with God for the coming of his

²⁰ Augustine quotes Rm. 14: 23 (“whatsoever is not of faith is sin”) in combination with Hbr. 6: 6 (“without faith it is impossible to please God”).

kingdom. In the Old Testament, the begetting of children was still of salvation-historical importance, in order to produce the people of God from which the Messiah was to be born (*bono coniug.*, 9, 18). This is also why polygamy was justified in the Old Testament. The patriarchs took more than one wife, not for the sake of lust, but rather for the sake of the begetting of children for the Church. This kind of marriage also had a sacramental meaning: the many wives under one husband prefigured the many Churches of the New Testament under one God. In the New Testament polygamy is no longer allowed, because of the eschatological state of the Church. One man and one wife mirror the eschatological relationship between God and his people, who are one soul and one heart in Him (*bono coniug.*, 20, 21). Moreover, the begetting of many children is no longer necessary, because God's children are now gathered from the nations. This is also why Augustine regards chastity as a higher good than marriage in the time of the New Testament, and celibate cohabitation of the spouses as a higher form of marriage, because it is closer to the eschatological state of the Church: a community of brothers and sisters in Christ who are one soul and one heart in God.

The begetting of children, however, still has an important function within Christian marriage. It remains the natural good of marriage, and this natural good is sanctified by the graced will of the spouses, who engage in it with the desire to have children that will not only be born, but also be reborn by the water of baptism and the work of the holy Spirit (*nupt. et conc.*, 1, 5). In this way, the misdirected carnal desire (*concupiscentia carnis*) of the spouses is again directed at the purpose for which it was created. The peace of the mind with God is "embodied" in the sexual act aimed at the begetting of children for God and his Church. When Christian spouses become fathers and mothers, they put their physical parenthood in the service of their spiritual parenthood of their children. They intend to serve God and Christ in the way they treat their children.

This has important consequences for the way in which Christian fathers exercise their authority towards their children. They acknowledge Christ as their head and serve him. They do so by showing "paternal love" (*paternum affectum*) to their children, by teaching them the name and doctrine of Christ, and showing by their example what obedience to Christ means. This is why Augustine also calls fathers *bishops* in their own houses (*Io. ev. tr.*, 51, 13).

As bishops in their own houses, Christian husbands and fathers also administer discipline to their wives, children and slaves with merciful severity. In this context, Augustine applies the metaphor of head and body to the relationship of the *pater familias* to his household. To take care of his body (Ef.

5: 29), also means that the father fights against “the flesh” in those who are entrusted to his care. Just as an individual person should subject the flesh to the spirit (Gal. 5: 17), the father has the responsibility to make his body obey him. But this obedience to the father is not a goal in itself. The father himself is a servant of Christ. He is a steward of Christ in his family, and should lead them to obedience to Christ (s., 349, 2). Therefore, Augustine reminds his readers: “If you want your body to serve you, you are reminded of how fitting it is for you to serve your God” (*util. ieiunii*, 4) (CCL 46; 235).²¹ If the father experiences resistance to his authority from his family, he should not just react with the affirmation of power, but also seek wisdom and grace from God to react in a loving, Christ-serving way.²²

What about the role of the Christian woman in marriage? By God’s providence, the woman has become subject to her husband. She is not allowed to do anything without his consent and should obey his command. This belongs to the punishment of Gn. 3: 16, in order to restrain the rebellious nature of the woman. Augustine argues that a Christian woman will not rebel against this order, even if her husband is a pagan and treats her ill. Augustine takes his mother as an example. She tried to win her husband for Christ, not by words, but by the loving and patient manner in which she treated her husband (1 Ptr. 3: 1). She bore with his unfaithfulness, and did not go against him when he came home with an aggressive mood, but waited patiently for the moment he had become reasonable again, and then talked to him. In doing so, she served the Lord, and eventually won her husband for Christ.

From a modern perspective, which emphasizes individual rights and the empowerment of women, this behaviour might seem sub-assertive. The woman should fight for her own rights, we would say. Augustine, however, sees the societal position of the woman as a somehow ruled by divine providence, in some way similar to slavery. It is not directly commanded by God, but the factual situation is used by him to restrain the sinful nature of the woman and to exercise her in virtue (*Quaest. Gen.*, 153). Rebellion against this condition would be a proud protest against God, which would show that the woman is not aware of the rebellious nature, that she inherited from Eve. Given the societal position of the woman, she serves the Lord, by accepting her position, and living faithfully in that position, in order to win her husband for her through

²¹ See *util. ieiunii* 4 (CCL 46; 235): “Cum vis ut serviat tibi caro tua admoneris quomodo te oporteat servire Deo tuo.” See *cont.* 9, 22-24.

²² In *util. ieiunii* 4 Augustine points to the fact that God “tries” the head through the resistance of the body. This is true in the individual, but also in the household.

her way of live. In the case of Monnica, God blessed her love by the conversion of her husband, and the love and respect that accompanied it (*conf.*, 9, 17, 22). This does not mean that the Christian woman cannot appeal to her rights. In a Christian marriage, the husband and the wife are subject to the law of the Church, which is different from the laws of the world (s. 9,4; La Bonnardière 41). Whereas the laws of the world allow a man to have sex outside of marriage (Shaw 29), and to divorce and marry someone else, the laws of heaven forbid this, and to these laws a Christian marriage is bound. Therefore, a Christian woman has the right and even the duty to report the crime of her husband to the bishop, so that he can exercise ecclesiastical discipline. On the one hand, she claims her rights in doing so,²³ but at the same time she cares for the soul of her husband (s. 392), and strives to re-establish marital peace.

In the stewardship over the family, the wife is the partner of her Christian husband. They work together, although the woman is not the equal of the husband. Augustine emphasizes this in his letter to Ecdicia, who had acted independently from her husband in several ways. She had vowed celibacy without his consent (which is needed from both partners according to I Cor. 7: 4-5), she had sold a large part of the family property to wandering monks without the consent of her husband, and she had changed her clothes into those of a widow without asking his permission. This made him so angry, that it became the occasion for him to commit adultery, whereas he had first vowed celibacy, following his wife. It goes without saying that Augustine rejects the behaviour of her husband, but Ecdicia also receives a severe chastisement from him. She was not allowed to act independently from her husband, whom she should obey as her lord (1 Ptr. 3: 6). With regard to the selling of property, Augustine argues that this is in itself a good deed, but the fact that she had done this without the consent of her husband made it wrong. For the husband is the head of the family, and should take final decisions. This does not mean that she only had to listen and obey. Augustine views the woman indeed as a co-steward of the household. It would have been good if Ecdicia had made suggestions to her husband, in order to make a plan together about what to do with their property. As they did not yet know the future calling of their son, they neither knew how much property they had to save for his future. Therefore, they should have made a plan in order to combine the practice of mercy and the care for their son. She could come up with plans and suggestions, but her husband remained the one who took the final decisions. This is not because the husband is “the boss”, but because God gave him the final responsibility for their son. Augustine empha-

²³ See I Cor. 7: 4.

sizes that their reunion is of great importance, not only for their souls wellbeing, but also for the Christian education of their son (*Ep.*, 262, 11).

Finally, Augustine argues that the Christian family serves the peace of society. In a sermon, held after the lynching of a government official, who had maltreated the people, he warns his congregation not to take vengeance. If they feel maltreated they should go to the government, but not take the law into their own hands. This is what fathers should teach their children. In this way, Christian families can contribute to a more peaceful society. If children learn how to behave at home, this will influence society at large, because most people have become Christians. Thus, Augustine says, those who learn virtue at home, because they belong to the city of God, will contribute to the peace of the earthly city by their way of life (*s.*, 302,19).

Conclusion

How does Augustine help us to diagnose the crisis of peaceful relationships between men and women in our society? I draw a few conclusions.

Augustine regards marriage as a bond between a man and a woman that is designed by God. He joins man and woman, and defines the purpose of this union, which they, in their turn, have to serve. Marriage implies the sacrifice of autonomy, both from the man and from the woman, in order to serve God by submitting their wills to Him. This theocentric perspective is indispensable for a righteous peace within marriage.

Augustine relativizes the romantic concept of marriage in our societies, in which the experience of attraction and sexual satisfaction is regarded as the highest goal of the relationship. Men and wife were given to each other to serve God, and to help each other serve God. Obedience to his will is the *summum bonum* under which lesser goods should be ordered, such as friendship and sexual desire. They are not denied or suppressed, but receive their proper place in the order of love, according to which God is loved in and of himself, whereas other things are loved because of Him. If something else is cherished by the spouses for its own sake (such as begetting children, or not begetting children, sexual satisfaction, etc.) this endangers the fidelity of the spouses to each other.

In Augustine's view, God gives the man and the woman a specific position in the marriage relationship. Feminist interpreters of Augustine have criticized him as a representative of a patriarchal culture. Augustine emphasizes, however,

that the headship of the man over the woman should reflect the headship of Christ over his Church. Male headship is not a justification of abuse or adulterous behaviour (as it was in the Roman culture in which Augustine lived), but rather a call to rule one's wife and family in the name of Christ with loving and sacrificial authority. The fact that male headship in our culture is treated with disdain, might explain why many men don't know how they should relate to women in a responsible way (cf. #MeToo).²⁴

When it comes to the position of the woman, Augustine emphasizes that she is the man's companion and helper. At the same time, the man has received the final authority in the household. When the man abuses his position, as Augustine knew from his own boyhood experience, a Christian woman will seek peace, not so much by rebelling against her subordinate position, but by patiently bearing with it, and by keeping her conscience clean, in order to amend her husband by her good works.

This does not mean that Augustine justifies the *status quo* of sinful male behaviour in marriage. He rather takes seriously that male dominance over the woman is a consequence of the fall, which cannot be solved by simply improving the rights and assertiveness of women. For Augustine, only the regeneration of a man's heart can solve this problem. At the same time, God makes a good use of the sin of the husband. He uses it in his providence to control the rebellious nature of the woman, and to exercise her in virtue.

From Augustine's concept we can learn that peace between the man and the woman is not reached by the negotiation about individual rights (which is driven by self-love), but by regeneration of the heart, which enables them to accept the position that God has given each of them, and to bear with each other's sins and weaknesses, for God's sake.

Augustine also points to the fact that a Christian household, in which parents educate their children in the fear of God, contributes to the peace of the earthly City, because the children learn to treat their neighbors well, and respect the temporal authorities that God has given.

²⁴ This is not to say that the Christian notion of male headship cannot be abused by men for malevolent purposes. For the connection between sexual harassment of women, and the egalitarian ideology that dominates our culture, see the talk by John Piper "Sex Abuse Allegations and the Egalitarian Myth". This talk is based on Piper article "Do Men owe Women a Special Kind of Care?".



Works Cited

- van Bavel, Tarsicius J. *Augustinus. Van Liefde en Vriendsch.* Averbod, Altiora/Kampen, Kok, 1986.
- . "Augustine's View on Women." *Augustiniana*, vol. 39, 1989, pp. 5-53.
- Becker, Ernest. *The Denial of Death.* London/New York, The Free Press, 1973.
- Bennett, Elisabeth. *Water is Thicker than Blood. An Augustinian Theology of Marriage and Singlehood.* Oxford, OUP, 2008.
- Børresen, Kari Elisabeth. *Subordination and Equivalence. The Nature and Role of Woman in Augustine and Thomas Aquinas,* Kampen, Kok, 1995.
- Brown, Dan. *The Davinci Code.* London, Transworld Publishers, 2004.
- Clark, Elizabeth. "Adams Only Companion:' Augustine and the Early Christian Debate on Marriage." *Recherches Augustiniennes*, vol. 21, 1986, pp. 139-162.
- van Geest, Paul. "Gemeenschap, ontrouw, vergeving en onthouding." *Augustiniana Neerlandica. Aspecten van Augustinus' spiritualiteit en haar doorwerking*, edited by Paul van Geest and Johannes van Oort, Leuven, Peeters, 2005.
- Eberstadt, Mary. *Adam and Eve after the Pill. Paradoxes of the Sexual Revolution.* San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 2012.
- Kuby, Gabriele. *Die Globale Sexuelle Revolution. Zerstörung der Feitheit im Namen der Freiheit.* Regensburg, Fe-Medienverlag, 2016.
- La Bonnardière, Anne-Marie. "L'Interprétation Augustinienne du *Magnum Sacramentum de Eph. 5, 3.*" *Recherches Augustiniennes*, vol. 12, 1977, pp. 3-45(41).
- Lamberigts, Mathijs. "A Critical Evaluation of Augustine's View of Sexuality." *Augustine and his Critics. Essays in Honour of Gernald Bonne*, edited by Robert Dodaro and George Lawless, London/New York, Routledge. 2000
- Pereira, Bernard A. *La Doctrine du Marriage selon St. Augustin.* Paris, Beauchesne, 1930.
- Piper, John. "Sex abuse allegations and the egalitarian myth." *Desiringgod.org*, <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/sex-abuse-allegations-and-the-egalitarian-myth>. Accessed 13 August. 2018.
- . "Do Men owe Women a Special Kind of Care?," *Desiringgod.org*, www.desiringgod.org. Accessed 13 August. 2018.
- Radford Ruether, Rosemary. "The Liberation of Christology from Patriarchy." *New Blackfriars*, vol. 66, no. 781/82, 1985, pp. 324-35.

- "Augustine, Sexuality, Gender and Women." *Feminist Interpretations of Augustine*, University Park, PA, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007, pp. 47-68.
- Schmitt, Émile. *Le Mariage Chrétien dans l'Oeuvre de Saint Augustin. Une Théologie Baptismale de la Vie Conjugale*, Paris, Institut Augustinien, 1983.
- Shaw, Brent D. "The Family in Late Antiquity: the Experience of Augustine." *Past and Present*, vol. 15, 1987, pp. 3-51.
- Stark, Judith Chelius. "Augustine on Women: In God's Image, but Less So." *Feminist Interpretations of Augustine*, edited by Judith Chelius Stark, University Park, PA, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007.

Inner Peace and Personal Identity. Reflections on the Unity of the *Confessions*

Paz interior e identidad personal.
Reflexiones sobre la unidad en las *Confesiones*

4

Dagmar Kiesel, Friedrich-Alexander
Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany



Abstract

The division of the *Confessions* into an autobiographical part (book 1-10) and an exegetical part to Gen. 1-2: 3 (book 11-13) has raised questions with respect to their unity. While the view that the *Confessions* cannot be regarded as a unitary whole is now considered as a marginal position, there are various approaches to an integrating interpretation. This contribution elaborates on the proposal that the unity of the *Confessions* arises from their interpretation as a narrative identity construction of Augustine. The underlying meta-narrative in the *Confessions* is Augustine's own doctrine of grace and original sin, which he has worked out in *Simpl.*, 1, 2, shortly before. In the *Confessions*, Augustine illustrates the effect of divine grace and the transformation of man from *homo sub lege* and *homo sub gratia* to *homo in pace* exemplarily on the basis of his own life story. This understanding is supported by the further thesis that Augustine himself deals extensively with the question of "personal identity" in the *Confessions* and perceives identity in the context of neoplatonic conceptions as an inner-soul unity and harmony, which he conceives as *unitas*, *quies/requies*, and *pax*. The source of this unity is the eternal, unchanging one God. In Augustine, *pax* also stands for the condition of spiritual balance and represents the Christianized version of epicurean *ataraxia* and stoic *tranquillitas animi*. In addition, the contribution shows the systematic interlinkage of the Augustinian concepts of *pax*, *unitas*, *caritas*, *requies*, *beatitudo*, *uti-frui*, *res mutabiles-res immutabiles*, *creatio-creatura*, *temporalia-aeterna*, and *peregrinatio*.

Keywords: *Confessions*, harmony, mutability, peace, personal identity, self.



Resumen

La división de las *Confesiones* en una parte autobiográfica (libro 1-10) y una parte exegética de Gen. 1-2,3 (libro 11-13) ha suscitado preguntas con respecto a su unidad. Si bien la opinión de que las *Confesiones* no pueden considerarse como un todo unitario, ahora se considera una posición marginal, pues existen varios enfoques para una interpretación integradora. Esta contribución profundiza en la propuesta de que la unidad de las *Confesiones* surge de su interpretación como una construcción de identidad narrativa de san Agustín. La meta-narrativa subyacente en las *Confesiones* es la propia doctrina de la gracia y el pecado original de san Agustín, que él desarrolla un poco antes en *Simpl.*, 1, 2. En las *Confesiones*, san Agustín ilustra el efecto de la gracia divina y la transformación del hombre de *homo sub lege* y *homo sub gratia* a *homo in pace* de forma ejemplar, lo anterior sobre la base de la historia de su vida. Esta comprensión se apoya en la tesis adicional de que san Agustín trata ampliamente la cuestión de la “identidad personal” en las *Confesiones* y percibe la identidad en el contexto de las concepciones neoplatónicas como una unidad y armonía del alma interior, que él concibe como *unitas*, *quies/requies*, y *pax*. La fuente de esta unidad es el Dios eterno e inmutable. En Agustín *pax* también representa la condición del equilibrio espiritual y la versión cristianizada de la *ataraxia* epicúrea y la *tranquillitas animi* estoica. Además, la contribución muestra la interconexión sistemática de los conceptos agustinianos de *pax*, *unitas*, *caritas*, *requies*, *beatitudo*, *uti-frui*, *res mutabiles-res immutabiles*, *creatio-creatura*, *temporalia-aeterna* y *peregrinatio*.

Palabras clave: Paz, identidad personal, uno mismo, confesiones, armonía, mutabilidad.



Sobre el autor | About the author

Dagmar Kiesel [dagmar.kiesel@fau.de]

PD Dr. Dagmar Kiesel is assistant professor at the Friedrich- Alexander-University Erlangen-Nürnberg where she is head of the Arbeitsbereich Philosophie der Antiken und Arabischen Welt at the Institute of Philosophy together with Dr. Cleophea Ferrari. She received her doctorate on Augustine's concept of love and habilitated in 2017 on "Perspectives of Personal Identity in Late Antique Christianity and in Nietzsche". Her main areas of research and teaching are Philosophy Psychology, Philosophy Religion as well as Philosophy Literature.



Cómo citar en MLA / How to cite in MLA

Kiesel, Dagmar. "Inner Peace and Personal Identity. Reflections on the Unity of the Confessions." *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Bendimez Eguiarte y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2019, pp. 115-157, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.4

Introduction

The division of the *Confessions* into an autobiographical part (book 1-10) and an exegetical part to Gen. 1-2: 3 (book 11-13), which was noted by Augustine himself (*retract.*, 2, 6, 1), has raised questions with respect to their unity. While the view that the *Confessions* cannot be regarded as a unitary whole is now seen as a marginal position, there are various approaches to an integrating interpretation (Feldmann). The variety of interpretations ranges from attempts to prove the unity of the *Confessions* on the basis of formal, stylistic and motivic criteria (Knauer; Steidle “Augustins Confessiones”; “Gedanken”; Fuhrer 107), to the interpretation as a theology of creation (Nygren) or as proof of God (Steur), as a contemplation of the development of salvation (Kusch), an anti-Donatist project (Wundt), or as a trinitarian analysis showing the obnubilation of the image of God in human beings after the Fall and its restoration by grace (O'Donnell, 2005, pp. 65-86).

My contribution elaborates on a new proposal, which has the advantage of being largely compatible with the above-mentioned interpretations. The unity of the *Confessions* arises from interpreting them as a narrative identity construction of Augustine. According to the contemporary concept of *narrative identity*, personal identity as an answer to the question “Who am I?”¹ is constructed by narrating the story of our life, and interpreting it with reference to philosophical, religious or other cultural meta-narratives, thus giving meaning and significance to it (Klessmann 148). The underlying meta-narrative in the *Confessions* is Augustine's own doctrine of grace and original sin, which he worked out in *Simpl.*, 1, 2, shortly before. In the *Confessions*, Augustine illustrates the effect of divine grace and the transformation of man from *homo sub lege* and *homo sub gratia* to *homo in pace* exemplarily with reference to his own life story, and thus endows it with unity and coherence.² According to this interpretation, the *memoria*-analysis in *conf.*, 10, as well as those of time in *conf.*, 11, is reasonable, since man as a temporal being develops his identity in a chronological process, and changes and (re-)constructs it from memory. Insofar as man is *creatura*, and as such is related to the whole creation and to the creator himself, and because his individual identity must be formed based on the *conditio humana*, the embedding of Augustine's identity construction

¹ In the philosophy of antiquity, personal identity is therefore addressed under the heading of “self-knowledge”. See Hager.

² For the interpretation of the four-stage doctrine as a salvation-historical as well as an individual-historical perspective see Drecoll 183.

into his theology of creation (*conf.* 11-13) is meaningful. This understanding is supported by the further thesis that Augustine himself addresses explicitly the question of personal identity in the *Confessions* (10, 2, 2; 10, 37, 62).

The compatibility with widely accepted interpretations is particularly evident in the common understanding of the *Confessions* as a confession of guilt, praise and faith; as part of the narrative elaboration of his identity—based on the meta-narrative of his teachings of grace and original sin—Augustine confesses both his culpable affiliation with the children of Adam and his personal sins up to the time of the composition of the *Confessions* (*confessio peccati*), and the testimony of God's graceful attention which he demonstrates exemplarily by his own life also shows features of a *confessio laudis* as well as that of a *confessio fidei*. In addition, the reference to meta-narratives which is implied in the concept of personal identity can be based on interpretations of the *Confessions* as autobiography (Misch, 1947); at the same time, it allows their extension to the specifically theological context of the work and its intention to turn the reader to God (*conf.*, 10, 3, 4). Augustine's concept of personal identity brings the topic of peace (*pax*) into play. In accordance with the pagan philosophical tradition of antiquity, Augustine discusses personal identity in a eudaimonistic context and understands it—following the Platonic as well as the Stoic tradition—as inner-psychoic coherence, unity and harmony which is realized by virtue (Kiesel “Die Emotionstheorie“ 93f).³ This ideal constitution of the soul can be conceptualized as “inner peace.”⁴ However, unlike the schools of philosophy mentioned above, Augustine believes after his turn to the theology of grace that, firstly, this virtuous perfection cannot be achieved in this life, secondly, that all moral progress is a gift of God's grace, and thirdly, that perfect virtue as well as fulfilled inner peace can only be realized in eternal blessedness (*conf.*, 13).

A characteristic feature of the Augustinian concept of peace is the diversity of its fields of application (Atkins; Budzik). In addition to a social concept of peace, which is the prerequisite for a functioning communal life in any human

³ See the Platonic analysis of the virtues as a harmonious unity of the three soul parts (*logistikón*, *thymoeides* and *epithymétikon*) in *Rep.*, IV, 441c-441a. See also Seneca, *ep. mor.*, 20, 2, and Aristotle, *NE*, IX, 4, 1166a: “For [the *spoudaios*] is in agreement with himself, and he strives with all his soul for the same things.”

⁴ *Pax* stands in this sense for the state of mental balance and represents the Christianized version of the Epicurean *ataraxia* or the Stoic *tranquillitas animi*. While the Old Testament *shalom* is almost never used in the sense of “inner peace,” there is a New Testament link between participation in the Christian community and inner peace in Phil 4, 6-9. See Atkins 567.

community, Augustine discusses a closely related political concept of peace as an essential goal of earthly governance in domestic and external policy, as well as the peace of the Church founded by Christ (*pax ecclesiae*), and the perfect heavenly peace (*pax caelestis civitatis*), which the members of the citizenship of God will enjoy in the coming kingdom of God. The common feature underlying all manifestations of peace is that of order (*ordo*).⁵ Order assembles various parts of an entity (living being, human, soul) or a community harmoniously in a unity (*unitas*) and is defined by Augustine as “fair distribution of equal and unequal things” (*civ.*, 19, 13).⁶ Augustine understands inner peace as “peace of a rational soul in the ordered accordance of thought and action”, as well as “peace between body and soul in the ordered and believing obedience to eternal law” (*civ.*, 19, 13). In the eighth book of the *Confessions*, Augustine discusses this concept of inner peace in more detail and analyses it as a harmonious unity of strivings (*voluntates*), emotions (*affectus*) and deliberate decisions (*liberum arbitrium*) of a person, which are interconnected by their shared orientation to the divine order of values (*lex aeterna*). It is at this point that the relation of the Augustinian definition of inner peace to personal identity becomes clear. This connection is already etymologically obvious in the term *identity*. It comes from the Latin *idem*, “the same”. According to Augustine, to be “the same” in all respects is synonymous with the shared axiological orientation of all mental aspirations and phenomena to the *lex aeterna*, and where there is this kind of inner-soul “sameness”, there is also inner peace. The theoretically conceivable accordance of all relevant mental conditions in the sense of a shared orientation towards evil (*malum*), on the other hand, is for Augustine in many respects neither an expression of order, unity, tranquillity or peace, nor does it realize the genuine identity of a person. A human soul that does not follow the divine order of values misses its destiny as a creature of God (*creatura*). It falls into an ontological and ethical state of disorder and gets into a state of strife and disturbed unity with God and fellow human beings as well as with himself: “That is why the unholy, who have no peace due to their unholiness, are lacking the peaceful order in which there is no disturbance” (*civ.*, 19, 13). Since the orientation toward sin ultimately leads to eternal damnation, it is also self-destructive, so that there is also in a final sense a lack of peace in the realm of the self. For the same reasons, the sinner cannot succeed in a peaceful construction of

⁵ For the concept of *ordo* in Augustine, see Enders.

⁶ Translations that are not listed in the bibliography are mine. Regarding the *Confessions*, I have always consulted the excellent German translation by Flasch and Mojsisch together with the English translation by Hammond.

personal identity.⁷ According to the essentialist position of Augustine, the individual must answer the question “Who am I?”, based on her or his essential nature as a human being and thus as a creature of God. The person who sins out of conviction gives a wrong answer to the question “Who am I?,” and misses her or his identity as *creatura* directed toward the Creator. In this sense, the Augustinian concept of personal identity must be understood in a normative way.

The fact that the concept of inner peace in the context of Augustine’s narrative identity construction in the *Confessions* plays a major role, is evident from the frequency of relevant terms. The term *pax* is found 20 times—the associated adjective *pacificus* three times—, and thus corresponds numerically to the occurrences of *confessio* (23 times). Given the contextual overlap, it is not surprising that related terms, including *quies*, are also found 23 times (Lawless 45). As the following reflections shall show, Augustine uses the terms *pax*, *ordo*, *unitas*, and *(re-)quies* in the context of the systematic connections of inner peace and personal identity almost synonymous (Atkins 568).

Inner Peace and Personal Identity in the *Confessions*

Confessions I

The famous first passage in *conf.*, 1, 1, 1, “our hearts are restless until they rest in you (*inquietum est cor nostrum, donec resquiescat in te*),” shows that the question of peace of mind and personal identity in the sense of a harmonious unity of the self is one basic theme of the *Confessions*. The source of restful peace is the triune God, and the longed-for peace will only be fulfilled in the “Sabbath of eternal life” (*conf.*, 13, 36, 51), as Augustine will explain in the course of the other books. The formal framework of the longing for peaceful rest at the beginning and the description of the fulfilment of this yearning at the end of the work, points to the substantial insight that the existence of man originates from the creator and strives back to him: “For you have made us toward yourself (*quia fecisti nos ad te*)”⁸ (*conf.*, 1, 1, 1). Augustine conceptualizes this return to origin as *peregrinatio*,⁹ as a rocky path in the foreign land, and a restless as

⁷ On the connection between the sinless soul and a peaceful self-constitution see the liturgical *Agnus Dei*: “...Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.”

⁸ My translation. Hammond reads: “for you have made us for yourself.”

⁹ See Ps. 149: 5 and the implicit reference to the parable of the lost son (Lk. 15: 11-32) in *conf.*, 1, 18, 28. For further reading see Stewart-Kroeker.

well as a peaceless enterprise. Augustine's question, whether it is more precise to say that he would not exist, if God were not in him, or he exists only because he is in God (*conf.*, 1, 2, 2), shows that man's profound submission to God can be described only in paradoxes. But it is not only his creatureliness that refers man completely to God. God, as a punishment for the Fall, struck all children of Adams with ignorance of the good (*ignorantia*) and moral weakness (*difficultas*) (*lib. arb.*, 3, 18, 52), and changed human nature to such an extent that he ceases to be capable of a sinless life (*non posse non peccare*), the rescue out of this misery requires the intervention of divine grace. By himself, man is only free to sin, to which he is driven by the overwhelming sinful desire (*concupiscentia*) as the source of his restless strife.¹⁰ In this sense, man is only "a part of your creation... [that] bears everywhere its own mortality, ...the evidence of its own sin" (*conf.*, 1, 1, 1). The almost complete moral depravity can only be healed by the perfectly good God. Between the good and just God and the sinful and corrupt man a gap opens up whose overcoming in the act of grace evokes the praise of God: "Great are you, O Lord, and surpassingly worthy of praise (*laudabilis valde*)" (*conf.*, 1, 1, 1). Augustine makes it clear that this praise of God is also a gift of grace ("You inspire us [*excitas*] to take delight in praising you" (*conf.*, 1, 1, 1), in this way packaging his recently elaborated doctrine of grace in the *confessio laudis* of the first passage of the work. In addition to this enormous ethical hiatus, Augustine also emphasizes the ontological gap between the restlessness of man and the tranquillity of God; while man as *creatura* exists in space and time and is subject to physical as well as psychic changes, the timeless eternity of God ensures his everlasting active rest: "Semper agens, semper quietus" (*conf.*, 1, 4, 4). This, too, is an insight that can only be formulated by the limited perspective of man in the form of a paradox. In contrast to God, the changeable human being is inevitably subject to a diachronic change in his or her identity and finds ontological survival in the realm of immutability: "You bind us together [*conligis nos*]" (*conf.*, 1, 3, 3). The underlying Neoplatonic motive of dispersing man,¹¹ who is trapped in changeability and turning towards the temporal, is illustrated by Augustine's metaphorical self-characterisation as "earth and ashes" (*conf.*, 1, 6, 7).

The radical being of man in relationship to God also becomes apparent in another point. Although Augustine undoubtedly has his readers in mind

¹⁰ On the Fall as the cause of mental strife see *Iul.*, 3, 23, 2: "For there should be peace in the interior of man before sin, not war"; and 5, 24, 4: "In the whole soul and in the whole body I have the creator as the God of peace, who sowed the struggle in me?"

¹¹ On the thought of dispersion into multiplicity see Plotinus *enn.*, VI, 4, 7.

when writing the *Confessions* (*conf.*, 10, 3, 3), he considers his work as a dialogue with God, whose gracious attention makes him a worthy subject of his deliberations. For this reason, Augustine begins his life story with a hymn to God (*conf.*, 1, 1-5, 6) and indicates through numerous direct addresses in the thirteen books that he sees the *Confessions* as a dialogue with the Creator. Therefore, the theoretical insight of man's focus on God is designed by Augustine in the *Confessions* as a performative act.

Following the proem, Augustine begins with the narrative of his life, which he formally divides into the previously completed four of the seven stages of life according to the Roman counting. The reconstruction of his infancy (*conf.*, 1, 6, 7-7, 12) is characterized by his meta-narratives of original sin and grace as well as by the dichotomy between the greatness of the Creator and the weakness of man, both ontological and moral. Augustine now concretizes the general realization that man is grounded in God with reference to his own person, hereby making it the basic truth of his own formation of identity.

In this context, too, it becomes clear that Augustine, within his biographical narrative, makes the topic of "personal identity" an explicit subject of theoretical reflections: "My infancy is long ago, dead: and I am alive" (*conf.*, 1, 6, 9); and "What was before that [i.e. before my birth, D. K.], my sweetness, my God? Did I exist somewhere? Was I someone at all?" (*conf.*, 1, 6, 9). Also, the transition from *infantia* to *pueritia* in *conf.* 1, 8, 13-20, 31, is an example of man's fluid and elusive identity: "Was it really I who went onward from infancy and progressed to boyhood? Or was it rather that boyhood entered into me and took the place of my infancy? Infancy did not leave me—for where did it go to? Yet it was no longer there" (*conf.*, 1, 8, 13).¹² (This becoming of the creatures contrasts Augustine with the timeless being of God: "And still you yourself remain the same (*idem ipse*)", *conf.*, 1, 6, 10). As *idem ipse* and "the most high [*summus... es*]" (*conf.*, 1, 6, 10), God is the ideal of identity in the sense of selfsameness and unity. All finite forms of physical and mental "wholeness (*incolumitatem*)" (*conf.*, 1, 20, 31) have their origins in this "mystical unity (*secretissimae unitatis*) of yours from which my existence derived" (*conf.*, 1, 20, 31).

Beyond the gift of life, God is also the donor of all natural goods of living beings, of those who are in their species-specific nature, such as the life-sustaining "instincts" (*conatus*) (*conf.*, 1, 7, 12), as well as of those given to him

¹² This consideration is a reference to the analysis of time in book 11 and the volatility of the three *tempora*.

from the outside: “But neither my mother nor those who nursed me filled their own breasts with milk. You were the one who used to give me nourishment through them” (*conf.*, 1, 6, 7). The moral condition of the underage baby—little Augustine claims no more than what is necessary for him—is just as much as the willingness of responsible caregivers to attend for the child a gift of God (*dabas*) (*conf.*, 1, 6, 7), while the sin of which no one is free must be attributed to man himself (*conf.*, 1, 7, 11). Augustine’s theology of grace shows here as well as his teaching of original sin: “But if I was also conceived in wickedness [*in iniquitate*], and in sin [*in peccatis*] my mother nourished me in the womb...” (*conf.*, 1, 7, 12).

Relevant for the present question is the connection between the sin, which is caused by man, and the spiritual strife caused by it, which Augustine already states in the context of his boyhood narrative. The train of thought is the following: in a well-ordered creation, the existence of sin is in need of explanation because it seems to conflict with the idea of a perfectly good God. Augustine seeks a solution to the problem by differentiating between God-given natural phenomena, and the sin brought into the world by man. Both the natural world and the sin are integrated by God in an all-embracing *ordo*: “And though you are both disposer and creator of all natural phenomena, of sins you are the disposer only” (*conf.*, 1, 10, 16). The divine *lex aeterna* not only determines the *ordo* of all things hierarchically, but at the same time it enacts the punishment of the sinner. By perverting the order of things, the sinner also perverts his own nature, upsetting his soul, and is consequently punished with unrest and peacelessness: “For this is your decree... that every disordered (*inordinatus*) mind becomes its own punishment” (*conf.*, 1, 12, 19). Man finds inner peace and spiritual unity only by turning toward God, the highest unity, while the sinful boy Augustine “was carried away into vain pursuits” because he “went outside [*ibam foras*]” (*conf.*, 1, 18, 28).¹³

The attention to these lesser goods (academic or sporting success, enjoyment of games instead of learning) is punished by aversive affects associated with them. Augustine notes “fear of disgrace and beatings” (*conf.*, 1, 17, 27), “fear [of] grammatical solecisms”, “envy” (*conf.*, 1, 19, 30), and, more generally, “distress, disorder, delusion [*dolores, confusiones, errores*]” (*conf.*, 1, 20, 31).

¹³ My translation.

Confessions II

In the second book, in which Augustine reports on the aberrations of his youth (*adulescentia*), the dichotomy of rest in God on the one hand, and the peaceless disposition as well as the mental fragmentation of the slaves of sin, are prominently featured. Augustine begins his remarks with the call to God: “For you are... a sweetness which brings happiness and peace [*secura*], pulling me back together from the disintegration [*et conligens me a dispersione*] in which I was being shattered and torn apart [*discissus sum*], when I turned away from you who are unity and dispersed into the multiplicity that is oblivion” (*conf.*, 2, 1, 1)¹⁴ and finishes them in the same way: “With you there is deep peace [*quies*] and life which cannot be disturbed [*vita imperturbabilis*]. ...in my teens I was too inconstant in your steadfastness [*stabilitate*]; and I made myself a barren land” (*conf.*, 2, 10, 18).

The youthful sins reported by Augustine are unspecified sexual debauchery and the famous pear theft. Using the example of sexual desire (which is not ordered in the legitimate paths of marriage and the procreation of offspring), the paradigm of sinful desire and generic term for all kinds of misguided desire (*concupiscentia*), he demonstrates the difference between love for God and the neighbour (“the purity of love [*serenitas dilectionis*]” (*conf.*, 2, 2, 2), and the “darkness of lust [*caligine libidinis*]” (*conf.*, 2, 2, 2) or perverted love that “turns away from you and looks away from you for what is untainted and pure, but cannot find it except by returning to you” (*conf.*, 2, 6, 14). This distinction is relevant in several ways. On the one hand, the difference between pious love of God and neighbour and sinful desire, the primary object of which are external, physical or specific spiritual goods (intelligence, good memory, quick comprehension, etc.), coincides with the distinction between virtue and vice (Kiesel “*Voluntas, amor*”). Augustine extends the ancient catalogue of virtues with the three Pauline virtues of faith, love, hope (1 Cor. 13: 13), and understands with Paul the rightly guided love (*agapê, caritas*) as the epitome of virtue. Accordingly, he summarizes his ethics with the imperative “Love and do what you will [*dilige, et quod vis fac*]” (*Io. ep. tr.*, 7, 8). This love is determined by the orientation toward the hierarchical divine order of goods, whereby love itself takes the form of an ordered love (*ordo amoris*) (Bodei, 1993). In book II, Augustine mentions sensually tangible beautiful objects, honour, power, life, and friendship among others as examples of low-ranking goods with a certain

¹⁴ See *conf.*, 6, 14.

“dignity [*decus*]” (*conf.*, 2, 5, 10), and emphasizes their subordination to “God, and your truth and your law” (*conf.*, 2, 5, 10).

The connection of right love and virtue or of misguided love and vice also lies in the Augustinian interpretation of the pear theft he committed as a teenager together with his friends. While certain attitudes which are believed to be virtues (according to worldly conventions), are in truth vices (sovereignty is arrogance, false love is lust, pretended zeal is mere curiosity) because they strive for temporal goods and not for the eternal God as the epitome of honour, true love and highest knowledge, the pear theft is a paradigm for the radical perversion of divine law and a “versuchte Umkehrung des Verhältnisses von Schöpfer und Geschöpf” (Brachtendorf “Augustins Confessiones” 68). As is well known, the intention of the theft is not to eat the juicy fruits (Augustine throws them away, *conf.*, 2, 6, 12), but the joy of breaking the law itself. Thus, it is at the same time the paradigm of a false attitude that misses the creaturely nature of human beings and results in a disturbed and unstable identity leading to self-destruction: “My soul was foul and, becoming alienated from your firm foundation, it was disintegrating into oblivion” (*conf.*, 2, 4, 9).

Important for our topic is the connection between emotions and spiritual peace. According to the Stoic conception, the sage develops only so-called “good feelings” (*eupatheiai* or *constantia*) that do not cloud emotional well-being, but no excessive and peace-disturbing affects (*pathê* or *perturbationes animi*) (Halbig). By contrast, Augustine emphasizes that even Christians gifted by the Holy Ghost with divine love (*amor Dei, caritas*) are not free from stressful emotions. As Augustine shows by using the example of his mother and her concern for the son’s salvation (*conf.*, 3, 11, 9), even pious fears can be existentially threatening and severe. In addition, Augustine considers the Stoic conception of a fundamental human capacity to eradicate harmful and morally dubious emotions in this life to be illusory (*civ.*, 9, 4). In this respect, *homo sub gratia* differs from *homo in pace*.

Significant, however, is the difference between aversive affects that evolve in the value context of a godly life and those that are grounded in an orientation toward lower-ranking goods. Indeed, the former also have their origin in the punishment of sin: Adam and Eve, before biting into the forbidden fruit, knew only joy (*gaudium*) and love (*amor*) (*civ.*, 14, 10) and, moreover, were not yet submitted¹⁵ under original sin and its threatening deadly consequence,

¹⁵ Accordingly, Augustine’s choice of words is clear when he speaks of his coming into “this life which is mortal—or is it perhaps life-giving death?” (*conf.*, 1, 6, 7), as well as of the

eternal damnation.¹⁶ Yet, pious fears are set within the divine order because they spring from the love of God and charity, while affections directed to inferior goods turn this order upside down. Thus, while God looks upon the former with pleasure and shows willingness to comfort and answer the prayers of the burdened,¹⁷ the latter carry their punishment within themselves, as the aversive character of these emotions cause mental pain and peacelessness: “I transgressed all your true ordinances, but I did not escape your scourges” (*conf.*, 2, 2, 4). In the context of his narrative identity construction against the background of the meta-narrative of his doctrine of grace, Augustine interprets the inner peacelessness that causes painful affects not only as a punishment, but also as a remedy that should remind the youthful sinner of the ungodliness of his doings:

After all, you were always there..., sprinkling all my forbidden pleasures with the bitterest of disappointments, so that I would seek a kind of pleasure that is free from disappointment, and when I did so I would find none other but yourself, Lord, yourself alone (*conf.*, 2, 2, 4).

Confessions III

These motives continue in the third book, in which Augustine reports on the period of his rhetoric studies in Carthage and his spiritual aberrations. The promising reading of Cicero’s protreptic script *Hortensius*, which gives him a first impulse to search for “immortal wisdom” (*conf.*, 3, 4, 7), is followed by a disappointing study of the Bible and the so motivated turn to Manichaeism. Augustine relates how he did not bind his identity to the creator, who as the true one (*unum*) can also produce the peaceful inner unity of man, but to the world of external things as well as to sensual pleasure. The latter cuts through “that actual union that we ought to have with God” (*conf.*, 3, 8, 15): “So my soul was in a poor state of health, and covered in sores [*ulcerosa*], it lay prostrate out of doors” (*conf.*, 3, 1, 1). This attachment of the self to the outside world goes hand in hand with the false Manichaean image of God as well as with the alienation from the divine and the self: “I was wandering far from you. ...I was seeking you not be following my mind’s understanding... but according to my capacity for physical

“pestilent odor (*pestilentiosum*)” (*conf.*, 2, 3, 8) (my translation) of his father’s encouragement to sex.

¹⁶ Since the Fall, humanity has formed a *massa peccati* (*Simpl.*, 1, 2, 16).

¹⁷ Augustine demonstrates this with the example of his mother, who is comforted in her fears for Augustine’s salvation by the words of the bishop: “...it is impossible that the son of your tears should perish!” (*conf.*, 3, 12, 21). See also 11, 19.

sensation” (*conf.*, 3, 6, 11). The inner emptiness that Augustine feels in himself and that could only have been filled with spiritual “incorruptible food” (*conf.*, 3, 1, 1) cannot be filled with the Manichaean God, “but instead was utterly drained” (*conf.*, 3, 6, 10).

In the consequence, Augustine seeks solace in sensual passions. The false love that underlies his escapades is the cause of sorrowful afflictions, which Augustine once again interprets as God’s discipline and means of correction:

My God, my mercy, how good you were, sprinkling that sweet gratification of mine with so much bitterness! ...and I was happy to be constrained by burdensome bonds—with the result that I was being beaten with glowing iron rods of jealousy, mistrust, anxieties, rages and quarrelling (*conf.*, 3, 1, 1).

In this sense, the punishment for wrong love is inherent in this love itself,

Because when they sin against you, they also profane their own souls, and iniquity is self-deceiving whether in harming and perverting their nature, which you have created and set in its proper place (*conf.*, 3, 8, 16).

The mentioned connection between sin as the reversal of the divine *ordo* and the destruction of the peaceful order in man’s soul as its immediate consequence is expressly described here, as is the dichotomy between love of God and neighbour and misguided love (*conf.*, 3, 8, 15). The fact that Augustine connects love of God and neighbour with the commandment of self-love fits in the framework of his presentation: whoever acts against God and his neighbour harms first and foremost his own soul and its peace.

Confessions IV

At the heart of the fourth book are Augustine’s ethical-theological reflections on the early death of his childhood friend. Using the example of his young self’s emotional responses to the loss, Augustine analyses the devastating consequences a misguided love can have for the lover’s identity and peace of mind: “I had become the subject of my own questioning” (*conf.*, 4,6,9). The systematic context is this: according to Augustine, the lover identifies with the object of his love and strives for union to complete the integration of the beloved into his own self. Hereby, the lover externalizes his identity through attachment to outside things as well as to persons (Kiesel, “Die Emotions-theorie Augustins” 104–107). If love is directed to the eternal and unchanging God, the object of love is always available, and the unity and integrity of the

loving self are assured. Identification with changeable and perishable things (*res mutabiles*), on the other hand, threatens the integrity of the self. Because the objects of love can be torn away by loss, robbery or death, the lover is always threatened by personal fragmentation, and in a state of inner peacelessness and unrest. Pain, fear, overflowing lust and insatiable desires are the emotional manifestations of this perverted love:

What is all love, if it does not want to become one with the beloved and embraces it in a way that it will be united with him? ...What makes pain what it is, if not the violent separation of once united things? Therefore, it is bitter and dangerous to become one with things that can be separated (*ord.*, 2, 11, 8).

Augustine illustrates this phenomenon by the example of the love for his friend, whom he felt to be his “twin self [*ille alter eram*]” (*conf.*, 4, 6, 11). With reference to Horace (*Odes*, 1, 3) and Ovid (*Tristia*, 4, 4, 72), Augustine describes the integration of the friend into his own identity: “How rightly someone once called his friend, ‘half of my own self [*dimidium animae suae*]’. For I felt that my soul and his were one soul in two bodies...” (*conf.*, 4, 6, 11). The loss of the friend as part of his self thus destroys the integrity of the ego¹⁸ and causes emotional confusion: “And that was why life was dreadful to me because I did not want to live as half a person” (*conf.*, 4, 6, 11). Augustine finds no peace because the identification with himself is disturbed: “I was carrying about with me my shattered, bleeding soul; it could not endure being carried by me” (*conf.*, 4, 7, 12). This inner peacelessness motivates an unfulfillable desire for escaping his own self: “Where could I flee, to escape from myself?” (*conf.*, 4, 7, 12). Augustine summarizes his personal experience of the mental turmoil that follows the death of such a loved one in a general insight: “I was miserable, as every mind is miserable that is fettered by its love of earthly things yet torn into pieces [*dilaniatur*] when it is deprived of them” (*conf.*, 4, 6, 11).

The negative assessment of friendship with mortals suggests a general prohibition of affectionate interpersonal relationships and raises the question of whether this does not—against the biblical testimony—nullify the commandment to love one’s neighbour. Augustine seeks a solution to this problem by differentiating between two types of love for fellow human beings. The harmful form of affection for the neighbour is not able, “to love humanity in a hu-

¹⁸ See also *conf.*, 4, 8, 13: “For how else had that pain pierced me so easily and so deeply, if not because I had poured out my soul upon the sand by loving someone mortal as if they were immortal?”

man way [*diligere homines humaniter*]¹⁹ (*conf.*, 4, 7, 12).²⁰ To love people in this right way is to love them as creatures in the creator: “Only those who hold everyone dear, in the One who can never be lost, never lose anyone dear to them” (*conf.*, 4, 9, 14).²¹ In particular, friendships as most intimate and intense relationships should be borne out of a Christian spirit: “Blessed are those who love you, and love their friend in you and their enemy because of you” (*conf.*, 4, 9, 14). Such interpersonal relationships are endowed by God and firmly united in the love of God as a gift of the Holy Spirit (*conf.*, 4, 4, 7). This love also binds together and makes “from many [minds], one” (*conf.*, 4, 8, 13). Unlike misguided love, however, it fits into the love of God and thus has a share in its stability (*conf.*, 4, 9, 14): friends who are attached to each other in God will one day complete their love in the eternal unity of the community of the blessed.²² Moreover, the imperishable love of God not only guarantees the inner peace of the lover, but also, through the common orientation toward the divine law, social peace among men.

This pious form of loving affection for a friend remains for the time being just as impossible for Augustine as the divine comfort: peace, tranquillity, and the healing of mental division and identity diffusion can only be granted by the eternal triune God as the source of all peaceful unity: “Stand with him, and you will stand fast indeed; take your rest in him and you will find peace” (*conf.*,

¹⁹ My translation.

²⁰ See *conf.* 4, 8, 13.

²¹ See *conf.* 4, 12, 18.

²² This understanding of right and misguided love is systematically linked to the *uti-frui* distinction. See Mayer 65: “Zu den Prinzipien der in *De doctrina christiana* zusammengefassten Hermeneutik gehört die mit Hilfe des ontologischen Schemas <mutabile-inmutabile> vorgenommene Unterscheidung der Dinge (<res>), in solche, die sich verändern, und in solche, die bleiben. Unter Hinzuziehung weiterer Schemata aus der Erkenntnislehre (Signum-res) und der Ethik (Frui-uti) teilt A. die <res> auf in <significantes> und <significatae> sowie in <fruendae> und <utendae>. ...Diese [Hermeneutik] hat nicht zuletzt die Klärung der mit dem <creator> identischen <aeterna atque incommutabilia> sowie der mit den <creatura> identischen <temporalia atque mutabilia> zum Ziel und steht zugleich im Dienste des Programmes <redire in patriam>.” See also Chadwick 72f; and Budzik 65. The interpretation by Dupont explains why the pious love of one’s neighbour guarantees, on the one hand, the longevity of the beloved and, on the other hand, why, in a certain sense, humans may also be enjoyed: “Only as far as the Lord is present in humans, are humans enjoyable (498).” See also the reading by Verheijen 180-182. Canning explains Verheijen’s view: “Human beings are also to be objects of *frui* in the proper sense of the term, but this is a heavenly not an earthly *frui*, and it is *frui in deo* because God alone, and not human beings, brings human life to full beatitude” (324).

4, 12, 18).²³ The Manichaean deity, to which Augustine continues to cling, as a “imaginary being” and “heretical belief” (*conf.*, 4, 7, 12), on the other hand, can be no haven of peace and rest.

Confessions V

In the fifth book, Augustine describes his gradual estrangement from Manichaeism and the ongoing turn toward Christianity. Decisive for the former is the disappointing encounter with the Manichaean bishop Faustus of Mileve in Carthage, who cannot scientifically substantiate and make plausible the cosmological myths of his faith (*conf.*, 5, 6, 11-7, 13). The indiscipline of his students in Carthage leads Augustine on a career change to Rome, where he again gets into a Manichaean environment and, despite his doubts, continues to cling to the Manichaean conception of God and biblical criticism as well as to the substantiality of evil (*conf.*, 5, 10, 18-21, 21). As the students in Rome also turn out to be refractory and unwilling to pay, he successfully applies for the position of rhetorician at the Milan Imperial Court, where his acquaintance with the allegorical biblical exegesis of Bishop Ambrose shows him an intellectually satisfying way of dealing with Holy Scripture (*conf.*, 5, 14, 24). A short phase of turning to academic scepticism is followed by the catechumenate in the Christian Church (*catholica ecclesia*) (*conf.*, 5, 14, 25).

As in the previous books, Augustine explicitly addresses the question of his personal identity in the context of his way of life in separation from God.²⁴ Because God cannot be found in the external material world, but only in the interior of man,²⁵ the self-exodus of the young rhetorician goes hand in hand with the unintended rejection of God: “So where was I, when I was searching for you? You were right in front of me, but I had even abandoned myself, and I could not find myself, never mind you!” (*conf.*, 5, 2, 2). Again, Augustine puts viciousness, remoteness of God, and peacelessness into one (“the wicked, those who are without rest”, *conf.*, 5, 2, 2), and contextualizes this as part of his *ordo*-concept: “you [have] arranged all things so that they have magnitude, number and weight (*mensura et numero et pondero*)” (*conf.*, 5, 4, 7). He also sees the audacity of his students in Carthage as a disturbance of order (*perturbant*

²³ See *conf.*, 4, 7, 12; 10, 15; 11, 16.

²⁴ See *conf.*, 5, 6, 10: “For almost nine years, in which my mind was aimless and destitute, and I continued a ‘hearer’...”

²⁵ On the connection between knowledge of the divine and the self, see *sol.* 1, 7: “I want to get to know God and the soul. Then nothing? No, nothing!”

ordinem, *conf.*, 5, 8, 14), as well as the insolvent students in Rome whom he describes as “untrustworthy and [mentally, D. K.] crooked (*pravos et distortos*)” (*conf.*, 5, 22, 22). While the teacher Augustine felt personally disturbed by this impudence of his disciples, the author of the *Confessions* desires their improvement “for your sake” (*conf.*, 5, 22, 22), and defines this improvement as a recognition of the hierarchical order of goods: “If they come to prefer, instead of money, the true teaching that they master, and over that to prefer you, who are God” (*conf.*, 5, 22, 22). The subordination of all goods under God, who is “of assured good [*certi boni*]” (*conf.*, 5, 22, 22), would impart to them a stable self as well as “purest peace [*pacem castissimam*]” (*conf.*, 5, 22, 22) in their souls as well as within their social environment.

The dichotomy between ordered and disordered love is also mentioned in the fifth book—this time exemplified by Augustine’s mother Monica. The misguided and egocentric love for her son is demonstrated by her unwillingness to let Augustine go to Rome without maternal accompaniment, and Augustine characterizes it as “fleshly desire [*carnale desiderium*]” (*conf.*, 5, 8, 15).²⁶ The inner-soul peacelessness that results from this false love manifests itself in the emotional pain, which Augustine in this context, too, interprets as a divine chastisement and “righteous scourge of sorrows” (*conf.*, 5, 8, 15). On the other hand, Monica’s concern for the salvation of her son springs from an upright love of God and neighbour. This love too is accompanied by restlessness: “... how much more she struggled (*sollicitudine*) to give me spiritual birth than when she had given birth to me physically” (*conf.*, 5, 9, 16). In contrast to the peacelessness of perverted love, the concern of pious love finds divine appreciation and is rewarded with God’s answers to prayers:

Would you have spurned this woman’s tears, not shed in pleading for... some fragile or changeable good, but for the salvation of her own son’s soul? Or driven her from your help though it was by your gift that she was what she was? (*conf.* 5, 9, 17).

Augustine uses the interpretive pattern of his theological meta-narrative at this point as well, attributing Monica’s sin to herself, but all the best in her personality to God. In addition, he emphasizes the providence of his fate by God, who did not let him die in separation from him of a disease contracted in Rome: “though you did not allow me, such as I was, to endure a double death” (*conf.*, 5, 9, 16).

²⁶ My translation. Hammond reads: “the physical element of her attachment.”

Confessions VI

The sixth book reports (including some side stories) on the arrival of mother Monica in Milan and her contact with Bishop Ambrose, Augustine's separation from his concubine, and subsequent marriage plans. In spiritual terms, Augustine is still in a state of upheaval: the abandonment of Manichaeism does not yet result in a definite turn toward Christianity, because Augustine continues to cling to a materialistic idea of God.

Following the Socratic-Platonic self-understanding of philosophy as care of the soul (*epimeleia tês psychês*, Plato, *Phd.*, 107c), Augustine reconstructs this phase of life as a "cross over from sickness to health" and considers it as "critical" (*conf.*, 6, 1, 1).²⁷ The salvation of the soul, which Augustine sees as a peaceful inner-soul unity, can only be found if man grasps his true identity as a creature of the one and spiritual God: Self-knowledge and knowledge of God are directly linked. Paradoxically, it is precisely the consciousness of this connection that prevents Augustine from true knowledge of God. Believing that "you have made humanity in your image" (*conf.*, 6, 3, 4), he seeks "this image of yours" (*conf.*, 6, 4, 5) not in the inner world of his mind but "restricted you on all sides to the configuration of human limbs" (*conf.*, 6, 4, 5). This false image of God is responsible for Augustine's spiritual peacelessness, because it offers no safe place for his "storms of emotion" (*conf.*, 6, 3, 4). The moral maladjustment of a perverted love orientation and his greed for "honours, profits, marriage" (*conf.*, 6, 6, 9), as well as his "disease of the flesh with all its deadly desirability" (*conf.*, 6, 12, 21), have not yet been cured and are pushing on "the sickness of my soul" (*conf.*, 6, 4, 6): "By so desiring, I endured the bitterest of struggles" (*conf.*, 6, 6, 9).²⁸

²⁷ Augustine discusses Alypius' addiction to the circus games in the context of the salvation of the soul ("At once he was struck by a wound to his soul that was deeper (*graviore vulnere*) than the wound the combatant he was now eager to watch suffered to his body" (*conf.*, 6, 8, 13), and parallelizes the successive effect of grace on Alypius with his own: "This, however, was being stored up in his memory as a medicine for him in the future [*medicinam futuram*] (*conf.*, 6, 9, 14). Just as Monica's warnings indicate the divine will, Augustine's criticism of the games is in truth the work of God: "It was not I who had reproached him, though, but you" (*conf.*, 6, 7, 12).

²⁸ Augustine also sees this peaceless constitution of the soul as a lack of freedom when he describes himself as a "slave of lust" (*conf.*, 6, 15, 25). Hereby, he refers to his emphatic concept of freedom as freedom for good. See *lib. arb.*, 1, 15, 109: There is "no true freedom except the freedom of the happy and those who are attached to the eternal law." This idea refers to the Platonic *Gorgias* (466a-479c), where Socrates explains that only he who knows and acts

Augustine suffers from the aftermath of his glory (“it confused [*vertebat*] my mind even more”, *conf.* 6, 6, 10), and consumes himself with sorrows (*conf.*, 6, 6, 10), being “in the same mud of hungering [*fruendi*] after the momentary, fleeting things that were tearing me apart [*dissipantibus me*]” (*conf.*, 6, 11, 18). Because, by enjoyment (*frui*) of transient goods, he inverts the divine order which commands only to use them (*uti*), he misses the goal of his pursuit of happiness: “And if any good fortune smiled on me, I was reluctant to grasp it because just before I seized it, it always fluttered out of reach” (*conf.*, 6, 6, 10). The desperate attempt to find happiness in the enjoyment of perishable and corruptible things disturbs his peace of mind and leads to “sighing and groaning” (*conf.*, 6, 14, 24), because “winds were blowing and driving my heart first one way and then another” (*conf.*, 6, 11, 20). Augustine describes the climax of his emotional suffering, the separation from his long-standing concubine, in the context of his view that the lover integrates the object of his love in his or her own identity, as intrapsychic fragmentation and tearing out a part of his self: “My heart [...] was broken and pierced, leaving a trail of blood” (*conf.*, 6, 15, 25). This mental rupture in the turn to lower goods or to evil threatens to lead to a dissolution of the personal self, “as if I were already dead” (*conf.*, 6, 1, 1).

As a doctor and therapist of his mental illness Augustine sees, unlike the philosophical tradition,²⁹ not philosophy but the triune God. Again, within the frame of his narrative construction of identity relating to his doctrine of grace, he interprets his mental peace- and restlessness as a divine indication of his moral and theological misorientation, which should point to the right path: “I became more pitiable, and you drew closer still” (*conf.*, 6, 16, 26).³⁰ This divine providence of Augustine’s journey through life “is everlasting” (*conf.*, 6, 14, 24) and brings “that broad and well-worn way of the world” to a happy end (*conf.*, 6, 14, 24). At the end of the book, Augustine notes that this goal is peaceful rest, thus harmonizing the content of his claim that absolute calm is granted only to *homo in pace* at the end of time with the formal composition: “You are the only rest (*requies*)” (*conf.*, 6, 26, 26).

for the good does truly what he wants, because only through the good the *eudaimonia* as the goal of all human aspiration can be achieved.

²⁹ See Plato, *Charm.*, 157ab; Epicurus, *gnom. vat.*, 54; Cicero, *Tusc.*, 3, 6, and (after Augustine) Boethius, *cons.*, 1, pr. 1.

³⁰ See *conf.*, 6, 9.

Confessions VII

The seventh book, which deals with Augustine's transition from youth (*adulescentia*) to manhood (*iuventus*), points out the connection between a failed identity constitution and a mistaken image of God too: "I was not even transparent to my own self. Whatever was not extended through some degree of space..., I judged that no such thing could exist [not even God, D. K.]" (*conf.*, 7, 1, 2). Nevertheless, Augustine's image of God has evolved: "I believed with all my heart that you were imperishable and invulnerable and immutable [*incorruptibilem et inviolabilem et incommutabilem*]" (*conf.*, 7, 1, 1). With the *immunitas* of God, Augustine highlights an essential characteristic of the divine nature, which goes hand in hand with his inviolable rest. However, because physical natures bound in space cannot have this immutability, Augustine's conception of God is not only wrong but also inconsistent, and consequently cannot be a haven of peace and tranquillity: "Meanwhile I was scrutinizing those things that are contained in space, and there I found no place to rest [*ad requiescendum*]" (*conf.*, 7, 7, 11). The idea of a physical but unchanging God is a reversal of the true order and prevents Augustine from fitting in with this order and thus finding inner peace: "This was the proper median and central zone of my salvation, to remain in your image and serve you by governing my body" (*conf.*, 7, 7, 11). As pure spirit, God is at the head of ontological and moral order, while man as a bodily as well as a spiritual being is created in the image of God only in his spiritual nature and occupies an intermediate position by exercising the dominion of the spirit over the body and by submission to God. In this sense, the integration of corporeality into the conception of God turns everything upside down.

In presenting his indoctrination on the true nature of God, Augustine revisits his interpretation of God as a healer in the sixth book as well as the therapeutic character of aversive affects:

Thanks to the unseen touch of your hand doing its healing work, my swelling began to go down, while my mental perception, formerly agitated and obscured, was getting better day by day thanks to the effective ointment of wholesome afflictions (*conf.*, 7, 8, 12).

This healing takes place through the acquaintance with the *Platonicorum libri* (*conf.*, 7, 9, 13), which proclaim the spirituality of God and locate the knowledge of God in the spirit of man: "All this warned me to come back to myself. I

entered deep within myself under your guidance, for you became my helper”³¹ (*conf.*, 7, 10, 16). This new realization is, firstly, linked to the insight that knowledge of God and pious love are connected with each other (“Love knows it”, *conf.*, 7, 10, 16), and secondly, that the fragmented and broken identity has been a salutary chastisement by God: “And I realized that... you have made my soul dwindle away (*tabescere fecisti*) like the threads of a cobweb” (*conf.*, 7, 10, 16). The bitter remedy motivates misguided Augustine to continue with his search for God—with success: “And you called from far off, ‘Truly I am who I am’ [*immo vero ego sum qui sum*]” (*conf.*, 7, 10, 16). The biblical name of God (Ex. 3: 14) is an emphatic reference to the fact that the Christian God as well as the Neoplatonic divine is the paradigm of identity in the sense of selfsameness: “You who are the same [*idem*] forever” (*conf.*, 7, 20, 27).³² Even the problem of evil, which Augustine saw satisfactorily clarified for many years only by Manichaean dualism, can be solved now by referring to the Neoplatonically inspired *privatio boni*-theory: While only God “abides unchangingly” (*conf.*, 7, 11, 17) in the emphatic sense of the word, all other things are *qua* being creatures subject to becoming and change. Because the notion of destroying implies harm, and the concept of damage presupposes the existence of a good diminished by the damage, all created destructible things must be good. The fact that things are good to varying degrees is not a shortcoming, but a sign of the well-formed order of goods (*conf.*, 7, 13, 19).³³ Against the Manichean idea of a struggle between a realm of darkness and a realm of light Augustine states: “... because there is nothing outside of it [i.e. of God’s created world, D. K.] that could burst into it and cause the order that you have placed upon it to become perishable” (*conf.*, 7, 13, 19).

Augustine no longer conceives sin as substantial, but as a “deviation of the will that is misdirected away from the highest essence, which is you who are God” (*conf.*, 7, 16, 22). Interesting is Augustine’s explication of this will: the evil will is, firstly, a will that turns to lower-ranking goods in a way that is only due to those of higher rank—this will coincides with the perverted love that we have already discussed (*conf.*, 7, 16, 22). Secondly, it is a will “that casts out what lies

³¹ This is a critique of the Neoplatonic *superbia* as well as a reference to his theology of grace.

³² See also *conf.*, 7, 20, 26.

³³ See *lib. arb.*, 3, 9, 91: “Likewise, you should think about the differences of souls, so that you too realize here that the misfortune that hurts you also serves to ensure that the perfection of the universe does not lack those souls who have had to become unhappy because they wanted to be sinful.”

deep within it” (*conf.*, 7, 16, 22)—this describes the externalization of identity through the integration of the transitory object of love into the self, which thereby is threatened in its integrity. Moreover, the evil will is a will that “puffs itself up” (*conf.*, 7, 16, 22). Augustine here hints at pride (*superbia*) as the central human vice and mainspring of the Fall (*civ.*, 14, 13), which favours perverted self-love over the love of God and strives to take on the rank of God himself.³⁴ On the other hand, the *humilitas* (*conf.*, 7, 18, 24) exemplarily shown by Christ is the central virtue of those who are gripped by the true love of God. In *conf.* 7, 10, 16, and 17, 23, Augustine reports on two Neoplatonic ascensions to God. He describes their aftermaths by revival of the metaphor of spiritual food intended to fill the inner emptiness: “...carrying with me no more than a loving memory and, as it were, longing to smell the sweet savour of food that I could not as yet consume” (*conf.*, 7, 17, 23). The lasting enjoyment of God as well as the integration of God into his own self (metaphorically described as incorporation) and its healing transformation will only take place when Augustine recognizes Christ as “mediator between God and humanity” (*conf.*, 7, 18, 24). Until then, he remains in the *regio dissimilitudinis*: “Then I discovered that I was far away from you, in a place of unlikeness” (*conf.*, 7, 10, 16). This *regio dissimilitudinis* is relevant to our topic (“being unlike” is a counter-concept to “identity” in the sense of “sameness” and “self-sameness”), and can be interpreted in various ways.³⁵ Enlightening in this regard is Augustine’s statement about the works of creation in the context of the interpretation of Gen. 1: 1: “The further things are from you, the more unlike you (*dissimilius*) they become—and not in terms of physical distance” (*conf.*, 12, 7, 7). “Unlikeness” thus refers to the relationship with God: if Augustine doesn’t succeed in integrating the divine into his own self through enduring enjoyment (*frui*) of God, and in doing so becomes like him (as far as this is possible for human beings), he is still estranged from God and himself as a living being created in the image of God (*imago Dei*) and thus misses his genuine identity. In a certain sense, he is also “dissimilar” to himself in his striving and pursuits, because he is tormented by the unpacified discord between right and misguided love or good and evil will—it is no coincidence that Augustine elaborates on this struggle of will in the following book in detail. Thirdly, he is also alienated from the mind as the core of his self.³⁶ The mind acts as the place of reunification of the individual which is divided in

³⁴ See Augustine’s narration of the pear theft in *conf.*, 2, 4, 9; 4, 14. Overall, there are 32 references to *superbia* in books 1–9 of the *Confessions* (Trelenberg 271).

³⁵ For the Platonic origin of this thought, cf. Plato, *Pol.*, 273e; and Ferguson.

³⁶ See Plato’s characterization of the rational soul part (*logistikon*) as “inner man (*anthrôpos*)” (*rep.*, 9, 588c).

past, present and future, thus creating unity in the diachronically developing self.³⁷ It identifies the present with the past self as well as with the future self and makes these different selves similar to each another. With regard to social peace, false enjoyment of transient goods generates difference (*dissimilitudo*) and opposition between people too. While those who enjoy God are like each other in their shared pursuit of the vision of God and live in peace (*en. Ps.*, 84, 10), those who cling to temporal things struggle for limited goods that cannot be common possessions of all, and thereby become dissimilar and hostile to one another.

The seventh book closes with reference to rest and peace in God together with Augustine's Christian demarcation to the Platonic tradition. While the Neoplatonists teach "to see the homeland of peace [*patriam pacis*] ...[they] fail to find the way to it" because of the disregard for Christ's salvific act (*conf.*, 7, 21, 27).

Confessions VIII

The gracious gift of being "more firmly established in you" (*conf.*, 8, 1, 1), which far exceeds mere knowledge of God and at the same time goes hand in hand with a greater firmness and stability in the self, is the theme of the eighth book. The familiar motifs from the previous books are taken up again. People burdened by "those things that seem good [*quae videntur bona*]" (*conf.*, 8, 1, 2) are characterized as "vain [*vani*]" (*conf.*, 8, 1, 2), so that their inner emptiness is grasped conceptually. Rightly guided love is called again the therapeutic of this emptiness as well as of mental peacelessness: "Let my very bones be flooded with love for you [*dilectione tua*]" (*conf.*, 8, 1, 1). The absence of a lasting peace in the self is related to the changeability of the created world: "Why is it that one part of things alternates between advance and decline, conflict and reconciliation?" (*conf.*, 8, 2, 8).

While the previous books spoke primarily of the dichotomy of right and misguided love, Augustine now discusses intrapsychic peacelessness as a struggle between the remaining perverted will, solidified by time and habituation, and the new will. In contrast to the evil will, which strives for the enjoyment of perishable goods, the pious will implies "to enjoy you, o God" (*conf.*, 8, 5, 10).³⁸

³⁷ See Augustine's analysis of time in book 11.

³⁸ Emotions, which Augustine summarizes under the generic term "love", are closely connected with the will: "They are all ...nothing other than volitions" (*civ.*, 14, 6). Reversely, Augustine also sums up the will as love (*amor*) (*conf.*, 13, 9, 10). Accordingly, he describes the struggle of

The designation of God as “the only sure pleasure” (*conf.*, 8, 5, 10) refers to the lastingness of God and the spiritual peace of those who love God. But Augustine is not that far yet. There still rages in him a painful volitional war:³⁹ “And so my two wills, one old, the other new, one physical, the other spiritual, were in conflict with one another and by their strife [*discordando*] were shattering [*dissipabant*] my soul” (*conf.*, 8, 5, 10). This inner struggle causes a split in the self and frustrates a harmonious identity formation. In addition to tendencies of striving (*voluntates*), Augustine also knows a decision-making faculty (*liberum arbitrium*),⁴⁰ which judges the *voluntates* and expresses a preference regarding their effectiveness to come into action. But weakness of the will (*difficultas*),⁴¹ as one of many punishments for original sin, prevents this preference of goodwill from being put into action. Augustine explains the fact, that hereby the personal self is divided in several ways, as follows:

I was enmeshed in both but more in the form of desire that I approved of in myself than in the one I disapproved of. For in that which I disapproved, my ego was less itself [*magis iam non ego*], because I was to a great extent already enduring it against my will [*invitus*] rather than engaging in it willingly [*volens*] (*conf.*, 8, 5, 11).⁴²

Augustine is at war with himself:⁴³ “With what rods of condemnation did I not lash my soul, to make it follow me as I tried to go after you? And it resisted, recoiled, but did not excuse itself” (*conf.*, 8, 7, 18). During this time, Augustine hears several conversion reports: the public confession of the rhetorician Marius Victorinus to Christianity, Pontician’s report on the Egyptian ascetic

will as a conflict between the love of God and the perverted desire: “Likewise I was convinced that it was better for me to give myself up to your love than to give myself up to my desire; but although the former course of action was both attractive and convincing, the latter was more tempting and had me in its coils” (*conf.*, 8, 5, 12, Hammond’s translation slightly modified). See also Kiesel “Die Emotionstheorie”; and “Voluntas.”

³⁹ For different interpretations of the will struggle see Brachtendorf “Augustine’s Notion”; Müller; and Kiesel “Wille und Personalität.”

⁴⁰ See den Bok.

⁴¹ On the Augustinian concept of *difficultas* see Drecoll and Kudella 117. See also *conf.*, 8, 10, 22: “So I was in conflict with myself, and my very identity was disintegrating, and the actual disintegration was in fact taking place quite against my will... for I was a son of Adam.”

⁴² I changed Hammond’s translation slightly.

⁴³ In connection with our topic it is noteworthy that, analysing his will-struggle, Augustine speaks of his refusal “to serve in your army [*militare tibi*]” (*conf.*, 8, 5, 11). See also *conf.*, 9, 8, 17, where Augustine tells us about his friend Evodius: “Then he put military service (*militia*) behind him and girded himself for your service instead.”

Antonius, and the instruction of two imperial officials in Trier, who had been inspired to a Christian departure from all secular aspirations by a coincidental encounter with the biography of Antonius. But these narratives result in even greater self-hatred: “The more intensely I loved [*amabam*] those salutary intentions that I heard of... the more I came to detest and loathe myself [*oderam*] in comparison with them” (*conf.*, 8, 7, 17).

As in the sixth book, Augustine sees his mental state as a “disease [*morbo*]” (*conf.*, 8, 7, 17), culminating in a state of crisis necessary for healing. Augustine also interprets this emotional pain as divine chastisement: “So I was sick and tormented. ...You redoubled the lashes of fear [*timoris*] and shame [*pudoris*] to stop me from giving up again” (*conf.*, 8, 11, 25). His healing and devotion to *continentia* is described by Augustine in the famous garden scene (*conf.*, 8, 12, 28-30) in the context of his meta-narrative as the work of divine grace.

Confessions IX

In the ninth book Augustine reports on his retirement from the profession as a rhetorician, the retreat with his friends to an estate in Cassiciacum, and the subsequent return to Africa. During the trip, the mother dies in Ostia. Shortly before her death, she and Augustine share a Christian and Neoplatonic-inspired vision. All these decisions and experiences are based on the fact that God has “pierced our heart with your love [*caritate tua*]” (*conf.*, 9, 2, 3). The heart, which in antiquity was the seat of the spirit, is now so permeated with the love of God that the identity of Augustine has changed: he has become another. The identification with the divine Word is summarized by Augustine again in metaphors of the incorporation into the self: “And so we carried with us your words fixed deep within” (*conf.*, 9, 2, 3). For that very reason the good will gains in strength (*conf.*, 9, 2, 4), the emptiness of the heart fills with “joy”, and God begins “to grow sweet to my taste” (*conf.*, 9, 4, 10). The attachment to the “eternal simplicity [*aeterna simplicitate*]” (*conf.*, 9, 4, 10) motivates the desire to no longer fall into a splitting of the self in the manifold of the variable: “I no longer wanted to be dragged out into the diversity [*multiplicari*] of worldly goods,⁴⁴ both devouring time and being devoured by it” (*conf.*, 9, 4, 10).

In the context of a meditation of Psalm 4: 9, Augustine reflects on the rest (*requies*) in peace (*pax*) and on the selfsameness of the divine essence (*id ipsum*), and in this way explicitly binds together these three issues systematically

⁴⁴ I modified Hammond’s translation.

(*conf.*, 9, 4, 11).⁴⁵ Since the burden of his past sins disturbs this newfound peace, he signs in for baptism in Milan. The reference to the motif of peace is accompanied by the dominant presence of mother Monica in the ninth book. As a formative characteristic of Monica, Augustine names her peacefulness: She was “behaving as a peacemaker [*pacificam*]” (*conf.*, 9, 9, 21), providing for reconciliation between those who quarrelled. Patiently she endured both her husband’s infidelity without instigating “acrimony [*simulatatem*]” (*conf.*, 9, 9, 19), as well as the initial dislike of her mother-in-law, “who was stirred up against her by the mutterings of spiteful servant girls” (*conf.*, 9, 9, 20). This maximum peacefulness is only possible because Monica has been taught by Christ, “her inmost teacher” of peace (*conf.*, 9, 9, 21). Generally, Augustine also emphasizes in the narrative of his mother’s life story the initial sinfulness of human beings trapped in concupiscence, which must be healed by the divine doctor. In the case of Monica this happened through the sharp tongue of a slave woman who caught little Monica nibbling on her parents’ wine supply and called her a “drunkard”:

How did you restore her, how did you heal her? Surely what you did was to provoke a harsh and sharp reproof from another soul, and use it as a surgeon’s knife from your secret storehouse; and with one stroke you cut away that rottenness! (*conf.*, 9, 8, 18).⁴⁶

The communion between mother and son in Christ culminates in the Vision of Ostia. The contemplative, Neoplatonic-Christian ascension⁴⁷ leads to the “food of truth” which “does not have the capacity either to *have* existed, or to *come* to exist. It simply is, because it is eternal” (*conf.*, 9, 10, 24), and where the being in relationship with the creator becomes impressive:

Imagine... that anything which comes into being through transition grew silent to that person (for all these things make the same declaration, if only one

⁴⁵ See Augustine’s comment on the death of his son Adeodatus, who now rests in the peace of God: “You were quick to take his life from this Earth, but I am not at all anxious when I remember him, for there is nothing for me to fear from his boyhood, or adolescence, and certainly not from his manhood” (*conf.*, 9, 6, 14).

⁴⁶ According to Augustine, physical pain can also be a divine chastisement, as it is shown by the following anecdote: “But I have not forgotten... the harshness of your punishment, and the marvelous swiftness of your mercy. You were tormenting me with toothache; and when it grew so severe that I could not even speak... As soon as we were knelt down in a suppliant posture, the pain vanished” (*conf.*, 9, 4, 12).

⁴⁷ For a detailed interpretation see Brachtendorf “Augustine’s Notion” 189-197.

could hear it—we have not made ourselves, but the One who abides for ever has made us (*conf.*, 9, 10, 25).

Important to our question is the immediate chronological connection between the ascent to timeless beings and the death of the mother, which on the one hand illustrates the ontological difference between the eternity of the creator and the transitoriness of the creatures, and, on the other hand, shows the way to eternal life and the enduring fellowship with beloved fellow creatures through the pious bonding with the creator. Nevertheless, as with the death of his childhood friend, Augustine portrays his grief in terms of a torn and divided self, and thus as a disruption of the personal identity arising from false love and “affection according to the flesh [*carnalis affectus*]” (*conf.*, 9, 13, 34): “Since, therefore, I was bereft of that great consolation that she provided, my soul was hurt and my life was in torment, for my life and hers had been as one [*una facta erat*]” (*conf.*, 9, 12, 30). His prayer is not answered by God with a relief of the pain of separation in the first place. As in the previous books, he interprets this as divine discipline and doctrine with the aim of bringing the “habitual behaviour” of carnal love orientation as “fettters” [*consuetudinis vinculum*] home to Augustine.

But devout love is also not immune to worries, fears, and mental peacelessness in a fallen world. While, immediately after her death, Monica’s “manner of life” and “her unfeigned faith” (*conf.*, 9, 12, 29) let Augustine feel safe in the knowledge that the deceased would enter eternal blessedness, at the time of writing the *Confessions* he shed “a very different kind of tears for her, your servant. They flow from a spirit struck by the thought of the dangers threatening every soul that dies in Adam”⁴⁸ (*conf.*, 9, 13, 34). His request for forgiveness of Monica’s sins in the name of *Christus medicus*⁴⁹ (*conf.*, 9, 13, 35) takes up the topic of grace-induced salvation and at the same time reverses the relationship between Monica and her son: as Monica had prayed during her lifetime for the salvation of her son, Augustine now appeals as an advocate of his mother to God, thus referring to the mutual care and peace in the Christian community of love. This “peace” (*conf.*, 9, 13, 37) in Christ, as the embodiment of which he has described Monica, he solicits now for her and thus gives the ninth book a worthy conclusion.

⁴⁸ That is why the dying Augustine has David’s penitential psalms hung on the wall, being able to pray for the remission of his sins without interruption. See Possidius, *Vita Augustini*, 31, 1–4.

⁴⁹ On the Augustinian concept of *Christus medicus* see Arbesmann 1954.

Confessions X

Although Augustine's autobiographical account concludes with the ninth book, the tenth book is central to his narrative identity construction in several ways. On the one hand, it offers the author's self-analysis at the time of writing,⁵⁰ and in this way links the past with the present self as well as the historical with the writing self, which selects and interprets subjectively certain experiences:⁵¹ writing Augustine describes young Augustine and his experiences in the context of his current convictions and thus gives his narrative a specific colouring with his theology of grace. In addition, Augustine analyzes the faculty of memory in the tenth book, thereby addressing a mental faculty that is indispensable for the identity construction of temporal beings, and deals with the inner man, whom he understands as a place of divine and self-knowledge.

Already the beginning of the book points to the connection between knowledge of God and personal identity: "You know me: let me know you, let me know even as I am known" (*conf.*, 10,1 1,1), and "I am open to you, Lord, whoever I am" (*conf.*, 10, 2, 2). This connection has a paradoxical character. On the one hand, the knowledge of God requires self-knowledge, and on the other hand, knowledge of God is the presupposition of self-knowledge. The fact that Augustine deals with memory to solve both is motivated by his Platonic heritage: according to the Platonic doctrine of *anamnêsis*, the soul has seen the divine (the ideas) prior to being incarnated in the body, and must remember this vision for the purpose of self-knowledge and alignment with God (*homoiosis theô*).⁵²

Augustine discusses as possible memory contents the images of physical things perceived through the senses, scientific teaching contents (grammar, dialectics, arithmetic, geometry) as well as affects developed in the past with

⁵⁰ There are about ten years between the death of his mother and the writing of the *Confessions*.

⁵¹ To be sure, Augustine himself would see his narrative construction of identity as objective in the sense that he regards his meta-narrative (i.e. the doctrine of grace) as biblically founded and thus as divine truth. Nevertheless, the uncertainties about one's own identity and the requests to God often expressed in the *Confessions* show the fundamental epistemic uncertainty (*ignorantia*) of fallen man, and Augustine himself confesses that the (subjective) interpretation of one's own experiences can change in the course of personal development (*conf.*, 10, 14, 21).

⁵² See Plato, *Phd.* 72e-77a; and *Phdr.* 249bc. On the question of *a priori* knowledge see *conf.*, 10, 10, 17, and on the connection of memory and identity *conf.*, 10, 16, 25: "I am a creature who remembers; I am a mind."

certain experiences. For all memory contents, Augustine establishes a link with the topic of personal identity. In the course of discussing sensually perceived natural phenomena, he expresses his astonishment on the power of memory with a metaphor that considers the internalization of these things: “Even so, when I looked at them with my eyes, I did not absorb [*nec... absorbui*] them into myself by the act of looking at them”⁵³ (*conf.*, 10, 8, 15). The concluding insight that it is not the objects themselves, but merely their pictures that are within Augustine, expresses their significance for Augustine’s identity too: Before he can ask the question of the origin of natural beauties and powers or the place of man in the natural order within the framework of a sophisticated identity construction, he must first perceive their existence and incorporate this into his memory as permanent knowledge.

Augustine describes the learning of sciences and corresponding intellectual operations in terms of a synthetic and order-setting unity: “This is nothing than using our thought processes to bind together (*cogitando quasi conligere*) things that our memory contains in a random disorder” (*conf.*, 10, 11, 18). It is noteworthy that Augustine uses in his etymological interpretation of the verb *cogitare* (“to think”) the same terminology as in his analysis of personal fragmentation and dissolution of the self in the transient manifold of the external world. Because the contents of knowledge “must be gathered up again so that they can be known: that is, out of their diffusion [*ex quadam dispersione*] they must be bound together: from this comes the term ‘cogitate’” (*conf.*, 10, 11, 18). Augustine’s insight that only the mind (*animus*) is capable of this synthesizing activity, is also not surprising. It is true that the human mind belongs to the mutable works of creation,⁵⁴ but insofar as it is an intangible nature and actualizes the god-like image of man as well as, ideally, the orientation towards God, it is the unifying faculty in the human being par excellence. Also, moods and feelings preserved in the mind are central in the context of human identity formation. On the one hand, the reconstruction of experiences is essential to the memory of emotions associated with these experiences: without the depth and density, aversive affects as well as pleasurable emotions bring about, human experiences are empty. On the other hand, the reflection and emotional mirroring of past emotions impressively show changes in self-image and identity over time: “When I happily recall my past sadness, my mind experiences

⁵³ I modified Hammond’s translation slightly.

⁵⁴ See *conf.*, 10, 35, 36: “So too you yourself are not the mind, because you are God and Lord over the mind. And all these things undergo change, but you remain unchangeable over all things”.

happiness and my memory contains sadness” (*conf.*, 10, 14, 21). As we have seen in the previous books, the author of the *Confessions*, in remembrance of once-enjoyed sexual lust, may feel sadness, repentance, and revulsion for his former moral depravity, or gratitude for emotional pain, motivating him to long for God. The thought of mental processing or “digestion”⁵⁵ of previously emotionally troubling experiences can also be found here: “...happiness and sadness are like sweet and bitter food for it. When they are committed to memory, it is as if they were transferred into the stomach to be stored there; they can no longer impart any taste” (*conf.*, 10, 14, 21). This motif of incorporation as a metaphor for integration into one’s identity can also be found in the following passages, where Augustine ponders the divine presence in human mind: “You breathed your fragrance onto me: and I drew in my breath and I pant for you. I have tasted you: and now I hunger and thirst for more. You have touched me: and I have burned for your peace (*pacem tuam*)” (*conf.*, 10, 27, 38).⁵⁶ Augustine defines the divine food, which he has tasted in small bites, more closely as the “blessed life” (*conf.*, 10, 17, 29), “enjoyment of the truth” (*conf.*, 10, 22, 33), and—as in the above quote—as peace. Because only God can offer reliable happiness, true peace of mind and its unclouded joy are found exclusively in him: “And that is the real ‘blessed life’—rejoicing toward you, about you, because of you” (*conf.*, 10, 22, 32). This joy again is an expression of pious love which enjoys God alone. In this material world, however, people are only “blessed in their hope of it” (*conf.*, 10, 20, 29): “You shine brightly and are pleased, and loved, and longed-for” (*conf.*, 10, 2, 2). Only in eternity God is “present experience” (*conf.*, 10, 20, 29). Even in the state of grace, man is still threatened by the disturbing invasion of perverted love, and suffers of mental strife: “Surely human life on earth is a time of interminable trial?” (*conf.*, 10, 28, 39).⁵⁷

In the last third of the book, Augustine describes his present state of mind as still tormented by wrong love which he outlines through the triad of lusts in 1 Joh. 2: 15-17: “Anyone who loves something else as well as you, but does not love it for your sake, loves you the less as a result” (*conf.*, 10, 29, 40). Again, Augustine points repeatedly to God’s unerring insight into the depths of the human soul: “After all, Lord, what is there of myself that could stay hidden before you—in whose sight the bottomless pit of human guilt is laid bare—even if I did not want to make confession to you?” (*conf.*, 10, 2, 2). God knows the trials and tribula-

⁵⁵ The metaphor of digesting emotional experiences is found excessively in Nietzsche. See *Nachlass 1881*, 11[258]; *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* V 364; and see Also *sprach Zarathustra* III, Vom Geist der Schwere 2.

⁵⁶ See *conf.*, 10, 17, 26.

⁵⁷ See *conf.*, 10, 32, 48.

tions of Augustine's soul, which make him question his own identity: "Before your eyes I have become a puzzle to myself" (*conf.*, 10, 33, 50). False human self-love and the penalty of ignorance prevent true insight into the inner self, which can only succeed with divine help: "But I do not know whether I am like this."⁵⁸ In this matter I know myself less well than you. I beg you, O my God, make me clear to myself as well" (*conf.*, 10, 37, 62). God also knows the authenticity of his grief over the remaining false desires: "On this subject you know how my heart groans to you" (*conf.*, 10, 37, 60). Only the temporary despair of God's grace and the self-induced relapse into concupiscence can alienate man from God and thus from himself too: "I have been cast out from before your eyes" (*conf.*, 10, 41, 66).

Among the lusts of the flesh (*concupiscentia carnalis*), especially sexual imaginations and nocturnal ejaculations torture him, in addition to culinary temptations, against which he leads "a daily war [*cotidianum bellum*]"⁵⁹ (*conf.*, 10, 30, 43). He reflects the latter in the context of self-alienation and a disturbed identity: "Surely, O Lord my God, I am still myself when sleeping? But there is such a big difference between my waking self and my sleeping self in that moment when I make the transition from here into sleep or back from sleep to here!" (*conf.*, 10, 30, 41). The pleasures of hearing and the "physical pleasure of my eyes" disturb peace and "rest" (*conf.*, 10, 34, 51) of the soul too. The temptation of curiosity "diverts my thoughts" (*conf.*, 10, 35, 57) from the turn to the inner self as a place of God's presence and of unity (*conf.*, 10, 34, 52), outward into the sphere of diversity and dispersion. The healing of "that pestilence" of bitterness (*conf.*, 10, 37, 60) takes place solely through the ministry of God's grace (*conf.*, 10, 29, 40; 30, 42). In the form of "continence [*contentia*]" through which "we are joined together and restored to wholeness, from which we trickled away into multiplicity" (*conf.*, 10, 29, 40), it unifies the personal self and creates a limited inner peace that leads to the "fullness of peace [*pacem plenariam*]" (*conf.*, 10, 30, 42; 38, 63; 11, 65) of the eternal blessed in the peaceful communion of "those who eat and are satisfied" (*conf.*, 10, 13, 70). The central notion of *continentia* should not be understood exclusively as sexual abstinence. As has often been said,⁶⁰ the literal meaning of *continentia* is "holding together", and, in the light of the dispersion and fragmentation of the self into manifold

⁵⁸ I slightly changed Hammond's translation.

⁵⁹ My translation. For the remaining inner war in the baptized see. *Iul.*, 2, 7, 5: "...in the baptized, so to speak, survives a civil war of internal mistakes;" and 4, 33, 2: "You do not spend a day without an internal war."

⁶⁰ See Fischer 76; and von Herrmann, 33.

external things, it is to be understood as a desired accompanying phenomenon of the orientation towards God.

Confessions XI

With the eleventh book begins the interpretation of the creation account in Gen. 1, 2, 3. For Augustine's narrative identity construction, this is just as relevant as the ontological location of man (and therefore his own) in creation and his relationship to the creator, as well as for his concept of personal identity as a peaceful inner-soul unity that can succeed only by turning to the creator.⁶¹

The interpretation of the first verse of the bible, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," evokes the question of God's activity before this beginning, and thus the idea of a temporality of God. Augustine solves the problem with reference to the concept of creation through the eternal Word that he equates with Christ (*conf.*, 11, 9, 11), and the fact that time itself is one of the works of creation (*conf.*, 11, 14, 17). On the other hand, the creator himself is "antecedent to all times (*ante omnia tempora*)" (*conf.*, 11, 13, 16), and his "eternity (*aeternitas*)" (*conf.*, 11, 1, 1) is, in contrast to the discursive and linear succession of temporal beings, an all-embracing presence of the "all at once" (*conf.*, 11, 8, 9): "Your 'today' is eternity" (*conf.*, 11, 13, 16). The very same thing is the reason for God's absolute identity, who is "always the same [*idem ipse*]" (*conf.*, 11, 13, 16), because he is not subject to diachronic change. As opposed to this, the presence of man is so fleeting that it cannot be grasped because it "has no extension in time" (*conf.*, 11, 15, 20).

The past and the future too are subject to volatility: "In eternity nothing passes, but everything is in the present" (*conf.*, 11, 11, 13). The fact that in a certain sense the "past no longer exists; and what is future does not yet exist" (*conf.*, 11, 15, 18), refers to the ontological inferiority of the temporal. It is also significant that the human mind, as an entity created in the image of God, has the function of visualizing the three times (*conf.*, 11, 20, 26) and thereby bringing them into being in an imperfect imitation of the divine act of creation (*conf.*, 11, 17, 22).⁶² The diachronic change of man and his imprisonment in either re-

⁶¹ The reference to the topic "personal identity" in the last three books of the *Confessions* is, as will be shown below, remarkable. In this respect, Augustine's exegetical deliberations concerning the creation account in the *Confessions* differ from his remarks in *De Genesi adversus Manichaeos*, *De Genesi ad Litteram liber imperfectus*, and *De Genesi ad Litteram*. I am grateful for this comment to the reviewer.

⁶² See the Platonic concept of time (*chronos*) as a moving image of eternity (*aiôn*) in *Tim.* 37d.

penitance or longing for the past and in his concern or desire for the future are partly responsible for disturbances of his identity: “My life is a kind of distraction. ...But I became alienated [*dissilui*] as I entered into time, not knowing the order in which it passes, and my thoughts, the inmost part of my soul, are ripped apart [*dilaniantur*] by turbulent vicissitudes, until I flow back together toward you, purged and shining with the fire of your love” (*conf.*, 11, 29, 39). Because times never rest (*conf.*, 11, 11, 13), Augustine’s heart, bound to temporal things, is without peace, “until I flow back together toward you, purged, and shining with the fire of your love” (*conf.*, 11, 29, 39). This confluence in God, which allows him to “stand fast and be established in you” (*conf.*, 11, 30, 40), is again expressed by Augustine metaphorically as an incorporation of spiritual nourishment into his own self: “Let me drink of you” (*conf.*, 11, 1, 4). This transgression of the ontological boundary between man and God becomes possible through Christ: “Your right hand has supported me in my Lord who as the Son of Man is mediator between you who are the One, and us who are many.... I forgot what is past, and instead of being distracted I reach out, not for what is in the future and so transitory, but for those things which are before me: I press forward, going in the right direction, rather than being distracted, to the prize of my highest calling” (*conf.*, 11, 29, 39).

Augustine wishes the peace which the harmonious unity of the self will bring with it, not only for himself, but in “brotherly love” (*conf.*, 11, 1, 3) also for the neighbour. In turn, the desire for universal peace expresses Augustine’s own activity as a peacemaker, thus fulfilling Jesus’ commandment to be peaceful (*pacificus*) (*conf.*, 11, 1, 1).

Confessions XII

In the twelfth book Augustine presents a Neoplatonic interpretation of Gen. 1: 1-2. According to Psalm 113, 16, Augustine understands God’s “heaven” created in the beginning to be “the heaven of heaven” and “intellectual creation [*creatura... aliqua intellectualis*]” (*conf.*, 12, 9, 9), where the city of God (*civitas Dei*) is gathered with all angels and saints.⁶³ On the other hand, he interprets the first created “Earth” in Gen. 1, 1 as unformed and dark matter (Gen. 1: 2), which represents the basic material for the formation of individual things. Due to the *creatio ex nihilo* (*conf.*, 12, 7, 7), all created things suffer to varying degrees from an ontological deficit: the higher the form of the creature, the closer it

⁶³ It is uncertain what Augustin understood exactly by the “heaven of heaven.” This interpretation can be found in Fuhrer 120.

is to God, and the farther it is from him, the more “unlike [*dissimilius*]” (*conf.*, 12, 7, 7) it is to him. With man’s task of perfecting his spiritual image in God to be similar to him to the maximum extent possible, the stability of the self, personal unity, and inner-soul peace emerge: God as a paradigm of identity (he is “the same and the same, and the same (*idipsum et idipsum et idipsum*),” *conf.* 12, 6, 7), is a haven of peace and tranquillity, while the restlessness of creatures is related to temporality as well as to matter-based variability (*conf.*, 12, 6, 6). The spiritually gifted beings have the option to pursue either the eternal and unchanging God or temporal and variable things, and thereby strengthen or weaken both their inner peace and their diachronic identity: “It is true that anything that clings so closely to an unchanging form that it does not change [though it is capable of changing]” (*conf.*, 12, 19, 28). This approach to God manifests through the love of God and neighbour (*conf.*, 12, 18, 27), which is realized by the above-mentioned spiritual creature in the consummation of pure love and thus “rises above all the whirling fluctuation of time” (*conf.*, 12, 9, 9). With the stabilization of one’s self and the inner peace thus effected, the external peace of communion with one another in heaven’s heaven goes hand in hand with the connection to

your loveliness without the blemish of abandoning it for something else: it is the pure intelligence of holy and spiritual things, who are the citizens of your city that is in heaven (above this visible heaven), harmoniously at one upon a foundation of peace [*stabilimento pacis*] (*conf.*, 12, 11, 12).

Augustine now sees the time before his conversion as a departure from the Eternal, whose inviting voice was drowned out by the “outcry of the unquiet [*tumultus impacatorum*]”, and to whose life-giving “fountain” he now returns “to drink from (*bibam*)” (*conf.*, 12, 10, 10). Augustine will not leave the shelter “beneath your wings” (*conf.*, 12, 11, 13)—a reference to the dove of peace between God and man that Noah sent after the Flood to explore the water level (Gen. 8: 11), as well as to the peacemaker Monica—or “turn aside you until you bind up all that I am, from this disintegrating [*dispersione*] and misshapen state, into the peace of my dearest mother ...and establish me [*confirmes*] for ever” (*conf.*, 12, 16, 23).

Peace is also the subject of Augustine’s hermeneutical reflections on the multiple sense of Scripture in *conf.* 12, 14, 17 and 32, 43, underlying his remarks on various possible interpretations of the discussed Genesis passage. In conformity with his previous analysis, he defines God as the source of immutable truth (*conf.*, 12, 30, 41), who can “bring forth harmony amid such a variety of

true opinions” (*conf.*, 12, 30, 41), and determines his very hermeneutic approach as “brotherly and peaceable [*fraternam ac pacificam*]” (*conf.*, 12, 25, 35). At the same time, it is an expression of the pious “love [*caritatem*] on account of which he whose words are we trying to explain said it all” (*conf.*, 12, 25, 35). This love connects the siblings in Christ both with each other and with God (*conf.*, 12, 30, 41), and stands in contrast with the false (self-)love of those who move “from truth to lies [*mendacium*]” (*conf.*, 12, 25, 34; see also 13, 25, 38).

Confessions XIII

The twelfth book presents an allegorical, historical and typological exegesis of the entire first creation account in Gen. 1-2: 3,⁶⁴ and at the same time offers a compilation of all theories that are systematically relevant to the topic of personal identity.

God’s absolute ontological identity (“for you yourself are the same” [*tu autem idem ipse es*], *conf.* 13, 18, 22)⁶⁵ is handled both from an ethical point of view (as the epitome of goodness he “can never be changed either for better or for worse”, *conf.* 13, 3, 4), and under the aspect of *beata vita*: “To you, it is not one thing to live, and another to live in bliss—because you are bliss itself” (*conf.*, 13, 3, 4). At the same time, the goodness of creation is described in terms of form, order, and unity: the divine design of the world by the shaping of unformed matter creates the unity (*unitas*) of things and subjects, and makes them a good (*bonum*) (*conf.*, 13, 2) that has a definite place in the *scala naturae* and the divine order. The fact that the individual works of creation are each judged by God to be “good”, and that only creation as a whole qualifies as “very good”, is due to Augustine’s explanation of the higher order of the tympanic structure of the world: “parts which, even though they are beautiful individually, come together to accomplish an even more attractive whole” (*conf.*, 13, 28, 43). By their giftedness with will and reason, natures who possess a rational mind (angels and men) are capable “to cleave [*haerere*] to you constantly” (*conf.*, 13 2, 3), and thus to reach “blessed rest [*ad beatam requiem*]” (*conf.*, 13, 8, 9), or by turning away from him fall into unrest and misfortune. While the attachment to the creator through the love of God as a gift of the Holy Spirit “sublimates us to that place” (*conf.*, 13, 9, 10), the sorrowful love and the oppressive burden of desires plunge us into the abyss (*conf.*, 13, 7, 8). Right love is inseparably connected with goodwill and, by being oriented towards the divine order of

⁶⁴ For the sake of brevity, a detailed analysis will be omitted.

⁶⁵ See *conf.*, 13, 31, 46: God, “who is... existence itself [*est est*]”

goods, at the same time ensures the order in the human soul, which finds therefore rest and peace: “What is out of its proper place is restless” (*conf.*, 13, 9, 10), but “in having goodwill do we find peace” (*conf.*, 13, 9, 10).

The disciples of goodwill and true love, who consider God alone as the object of enjoyment, while using all other things for the sake of God, sees Augustine symbolized in the mainland (Gen. 1: 6-10) which is separated from the water (i. e. the adherents of “worldly, earthly happiness”, *conf.*, 13, 17, 20).⁶⁶ In the context of personal identity, the Augustinian attribution of earth to life and bitter water to death is significant: as we have already seen, love integrates the beloved object into one’s own identity, thus assimilating the loving person to the beloved. While the love of God approaches the epitome and creator of all life, and while its pleasures are “life-giving [*vitales*]” (*conf.*, 13, 21, 29; 22, 32), the sinfully loving one becomes the slave of,

pride in self-aggrandizement, and delight in excessive sexual appetite, and toxic curiosity [which, D. K.] are operations of a soul that is dead—not dead in the sense that it is utterly inert, but because it departs from the wellspring of life and is adopted by this passing age and is conformed to it (*conf.*, 13, 21, 30).

His pleasures are in this sense “deadly [*mortiferis*]” (*conf.*, 13, 21, 29) because they result in the second and final death of eternal damnation.

In keeping with his conviction of the inviolable integrity of God, Augustine states that evil also is subject to the “command” of God and his order: he sets firm “limits, as to how far the waters [of evil, D. K] are allowed to advance so that their waves break upon themselves” (*conf.*, 13, 17, 20).

The condition of the possibility of an approximation of the human soul to God is also suggested by Augustine in the thirteenth book with deliberations, that come to their systematic conclusion in *De trinitate* (399-419) (Brachtendorf “Augustine’s Confessiones” 285-289): the divine trinity is represented in man through the unity of being [*esse*], knowing [*nosse*] and volition [*velle*] (*conf.*, 13, 11, 12).⁶⁷

Although Augustine in the thirteenth book still underlines the difference between that “which exists unchangeably, and knows unchangeably, and wills unchangeably” (*conf.*, 13, 11, 12), and man, who accomplishes all of this in the context of his *mutabilitas*, his already mentioned explanations of the spiritu-

⁶⁶ This is a pre-reference to the doctrine of the duality of *civitas Dei* and *civitas terrena* in *civ.* (412-426).

⁶⁷ Remarkable is Augustine’s view that inner Christian peace is the prerequisite for being able to grasp the secret of the Holy Trinity (*conf.*, 13, 11, 12).

al creature, which, when fully connected to God, is not subject to temporal change (*conf.*, 12, 19, 28), show that he considers a substantial approximation with God possible. This too is, like all good things that come to man, due “to your grace alone” (*conf.*, 13, 3, 4). Augustine summarizes this effect of grace in terms that suggest that God gives himself to the blessed and thus integrates himself into their selves: in the human being God gives himself by creating man in the *imago Dei*. When Augustine chooses, with a view to human knowledge, to say, “Whatever they see as being good, therefore, in the Spirit of God, it is not they but God who sees that it is good” (*conf.*, 13, 31, 46), then he seems to refer to the doctrine of Christ as inner teacher in *De magistro* (388–391) as well as to his doctrine of illumination (*vera rel.*, 71). After all, right-will is accompanied by the “love of God” which “has been shed abroad [*diffusa*] in our hearts” (*conf.*, 13, 31, 46), and in this way man becomes similar to the triune god.

The formal conclusion of the thirteenth book and the *Confessions* as a whole, discusses what the *homo sub gratia* hopes (*in spe*), firstly, for the end of earthly history, and secondly, for the consummation of his own creaturely existence. While Augustine’s soul is still “sad [*tristis*]” and in a state of restless trouble [*conturbas me*] (*conf.*, 13, 14, 15) even after God’s act of grace, the rest of God at the seventh day after the completion of his creation points to the perfect and never-ending rest of the community of the blessed at the end of time: “Lord God, grant us peace (for you have bestowed everything on us) the peace of rest, the peace of sabbath, peace where evening never comes” (*conf.*, 13, 25, 50). The motif that comes up in this quote which is part of his meta-narrative of divine grace continues throughout the following considerations. God, who will endow his chosen children with the unclouded peace of eternal bliss, is also the giver of that which justifies the reward of that blissful rest: “...after our works (likewise ‘very good’ because you bestowed them on us), should rest in you in the Sabbath of eternal life” (*conf.*, 13, 36, 51).⁶⁸ The following lines bring out the closest possible alignment with the divine as well as the associated integration of the creator into one’s own identity through the love of God: “Even then you will rest in us, as now you are at work in us; and so that rest of yours will pervade us just as those works of yours pervade us now” (*conf.*, 13, 37, 52). Once again, Augustine refers to the connection between the timelessness of God and his absolute peace and immutability: “But you, Lord, are always at work and always in repose: you do not see in time, act in time, rest in time; but yet you create our seeing in time, and time itself, and rest in time” (*conf.*, 13, 37, 52). As Augustine has already shown, inner peace requires turning

⁶⁸ See *conf.*, 13, 38, 53.

to the good. In this respect too, the holy goodness of God is the ideal: “You are the Good, you need no good thing, you are always at rest, since you yourself are your own rest” (*conf.*, 14, 38, 53).

His own alignment with and participation in this good is carried out by Augustine performatively with his final word, which also illustrates the prayer character of the *Confessions* as well as their form as a narrative identity construction under the guideline of a Christian meta-narrative: “Amen” (*conf.*, 13, 38, 53). Moreover, it etymologically refers to the theme of a peaceful and harmonious personal identity, secured by stability and permanence in God (the Hebrew verb root מא means “sustained...; reliable, firm, faithful; to last, to stay, to endure” (Fohrer 16f.), and at the same time it impressively reveals the peaceful *tranquillitas animi* of the one who blesses everything managed by divine providence with a “So be it”.



Works cited

- Arbesmann, Rudolf. "The Concept of Christus Medicus in St. Augustine," *Traditio*, vol. 10, 1954, pp. 1-28.
- Augustine of Hippo. *Confessions (Books 1-8)*, edited and translated by Carolyn J.-B. Hammond, Cambridge & London, Harvard University Press, 2014.
- . *Confessions (Books 9-13)*, edited and translated by Carolyn J.-B. Hammond, Cambridge & London, Harvard University Press, 2016.
- . *Confessiones-Bekenntnisse (Lat./Dt.)*. Übersetzt, herausgegeben und kommentiert von K. Flasch & B. Mojsisch, Stuttgart, Reclam, 2009.
- Atkins, Margaret. "Pax." *Augustinus-Lexikon*, edited by Cornelius Mayer, vol. 4, Basel-Stuttgart, Schwabe, 2014, pp. 566-573.
- Bodei, Remo. *Ordo amoris. Augustinus, irdische Konflikte und himmlische Glückseligkeit*. Wien, Edition Passagen, 1993.
- Brachtendorf, Johannes. *Augustins Confessiones*. Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005.
- Brachtendorf, Johannes. "Augustine's Notion of Freedom: Deterministic, Libertarian, or Compatibilistic." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2007, pp. 219-231.
- Budzik, Stanislaw. Die Weite der augustinischen Friedensauffassung. *Congresso Internazionale su S. Agostino nel XVI Centenario della Conversione 15-20 Settembre 1986*, Roma, Atti 3, 1987, Roma, Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, pp. 55-68.
- Canning, Raymond. "Using the Neighbour, Enjoying God: A Key to Augustine's Spirituality." *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, edited by Pauline Allen and Lawrence Cross, vol. 1, Brisbane, Australian Catholic University, 1999, pp. 319-325.
- Chadwick, Henry. "Frui-uti." *Augustinus-Lexikon*, edited by Cornelius Mayer, vol. 3, Basel-Stuttgart, Schwabe, 2004, pp. 70-75.
- den Bok, Nico. "Freedom of the Will. A Systematic and Biographical Sounding of Augustine's Thoughts on Human Willing." *Augustiniana*, vol. 44, 1994, pp. 237-270.
- Drecoll, Volker Henning. *Die Entstehung der Gnadenlehre Augustins*. Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 1999.
- Drecoll, Volker Henning & Kudella, Mirjam. *Augustin und der Manichäismus*. Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2011.
- Dupont, Anthony. "Using or Enjoying Humans. Uti and frui in Augustine." *Augustiniana*, vol. 54, 2004, pp. 475-506.

- Enders, Markus. "Das metaphysische Ordo-Denken in Spätantike und Frühem Mittelalter. Bei Augustinus, Boethius und Anselm von Canterbury." *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, vol. 104, no. 2, 1997, pp. 335-361.
- Feldmann, Erich. "Confessiones." *Augustinus-Lexikon*, edited by Cornelius Mayer, vol. 1, Basel-Stuttgart, Schwabe, 1986, pp. 1134-1193.
- Ferguson, Margaret. "Saint Augustine's Region of Unlikeness. The Crossing of Exile and Language." *Innovations of Antiquity*, edited by Daniel Selden and Ralph Hexter, New York, Routledge, 2013, pp. 69-94.
- Fischer, Norbert. "Zu Ursprung und Sinn menschlichen Fragens und Suchens. Confessiones 10,10: homines autem possunt interrogare." *Selbsterkenntnis und Gottsuche. Augustinus: Confessiones 10*, edited by Norbert Fischer and Dieter Hattrup, Paderborn, Schöningh, 2007, pp. 57-77.
- Fohrer, Georg. *Hebräisches und aramäisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*. Berlin-New York, De Gruyter, 1992.
- Fuhrer, Therese. *Augustinus*. Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004.
- Hager, Fritz-Peter. "Selbsterkenntnis I. Antike." *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, edited by Joachim Ritter and Karlfried Gründer, vol. 9, Basel, Schwabe, 1995, pp. 406-413.
- Halbig, Christoph. "Die stoische Affektenlehre." *Zur Ethik der älteren Stoa*, edited by Barbara Guckes, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck-Ruprecht., 2004, pp. 30-68.
- Kiesel, Dagmar. "Wille und Personalität. Zum Konzept personaler Identität bei Augustin (Conf. VIII) und Harry G. Frankfurt." *Theologie und Philosophie*, vol. 86, no. 3, 2011, pp. 372-402.
- . "Die Emotionstheorie Augustins als Theorie personaler Identität." *Augustiniana*, vol. 64, 2014, pp. 93-123.
- . "Voluntas, amor, virtus." *Zur spezifischen Eigenart des augustinischen Tugendkonzepts*, edited by Dagmar Kiesel and Cleophea Ferrari, Frankfurt am Main, Klostermann, 2016, pp. 59-86.
- Klessmann, Michael. "Identität." *Lexikon Psychologie. Hundert Grundbegriffe*. Edited by Stefan Jordan and Gunna Wendt, Stuttgart, Reclam, 2005, pp. 145-149.
- Knauer, Georg Nicolaus. *Geschichte der Autobiographie*. Frankfurt, Ulan Press, 1974.
- Kusch, Horst. "Studien über Augustinus I. Trinitarisches in den Büchern 2-4 und 10-13 der Confessiones." *Festschrift für Franz Dornseiff*, Leipzig, Bibliographisches Institut, 1953, pp. 124-183.
- Lawless, George P. "Interior Peace in the Confessions of St. Augustine." *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*, vol. 26, 1980, pp. 45-61.
- Mayer, Cornelius. "Creatio, creator, creatura." *Augustinus-Lexikon*, edited by Cornelius Mayer, vol. 2, Basel-Stuttgart, Schwabe, 1996, pp. 56-116.

- Misch, Georg. *Geschichte der Autobiographie*. Frankfurt am Main, Ulan Press, 1974.
- Müller, Jörn. "Zerrissener Wille, Willensschwäche und menschliche Freiheit bei Augustinus. Eine analytisch motivierte Kontextualisierung von Confessiones VIII." *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, 114, 2007, pp. 49-72.
- Nygren, Anders. "The Meaning and Structure of St. Augustine's Confessions." *LCQ*, vol. 21, 1948, pp. 214-230.
- O'Donnell, James J. *Augustine. Sinner and Saint. A New Biography*. London, Profile Books Ltd, 2005.
- Oser-Grote, Caroline. "Inuidia." *Augustinus-Lexikon*, edited by Cornelius Mayer et al., vol. 23, Basel-Stuttgart, Schwabe, 2004, pp. 681-684.
- Steidle, Wolf. "Augustins Confessiones als Buch." *Romanitas-Christianitas. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Literatur der römischen Kaiserzeit*, edited by Liselot Huchthausen, Berlin-New York, De Gruyter, 1982, pp. 436-527.
- "Gedanken zur Komposition von Augustins Confessionen." *Struktur und Gehalt*, edited by Peter Neukam, Munich, Bayerischer Schulbuch Verlag, 1983, pp. 86-101.
- Steur, Kurt. "De eenheid van sint Augustinus Confessiones." *StC*, vol. 94, 1936, pp. 17-29.
- Trelenberg, Jörg. *Augustins Schrift De ordine: Einführung, Kommentar, Ergebnisse*. Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2009.
- Verheijen, Luc. "Le premier livre du De Doctrina Christiana: un traité de "téléologie" biblique." *Augustiniana Traiectina*, edited by Jan den Boeft and Johannes van Oort, Paris, Brepols Publishers, 1987, pp. 169-187.
- von Herrmann, Friedrich-Wilhelm. "Gottesfrage und Selbstausslegung: memoria-beata vita-temptatio." *Selbsterkenntnis und Gottsuche. Augustinus: Confessiones 10*, edited by Norbert Fischer and Dieter Hatstrup, Paderborn, Schöningh, 2007, pp. 9-39.
- Wundt, Max. "Augustins Konfessionen." *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, vol. 22, 1923, pp. 128-135.

***Ipse Enim est Pax Nostra:*
Ephesians 2:14
in the Preaching of St. Augustine**

Ipse Enim est Pax Nostra: Efesios 2,14
en la predicación de san Agustín

5

Jonathan P. Yates
Villanova University, United States of America



Abstract

This chapter elucidates Augustine's uses of Paul's phrase "ipse enim est pax nostra" (Eph. 2:14a) within his extant preaching. Although primarily exegetical and theological, the implications of this exegesis and theology for spirituality and ecclesiology are also discussed. Contemporary biblical scholars often limit Eph. 2:14's claims to reconciliation between Jews and Gentiles, and the way(s) that this reconciliation serves as a basis for living out the bond between God and his people and as an inspiration for peace in this world. However, for Augustine, Eph. 2:14 teaches even more about living the Christian life and about reconciling human beings, whether they are inside or outside the visible church. Augustine employed Eph. 2:14 more than sixty times in various contexts. Eph. 2:14 appears in sermons for both Christmas and for Epiphany, in sermons directly or indirectly addressing Jews, Pelagians, and Donatists, and in sermons intended to educate or encourage particular congregations. The true import of Ephesians 2:14a for Augustine is most clearly seen, however, in his overtly exegetical sermons. In these, Augustine invokes Eph. 2:14 to emphasize the necessity of faith in Christ for experiencing peace either in this age or in the age that is to come, that Christ is the only genuine *pacificus*, and that Israel's "true" identity is only found among those who are united with the trans-temporal church. The sermons for Epiphany, which are by definition anti-Donatist, often plead for reconciliation, even as they cast doubt upon the genuineness of Donatist claims to possess faith in Christ.

Keywords: Ephesians 2:14, pax/peace, preaching, (anti-) Donatist, reconciliation.



Resumen

Este capítulo dilucida cómo san Agustín usa la frase de Pablo “ipse enim est pax nostra” (Efesios 2, 14a) en su predicación. Aunque principalmente exegéticas y teológicas, también se discuten las implicaciones de esta exégesis y teología para la espiritualidad y la eclesio-logía. Los eruditos bíblicos contemporáneos a menudo limitan los reclamos de Ef. 2, 14 a la reconciliación entre judíos y gentiles, y la forma en que esta reconciliación sirve como una base para vivir el vínculo entre Dios y su pueblo, así como una inspiración para la paz en este mundo. Sin embargo, para san Agustín, Ef. 2, 14 enseña acerca de vivir la vida cristiana y de reconciliar a los seres humanos, ya sea dentro o fuera de la Iglesia visible. Agustín empleó Ef. 2, 14 más de sesenta veces en diversos contextos. Ef. 2, 14 aparece en sermones tanto para Navidad como para la Epifanía; en sermones directa o indirectamente dirigidos a judíos, pelagianos y Donatistas; y en sermones destinados a educar o alentar a congregaciones particulares. La verdadera importancia de Efesios 2, 14 para Agustín se ve más claramente, incluso, en sus sermones abiertamente exegéticos. En estos, san Agustín invoca Ef. 2, 14 para enfatizar la necesidad de la fe en Cristo que permite experimentar la paz, ya sea en esta era o en la venidera. Asimismo, plantea que Cristo es el único pacífico genuino, y que la identidad “verdadera” de Israel solo se encuentra entre aquellos que están unidos con la Iglesia transtemporal. Los sermones para la Epifanía, que son por definición antidonatistas, a menudo abogan por la reconciliación, incluso cuando arrojan dudas sobre la autenticidad de las afirmaciones donatistas de poseer fe en Cristo.

Palabras clave: Efesios 2, 14, paz, predicación (antidonatista), reconciliación.



Sobre el autor | About the author

Jonathan P. Yates [jonathan.yates@villanova.edu]

Jonathan Yates is a professor in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Villanova University. He holds the Ph.D. in Historical Theology from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium). His area is Early Christian Thought and his research specialty is ancient Latin Christianity with a focus on how ancient North African Christianity understood and applied its sacred texts both theologically and within its day-to-day practice. He is a member of Villanova's Augustinian Institute, and, for ten years, served as the Editor of the international peer-reviewed academic journal *Augustinian Studies*.



Cómo citar en MLA / How to cite in MLA

Yates, Jonathan P. "Ipse Enim est Pax Nostra: Ephesians 2:14 in the Preaching of St. Augustine." *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendimez y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2019, pp. 159-193, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.5

*Gaudium nostrum, pax nostra, requies nostra, finis
omnium molestiarum, non est nisi deus
(en. Ps., 84, 10) (CCSL 39, 1171).*

Introduction

Most non-Christians will be at least vaguely aware that the Christian New Testament has a lot to say about peace and its pursuit, whether the peace being sought is between family members, between community members, between neighbors, between nations, or between God and his creation.

It is doubtful, however, whether even most Christians have seriously considered the claim that can be found in the first half of 2: 14 of Paul's *Letter to the Ephesians*, namely, that "Christ himself is our peace" (*ipse enim est pax nostra*). This chapter, although not an exegetical study of Ephesians 2: 14 *in se*, aims to assist just such a consideration by elucidating Augustine's reading and application of this verse,¹ and will do so via a particular focus upon the ways in which the Bishop of Hippo incorporated this phrase into his homiletical compositions, that is, his *sermones ad populum* and *Enarrationes in Psalmos* (cited hereafter, *en. Ps.*). The methodology employed in this study is relatively straightforward. Drawing upon the work of H. J. Frede,² it has endeavored to corroborate his results via computerized searches of the available (mostly) critical editions of Augustine's compositions in order to generate an exhaustive

¹ While it may be explained—at least in part—by the fact that Augustine never penned a commentary on Ephesians *per se*, the relative dearth of scholarly attention to his exegesis and use of this letter remains surprising. The most prominent among the handful of articles dedicated to Augustine and Eph. include: Dupont "Habitaré Christum" 367-376; Manrique 41-61; Rombs 321-327; Zumkeller 457-474; van Bavel 45-93; La Bonnardière "L'interprétation Augustinienne" 3-45; Doignon 201-211; La Bonnardière "Le Combat Chrétien" 235-238; and Lash 161-174. Unfortunately Nebreda "Un comentario de San Agustín, obispo de Hipona, a la carta de San Pablo a los Efesios" 287-298 and 367-378 remains unavailable to me.

² Augustine employed Ephesians 2: 14 more than sixty times throughout the course of his career in works of various genres and in response to a variety of contextual considerations. For an exhaustive list of his uses, see "Vetus Latina" 79-80; see 81 and 85 for the text of Eph. 2: 14. Of course, Augustine was far from the first Patristic author to make substantial use of Ephesians in general or of Eph. 2: 14 in particular. With regard to 2: 14 in the Latin exegetical tradition, comments are extant from Origen, Marius Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, Jerome, Pelagius, and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Relevant bibliography on the use of Eph. 2: 14 by Augustine's predecessors and contemporaries includes: Heine 132-37; for Marius Victorinus Edwards 138; "Commentaries on Galatians-Philemon" 40-41; and Greer 224-229.

list of places in Augustine's extant works where Ephesians 2, 14 is cited, alluded to, or otherwise referenced.³

The Text of Ephesians 2: 14 in Context

Again, although what follows will not be an exegetical study, it seems helpful to supply the reader with the broader context of our verse. Table 1 supplies Ephesians 2: 11-18 in Greek,⁴ in Latin,⁵ and in the relatively literal NASB English translation.⁶

³ For this study I have employed the CLCLT, also known as the "Library of Latin Texts" (Turnhout, Belgium, Brepols Publishers). Accessed via Villanova University's Falvey Library at <http://clt.brepolis.net.ezp1.villanova.edu/lta/pages/Search.aspx>

⁴ This is the text of the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28th edition, provided by the German Bible Society and was taken from <https://www.academic-bible.com/en/online-bibles/novum-testamentum-graece-na-28/read-the-bible-text/bibel/text/lesen/stelle/59/20001/29999/ch/af17f2be751b9117f86277ad74a4a067/>. Commentators are quick to note that neither the vocabulary nor the syntax of the Greek of Eph. 2,14-18 is straightforward. The text of 2: 14a ("αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν"), however, is esp. particular if one notes that the use of the emphatically positioned pronoun αὐτὸς "places the spotlight directly on Christ." See Thielman 163. Also noteworthy, not least because it differs from the way this clause is usually rendered in Latin, is how the use of the genitive possessive pronoun "ἡμῶν" in the Greek "denotes that both the 'circumcision' and the 'uncircumcision' are recipients of the advantage which Christ brought." See Yee 143 and n. 61. See also O'Brien 192, who emphasizes that vv.14-18 "is closely tied in with... vv.11-13... and is rounded out by an *inclusio*... in which the 'we' and 'our' now refer inclusively to both Jew and Gentile believers."

⁵ This is the text of the *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem Editio Quinta*, provided by the German Bible Society and was taken from: <https://www.academic-bible.com/en/online-bibles/biblia-sacra-vulgata/read-the-bible-text/bibel/text/lesen/stelle/59/20001/29999/ch/af17f2be751b9117f86277ad74a4a067/>. Except for one minor bit of syntax, i.e., should it read "est enim" or "enim est"?, the text of Eph. 2: 14a in this critical edition of the Vulgate is not significantly dissimilar from the reconstructed text as found in the Beuroner edition of the *Vetus Latina* (n. 2).

⁶ This version of Eph. 2, which is the "updated" NASB published in 1995, was taken from: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians%202&version=NASB>.

Table 1

<p>11 Διὸ μνημονεύετε ὅτι ποτὲ ὑμεῖς τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκί, οἱ λεγόμενοι ἀκροβυστία ὑπὸ τῆς λεγομένης περιτομῆς ἐν σαρκὶ χειροποιήτου, 12 ὅτι ἦτε τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ χωρὶς Χριστοῦ, ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ξένοι τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, ἐλπῖδα μὴ ἔχοντες καὶ ἄθεοι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. 13 νυνὶ δὲ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ὑμεῖς οἱ ποτε ὄντες μακρὰν ἐγενήθητε ἐγγύς ἐν τῷ σίματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ.</p> <p>14 Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν, ὃ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφοτέρα ἐν καὶ τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, 15 τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας, ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἓνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον ποιῶν εἰρήνην 16 καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἐνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ. 17 καὶ ἐλθὼν εὐηγγελίσαστο εἰρήνην ὑμῖν τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ εἰρήνην τοῖς ἐγγύς. 18 ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμφοτέροι ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα.</p>	<p>11 propter quod memores estote quod aliquando vos gentes in carne qui dicimini praeputium ab ea quae dicitur circumcisio in carne manufacta 12 quia eratis illo in tempore sine Christo alienati a conversatione Israhel et hospites testamentorum promissionis spem non habentes et sine Deo in mundo 13 nunc autem in Christo Iesu vos qui aliquando eratis longe facti estis prope in sanguine Christi</p> <p>14 ipse est enim pax nostra qui fecit utraque unum et medium parietem maceriae solvens inimicitiam in carne sua 15 legem mandatorum decretis evacuans ut duos condat in semet ipsum in unum novum hominem faciens pacem 16 et reconciliet ambos in uno corpore Deo per crucem interficiens inimicitiam in semet ipso 17 et veniens evangelizavit pacem vobis qui longe fuistis et pacem his qui prope 18 quoniam per ipsum habemus accessum ambo in uno Spiritu ad Patrem</p>	<p>11 Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands— 12 remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.</p> <p>13 But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. 17 AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; 18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.</p>
---	---	---

Contemporary biblical scholars, even those who accept that Ephesians was written by Paul, typically expend both ink and energy on the degree to which 2: 14-18 may or may not reflect adaptation by the author of traditional materials, and, as a result, are want to limit the application of 2: 14 to the peace that Christ imparted in order to bring about reconciliation between Jews and Gentiles,⁷

⁷ Yee argues that the author of Ephesians views the Gentiles from a decidedly Jewish perspective and, thus, “has brought to light the way in which the marginalized Gentiles could become one with the Jews ‘in Christ’” (133). See 126, 136, 140, 142-143, 146, 183, and 187-189. See also Fowl 83-84 and 89-90. On 90, Fowl makes it clear that, for the author of Eph., the Jews and Gentiles “are not dissolved into one. Peacemaking here is not homogenizing. Rather... it involves eliminating the hostility that divided them.”

as well as to generate a single, trans-temporal people of God.⁸ Tet-Lim Yee even goes so far as to claim that “the author’s utmost concern is to redefine the identity of the people of God for the Gentiles for whom he wrote,” before going on to assert that this concern is betrayed in the very language that he used “to reframe the notion of the people of God and to undercut the old ethnic forms of self-identification,” in order to “replace them with a new community-identity in Christ” (126). At the same time, contemporary biblical scholarship can assert that “2:11-21 is the key and high point of the whole epistle,” and that 2: 14-18 “praises the eternal, personal union of Christ and peace” that “is a present, not only a past reality” since “Jesus Christ is still active as a peacemaker” (Barth 275 and 295). Much contemporary biblical scholarship also concludes that the claim “[Christ] is our peace” is solely rooted in his death as an atoning sacrifice for sin,” and ought not to be read in incarnational or sacramental terms. Markus Barth (298), for example, argues that Ephesians 2: 14-18 highlights “the means by which Christ made peace” and identifies it “with the price he paid.”⁹ Others go so far as to characterize the equivalence between Christ and peace that is both made and praised here as “not primarily... the peace he brings to individual souls,” but, rather, as the peace he brings socially and politically.¹⁰

In what follows, we shall see that, to one degree or another, Augustine’s reading and application of Ephesians 2: 14 is frequently at odds with these assertions, arguments, and conclusions.

⁸ This is in spite of the fact that some are also willing to label Eph. 2: 14-18 “as the *locus classicus* on peace in the Pauline letters.” For this see O’Brien 193, where he also points out that the term *peace* occurs in these five vv. no less than four times. For the view that that these verses are best seen as reflecting traditional and perhaps even older hymnic material, see, e.g., Barth 260-264 et passim. For the view that these verses are best seen as “encomiastic... via amplification,” see Yee 126-189, esp. 136ff. For a brief summary—but ultimately non-committal—discussion of the several alternatives, see Thielman 161-163.

⁹ See also Barth 302-305. He supports his position by distinguishing between the sacrificial, which he takes to be the Pauline sense, and the incarnational, which he sees as based on passages like Luke 2: 1-14. As we shall see, Augustine saw no need for such distinctions and often employs our v. and Luke 2: 14, which according to the NASB English trans. reads “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth *peace among men* with whom he is pleased” [emphasis added], in the same context.

¹⁰ As an example for this see Yee 180 and Barth 305. For the quotation, see Barth 262.

Ephesians 2: 14 in Augustine's Polemical Works

The only explicitly anti-Pelagian composition to make reference to our verse is the *De peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo paruulorum* (cited hereafter, *pecc. mer*). It is also Augustine's first anti-Pelagian treatise, having been written in late 411 or early 412. In book 1 at 27.46 (CSEL 60, 44-45), Augustine offers a long quotation of Ephesians 2: 8-10 and 12-20, in support of his larger claim that Paul, just as do the other authors of scripture, offers ample testimony about both the fact and the nature of Christ's incarnation. At the most fundamental level, the incarnation was salvific, redemptive, and enlightening. Nevertheless, in this context, Augustine offers neither an exegesis nor a specific application of our verse.

Augustine made yet another formal polemical use of Ephesians 2 some six or eight years later when he penned the two books of the *Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum*. The identity of Augustine's opponent is as unknown to us today as it was to him. Writing in his *Retractations* (cited hereafter, *retr.*) approximately a decade later, Augustine speculates that his opponent might have been a latter-day Marcionite before noting that, whoever he was, he seemed to want Christians to stop identifying the true God with the creator of this world and to stop believing that the "god" behind Jewish scriptures is in any sense the true God since it is impossible that this "god" could be anything more than a "most wicked demon" (*pessimus daemon*) (CCSL 57, 136).

Similar to what he did in *pecc. mer.* 1, 27, 46, Augustine opens *Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum* (2, 2, 5) with a long quotation of Ephesians 2, though this time he quotes 2: 11-20 in its entirety (CCSL 49, 92-94). Here, however, the point of the quotation is to demonstrate that Paul had an exceedingly high opinion of the Jews, of their covenant with God, and of their privileged position relative to Gentiles. After all, if the Jews were in fact serving a demon, why would Paul describe them as being "near" (*prope*) (2: 13) to God relative to the Gentiles? And "how can [Paul] say that [the Gentiles] were separated from the company of Israel and strangers to the covenants and the promise and that they were without hope and without God in this world, unless Israel was (*erat*) the people of God and of Christ?" (WSA I/18, 413) (CCSL 49, 93, 2, 189-192). In short, according to Augustine, in Ephesians 2, Paul, who as a "Hebrew of Hebrews" (Phil. 3: 5) knew and served the God of Israel, proclaimed this same God, the same law, and the same prophets to the Gentiles, even as he quotes directly from one of the Jews' prophetic scriptures (Isaiah 28: 16) in order to give meaning to his equation of Christ and

the “cornerstone” (*summo angulari lapide*), just as Peter would do elsewhere (1 Peter 2: 6).

In order to complete the picture of Augustine’s polemical uses of Ephesians 2 in general and of 2: 14 in particular,¹¹ it will be helpful to notice how he employed it in the so-called *Tractatus adversus Iudaeos*. This composition or, better, sermon,¹² is one of his primary and (probably) chronologically final efforts to clarify his vision of the relative positions of those Jews who had rejected Jesus, that is “Israel according to the flesh” (*secundum carnem*), and those, whether Jew or Gentile, who had accepted Jesus as the Messiah and, as a result, had been incorporated into “spiritual Israel” (*israel spiritualem*), the true people of God.¹³ It bears noting that scholars find it highly unlikely that any actual Jews were present when this sermon was preached (Fredriksen 310 and 330).¹⁴ As will become clear in what follows, the most direct connection between the use of Ephesians 2: 14 in the *Adversus Iudaeos* and that which occurs in *Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum* 2, 2, 5 is the Book of Isaiah.

Throughout this sermon’s first seven chapters, quotations from the Hebrew scriptures abound, with the majority being drawn from the Book of Psalms. In Chapter 8, Augustine engages explicitly with what he perceives to be the standard Jewish mindset regarding their identity. He acknowledges both that all Jews are of Israel in the sense that they are literally “descendants of the patriarch” (*ex quo patriarcha propagati sumus*) and that, according to straightforward reading of Genesis 32: 28,¹⁵ Jacob and Israel “are one and the same [person]” (*unus homo erat iacob et israel*). But then he transitions to a consideration of Isaiah 2: 2-3 and reminds his audience that Isaiah had prophesied that “the Law and the Word of God was going to proceed from Sion and Jerusalem

¹¹ Another important polemical use of our v. can be found in *c. litt. Pet.* 2, 70, 157-158. However, because this use is quite similar to what we find in anti-Donatist passages of the *en. Ps.* and the *sermones ad populum*, it will not be treated in detail here. But see n. 31 *infra*.

¹² Particularly helpful by way of an orientation to this work is Harkins. For an older but still brief theological reflection see Bori 301-311.

¹³ Harkins dates *Adversus Iudaeos* 428-430 CE. Fredriksen 303, 310, 330, and 420-421 and nn. 8-9, is less precise. In the midst of a discussion of its contents and after noting the position of Lancel that it should be dated to 418-419, she claims only that this text “must date to some time after” Augustine’s *ep.* 121, i.e., to “some point between 410 and 415.” See esp. 304 and 324.

¹⁴ On 310, Fredriksen rightly emphasizes that at *Adversus Iudaeos* 7, 9, Augustine tells his audience of his plans to “address [the Jews] as if [*quasi*] they were present” in the room. For this trans., see FOTC 27, 403. See PL 42, 57: “Quos paululum quasi praesentes alloqui libet.”

¹⁵ According to the NASB, this v. reads “[the man with whom Jacob had wrestled] said, ‘Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed.’”

to all nations (*omnibus gentibus*), not... to one nation" (*non... uni genti*), before going on to assert that this prophecy is one that "we see most obviously fulfilled (*manifestissime... impletum*) in Christ and the Christians."¹⁶ Augustine then skips to Isaiah 2: 6 and observes that the prophet also teaches that the Lord has "abandoned (*dimisit*) his people, the house of Israel." Then, in what amounts to this chapter's final exegetical move, Augustine, having assumed that God's abandonment of Israel was due to that house's lack of faith, appeals to Matthew 19: 28 to support a further prophecy regarding the destiny of that house's unfaithful members:

[The Lord] abandoned those whom you imitate by your unbelief [*non credendo*], and by imitating them you are lingering in the same danger of destruction... See what you are, not what you boast to be (*esse iactatis*)... [to the faithful from that house] he makes this promise: "you shall also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28). [the faithful] will sit to judge the house of Israel, that is, the people of that house whom he abandoned. How is it that, according to the same prophet: "The stone which the builders rejected: the same is become the head of the corner" (Ps. 118:22),¹⁷ unless because circumcised and uncircumcised meet and unite in the keystone, like the union of two adjacent walls, as it were in the kiss of peace. That is the reason that the Apostle says: "For he himself is our peace, who has made both one" (Eph. 2:14). They who have followed his call—whether from the house of Jacob or from the house of Israel—are clinging to the cornerstone... they, however, whom he abandoned from the house of Jacob or from the house of Israel are the ones building destruction and the ones rejecting the cornerstone.¹⁸

At first, it appears that this use of our verse and that which we find in *Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum* are contradictory or, at least, are in tension: in this use, the Jews are taken to task for having ceased to believe and, thus, to participate in God's relatively inclusive plan of salvation; in *Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum*, however, the Jews are praised for their faithfulness to God's revelations to them and for their part in ushering in God's relatively inclusive plan of salvation. Nevertheless, the tension resolves, at least according to Augustine, if one understands that God's relatively inclusive plan of salvation has always been about Christ and has always been dependent upon faith

¹⁶ For this (slightly adjusted) trans., see FOTC 27, 407. For the Latin, see PL 42, 59.

¹⁷ Here Augustine may have in mind Isa. 28: 16, but the quotation he offers is significantly closer to Ps. 118: 22 (according to the numbering of modern Bibles).

¹⁸ For this (adjusted) trans., see FOTC 27, 408-409. For the Latin, see PL 42, 60.

in Christ's faithfulness in bringing about an ultimate reconciliation between both God and humanity in all of its various factions.

Ephesians 2: 14 in Augustine's Exegetical Works

The assertion that "Christ is our peace" appears in several of Augustine's works that are explicitly exegetical and that aim to elucidate the Christian scriptures. In addition to a clear and detailed use of our text in *In Iohannis euangelium tractatus CXXIV* (77, 3) (CCSL 36, 521) (cited hereafter, *Io. eu. tr.*), Augustine made recourse to Ephesians 2: 14 in no less than nine different *Enarrationes in Psalmos* (cited hereafter, *en. Ps.*)¹⁹

In *Io. eu. tr.* 77

Tractatus 77 is a relatively brief reflection on John 14: 25-27.²⁰ Significantly, it is 14, 27's report that Christ promised to leave his peace with the disciples that draws Augustine's attention; indeed, this promise occupies him for more than half of the tractate. Following a series of comparisons between what we might expect from this promise in this age and what we might expect from it in the age to come, e.g., in this age it enables us to love one another, in the age to come it will guarantee that we "shall never be able to disagree," Augustine reminds his hearers that all true peace has only one source since it is "in [Christ] and from him [that] we have peace." This is because, even for the remainder of this age, Christ has left himself with us,²¹ a thought that, in turn, compels Augustine to invoke Ephesians 2: 14:

¹⁹ See 33, s. 2, 19 (CCSL 38, 294); 47, 3 (CCSL 38, 540); 71, 1 (CCSL 39, 971); 78, 3 (CCSL 39, 1100); 94, 8 (CCSL 39, 1337); 106, 1 (CCSL 40, 1570); 119, 9 (CCSL 40, 1786); 124, 10 (CCSL 40, 1843); and 126, 2 (CCSL 40, 2, 1857).

²⁰ According to the New American Standard Bible (NASB), these verses read: "These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you. But the helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful." The use of John 14: 27 alongside Eph. 2: 14 is not, however, original to Augustine. See., e.g., Heine 134, where part of Jerome's comment on 2: 14 runs: "He is our peace, who says, 'my peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you,'" before adding that Christ "as peace, makes us to be peaceful."

²¹ In the context of the tractate as a whole, it becomes clear that Christ has left all three persons of the Trinity with us, that is, with the Church. In paragraph 1, as he is recapitulating the verses that immediately precede John 14: 25-27, Augustine writes: "Iam uero et superius dixerat de spiritu sancto: 'vos autem cognoscetis eum, quia apud vos manebit, et in uobis

“For he himself is our peace, who has made both one” (Eph. 2:14). Therefore (*ergo*) he himself is our peace for us both [*et*] when we believe that he is and [*et*] when we shall see him as he is (cf. 1 John 3:2). For if as long as we are in the corruptible body ...when we walk by faith, not by sight, he does not abandon those who are pilgrimaging apart from him [*a se*] (cf. 2 Cor. 5:5-8), how much more, when we have come to the sight itself, shall he fill us out of himself [*ex se*]:²²

This passage is also remarkable for how, within it, Augustine has so deftly harmonized the perspective of John with that of Paul: in it he used a reference from 1 John and multiple references from Paul in order to make Christ's words clearer.

Ever attentive to the presence and absence of even the smallest textual detail, Augustine continues his discussion of John 14: 27 by asking why Christ did not modify the first reference he made to peace with the possessive pronoun “my” (*meam*), despite having done so with the second reference to peace.²³ In continuation with his theme of the stark difference between our experience in this age and that of the age to come, he explains that this is exactly how it should be since, despite the gracious gift of peace that Christ has given already, our peace in this life will not and cannot be exactly like Christ's own since, unlike Christ, we are direct descendants of the post-lapsarian Adam and inheritors of his conflicted, sin-infected nature. We may have been forgiven this inheritance in baptism, but its effects remain with us for this rest of this life and make it a near-constant struggle. Yet again, he employs Paul to explain what he means. The peace that Christ,

leaves with us in this age must be called ours rather than his. For indeed, nothing in himself does battle against him who has no sin at all; but we now have such a peace as that in which we will say, “Forgive us our debts” (cf. Matt. 6:12). Therefore, we have some peace (*pax aliqua*) since we are delighted with the law of God according to the inward man, but it is not full because we see another law in our members doing battle against the law of our mind (cf. Rom. 7:22-23).²⁴

For Augustine, then, it is certainly true that Christ is our peace, but the reality of sin demands that we also admit that he will only be fully so via the consistent exercise of the humility to confess our sins and transgressions, of the

erit; unde intelleximus in sanctis tamquam in templo suo simul manere trinitatem deum” (CCSL 36, 520).

²² Trans. Retting, FOTC 90: 103 (slightly modified). For the Latin see CCSL, 36 520.

²³ See. n. 20 *supra*.

²⁴ Trans. Retting, FOTC 90, 104. For the Latin, see CCSL 36, 521-522.

hope that faith requires, and of the faith that has always been necessary for a relationship with God.²⁵

Enarrationes in Psalmos

As noted above, Augustine makes significant use of Ephesians 2: 14 in nine different *Enarrationes in Psalmos*. Given that there is substantial thematic repetition among these nine uses, it seems preferable to discuss them under three (occasionally overlapping) rubrics instead of discussing all nine individually. These three rubrics are: 1. Comparisons between King Solomon and Christ as purveyors of peace; 2. Israel's "true" identity; and 3. Assertions against the Donatists.

Ephesians 2: 14 appears in sections of two different *Enarrationes* in which Augustine's purpose would seem to be to exalt Christ via comparison with one of ancient Israel's greatest kings, King Solomon. In *enarratio* 71, which is of course dedicated to exegeting Psalm 71 in Augustine's Bible (Ps. 72 according to the numbering of modern Bibles), Augustine begins by discussing the fact that the Psalm is "for Solomon" (*in salomonem*), a detail that he, in fact, dismisses: the words of Psalm 71 "cannot refer to the Solomon who was King of Israel" since they do not "correspond" (*non possint... advenire*) with how King Solomon is depicted elsewhere in the Bible. And this observation leads Augustine to search for the "figurative" referent of the name Solomon. Augustine quickly expresses the conviction that "we must take it to indicate Christ." Expressing no surprise at finding the Psalm's true referent to be Christ, Augustine continues by noting that "this is entirely suitable, because the name 'Solomon' is interpreted as 'Peacemaker'" (*pacificus*). From this assertion, according to Augustine, several things follow, all of which are taught more or less explicitly by the Bible:

²⁵ A very similar assertion is made in paragraph 19 of *sermo* 2 of *en. Ps.* 33 (Ps. 34 in the numbering of modern Bibles). In commenting on verse 15, which includes the exhortation to "seek peace and pursue it," Augustine reminds his audience that: "The righteous themselves groan here below... to make it clear to you that we seek peace here, but will obtain it only at the end. Yet we do have peace in some degree here, in order that we may deserve to have it totally there." For this trans. see WSA III/16, 38; for the Latin, see CCSL 38, 294-295. Modern Bibles follow the numbering system established by the Hebrew tradition of the Masoretic Text, while the ancient Latin Psalter followed the numbering system established by the Greek translation tradition, and by the so-called Septuagint in particular. In order to avoid undue confusion, whenever a psalm is discussed in what follows, its number in modern editions will also be supplied.

Hence (*ac*) it can most fittingly be used of the mediator through whom we, who were formerly God's enemies, are reconciled to him and granted forgiveness for our sins... He certainly is our Peacemaker [*ipse est ille pacificus*], since he united Jews and Gentiles, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility by his own flesh, annulling the law with its rules and regulations, to create from the two of them one new man in himself, thus making peace (cf. Eph. 2:14-15)... Christ himself declared in the gospel, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you (cf. John 14:27). Many other scriptural passages reveal our Lord Jesus Christ as the peacemaker, though the peace he imparts is not that which this world knows and seeks, but that of which it is said in a prophetic text, "I will give them true comfort, peace upon peace" (cf. Isa. 57:18-19 LXX) (WSA III/17, 452) (CCSL 39, 971).

It is not without significance here that Augustine felt confident enough with his understanding of what Ephesians 2: 14-15 teaches that he could alter the text of 2: 14 from "*ipse est... pax nostra*" to "*ipse est ille pacificus*." Making this alteration allowed him to apply Ephesians 2: 14-15 to his larger point that Solomon never quite lived up to his name and that, therefore, it is perfectly legitimate to apply the name Solomon to Christ. Indeed, here, Augustine is claiming that Christ, having served perfectly as the mediator between God and human beings, has obtained for us the only peace that truly matters, namely the peace of immortality that is rooted in the peace that his work of reconciliation made possible. Ergo, given that we have now "discovered who is the true Solomon" (*invenimus verum Salomonem*), we now also know the best way to read the remainder of this Psalm.²⁶

A similar but not identical application of our verse that includes a contrast between Solomon and Christ is made in paragraph 2 of *enarratio* 126. It is similar in that it again asserts that Solomon never actually lived up to his "peacemaker" moniker, though Christ surely did. It is different in that, here, Augustine offers a further contrast between them by noting that, while both Solomon and Christ built temples, the temple that Christ built is far greater precisely because it is the "true" spiritual temple of his body, the Church. According to Augustine, Christ's claim in John 2: 19 that if anyone dares to "destroy this temple... in three days I will raise it up" proves this. Working backwards from the clarification offered by John 2: 21, namely that Jesus was "speaking of the temple of his body," Augustine next claims that Solomon's temple, although it

²⁶ In fact, Augustine transitions to his exegesis of the Psalm proper by exhorting his audience to "concentrate next on what this Psalm teaches us about [Christ]" (*quid deinde psalmus ipse de illo doceat attendamus*).

was dedicated to the Lord, was actually “a type and figure of the church and of the body of the Lord.” Moreover, “in building this temple Solomon himself prefigured our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Solomon, who built the true temple, and who was the real man of peace.” Indeed, “the true peacemaker is he of whom the Apostle says, ‘he is himself our peace, since he united the two’” (Eph. 2: 14). Augustine pursues the building metaphor in order to explain why this is. Christ,

is the true peacemaker because he is the cornerstone (cf. Eph. 2:20) who joined in himself the two walls that came from different directions. One was that of the Jews who believed in him, the other was that of the Gentiles, believers also. The circumcised and the uncircumcised, two peoples, were united into the church, and Christ was made the cornerstone (WSA III/20, 84) (CCSL 40, 1857).

In case anyone in the audience might still be confused about how much respect he or she owes to the all-too-human Solomon, Augustine furthers the contrast between him and Christ by using the words of this same Psalm to remind the audience who *really* built the actual physical temple. Augustine quotes part of verse 1, “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it,” and then points out that, from this principle, it follows that not only did the Lord build the physical temple in Jerusalem that bore Solomon’s name, but this same Lord Jesus Christ is also the one who “builds his own house” (*aedificat domum suam*), the Church.

Ephesians 2: 14 also appears in several *enarrationes* in contexts where the chief concern is to establish the “true” identity of Israel. Of these, the one that is both the most interesting and the most complex is *enarratio* 78 (Ps. 79 in the numbering of modern Bibles).²⁷ This Psalm, which is traditionally attributed to the mysterious Asaph, is actually a lamentation over the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of foreign nations, i.e., the Gentiles. Verse 1

²⁷ See also the briefer and simpler portion of *en. Ps. 47, 3* where our verse is invoked to help explain why Ps. 47: 3, when discussing Jerusalem and Zion, mentions the “mountains of Zion” in the plural. Augustine speculates that “perhaps” this is “because Zion embraces peoples coming from different quarters to meet each other and be joined to the cornerstone.” Indeed, the believing Jewish people and the believers who have been drawn from the Gentiles “are no longer averse even though diverse in origin; and once fitted into the corner they are diverse no longer. ‘He himself is our peace, since he united the two’ (cf. Eph. 2:14), says scripture. Christ is the cornerstone.” The clear implication here is that, in this age, it is belief that has established the metes and bounds of “true” Israel. For this trans., see WSA III/16, 337; for the Latin, see CCSL 38, 540.

includes the heartbroken prayer that “O God, the Gentiles have invaded your inheritance; they have defiled your holy temple.” In seeking to apply this verse, Augustine, who is convinced that this Psalm is simultaneously “a telling and a foretelling,” or a “recounting of disasters” and “a prophecy,” not unreasonably asks how Christ’s advent, death, resurrection, and ascension might have changed the identity of “[God’s] inheritance.” Augustine goes on to point out that “there were some from that Israelite people who believed in Christ,” before going on to catalogue them on the basis of the Gospels and the Book of Acts: Joseph and the Virgin Mary; John the Baptist; Zechariah and Elizabeth; the “great number” who were baptized following Peter’s Pentecost sermon; Stephen, the Protomartyr; and Paul himself. “All these were from the Jewish people, and they were God’s inheritance.” And this in turn leads Augustine to offer an explanation of Paul’s own words from Romans 11: 1-7, where, *inter alia*, he rhetorically asks “Surely God has not cast off his people?” before rejecting this idea in the strongest terms. Augustine takes this to mean that “the people who came from that nation to unite themselves to the body of Christ are God’s inheritance,” and that the relatively small number of Jews who came to faith in Christ are the precise identity of “remnant” that has been elected from Israel by God’s gratuitous grace.

This rationale then leads Augustine to a definition of the Church. He notes that “this church (*haec... ecclesia*), this inheritance of God, has been assembled from both the circumcised and the uncircumcised, that is, from the people of Israel and from other nations” (*ex populo israel et ex ceteris gentibus*).²⁸ And it is precisely Christ, the cornerstone, who has brought them all together. Indeed, he has joined these two groups “in” himself, “for he is himself our peace, since he united the two, to create from the two of them one new man in himself, so making peace... in one body” (Eph. 2: 14-16). Interestingly, Augustine then retreats back to Romans (and/or Galatians) in order to further explain this composite body. For him, all who belong to this body are “children of God, crying ‘Abba, Father!’” (cf. Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). And the very reason that God’s children all address him in this apparently redundant way is that ‘we cry ‘Abba’ because that is [the Jews’] language, and ‘Father’ because it is our language.” In other words, according to Augustine, the composite nature of the true people of God is both consciously reflected and consciously preserved in the composite way that all of them, regardless of ethnic origins, are encouraged to address

²⁸ For this (modified) trans. see WSA III/18, 129; for the Latin, see CCSL 39, 1100.

God as their heavenly father. As we shall see, this insight is one that Augustine uses with some frequency.²⁹

The most overtly polemical use of Ephesians 2: 14 in Augustine's *en. Ps.* is easily the handful of times that he invokes the verse and its wider context in order to challenge both Donatist exegesis and Donatist ethics.³⁰

Like *enarratio* 78, *enarratio* 94 (Ps. 95 in the numbering of modern Bibles) employs our verse in a context that offers both an expanded exegesis of Romans 11: 1-7, and a discussion of the identity of God's "remnant" that is found there.³¹

²⁹ For an additional homiletic efforts that invokes this insight while also combining Eph. 2: 14 and Rom. 8: 15 (and/or Gal. 4: 6), see *en. Ps.* 106, 1 (CCSL 40, 1570) and s. 156,15 (CCSL 41Ba, 158-159). In par. 1 of *en. Ps.* 106, despite not clearly defining "the people of God" for his audience as those who "have been freed from a vast, widespread Egypt" until par. 3, Augustine has already made the move that will allow him to define the true people of God as "the whole church of God spread throughout the world." This move is based upon his belief that, "although [Ps. 106] was sung about the people of Israel," it is "evident" (*quantum apparet*) from its content that this much broader definition of God's people is required. Most important for our purposes is that, in this same context, Augustine also asserts that "it is hardly surprising that we sing the Alleluia twice, since we also cry out, 'Abba, Father!'" before going on to claim that we all use this redundant address because both of the composite parts, i.e., the remnant of the Jews who believe and those who have been called from out of the Gentiles, of the true people of God "cry out in that cornerstone who is our peace and builds the two into one" (Eph. 2: 14). In s. 156, 15, the point about the redundancy of Paul using both "Abba" and "Father" is made in similar terms. "From one direction the circumcision, from the other the uncircumcision" have both been reconciled and made into one people by that one who is "our peace" (Eph. 2: 14) since in him "the walls [are] harmonized (*concordia*), [and] the corner [is] glorified (*gloria*)" (CCSL 41Ba, 159).

³⁰ For a use of our v. in an expressly anti-Donatist work, see *c. lit. Pet.* 2, 70, 157 (CSEL 52, 101). In par. 155, Petilian has quoted Eph. against Augustine. In par. 157, Augustine returns the favor and, following two rhetorical questions ("But when the prophet says to you: 'Peace, peace, and where is there peace?', what will you show the prophet? Will it be the part of Donatus (*partem donati*), unknown to the innumerable nations to whom Christ is known?"), Augustine cites Eph. 2: 14 to demonstrate that "For he is our peace, the one who made us both one, not Donatus who made one into two."

³¹ Also, all but identical to *en. Ps.* 78, is *en. Ps.* 94, 7's discussion of how all of the earliest Christians had been Jews first. Here, however, it is a discussion of the meaning of Romans 11: 16-24's metaphors of "wild" olive branches being grafted into domesticated olive trees. See WSA III/18, 416: "There stands the tree, then. Some (*aliqui*) of its branches have been broken off, but not all (*non omnes*). If all the branches had been removed, where would Peter have come from? Or John? Or Thomas? Or Matthew? Or Andrew? Or any of the apostles? Where would the apostle Paul himself have sprung from, he who was speaking in these passages and bore witness to the good olive tree by his fruit? Were not all these branches of the same tree? And where did the five hundred brethren come from, the ones to whom the Lord appeared after his resurrection? What about those many thousands who were converted by Peter's address

Interestingly, *enarratio* 94 seems to have been preached *ex tempore* by Augustine while he was in Carthage and in obedience to the command of “our father” (*patrem nostrum*) Aurelius, the Primate of Carthage.

Throughout Paragraph 7, Augustine carefully argues that the proof that God did not in fact reject his people is to be found in the facts that the Jewish nation, like a wheat harvest, has already been “threshed,” that this threshing yielded some “grain” in the form of those who have accepted Christ as Messiah, and that this grain is also the prophesied “remnant.” Those Jews who did not accept Christ, by contrast, are simply the “chaff” that is “left lying” (*palea iacet*), which, apparently, is Augustine’s way of affirming their rejection.

In Paragraph 8, the phrase “because all the ends of the earth are in his hand” from verse 4 allows Augustine to discuss Christ’s reconciling role explicitly. This is because the aforementioned phrase allows us to “recognize (*agnoscimus*) the cornerstone,” which is Christ. And this, in turn, pushes Augustine to invoke Ephesians 2:

[Christ] can be the corner only because he has tied two walls together in himself; they come from different directions, but in the corner they are not opposed to each other. The circumcised come from one direction, the uncircumcised from another, but in Christ the two peoples are at peace (*concordauerunt*), because he has become the cornerstone (cf. Eph. 2:14-15; 19), he of whom it was written, “The stone rejected by the builders has become the headstone of the corner” (cf. Ps. 117(118): 22) (WSA III/18, 416-417) (CCSL 39, 1337).

In Augustine’s view, the former “diversity” (*diversitatem*) of these two people groups is now irrelevant. The only thing that truly matters now is that they have both developed a “close kinship” (*propinquitatem*) by having embraced Christ, a detail that, furthermore, allows us to see how God’s promise not to reject his people might have been fulfilled. It is fulfilled insofar as one of the two walls that were joined in and by Christ the cornerstone was comprised of a remnant chosen from out of Israel.

Augustine then considers the other wall, a consideration that also allows him to contrast God’s recently-formed people with the heretical Donatists:

All the Gentiles (*omnes gentes*) too have come to the cornerstone, there to receive the kiss of peace; they have come to this one Christ who has made one

when the apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke in the tongues of all nations—those who at their conversion were so eager to praise God and accuse themselves?” (CCSL 39, 1336).

people out of two, not like the heretics (*haeretici*) who have made two out of one. This is exactly what the apostle says about Christ our Lord: “he is himself our peace, since he united the two” (cf. Eph. 2:14) (CCSL 39, 1337).³²

Since it is obviously not true that literally “all” the Gentiles have come to Christ for reconciliation, here Augustine probably means—but does not explicitly say—that God is also at work with a remnant of all the gentile nations insofar as at least *some* members of each and every gentile nation will eventually be incorporated into God’s people.³³ In any case, Augustine says no more about the “heretics” in this context. The negative comparison between them and the true people of God is made *en passant*. But, if this identification between the heretics and the Donatists is correct, it is one of several places in which a consideration of Ephesians 2 compels Augustine to contrast the true Church with the Donatist community.

A final but still instructive example of a use of our verse in the *en. Ps.* occurs near the end of Augustine’s comments on the relatively brief Psalm 124 (125 in the numbering of modern Bibles). Here, many of the same themes that appeared in the *en. Ps.* 94(95) reappear, although in a less than identical form.

Near the very end of the *enarratio* and in connection with the final and prayerful words of the Psalm that “[Let] peace upon Israel,”³⁴ Augustine exhorts his audience to be peacemakers by reminding them that their identity as the true and final Israel of God is dependent upon their obedient fulfillment of Israel’s charge: “Let us be Israel (*simus israel*) and embrace peace, because Jerusalem is the ‘vision of peace,’ and *we are Israel*” [*nos israel*; emphasis added].

Also interesting is how, in the immediately preceding paragraph, Augustine has again chosen to use the Donatists as an example of how *not* to embrace

³² “Venerunt etiam omnes gentes ad lapidem angularem, ubi osculum pacis agnouerunt; in illum unum qui de duobus fecit unum, non quemadmodum haeretici, qui de uno fecerunt duo. hoc enim idem ait apostolus de domino christo: ipse est enim, inquit, pax nostra, qui fecit utraque unum.”

³³ See Paragraph 9 where, with help from Ps. 85(86): 9, the *gentes* are discussed both in terms of a possible source of fear for believers and as collectively under God the Creator’s sovereign control (CCSL 39, 1338): “A gentibus times scandala? et ipsas gentes ipse fecit; non permittet illas ultra eam saevire quam novit ille mensuram, ex qua proficias. nonne dicit alius psalmus: ‘omnes gentes quotquot fecisti, venient et adorabunt coram te, domine?’”

³⁴ Here the Latin text omits any form of “to be,” reading “*pax super israhel*.” The form must be supplied by the reader. Boulding, the translator for the WSA series, opted for the straightforward “is.” See WSA III/20, 67. Given that this is a decision that must be made via the context, other options such as “[Let] peace be upon Israel,” or “[May] peace [be] upon Israel” are also possible.

peace.³⁵ Not only are the Donatists thoroughly hypocritical insofar as they claim to love what they actually hate, according to Augustine, their hypocrisy and, by extension, their self-condemnation even extends into the (pseudo-) liturgy that they, following their thoroughly corrupt leadership, attempt day after day. The Donatists are,

Those who hate Jerusalem [i.e., God's true people] and hate peace [*qui oderunt pacem*], those who want to rend our unity apart, those who do not believe in peace,³⁶ who mouth words of false peace among the people and have no peace in themselves. They say, "Peace be with you," and people reply, "[And] with your spirit," but they are responding with a lie and hearing a lie [*falsum dicunt et falsum audiunt*]... As for [the Donatist leadership], if peace really were present in their spirits, would they not commit themselves in love to our unity and abhor schism? Of course they would; and so they are mouthing a dishonest greeting and accepting a dishonest response.³⁷

Our verse is featured most explicitly a few lines before this—albeit with several notable differences. Here, Augustine begins by bypassing the logic that he used elsewhere (and that has been discussed *supra*) to explain how Christ is the true Solomon by simply asserting that “peace is the name of Christ himself” (*ipsa est christus*), a claim that is supported by an explicit reference to Ephesians 2: 14 and that, presumably, has been derived from subtly omitting the “nostra” from that verse. Nevertheless, in the lines that follow, he introduces a different logical equation even as he explains how he can legitimately assert that “Israel” means “vision of peace.” He walks his audience through his logic step by step:

If the name Israel is said to mean “one who sees God” (*videns deum*), and the name Jerusalem means “vision of peace” (*visio pacis*), what does the comparison of the two suggest?... [it suggests that] those who dwell in the “vision of peace” will not be displaced for ever. ...[and that] the Israel that sees God sees peace. And this Israel is also Jerusalem, because God's people is the same as

³⁵ For still more similar (but, yet again, not identical) assertions about the Donatists, see *en. Ps.* 119, 9 (CCSL 40, 1786) (WSA III/20, 508-509). *Inter alia*, here they are upheld as those who “tear our unity apart,” as those who “hate peace,” and as those who still need to be urged to love Christ. It is their very choice for schism that proves that they are in the wrong and deserve to be numbered among the haters of peace.

³⁶ Given that Eph. 2: 14 and the equation of Christ and peace has so recently and repeatedly been made explicit in this context, a strong case could be made that, via the phrase “qui non credunt paci,” Augustine is implicitly asserting that the Donatists, or at least their leadership, do not truly believe in Christ.

³⁷ For this (adjusted) trans., see WSA III/20, 66-67 (CCSL 40, 843-1844).

God's city. If, then, the people that sees peace thereby also sees God, we are right to infer that God himself is peace [*deus ipse est pax*].³⁸

Interestingly, this final inference is followed immediately in the text by the words “Christ, the Son of God, is peace,” a claim that in addition to once again invoking our verse is, in context, clearly meant to remind the audience of the inseparability of the persons of the Trinity and of their shared attributes.

Ephesians 2: 14 in Augustine's *Sermones ad Populum*

Not surprisingly, our phrase turns up in many of Augustine's *sermones* for both Christmas and for Epiphany, celebrations that typically incorporate biblical promises (or wishes) for peace.³⁹

Ephesians 2: 14 in Augustine's *Sermones* on Christmas

Some thirteen Augustinian sermons preached in connection with the Feast of Christmas are extant.⁴⁰ And, of these thirteen, two, that is s. 185 and 193, make clear and significant use of Ephesians 2: 14.

Sermo 185 was actually preached on Christmas Day.⁴¹ From its opening lines, it reminds the audience (and its readers) that, with Christmas, the main theological point is always the miracle of God's Wisdom and Word manifesting himself to us as an infant (*se demonstravit infantem*). Becoming a human being is something that he did entirely for us. And, in the process, he fulfilled the “prophecy” of Psalm 85: 11, which, in Augustine's Latin version, tells us that “truth has sprung from the earth, and justice has looked forth from heaven.”⁴²

³⁸ For this (adjusted) trans., see WSA III/20, 66 (CCSL 40, 1843).

³⁹ For a recent discussion of the issues surrounding these two series, see Drobner “Weihnachten, Neujahr” 221-242. For a general introduction, Latin texts, and a German trans. of the Christmas sermons, see Drobner “Augustinus von Hippo, Predigten zum Weihnachfest.” And for the same treatment of the sermons on Epiphany, see Drobner “Augustinus von Hippo, Predigten zum Neujahr.”

⁴⁰ These are ss. 184 to 196 inclusive.

⁴¹ Some scholars are confident that this sermon was preached in the initial years of the first phase of the Pelagian Controversy, i.e., from 412 to 416. Drobner “Augustinus von Hippo, Predigten zum Weihnachfest” 42 and 106-107, however, argues that it is impossible to assign it a date, though in “Weihnachten, Neujahr” 226 (cf. 241), he does highlight Augustine's efforts to guarantee that “das Datum des 25. Dezember begründen.”

⁴² Normally, this would be Psalm 84: 12 in the numbering of modern Bibles. However, in this case, Augustine's text, which is based upon the Greek tradition, differs substantially from the

One of the several ways in which this verse was fulfilled was precisely when Christ, “who said ‘I am the truth’ (cf. John 14:6)” was “born of the virgin.” Moreover, the line “and justice has looked forth from heaven” is fulfilled whenever a human being “by believing in the one who was so born, has been justified not by herself but by God” [adjusted for accuracy] (WSA III/6, 22).⁴³ In a real sense, justification by means of faith proves to be a major theme of this brief sermon. At the beginning of its third and final paragraph, Augustine quotes Romans 5: 1-2, which opens with the declaration that “having, therefore, been justified by faith,” and which is followed by the exhortation “let us have peace with God,” before expressing the desire to “mix a few words of [Psalm 85:11]” (*pauca verba psalmi huius admiscere*) with Paul in order “to discover their harmony [with each other]” (*consonantiam reperire*). They fit together in the sense that this justice, which Augustine is careful to reaffirm has come from heaven and “has not proceeded from us” (*non de nobis processit*), is precisely what the angels were describing when they were manifested to the shepherds:

Thus is was... that the voices of the angelic choir sang the praises of the Lord born of the virgin, whose birthday we are celebrating today: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will” (Luke 2:14). Why “peace on earth,” ...unless because “Truth has sprung from the earth,” that is, Christ has been born of flesh? And he is our peace, who has made the both into one” (Eph. 2:14), that we might be people of good will (*homines bonae voluntatis*), agreeably (*suaviter*) linked together by bonds of unity (*vinculis unitatis*) (WSA III/6, 22).⁴⁴

With these comments, Augustine expands upon the “fulfillment” of Psalm 85 :11 yet further. Not only does Paul’s teaching of justification by faith explain this verse from the Psalter, but so also do Luke 2: 14 and Ephesians 2: 14. Significantly, in this context Augustine chose not to elaborate upon the exact identity of the two who were “both” made “into one.” Apparently, Augustine was less concerned to describe the precise groups to which the fundamental claim of our verse ought to be applied than he was to make plain that peace, goodwill, and genuine unity are available to those who believe upon Christ and all that his incarnation achieved.

Hebrew or MT reading. According to Augustine, this verse reads: “Veritas de terra orta est, et iustitia de caelo prospexit.”

⁴³ For the Latin, see Drobner “Augustinus von Hippo, Predigten zum Weihnachfest” 112: “Christus qui dicit: ‘ego sum veritas,’ de virgine natus est... credens in eum qui natus est, non homo a se ipso, sed a deo iustificatus est.”

⁴⁴ For the Latin, see Drobner “Augustinus von Hippo, Predigten zum Weihnachfest” 114.

In s. 193, which was also preached on Christmas Day,⁴⁵ Augustine also calls upon Ephesians 2: 14—even though Luke 2, which had been the gospel reading for the day, is referenced in the sermon’s opening lines. In fact, here, Augustine explicitly combines the two, using Ephesians 2: 14 to explain and exegete Luke 2: 14: “[Christ], you see... is ‘peace on earth to people of good will,’ because (*quoniam*) ‘he is our peace, who has made the two into one’” (WSA III/6, 51).⁴⁶

The section of this sermon is also significant pastorally because in the immediate context, Augustine has also invoked Psalm 33: 12-14 (Psalm 34 in the numbering of modern Bibles), Romans 7: 18-25, and Galatians 5: 17 to exhort his audience to pursue peace on both the external and the internal front. Externally, following the advice of Psalm 33(34): 12-14, Augustine reminds his hearers that they are obligated to “seek peace and pursue it” and that a major part of *how* to do this is to “turn aside from evil and do good,” especially by keeping one’s “tongue from evil and [one’s] lips from speaking deceit.” In other words, Augustine clearly reminds this part of his flock that obtaining and maintaining peace must include maintaining peace with one’s neighbors especially through a firm commitment to honesty. Immediately on the heels of this exhortation, Augustine assumes the role of a member of his audience in order to raise a skeptical objection regarding the consistent disconnect that exists—even for Christians—between willing and doing. That is, Augustine assumes that at least some in his audience will claim that the peace that he has just exhorted them to will exceed their grasp precisely because of “another law in [their] members” (Rom. 7: 23) and how, within each of them, “the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh” (Gal. 5: 17). Reverting back to his role as preacher, Augustine exhorts them to “stand firm against [their] evil desires” (*persistat... adversus concupiscentias malas*), but he is careful to be clear that this resistance is not up to them and their own will power. On the contrary, he reminds them that their ability to resist is contingent upon not being “too proud to confess” (*non dedignetur esse confessa*) and not trusting in their “own powers” (*non fidat viribus suis*) or, in other words, their persistence “in imploring the help of God’s grace” (*imploret auxilium gratiae dei*).

⁴⁵ Scholars have proposed dates for this sermon ranging from 410 to 425, holding open the possibility that it may have been preached in almost any year of that sixteen year span. Drobner “Augustinus von Hippo, Predigten zum Weihnachfest” 42 and 224-225, however, argues that it is impossible to assign it a date.

⁴⁶ For the Latin, see Drobner “Augustinus von Hippo, Predigten zum Weihnachfest” 229-230.

Though such a discussion of this internal struggle might initially strike the modern reader as an odd theme to include in a Christmas sermon, it need not ultimately be taken that way. In a larger sense, this theme fits together well with Christmas in that, within Augustine's theology, internal peace in the sense of experiencing a gradual "healing" from the "disease" of disordered desires is a major part of what Christ's incarnation, which, of course, should be the focus of all Christmas liturgy and worship, was intended to achieve—even if, in that same theological schema, we all remain thoroughly dependent upon God's gratuitous grace for both the will and the ability to begin that process.

Ephesians 2: 14 in Augustine's Sermones on Epiphany

Interestingly, no less than ten Augustinian sermons preached in connection with the Feast of Epiphany have come down to us.⁴⁷ As preserved, almost all of these sermons are relatively brief and, not surprisingly, are relatively similar in content.⁴⁸ Like most preachers, Augustine did not hesitate to recycle comments and exegetical material for prominent annual feasts, especially when that material had proven effective. Several of these sermons include the following: 1. That Epiphany is Greek word that, in this context, means "a manifestation [*manifestatio*] of the Lord"; 2. That this manifestation was to the Magi, who, of course, were Gentiles (Matt. 2: 1-12); and 3. Given that Epiphany has this connection to the Gentiles, that Epiphany may, in a sense, be contrasted to Christmas, which, because it involved a manifestation of the Lord to Jewish shepherds via angels (Luke 2: 8-20), has a connection to the Jews. As we shall see, the fact that these two manifestations had Christ in common would seem to be the detail that drove Augustine to incorporate Ephesians 2: 14 into his sermons on Epiphany so frequently. It also bears noting that both the celebration of and preaching about Epiphany were by definition anti-Donatist activities since although "the Donatists celebrated Christmas," they "rejected Epiphany as an innovation of the Oriental Church" (Lawler 10).⁴⁹

⁴⁷ These are ss.199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 204A, 373, 374 (cf. s. Dolbeau 23), and 375. For a brief English introduction to six of these *sermones*, i.e., ss. 199-204, see Lawler 3-19; for his trans. of these six, see 154-182. They do not, however, all make clear reference to our verse. See n. 50 *infra*.

⁴⁸ S. Dolbeau 23, which is a full-length version of s. 374 is a notable exception. It seems likely that most of these sermons were radically condensed as they were copied and transmitted. As a result, barring new discoveries similar to Dolbeau's, their complete contents will never be known.

⁴⁹ This conclusion is partially based upon information Augustine himself supplied. See s. 202.1-2 (PL 38, 1033). More recently, Drobner "Weihnachten, Neujahr" 233 and 242 confirms

For example, in s. 373 our verse is used in the Augustine's opening remarks as he reminds his audience of exactly what it is that Christ's birth as a man had accomplished for all who would believe in and worship him:

He [*ille*] is that cornerstone who coupled together, as it were, in his own unity [*in sua unitate*] the two walls, coming from different angles, of the circumcision and of the uncircumcision, of the Jews... and of the Gentiles, and who thus "became [*factus est*] our peace, who made both into one" (Eph. 2:14). Therefore, that he might be announced to the Jewish shepherds, angels came from heaven; and that he might be worshiped by the Gentile Magi, a star shone brilliantly from the sky. So whether by means of angels or of a star, "the heavens declared [*enarrauerunt*] the glory of God" (Ps. 19:1) (WSA III/10, 320) (PL 39, 1663-1664).⁵⁰

A different and, if anything, more explicitly reconciliatory set of opening remarks can be found in s. 199. Exceptionally for the Epiphany sermons that clearly reference Ephesians 2: 14, this sermon also incorporates John 4: 22 and Isaiah 49: 6, in addition to the standard passages of Matthew 2, Luke 2, and Ephesians 2. Augustine begins by noting that:

Recently we celebrated the day on which the Lord was born of the Jews; today we are celebrating the one on which he was worshiped by the Gentiles; because "salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22); but this "salvation reaches to the ends of the earth" (Isa. 49:6).

He then goes on to contrast the shepherds and the Magi by reiterating the difference in how their respective revelation were made, i.e., angels in contrast to a star, before reconciling them with the observation that both groups learned about Christ "from heaven (*de coelo*), when they saw the king of heaven on earth, so that there might be (*ut esset*) 'glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will'" (Luke 2: 14).⁵¹

this, though not without qualification. On 231-232 he also points out that, with regard to the actual celebration of Epiphany, "in Nordafrika aber stellen Augustins Predigten die frühesten Zeugnisse dar."

⁵⁰ Opening remarks very similar to these may be found in s. 375.1 (PL 39, 1669), the authenticity of which has been repeatedly questioned, s. 201.1 (PL 38, 1031), s. 202, 1 (PL 38, 1033), albeit with a considerably longer quotation from Eph. 2, and in s. 203, 1 (PL 38, 1035). It is also notable that in s. 203 Augustine plays with the grammatical mood of Eph. 2: 14 by shifting from the indicative to the subjunctive: "... ut esset pax eorum."

⁵¹ A similar contrast is made and reconciled a few lines later: although the shepherds were obviously "nearby" and able to worship Christ on the very day of their revelation, the Magi were compelled to travel from very "far away." Nevertheless, both groups "saw the one light of the world" (*unam... lucem mundi utrique uiderunt*).

Significantly, it is this reference to Luke that compels Augustine to introduce Ephesians 2: 14; indeed, no words intervene between the two quotations. More interesting, however, is the way in which Augustine attributes the peaceful reconciliation that Christ achieved between believing Jews and believing Gentiles, a fact that is underlined by employing additional verses from Ephesians 2:

“For he is our peace, who made both into one” (Eph. 2:14). Already from this moment (*iam hinc*), by the way the infant was born and proclaimed, he (*ille*) is shown to be that cornerstone; already from the first moments of his birth he appeared as such (*iam in ipso primordio natiuitatis apparuit*). He began at once (*iam coepit*) to tie together in himself (*in se*) two walls coming from different directions, bringing the shepherds from Judea, the Magi from the East; “so that he might establish the two in himself as one new man, making peace; peace for those who were far off, and peace for those who were near” (Eph. 2:15 and 17).⁵²

Ephesians 2: 14 in Augustine’s “Regular” *Sermones ad Populum*

Augustine also uses Ephesians 2: 14 both in sermons intended to educate or encourage particular congregations and in sermons directly addressing the problems raised by such dissident groups as the Donatists and the Pelagians.⁵³

In fact, our verse is employed in what is arguably the most famous sermon that Augustine preached concerning the Donatists, the “Sermon to the People of the Church in Caesarea” (*Sermo ad Caesariensis Ecclesiae Plebem*).⁵⁴ In addition to knowing where it was preached, we know that this sermon was offered—apparently *ex tempore*—on September 18, 418 to a (largely) Donatist crowd gathered inside the Catholic basilica.⁵⁵ Caesarea was the capital city of Mauretania,

⁵² For this (modified) trans., see WSA III/6: 79; for the Latin, see PL 38: 1026.

⁵³ For a brief discussion of the way that Eph. 2: 14 is used in s.156, an overtly anti-Pelagian sermon that is part of a series of six that has been demonstrated to date with very high probability to October 17 of 417. See CCSL 41Ba, IX-XXVIII; see also n. 29 *supra*.

⁵⁴ For a similar and (most probably) anti-Donatist sermo that also uses Eph. 2: 14 to encourage the spiritual good of genuine unity both within and between Christian communities, see s. 360C (Dolbeau 27), esp. pars. 3-4. For the Latin text, see Augustine “Vingt-six sermons” 311-314.

⁵⁵ For a brief but helpful discussion of the background and context of this sermon, see Tilley. She points out that Augustine had traveled to Mauretania at the behest of Zozimus the Roman pontiff and that his main reason for the trip was to participate in a public debate with Emeritus, the Donatist bishop of Caesarea.

important in its own right, and “a major center for Donatism” (Tilley 770). Caesarea’s Donatist bishop, a man named Emeritus, was in the audience and was personally invited by Augustine to embrace the Catholic cause and ecclesial unity.⁵⁶ Not surprisingly, Emeritus did not accept the offer.

One of this sermon’s themes is that of family and how, from Augustine’s perspective, all Donatists were estranged family members with whom he longed to be reconciled. This theme was augmented by offering them praise for their faith and for the other goods that they, as Christians, possessed. Other important themes within this sermon include unity, charity or love, and peace. The claim that all three of these are supposed to mark all relations between Christians is supported via references to scripture. John 14: 27, which Augustine discussed in great detail in *Io. ev. tr. 77*, is repeatedly referenced in support of peace; 1 Corinthians 13 is also repeatedly referenced in support of the necessity of charity; and Psalm 132: 1 (133 in the numbering of modern Bibles) is referenced in support of the need for unity.⁵⁷ Interestingly, it is the use of the latter in the fourth paragraph that offers Augustine an opening to employ Ephesians 2: 14.⁵⁸

Therefore, when I am casting out discord and bringing in peace, how am I forfeiting the titles of peace? Assuredly I plead with my Lord: “O Christ, you who are our peace, you who have made both one (cf. Eph. 2:14), make us one so that we might honestly sing: ‘Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to live in unity’ (Ps. 132:1). Please bring in concord, please drive out discord.”⁵⁹

Here Augustine is attempting to assume the moral high ground. Not only does he claim that, as a Catholic bishop, he is blameless for the divisions that re-

⁵⁶ In paragraph 6 (CSEL 53, 174), and in what must have been heard as an homage to St. Cyprian, the great 3rd-century martyr-bishop of Carthage, Augustine goes so far as to claim that the salvation that God so graciously offers is something that one “non potest habere nisi in ecclesia catholica.”

⁵⁷ It is also true that, by invoking this v. from the Psalter, Augustine is underlining his belief that the Catholics and the Donatists are, or, at least, should be “brothers.” For Augustine’s Latin version of this v., see n. 59 *infra*.

⁵⁸ He also quotes our v. twice. The first is offered in the *sermo*’s second line (CSEL 53, 167): “Exultamus enim in domino deo nostro de quo apostolus ait: ipse est enim pax nostra, qui fecit utraque unum.” Even the simplest member of the audience must have recognized from this that the sermon would amount to a major appeal for unity between the Donatists and the Catholics.

⁵⁹ Trans. is my own. For the Latin, see CSEL 53, 172: “Cum ergo discordiam excludo, pacem introduco, titulos pacis quare depono? dico plane domino meo: o christe, qui es pax nostra, qui fecisti utraque unum, fac nos unum, ut recte cantemus: ecce quam bonum et quam iucundum habitare fratres in unum. introduc concordiam, pelle discordiam.”

main between the two communities, but he is also claiming that he regularly implores Christ to reunify them, even as he implicitly asserts that either the Donatists are unwilling to pray for reunification or that their relationship with Christ is so derelict that they are unable to do so.⁶⁰ More striking still is how, despite the fact that he is well aware that, in context, Ephesians 2: 14 is referencing the reconciliation that Christ brought about between believing Jews and believing Gentiles,⁶¹ Augustine here applies it directly to the possible reconciliation that Christ might yet bring about between Catholics and Donatists. The repeated use of our verse in this painstaking sermon preached in the presence of many Donatists clearly played an important role in Augustine's attempt both to educate and to convict that (presumably) hostile audience.

A good example of how Augustine incorporated our verse into a sermon that was more simply educational is *sermo* 25. This is a relatively brief sermon that was preached during the winter and, possibly, on a weekday before Augustine's home congregation of Hippo.⁶²

Ephesians 2: 14 appears in paragraph 7, a section in which Augustine's educational aim is to demonstrate to his flock that, via a regular encounter with Christ through the Mass, they can have something close to the very thing that all of us desire above all else: peace. A few lines into the paragraph, Augustine quotes an exhortation from Psalm 33: 14b (Ps. 34 according to the numbering of modern Bibles), namely, to "Seek peace and pursue it" (*quaere pacem, et sequere eam*), before asserting that it is peace "which we all long for even in this mortal flesh, even in this fragile state of the flesh, even in this most illusory condition of vanity." He then begins to address the obvious concerns of: 1. If peace is to be sought, knowledge of its location will be required; and 2. If peace is to be pursued, knowledge of which way it has gone will be required.

⁶⁰ See Origen's comment on Eph. 2: 14a: "And the one who does not have peace, does not have Christ," a sentiment that Jerome opted to retain in his commentary. For this see Heine 134.

⁶¹ For another *sermo ad populum* in which this is true, see, e.g., s.306E (Dolbeau 18), esp. par. 3, where the two "walls" (*parietes*) that have been unified in Christ, that is, "in the cornerstone" (*in angulari lapide*), are expressly called "the circumcision and the uncircumcision" (*circumcisio et praeputium*) and where their cleaving together is expressly said to "fulfill" (*impletum est*) what Paul wrote in Eph. 2: 14. For the Latin text, see Dolbeau 212.

⁶² The first line of Paragraph 8 makes it clear that it is winter ("*ecce ... hyems est*") (CCSL 41: 339). That it could have been preached on a weekday is less certain. That claim is based on Augustine's comments in Paragraph 7 that "every day" (*quotidie*) in the Mass this particular congregation hears the exhortation to "Lift up your heart" (*sursum cor*), words that also fuel the claim that, at least during Augustine's episcopacy, the church in Hippo celebrated Mass on a daily basis.

Before addressing these concerns, however, Augustine observes that a third bit of knowledge will also be required, namely knowledge about exactly what peace is:

First see what peace is, then see where it has gone, then follow it. What is peace? Listen to the apostle, he was talking about Christ: “he is our peace, who made both into one” (Eph. 2:14). So peace is Christ. Where did [peace] go? He was crucified and buried, he rose from the dead, he ascended into heaven. There you have where peace went [*ecco quo iit pax*] (WSA III/2, 85) (CCSL 41, 338).

The very next lines go on to address how all who desire peace, which, again, according to Augustine, includes every human being, ought to go about pursuing that which we desire. We ought to pursue this thing we desire above all via the Eucharist and via a clear recognition of the implications of being incorporated into Christ:

Listen how you should follow; every day you hear it briefly when you are told “Lift up your heart.” Think about it more deeply, and there you are, following. Listen also, however, more widely, in order to follow true peace... listen to the apostle: “If you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is, seated at God’s right hand; savor the things that are above, not those that are on earth. For you are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ appears, your life, then you too will appear with him in glory (cf. Col. 3:1-4) (WSA III/2:, 85-86) (CCSL 41, 338).

In s. 25, Augustine is intent to educate his congregation regarding their deepest wants. He does this by first asserting that he (as well as they, if they will just be honest with themselves) already knows that what they want above all is peace. He then demonstrates that they also need to be reeducated regarding precisely what peace is before, finally, reminding them that the way to obtain it is two-fold: both by a healthy realization of the identity that they possess through faith in Christ and by a healthy participation in the Sacrament as regularly celebrated by those who, by being in Christ, comprise his body, the Church.

Conclusion

Despite the brevity and relative straightforwardness of the actual text of Ephesians 2: 14, this study has demonstrated that Augustine has a rather complex relationship to it. Not only does he employ it with substantial frequency, but he also employs it in an impressive variety of contexts and in works of vari-

ous genres. This verse appears in polemical compositions, in overtly exegetical compositions, and in homiletical compositions.

Ephesians 2: 14 appears relatively rarely in Augustine's polemical works. It is used substantially only in works such as *Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum* and the *Tractatus adversus Iudaeos*.⁶³ His common concerns in the sections of these two works in which Ephesians 2: 14 appears are the status of the Jewish people (both past and present) and the nature and object of true salvific faith. For Augustine, God's relatively inclusive plan of salvation has always been about Christ and has always been dependent upon faith in Christ's faithfulness in bringing about an ultimate reconciliation between both God and humanity, regardless of which group one belonged to or identified with.

The true import of Ephesians 2: 14a for Augustine is most clearly seen, however, in his overly exegetical works such as the *Io. ev. tr.* and the *en. Ps.* In the former, Augustine invokes Ephesians 2: 14 as part of a larger claim (and amidst multiple scriptural references) regarding the necessity of faith in Christ if one is to experience his promise of peace—either in the here and now or in the age that is to come. In the latter, Ephesians 2: 14 is used in support of at least three sweeping claims: 1. That Christ is a better and truer source of peace—indeed, he is the only genuine *pacificus*—than any who have preceded him, including King Solomon; 2. That Israel's "true" identity is only to be seen by observing the true remnant who, through faith in Christ, chose to unite themselves with Christ's "body," the trans-temporal Church; and 3. That the status of the "heretical" and hypocritical Donatists is made plain precisely by their divisiveness: because they have split the Church, they have made their own alienation from Christ, the great Uniter and great Peacemaker, obvious. In these contexts, Augustine would also seem to be implying that, by not pursuing Christ's program of reconciliation, the Donatists' actions cast more than a little doubt upon the genuineness of their claims to believe in Christ.

Several of Augustine's *sermones* offered in celebration of Christmas and Epiphany also contain clear references to Ephesians 2: 14, although it plays a more prominent (and frequent) role in those sermons offered during Epiphany than it does in those offered during Christmas. In two of Augustine's Christmas sermons, Ephesians 2: 14 is linked with Luke 2: 14 in order to explain exactly what it was that Luke wanted to communicate: according to Augustine, it is precisely by being united to Christ and, via Christ, to other believers in faith, i.e.,

⁶³ Both of these works were composed within the final ten or twelve years of Augustine's life.

in becoming one body, that it becomes possible to become a person of good will (Luke 2: 14), both externally in terms of one's relationships and internally in terms of one's disordered desires.

The more prominent (and frequent) role played by Ephesians 2: 14 in Augustine's sermons for Epiphany is due in large part to Augustine's belief that the "manifestation" that Epiphany celebrates can be seen as something that both Jews and Gentiles, i.e., the two groups that Ephesians 2: 14 is most obviously concerned with, experienced via their representative groups, with the shepherds representing the Jews and the magi representing the gentiles. More than a few of the *sermones* that incorporated Ephesians 2: 14 also allowed Augustine space to continue his anti-Donatist polemics. This is because the sermons for Epiphany were by definition anti-Donatist activities insofar as the Donatists rejected Epiphany as a recent innovation, and because one of Augustine's most famous *sermones*, the *Sermo ad Caesariensis Ecclesiae Plebem*, despite being preached in the presence of some Donatists, was, at its heart, a plea for reconciliation between the two communions and, from Augustine's perspective, a plea for the Donatists to more perfectly follow Christ's reconciliatory lead.

Finally, this study has also demonstrated that Augustine did occasionally employ Ephesians 2: 14 in sermons that were explicitly didactic. In s. 25, for example, he used this verse in order to teach (a) that since everyone, despite being ignorant of where it is to be found or how to go about obtaining it, truly wants peace, and (b) that Christ alone is peace; from this teaching it follows (c) that, pursuing Christ is everyone's best option for obtaining the one thing that he or she truly wants.



Works cited

- Augustine of Hippo. *Vingt-six Sermons au Peuple d'Afrique*. Edited by François Dolbeau, Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Antiquité 147, Paris, Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1996.
- Barth, Markus. *Ephesians: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on Chapters 1-3*. The Anchor Bible 34. Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday & Co., 1974.
- Van Bavel, Tarcisius J. "No One Ever Hated his Own Flesh: Eph. 5:29 in Augustine." *Augustiniana*, vol. 45, 1995, pp. 45-93.
- Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem Editio Quinta*. Stuttgart, Württembergische, Bibelanstalt, 2007.
- Commentaries on Galatians-Philemon*. Ambrosiaster, edited and translated by Gerald L. Bray. Downer's Grown, IL IVP, 2009.
- Doignon J., Jean. "Servi... Facientes Voluntatem Dei ex Animo Eph. 6: 6): Un Eclatement de la Notion de Servitude chez Ambroise, Jérôme, Augustin?" *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques*, vol. 68, 1984, pp. 201-211.
- Drobner, Hubertus R. "Weihnachten, Neujahr und Epiphanie in Hippo (Nordafrika): Diskussionsbeiträge zu Festgehalt und-umständen (Sermones 184-204A, 369-370, 373-375)." *Ministerium Sermonis: Philological, Historical, and Theological Studies On Augustine's Sermones Ad Populum*, edited by Gert Partoens, Anthony Dupont, and Mathijs Lamberigts. Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia, vol. 53, Turnhout, Brepols, 2009, 221-242.
- *Augustinus von Hippo, Predigten zum Weihnachfest (Sermones 184-196): Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung und Anmerkungen (= Patrologia 11)*. Frankfurt, Lang, 2003.
- *Augustinus von Hippo, Predigten zu Neujahr und Epiphanie (Sermones 196A-204A): Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung und Anmerkungen (= Patrologia 22)*. Frankfurt, Lang, 2010.
- Dupont, Anthony. "Habitaré Christum per Fidem in Cordibus Uestris (Eph. 3,17): Brève Présentation de l'Approche Biblique d'Augustin sur les Questions Doctrinales de ses Sermons." *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique*, vol., 111, 2010, pp. 367-376.
- Edwards, Mark J. *Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament VIII*. Downer's Grown, IL, IVP, 1999.
- Fowl, Stephen E. *Ephesians: A Commentary*. The New Testament Library, Louisville, KY, Westminster John Knox Press, 2012.

- Fredriksen, Paula. *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defense of Jews and Judaism*. New York, Doubleday, 2008.
- Bori, Pier Cesare. "The Church's Attitude towards the Jews: An Analysis of Augustine's *Adversus Iudaeos*." *Miscellanea Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, vol. 6, 1983, 301-311.
- Greer, Rowan A. *Theodore of Mopsuestia: The Commentaries on the Minor Epistles of Paul*. Leiden, Brill, 2011.
- Harkins, Franklin T. "Adversus Iudaeos." *Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, edited by Karla Pollmann and Willemien Otten, vol. 1, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Heine, Ronald E. *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002.
- La Bonnardière, Anne-Marie. "Le Combat Chrétien; Exégèse Augustinienne d'Ephes. 6, 12." *Revue d'Études Augustiniennes et Patristiques*, vol. 11, 1965, pp. 235-238.
- La Bonnardière, Anne-Marie. "L'Interprétation Augustinienne du *Magnum Sacramentum* de Ephés. 5, 32." *Recherches Augustiniennes et Patristiques*, vol. 12, 1977, pp. 3-45.
- Lash, Christopher J. A. "Where Do Devils Live?" *Vigiliae Christianae*, vol. 30, 1976, pp. 161-174.
- Lawler, Thomas C., translator. *St. Augustine Sermons for Christmas and Epiphany*. ACW 15, Westminster, MD, The Newman Press, 1952.
- Manrique, Andrés. "Presencia de Cristo en los Corazones por la Fe (Ef. 3,17), según San Agustín." *Revista Agustiniiana de Espiritualidad*, 14, 1973, pp. 41-61.
- O'Brien, Peter. *The Letter to the Ephesians*. Grand Rapids, MI, William B. Eerdmans, 1999.
- Rombs, Ronnie J. "Vinculum Pacis: Eph. 4:3 and Indications of a Pneumatology in St. Augustine's Theology." *Studia Patristica 50, Including Papers presented at the National Conference on Patristic Studies held at Cambridge in the Faculty of Divinity under Allen Brent, Thomas Graumann and Judith Lieu in 2009*, edited by Allen Brent and Markus Vincent, Leuven, Peeters, 2011, pp. 321-327.
- Thielman, Frank. *Ephesians. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Academic, 2010.
- Tilley, Maureen A. "Sermo ad Caesariensis ecclesiae plebem." *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids, MI, William B. Eerdmans, 1999.
- Yee, Tet-Lim N. *Jews, Gentiles and Ethnic Reconciliation: Paul's Jewish Identity and Ephesians*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 130, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Vetus Latina: Die Reste der Altlateinischen Bible Nach Petrus Sabatier Neu gesammelt und herausgegeben von der Erzabtei Beuron, 24/1-2, Ad Ephesios, Ad Philippenses, Colossenses*. Edited by Hermann Josef Frede, Freiburg im Breisgau, Herder, 1962-1971, pp. 79-80.
- Zumkeller, Adolar. "Eph. 5, 27 im Verständnis Augustins und Seiner Donatistischen und Pelagianischen Gegner." *Augustinianum*, vol. 16, 1976, pp. 457-474.

 **PART II | PARTE II**

**Augustine's Influence
in the Contemporary World**

La influencia de Agustín en el mundo contemporáneo

***Magnum Beneficium est Pax,
sed Dei Veri Beneficium est*
(*ciu.*, 3.9). Augustine's Realism,
Strategy, and Insight into Human
Motives as a Prelude to Peace at
all Levels of Human Existence**

*Magnum beneficium est pax, sed Dei veri
beneficium est (ciu., 3.9). El realismo, la
estrategia y la comprensión de las motivaciones
humanas de san Agustín como preludio a la paz
en todos los niveles de la existencia humana*

6

Paul van Geest
University of Tilburg, Netherlands



Abstract

The objective of this study is to examine the vision Augustine developed on the relationship between religion and politics, and how he conceived the Christian religion as the foundation of political and social action. Firstly, he emphasizes in his reflections on officials in the *res publica* that their work was marked by tragedy. State institutions and political relationships are characterized by the volatility and temporality. The only ones that do not seem to realize this are the politicians themselves, because the nature of their work does not contribute to the development of the ability to (self-) introspection and growth in *humilitas* (humility). Secondly, in his *De Civitate Dei* Augustine strove to present human history as a mirror in which each leader can see the impact of his own inner motives. The struggle between Jerusalem and Babylon, greed and generosity, sincerity and opportunism is a battle in the interior for Augustine. But in Book XIX of *De civitate Dei* Augustine finally also relates physical balance, irrational and rational motives, striving for integrity, the role of family and government, in order to show that inner peace and peace in any social context are interwoven.

Keywords: Augustine, leadership, mystagogy, patristics, politics, rationality, religion.



Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio fue examinar la visión que desarrolló san Agustín sobre la relación entre religión y política, y la manera en que concebía la religión cristiana como la base de la acción política y social. En primer lugar, él enfatiza en sus reflexiones sobre los funcionarios de la *res publica* cuyo trabajo fue marcado por la tragedia. Las instituciones estatales y las relaciones políticas se caracterizan por la volatilidad y la temporalidad. Los únicos que no parecen darse cuenta de esto son los políticos porque la naturaleza de su trabajo no contribuye al desarrollo de la capacidad de (auto) introspección y el crecimiento en *humilitas* (humildad). En segundo lugar, en *De Civitate Dei* Agustín se esforzó por presentar la historia humana como un espejo en el que cada líder puede ver el impacto en sus propios motivos internos. La lucha entre Jerusalén y Babilonia, codicia y generosidad, sinceridad y oportunismo, es una batalla interior para san Agustín. Sin embargo, en el Libro XIX de *De civitate Dei* Agustín, finalmente, relaciona el equilibrio físico, los motivos irracionales y racionales, la lucha por la integridad, el papel de la familia y el gobierno para mostrar que la paz interior y la paz en cualquier contexto social están interrelacionadas.

Palabras clave: Religión, política, racionalidad, mistagógica, patrística, san Agustín, liderazgo.



Sobre el autor | About the author

Paul van Geest [P.J.J.vanGeest@uvt.nl]

Professor of Church History and History of Theology, Faculty of Theology, Tilburg University; Professor of Economy and Theology, Faculty of Philosophy, Erasmus University Rotterdam; Visiting Professor Faculty of Theology, Catholic University Leuven; Member Koninklijke Hollandsche Maatschappij der Wetenschappen (Royal Holland Society of Sciences and Humanities); Editor-in-chief, Brill Encyclopedia of Early Christianity... Editor (co-founder), Brill Studies in Catholic Theology (Leiden); Editor, Brill Series in Church History (Leiden); Editor, Late Antique History and Religion (Leuven); Editor, Augustiniana (L). Member of various National and International Scientific Assessment Committees including NWO, Vici in the Netherlands. Commentator for Dutch national broadcaster on developments in the Roman Catholic Church.



Cómo citar en MLA / How to cite in MLA

Van Geest, Paul. "Magnum Beneficium Est Pax, sed Dei Veri Beneficium est (civ., 3.9). Augustine's Realism, Strategy, and Insight into Human Motives as a Prelude to Peace at all Levels of Human Existence" *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendimez y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2019, pp. 195-214, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.6

Incomparable Times

In the fourth and fifth century, the influence of the Christian bishops in the Roman Empire suddenly increased in a tremendous way. The fact that many of them were well educated began to pay off. The bishops had developed the capacity to integrate the rhetorical strategies and practices of the Greco-Roman orators into their own discourse. Moreover, they knew how to embed principles from classical philosophy into their interpretation of the Christian message. In doing so they reflected the culture of the upper class, to which many of them belonged personally.¹ Bishops such as the aristocrat Paulinus of Nola and his pen friend Augustine, for instance, were deeply versed in classical rhetoric, literature, and philosophy. They became important figures in Roman society because Christianity became the dominant religion, but also because of their own contribution to this process. In addition, the allure that the ascetical life held for the aristocracy also consolidated the power of the bishops, as bishops such as Ambrose strongly propagated it (Natal Villazala 59-107). Research of episcopal dealings in the public domain has revealed, moreover, that other activities of theirs also contributed to the increase of their power and influence. In addition to their catechetical, homiletical, and liturgical activities, in both East and West, they developed programmes for the care of the poor;² they also founded hospitals (Crislip, *passim*), and—recognised by the State as judges—bishops followed Roman procedures in issues related to property law, inheritances, or contracts, by interrogating—rather than inculcating—people in respect of the legal basis of slavery, the right of asylum, or adultery. Augustine once wrote to the tribune Marcellinus that this interrogation should be sharp and painful, so that the accused party would be all the more grateful for the evangelical clemency (*mansuetudo*) that should characterise the sentence (*ep.*, 133, 2). The Church father's intention in writing this will be explored below. What is clear in any case is that strategies such as these increased the bishops' power, although it must also be noted that Christian relations with the other religious or philosophical traditions in the plural society of the time were sometimes unclear, and that there was a certain unease between Christianity and Roman culture. But this does not mean that religion in Late Antiquity was a private affair. In the plural society of the time,

¹ This publication is based on van Geest and Hunink; van Geest “Waarachtigheid”; “Geordend is de politie”; and “Quid dicam de vindicando.” See also the important studies of the growing unofficial power, a power as yet without legal sanction, by Brown; Cameron; and Rapp.

² See Lepelley; and Holman.

Christianity embodied a social practice which was connected with individuals' own—at times ascetic—lifestyle.

The situation of Christians in the fourth and fifth centuries cannot be easily compared with the current situation of Christians in my own secularised country, the Netherlands. Whereas in the former case, the Church increasingly began to shape society; in the latter, bishops and other Church leaders are becoming ever more invisible in society. From the second half of the nineteenth century up to the 1960s, Dutch society was characterised by *verzuiling* (“pillarisation”). There was sharp segregation between the Protestant, Catholic, liberal, and socialist sections of society, which was deliberately enforced by the elites at the top of these four “pillars.” It was sustained by the churches, media, vocational corporations, political parties, schools, hospitals, and even universities, and provided the members of the “pillars” with a strong sense of identity. In the Catholic pillar, political leaders were clerics such as Msgr W. Nolens and Msgr H. Schaepman. In the 1960s these pillars toppled over and came down with a crash. Prelates such as Herman Schaepman or Willem Nolens had long since ceased to dominate politics or parliamentary debate. Few people can remember that a hospital such as St. Francis's in Rotterdam was once founded and fully owned by the Augustinian Sisters of Heemstede—the doctors were employees of this congregation—and the existence of this hospital certainly cannot be said to contribute to an increase in episcopal power and influence. Whereas self-confident bishops energetically fostered the growth of Christianity as a significant societal force in Late Antiquity (through networks, sermonising specifically geared to certain audiences, care for the sick, or the administration of justice), relations between Church and secular leaders are currently characterised by a certain unease. Unless you are Desmond Tutu, Church dignitaries are relegated to the domain of faith, i.e. the private domain that must be kept strictly separate from the public domain.

Despite the incomparability of the times, it is nonetheless useful to examine the views that a Church father like Augustine developed on the relationship between religion and politics, and on the Christian religion as the foundation of political and social action. Can his vision offer anything of value to people who operate currently in the public domain? It will become evident that he offers no ready-made solutions for the problem of how Christianity might provide a solid basis for the development of Christian Democratic politics. Augustine never thought of this question because democracy as we know it was totally alien to him as a political system. What he does do in his political thought, however, is to intensify a sense of reality that is truly timeless.

The Tragedy of Politics and the State

When Augustine was young, around 390, he subscribed to the notion, derived from Greek philosophy and Roman political ideology, that the *polis* or the *civitas* offered free citizens a trajectory towards individual perfection. With Plato and Aristotle, he regarded “politics” as a creative process which generated a social order that enabled the free individual to obtain happiness through a step-by-step plan. Competent leaders, he believed, ordered society in such a way as to permit their subjects to attain the highest degree of happiness for themselves. This perfection was individual: *disciplina* was more important than *concordia*.³

However, his reading of Scripture, which informed him of the vicissitudes of the Jewish people, caused Augustine to conclude after 390 that it was much more difficult to actually realise this life under the guidance of the philosopher-politician, and on the basis of the right use of reason, than he had initially believed. As it turned out, people were much less reasonable than he thought. Scripture taught him that the classical philosophers had been unable to resolve the tragic nature of the *saeculum*, where tension, discord, and chaos determine life, and where neither society nor politics are capable of playing the grand role in the pursuit of happiness that they were supposed to. Having had a dose of realism through the pastoral work he began to do after becoming bishop of Hippo in 396, a town inhabited by fishermen and dockworkers, Augustine started to emphasize that, even though people are social animals, their dealings with one another since the Fall have engendered chaos and aggression. Initially he still believed on account of humankind’s social character that the State should attempt to establish *concordia*, a condition which produces kindness, art, and civilisation in social interactions (*qu. an.*, 33, 72; *doc. chr.*, 2, 39, 58). But having become more realistic after 397, he moderated his expectations, because he realized that politicians were already hands full trying to curb violence of all kinds. He adjusted his ambitious expectations, writing that to attempt to counteract the forces that tended towards chaos, the opposite of order, was in fact politicians’ most important objective (*doc. chr.*, 12, 27, 1). It was their task to prevent the people—to whom they belonged themselves, incidentally—from devouring each other like fish. That is all they can hope to achieve. They are not lords and masters of history, nor of the individual soul. In the best-case scenario, the leaders of the State create the conditions for that

³ A groundbreaking work on this aspect is Markus’ *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St Augustine*.

peace that arises when society is in agreement with itself on the distribution and acquisition of the necessities of life (*civ.*, 19, 6; 2, 21).⁴ Politicians can also bring about a certain measure of justice, the justice that flows from sacrificing one's own pursuit of profit for the common good (Markus 72-104).

But even so, later, when Augustine began writing his *De civitate Dei* ("The City of God") (cited hereafter *civ.*) in 410, he became convinced that perfect justice—the perfect state where citizens and their leaders are of one heart—could never exist in any earthly State. Wars waged by people who cannot even understand each other's language, and the dangers in society that increase as the masses grow in number, were further proof for him that peace can never be realised on any level.⁵ This ultimately led him to disavow Plato's idea that politicians were the appropriate agents to lead people to individual perfection. But this does not mean that he thought politics meaningless. If politicians succeed in counteracting social chaos they have already achieved a great deal. In his reflections Augustine also took account of the fact that the activities of politicians are tragic. For a start, they must use language to realise their goals. And language also permits people to lie and to deceive, thus further distancing them from themselves and from others (*Gen. adu. Man.*, 2, 7; 2, 30; *conf.*, 1, 17, 27-18; 29; 3, 3, 6; 9, 2, 2; *doc. chr.*, 6, 2).⁶ And secondly, no political system endures (*s.*, 105).⁷ Institutions of State and political structures are ephemeral and temporary. The only people who appear not to realise this tend to be politicians themselves, because the nature of their work is not conducive to developing the capacity of taking oneself lightly and to grow in *humilitas* ("humility"). Because of the impermanence of all empires or political systems, Augustine spoke increasingly of an *Imperium christianum* as he grew older (Lohse, 470-475). This brings us to the next topic.

The Uncoupling of Religion and Politics in Early Christianity

In the second and third century, the period in which the Church was being persecuted by the Roman emperors, Christian writers had decidedly apocalyptic ideas about the Roman Empire. Hippolytus, for instance, compared it to the last of the four beasts that the prophet Daniel had seen in a vision—the

⁴ See Burt 127-129.

⁵ On this theme see *civ.* 10, 4-7.

⁶ This means Augustine believes there was no need for language in paradise.

⁷ "Civitas manet quae nos carnaliter genuit."

most terrifying of the four, crushing everything before it (Dan. 7: 7-9). The emperors, he thought, increased their power by conquest and the empire was therefore a diabolical imitation of the Kingdom of Christ. But once Christianity had become a recognised religion, and bishops began to have power and influence themselves, the Christian perception of the Roman Empire changed. Eusebius of Caesarea, the first Church historian, believed that the unity of the *Orbis Romanus* under the Roman emperors had been God's will. That Jesus had been born under the unifying reign of the Emperor Augustus was no coincidence. This unity had facilitated the proclamation of the Gospel. Ambrose, Augustine's mentor, regarded the Roman emperor as a *filius ecclesiae*, the son of the Church *par excellence*, because he was able to Christianise the world using the institutions of the empire. Thus, Roman power became strongly sacralized.

Around 400, Augustine agreed with his mentor that Christianisation could take place in an institutional way under the aegis of the emperor. But as his interaction and correspondence with political leaders intensified, his view of the role of political leaders, and of humans in general, changed. Unlike Ambrose, his references to the *Pax Romana* as part of sacred history became scarce (*civ.*, 18, 46). He no longer regarded the Roman Empire as a *praeparatio evangelica*, and when he mentioned the Emperor Augustus, he emphasized the conflicts that marked his reign. He then explicitly linked the conflicts in the world to the restlessness of the human heart. This, he believed, prevented humanity from converting to Christianity collectively and along the institutional way. What is more: the actions of emperors and politicians were just as much the result of this restlessness, and in fact of an often fruitless ambition. On the basis of this observation Augustine emphasized that political leaders could not legitimise their claims on the obedience of the citizens by pointing to their belonging to a higher, divine order.⁸ In this way, Augustine desacralized the history of Rome, and, having become more realistic about the intentions of those who serve the public cause, he uncoupled religion and politics (*civ.*, 2, 19).

The reason for this uncoupling was his gradual discovery that political leaders, particularly through their pride, their love of power, and their ambition, are apt to make choices that do not benefit their people. They should not therefore be invested with sacral power. As a young Christian, he had stressed that perfect leaders ideally should be well-educated and thus possess wisdom. Ideally, they would be impervious to the allure of temporary success and the temptation to place themselves in the spotlight. Leaders of this disposition would be able

⁸ Other aspects of Augustine's view of imperial policy are discussed in van Geest and Hunink.

to lead the people, along the paths of the legally guaranteed order in society, to understanding of the universe and of the cosmic order, and to happiness, which are both accessible to reason (*ord.*, 2, 8, 25).⁹ The social order is good only if it reflects the cosmic order, and treats each creature justly by assigning to it the place in the *ordo* that belongs to it.¹⁰ A human being must, for instance, never be used as an animal or an instrument; nor must he see himself as God (*mus.*, 6, 16, 46; 6, 17, 58; 6, 17, 56; *vera rel.*, 12, 23; 20, 38).¹¹ A leader is good if, being wise and just himself, he gives his tormented subjects access to the universe and to happiness through reason (Cranz). Although Augustine continued to perfect his thinking on the natural and social order, he began to qualify this Platonic notion of political leadership after 400. Just as perfect justice will never be realised in society, no politician can embody perfect wisdom. Augustine sometimes uses *civ.* to present the history of humankind as a mirror in which leaders can see the reflection of their own motives and the effects of their actions. The struggle between greed and generosity, sincerity and opportunism, dominates both history and the struggle that leaders must wage within themselves before they speak, decide, and act. The dramatic conflict on earth between these two cities, Jerusalem and Babylon, has no end: the two cities are intertwined in this world, just as they are intertwined in the hearts of politicians and of other mortals.

The Intertwining of Church and State in the Person of the Bishop as a Mediator and Judge

As has been seen, bishops were given the authority by the State to adjudicate legal disputes and to reconcile quarrelling parties. This explains why Augustine spent a great deal of his time hearing litigants, passing sentence, and making peace between them. His biographer Possidius mentions that Augustine spent whole days dispensing justice in his *curia episcopalis*. In the *secretarium* of his cathedral church, Augustine issued rulings every morning in suits relating to the law of property, inheritance, or contracts. He also presided over cases concerning the legal status of slavery, the right of asylum, and adultery. It is no surprise that his treatise on adulterous marriages (*De adulterinis coniugiis*) is written in a legal style. Contested wills were frequently placed before him

⁹ See Cranz, *passim*.

¹⁰ See, for example, *ord.* 2, 5, 17; 2, 6, 18.

¹¹ See also *ep. gal.* 20: “Conturbatio enim ordini contraria est, ordo est autem a carnalibus ad spiritalia surgere, non ab spiritalibus ad carnalia cadere, sicut istis acciderat”; and *Gen. adu. Man.*, 2, 9, 12 “arrogando.”

for adjudication. The prestige of his position also ensured that many requests were put to him, requests he always took seriously and which he sometimes pursued with local rulers or imperial authorities. From time to time he undertook tiring journeys to be able to mediate in person. He even opened a legal advice centre to facilitate this juridical aspect of his activities, and he regularly consulted competent lawyers, such as his friend and colleague Bishop Alypius, who had excellent contacts at the imperial court.

As in the case of rulers who have the authority to implement coercive measures, Augustine argued that judges must be able to judge their own deeds and motives within themselves: “*Esto iudex in te!*” In his analysis, the real weakness of the legal system is not systemic but results from human frailty. His view of justice was based more on his analysis of the capacities, limitations, and imperfections of man than on his thinking on social and political structures (Dodaro 99-115). He also confronted the rulers and judges with the basic rule not to do anything in legislation or in the administration of justice that they would not want done to themselves. In order to distinguish justice from injustice, it is of course necessary to be competent, erudite, effective, and faithful to the legal precepts. But Augustine hastened to add that judges must personally experience in their imagination the sentence they pass by emphatically placing themselves in the shoes of the person they are sentencing. They will not have heard the case properly until they have themselves imagined the torments of the anxiety that the accused person is experiencing.

In *ep.* 133, which he wrote around 411 and was addressed to the imperial commissary Marcellinus, Augustine asked him why criminal justice was not applied to Donatists who had committed offences against Catholic priests. He maintained two principles in doing so.

The legal procedure stipulated that officers of the civil or ecclesiastical courts—i.e. judges or bishops—were bound to observe that judges must interrogate rather than inculcate. This is also what Augustine did himself. Comparing the judge’s actions to those of a doctor, he told Marcellinus that the interrogation should be sharp and painful. It was part of his strategy to interrogate in great detail and very precisely. The accused was thus subjected to an inquisitorial trial, which was intended to foster in him a clear and unrestrained sense of his own badness. But this was not a goal in itself. Precisely because the interrogation was followed by a mild punishment, the realisation on the part of the accused ultimately served the intensification of a kind of gratitude at being let off lightly. Augustine’s main interest in determining the penalty was not,

therefore, to apply the law;¹² his sentences were intended to occasion a process of seeking of the truth in the accused person's heart.

The torment of the interrogation was not a goal in itself, no more than the pain that the doctor inflicts or the violence that the State exercises are goals in themselves. Ultimately, the accused must become aware of the *paterna diligentia*, which Augustine was keen to reflect in his dealings with the accused. It was the responsibility of bishops who acted as judges to practice evangelical clemency (*mansuetudo*). Whereas the punishments imposed by the secular magistrates were meant to be deterrents, Augustine endeavoured to ensure—in line with his pedagogical “system”—that his punishments would produce new insight and inner reform.

Peace at Every Level of Human Existence

In the so-called “table of peace” in the nineteenth book of *civ.*, written around 425, Augustine discusses the aspects of human existence that are crucial to the realisation of peace on Earth. He returned there to a train of thought that he had first expressed in 388. In *De quantitate animae*, he described for the first time the seven aspects of human beings in their mutual interdependence. The level of vegetative life (breathing, 1) is followed by the sensory life (feeling, smell, sight, hearing, taste, 2), the intellectual life (thinking, manual and artistic skill, 3) and ultimately by the level of the moral life (4). This consists of obedience to precepts which, if practiced, ensures a balance in the soul (*pulchre ad pulchrum*), which then loses itself in God's life (*pulchre in pulchro*, 5), is absorbed in God (*pulchre ad Pulchritudinem*, 6) and becomes one with God (*pulchre apud Pulchritudinem*, 7).

This line of reasoning, which dates from the year 388, one year after Augustine's baptism, was no longer entirely neo-Platonic. Although Augustine described the elevation, the rise of human beings in a neoplatonic way, he clearly

¹² See *ep.* 133, 2: “Imple, christiane iudex, pii patris officium; sic succense iniquitati, ut consulere humanitati memineris: nec in peccatorum atrocitatibus exerceas ulciscendi libidinem; sed peccatorum vulneribus curandi adhibeas voluntatem. Noli perdere paternam diligentiam, quam in ipsa inquisitione servasti, quando tantorum scelerum confessionem, non extendente equuleo, non sulcantibus unguis, non urentibus flammis, sed virgarum verberibus eruisti. Qui modus coercionis a magistris artium liberalium, et ab ipsis parentibus, et saepe etiam in iudiciis solet ab episcopis adhiberi. Noli ergo atrocius vindicare, quod lenius invenisti. Inquirendi quam puniendi necessitas maior est: ad hoc enim et mitissimi homines facinus occultatum diligenter atque instanter examinant, ut inveniant quibus parcant. Unde plerumque necesse est, exerceatur acrius inquisitio, ut manifestato scelere sit ubi appareat mansuetudo.”

already believed that all aspects of human existence are important in this rise or elevation to the highest being. The human is involved in this as a spiritual and physical being—in contrast to Plato; therefore, the physical does not need to be “eliminated.” Nearly thirty years later, Augustine still espoused this anthropology. It formed the basis for his table of peace. He wrote:

The peace of the body is, then, the properly ordered arrangement of its parts; the peace of the irrational soul is the properly ordered satisfaction of the appetites; the peace of the rational soul is the properly ordered accord of cognition and action; the peace of the body and soul together is the properly ordered life and wellbeing of a living creature; peace between mortal man and God is properly ordered obedience, in faith, under eternal law; peace among men is the properly ordered concord of mind with mind; the peace of a household is the properly ordered concord, with respect to command and obedience, of those who are living together; the peace of a city is the properly ordered concord, with respect to command and obedience, of its citizens; the peace of the heavenly city is perfectly ordered and wholly concordant fellowship in the enjoyment of God and of each other in God. The peace of all things is the tranquility of order, and order is the arrangement of things equal and unequal that assigns to each its due place (*civ.*, 19, 13) (trans. Babcock 368).¹³

Augustine assumes here that humans are composites of body and soul. Within the soul, the vital, non-rational part must be distinguished from the rational soul. Peace must reign in each of these three dimensions. The peace of the body is attained through “the properly ordered arrangement of its parts”; the peace of the vital, but non-rational part of the soul through the ‘the properly ordered satisfaction of the appetites’ (*civ.*, 19, 13).¹⁴ If all organs and body parts function in accordance with the order of creation, and if the human is therefore free of any disordered tendencies, Augustine speaks of ordered life that causes well-being.¹⁵ Peace within the rational soul in turn presupposes order in the body and the mind. But peace within the rational soul is primarily the fruit of the “the properly ordered accord of cognition and action” (*civ.*, 9.13).¹⁶

¹³ See Cicero, *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*.

¹⁴ “Pax itaque corporis est ordinata temperatura partium, pax animae inrationalis ordinata requies appetitionum.”

¹⁵ See *civ.* 19, 14: “Utrumque autem simul ei paci prodest, quam inter se habent anima et corpus, id est ordinatae vitae ac salutis.” See also 19,13: «Pax corporis et animae ordinata vita et salus animantis, pax hominis mortalis et Dei ordinata in fide sub aeterna lege oboedientia.”

¹⁶ “Pax animae rationalis ordinata cognitionis actionisque consensio.”

As in *De quantitate animae* and the *Praeceptum*, Augustine postulates in the table of peace that physical health is the basis for spiritual well-being. Physical health is therefore of the utmost importance for the spiritual life. He writes in s. 277:

Look, my dearest friends; when this body of ours is healthy, even this fragile and mortal object, when it is regulated by the constitution of its parts, when there is nothing in it quarreling with anything else, not heat overcoming and driving out coolness, not warmth being extinguished by an excess of cold—and afflicting the body while the fight’s going on; not dryness absorbing the moisture, not the moist overflowing and congesting; but all things it consists of are balanced with each other in a harmonious relationship, which is called health. In a word, the health of the body is the harmony of those things of which it consists (trans. Hill 35).

In the table of peace, Augustine also associates physical health with the instincts, unconscious motives and impulses that also cause human actions, but that cannot be derived exclusively from rational considerations. He thinks these are produced by the non-rational part of the soul, the part of the soul that humans have in common with animals. The Church father suggests here that people who do not experience peace within themselves are oblivious to irrational processes that take place within the non-rational part of the soul. But he does not subscribe to the Stoic view that all *perturbationes* must be eradicated before reason can rule. As has been seen, he does not think that victory over *pathè*, *apatheia*, is a normal condition, because it is wrong to believe that the wise man should have no compassion as compassion involves suffering (s., 348, 2).¹⁷ He would write therefore in *civ.* that the affects cannot be eliminated but must be governed by the will. If the will is good, then fear will be good too (Fiedrowicz 431-440).

As has been seen, Augustine then assumes in the table of peace that peace is established in man’s highest dimension of being, the rational soul (the only dimension that humans do not have in common with animals), through the harmony of thought and action. It is clear that personal integrity is a form of peace, founded on physical and spiritual balance: on health, insight into, and a certain level of control over the “animal spirits” within the “I.”¹⁸ This

¹⁷ See *mor.* 27, 53-54 (compassion with those in need must not perturb one’s own soul too much, but nor must *apatheia* cause inhumane behaviour). See also, for the influence of the notion of *apatheia* on Christianity, Mühlenberg 000.

¹⁸ See, for the latter point, Akerlof and Shiller. They deplore the fact that almost all of the animal spirits that Keynes identified in *The General Theory* as the cause of the Great Depression have been pushed to the margins by later economists.

peace within the rational part of the soul is then immediately placed within the perspective of peace between mortal man and God, a peace that encompasses “properly ordered obedience, in faith, under eternal law” (*civ.*, 19, 13). If someone has attained physical and spiritual balance, and his thoughts and actions are consistent, then, Augustine believes, this results in the consciousness of being part of an order of creation which is oriented to peace. This is not very different from the notion of *oikeiosis*. In this context Augustine then describes peace between people as their ordered harmony. In the table of peace, just as in the *Praeceptum*, personal integrity is also related to the way one treats others, in chance encounters or in more structured forms of communal living such as the home, the city or the world. The discourse on peace within man is therefore followed directly by a description of peace within the home and in the city as the “ordered harmony” in which “with respect to command and obedience” (*civ.*, 19, 13).¹⁹ Domestic peace, where paternal authority is characterised by caring compassion, just like that of the *praepositus*, is oriented to civic peace.²⁰ This *ordinata concordia* lies at the basis of every people, defined by Augustine as “an assembled multitude—not of animals but of rational creatures—, and is joined together by the common agreement on the objects of its love” (*civ.*, 19, 6).²¹ This was a commonplace in Antiquity. Ideally, the family, the home, stood at the service of the city, just as the city was the foundation of the empire. At the same time, he emphasizes the social nature of the human race and the value of natural bonds and friendship (*bono coniug.*, 1, 1). Anyone who is born, is born to become a friend.

In the table of peace, social order is the result of the order and balance that individuals are able to realise within themselves. The individual’s highest task is to become a person of integrity. This integrity is assumed and developed in his or her interactions with others. But Augustine contends emphatically that integrity in this sense must be supported by the ordering of irrational dimensions and of the physical dimension. Integrity thus presupposes *integritas*, wholeness, and also contributes to this.

¹⁹ See *civ.*, 19, 13: “Pax hominum ordinata concordia, pax domus ordinata imperandi atque oboediendi concordia cohabitantium, pax civitatis ordinata imperandi atque oboediendi concordia civium, pax caelestis civitatis ordinatissima et concordissima societas fruendi et invicem in Deo, pax omnium rerum tranquillitas ordinis” (trans. Babcock 385).

²⁰ See Schrama “Augustinus” 133–148; and “Praeposito” 847–878.

²¹ “Coetus multitudinis rationalis rerum quas diligit concordii communione sociatus.” See 19, 17.

In this way, Augustine brings physical harmony, irrational and rational motives, the pursuit of integrity, the role of the family and of the government into a single vision, articulated in his so-called “table of peace” in fewer than twenty lines. It is a map showing the reader precisely what factors are required for individual and social peace and how these two things are interrelated. Peace within an individual person is interrelated with the harmony that is pursued on various levels of society. In the different social units, the individual must, on the one hand, have the scope to discover what rational and irrational forces move him. On the other hand, relatives or members of wider social units set boundaries that prevent the individual from being destroyed by his animal spirits, his jealousy, resentment, and illusions. The table of peace shows that Augustine believes personal integrity is founded upon physical and spiritual calm and equilibrium. But in order to be able to stimulate integrity as the bridge between individual peace and peace in society, he demands the same from society at all levels. Augustine regards the social connections within society as instances that, each at their own level, create preconditions for the cultivation of personal integrity as a source of peace at the highest level of humankind, with all the beneficial effects that this has on society.

Conclusion: The Usefulness of Idleness

It has yet to be investigated whether the bishops’ success in the fourth and fifth centuries was due to the sense of reality that Augustine expresses in his reflections on the business of politics and the inner life of politicians. But it is a paradox that their power in the Roman Empire should have increased at the time that Augustine was proclaiming frankly that political leaders cannot bring perfect happiness, and cannot do much more, in fact, than create the conditions to avoid chaos in the world, as well as that political institutions are essentially tragic due to their impermanence and transience.

Augustine has no ready-made solutions to offer on the utility of Christianity for Christian Democracy, because he lived and worked under different social circumstances. Yet his gradually acquired insight that people do not act quite as rationally in the public domain as they think they do, is as timeless as it is realistic. The attention he pays to the limitations of human beings is also valuable; it is even the prelude to his uncoupling of religion and politics, which is effected in order to avoid investing politicians with sacral power, thus obscuring their shortcomings.

Augustine describes three ways of living in *civ*. The first is a life without responsibilities, spent searching for truth about the world and about oneself; the second is an active life, spent taking care of human affairs. The third is a harmonious combination of the two former styles (*civ.*, 19, 2). There is no doubt that he believed the third way of life to be most appropriate for the politician, no matter in what era or under what political system.

The torment of the probing interrogation was not a goal in itself; the accused had to become aware of the *paterna diligentia* and the *mansuetudo* of the judge (the bishop) in his dealings with the accused. According to Augustine's own pedagogical "system", only then his punishments would bring about new insight and inner reform.

Augustine was demanding of those who fulfil responsible political functions. As a former professor of rhetoric he knew that those in public office gain in authority if it is clear to everyone that they pursue the same ideals in both the personal and the public domain. Clerics in particular are expected to make choices in their daily lives that are in accordance with their state of life or the position they occupy. At the end of his life, Augustine described in *De civitate Dei*, in less than twenty lines, the interrelatedness between physicality, irrational and rational motives, the pursuit of integrity, the role of the family and of government. In his so-called "table of peace", he charted the factors that come into play whenever people seek peace both within themselves and in the world. Augustine presupposed that there is interaction between tendencies that emerge from the body, from the instinctive, moral, and social life. In his view, animal spirits, one's own irrationality and subconscious motives, are not just possible causes of personal, but also of economic or social instability. He thought that integrity rests upon a balance in the personal life. Body and mind must work together. Equilibrium in the mind presupposes equilibrium in the body. Both form the basis for personal integrity, the virtue which Augustine believed is itself the foundation of peace in any form of community. It transpires therefore that Augustine's thinking on the order of the world and the quality of human society at all levels is infused with a sense that integrity, in our sense of the word, is a crucial virtue.

The phenomenon of man always remained a riddle to Augustine. In the *Confessiones*, at the end of his descent into memory and the subconscious, he expressed this very strikingly in his famous phrase "Mihi quaestio factus sum" ("I have become a question to myself") (*conf.*, 10, 33, 50). Living both in

a complex society and in an incomprehensible creation, people, Augustine thought, are faced with the tremendous challenge to seek the truth and to find the Truth. But perhaps more than any Church father before him, he was strongly aware of the fact that no one can even approximate the truth about themselves or the Truth behind all things if they do not live a truthful life.



Works Cited

- Akerlof, George A. & Shiller, Robert J. *Animal Spirits: How Human Psychology Drives the Economy, and Why it Matters for Global Capitalism*. Jersey, 2009.
- Augustine of Hippo. *Sermons III/8 (273-305A) on the Saints*. Translated by Edmund Hill, New York, New City Press, 1994.
- . *The City of God (De Civitate Dei) XI-XXII*. Translated by William Babcock, New York, New City Press, 2012.
- Brown, Peter. "Late Antiquity." *A History of Private Life*. Vol. 1: *From Pagan Rome to Byzantium*, edited by Paul Veyne, Cambridge, MA, Belknap Press, 1987.
- Burt, Donald. *Friendship and Society. An Introduction to Augustine's Practical Philosophy*. Grand Rapids, Cambridge, Eerdmans, 1999.
- Cameron, Averil. *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1991.
- Cicero. *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*. Translated by Harris Rackam, Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1971.
- Cranz, F. Edward. "The development of Augustine's Ideas on Society before the Donatist Controversy." *Harvard Theological Review*, 47, 1954, pp. 255-316.
- Crislip, Andrew. *From monastery to Hospital: Christian Monasticism and the Transformation of Health Care in Late Antiquity*. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2005.
- Dodaro, Robert. "Between the two Cities. Political Action in Saint Augustine of Hippo." *Augustine and Politics*, edited by John Doody, Kevin Hughesa and Kim Paffenroth, Oxford, Lexington Books, 2005, pp. 99-115.
- Holman, Susan R. *The Hungry Are Dying: Beggars and Bishops in Roman Cappadocia*. Oxford-New York, Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Lohse, Bernard. "Augustins Wandlung in seiner Beurteilung des Staates." *Studia Patristica*, vol. 6, 1960, pp. 447-475.
- Lepelley, Claude. "Facing Wealth and Poverty: Defining Augustine's Social Doctrine." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 38, 2007, pp. 1-17.
- Markus, Robert. *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St Augustine*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970.
- Mühlenberg, Ekkehard. "Altchristliche Lebensführung zwischen Bibel und Tugendlehre." *Ethik im Antiken Christentum*, edited by Hanns Christoph Brennecke and Johannes van Oort, Leuven, Peeters Publishers, 2011.

Rapp, Claudia. *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity. The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition*. Berkeley, London, University of California Press, 2005.

Schrama, Martijn. "Augustinus over het verlangen naar vrede." *Communio*, 14, 1989, pp. 133-148.

----- . "Praeposito tamquam patri oboediatur." Praeposito tamquam patri oboediatur. Augustinus über Frieden und Gehorsam, edited by Bernard Bruning, Mathijs Lamberigts and Jozef van Houtem, *Mélanges T.J. van Bavel*, Leuven, 1991, pp. 847-878.

Michael Fiedrowicz. "'Cives Sanctae Civitatis Dei Omnes Affectiones Rectas Habent' (Civ. Dei 14, 9): Terapia delle Passioni e Preghiera in S. Agostino." *Letica cristiana nei secoli III e IV: eredità e confronti*, Rome, 1996, pp. 431-440.

Van Geest Paul & Hunink Vincent. *Met zachte hand. Augustinus over dwang in kerk en maatschappij [brief 185]*. Budel, Damon, 2012.

Van Geest, Paul. *Waarachtigheid. Levenskunst volgens Augustinus*. Zoetermeer, Meinema, 2011.

----- . "'Geordend is de politiek'. Het christendom als fundament voor politiek handelen volgens Augustinus.' Dood of wederopstanding? Over het christelijke in de Nederlandse politiek', edited by Erik Borgman, Pieter Jan Dijkman and Paul van Geest, Amsterdam, Boom, 2012, pp. 26-32.

----- . "Quid dicam de vindicando vel non vindicando? (ep. 95.3). Augustine's Legitimation of Coercion in the Light of his Role of Mediator, Judge, Teacher and Mystagogue." *Violence in Ancient Christianity: Victims and Perpetrators*, edited by Albert Geljon, Riemer Roukema, Leiden, Brill, 2014, pp. 151-184.

Villazala, David Natal. *Fugiamus ergo forum. Ascetismo y poder en Ambrosio de Milán León*, Universidad de León, 2010.

The Soul in Pieces and its Quest for the Peace of Christ

El alma en pedazos y su búsqueda
de la paz de Cristo

7

Matthew Drever
University of Tulsa, United States of America



Abstract

Confessions is the tale of the journey to the *patria pacis* from out of the ashes of humanity's restless, sinful anxiety. Augustine's quest for inner peace is wrapped within this journey home, and it is a quest that has a trinitarian and an ecclesiological structure. Interior peace is only achieved through our participation in Christ, which itself is structured by our inclusion within Christ's body (the Church) through the power of the Spirit. We find this peace when we find our rest, that is, when we find our proper place. Love dictates our place and within the body of Christ we find the proper (moral) love that directs our praise toward God. This love is also the presence of the Spirit within the soul—this love is the Spirit—and so interior peace is not only a condition of the soul but also its deification. This points to the underlying reality of the soul's interior nature, whose existence and identity is grounded in its imaging of God. We find our peace in uniting with God because our proper place—the place wherein we find rest—is as images of the divine.

Keywords: Augustine, divine image, love, peace, Spirit.



Resumen

Las confesiones son el relato del viaje a la *patria pacis* desde las cenizas de la inquietud y la angustia pecaminosa de la humanidad. La búsqueda de san Agustín por la paz interior se encuentra en este viaje a casa, y es una búsqueda que tiene una estructura trinitaria y eclesiológica. La paz interior solo se logra a través de nuestra participación en Cristo, que a su vez se estructura por nuestra inclusión dentro del cuerpo de Cristo (la Iglesia) por medio del poder del Espíritu. Encontramos esta paz en nuestro descanso, es decir, cuando hallamos nuestro lugar adecuado. El amor dicta nuestro lugar y dentro del cuerpo de Cristo encontramos el amor apropiado (moral) que dirige nuestra alabanza hacia Dios. Este amor es la presencia del Espíritu dentro del alma, por lo que la paz interior no es solo una condición del alma sino también su deificación. Esto apunta a la realidad subyacente de la naturaleza interior del alma, cuya existencia e identidad se basa en su imagen de Dios. Encontramos nuestra paz en la unión con Dios porque nuestro lugar apropiado, el lugar donde encontramos descanso, es como imágenes de lo divino.

Palabras clave: Paz, san Agustín, Cristo, Espíritu, amor, imagen divina.



About the author | Acerca del autor

Matthew Drever [matthew-drever@utulsa.edu]

Matthew Drever is Associate Professor of Religion and Chair of the Philosophy and Religion Department at the University of Tulsa. He is the author of numerous articles on Augustine and the reception history of Augustine in the modern period. He is also the author of *Image, Identity, and the Forming of the Augustinian Soul* (Oxford, 2013).



How to cite in MLA / Cómo citar en MLA

Drever, Matthew. "The Soul in Pieces and its Quest for the Peace of Christ." *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguarte Bendimez y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2019, pp. 215-233, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.7

Lord God, grant us peace; for you have given us all things, the peace of quietness, the peace of the Sabbath, a peace with no evening. This entire most beautiful order of very good things will complete its course and then pass away; for in them by creation there is both morning and evening (*conf.*, 13, 35, 50).

Augustine's final prayer for peace in *Confessions* (cited hereafter, *conf.*) brings to conclusion a search he initiates in the opening lines of the text when famously he declares: "Our heart is restless until it rests in you" (*conf.*, 1, 1, 1). Here Augustine sounds the depths of the restless human heart and locates its resolution in the peace we achieve through praising God. As Augustine moves through *conf.* this message takes its shape as a life-long quest and is used as a multi-pronged launching point to offer: a framework to structure his autobiographical narration of spiritual development; a hermeneutical key to unlock basic theological themes on the nature of creation, salvation, and the relation between humanity and God; as well as a rhetorical device to invite the reader to join Augustine's quest for peace through the praise of God. Augustine's opening call, then, gives us a window into *conf.*—its structure, intentions, and goal.

In this chapter, I will focus on how Augustine in *conf.* situates peace within his account of human interiority. One way to broach this issue is with Augustine's query, in *conf.* 10, 30, 42, on why the good, almighty God does not heal Christians of temptation and sin immediately so they may enjoy interior peace. This is a profound and haunting question for Augustine, and one that underlies his wider search for an enduring peace in Christ through the Church. It is also a good place to begin because it underscores an important point about Augustine's search for interior peace, namely, that it is not found within an insulated space of the individual soul but rather within an interior spiritual space reformed within a Christological, ecclesiological, and Trinitarian framework.

In the Voice of Angels: Fragmentation, Unity, and the Search for God

The drive for unity is one of the most conspicuous and fundamental concerns that accompanies Augustine's search for interior peace in *conf.* He voices this concern in a variety of contexts, using it to highlight basic features of his accounts of creation and salvation. In *conf.* 4, Augustine notes the relation between peace and unity, connecting it to righteous love and contrasting it with sinful love: "Since in virtue I loved peace and in vice I hated discord, I

noted that in virtue there is unity, in vice a kind of division (*conf.*, 4, 15, 24).¹ Further, in *conf.* 12, in the midst of his discussion of creation, Augustine argues that angels enjoy an “unshakeable peace,” and connects this with the spiritual unity angels possess (*conf.*, 12, 11, 12). Angelic unity is grounded on the angels’ love of God:

Its delight [*voluptas*] is exclusively in you. In an unailing purity it satisfies its thirst in you. It never at any point betrays its mutability. You are always present to it, and it concentrates all its affection on you. It has no future to expect. It suffers no variation and experiences no distending [*distenditur*] in the successiveness of time (*conf.*, 12, 11, 12).²

Augustine’s account of angelic unity and peace provides an important contrast with the lack of peace and restlessness he voices in the opening lines of *conf.* Humans and angels are both created *ex nihilo* and so with a certain type of change, or mutability, at their origins, namely, the change from nonbeing to being (*conf.*, 12, 6, 6-12; 7, 7; *vera rel.*, 17, 34-18, 35; *nat. b.*, 1, 19, 27; *civ.*, 12, 5).³ This distinguishes all created beings from God, who is the only true eternal being. In the case of the angels, their mutability is suspended or deferred, as it were, through their love and praise of God, and in this they participate in divine eternity. It is this participation that gives angels their unity and peace.

Augustine’s account of angelic peace highlights a few important points. Foremost, it underscores the close connection between unity, peace, and divine eternity. The peace and unity Augustine seeks is one of stability and permanence, which he associates with divine eternity. In saying this, the point is not that Augustine’s account of unity and peace shuns notions of dynamism, affection or desire in favor of a static, nonchanging baseline that is sometimes read into ancient accounts of eternity (Farley 165-167). Though not as developed as in *On the Trinity*, already in *conf.* Augustine reads his account of creation through a trinitarian lens, intimating that creation finds its life and place through the reciprocal, self-giving love of the persons of the Trinity (*trin.*, 15, 17, 27-15, 19, 33); (*conf.*, 13, 5, 6-13, 7, 8; 13, 9, 10-13, 11, 12). To be unified and at peace involves a stability in, rather than a rejection of, the desire, affection, and dyna-

¹ “Et cum in virtute pacem amarem, in vitiositate autem odissem discordiam, in illa unitatem, in ista quamdam divisionem notabam.”

² “Cuius voluptas tu solus es teque perseverantissima castitate hauriens mutabilitatem suam nusquam et numquam exserit et te sibi semper praesente, ad quem toto affectu se tenet, non habens futurum quod exspectet nec in praeteritum traiciens quod meminerit, nulla vice variatur nec in tempora ulla distenditur.”

³ See also Drever 48-84; and Marion 24-42.

mism of life, insofar as this is grounded in one's participation in the trinitarian love of the eternal and immutable God. It is this relation to God that allows one to defer continually one's mutable origin *ex nihilo* and avoid the oblivion—the nonbeing—at the foundation of one's existence.

In returning to the notion of *distentio*, Augustine's account of angelic unity and peace also connects to his analysis of human temporality in book 11. Augustine reads the difference between the peace angels enjoy and the restlessness that plagues humans in part through the distinct relations to mutability and temporality angels and humans experience. Angelic love and affection is directed toward God such that angelic existence and identity is not spread thin and dispersed (*distenditur*) through time. Augustine returns often to this idea that a creature's peace entails being collected together and unified in divine eternity rather than scattered and spread apart in time. This is the lesson of *conf.* 11, as Augustine moves from a metaphysical account of human temporality as the stretching of the soul's attention through the objects it encounters (i.e., the *distentio animi*), to a moral account of how the sinful soul experiences this stretching as a shattering and scattering into pieces of its inward identity and existence as a result of its turning from the integrative and unifying power of divine eternity to the mutable (*nihil*) origins of its creation (*conf.*, 11, 14, 17–11, 26, 33; 11, 29, 39–11, 31, 41). Here, Augustine associates the lack of human peace with human temporal and mutable being, both of which were originally a part of God's good creation but have become corrupted through sin.

Interior peace involves transcending sinful temporality and the ways our affections and loves are pulled through the events, things, and people we experience. More specifically, Augustine identifies interior human peace with a unity of the soul that transcends time in participating in divine eternity but that does not transcend human mutable origins. That is, we remain *de (ex) nihilo* rather than *de Deo* and so never share in the divine simple existence characteristic of divine being itself (*id ipsum*) (*conf.*, 12, 7, 7; 12, 15, 20–21; *trin.* 15, 16, 26). Augustine summarizes his claims here with the prayer that concludes his account of human temporality in *conf.* 11:

You are my eternal Father, but I am scattered in times whose order I do not understand. The storms of incoherent events tear to pieces my thoughts, the inmost entrails of my soul, until that day when, purified and molten by the fire of your love, I flow together to merge into you (*conf.*, 11, 29, 39).⁴

⁴ "Pater meus aeternus es; at ego in tempora dissilui, quorum ordinem nescio, et tumultuosis varietatibus dilaniantur cogitationes meae, intima viscera animae meae, donec in te confluum purgatus et liquidus igne amoris tui!"

This interior peace and unity that Augustine seeks in answer to the restlessness voiced in the opening of *conf.* 1 is precisely what the angels enjoy, and the promise of salvation is that we might join the angels in their praise of God (*conf.*, 12, 11, 12-13).

Augustine's account of angelic peace, finally then, underscores that unity and peace are fundamentally relational in being grounded in God. At issue in this relation is not only the stable foundation of our existence but also our ownmost self-identity. We must remember this so as not to equate the interior peace of the soul with an individual or private spiritual space wherein we retreat to find our core identity. We see a rejection of this idea already in Augustine's account of the angels in *conf.*, but it becomes clarified in his later writings as he develops further his account of angelic peace. Here he argues that angelic peace is formed not when they turn in on themselves in a type of isolated privacy, but rather when they turn first to God in praise and then come into themselves as a result of their relation to God (*Gn. litt.*, 2, 8, 17-19; 4, 24, 41-4, 29, 46). In this, angels' existence and self-identity derives from elsewhere, that is, from their relation to God, which then also means the peace they enjoy derives not from their own existence but from God.

At various points in *conf.* Augustine contrasts the angelic relation with God to the sinful relation humans have with God, and the lack of peace that follows. Memorably, in *conf.* 4 Augustine narrates the way he sought disastrously to replace his love of God with his love of a friend: "The reason why that grief had penetrated me so easily and deeply was that I had poured out my soul on to the sand by loving a person sure to die as if he would never die" (*conf.*, 4, 8, 13).⁵ Augustine goes on to identify more precisely that the danger of his misplaced love resided in his attempt to ground his existence and identity within the created (i.e., *ex nihilo*, mutable) nature of his friend rather than the uncreated (i.e., immutable) nature of God: "For wherever the human soul turns itself, other than to you, it is fixed in sorrows, even if it is fixed upon beautiful things external to you and external to itself, which would nevertheless be nothing if they did not have their being from you" (*conf.*, 4, 10, 15).⁶ This leads to the shattering of inner peace, with Augustine's identity scattered in grief and loss, and to his recommendation, exemplified by the peace of angelic existence, that the soul must ground its love first and fundamentally in God:

⁵ "Nam unde me facillime et in intima dolor ille penetraverat, nisi quia fuderam in harenam animam meam diligendo moriturum ac si non moriturum."

⁶ "Nam quoquoversum se verterit anima hominis, ad dolores figitur alibi praeterquam in te, tametsi figitur in pulchris extra te et extra se. Quae tamen nulla essent, nisi essent abs te".

Let these transient things be the ground on which my soul praises you, 'God creator of all'. But let it not become stuck in them and glued to them with love through the physical senses. For these things pass along the path of things that move towards non-existence. They rend the soul with pestilential desires; for the soul loves to be in them and take its repose among the objects of its love. But in these things there is no point of rest; they lack permanence (*conf.*, 4, 10, 15).⁷

Humans lack inner peace because in sin they do not praise God but rather direct their love toward creation where they become "glued" to created objects in forming their identity and existence through the mutable nature of creation, which is bound to pass away into nonexistence. This leads to the inner restlessness, dissolution, and fragmentation about which Augustine laments.

When the soul turns from God, it not only turns from the stable source of its existence but also from the source of its ownmost inward identity. Like the angels, we find our self-identity in and through our relation to God. In our case, this identity is formed through the divine image, which, Augustine argues, images the Trinity (*trin.*, 12, 6, 6-12, 6, 7). This is an image that is whole only when we are turned to God in praise and constituted through the love of the trinitarian God (*conf.*, 13, 9, 10-13, 11, 12; *trin.* 14, 1,1; 14,12, 15). This is why the lack of inner peace Augustine finds within himself constitutes a fundamental existential crisis that haunts the pages of *Confessions*: peace is the harbinger not only of a stable relation with the immutable God but also of the wholeness of one's inward identity as an image of God. The loss of peace leaves one grasping for the stable existence found within divine immutable eternity, and profoundly disoriented by the distortion of one's self-identity as the divine image. Augustine underscores this idea in his later writings when he returns to the idea that sinful love "glues" the soul to mutable objects, arguing now that it upends inner peace by distorting the divine image within the soul (*trin.*, 10, 5, 7-10, 6, 8). It is only through the proper love of God, a love grounded in the trinitarian God's love of us, that the divine image is reformed and human life made whole.

⁷ "Laudet te ex illis anima mea, Deus, creator omnium, sed non in eis infigatur glutine amore per sensus corporis. Eunt enim quo ibant, ut non sint, et conscindunt eam desideriiis pestilentiosis, quoniam ipsa esse vult et requiescere amat in eis, quae amat. In illis autem non est ubi, quia non stant".

In the Voice of the Spirit: Unity and the Body of Christ

It is one thing to identify the source of inner peace and another to grasp it. *Confessions* is littered with failed attempts—Platonist, Manichean, and otherwise—to find peace, which together bring into relief the proper route to peace through Christ. Like the gradual resolution of a blurry image, *conf.* slowly brings into focus the homeland of peace and rest for which the soul longs. Augustine describes this process as one in which the order of the soul is restored. In Augustine's metaphysics, the peace of all things is contingent upon their proper order: "Things which are not in their intended position are restless. Once they are in their ordered position, they are at rest (*conf.*, 13, 9, 10)."⁸ All things tend toward their ordered place according to their weight, and love is the weight that determines the human place. Love is what moves us, motivates us, gives us our moral orientation, and shapes our identity: "My weight is my love. Wherever I am carried my love is carrying me. By your gift we are set on fire and carried upwards; we grow red hot and ascend" (*conf.*, 13, 9, 10).⁹ Augustine associates the lack of inner peace in humans with sinful love because love disorders our place within creation, leaving us restless. The way for humans to reorder their love and find their proper place and peace comes only through the gift of God, which Augustine identifies with the Holy Spirit:

Why then is this said only of the Holy Spirit? Why is it said exclusively of him as if there were a place where he then was, though it is not a place? Of him alone is it said that he is your 'gift'. In your gift we find our rest. There are you our joy. Our rest is our peace (*conf.*, 13, 9, 10).¹⁰

The Holy Spirit is God's gift who brings us divine love, restoring us to our place and leading us toward peace (*trin.* 5, 11, 12-5, 16, 17; 13, 10, 14; 15, 17, 27-19, 33).

In his later sermons on 1 John, Augustine goes even further in rendering the soteriological role of the Spirit's love as ontological formation (*ep. Io. tr.*, 7, 4-7; 9).¹¹ Here he argues that the Spirit's love within us represents not only the renewal and reformation of our love of God, but also the presence of God within us and our participation—deification—within God's own life. When we love

⁸ "Minus ordinata inquieta sunt: ordinantur et quiescent."

⁹ "Pondus meum amor meus; eo feror, quocumque feror. Dono tuo accendimur et sursum ferimur; inardescimus et imus."

¹⁰ "Cur ergo tantum de spiritu tuo dictum est hoc? Cur de illo tantum dictum est quasi locus, ubi esset, qui non est locus, de quo solo dictum est, quod sit donum tuum? In dono tuo requiescimus: ibi te fruimur. Requies nostra locus noster."

¹¹ See also van Bavel 169-181; and Teske.

God we not only find our proper place, and so achieve rest and peace, but we also—in some sense—become god through our participation in God. This is a strong soteriological and ontological claim, not yet fully developed in *conf.*, but one that illustrates further that the attainment of inner peace is not achieved through an inward, solitary act of the soul, but rather only through intimate and radical participation within God.

The nature of this participation takes various forms in Augustine's writings, and I would highlight two of them. One way of parsing Augustine's claims about the work of the Spirit's love is in terms of how it renews the divine image within us. As we have seen, one of the reasons disordered love is dangerous for Augustine is because it distorts the divine image within the soul, which is at the core of our identity. To say that the Spirit's love is the presence of God within us and our simultaneous participation in God is to register the reality of our core existence and identity—our place—as the divine image. Insofar as the Spirit's love brings us to this place of peace, it restores our identity, which is only found through its intimate participation in—imaging of—God.

A second way of parsing Augustine's claims on the Spirit's love moves us further into his trinitarian soteriology. Augustine argues that the Spirit's love brings us into God—deifies us—because the place wherein our love is ordered is within the body of Christ. That is, we become god insofar as we join with Christ's body. Augustine's Pauline claims here have multilayered soteriological, eschatological, ecclesiological, and ontological dimensions. Not all of these dimensions are fully worked out in *conf.*, but we can begin with the central soteriological role Augustine affords Christ in *Confessions*. In book 10 Augustine delves into the depths of human memory, looking to discern the nature of the soul and its relation to God. There he finds God, though less as the evident answer to his restlessness than as a mysterious presence that bids him deeper into his soul's depths (*conf.*, 10, 7, 5; 10, 8, 15; 10, 16, 25-10, 17, 26). Here he finds the future promise of peace, but not an immediate resolution to his sinful restlessness. Indeed, to his own consternation he discovers lodged deep within him temptation and sin from which he cannot fully exculpate himself despite his conversion to Christianity (*conf.*, 10, 30, 41-42). Augustine concludes that the resolution to the sinful habits that plague him must flow through Christ. Christ offers the solution by becoming the mediator who teaches humility that brings with it righteousness and leads us into a life of peace (*conf.*, 10, 43, 68).

For Augustine, Christ's humility must reform us at both an ontological and moral level. At the ontological level, the divine image is deformed when, in sin,

we attempt to replace the image of the immutable and eternal God with images of the mutable and finite world. This is a type of inward, prideful idolatry that leads to the dissolution of our identity, the dangers of which we saw in Augustine's grief over the death of his friend. In turn, this generates an immoral love of objects and people that lodges deep within the soul, the dangers of which Augustine narrates in his account of temptation in *conf.* 10. Both dimensions of sin lead to the disunity and restlessness of the soul, undercutting its interior peace. In repositioning God as the primary love within the soul, Christ's humility restores the divine image and so reforms our identity, even as it realigns our moral and affective habits so that we love God and creation in the proper manners. Christ's humility, then, provides the route back to peace through the restoration of inner-wholeness. In this respect it is important to see that humility is not about self-abnegation or self-denial. Most fundamentally, it is about the restoration and wholeness of the self, but a self whose identity as the divine image is constituted through the divine Other and consequently whose love is properly ordered only when flowing through God.

In this, we can also see that the peace that comes through Christ's humility entails more than what today we would associate with various types of inward, contemplative, meditative exercises. Augustine famously attempts his own version of this in his mystical ascents in *conf.* 7 (7, 10, 16; 7, 17, 23). There he draws on Platonist mystical practices to achieve momentary unity with God, but unity that fails because it does not move through Christ (*conf.*, 7, 9, 13; 7, 18, 24-7, 21, 27). Augustine concludes that routes that bypass Christ may provide a brief and far-off view of the "homeland of peace [*patriam pacis*]," but nothing more (*conf.*, 7, 21, 27). Here again, Augustine emphasizes Christ's humility that comes through the humanity God takes on in Christ as the soteriological key toward the achievement of permanent peace. This is part of Augustine's rereading of Paul and the importance Augustine comes to attach to the incarnation as the route to enduring peace (Cameron).

God's participation in humanity through Christ opens the route for humanity to participate in God, and so to enjoy the unity, peace, and stability possessed by the angels (Bonner; Meconi; Wilson-Kastner). Augustine's claims on how peace is achieved through Christ develop along various lines, one of which grows out of his understanding of the body of Christ. As we have seen, the Spirit's love repositions us to rest (peace) by bringing us into participation in God. One of the ways Augustine envisions this participation is through our incorporation into the body of Christ. While this metaphor is not prevalent within *conf.*, Augustine gravitates towards it in *conf.* 13 with his extended

analysis of the Church and its place in the Genesis creation narrative (*conf.*, 13, 19, 25-13, 23, 33). To the contemporary reader, the connection between the Church and the creation narrative may be an exegetical stretch. But it is a crucial dimension to Augustine's overarching query in *conf.*, into the origins of himself, sin, and salvation. Genesis reveals the source of his own sinful origins in Adam, but Augustine also discerns God's providence already at work in providing the foundations for human redemption within the Church (*conf.*, 13, 12, 13). Augustine finds in the separation of the light from the dark the delineation of the elect (*conf.*, 13, 14, 15; 13, 18, 22; 13, 19, 25), and in the creation of the waters and earth the work of the Church in the sacraments (waters/ baptism) and preaching (earth/ scripture) (*conf.*, 13, 17, 20-13, 18, 22; 13, 20-26-13, 21, 30). Augustine does not identify the Church here with the body of Christ *per se*, but the mystical and eschatological connotations he draws out, combined with the way he grounds the Church in the Spirit's work, brings it into the general orbit of his claims on the body of Christ (*conf.*, 13, 18, 23).

One of the important consequences of Augustine's ecclesiological treatment of salvation in *conf.* 13 is the way it qualifies his earlier claims that salvation flows through Christ. In particular, it demonstrates that the path to interior peace must have an outward and corporate component in the Church. Salvation is not bound solely to the inward refashioning of the individual soul (i.e., the divine image) in relation to God. Our participation in God is mediated through our integration into the community of the redeemed.¹² That is, we become deified by becoming united to Christ's body. This brings with it a social ethic and sense of corporate identity, centered around the Church, that Augustine only begins to explore in *conf.*

If we turn briefly beyond the pages of *conf.* we can fill-in this account. Here we see Augustine developing the implications of his claim that our redemption through our incorporation into Christ's body is our inclusion into both the mystical (eschatological) heavenly body of the elect and the historical body of the Church. This incorporation brings with it the presence and redemptive love of the Spirit who dwells in and through the Church. We can see this, for example, in his meditations on the body of Christ (i.e., the *totus Christus*) in his early sermons on the Psalms, which Augustine composes a few years prior to

¹² Raymond Canning has shown that, at points, Augustine extends the love within Christ's body beyond Christians to the poor more generally (*minimi mei*), which intimates a wider unity between the love of God and neighbor in Christ, pp. 383-394.

Confessions.¹³ The concept of the *totus Christus* is a central theme that animates the christological framework Augustine applies to his interpretation of the Psalms. Here Augustine experiments with a complex prosopological method that delineates a shifting identity in the voice (or speaker) of the Psalm based on the context and content of the passage.¹⁴ Among the voices (identities) Augustine finds in the Psalms are: the twofold voice of Christ when he speaks in his divinity as the Word and in his humanity for sinful people (*pro nobis*); the voice of individual Christians as part of Christ's body; and the voice of the Church when it speaks as the body of Christ. The diverse voices are united in the *totus Christus*.

Augustine develops various soteriological themes from the shifting identity of the speaker in the Psalms that complement the claims he develops in *conf.* around the incarnation. First, he argues that Christ's speaking in the Psalms—as both God and humanity—represents the downward participation of God in humanity and the upward participation of humanity in God. When Christ speaks as the head of the body it reminds us that salvation flows through God's presence in Christ and that this salvation entails our incorporation into the body of Christ. Here Christ speaks in the voice of the Church as the head that unites the corporate body of the Church into his risen body.¹⁵ This inclusion into Christ's body is our deification, which highlights the mystical and eschatological dimension he attaches to the body of Christ (*conf.*, 7, 9, 14; 7, 18, 24; 7, 19, 25; s. 23b, 1-2; *en. Ps.*, 49, 2; 81, 2; *trin.*, 13, 9, 12; 14, 12, 16-14, 19, 25).

Second, Augustine speculates in a few places about the way the Church can, in some capacity, speak as Christ. Augustine is experimenting with the idea that our incorporation into Christ's body brings with it a new identity—a new type of corporate personhood—that can speak as Christ (the head). This is not to say that we become or speak as God in our own individual voices. Rather, we might say that it is indicative of the reforming of the divine image that occurs within Christ's body in which we come to reflect and so in some sense speak as the divine. This only occurs insofar as we exist within Christ's body and so image God, underscoring that the divine voice that speaks through—and in some

¹³ Augustine takes up the theme of the *totus Christus* in a wide variety of contexts in his early sermons on the Psalms. Some examples include: *en. Ps.* 3, 9; 18, 2,10; 21, 1, 1; 21, 1, 7; 26, 2, 2; 29, 2, 22; 30, 2, 3-4; 30, 3, 1; 30, 3, 8; 32, 2, 2. See also Cameron 165-212; and Williams 25-40.

¹⁴ For recent studies on Augustine's prosopological exegesis, see Cameron 171-212.

¹⁵ Augustine draws on the corporate, ecclesiological context of participation in Christ's body in numerous contexts. For example, see: *civ.* 10, 6; 12, 9; *Io. ev. tr.*; *en. Ps.* 10, 7; 26, 2, 13; 75, 3; 125, 13; 149, 5.

sense as—us is never our own private possession but rather is ours precisely as we give ourselves to God through Christ.

Beyond the mystical and eschatological themes Augustine develops, he also uses his Christological reading of the Psalms to draw attention to moral dimensions of the *totus Christus*. The central passage here is the famous verse in Acts 9: 40—“Saul, why do you persecute me.” Augustine argues that this is indicative of Christ’s presence within the historical Church. Christ’s cry of protest against Paul signals that the persecution of the Church is also the persecution of Christ. This lends a Christological basis to moral action: our treatment of others has real consequence within Christ’s own body. This also, then, connects outward moral action to the quest for inward spiritual peace. The body of Christ, which is the place where we find rest in God, will not be at peace as long as humans act unjustly and immorally towards others.

Looking beyond his sermons on the Psalms, Augustine also develops the sacramental context of the *totus Christus* when he connects our participation in the body of Christ to baptism and the Eucharist. In *ep.* 98, Augustine argues that we share [*communicatur*] in grace through baptism, which joins us to other Christians in the unity of the Spirit (*ep.*, 98, 2). In sermon 26 on John, Augustine argues that our participation in Christ is conditioned by our partaking in the Eucharist. Here again, Augustine emphasizes both an historical dimension through our actual partaking in the Eucharist, as well as an eschatological and mystical dimension that is found in the divine predestination that grounds the efficacy of the sacrament (*Io. ev. tr.*, 26, 15). In s. 123 on John, Augustine reiterates the ecclesiological and eschatological dimensions that flow through the Eucharist.¹⁶ Here he associates the participation in Christ that comes through the Eucharist with the Church’s unification and its movement toward eternal blessedness. Cumulatively, these passages sketch a soteriological account in which the interior peace of the soul that is achieved by participation in God flows through the corporate and historical sacraments of the Church that unite Christ’s body through the power of the Spirit.

Admittedly, the sacramental, moral, and mystical dimensions that Augustine attaches to the *totus Christus* in his wider writings are not present in the same manner in the Christology of *conf.* There are, however, two ways we might

¹⁶ Deification encompasses both the process and goal of the human return to God. In this, it has an eschatological dimension. Those redeemed through Christ are deified now in the hope that they will be resurrected and reunited with God (*en. Ps.*, 49, 2). For a wider study of the connection between Augustine’s account of deification and his ecclesiology and theory of signs, see Meconi 61-74.

link Augustine's examination of the *totus Christus* to *Confessions* that further highlight the theme of interior peace. First, we can think specifically about the mystical visions in *conf.* 7 and 9. As we have seen, in *conf.* 7 the chief lesson Augustine draws from his failure to achieve permanent interior peace is the need to ground this union in Christ (*conf.*, 7, 10, 16; 7, 17, 23-7; 18, 24). Significantly, Augustine's post-conversion Christian mystical ascent at Ostia in *conf.* 9, while it still fails to achieve a permanent union with God, is now conducted within a Christian communal context—with his Christian mother (*conf.*, 9, 10, 23-25). The quest for peace and the inability of humans to grasp it now becomes wrapped within a different hermeneutical lens, namely, the pilgrim Church and its eschatological hope for eternal peace. Unlike his prior Platonist vision, the vision at Ostia is no longer interpreted as fleeting and futile. Rather, it offers to Augustine a proleptic vision of the life to come: "We sighed and left behind us 'the first-fruits of the Spirit' [Romans 8: 23] bound to that higher world, as we returned to the noise of our human speech where a sentence has both a beginning and an ending" (*conf.*, 9, 10, 24).¹⁷ The vision still ends, like the prior ones, but it is now couched in terms of the "first-fruits of the Spirit." For Augustine, this signals the promise and hope of a future permanent union with God.¹⁸ It is also important to pay attention to the way Augustine connects the end of the Ostia vision to his departure from the Spirit and a return to human speech and finite existence. Here, we might infer that his mystical union with God is grounded in an eternal divine speaking that is present in the soul through the Spirit's power. Within the Christological framework of his early sermons on the Psalms, we might also say that Augustine glimpses the eschatological and mystical vision of what it means to speak through Christ and so to participate in Christ's body through the Spirit's power. The cumulative point of *conf.* 7 and 9, then, and one that echoes Augustine's sermons on the Psalms, is that we must move eschatologically toward peace and union with God through Christ, whom we encounter within a Christian communal context (i.e., the Church).

Second, we can highlight the connection between *conf.* and Augustine's sermons on the Psalms by thinking more broadly about how his accounts of the praise of God complement one another. In the opening lines of *conf.* Augustine announces that the soul is restless and lacks peace until its desires are properly

¹⁷ "Et suspiravimus et reliquimus ibi religatas *primitias spiritus* et remeavimus ad strepitum oris nostri ubi verbum et incipitur et finitur."

¹⁸ Elsewhere, Augustine explicitly connects Romans 8: 23 with the salvific hope of permanent union with God. See *en. Ps.* 31, 2, 20; 37, 5; 50, 19; *trin.* 2, 17, 29.

aligned in the praise of God. Put differently, all things find peace in their proper place, and humanity's place is dictated by its love, which finds its rightful orientation in the praise of God. Where is it, then, that we learn to praise God? This is the quest of *conf.*, and I have argued that its resolution is found in Christ's humility, which offers us a path toward ethical and ontological reformation—of act (love) and being (identity)—that Augustine tells us in *conf.* 13 occurs within the Church through the power of the Spirit. It is in this way that we learn to praise God aright, and it is here that we find peace when we join the angels in the praise and worship of God. Augustine's account of praise, then, gives us a glimpse into a more nuanced, corporate concept of interior peace that elevate his discussion beyond simply the individual soul finding rest in God. We find confirmation of this account in Augustine's sermons on the Psalms, which give us a robust notion of the Christological and ecclesiological dimensions that layer human inwardness and are at the heart of interior peace. The voice of praise that permeates the Psalms is, for Augustine, the voice of Christ spoken in various forms and identities, but one that includes and incorporates the Church, and with it all of its members, in the praise of God. The Church provides the place for the proper worship of God in constituting the body of Christ. We embody Christ, and perhaps even speak as Christ, through our praise of God. This signals, then, that the interior peace of the soul comes through its inclusion within the community of Christians.

Conclusion

Confessions is the tale of the human journey toward the *patria pacis* from out of the ashes of humanity's restless, sinful anxiety. Augustine's quest for interior peace is wrapped within this journey home. It is a quest that we have seen has a trinitarian and ecclesiological structure. Interior peace is only achieved through our participation in Christ, which itself is structured by our inclusion within Christ's body (the Church) through the power of the Spirit. We find this peace when we find our rest, that is, when we find our proper place. Love dictates our place, and it is only within the body of Christ that we find the proper (moral) love that directs our praise toward God. This love is also the presence of the Spirit within the soul; indeed, this love is the Spirit, and so interior peace is not only a condition of the soul but also its deification. This points to the underlying reality of the soul's interior nature, whose existence and identity is grounded in its imaging of God. We find our peace in uniting with God because our proper place—the place wherein we find rest—is as images of the divine.

In this, the question of peace addresses the basic contours of the created nature of our being. It also signals that the achievement of interior peace entails a life-long quest for a permanent and profound transformation of our sinful reality. Our restless heart is not a superficial problem, but rather one that requires a basic orientation of our identity toward ourselves, God, and other people. True interior peace requires our inner reconciliation as images of God, but this is a journey whose reforming process only occurs outwardly within the corporate context of the Church. Here we find the expansion, so to speak, of human interiority within the body of Christ. Interior peace is not found in a personal (private), inner meditative process of contemplation, even the sophisticated variety practiced within Platonism (*conf.*, 7, 21, 27). As Augustine intimates in the opening lines of *conf.*, interior peace requires the inward re-ordering of our love of God. Insofar as the *totus Christus* provides the locus for true interior peace, we will find such reordering only through our participation in the Church and its accompanying spiritual and sacramental practices. This participation brings with it the transformation of our love of the neighbor, and so also must inevitably lead to our moral reform in our relation to the world. Interior peace, then, requires a basic and permanent reconfiguration of our being in the world—of the place wherein we find our existence and identity—and so also of the world itself, which in turn points towards its eschatological horizon. We are not practitioners of peace but pilgrims in search of the *patria pacis*, which is a journey that will take us inward into God even as it moves us outward into the neighbor.



Works Cited

- Van Bavel, Tarcisius J. "The Double Face of Love in Augustine." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 17, 1986, 169-181.
- Bonner, Gerald. "Augustine's Concept of Deification." *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. 37, no. 2, 1986, pp. 369-386.
- Cameron, Michael. *Christ Meets Me Everywhere: Augustine's Early Figurative Exegesis*. New York, NY, Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Canning, Raymond. *The Unity of Love for God and Neighbor in St. Augustine*. Leuven, Augustinian Historical Institute, 1993.
- Drever, Matthew. *Image, Identity, and the Forming of the Augustinian Soul*. New York, NY, Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Farley, Edward. *Divine Empathy: A Theology of God*. Minneapolis, MN, Fortress Press, 1996.
- Fiedrowicz, Michael. *Psalmus vox totius Christi: Studien zu Augustins "Enarrationes in Psalmos"*. Freiburg, Herder, 1997.
- Marion, Jean-Luc. "Resting, Moving, Loving: The Access to the Self According to Saint Augustine." *The Journal of Religion*, vol. 91, no. 1, 2011, pp. 24-42.
- Meconi, David. (2013). *The One Christ: St. Augustine's Theology of Deification*. Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press.
- "Becoming Gods by Becoming God's: Augustine's Mystagogy of Identification." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 39, no. 1, 2008, pp. 61-74.
- Teske, Roland. "The Ambiguity of Love in Augustine." *Confessions of Love: The Ambiguities of Greek Eros and Latin Caritas*, edited by Craig J. N. de Paulo, New York, NY, Peter Lang, 2011, pp. 16-38.
- Williams, Raymond. *On Augustine*. New York, NY, Bloomsbury, 2016.
- Wilson-Kastner, Patricia. "Grace as Participation in the Divine Life in the Theology of Augustine of Hippo." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 7, 1976, pp. 135-52.

‘Live Together in Peace on the Way to God.’ The Rule of Augustine as a ‘Rule of Peace’

“Vivir juntos en paz en el camino de Dios”.
La regla de Agustín como una “regla de paz”

8

Pierre-Paul Walraet
Order of the Holy Cross, Italy



Abstract

Love, harmony, unity, and peace are key to Augustine's ideal of the religious life. Augustine's *Praeceptum* is explored from the perspective of peace. The monastic precepts, admonitions and recommendations elaborated in the *Praeceptum* are geared toward peace in the community and finally toward eternal peace (*in Deum, in pace*). To this end, the *Praeceptum* emphasizes harmonious living together in community, observing the community of goods, fostering mutual respect in common and personal prayer, avoiding cases of anger and dealing with them, fraternal correction through a restorative process, love that is not self-seeking but serves the common good, religious obedience to the superior. The brothers are called to seek peace and pursue it, aware that the peace here on Earth is still imperfect. The *Praeceptum* reflects aspects of Augustine's vision and teaching on peace elaborated in Book XIX of the *De Civitate Dei*. In his *Ennarationes in Psalmos* the bishop of Hippo uses images of a harbor, a furnace and a cartwheel to illustrate challenges in achieving peace, and points out faulty expectations for peaceful life in a religious community. Authentic peace lived in community strengthens the longing and love for the spiritual beauty of God who is Perfect Peace.

Keywords: Brotherhood, fraternal correction, *Praeceptum*, religious community, unity and peace.



Resumen

El amor, la armonía, la unidad y la paz son claves para el modelo de la vida religiosa de san Agustín; en *Praeceptum*, de Agustín, se explora este modelo desde la perspectiva de la paz. Los preceptos orientan advertencias y recomendaciones monásticas elaboradas en el *Praeceptum* hacia la paz en la comunidad y, finalmente, hacia la paz eterna (*in Deum, in pace*). Con este fin, el *Praeceptum* enfatiza: convivir en armonía en comunidad, observar la comunidad de bienes, fomentar el respeto mutuo en la oración común y personal, evitar los casos de enojo y tratar con ellos, la corrección fraterna a través de un proceso restaurativo, un amor no egoísta sino que sirve al bien común, la obediencia religiosa al superior. Se llama a los hermanos a buscar la paz y perseguirla, teniendo en cuenta que la paz aquí en la tierra todavía es imperfecta. El *Praeceptum* refleja aspectos de la visión y la enseñanza de san Agustín sobre la paz elaboradas en el Libro XIX de *De Civitate Dei*. En *Ennarationes in Psalmos* el obispo de Hipona usa imágenes de un puerto, un horno y una voltereta para ilustrar los desafíos que requiere la paz, y señala las expectativas erróneas de una vida pacífica en una comunidad religiosa. La paz auténtica vivida en la comunidad fortalece el anhelo y el amor por la belleza espiritual de Dios, que es la Paz Perfecta.

Palabras clave: *Praeceptum*, comunidad religiosa, unidad y paz, fraternidad, corrección fraterna.



About the author | Acerca del autor

Pierre-Paul Walraet [walraet.pierrepaul@gmail.com]

Pierre-Paul Walraet O.S.C. (1959) is a religious priest, belonging to the Canons Regular of the Order of the Holy Cross (Crosiers). He obtained a licentiate in spiritual theology at the Institute of Spirituality of the Pontifical Gregorian University (Rome). Collaborated with the Augustinian Historical Institute of Louvain (Belgium) in organizing the annual study day on Augustinian spirituality. Is involved in leadership, serving as councilor to the superior general of his Order.



How to cite in MLA / Cómo citar en MLA

Walraet, Pierre-Paul. "Live Together in Peace on the Way to God." The Rule of Augustine as a "Rule of Peace". *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendimez y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2019, pp. 235-264, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.8

Introduction

Augustine, as Doctor Pacis, shapes religious life in every generation by instilling peace-promoting values in the lives of brothers and sisters seeking God. The accent on peace in religious community is not so much on the political order of society, as we might find in *De Civitate Dei* (cited hereafter, *civ.*), nor even on domestic order in a family community of parents and children, nor even on the local faith community with its liturgical routines, its incorporation of new members and its ministers and pastors. This chapter focuses on Augustine's concern for peace, order, tranquility and especially for the peaceful order for a unified well-ordered soul, intent on God, who is our Ultimate Peace.

Augustine's particular concern for *cura animarum* for religious members of each fraternal order of religious life focuses on his *Monastic Rule*. In our analysis and discussion of the Rule we recognize first of all that the textual term *peace* does not occur in the entire treatise. The points of contact with the religious value of peace, however, occur at many points along the way, throughout the text. Our method will be to focus on analysis of these contact points between the text of the Rule and the value of peace, through parallel reading Augustine's other texts so as to underscore how the value of peace does explicitly inform a reading of the Rule as a rule promoting interpersonal and even intrapersonal saving peace.

The Rule, on first reading, accents the ordered social role of communal life lived in harmonious peace; on a second or deeper reading, the Rule accents a deeply personal atmosphere that is highly spiritual. We will also refer the reader to understanding peace as a characteristic evangelical mark the Doctor of Peace seeks to inculcate personally and individually in each of the souls, that is, the *anima et cor*, and in the one corporate life (*anima una*) of those who congregate, who join to live life together *unanimes*. All are explicitly intent—that is, share the same life aim *in Deum*; embodied communion with Ultimate Unity, Perfect Peace, and All-encompassing Love (“The Rule of Saint Augustine” 45).

Attain Peace in God

Interior peace was a significant outcome of the conversion of Augustine. While still in the garden of Milan, in 386, Augustine, in a like manner to Saint Anthony, experienced the silent reading of a Scripture passage as if it were a divine light relieving his anxiety and flooding into his heart: “Not in orgies and

drunkenness, not in promiscuity and licentiousness, not in rivalry and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the desires of the flesh” (Rom. 13: 13-14).¹

For Augustine, this chance text acted as a liberator from a lengthy intolerable situation of anguish. The shadows of doubt were dispelled, at once. Immediately Augustine told everything to his friend Alypius, with an untroubled face now serene and at peace (*conf.* VIII, 12, 30).²

At the heart of Book X in *Confessions* (cited hereafter, *conf.*), Augustine offers a reflection on his conversion experience. The poetic-lyric prayer opens with the famous *Sero te amavi*, and continues:

You called and cried out loud and shattered my deafness. You were radiant and resplendent, you put to flight my blindness. You were fragrant, and I drew in my breath and now pant after you. I tasted you, and I feel but hunger and thirst for you. You touched me, and I am set on fire to attain the peace which is yours (*conf.*, 10, 27, 38).³

Augustine felt set on fire to attain peace in God. This life perspective resonates with the solemn programmatic opening of *conf.*: “..you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you” (*conf.*, 1, 1, 1).⁴ The heart resting in God, attains peace in God⁵ as if now well placed, no longer feeling alien inside, awkward and displaced, out of place.

For Augustine, the oneness of mind and heart among brothers building a fraternal community will be the religious route to achieve the intended goal—unity *in Deum*. Attaining peace in God would become an aim to strive after and live for, within the context of a fraternal life with brothers in community, modelled on the primitive Church community (Acts 4: 31-35). Hearts and minds find peace in fraternal oneness. If hearts and minds are not emotionally placed in their intended interpersonal position, namely not in unity and harmony, they are restless.

Shortly after the conversion experience in a garden at Milan in 386, Augustine made up his mind. He wanted to be a monk. His conversion to the faith of the

¹ See *conf.* VIII,12, 29.

² “Tranquillo iam vultu.”

³ “In pacem tuam.”

⁴ “Fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te.”

⁵ See *conf.* XIII, 9, 10: “In your gift we find our rest. There are you our joy. Our rest is our peace” (*requies nostra locus noster*).

Catholic Church included a decision to live as a monk. For him, being a monk could not mean taking flight to live in solitude (*conf.*, 10, 43, 70). Augustine did not desire to become a hermit in the Egyptian desert as had Saint Anthony.⁶ Nonetheless, the life of the Christian anchorites and cenobites in the desert captured Augustine's attention. Filled with awe, but also aware that this way of following Christ would surpass his own endurance, Augustine wrote, in 388, about the peaceful ideal of the coenobitic monasticism:

But if this far surpasses our endurance, who would not admire and praise those who, having scorned and abandoned the allurements of this world, and come together in a most pure and holy common life, spend their time in prayers, reading, and discussion; and who, not puffed up with any arrogance, not troublesome with any inflexibility, not spiteful out of jealousy, but meek, modest and peaceful, offer a most pleasing gift to God, from Whom they have gained the ability to do these things: namely a life lived in the greatest harmony and fully directed toward Him? (*mor.*, 1, 31, 67 qtd. in Zumkeller 304).

Augustine wanted to be a monk⁷ in a way that he would live together with brothers in a community, dwelling in Christ (*en. Ps.*, 132(133), 6), and fully devoted to the service of God in charity. For the distinctive Augustinian form of monastic life he would develop in North Africa, Augustine took inspiration from the monks living even in the Italian cities, be it radically adjusted from the ordinary urban style of life. In Milan, Augustine saw such a dwelling place of consecrated men, presided over by a holy and most learned priest (*conf.*, 8, 6, 15; *mor.*, 1, 33, 70). He got to know more of such places in Rome. This acquaintance with urban monks in Rome happened about a year after his conversion and baptism, before returning to North Africa, following the death of Monnica in 388 at Ostia.

⁶ A while before, Augustine and Alypius were informed by Ponticianus about the life of Saint Anthony, his conversion to follow Christ, and his influence as a monk on innumerable followers (*conf.*, VIII, 6, 14-15).

⁷ Augustine explains the Greek word *monos*, meaning "only one", to focus on intention rather than social arrangement. For Augustine, the term *monk* refers distinctively to the united dedication of heart and mind among the many brothers in one common life (*en. Ps.*, 132(133) 6). See also Burt 631-632: "Though maintaining their individuality, they [monks] should be aiming at becoming one (*monos*), a community living together in peace and love... The peace of the religious community... depended on being friends with each other and friends with God."

On the Way to Peace Through Monastic Community Life

Before Augustine describes the illness and death of his mother at Ostia, quite immediately after their intimate conversation (*conf.*, 9, 10, 23-25) about the divine Wisdom which they touched for one instant, he writes about a holy decision he proposed to undertake. The passage opens with Psalm 67 (68), verse 7, as also quoted in his *Praeceptum* (1, 2):⁸

“You make people to live in a house in unanimity” (Ps. 67: 7). So you made Evodius a member of our circle, a young man from my hometown. When he was a civil servant as an agent in the special branch, he was converted to you before we were. He was baptized and resigned his post on taking up your service. We were together and by a holy decision resolved to live together. We looked for a place where we could be of most use in your service; all of us agreed on a move back to Africa (*conf.*, 9, 8, 17).

Following through on that holy decision, Augustine returned to Thagaste, in order to implement the plan he had undertaken to serve God, in the company of some countrymen and friends, who wished to serve God in the same way.⁹ Once a priest, in 391, and with the permission of the old bishop Valerius, the monk Augustine implemented his decision to establish a monastery in the garden of the *basilica pacis* (*intra ecclesiam*) at Hippo Regius. This allowed him to continue as a priest the monastic life in community. With the servants of God, he began to live according to the manner and the rule of the holy Apostles. When named his successor, and after the death of bishop Valerius, Augustine founded another monastery in the house of the bishop, in 395/396. Augustine as bishop formed a clerical monastery with his priests, deacons and sub-deacons. These brother monks became well-formed—that is, community-formed—clerics. Augustine’s biographer refers to the monastic community’s strategic role in the establishment of peace and unity in the Catholic Church of North Africa, which suffered from the separatist movement of the Donatists:

As the sacred teaching spread, those who served God in the monastery under the holy Augustine’s leadership and in his company began to be ordained as clerics for the church at Hippo. And, then, as the truth of the Catholic Church preaching, and the holy life, continence, and complete poverty of God’s holy servants grew in reputation and daily became more famous, the peace and

⁸ References to the *Praeceptum* are made in the text.

⁹ See Possidius *Vita Augustini* 3; and Zumkeller 424.

unity of the Church began to seek bishops and clerics from the monastery which owed both its existence and growth to this remarkable man.¹⁰

When Augustine, monk and priest became bishop, he was concerned about maintaining the contemplative atmosphere of peace and quiet in the garden monastery, occupied by non-clerical brothers.¹¹ The bishop of Hippo was firmly resolved to remain faithful to his original vocation. He decided to continue his monastic life, in a different place, namely in the house of the bishop (*domus episcopi*). There he formed a community of clerics in a *monasterium clericorum*. Therefore, Augustine was no longer immediately on hand to lead and guide the garden monastery. Keeping in mind the brothers of the garden monastery whom he had left behind as their founding leader, Augustine compiled the *Praeceptum*, the “Rule for Men.”¹² Instructing the brothers through conferences¹³ was not possible anymore. By way of “compensation” for something otherwise routinely personal, dialogical and more dynamically vital, the written *Praeceptum* spells out the norm that it should be read aloud, once a week (VIII, 2).

Ordered by a “Rule of Peace”

The reason why brothers have come to live together to form a religious community is to live together in harmony (Ps. 67(68): 7), “being of one mind and of one heart” (Acts 4: 32) on the way to God, or intent upon God. This is the *primum propter quod* of the *Praeceptum* (1, 1-2). To seek love and harmony in God is the goal of building religious and fraternal community life according to the monastic legacy of Augustine of Hippo. Living together in harmony (*unanimus*) and being of one mind and of one heart (*concordia*) are conditions for realizing peace.¹⁴ Peace practiced in the religious community, ripples out through the community into the society. If the members of a religious community, following the *Praeceptum*, succeed in living together in harmony and

¹⁰ Possidius *Vita Augustini* 11 (424).

¹¹ Augustine “decided to leave the garden monastery in order not to endanger the peace of the community’s existence; as bishop, he could not avoid receiving many visitors to his house” (s., 355, 2). See Zumkeller 40.

¹² See Augustine “The Monastic Rules” 54. See also the English translation of the *Praeceptum* by Lawless 80-103.

¹³ *De diversis questionibus octoginta tribus* collects answers to questions posed by the brothers on various subjects, between 388 and 396.

¹⁴ See civ. 19, 13: “Peace among men is an ordered concord” (*pax hominum ordinata concordia*).

experience moments of oneness of mind and of heart, peace will emerge. The precepts Augustine laid down in the *Praeceptum* to be observed by those admitted to the monastery are meant to order the life in the community in such way that unity and harmony can be established, from which earthly peace and peacefulness may result. Peace among the brothers who live together in community realizes peace in the house.

Further, to connect human concord with the transcendent religious horizon, the fraternal life of the Augustinian monastic community is actively intent upon the peace of the brothers with one another in God. Such is the horizon of the peace of the city of God. The peace of the heavenly city is the true peace¹⁵ and the source of every other peace (*civ.*, 19, 13). When Augustine preached to the people at Carthage about Psalm 85, he explored the final transcendent horizon of total, everlasting peace, the true and perfect peace:

We shall be in a city... that city, whence no friend departs, where no enemy gains entrance, where there is no tempter, no disturber of the peace, no one to cause divisions within God's people... A peace made pure will reign among (within) God's children: they will all love themselves as they see themselves full of God, and God will be all in all (see 1 Cor. 15: 28). For all of us God will be the object of our contemplation; he will be our common possession, he our common peace. Whatever he gives us now, he himself will be for us then in place of what he gives. He himself will be our peace, perfect and total (*en. Ps.*, 84(85), 10).

This description of the anticipated outcome of Augustine's ideal of the monastic life governs Augustine's vision of the *Praeceptum*. Monastic life according Augustine aims at God being the object of the community's contemplation; God being the community's common possession and common peace.¹⁶ Speaking in the same spirit about the perfect common life, Augustine publicly said to the faithful at Hippo's *basilica pacis*, recalling the history of his monastic foundations in that city:

I began to assemble brothers to be my companions in this holy undertaking, men possessing nothing just as I possessed nothing and imitating me. Just as

¹⁵ There can be no true peace where there is no real harmony; there is no real harmony when all hearts are privately and when each goes as far as possible to do what he will. See *Io. ev. tr.* 77, 5.

¹⁶ The shortest summary Augustine ever gave of his monastic ideal could be this: "Unus in uno ad unum" (*en. Ps.*, 147, 28). The brothers are "together one, in the one Christ, on the way to the one Father". See "The Rule of Saint Augustine" 45.

I sold my tiny bit of property and gave the proceeds to the poor, so they too who wished to be with me did the same, that we might live from our shared resources; but what we shared would be a great and very rich estate: God Himself (s., 355, 2).

In the opening of the *Praeceptum*, Augustine quotes a psalm. The psalm text he had before him reads: “God, who brings those of one mind together in one house.” Those of one mind, living together in one house, are a privileged place for encountering the Lord (*tabernaculum*). Augustine asks: “Do you want to be a house for God? Then be humble and peaceable and tremble at God’s word and you will yourself become what you are seeking” (en. Ps., 131[132], 4).

Being of one mind and one heart, intent on God, is not merely nor primarily an outcome of human efforts. It is a gift, the fruit of the action of God in the life of the community. The end of Augustine’s *Praeceptum* confirms this acknowledgement: “May the Lord grant that, filled with longing for spiritual beauty (Sirach 44, 6) you will lovingly observe all that has been written here” (8, 1). In other words, brothers are dependent on the grace of God to live together in harmony and to be of one mind and one heart. In line with Augustine’s deepest faith conviction (*civ.*, 15,4), we may say that peace, resulting from living out of the basic principles of the *Praeceptum*, is a gift of God,¹⁷ and contemplatively understood, a religious experience of spiritual beauty (8, 1). To become lovers of spiritual beauty is a significant religious objective Augustine has in mind. It is the heartbeat of Augustine’s spirituality of community life. This intentional prime aim should motivate the brothers to lovingly observe the *Praeceptum*, in view of experiencing God’s unity and harmony, beauty and peace.

The experience of fraternal unity and interpersonal harmony, from which flows a longing for spiritual beauty and peace is not a quick fix. Each chapter of the *Praeceptum* points out driving forces and restraining forces that promote or, conversely, do not promote unity, harmony and integrity as conditions for peace, as well as experiential ways to God who is Perfect Peace.¹⁸ It is our intention to explore the *Praeceptum* from this perspective.

¹⁷ Augustine states: “Brothers dwell in unity by the grace of God—not by their own power, not of their own merits, but by his gift, by his grace, like the dew from heaven. For the earth does not rain upon itself, and whatever the earth has brought forth would dry up if the rain does not flow down from heaven” (en. Ps., 132(133), 10; 403).

¹⁸ See Gillette 108: “The diverse parts of the *Rule* are orchestrated towards building community in the bond of peace, through the process of caring, enduring, serving, forgiving, honoring, and correcting.”

Community of Goods as Way to Peace

The life of the primitive Christian community forms the foundation of Augustine's ideal of the religious life. Acts 4: 32-35 was also the *rule of life* for Augustine's community of clerics (*monasterium clericorum*) gathered in the bishop's house (*domus episcopi*).¹⁹ The distinctive Augustinian focus of this monastic ideal is on forming community. Interpersonal relationships build upon and draw inspiration from the double command of love: "Love God above all else, dearest brothers, then your neighbor also, because these are the precepts given us as primary principles" (*Ordo Monasterii*, 1) (Lawless 75).²⁰ The abiding goal of love is experienced peace. Commenting on Psalm 33(34), verse 15, "seek peace and pursue it", Augustine says:

Scripture does not promise you that you will have peace here; seek it, pursue it... we seek peace here, but will obtain it only at the end. Yet we do have peace in some degree here, in order that we may deserve to have it totally there. ... Let us be of one heart here, let us love our neighbor as ourselves. Love your brother and sister as you love yourself, and have peace with them (*en. Ps.*, 33[34] II,19).²¹

The first practical implication in the *Praeceptum* of the double command of love to achieve unity, harmony and peace is concrete and down to earth: the community of goods. "Among you there can be no question of personal property. Rather, take care that you share everything in common" (1, 3). Making private goods common is fundamental for building a monastic community and making a place for the Lord. By describing the social agitation of the opposite, that is, private possessions, Augustine provides a striking rationale for making clear the positive effects of sharing everything in common:

What are we fighting over? Over the things we call our own. We do not go to law about things we possess in common, do we? We all breathe in the air that belongs to all of us, and we all enjoy the sunshine that is common to all.

¹⁹ See s., 356, 1. At the beginning of this second sermon on the way of life of the clerics, the deacon Lazarus read Acts 4: 31-35, which before continuing the sermon was read again by bishop Augustine.

²⁰ Referring to Mt. 22: 37-40: "Ante omnia, fratres carissimi, diligatur Deus, deinde et proximus, quia ista sunt praecepta principaliter nobis data." The *Regula recepta* consists of the first sentence of the *Ordo Monasterii* followed by the *Praeceptum*.

²¹ See also *en. Ps.* 147, 15: "Pursue this peace, long for this peace... love peace in your homes, ... Love peace with your friends, and love peace with your enemies."

Blessed are those who are so intent on making a place for the Lord that they take no pleasure in their private possessions (*en. Ps.*, 131(132), 5).²²

The terminology used (e.g. fighting) gives evidence that the emphasis on private possessions does not promote the peace that is aimed for in the community, nor in the broader society. Social peace, on Augustine's reading of the Acts story, is conditioned by common ownership and common use. His monastic rule lays out as a fundamental characteristic and norm of Augustinian community the precept of common property.

Next, the *Praeceptum* refers to the role of the superior. Once the possessions are commonly shared, and nobody says, "this belongs to me", the superior can take over care for the needs of each of the brothers without distinction. He,

Should see to it that each person is provided with food and clothing. He does not have to give exactly the same to everyone, for you are not all equally strong, but each person should be given what he personally needs (1, 3).²³

The unity and harmony in the Augustinian community is not fostered by mechanistic equality or uniformity. The brothers or sisters are unique persons with strengths and weaknesses.²⁴

Augustine's community of the garden monastery was composed by unique persons. A conditioning background "distinction" is noticed between "those who owned possessions in the world" (1, 7) and "those who did not have possessions" (1, 4-5). Augustine is aware that living together in community is a challenge for both "former rich" and "former poor". The first come from a more comfortable manner of life. The latter are considered more robust individuals (3, 4). Their former status in life and their background differ. Augustine weighs

²² See also s., 355, 2, qtd. in Gillette 89. The monk-bishop of Hippo underlines that the really great and profitable common estate is God himself.

²³ For those who had nothing before entering the monastery "allowance should be made for their frailty, however on the basis of individual need, even if previous poverty never permitted them to satisfy those needs" (1, 5). Augustine's definition on peace and order is applied: "The peace of all things is the tranquility of order. Order is the distribution of things equal and unequal, each to its own place" (*civ.*, 19, 13). See also *civ.*, 19, 4: "What is to be said of justice, whose task is to assign to each man his due..."

²⁴ See *ep.*, 130, 14, 31: "Let each of you do what she can in fasting, vigils, and every chastisement of the body, by which prayer is helped very much. If another cannot do as much, let her do what she can if she loves in the other what she does not do because she cannot. Hence, let one who cannot do as much not hold back the one who can do more, and let not the one who can do more not urge on the one who cannot do as much."

in on the aptness of a superior, considering personal background information, to determine fair distribution according to need.

Chapter I of the *Praeceptum* presents a list of admonitions addressed to those who were “rich” and to those who were “poor”:

Do not call anything your own; do freely consent to possess everything in common; do not seek in the monastery possessions which were beyond your reach outside; do not consider present good fortune to consist in the possession of food and clothing..., do not put your nose in the air...; do not pursue hollow worldly concerns...; do not belittle the brothers who come to the holy society from a condition of poverty...; do not have a high opinion of yourselves because of making available some of your possessions to the community.

Through these warnings, Augustine instills renunciation of possessions via the personally appropriated virtue of humility in the members living in the monastery. The central issue is not weighing up on objective scales equal portions. Rather, the central concern is developing good judgment and personally appropriated values within members’ assessment of what is good and apt and concords harmoniously to the God’s eye point of view. Augustine’s observation about pride, considered a trap able to destroy even good works, speaks of itself. “Hasten on ahead” (*en. Ps.*, 132(133), 13)²⁵ could well point out the dynamic cutting-edge standard involved in each person’s attaining personal improvement and poised blessedness in communal life and communal sharing.

...desire for that security where peace is fullest and most certain. ...There the virtues, no longer struggling against any vice or evil whatsoever, will have as the reward of victory eternal peace which no adversary may disquiet. For this is the final blessedness, this is the ultimate perfection, the unending end (*civ.*, 19, 10).

The above listed cautions, pointing out important attitudes, Augustine proposes, should be honored by the brothers, in striving for unity, harmony and peace. The purpose of these principle attitudes is to bring order in the living together of people with a diversity in background. One required attitude stands out: “No one should desire the extras given to a few more out of tolerance than out of deference” (3, 4). The *Praeceptum* (3, 3-4) calls the brothers to be at peace when seeing another receiving more; when noticing that excep-

²⁵ “Hasten on ahead with your heart where you cannot follow with your body” parallels *Praeceptum*, 1, 6: “...but they should lift up their heart, seeking the nobler things” (*sed sursum cor habeant*). See also *en. Ps.*, 85(86), 6.

tions are made: better food, a special diet for health reasons, better bedding, more blankets.²⁶ Being at peace is fostered when one is aware concessions are granted not to show favor but out of concern for the person in special need. That a brother is at peace will become obvious when he is glad and grateful for having the strength to endure what others cannot.

The monastic community for which Augustine compiled the *Praeceptum* was characterized by multiplicity and rich diversity, due to the uniqueness and proper history of each of the members. In this human and social reality of a monastic community, peace will be found in what Augustine later will call the tranquility of order (*tranquillitas ordinis*).²⁷ The meaning of order, applied to the shared life lived in an Augustinian endowed monastic community, implies that each member is assigned to his proper passive receptive and active contributing place, by appreciating both his personal background and his proper strengths. On the way to God, experienced multiplicity will not be an obstacle to striving for unity and harmony amid personal differences of need and contributed gifts. For that desired peace and unity to happen, members old and young will need to be schooled in appropriate assessing skills, learning to judge wisely and not merely mechanistically and rigidly. Good judgment is a cultivated religious gift of perfecting the soul toward a life bent on real care of the other and mutual love.

The short final paragraph of Chapter I, echoing I, 2, summarizes our exploration: “Live then, all of you, in harmony and concord (*unanimitèr et concorditèr vivite*);²⁸ honor God mutually in each other; you have become His temples (1,8).²⁹ It is a call to life (*vivite*)! According to Agatha, the Latin *concordia* “calls to mind harmony, friendship, and peace—qualities that a loving heart can bring to birth.” She adds:

But can these be born among a group whose common difficulties have been probed earlier in this chapter? Yes, but not once and for all. Yes, again and again, every time that a monk’s mind and heart turn away from self-regarding

²⁶ The needs listed are physical and bodily. Meeting these human needs will benefit the inner tranquility which is indispensable for living in unity and harmony with one another. See also Gillette 97: “If everyone has what he or she needs, there will be less worry and fuss and therefore fewer complaints. Peace reigns where there is tranquility of order.”

²⁷ See *civ.* 19, 13: “*Pax omnium rerum tranquillitate ordinis*”. Augustine’s well-known definition for “peace.” Schrama 860-865 points out that Augustine’s *Praeceptum* and *civ.*, 19 have themes in common.

²⁸ See Acts 4:32; Rom. 15: 6.

²⁹ See 2 Cor. 6:16.

to see and to worship him who is at the center of the community's life (Agatha 88-89).

The close-knit order of life inside the Augustinian monastery is concretely different from the way people's life is ordered in the social world, characterized by personal and private property. A monastic common life requires efforts and adaptations from all brothers, regardless of their background, seeking now to share life together, to grow into unity (*civ.*, 19, 17), and to live peacefully in the house. The peace called *concordia* is experienced when brothers in the monastery, regardless of their background, are intentionally and intently centered on God, and honor God in one another. The Augustinian accent on developing one's interiority, each one's soul, entails intent conversion to God so as to shape one's judgments and decisions and behaviors dynamically based *in Deum*.

Awaiting the everlasting blessings promised for the future, the brothers in the community, like pilgrims, should use anything earthly and temporarily, not letting these goods entrap or distract from the path that leads to God and the most blessed life.³⁰ To facilitate this conversion of soul to the final horizon of God Augustine recommends to move from having to improving on how we exercise our soul weighing what is really better: "...it is better to need less than to have more" (3, 5).³¹

An Ordered Life of Prayer as Way to Peace

Praeceptum 1, 8 (see above) serves as transition to Chapter II. The use of the image of the *temple* is striking: a place within each brother; a place prepared for God. Chapter II is dedicated to the personal and communal prayer life in the monastery. The precepts include ordering this dimension of the life in the religious community. The importance of the concrete *oratorium* is emphasized.

For peace to be established in the community, the tranquility of an ordered life of prayer is important. Aspects that bring order in a community life entirely centered on God are, thus, included in Chapter II of the *Praeceptum*, on prayer. Augustine exhorts the community to "be assiduous in prayer (see Col. 4: 2) at the scheduled hours and times" (2, 1). Time and space are set aside. Together with the need for scheduled time and the observed hours (*horarium*), the

³⁰ See *civ.*, 19, 17.

³¹ "Melius est enim minus egere quam plus habere."

Praeceptum clarifies the need for an ordered space (*oratorium*). Space thus ordered is mindfully set apart as an exclusive place of undisturbed quiet and silence. This space should be freed from any business that disrupts the purpose the oratory is to serve. No one can do anything there except that what the prayer space in the monastery is built for. Because, “if some wish to pray even outside the scheduled periods, during their free time, they should not be deterred by people who think they have some other task there” (2, 2).

Order is disrupted when a brother performs tasks that violate the purpose of the place assigned for individual prayer. Peace in the community and in the heart of the brothers is fostered by a mutual respect for dedicated or mindfully purposed privacy. Peace is cared for by commonly providing a spiritual architecture (an *oratorium*) without disturbance. For the brothers in need for praying to God outside the appointed hours and times, an ordered priority space is provided. Whenever the brother enters the *oratorium*, he may move into this place with the right and good intention for turning to God in prayer: respecting the place and providing for his intention, the other brothers, thus respect the order of a shared communal religious life, dedicated as it is (*primum propter quod...*) to enable loving and turning to God. This specific norm of the rule concretizes the aim and purpose for life together.

Augustine, furthermore, emphasizes the importance of integrity and congruency in the common prayer life of the brothers: “When you pray to God in psalms and hymns, the words you speak should be alive in your hearts” (II, 3). Integrity and congruence are expressions of the peace of the rational soul which enjoys an ordered agreement of knowledge (what is alive in the mind and heart of the brother) and action (praying psalms and hymns). The brothers exercise their mind and heart in contemplation and act in accordance with it (*civ.*, 19, 14).³²

Table Fellowship as a Way to Peace

Not only is the *oratorium* the place where the Word of God is listened to; the community is exhorted to also “listen to the customary reading from the beginning to the end of the meal without commotion or arguments” (3, 2), that is to say in peace, without resistance, in obedience and meekness (*s. dom. m.*, I, 4, 11). Augustine adds: “Food is not for the mouth alone (Mt. 4: 4); your ears also should hunger for the Word of God (Amos 8, 11)” (3, 2). Because, as

³² On *Praeceptum*, 2, 3, see Gillette 86–87.

Augustine says elsewhere: “The voice of Christ, the voice of God, is peace, and it calls us to peace” (*en. Ps.*, 84(85), 10). Hearing the voice of Christ and listening to the Word of God keeps the brothers focused on the aim of their life as religious in the community: *in Deum*, growing enthusiasm, and fullness of life in God.³³ Moments of table fellowship are ordered moments. Attention should be given to both the body and the soul. The body hungers for food. But the brothers should not focus in such way on the bodily hunger for food as to forget the hunger for the Word of God. Augustine’s definition of peace, connecting soul and body, is applied in practice: the peace of the body and soul is the ordered life and health of the brothers living in community.³⁴

Regarding table fellowship, Possidius points to another obstacle to peaceful relationships among the brothers as well as when invited guests join the meals of the community. An inscription in the table served as a caution for those—even Augustine’s fellow-bishops and friends—who would openly disturb the peaceful fellowship at meals by openly voicing infectious and hateful criticism about absent people. Possidius writes:

At the table he [Augustine] preferred reading or conversation to eating and drinking, and to counteract a contagious habit of men he had these words inscribed on his table: “If anyone feeds by biting at other men’s backs, he will not find at this table the food that he lacks (*Possidius Vita Augustini*, 22; 425).³⁵

Augustine once was very agitated. Friends at table forgot the inscription. He rebuked them saying that either the warning in writing would be removed from the table or he would leave the table right away and withdraw in his room.

Fraternal Correction as a Way to Peace

Striving and working for unity and peace in a religious community can be harmed, by the disruptive behavior of a wayward brother, by a manner of life that damages his integrity, and the integrity of the community, and by attitudes that are inconsistent with the way of life the brother committed himself to. What he does wrong gives offense to those who see him because it is not

³³ For a description of this aim, see *en. Ps.*, 99(100), 12: “That rest which awaits us, where we shall be equal to the angels” (*In illa requie, in illa aequalitate Angelorum*).

³⁴ See *civ.*, 19,1 3: “*pax corporis et animae ordinata vita et salus animantis*.”

³⁵ “*Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere vitam, hanc mensam indignam noverit esse suam*.”

in keeping with his holy state (4, 3). His behavior does not befit his call to monastic community life intent on the way to God.

The purpose of Chapter IV in the *Praeceptum* is not to develop a theory or theology of celibacy. The provisions included were, instead, a cultural conditioned necessity for safeguarding the unity and well-being and peace of the community. They elaborate a procedure (4, 7-8-9)³⁶ for how to deal in community with a brother who behaves improperly, and whose heart is harmfully infected by sin, namely the provocative and lustfully looking at a woman. What should be done if it happens? Reporting the offender to the superior is not the first step. After that, given neglect of the warning by an individual brother, when noticing falling back into the improper behavior, then two or three other brothers—a small delegation of the community—should be informed first. Out of the community’s felt responsibility for one another, and prompted by honest fellow feelings for each member, a group effort seeks to convince the errant brother of his fault. He must be called back to order with firmness. His mind and heart are to be redirected back to the fundamental aim of his vocation, conducting his life on the way to God, on the way to Peace. All these efforts may still fail. In case of perseverance in evil-doing, finally the superior gets involved. He first calls the suspect brother to accountability. This shall happen in a private colloquium. The superior shall not immediately and publicly expose the brother’s wrongdoing to the full community. However, in case the brother’s misconduct does not change, “then the others are to be summoned without his knowledge so that he can be accused in the presence of all” (4, 9). Because the brother who does wrong is member of the community, all other brothers have a stake in redressing the problem and should engage the brother in working at a resolution to acknowledge the evil and restore to good. Silence, at this point, would mean ruinous denial or tacit complicity and thus further harm both the erring member and the community’s common life, which can only be built up by supportive fraternal and healthy interpersonal relationships among all the brothers.

If the brother is proved guilty, a suitable punishment is determined by the superior or by the priest, with a view on the improvement of the behavior, again be it noted, so that peace might be re-established in the heart of the brother as well as in fostering mutual brotherly relationships in the community. Dismissal from the community is not ruled out if he refuses the imposed

³⁶ Augustine builds upon Mt. 18:15-17, on what it means to live in an evangelical community. See also *civ.*, 19, 16 on what to do when disobedience breaks the domestic peace.

punishment. Dismissal is the ultimate step in the “tough love” procedure noted in the *Praeceptum*.

Augustine’s dominant message of love makes its impression here as well. The heart of the brothers, the superior or the priest should always be ordered to fraternal love, in every step of whatever procedure is used, including the dismissal step. The unruly brother shall never be totally identified with his act of wrongdoing. Augustine clearly distinguishes sin from sinner. A communal act of totally identifying the person with his act would point to unjust harshness in both the superior or the other community members. Augustine concludes:

Diligently and faithfully, then, attend to my word about suggestive glances at women. Such advice holds also for detection, prevention, disclosure, proof, and punishment of other offenses, with love for the person and hatred for the sin (4, 9).³⁷

It strikes us that punishment is reserved as the last remedy. Energy goes first and foremost into fraternal correction. Fraternal correction is a relational process. It keeps the interconnection between the brothers alive and restores by face-to-face encounter the bruised relationships. The community’s duty is based in building the fraternal relation of love, that is, even in finding a step forward. It is to lovingly persuade the brother who does wrong. The brothers seek to get him to think about his unacceptable behavior, which distances him from the community and his own good, and to amend it. The kind of message they should convey to the brother could be like this: no matter what you do or say, we will continue to love you, to support you, to hold you accountable to be all that you can be as a human person and as a religious fellow brother in the community. To be all that you can be would mean to be faithful to your call and primary commitment to the fraternal community on the way to God in oneness of mind and heart.

The fraternal correction process as spelled out at length in the *Praeceptum* aims at restoring order in the community, at the rehabilitation of the brother who did wrong. The process also restores peace as a constitutive component of fraternal relationships and as an indispensable condition for relational growth in the community. The purpose and end of fraternal correction is reforming the offending brother so as to participate in the constitutive peace and harmony in community, a peace which he had bruised, a concord from which he had broken away (*civ.*, 19, 16).

³⁷ “Cum dilectione hominum et odium vitiorum.” See also *civ.*, 14, 6.

The Rule's lengthy attention to health and healing underscores the Augustinian community's vivid human-sacramental process of embodying and enabling the work of achieving health-as-shalom, glorifying God in honoring the interpersonal dynamics present in a community of tough love.

Reconciliation as a Way to Peace

Chapter VI of the *Praeceptum* opens with this admonition: "Either have no quarrels or put an end to them as quickly as possible" (6, 1). This phrase mirrors an earlier warning: "If you notice in any of your number this roving eye referred to above, immediately admonish the individual and correct the matter as soon as possible, in order to curb its progress" (4, 7).

Both phrases accentuate interpersonal fraternal immediateness: "notice" leads to "act" as quickly as possible. When inner peace is at danger, when an interpersonal peaceful relation in the community is disturbed, something needs to be done, as soon as possible. In terms of quarrels or cases of anger between brothers in the community, Augustine indicates two guidelines: one is to avoid having them; the second guideline is to put an immediate end to them. Quarrels should be transformed to reconciliation as soon as they arise. Augustine writes to Felicity, the superior of the women's monastery at Hippo, and to Rusticus, the superior of the men's monastery who served as priest to the women's convent:

Put more effort into establishing harmony among yourselves than into rebuking one another. For just as vinegar spoils a container if it is kept there too long, so anger ruins a heart if it lasts until the next day. *Do this, then, and the God of peace will be with you* (Phil. 4: 9), and at the same time pray for us that we may quickly carry out the good admonitions we give (*ep.*, 210, 2).³⁸

A brother who quarrels, excludes the other from his love. Divided and separated individuals do not live in harmony. They do harm to the prime reason for why members have come to live together to form a religious community (1, 2). For in discord, the Lord cannot be not praised (*en. Ps.*, 132(133), 13). To enjoy harmony with God and to praise Him, hearts must be open and at peace with everyone in the community. Therefore, Augustine underlines that whatever quarrels and disagreements might surface, that these be ended as quickly as possible: "A swift course of action is called for since the heart itself suffers corrosion until peace is reestablished" (Gillette 104).

³⁸ See Gillette 99. See also *ep. Io. tr.*, 4, 6.

Augustine is straightforward in his admonitions to deal with discord in the community, but also realistic. He says: “It is impossible, though, for disputes never to arise. They have broken out between brethren, even between saints, between Barnabas and Paul (see Acts 15: 39), but not so as to destroy the unity of hearts, not so as to kill charity” (*en. Ps.*, 33(34), 2,19). Augustine encourages people to be active in searching for peace:

Seek peace, then, brothers and sisters. The Lord said, *These things I tell you, that in me you may have peace. I do not promise you peace in this world* (see John 16: 33; 14,27). In this life there is no true peace, no tranquility. We are promised the joy of immortality and fellowship with the angels. But anyone who has not sought it here will not find it on arriving there (*en. Ps.*, 33(34) 2, 19).³⁹

Seeking peace and pursuing it (Ps. 33(34):15) entails the ongoing and freely willed efforts in the monastic community to return to the *anima una et cor unum* from which quarrelling, anger, discord, insults, the use of harmful words, having gone too far, accusation, turn away. Seeking peace and pursuing it means “to right the wrong... at the earliest opportunity”, to mutually “forgive without further bickering”, and to make sure that the same lips from which harsh words have escaped “promptly heal the wounds they have caused” (6, 2).

Obedience in Love as Way to Peace

On several occasions, Augustine’s *Praeceptum* addresses the role of the superior (*praeposito*). The superior shall provide each of the brothers with food and clothing (1, 3). A stubborn wayward brother is to be reported to the superior (4, 9). A salutary punishment shall be determined by the judgment of the superior or the priest (4, 9). The priest or the superior may judge it necessary to severely correct someone (4, 11). Gifts are to be submitted to the superior as common property so that it can be given to whoever needs it (5, 3). The superior decides how often a brother’s clothes are to be laundered (5, 4).⁴⁰ The superior may oblige brothers to visit the public baths (5, 5). The superior designates the companions with whom a brother will visit the public baths or any other place (5, 7). And, the superior has a good opinion of his brothers.⁴¹

³⁹ Perfect peace will be given to those who draw back from evil and do good. See s., 72, 9.

⁴⁰ To avoid that an inordinate desire for clean clothes disturbs the inner peace of the heart.

⁴¹ See s., 355, 2: “bene autem sentio de fratribus meis”, referred to by Gillette 89.

Chapter VII of the *Praeceptum* is on authority and obedience, citing scripture: “Obey your superior (Heb. 13: 17) as a father” (7, 1). A superior is in a position of authority. The superior serves in love, because the double commandment of love applies to him. The opposite of serving in love would be the desire to rule over others by striving to be feared by them instead of striving to be loved (7, 3). The superior, by his formative religious role, should desire and pray that all in the community may reach the heavenly home where the duty of commanding them will be unnecessary because there will be no duty of providing for those who are already happy in that immortal state, and enjoy the everlasting love and peace the contemplation of the spiritual beauty (*spiritalis pulchritudinis*) (8,1).

To be obedient is to be at peace. Disobedience breaks the peace (*civ.*, 19, 16). Book XIX of *De Civitate Dei* links peace and obedience. First when Augustine speaks about the peace between mortals and God, it is an ordered obedience in faith to eternal law (*civ.*, 19, 13). Further: “...domestic peace is ordered concord among those ruling and those obeying... For those who are concerned for others give commands... But those who are objects obey...” (*civ.*, 19, 13; 14). This description could be applied to the house in which the brothers live together under a superior whose principle task it is one of seeing to it that all precepts of the *Praeceptum* are observed (1, 2; 7, 2). In short, the peace and the unity in the monastic community is fostered and determined by both “commanding in love” and “obeying with respect.” To that end, the peace in the community is ordered through a superior who regards himself to be fortunate as one who serves the brothers in love, and not as one who exercises authority over the brothers (7, 3).⁴² In other words of Augustine, the superior does indeed command, however “not through desire to dominate but through dutiful concern for others, not with pride in exercising authority but with mercy in providing for others” (*civ.*, 19, 14). The atmosphere of peaceful living together in the religious community is also actively ordered by the brothers who wholeheartedly and freely obey their superior as a father, as well as the priest who bears responsibility for the brothers and has greater authority over them (7, 1-2). The brothers in the community, including the superior who is to be a model of good deeds for everyone (7, 3), give practical expression to their obedience when in their daily life, the common purpose takes precedence over the private purpose, and the common good over the private good. If this happens growth is assured, progress is made, and love which is not self-seeking

⁴² “Non se existimet potestate dominantem, sed caritate servientem felicem.”

(1 Cor: 13, 5) is put into praxis (5, 2).⁴³ Self-seeking would disrupt peace in the community.

The superior of the community should lead through the spiritual good of true wisdom, by prudently directing his judgments, his courageous actions, self-control, and just dealings toward that end where it is finally God who shall be all in all (1 Cor. 15: 28) in sure eternity and perfect peace (*civ.*, 19, 20).

Harbor, Furnace and Cartwheel

Many tend to think of a monastery as a safe and peaceful harbor, a calm “get-away” place of retreat where good and worthy people have chosen a life of quiet, peace, and contemplation, far removed from the clamor of the people, from the tumult and the noise of the great crowds, from the towering waves of the world, as though they were safe in a harbor. Focusing on the imagery of a harbor, Augustine applies its features to monastic life in community. Brothers joining a religious community, do not yet find there the awaited final joy. They do not yet experience the promised jubilation. Because, in the monastery, are still laments and worry over temptations. It is not yet an experience of the security and the peace of the Celestial City, which is to be a perfectly ordered and harmonious enjoyment of God and of one another in God.⁴⁴ Augustine explains:

For even a harbor has an entrance somewhere—if a harbor had no entrance on any side, then no ship could enter it. So it must of necessity lie open on one side. Yet sometimes the wind rushes in from that open side. And even where there are no rocks, the ships are dashed against each other and are shattered. Then, where can that security be found, if not in a harbor? (*en. Ps.*, 99(100),10; 387-393).

Augustine, however, notices that the ships in the harbor⁴⁵ are still more fortunate than the ones on the open sea, i.e. the people in the world. To assure and protect the vulnerable peace in the harbor of a religious community, the brothers should love one another. Quoting Saint Paul, the brothers should bear with each other in love, eager to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4: 2-3), just as the ships in the harbor are to be bound to

⁴³ See also *op. mon.*, 25, 32.

⁴⁴ See *civ.*, 19, 13: “Pax caelestis civitatis ordinatissima et concordissima societas fruendi Deo et invicem in Deo.” Here, in this life, security and peace are in the hope of God’s promises. There, in the fulfilment of God’s promises, is full security and peace, when the bars of the gates of Jerusalem are made fast (*Ps.* 147: 13). See also *en. Ps.*, 99(100) 11.

⁴⁵ The brothers in the monastic community who have chosen a quiet life.

each other by good and not be dashed against each other. And further, if by chance the wind rushes in from the open side, if conflicts arise, let there be careful piloting (*en. Ps., 99(100), 10*). Applying the imagery of harbor and ships to the religious life in community, reference is made to the office, the authority and responsibility—the careful piloting—of the superior.

Augustine himself was a monastic community leader. In his exposition on Psalm 99(100) he speaks from experience. To assure and maintain peace and tranquility in the monastery, brothers in charge of community leadership, could putatively easily adopt a principle of precaution in favor of peace: be carefully not to admit evil and wicked people and exclude them from religious community living. Augustine, however, pleads against such a criterion using some refined psychological thinking.

To recognize a man as evil, you must first test him within the monastery. So how do you shut out the man who is about to enter and who is to be tested afterward, but cannot be tested unless he has entered? Will you send all the wicked men away? (*en. Ps., 99(100),10*).

Just avoiding *a priori* bad people from joining the monastic community does not *ipso facto* guarantee unity, concord, happiness, and peace in a monastery that would, thus, be reserved only for so called “good people”. Augustine pleads against an *a priori* judgment.⁴⁶ He does want, in fact first of all, an *a posteriori* formation experience of monitoring. The deepest motivations of the heart—often still unknown to new members—and equally the over-idealistic expectations of the heart of those who wish to be admitted need to be scrutinized, discerned, tested and purified in the community, as in a furnace:⁴⁷

For many have promised themselves that they would fulfil that holy life that holds all things in common, where no one calls anything his own, and where they have one soul and one heart toward God (Acts 4:32). They have been put into the furnace and they have cracked (*en. Ps., 99 (100), 11*).

Entering the common life of the brothers in the monastery, in the sweet hope for praiseworthy peace and security, is quite an unrealistic, even romantic expectation. Without doubt, Augustine’s idealized description of that common life is beautiful:

⁴⁶ Augustine asks: “What is the work of peace? It passes no judgment on uncertain matters, it does not assert what it does not know. It is more inclined to think the best of any man or woman than to suspect the worst” (*en. Ps., 147, 16*).

⁴⁷ A furnace “burns”, but also “purifies”, e.g. metal, silver and gold.

Great men, holy men, live there in daily hymns, prayers, and praise of God. They occupy themselves in reading and support themselves by manual labor. They do not seek anything greedily, but use in contentment and love whatever their pious brothers bring to them. No one takes anything for his own that another does not have; they all love one another and bear with each other (*en. Ps., 99 (100) 12*).⁴⁸

But at the same time, Augustine knows that the lived daily reality is different. Such perfect community as pictured above does not exist. A person who joins the community in the hope he will find perfect Christian love, or vaguely imagines that no one living there will ever have to be tolerated, is entertaining a naïve social expectation. The image of the harbor shows ships dashing against each other when the wind enters. A community with no difficult person to live with is a utopia. Therefore, living realistically the common life of real brothers in the monastery requires patience and tolerance with the bothersome men. Patient and tolerant behavior by exemplary good brothers may even correct and reform the troublesome. Augustine offers a principle for peacefulness in the monastery: “[one] should tolerate the real actions of the wicked for the sake of the fellowship of the good” (*en. Ps., 99 (100) 12*).

Irritation, exasperation and intolerance with the tiresome habits of the few, may make a newcomer want to leave the community to at least find peace in himself. That means that he becomes “a deserter of so holy an undertaking” (*fit desertor tam sancti propositi*). Augustine assesses such a consideration a questionable decision:

...when he has left that place, he, too, becomes a critic and a slanderer; he tells only of those things that he swore he could hardly have endured. ...What is more, he belches forth the bad odor of his indignation, and frightens away those intending to enter the monastery, since, when he himself had entered, he could not persevere. What sort of people are those brothers? They are envious, quarrelsome, completely intolerant, greedy. This one did this here, and that one did that. Wicked man, why do you keep quiet about the good brothers? You shout of those whom you could not tolerate, but you keep quiet about those who tolerated you in your wickedness (*en. Ps., 99(100), 12*).

The way “the deserter” pictures the common life of the brothers in the monastery to the outside world is completely opposite to Augustine’s earlier quoted

⁴⁸ Did this description—probably inspired by Augustine’s experience in the Thagaste community, which was composed of relatives and friends—make living together as *servi Dei* easy, pleasant, and peaceful?

description. The intolerant person depicts no more than a false caricature of those who wish to live Christ-like through love that is self-giving. Augustine uses the image of “the bad odor of indignation” the intolerant man belches forth. This reminds us, by contrast, of the concluding prayer in Chapter VIII of the *Praeceptum*. The brothers are exhorted to observe the Rule, exuding the fragrance of Christ in the goodness of their lives (8, 1).⁴⁹

Augustine left behind a wonderful paean to common life in his exposition on Psalm 132(133). This psalm is short and includes images, names and places: the oil, the dew, the robe, the hem, the beard, the mountains, Aaron, Hermon, Sion, etc. The bishop of Hippo applies this Psalm and its imagery also to brothers living together in unity and mutual love, thus building religious community. As in the *Praeceptum*, Augustine confirms that the brothers who really live in unity are those of whom it has been said: “And they had one soul and one heart toward God; and no one called anything his own, but they held everything in common” (Acts 4: 32). They have “the dew of Hermon flowing down over the mountains of Sion” (Psalm 132(133): 3). Therefore, they are “quiet, peaceful, humble, and tolerant.” They pray. They do not murmur. The love of Christ is made perfect in them. Augustine notes in his preaching the gap between his ideal of the religious life and the experienced reality:

So those in whom the love of Christ has not been made perfect do not live in unity ...even though they may be in the same place, [they] are hateful, troublesome, and quarrelsome. By their own restlessness they disturb others, just as the restless beast in the yoke does not pull but also breaks with his hooves whatever is yoked to him. ...all the murmurers are splendidly described in a certain passage in Scripture: “the feelings of a fool are like a cartwheel” (Eccli. 33, 5). ...A cartwheel carries hay, and it murmurs. For it cannot find rest from murmuring. Many brothers are like this; they do not live in unity, except in the body (*en. Ps., 132(133), 12*) (Zumkeller 403-404).

Conclusion

Augustine’s *Praeceptum* was explored to discover that a fraternal life together in peace is a way to God. The opening purpose of the Rule concentrates on the “*anima una et cor unum in Deum*”⁵⁰ as the life goal for those who serve God

⁴⁹ See 2 Cor. 2: 15; and 1 Pet. 3: 16.

⁵⁰ *In deum* highlights the Augustinian accent on our aim and transcending finality, at once eternal, but also operating now as an active attraction, in community. God draws the community’s life (*anima*) higher through fraternal love, experienced joy and delight, but still leaves

and as a statement to gain peace via a fraternal life lived together: minds and hearts intimately connected, seeking to be one soul and one heart on the way to God.

The precepts in Augustine's *Praeceptum* foster and safeguard harmony, unity and peace in the ordinary daily life of the community. Their observance in obedience helps the brothers to transform their mind and heart, to interiorize the values of the *Praeceptum*, and to attract attention by the life they live (4, 1).

Augustine underlines that harmony, unity and peace are more than a mere result of following laws and rules. One phrase in chapter VIII of the *Praeceptum* is of importance in this regard: "you are no longer slaves under the law, but a people living in freedom under grace" (8, 2). Living in freedom under grace is a significant "step" in the direction of living in peace (*in pace*) brought to perfection, fully possessed, loved and praised.⁵¹

Living Augustine's *Praeceptum* as a "Rule of Peace" is an apostolic endeavor. The Augustinian endowed monastic communities can serve as parables of peaceful brotherhood in Church and society.⁵² Augustinian monasteries should support Church communities, families and groups who strive for earthly peace and point out the final perspective: celestial peace in the City of God, where God is experienced as the Absolute One, Perfect Peace and All-Embracing Love.⁵³

hearts restless and turning toward greater personal appropriation. The "will toward wholeness" for the restless heart never attains full satisfaction, even in the grace of the fraternal life intentionally lived. The final fulfilled value, for Augustine, is always the eschatological patria of the Kingdom, the homeland to which life's journey always points, even with moments of felt peace and enjoyed reconciliation. The God of peace (*in deum*) always transcends even the best practiced fraternal life.

⁵¹ Augustine uses the fourfold division of marked periods for God's economy in human salvation history as: "ante legem, sub lege, sub gratia, in pace". The last period (*in pace*) will culminate only in the final eschatological shalom of all salvation history. See also *en. Ps.*, 147, 15.

⁵² See also Burt 631: "The peace of the larger societies flows from the peace of those that are smaller."

⁵³ See "The Rule of Saint Augustine" 45.



Works Cited

- Agatha, Mary. *The Rule of Saint Augustine: An Essay in Understanding*. Villanova, Augustinian Press, 1991.
- Augustine of Hippo. *Confessions*, translated by Henri Chadwick, Oxford, University Press, 2008.
- . *Expositions of the Psalms (Ennarationes in Psalmos)* 33-50. Translated by Maria Boulding, O. S. B., edited by John E. Rotelle O. S. A., Hyde Park, New York, New City Press, 2000.
- . *Expositions of the Psalms (Ennarationes in Psalmos)* 51-72. Translated by Maria Boulding, O. S. B., edited by John E. Rotelle O. S. A., Hyde Park, New York, New City Press, 2001.
- . *Expositions of the Psalms (Ennarationes in Psalmos)* 73-98. Translated by Maria Boulding, O. S. B., edited by John E. Rotelle O. S. A., Hyde Park, New York, New City Press, 2002.
- . *Expositions of the Psalms (Ennarationes in Psalmos)* 99-120, translated by Maria Boulding, O. S. B., edited by John E. Rotelle O. S. A., Hyde Park, New York, New City Press, 2003.
- . *Expositions of the Psalms (Ennarationes in Psalmos)* 121-150, translated by Maria Boulding, O. S. B., edited by John E. Rotelle O. S. A., Hyde Park, New York, New City Press, 2004.
- . *Letters 100-155*, translated by Roland Teske, edited by Boniface Ramsey, Hyde Park, New York, New City Press, 2003.
- . *Praeceptum*, translated by Georges Lawless O. S. A., Oxford, Claredon Press, 1987.
- . *Selected writings*, translated by Mary T. Clark, New York, Paulist Press, 1984.
- . *The Monastic Rules*, translated by Sister Agatha Mary S. P. B. and Gerald Bonner, edited by Boniface Ramsey, New York, New City Press, 2004.
- Burt, Donald X. "Peace." *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U. K., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999, pp. 629-632.
- Chadwick, Henry. *Augustine of Hippo. A Life*. Oxford, University Press, 2009.
- Gillette, Gertrude. *Four Faces of Anger: Seneca, Evagrius Ponticus, Cassian, and Augustine*. Lanham, University Press of America, 2010.

- Lawless, Georges O. S. A. *Augustine of Hippo and his Monastic Rule*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1987.
- Possidius. *Vita Augustini. Augustine's Ideal of the Religious Life*, translated by Adolar Zumkeller. New York, Fordham University Press, 1986, pp. 423-428.
- Schrama, Martijn. "Praeposito tamquam patri oboediatur. Augustinus über frieden und gehorsam." *Augustiniana*, vol. 41, 1991, pp. 847-878.
- The Rule of Saint Augustine. Masculine and Feminine Versions: With Introduction and Commentary* by Tarcisius J. van Bavel O. S. A. London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1996.
- Zumkeller, Adolar. *Augustine's Ideal of the Religious Life*. New York, Fordham University Press, 1986.

On the Two Wills: Augustine against Agonism toward Peace

Sobre las dos voluntades:
Agustín contra el agonismo hacia la paz

9

Thomas R. Clemmons
The Catholic University of America, United States of America



Abstract

This essay examines Augustine's critique of a hermeneutic of agonism in relation to his consideration of the Manichaean notion of the two souls, as well as his discussion of the two wills in the *Confessions*. The essay treats these dimensions as found in his early works *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* and *De vera religione*, as well as his work *De duabus animabus*, and lastly the *Confessions*. Augustine's recurring treatment of the two souls is bound with his critique of agonism. It is also linked with his own deepening understanding of the hermeneutical consequence of the luminous self and the weight of *consuetudo*. In this context Augustine's articulation of peace as an openness to God and others comes to fruition. Peace, for Augustine, is not the assertion of one's distinctive luminosity or even the resolve of a secure self at odds with the world in which it finds itself. Rather, peace is found in the realization that one is made open to difference, to a concord that does not require struggle and agony, and in fact precludes the consumption or erasure of this difference.

Keywords: Augustine, Manichaeism, *Confessions*, *consuetudo* peace, the will.



Resumen

Este ensayo examina la crítica de san Agustín de una hermenéutica del agonismo en relación con su consideración de la noción Maniquea de las dos almas, así como su discusión de las dos voluntades en *Confesiones*. El ensayo trata estas dimensiones tal como se encuentran en sus primeros trabajos *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* y *De vera religione*, así como en su trabajo en *De duabus animabus* y, por último, *Confesiones*. El tratamiento recurrente de san Agustín de las dos almas se vincula con su crítica del agonismo. También se relaciona con su comprensión más profunda de las consecuencias hermenéuticas del yo luminoso y el peso del *consuetudo*. En este contexto, la articulación de la paz de san Agustín como una apertura a Dios y a los demás llega a buen término. La paz, para Agustín, no es la afirmación de la luminosidad distintiva de uno, ni siquiera la resolución de un yo seguro en desacuerdo con el mundo en el que se encuentra. Más bien, la paz se encuentra en la comprensión de que uno está abierto a la diferencia, a una concordia que no requiere sufrimiento ni agonía, y de hecho excluye el consumo o la eliminación de esta diferencia.

Palabras clave: Paz, san Agustín, Maniqueísmo, la voluntad, *Confesiones*, *consuetudo*



Acerca del autor | About the author

Thomas R. Clemmons [clemmonst@cua.edu]

Thomas Clemmons, Asst. Professor of Latin Patristics, Asst. Professor of Church History and Historical Theology, School of Theology and Religious Studies, The Catholic University of America. His research focuses on Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, and other early and medieval Latin Christian figures.



Cómo citar en MLA / How to cite in MLA

Clemmons, Thomas R. "On the Two Wills: Augustine against Agonism toward Peace." *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendimez y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Uniaugustiniana, 2019, pp. 265-290, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.9

Introduction

Much of Augustine's literary output before 400 is concerned either directly or in passing with Manichaeism. The nature of this extensive critique of Manichaeism, however, is not so straightforward. Augustine, as he mentions in several treatises, is certainly drawing from his personal experience with Manichaeans and as a Manichaean himself.¹ He also has friends, such as Romanianus, for whom he writes *De vera religione* and *Contra Academicos*, and Honoratus, to whom he dedicates *De utilitate credendi*, who are still Manichaeans when he composes these works for them.² Beyond his personal motivation for these early writings, two dimensions of Augustine's critique of Manichaeism stand out.

The first is more broadly construed as biblical exegesis. At the heart of his engagement with Manichaeism is how to read the Bible and to see Christ as the *velamen* of Scripture, or as Augustine says in *De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae*, to read the whole of the Bible as the *Scriptura Christi* (*mor.*, 1, 1, 2). Augustine feared the implications of the oppositional hermeneutic of Manichaeism, which would use passages of the New Testament against seemingly contrary testimonies in the Old Testament. Even more so, Augustine grew to be suspicious of the narrational limitations that Manichaeism had placed on the interpretation of the New Testament. The New Testament, severed from the prior activity of God in the Old Testament, through the Patriarchs, Israel, and the Prophets, appeared a truncated story. An effect of this Manichaean narrational limitation was the removal of God's prior activity, in favor of stipulating a phantasmic, even ahistorical, Christ figure.³

Augustine's response and deepening awareness of the implications of this Manichaean hermeneutic is witnessed in his extensive exegesis which discloses his own theological vision, whether it be in relation to, amongst other things, his understanding of Christ, the Triune God, or the Church. The importance and extent of this dimension of Augustine's critique and engagement with Manichaeism, his identification of Manichaean scriptural interpretation

¹ The friendships that Augustine established as a Manichaean or friends who joined Manichaeism through Augustine are repeatedly in the background of the narrative of the *Confessions* in books III through VI. One of the more gripping illustrations of this is Augustine's friend who dies abruptly in book IV and Augustine's consolation in other friends, who were themselves likely Manichaeans. See *conf.*, 3, 4, 7-9, 14 (CCSL 27, 43-47).

² *De utilitate credendi*, *De vera religione* and *De duabus animabus* amongst others are written with such friends in mind.

³ Insofar as the Manichaean narrative opened to a historical past, Augustine perceived this to be mythologically figured. All pointed to the struggle of the Light and the Darkness.

and his own counter-exegesis, cannot be overstated. Indeed, it is the broader context in which a second dimension of Augustine's response to Manichaeism is situated. This essay will consider this second, somewhat more focused, aspect that endures through many of Augustine's writings of this period: his critique of the dualistic Manichaean conception of the two kingdoms, natures, or even souls, and how this relates to his understanding of the two wills, which he discusses in the *Confessions*.

There are several features of Augustine's protracted critique, such as his emphasis on *consuetudo* and the difficulty of the will, that will be discussed through a predominantly diachronic approach, beginning with his early writings of *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, *De vera religione* and *De duabus animabus*, and concluding with the *Confessions*. This diachronic reading is limited, however. It is possible to see in Augustine's earliest engagement the seeds, if not the flower, of his thought in the *Confessions*. My intent is to give prominence to the nuances of Augustine's thought in these earlier works such that the *Confessions* intimates a development or deepening of his own consideration. An additional limitation of this approach is the explicit focus on Augustine's theology. It is important to examine how Augustine considers the effects and limitations of the Manichaean conception of the two natures, even souls, and his own solution which manifests itself in anthropological, cosmological, social, and intrapersonal aspects.

Augustine's discussion of the two wills in the *Confessions* is not simply the rejection of dualism, but more significantly a critique of a kind of alienation from self, others, and the surrounding world. The "Manichaean" hermeneutic with which Augustine engages for so many of his early works ultimately places the individual in a kind of agonistic relation to all things, and rather focuses on the "true" self, a self safe and pure from the taint of otherness. Thus, we see in the *Confessions* Augustine's solution of the two wills both as the local limitation of what can constitute any kind of agonism and as the rejection of an agonistic hermeneutic. For Augustine, peace and concord are not found in the security of one's existential unboundedness as the Light (or any such notion of the self, be it ontologically figured or existentially so). Peace is not the citadel of the self, even if that self is bound in an agony of self-realization in a strange and divided world. Peace, rather, is found for Augustine in a self that remains open, even incomplete.⁴ Therefore, Augustine understands true peace to be

⁴ For two discussions of Augustine's conception of the self in such a manner, see Cavadini; and Mathewes.

ultimately an openness to God and thus to all that exists. This openness challenges the conception of the self as autonomous and thus independent of relation to God and all of creation, as it also rejects an agonism that replaces concord with the assurances of the self amidst strife and conflict.

On the Two Kingdoms, Natures, and Souls: Augustine's Developing Critique of Manichaeism

In his earliest commentary on Genesis (*Gen. adu. Man.*), composed circa 389, Augustine provides what may seem to be numerous *ad hoc* rejoinders to the Manichaean criticism of Genesis and to Manichaeism more broadly. Toward the end of the second book of *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* Augustine's critique becomes more pointed. Discussing 2 Cor. 11: 3, and the serpent or the deceit of heretical teachings that tempts the Church, Augustine notes that the Manichaeans are proud in that they claim as their own a status that belongs to God. They hold the human soul to be of and share the same nature as God. In their pride they attract those bound by the "desires of the flesh" who are only too willing to hear that whatever they do that seems evil or excessive is not being done by themselves, but by the nation of Darkness (*Gen. adu. Man.*, 2, 26, 40) (CSEL 91, 165-166). In one's true self, however, one is as God, indeed, of the same nature as God, true and pure Light free from all Darkness. Thereby, even when one seems to sin, this sin cannot be attributed to the Light of the true self; rather, the agent or actor who commits such sin or has such desires is another, one who is wholly other. It is not the Light, it is not the soul, but the Darkness.

Augustine rejects this division, be it existential or ontological, in favor of a unity of the human made by and in God, citing 1 Cor. 1: 7-12 (*Gen. adu. Man.*, 2, 26, 40) (CSEL 91, 166). Throughout this commentary Augustine emphasizes unity, though not an arbitrary, quasi-Platonic unity of the One, which would render all differences, material and otherwise, as the discord of Dyad.⁵ Rather, Augustine's conception of this unity is witnessed even in his reading of Adam and Eve, an exegesis that refuses a simple understanding of polarity. What is said of Adam does not simply apply to man, and of Eve to woman.⁶ On one level, Adam and Eve are images of the whole human: intellect and affections

⁵ See Augustine's discussion of this point in *conf.*, 4, 15, 24 (CCSL 27, 52-53).

⁶ Manichaean references to woman are largely negative as the process of trapping the Light in the flesh is imaged, and in truth, is understood to recur through birth. Majella Franzmann provides useful context to this largely pessimistic image. See Franzmann.

(*Gen. adu. Man.*, 2, 11, 15) (CSEL 91, 136). Similarly, the verse “and they will be two in one flesh” (*Gen. 2: 22*) is taken by Augustine to refer to the unity between Christ and the Church (*Gen. adu. Man.*, 2, 13, 19) (CSEL 91, 140). This great mystery (*sacramentum magnum*) reveals the profound unity of the Church with Christ, even as the Church through Christ is bound with history in all its particularities and moves to the ultimate consummation of the Christian with Christ in the Church (*Gen. adu. Man.*, 2, 8, 10-11) (CSEL 91, 129-131).

Against his articulation of the complex unity of the self, of humanity, of the world, all in God, Augustine discusses the deceit, even the duplicity, of sin. Sin, in this context, is a turning away from God, from truth, toward the phantasms of one's desires. It is the founding of a deceptive vantage removed from God and even from the hardships generated from and bound with one's own self-promulgated reality (*Gen. adu. Man.*, 2, 27, 41) (CSEL 91, 166-167). It is because of these difficulties (*tribulationes*) that the Manichaeans, Augustine notes, seek to blame another nature (*extranea natura*), when in fact they ought to fault themselves (*Gen. adu. Man.*, 2, 27, 41) (CSEL 91, 168).⁷ In passing off blame to another “thing,” the human has strangely abandoned or excised part of himself such that true charity, the fullness of knowledge by which one loves God and neighbor with one's whole heart, soul, and mind (*Matt. 22: 37-39*), is not possible. What remains in this integral blameless self is at best a fraction of wholeness, and thus, a partitioned love.

In *De vera religione*, written within a year of *Genesis contra Manichaeos*, Augustine expands or more properly hones his criticism of Manichaean dualism. While Augustine continues his critique of the Manichaean dualist metaphysic, he also isolates what he sees as the hermeneutical horizon and existential framing of Manichaeism. Augustine notes that the Manichaean narrative is not simply grounded in the perpetual, substantial struggle of the Light and the Darkness (*ver. rel.*, 9, 16) (CCSL 32, 198).⁸ He identifies the somewhat capricious and presentist nature of the Manichaean hermeneutic whereby those things that offend them are linked with the Darkness, and those things they prefer are from God (*ver. rel.*, 9, 16) (CCSL 32, 198).⁹ This aesthetic leads the Manichaeans to view even

⁷ “Id est per temporales tribulationes sua peccata cognoscendo et gemendo, et non iam extraneam naturam quae nulla est sed seipsum accusando ut ipse veniam mereatur.”

⁸ “Contra eos tamen potissimum est instituta, qui duas naturas vel substantias singulis principii adversus invicem rebelles esse arbitrantur.”

⁹ “Offensi enim quibusdam rebus et rursus quibusdam delectati non earum quibus offenduntur, sed earum quibus delectantur volunt esse auctorem Deum.”

themselves as divided or to propose the presence of another soul within them (*duas animas esse in uno corpore existimant*) (*uera rel.*, 9, 16) (CCSL 32, 198).¹⁰

This is Augustine's first overt reference to the two souls.¹¹ However, too much should not be made of this point, for with this observation we see Augustine's critique of the full range of the implications of the Manichaean narrative. He recounts how for the Manichaeans the Darkness is understood not to be made by God, but rather has its own autonomous being, source, and *regnum*, such that it has its own life, land, offspring, and *animalia* (*uera rel.*, 9, 16) (CCSL 32, 198).¹² This entity or reality with all its attendant living things is believed to have attacked the Kingdom of God. In response, the Light, under the pressure of necessity (*oppressum necessitate*), sent particles of Light, the good souls of God's own substance, to subdue the Darkness through admixture (*uera rel.*, 9, 16) (CCSL 32, 198).

From his more complete elaboration of the Manichaean myth, Augustine advances his critique beyond the metaphysical, cosmogonic narrative. Augustine also identifies the implications of its hermeneutic in its aesthetic impulses, which form the foundation of its moral framework.¹³ This is to say that the

¹⁰ Augustine holds the Manichaean vantage to be a consequence of their bondage to their disposition (*consuetudo*), which is entangled in carnal nets: "Et cum consuetudinem suam vincere nequeunt iam carnalibus laqueis irretiti..."

¹¹ See Giuffrè Scibona; see also Lössl. For its part, Ferwerda posits that Augustine is mistaken that the Manichaeans hold the notion of the two souls. Augustine confuses this "Gnostic" concept to be Manichaean. In contrast to these readings, Decret notes Fortunatus's reference to the *bona anima* (c. *Fort.*, 14, BA 17, 148) as an indication that Manichaeans used this terminology. Perhaps, the scholarly consensus is best represented by Jason BeDuhn who claims Augustine "consciously" misrepresents the Manichaean position. BeDuhn appeals to the technical Manichaean use of the *animus/anima* distinction (which we perhaps may assume shows the philosophical, even Platonic, terminology that guides Manichaean anthropology). BeDuhn claims the Manichaean would hold *duas* (sic?) *animos* but not *duas animas* (205). However, BeDuhn is mistaken in his assumption that this distinction holds true even in Augustine. Augustine's early language is not as strongly governed by such philosophical precision as, it would seem, holds true for the Manichaeans. Nevertheless, from this negative assessment, BeDuhn continues to show how Augustine's use of the term is functionally accurate.

¹² "Alteram de gente tenebrarum, quam Deus nec genuerit nec fecerit nec protulerit nec abiecerit; sed quae suam vitam, suam terram, suos fetus et animalia, suum postremo regnum habuerit ingenitumque principium..."

¹³ For an insightful account of Augustine's reading of the Manichaean system see Fuhrer 539-547. See also *uera rel.*, 9, 16 (CCSL 32, 198): "Sed quodam tempore adversus Deum rebellasse, Deum autem qui aliud quod faceret non haberet et, quomodo aliter posset hosti resistere, non inveniret, necessitate oppressum misisse huc animam bonam et quandam particulam

Manichaeism's conception of the two natures or souls need not be read simply as applying to an aboriginal state, which at some other concrete time becomes mixed. The function of this mixing is as much focused, perhaps even intensively focused, on the present. It is a hermeneutic that is focused on the interpretation of liberty and salvation from agony, in which the historically prior is equal in kind and quality to the present. One interprets the world in the agony of perpetual struggle, while holding the surety of one's "true" existence as perpetually being freed from this agonism. The human then walks divided in a world divided, though this struggle need not assault the citadel of one's confident luminosity. Indeed, such luminousness is a shield and weapon against what one dislikes. The problems with the world, society, and with one's self are all external, even foreign to the pure Light that is the true self.

Augustine summarizes what he sees to be the effects of this agonism and confident sense of the pure and autonomous self in the statement: liberty from justice and slavery under sin (*libertas a iustitia et servitus sub peccato*) (*vera rel.*, 40, 76) (CCSL 32, 237). The freedom of the self, freedom from external conditions such as society, nature, even one's own history, is a freedom from justice. Yet, this very freedom or liberty is in truth a bondage to one's own contrived notion of the self. This *libertas* of self-exaltation does not manifest itself in arrogant pride, but in the prideful delusion that rejects the claim of all other things on the self.¹⁴ The freedom gained from a stipulated duality permits, as Augustine understands it, the individual human to be free from responsibility, free from the claims of social and corporate justice.

The Two Natures as Two Souls: *De duabus animabus*

In *De duabus animabus* (written around 391, shortly after taking his vows for the priesthood), Augustine expands on his identification of the two souls in

substantiae suae, cuius commixtione (atque miseria) hostem temperatum esse somniant et mundum fabricatum." Part of the ambiguity of the Manichaeism narrative is found in its understanding of the "time" of the sending of the Light into the Darkness. The Light "sent" (*misisse*) some of its own substance into the Darkness. Augustine notes how this "sending" resulted in the making of the world. This "sending" is linked by the Manichaeism Fortunatus with the sending of the souls before the making of the world: "Hinc ergo apparet antiquitas temporum nostrorum quam repetimus et annorum nostrorum ante mundi constitutionem hoc more missas esse animas contra contrariam naturam ut eadem sua passione subiicientes victoria Deo redderetur" (*c. Fort.*, 22) (CSEL 25, 107). Sending is bound with the act of liberation, but also with the struggle in the tension of this world between the Light and the Darkness.

¹⁴ This claim is repeated in the *Confessions*. See, for example, 7, 14, 20 and 9, 4, 9.

Manichaeism, which he had only briefly mentioned in *De vera religione* (*duab. an.*, 1, 1) (CSEL 25, 51),¹⁵ as he begins the treatise by pressing the Manichaean claim that there are two sources of life (*vita*). He draws this inference from the fact that the Manichaeans claim that there are things “living” which do not find “life” from God but from another source (*duab. an.*, 1, 1) (CSEL 25, 51). Augustine’s argument for the two souls, contrary to the opposition to such a claim made by the Manichaean Secundinus some ten years later, is drawn from the Manichaean narrative of the two active, life-giving, yet opposing natures (Secundinus *Epistula ad sanctum Augustinum*, 2-3) (BA 17, 512).¹⁶ Indeed, Augustine acknowledges that if things from the *principium* of the Darkness lack life, they are not souls properly speaking. They cannot be understood, therefore, to want or not want, or to seek or flee anything. If one does not understand the Darkness as a willing, choosing force or thing, then it is nothing but a substantial evil, like fire that simply burns because it is fire. Such an “evil” or kingdom of Darkness cannot be called soul. Yet, if this nature is understood as wanting, seeking, or fleeing (as the Manichaeans often seem to state), it must be living; it must be soul (*duab. an.*, 1, 1) (CSEL 25, 51).¹⁷

Advancing this point, Augustine clarifies his understanding of what soul and life mean.¹⁸ Soul is not only attributed to that which is simply “life,” such as the body, but also to that life which one attributes to the mind or intelligence

¹⁵ “Nam primo animarum illa duo genera quibus ita singulas naturas propriasque tribuerunt ut alterum de ipsa dei esse substantia alterius vero deum ne conditorem quidem velint accipi. Scibona (388) dates the work to 391, after Augustine had taken his vows for the priesthood and before his debate with Fortunatus.

¹⁶ Lössl holds that Secundinus is “up to a certain point correct” (143). In contrast, Stroumsa presents a strong argument in favor of Augustine’s understanding of the Manichaean conception of the two souls (198-208).

¹⁷ “Quapropter illas animas quae a Manichaeis vocantur malae aut carere vita et animas non esse neque quicquam velle seu nolle adpetere vel fugere aut si viverent ut et animae esse possent et aliquid tale agere. Quale illi opinarentur nullo modo eas nisi vita vivere.”

¹⁸ Augustine’s refinement of what is meant by “life” is in part informed by his exegesis of John 14, 6. If Christ is life, such that there is no cause of being except through Christ, then certainly any soul, anything that “lives” must be understood to find this life in the one God who is life (*duab. an.*, 1, 1) (CSEL 25, 51-52). Augustine’s insight, against a Manichaean reading of this verse, which univocally predicates life to Christ, is the notion of participation. See *duab. an.*, 2, 2 (CSEL 25, 52): “Quod si tempore illo quaestionem de ipsa vita et de participatione vitae mea cogitatio ferre ac sustinere non posset...” Thereby, Augustine asserts that every soul insofar as it is a soul and participates in life, without which it could not be a soul, is from God. *duab. an.* 6, 6 (CSEL 25, 58). “Et ideo animam in quantum anima esset et vitae participaret sine qua nullo pacto esse anima potest (...) quamobrem maximi erroris esse ullam animam dicere non esse ex deo...”

(*duab. an.*, 2, 2) (CSEL 25, 52). One sees “life” or a “soul” even in a fly (*musca*), whose body is invigorated by the goodness of its soul (*duab. an.*, 4, 4) (CSEL 25, 55). If a fly can possess soul or life of a certain kind, surely such a conception of life applies to that soul or nature that the Manichaeans call evil or foreign (*alienigenas*), which does not simply live but lives immortally (*duab. an.*, 3, 3) (CSEL 25, 54).¹⁹ As Augustine observes, the attributes of the kingdom of Darkness, its immortality, its vigor, even its strength, reveal the goodness of the nature or soul of the Darkness. The Darkness, thereby, is a kind of life or soul.

Augustine, then, moves to a Scriptural commonplace used by the Manichaeans: that all life is from Christ. Surely, then anything from Christ is good, and thus, all life is good insofar as it is life. Augustine finds a useful image of this in Matthew 8: 22: “Let the dead bury their dead.” These dead are not actually dead (perhaps a Manichaean exegesis is that these dead are without life), but rather they live their lives viciously. To stress this point Augustine cites 1 Tim. 5: 6: “A widow who is living in pleasure is dead” (*duab. an.*, 2, 2) (CSEL 25, 53). Surely, Augustine comments, this widow is not dead, but alive; she is only said to be “dead” because of vice. Insofar as she is living or is a soul, she is good. The Manichaeans, Augustine observes, have collapsed the ontological and the moral so that a substance is charged with a moral valence; indeed, it is even reduced to its moral valence (*duab. an.*, 5, 5) (CSEL 25, 56).²⁰

In asserting that everything that lives, indeed, everything that is, comes from God and finds its very life from Christ who is life, Augustine rejects any dualistic conception of being, and thus by extension asserts the goodness of even those who act viciously. He makes this clear through his re-reading of the Manichaean proof text for the two natures from John 8, 44-47: “You do not hear, because you are not from God; but you are from your father the Devil” (*duab. an.*, 7, 9) (CSEL 25, 61).²¹ Augustine asserts that the children of the Devil are not ontologically distinct from the children of God. One ought to read John 8, 47, “You do not come from God,” in the same manner that one views all of creation, with the stipulation of the peace and harmony of all things in God (*duab. an.*, 7, 9) (CSEL 25, 61).²² John 8: 47 refers, then, only to the human

¹⁹ “Ergo pergerem quaerere animam illam quam malam dicerent.” Later, in the same section, “an illas animas quas alienigenas crederent.” See also *duab. an.*, 2, 2 (CSEL 25, 52-53).

²⁰ “Sed magis animas dicerem vitiosas etiam non in quantum vitiosae sed in quantum animae sunt deum sibi esse creatorem fateri oportere.” See also *duab. an.*, 6, 8 (CSEL 25, 60-61).

²¹ “Recitarent adversum me voces illas evangelicas: vos propterea non auditis quia non estis ex deo, vos ex patre diabolo estis” (John 8: 47-44).

²² “Pacem concordiamque monstrarent.”

in sin. It is not a statement about one's very being, since all "belong" (*pertineo*) to God.²³ Instead, this verse indicates what the human loves and rejects. To be not of God, for Augustine, is not to believe in Christ, reject his coming, and not receive him (*duab. an.*, 7, 9) (CSEL 25, 63).²⁴ This is why John 1, 11 states: "His own did not receive him." That humans are God's own pertains to human nature, the human's very being, whereas "You are not from God" (John 8: 47) only represents the condition of the human will: to choose love of self, that is, pride, over God (*duab. an.*, 7, 9) (CSEL 25, 63).²⁵

Through these steps, Augustine has found footing on what he takes to be the central issues: fault is found with the will, not the substance, and this will must be one's own. For example, if the Darkness is deemed the source of evil and it uses the soul, made from the Kingdom of Light, as an instrument for evil, the soul of Light cannot be held liable for willing to sin (*duab. an.*, 10, 12) (CSEL 25, 67-68). This soul of Light is an instrument by no fault of its own. Sin, on the other hand, can only be attributed to the will.²⁶ This fault occurs even when one is not able to accomplish what one wishes—there is sin in the will to evil (*duab. an.*, 10, 912) (CSEL 25, 68).²⁷ To will evil is free from compulsion (*cogere*) from an external source or substantial necessity, though at times it may seem that one is compelled (*duab. an.*, 10, 14) (CSEL 25, 69).²⁸ Sin, with Augustine expanding on his maxim in *De vera religione*, is the will for retaining or acquiring that which justice forbids and from which one is free to abstain (though Augustine will turn shortly in *De duabus animabus* to the weight *consuetudo*) (*duab. an.*, 11, 15) (CSEL 25, 70).²⁹

Augustine contends that the place of will should transform the Manichaean position of the two souls from an ontological claim to strictly a moral one. If

²³ As noted above, this statement is in contrast to the Manichaean conception of two kinds of souls: one from God that proceeds as part of God's very substance and another that is evil that does not pertain to God in any way. See *duab. an.*, 12, 16 (CSEL 25, 71).

²⁴ "Nam si Christo non credere Christi adventum repudiare Christum non recipere certum indicium esset animarum quae non sunt dei."

²⁵ "Hic ergo partem naturae tenuit qui ait: sui eum non receperunt" (John 1:11); "ille voluntatis qui ait: non estis ex deo" (John 8: 47). "Evangelista enim dei opera commendabat Christus hominum peccata cohercebat."

²⁶ Augustine gives a definition of the will in *duab. an.*, 10, 14 (CSEL 25, 68): "Voluntas est animi motus cogente nullo ad aliquid vel non amittendum vel adipiscendum."

²⁷ "Scilicet nisi in voluntate esse peccatum cum mihi auxiliaretur etiam illud quod iustitia peccantes tenet sola mala voluntate quamvis quod voverint implere nequiverint."

²⁸ "Restat ut volens a cogente sit liber etiamsi se quisquam cogi putet."

²⁹ "Ergo peccatum est voluntas retinendi vel consequendi quod iustitia vetat et unde liberum est abstinere."

the evil race of darkness in its original condition did not have will before its mixture with the Light, then it is blameless (*duab. an.*, 12, 16) (CSEL 25, 71).³⁰ If it is simply evil (like a substantial evil), then it seems necessary to reconsider what is meant by the term “evil” when applied to a thing, to substances that are divested of the will to evil. Perhaps, Augustine suggests, those things, even those people, that from a Manichaean vantage one might consider to be substantially evil, are in fact, simply good. The category of substantial evil is, thereby, a strictly aesthetic claim that means nothing more than difference.

Without the will to evil, there is no moral quandary. If the race of Darkness is evil only by reference to its nature or substance and the souls of Light are good only in relation to their substance, then this conflict is simply the exchange or interaction of different natures. If wood is burnt by fire, there is no moral dilemma.³¹ At least, there is no malevolence in the fire toward the wood. Likewise, the Kingdom of Darkness only sins (or is said to act in evil) by nature, and hence it is not malevolent (that is, it does not possess the will to evil) (*duab. an.*, 12, 17) (CSEL 25, 73-74).

Augustine reaches the conclusion that even in the Manichaean system sin must only apply to the good souls, who have will (*duab. an.*, 12, 18) (CSEL 25, 74).³² The Manichaean practice of repentance and forgiveness evidences this fact (*duab. an.*, 12, 18) (CSEL 25, 74). Repentance cannot apply to the natural, even substantial, evil of the Kingdom of Darkness. Rather, repentance and forgiveness only concern the souls that are a part of the Light, for they alone can actually sin or will otherwise (*duab. an.*, 12, 18) (CSEL 25, 74). If these souls sent into the Darkness do not have the power to resist the influence, manipulation, or will of the Darkness, then they do not sin. To use the same image, it is as if wood is thrown into the fire. No quandary exists for the soul of Light thrown into the irresistible force of what is deemed to be a substantial evil. Yet, if these souls of Light have the power to resist and still consent to evil, then they do in fact sin,

³⁰ “Utrum illud malum genus animarum antequam bono misceretur habuisset aliquam voluntatem.”

³¹ This applies likewise to the commixture of the Darkness and the Light. The two souls, the highest good and the greatest evil, were once two separate kinds (*duo genera*) and now are mixed (*duab. an.*, 12, 16) (CSEL 25, 71).

³² Augustine’s insight here into the Manichaean system agrees with the Manichaean Secundinus’s letter to Augustine, written some years after the *Confessions*. See Secundinus *Epistula ad sanctum Augustinum*, 2 (BA 17,512): “At si cum se ipsam cognoverit consentiat malo et non se armet contra inimicum voluntate sua peccauit (...) non enim punitur quia peccauit sed quia de peccato non doluit.”

and not due exclusively to the irresistible nature of the Darkness (*duab. an.*, 12, 18) (CSEL 25, 75). It is rather like wood *wanting* to burn and loving the fire.

Augustine has cut through the Manichaean system to focus on the will of those souls, who although good by nature, will what they could resist. He takes up the question of human deliberation, which seems to have been central to the Manichaean assertion of the two souls. For the Manichaeans, human deliberation demonstrates the tension between two forces or the “mind” of two natures or souls (*duab. an.*, 12, 19) (CSEL 25, 75).³³ Augustine, who may have felt compelled by this example in his youth, asks why he is forced to admit two souls because of the common experience of deliberation.³⁴ Surely, he notes, there may be two kinds of goods over which the soul deliberates?³⁵ The difficulty of choosing the higher good over the lower good is heightened, not because of another substance, but because of the human’s familiarity (*consuetudo*) with the flesh and the historical weight of one’s sins. This negatively inclined kind of *consuetudo* is a habit, familiarity, or even disposition that obstructs or hampers the ease with which one perceives (*duab. an.*, 13, 19) (CSEL 25, 76). Nevertheless, deliberation that results in choosing poorly or choosing the lesser good is a choice that proceeds from one who may have otherwise rightly willed the higher good. Augustine’s caveat, it is important to observe, is that such a difficulty in deliberation may be intensified by *consuetudo*.

The example of deliberation, that is, the process of weighing goods, is at the heart of Augustine’s reflection on the two wills in the *Confessions*., to which we will turn in the next section. In a similar way, Augustine’s consideration of repentance is prompted by his reflection on deliberation. In *De duabus animabus* Augustine states that a condition for the possibility of repentance is the fact that one wills an evil or a lesser good that one ought not to have willed (*duab. an.*, 14, 22) (CSEL 25, 78). The consequence of Augustine’s discussion of the will, deliberation, and repentance in *De duabus animabus* is that while Augustine is clearly rejecting the ontological agonism of Manichaeism, he is also probing more deeply into the difficulty of willing in light of the weight of *consuetudo*.

³³ “An ut discerem hinc ostendi animarum duo esse genera, quod in deliberando nunc in malam partem, nunc in bonam nutat adsensio.”

³⁴ Stroumsa identifies the lengthy tradition of deliberation of two spirits in Jewish and Early Christian texts from the Roman period. He notes that all of these considerations of the two spirits, powers, or souls, though certainly possessing different implications, may have Zoroastrian origins (198-205).

³⁵ Augustine also calls these two kinds of goods as the outer and the inner. See *duab. an.*, 13, 19 (CSEL 25, 75).

This is not a wholly new development, for even as early as *De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae* Augustine had emphasized the weight of *consuetudo*.³⁶ Rather, Augustine's discussion of deliberation has provided him with an excellent tool for discussing both the struggle or weight of *consuetudo* and the freedom of the will, while pressing the Manichaean system from its ontologically figured though functionally aesthetic, moral hermeneutic.

Augustine demonstrates in the conclusion of *De duabus animabus* his more acute assessment of the will and the human when he states: "O consuetudo peccati! O comes poena peccati!" (*duab. an.*, 14, 23 (CSEL 25, 79)). The Manichaeans do not merely substitute a battle between substantial evils in place of the struggle of the will. They, moreover, do not seem attentive to the weight of *consuetudo*. Their rejection of the weight of this disposition reveals a conception of the self as a luminous soul, exculpated from fault.³⁷ Yet, as Augustine has noted at two points in the treatise, the Manichaean does repent, while still confusingly holding to the substantial and thereby moral impeccability of the soul. Augustine will take up these concerns and provide a more subtle critique in the *Confessions*.

The conflict of admixture, the agony of the soul in the world, seems to be the proper framework for the Manichaean dilemma. If this is the case, however, one still seems to be trapped in an agonistic universe, even trapped in one's own body, in one's own society. The soul of Light may repent, but that from which it wants release or reprieve still remains substantially evil. One's focus is not on one's own willing of evil or identifying the weight of *consuetudo*, but rather on seeking liberation from this evil substance and all that this entails. It is this vision, this disposition, not only to attempt to exculpate oneself from doing evil, but to free oneself from the implications of being created in and an ordered part of this world that is at the heart of Augustine's understanding of a *mala consuetudo*. We see this already in Augustine's writings before *De duabus animabus*, but the weight of *consuetudo*, a disposition that informs (as much

³⁶ Augustine uses *consuetudo* in several of his works before *De duabus animabus*, including the difficulty of *consuetudo* at the beginning of *mor.*, 1, 2, 3 (CSEL 90, 5). Fredriksen (212-213) notes this reference, along with his use of *consuetudo* on the second day of his debate with Fortunatus, as indicating a shift in Augustine's thought. See also c. *Fort.*, 22 (BA 17, 176). Jason BeDuhn holds Augustine's use of *consuetudo* in *De duabus animabus* to be a later addition, which follows his debate with Fortunatus. This decision is driven by BeDuhn's claim of the great "disturbance" for Augustine after his debate with Fortunatus. See BeDuh, 115-121; 141-149; 166; 451, and n. 53.

³⁷ Augustine, at the very least, thought this to be the case when he was a young Manichaean. See *conf.*, 4, 15, 25-26 (CCSL 27, 53).

as it is informed by) what one wills, comes to the fore in this short work. However, Augustine's treatment of *consuetudo* in the *Confessions* provides greater precision to his rejection of agonism in all its individual and social implications.

The *Confessions*: The Will in Augustine: *Consuetudo*

In book 8 of the *Confessions*, building up to the famous scene of his conversion in the Milanese garden, Augustine pauses to reflect on his struggle at this earlier point of his life. He discerns how “his body more easily obeyed the slightest willing of the soul, so that the members of the body would be moved at command, than the soul obeyed itself in the will alone for accomplishing its own great will” (*conf.*, 8, 8, 20 (CCSL 27, 126)).³⁸ Indeed, there are many activities in which willing is not the same as being able to do (*conf.*, 8, 8, 20) (CCSL 27, 126).³⁹ Augustine is not talking about willing to do something like pick up a large rock and not being able to do it. He is strictly considering willing as such, specifically, to will wholly or completely to love God. To will ought to be simple in that the willing and the doing are one and the same. It is this simple, undivided willing that escaped Augustine (*conf.*, 8, 8, 20) (CCSL 27, 126).⁴⁰

As he reflects on this, Augustine discusses the difficulty of the human in sin: “The mind commands the body and is immediately obeyed. The mind commands itself and it is resisted” (*conf.*, 8, 9, 21) (CCSL 27, 126).⁴¹ This resistance is not indicative of the presence or power of something other than himself. Rather, he judges that this difficulty occurs because the mind does not will from its whole self (*conf.*, 8, 9, 21) (CCSL 27, 126).⁴² Augustine avers that this will, even as divided, is truly his own, not something foreign (as the Manichaeans might hold) (*conf.*, 8, 9, 21) (CCSL 27, 126).⁴³ He images this partial willing and partial not willing as a kind of sickness of the mind which is weighed down by habit (*consuetudo*) from wholly rising to Truth (*conf.*, 8, 9, 21) (CCSL 27, 126–

³⁸ “Faciliusque obtemperabat corpus tenuissimae voluntati animae ut ad nutum membra moverentur quam ipsa sibi anima ad voluntatem suam magnam in sola voluntate perficiendam.”

³⁹ “Potui autem velle et non facere si mobilitas membrorum non obsequeretur. Tam multa ergo feci ubi non hoc erat velle quod posse.”

⁴⁰ “Et non faciebam quod et incomparabili affectu amplius mihi placebat et mox ut vellem possem quia mox ut vellem possem quia mox ut vellem utique vellem ibi enim facultas ea quae voluntas et ipsum velle iam facere erat et tamen non fiebat.”

⁴¹ “Imperat animus corpori et paretur statim; imperat animus sibi et resistitur.”

⁴² “Sed non ex toto vult, non ergo ex toto imperat.”

⁴³ “Quoniam voluntas imperat ut sit voluntas nec alia sed ipsa.”

127).⁴⁴ He concludes: “There are two wills, one of these is not whole; what is present in one, is wanting in the other” (*conf.*, 8, 9, 21) (CCSL 27, 127).⁴⁵

Augustine returns to the example of deliberation central to his discussion in *De duabus animabus*. As in the earlier work, he states that the Manichaeans recognize two wills in deliberation and assert that there are two natures of two minds, one good and the other evil (*conf.*, 8, 10, 22) (CCSL 27, 127).⁴⁶ He does not, however, immediately turn to the conflict of deliberation, but rather he outlines what he sees as the framework through which the Manichaeans approach deliberation. As he had begun to do in *De duabus animabus*, Augustine perceives that antecedent to their consideration of deliberation is the Manichaean commitment to what he calls Manichaeism’s pride: to assert that one is of the same nature as God (*conf.*, 8, 9, 21) (CCSL 27, 126).⁴⁷ If one views oneself as God or of the same nature as God, and if God is without qualification good, one cannot ascribe an evil to one’s own nature. Thus, as in *De duabus animabus* Augustine once again faults the Manichaean conception of the self. Augustine maintains that the Manichaeans blend the moral and metaphysical to preserve the impeccably luminous and unreservedly pure self.

To Augustine, this position introduces an escape hatch from any consideration of evil.⁴⁸ One can freely fall back on the divinity of one’s nature, when asserting one’s distinction from the material “evil” of the world. What evils can one ascribe to one’s self? How does one know when it might be the good divine nature of Light that one truly is or when it might be the evil of Darkness that is truly foreign to the soul? In truth, the question seems more, what evils does the soul of Light want or desire to ascribe to itself or take responsibility for? To this problem, the Manichaean is always free to open

⁴⁴ “Non igitur monstrum partim velle partim nolle sed aegritudo animi est quia non totus assurgit veritate sublevatus, consuetudine prae-grauatus.” Concerning *consuetudo*, Shanzer (61-62) notes that in books VI and VII of the *Confessions* the term may signal a more overt sexual meaning.

⁴⁵ “Et ideo sunt duae voluntates quia una earum tota non est et hoc adest alteri quod deest alteri.”

⁴⁶ “Qui cum duas voluntates in deliberando animaduenterint duas naturas duarum mentium esse adseuerant unam bonam alteram malam.”

⁴⁷ “Illi enim dum volunt esse lux non in Domino sed in se ipsis putando animae naturam hoc esse quod Deus est...”

⁴⁸ James Wetzel (“Augustine” 90) summarizes Augustine’s criticism of Manichaeism: “What, after all, would be the sense of evil’s invasion and influence, if evil remains essentially alien and external to the good? The ontological partitioning of good and evil makes it difficult, if not impossible, to comprehend what manner of struggle the two natures could be involved in, either at the macroscopic level of the kingdoms or the microscopic level of the two souls.”

the escape of the willing potency of the substantial evil of the Darkness. Thus, as Augustine now considers his former Manichaeism, he recognizes that from this framework for the human (or soul) amidst the agonism of the soul in the world, there is always something or someone else to blame.

Augustine's response to this is an emphatic grounding of action and of willing as predicated of himself alone. Augustine expresses this emphasis on himself as the sole agent when he writes: "I was the one deliberating so that I might serve my Lord God, just as before I was disposed, I was the one who wished and I was the one who did not. I, I was the one" (*conf.*, 8, 10, 22) (CCSL 27, 127).⁴⁹ He was fighting with himself, and fragmented within himself. Yet, though this fragmentation occurred somewhat unwillingly, it did not reveal the nature of a foreign mind, but his own punishment (*poena*) in sin (*conf.*, 8, 10, 22),⁵⁰ a penalty that all share from Adam (*conf.*, 8, 10, 22) (CCSL 27, 127).⁵¹

This *poena* is the "penalty" of Augustine's interjection in *De duabus animabus*, "O comes poena peccati." It also reveals Augustine's continued consideration of the weight of *consuetudo* (his "O consuetudo peccati" in *De duabus animabus*). For Augustine, one cannot truly divide the *poena peccati* from the *consuetudo peccati*. The will to sin is not a perpetually reoccurring, utterly free choice. The will is bound in its own disposition or habit (*consuetudo*) to sin and the effects of this disposition are witnessed in the fractured will.

To demonstrate the difficulty of the will, Augustine returns yet again two sections later in book eight to the Manichaean example of the deliberation (*conf.*, 8, 10, 23) (CCSL 27, 127-128). Through observing the struggle of two wills in one person, the Manichaeans perceive two contrary minds from two contrary substances and two contrary principles, one good and the other evil (*conf.*, 8, 10, 24) (CCSL 27, 128). Augustine extends the line of argument previously advanced in *De duabus animabus* asking if there cannot also be deliberation between two bad choices, such as what weapon to kill someone with or even whether one should steal and then kill or steal and then commit adultery (*conf.*, 8, 10, 24) (CCSL 27, 128-129).⁵² Deliberation of this kind would reveal a division within

⁴⁹ "Ego cum deliberabam ut iam servirem Domino Deo meo (Jer 30: 9) sicut diu disposueram ego eram qui volebam ego qui nolebam. Ego, ego eram."

⁵⁰ Ideo mecum contendebar et dissipabar a me ipso et ipsa dissipatio me invito quidem fiebat nec tamen ostendebat naturam mentis alienae sed poenam meae."

⁵¹ "Et ideo non iam ego operabar illam sed quod habitabat in me peccatum (Rom 7:17) de supplicio liberioris peccati quia eram filius Adam."

⁵² Augustine notes that deliberation is also observed in choosing between good things such as what book to read.

the evil substance and the absence of the soul of Light, who stands as a silent observer to this struggle.

Augustine responds to the attempt to vacate the will in these examples, with his own conversion, his struggle to will wholly God. He describes how he was sick, turning and rolling himself in his own chain, his own division of will, until it was fully broken (*conf.*, 8, 11, 25) (CCSL 27, 129).⁵³ Augustine, in this famous passage, sees God's mercy in pressing him to break that which so thinly and narrowly held his will (*conf.*, 8, 11, 25) (CCSL 27, 129). All the while his temptations, which he calls his old friends (*antiquae amicae meae*), sought to remain, whispering to him to not let them go (*conf.*, 8, 11, 26) (CCSL 27, 129). It is important to note that these are not memories, this is not an exercise in forgetfulness, but rather what informs and presses him are urges or desires, more properly a violent disposition (*violenta consuetudo*) (*conf.*, 8, 11, 26) (CCSL 27, 130). In seeking to give up such desires, his disposition toward such things, Augustine realizes that he cannot stand on his own but rather must throw himself on God (*conf.*, 8, 11, 27) (CCSL 27, 130).⁵⁴ His understanding of himself, his own strength and autonomy, is precisely the problem.

Augustine provides an image of this struggle earlier in book eight. He notes how he wished that a law such as the one the Emperor Julian passed prohibiting Christians from teaching literature and rhetoric, could have stood in his way as it had for Marius Victorinus. He wishes that something external had opposed him. At least he would be forced to act and maybe his will would have been changed by this external necessity. This is a remarkable observation: an external necessity might aid in the transformation of his will. His own will bound in necessity from a certain *consuetudo* might be altered by an external necessity (*conf.*, 8, 5, 10) (CCSL 27, 119).⁵⁵ His very openness to the world, more properly to God's activity, might assist or even shockingly induce a new *consuetudo*.

In order to describe this transformation, he first outlines how his own necessity, the bondage of his will, was formed. He notes that from a bent will (*perversa voluntas*) lust develops. As one becomes a slave to lust, a habit or disposition (*consuetudo*) is formed. When such a habit or disposition is not

⁵³ "Sic aegrotabam et excruciar accūsans memet ipsum solito acerbius nimis ac voluens et versans me in vinculo meo donec abrumperetur totum quo iam exiguo tenebar."

⁵⁴ "Dominus Deus eorum me dedit eis quid in te stas et non stas proice te in eum, noli metuere; non se subtrahet ut cadas; proice te securus excipiet et sanabit te."

⁵⁵ "Cui rei ego suspirabam ligatus non ferro alieno sed mea ferrea voluntate."

resisted, necessity (*necessitas*) imposes itself (*conf.*, 8, 5, 10) (CCSL 27, 119).⁵⁶ Yet, somehow even when he was bound in this necessity, formed by a disposition to lust, Augustine detects that a new will (*nova voluntas*) had begun to be in him; a will to worship God freely and enjoy God completely (*conf.*, 8, 5, 10) (CCSL 27, 119).⁵⁷ Within himself a fight began to take place between his old *consuetudo* and its desires and this new will (and newly forming disposition). Instead of two souls from two natures, Augustine here in the *Confessions* describes this tension as a struggle between his own two wills (*duae voluntates meae*) (*conf.*, 8, 5, 10) (CCSL 27, 120).⁵⁸

In this struggle, Augustine recounts how his soul was torn apart. The desires of the flesh, established by his own willing of them, struggled against the spirit. Through such a force of habit, he seemed almost to obey unwillingly, more suffering than acting; though in truth, his own actions had fostered and strengthened his own habit (*conf.*, 8, 5, 11) (CCSL 27, 120).⁵⁹ The force of this disposition, of this habit, is such that the mind is dragged and held unwillingly even as the mind so willfully sunk into this very disposition (*conf.*, 8, 5, 12) (CCSL 27, 120-121).⁶⁰ To love God wholly, to will to love God wholly, is a struggle, even a battle, against his own violent habit or disposition; against Augustine's own conception of himself.

Augustine's understanding of the force of *consuetudo* is set in even greater relief when we look back to the *consuetudo carnalis* of book seven. Here his spiritual ascent is abruptly halted by what he calls a *consuetudo carnalis*. In this vision, Augustine hears God's voice saying: "You will eat me, but you will not change me into you, but you will be changed into me" (*conf.*, 7, 10, 16) (CCSL 27, 103-114).⁶¹ Through this confrontation, he realizes with a greater certainty even than he has of his own existence that God is truth and the Truth exists

⁵⁶ "Quippe ex voluntate perversa facta est libido et dum servitur libidini facta est consuetudo et dum consuetudini non resistitur facta est necessitas."

⁵⁷ "Voluntas autem noua quae mihi esse coeperat ut te gratis colerem fruique te vellem..."

⁵⁸ "Ita duae voluntates meae una vetus alia nova illa carnalis illa spiritalis confligebant inter se atque discordando dissipabant animam meam."

⁵⁹ "Ibi enim magis iam non ego, quia ex magna parte id patiebar invitus quam faciebam volens; sed tamen consuetudo adversus me pugnacior ex me facta erat, quoniam volens quo nollem perveneram." Augustine describes the two laws: the law in one's members and the law of the mind (Rom. 7: 24-25).

⁶⁰ "Lex enim peccati est violentia consuetudinis qua trahitur et tenetur etiam invitus animus eo merito quo in eam volens illabatur."

⁶¹ "Cibus sum grandium: cresce et manducabis me nec tu me in te mutabis sicut cibum carnis tuae sed tu mutaberis in me."

(*conf.*, 7, 10, 16) (CCSL 27, 104). God presses on Augustine to conform to God's Truth. In so doing, he begins to perceive that all things are good insofar as they are, and even things that seem to be evil, such as dragons, fire, and hail, all, in truth, praise God's name (*conf.*, 7, 11, 17) (CCSL 27, 104-105). Augustine cannot find peace or embrace God without a willingness to abandon his *consuetudo carnalis* and be open to God's transformation.

In the subsequent sections of book seven, Augustine discusses the very problem he has now for a decade identified with the Manichaean hermeneutic. He was unable and unwilling to admit that things which displeased him were from God. From the confidence of this aesthetic judgment, he refused to appreciate how all things, indeed, everything, points to and praises God. Therefore, he held to the Manichaean notion of the two substances so that he might exalt his own preferences and assure himself of his impeccability. Through this hermeneutic, Augustine was able to discard uncomfortable difference as being ontologically evil, if only because aesthetically displeasing. From the surety of his self-defined individuality, he could authoritatively aver that such things could have nothing to do with God or more properly himself (and by extension God) (*conf.*, 7, 13, 19) (CCSL 27, 105-1106).

Augustine comes to reject this view, which so easily discards the unwanted or that which he is not able to consume or make his own, as he questions his own integrity and judgment. Bread, he notes, is displeasing to the sick, and light to weak eyes, and so even to some justice is loathsome (*conf.*, 7, 16, 22) (CCSL 27, 106). The problem is the vantage of the viewer; that is, the distorted will that bends away from God. In essence, the human seeks a kind of agonism with things in order to preserve one's eminence. Through a *carnalis consuetudo*, one's formed disposition, the human seeks to consume and incorporate and discard at will. Yet the very difficulty faced in this endeavor presses or even forms one's desire for agonism. Because human beings seek to assert themselves as the sole arbiters of what is good, just, and beautiful, they must ground opposition, the displeasing, the ugly, even those things which cannot be commodified, in a kind of agonism, whether we think of this in the Manichaean framework of an ontology or, as Augustine identifies in other places, an agonistic aesthetic.

What stands out in these passages from the *Confessions* is that it is the beauty of God, a beauty that cannot be consumed but consumes, that draws in Augustine. On the other hand, it is the weight of his *carnalis consuetudo* that drags him down and back within his confident conception of himself (*conf.* 7,

17, 23) (CCSL 27, 107).⁶² This *carnalis consuetudo*, as James Wetzel has insightfully noted, is, on one level, the desire to consume (“The Question” 170–171). We can even extend this to the desire to consume what is different; to consume all things and make them one’s own. Augustine’s *consuetudo*, then, is a kind of disposition that seeks to possess and to consume, even that which is wholly other, even God. Through this consumption, Augustine also strives to assert his eminent autonomy over and against whatever he wills; a freedom, as he says in *De vera religione* from justice, from the claims and contributions of creation, humanity, and God.

As Augustine’s reflection on the *carnalis consuetudo* reveals, the resolution of the agonism put forward by a belief in two principles or two souls is not to turn around and consume all things into a kind of simple homogeneity. This is still to hold the exalted view of the self as divine (or functionally divine). Difference, authentic as well as good, must remain, and the will to consume must give way to the will to love even those things which do not appear to be worthy of love, as well as to love those things such as God which cannot be possessed, but in the end will possess Augustine. Perhaps this is why Augustine ends book seven with a discussion of the grace of God through the Incarnation (*conf.*, 7, 18, 24–21.27) (CCSL 27, 108–112).

Conclusion

Augustine’s critique of the Manichaean dualistic system and hermeneutic reveals his own thought. Even if we concede that Augustine unfairly depicts Manichaeism as holding two souls and not two minds or principles, Augustine’s reflection on the tension of the Manichaean hermeneutic of agonism is fairly his own. This does not mean that Augustine has nothing but criticism for Manichaeism. On the contrary, through his sustained engagement with Manichaean dualism, we can see how he attempts to move the Manichaean position toward a focus on the will to sin in the soul. If Manichaeans are disposed to be concerned with this issue, as Secundinus at least in part suggests, all the better.

Augustine’s focus on the human person, on the mind, indeed, on the will as the point of discord and tension takes place through, in part, his recurring treatment of the Manichaean notion of the two natures, minds, and two souls. The

⁶² “Sed rapiebar ad te decore tuo moxque diripiebar abs te pondere meo et ruebam in ista cum gemitu et pondus hoc consuetudo carnalis.”

fruit of the reflection is a substantial dimension of Augustine's understanding of concord and peace. Augustine places his suspicion on the self or mind who wills and one's own selfish *consuetudo*, not in the external world or in some unrelated substance within himself. The seeds of this insight, if not in full, are found as early as *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* and *De vera religione*, though it is in *De duabus animabus* that we begin to observe a more focused reflection on the weight of *consuetudo* and its function in relation to an agonistic hermeneutic.

Through his recurring reflection on *consuetudo*, we come to see that Augustine does not simply discuss the hindrance of *consuetudo*, but also, especially in the *Confessions*, takes up the corresponding conception of the self that engenders even as it is sustained by such a *carnalis consuetudo*. Hence, Augustine's articulation of his critique of Manichaeism does not simply fault pride as such, but the pride that closes off the human from humanity's created openness. Peace is found in openness to God, to others, to the beauty of the created world, even, perhaps shockingly, to difference. Peace is not the consequence of the consumption of beauty or the satiation of desire on even the most luminous of goods; peace is grounded in the disposition—*bona consuetudo*—to love God and others. While this is a disposition that may experience conflict, it does not find security and rest in agony or even the prideful resolution of such agony in the luminousness of the self—the secure citadel. Such a notion of the self is, for Augustine, the cause of so much carelessness and stolid dismissiveness. Peace truly can only be sought from a disposition that acknowledges the source of peace is beyond the confines of the self, and is open to the agency of that which is different.



Works Cited

- BeDuhn, Jason David. *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma, 2: Making a "Catholic" Self*, 388-401 C.E. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012, pp. 104-106.
- Cavadini, John. "The Darkest Enigma: Reconsidering the Self in Augustine's Thought." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2007, pp. 119-132.
- Decret, François. *L'Afrique Manichéenne (IV-Ve siècles): Étude Historique et Doctrinale*, I-II, Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1978, pp. II 262-271.
- Ferwerda, Rein. "Two Souls: Origen's and Augustine's Attitude toward the two Souls Doctrine; Its Place in Greek and Christian Philosophy." *Vigiliae Christianae*, vol. 47, no. 4, 1983, pp. 360-378.
- Franzmann, Majella. "Manichaean Views of Women: A Study of the Teaching and Perspectives on Women from the *Kephalaia* of the Teacher and the *Manichaean Psalm Book*." "I sowed Fruits into Hearts" (Odes Sol. 17:13): *Festschrift for Professor Michael Lattke*, edited by M. Lattke, Pauline Allen, M. Franzmann, and Rick Strelan, Strathfield, NSW, St Pauls Publications, 2007, pp. 67-85.
- Fuhrer, Therese. "Augustine's Moulding of the Manichaean Idea of God in the Confessions." *Vigiliae Christianae*, vol. 67, 2013, pp. 531-547.
- Giuffré Scibona, Concetta. "The Doctrine of the Soul in Manichaeism and Augustine." "In Search of Truth": *Augustine, Manichaeism and other Gnosticism, Studies for Johannes van Oort at Sixty*, edited by Jacob Albert van den Berg, Annemaré Kotzé, Tobias Nicklas and Madeleine Scopello, Leiden, Brill, 2011, pp. 377-418.
- Lössl, Josef. "Augustine on 'The True Religion': Reflections of Manichaeism in *De vera religione*." *Augustine and Manichaean Christianity: Selected Papers from the First South African Conference on Augustine of Hippo, University of Pretoria, 24-26 April 2012*, edited by Johannes Van Oort, Leiden, Brill, 2013, pp. 137-153.
- Mathewes, Charles. "Book One: The Presumptuousness of Autobiography and the Paradoxes of Beginning." *A Reader's Companion to Augustine's Confessions*, edited by Kim Paffenroth and Robert Peter Kennedy, Louisville, Westminster John Knox, 2003, pp. 7-23.
- Shanzer, Danuta. "Avulsa a Latere Meo: Augustine's Spare Rib: Confessions 6.15.25." *The Journal of Roman Studies*, vol. 92, 2002., pp. 157-176.

Stroumsa, Guy. "The Two Souls and the Divided Will." *Self, Soul and Body in Religious Experience*, edited by Albert I. Baumgarten, Jan Assman and Guy Stroumsa, Leiden, Brill, 1998, pp. 198-208.

Wetzel, James. *Augustine and the Limits of Virtue*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992.

-----". "The Question of 'Consuetudo Carnalis' in Confessions 7.17.23." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 31, no. 2, 2000.

Politics, Peace and Predestination

Política, paz y predestinación

10

Miles Hollingworth
Independent researcher, United Kingdom



Abstract

This chapter is intended to show that Augustine's political philosophy can speak with a radical voice into situations of extreme ideological conflict today—most especially where these involve gross disparities of wealth. The key to allowing this radical Augustinian voice to speak, is first to spend a good deal of time identifying the exact coordinates into which it can speak. These coordinates may surprise us, and they are the chief innovation of this chapter. For convenience sake, I lever the search for these coordinates against the general idea of radical socialism, understood as a philosophy of history. The result of this approach is that it eventually brings us out on Augustine's doctrine of predestination; and allows us to begin to see it as the practical touchstone of a new radical Augustinianism. This new radicalism does not need to make use of the device that liberation theology made use of, viz., a preferential option for the poor. Instead, it moves beyond all such class distinctions to direct itself against the very dynamics which have shaped political logic in the West since Plato.

Keywords: Marxism-Leninism, Plato, predestination, rationality, utopianism.



Resumen

El objetivo de este capítulo es mostrar que la filosofía política de Agustín puede hablar hoy en día con una voz radical en situaciones de conflicto ideológico extremo, especialmente cuando estas implican grandes disparidades de riqueza. La clave para permitir que esta voz agustiniana radical hable es pasar primero mucho tiempo identificando las coordenadas exactas en las que se puede hablar. Estas coordenadas pueden sorprendernos y son las principales innovaciones de este capítulo. Por razones de conveniencia, comparto la búsqueda de estas coordenadas con la idea general del socialismo radical, entendido este como una filosofía de la historia. El resultado de este enfoque es que finalmente nos revela la doctrina de la predestinación de san Agustín y nos permite comenzar a verlo como la piedra de toque práctico de un nuevo agustinismo radical. Este nuevo radicalismo no necesita hacer uso del dispositivo que la teología de la liberación utilizó, a saber una opción preferencial para los pobres. En cambio, va más allá de todas estas distinciones de clase para dirigirse contra la misma dinámica que ha configurado la lógica política en occidente desde Platón.

Palabras clave: Marxismo-leninismo, Platón, predestinación, racionalidad, utopismo.



Sobre el autor | About the author

Miles Hollingworth [www.mileshollingworth.com]

Miles Hollingworth is the author of several books, including *Saint Augustine of Hippo: An Intellectual Biography* (OUP, 2013) and *Ludwig Wittgenstein* (OUP, 2018). He has received the Jerwood Award for Non-Fiction from the Royal Society of Literature and the Elizabeth Longford Scholarship from the Society of Authors. His book *The Pilgrim City* (Bloomsbury, 2010) was shortlisted for the Gladstone History Book Prize. He is founder and editor of the international book series *Reading Augustine* (Bloomsbury, 2017–) and co-editor of *The Edinburgh Companion to Political Realism*.



Cómo citar en MLA / How to cite in MLA

Hollingworth, Miles. "Politics, Peace and Predestination." *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendimez y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2019, pp. 291-320, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.10

Some Necessary Preliminaries

In this chapter, I hope to show readers how to recover and deploy Augustine's radical voice for peace. The urgent need for this voice continues in many places around the world. I am particularly thinking of those places where people are separated by vast differences of circumstance and fortune. Note that I am being careful not to use the word "class." That word automatically invokes the idea—made famous by socialism—of political history as coordinate upon a conspiracy; namely, the conspiracy of the wealthy against the poor. Socialism says that this conspiracy has been the chief animating force in the post-industrial modern world. That is to say, the property-owning class, qua the property they own, have lived in *automatic consciousness* of what they would *automatically* stand to lose were their position to fall. Which means that in inheriting their material advantage over the working classes—or in building it up within their lifetimes—they have had to pursue an unusually active degree of self-interest.

All humans are self-interested, so this argument continues; it is the basis of our survivalist impulse. But whereas the working classes have experienced this impulse blamelessly, at its most basic level of daily bread, the capitalists have had always to devise and plot in order to present their unbridled pursuit of it in the best possible light. They have *controlled* history, both in the sense of keeping the working classes in a state of resigned, or even awed, submission and in enculturating the mystique of their own hallowed lot. It is by reason of this, its apparently cynical and unceasing manipulation of all around it, that socialism has regarded this capitalist class as the coordinating point for any true and viable thinking on *change*. More, it is the very existence of this class by means of its giant self-conscious effort (to perpetuate itself) that makes the very thought of change possible. For if the way things were in capitalist societies were instead akin to a law of nature, then change would be as inconceivable as changing the law of gravity. However, if it can be seen to be the result of a culpable human attitude of mind, then why should radical measures not present themselves? History itself might now be redirected or realised anew. The vigilance and awareness that was the preserve of those with property to lose might now be transferred to the classes beneath them, such that they would become enlightened and indignant at the injustice put upon them all these years, and receptive to a new education that would show them how now to set things right. The long-term virtue and issue of this vision would then be a kind of world society without class, in which the conscious and active participation in the making of history

would fall equally and indiscriminately to every human being. A true and final, Stateless democracy.

Augustine and Socialism

For a long while now, it has been recognized that numerous conceptual associations can be made between Augustine and socialism, and Augustine and communism.¹ One does not even have to reach very far to make the case. Augustine was after all at the forefront of early Christianity's mission to present itself as the religion of the weak and unprotected—of the lowest in society, of the poor. He stressed alms giving and charity. He gave up his own family inheritance to the Church and as Bishop and Judge, he routinely took the part of his needy parishioners in Roman North Africa, insofar as they were continuously beset by greedy officials and steeping taxes. What is more, he showed a lifelong commitment to the communistic ideal. His own journey to the Church had pivoted on what he came to regard as a shameful inability to give up on worldly ambition and success. When he was finally able to convert, in 386, he would round on this aspect of his life decisively and dramatically. His first attempt at an ideal Christian community at Cassiciacum would be based upon an *active* and *conscious* denunciation of Mammon, understood as the rival god—the preoccupation which keeps a man in belief of his own self-sufficiency. Later on, when it came to working out the form of organization for his priestly household at Hippo Regius, his focus would turn to private property as an obstacle to human friendship and fellowship, but most of all, to the true love of God. It would become a staple of his mature thought that holy communities are, as it were, always waiting to spring into life, but for the difficulty of human nature and pride, whose first and most devastating expression is in private possession. In this, he was referring to the logic that pride can be nothing without something of which to be proud. When you add to this the fact that all creation is God's—that God made it and that it is good as God made it—then you can see at once why Augustine could feel so confident about singling out the institution of *private possession* for such sustained attack.²

Throughout his priestly career, he would argue that devotion to the common possession of the necessities of (material) life can give to a Christian community its optimum chance to come into a high and sustained understanding of

¹ Beginning, in the 20th century with Ryan (26-39).

² A mere sample would be *civ.*, 5, 15-16; *Gen. litt.* 11, 15; *lib. arb.*, 2, 19, 53, 199-200; *tr.*, 12, 9, 14; *en. Ps.*, 39, 7; *Io. ev. tr.*, 6, 25-26; *en. Ps.*, 83, 3; *s.*, 113, 4.

the unique goodness of God. Here, Augustine was singling out a key difference between the Christian God and the gods of the pagan world. Unlike those latter gods, the Christian God (of the New Testament) was not partial in his blessings; nor could he be influenced by invocation or sacrifice. To Augustine, those ideas belonged firmly to the world of the Earthly City, in which justice must be understood from within the parameters of space and time. Against this entire conception, he placed the Christian God in a new vision of justice, beyond space and time altogether, in eternity: the Heavenly City of Jerusalem, the City of God. This God was quite simply above and beyond the schemings of human acquisitiveness. He was somehow and miraculously the same to one and all. He did not (anymore) belong to a particular people, or a particular class. As Augustine would put it in his *Confessions*: “You are good and all-powerful, caring for each one of us as though the only one in Your care, and yet for all as for each individual” (3, 2, 19).

Caveat Lector

When then you couple these observations to the fact that Augustine did not leave an explicit political vision—or for that matter write an explicit political treatise—you can see at once how it becomes possible to enlist him as the father of radical action and change in the world on the socialist model. Because in the absence of any specific veto in writing from Augustine, these interpretations of his message can and do remain fair and valid. What I wish to do in this chapter, however, is to move away from the question of “class” and what it immediately brings into a conversation today. I want to move away from the idea that the fundamental unfairness of human life—which is today addressed by the term “social justice”—is something that has a natural, human cause; such that it could, and should, then, have a natural, human remedy. I want to get away from that dynamic, or mechanism, by which so much of human history is still automatically understood.

And I want to stress again that the “getting away” from it is not a reaction, or an argument against it. No. It is simply an experiment. An investigation conducted against the normal direction of travel. An attempt to find Augustine’s radical political voice at the far end of his most uncompromising and otherworldly theology: his doctrine of predestination. As well as an attempt, when we have done that, to present it as a *practical* message of peace; notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary.

Western Science and the Status Quo

I want to begin here by repeating the key point from my opening above. Socialism, and at its extreme end, communism, reacts against the long and venerable idea of the *status quo*. The idea that in its fundamentals, human history is inert and unblinking—and that most fundamental of these fundamentals is that one part of humanity shall lord it over the other. Think of Heraclitus' dictum: "War is the father of all and king of all, and some he shows as gods, others as men; some he makes slaves, others free" (Heraclitus, 215, tr. Kirk).

The point of dictums like these is to make you realise that to react against their wisdom would be like changing the seasons (or "changing the law of gravity," as I put it above). More, they are meant to encourage you to pour your intelligence into discovering and enumerating the sense in which they are true. With this activity itself then to be considered as yet one more act of recognition and obedience—the recognition that man is liable to rebel against the manifest destiny of Nature and God, and the obedience by which he apologises and repents of that. This neatly captures the spiralling logic which has always defined Western political thought; most especially through its Christian era—and against which, therefore, radical socialism was bound to feel that only violence might prevail.

Think of it like this. The first great discovery of Western political thought is that man is a *zoon politikon*. That is to say, the very same rational faculty which can dislocate him from all around him in the twists of self-consciousness and subjectivity is also that which can bring him into the wider and higher view of science and ethics. The discovery of classical Greek political thought is the idea that rationality only comes home to man when once he begins to feel and appreciate his power to bring himself, and his society, into positive alignment with the world out there; with the Universe and its laws; with the gods. In other words, man is subject to the same forces of life as any other *zoon*; the difference is that whereas they can align themselves thoughtlessly, according to pure instinct, man must each time choose to do so. This act of choosing, enacted moment upon moment, is what actually puts him into time—it is what creates time from his point of view of it. The non-rational animals cannot be aware of time because they do not face the series of choices which define the human animal's *moment in time*.

Now, of course, if we are here defining the human animal on its basic difference to all other animals, then we are defining something that has all along existed, and we are therefore in danger of losing the sense of what the clas-

sical Greeks discovered; for indeed it was a proper discovery with major consequences. What the classical Greeks discovered was that the human animal, bound everywhere by its rational faculty to endeavour to choose to live well, does so by myriad different customs. Sail the seas (as the classical Greeks did) and you will discover at once that each new society has its gods and its laws, its customs and taboos. These will vary endlessly from place to place, such that they must simply be learnt anew by the traveller each time, upon each new shore. In a world like that, there is not yet any conception of what we would today call “knowledge.” There is nothing underlying, there is nothing foundational. There is instead only what is conventional; what is subject to change. What the classical Greek mind would then do against all of this flux and confusion would be to notice that, deep down, this very chaos is in actual fact being generated by forces which are foundational. Strictly speaking, this discovery is something that the classical Greek mind would first make in its speculations on the physical world. The so-called Presocratic philosophers—the “first philosophers” of the Western world—would concern themselves nearly solely with the investigation and enumeration of the laws of the natural world. They produced the first rational explanations for the phenomena of the land and the sea and the air that for eons before could only be accounted for by supernatural devices. Socrates would then become notorious as the philosopher who would take it upon himself to apply this new tool to the human world, and to the business of “living well.”

The overall story, and the overall discovery, however, is as I have described it. The classical Greek mind begins to learn to treat the outward phenomena of the natural and human worlds as merely the exempla—or products—of the stable and predictable forces which generate them. Behind the 1000 different cultures of 1000 different shores is now seen to be the foundation—the constant—of the human animal qua the mechanism of its basic form. Qua its basic, instinctual requirements of life.

Put yourself down amidst any human society, anywhere in the world, and what you will see behind the feathers and smoke and tribal dances is something that can be documented, by the impartial observer in a notebook, as *knowledge*, in just the way of the modern anthropologist. This way of always looking through to what is *really going on*, is what can be attributed, correctly, to the classical Greek mind. It is its discovery. The discovery of the power of the observing human mind. And it is a great power! For whatever is being observed by the observing human mind, is at that exact same moment rendered pow-

erless, objective and inanimate—whether it be the thundering heavens or the beating heart of man himself. The tribe dancing before the anthropologist is just as powerless and deceived as to the true meaning of its actions as Plato's prisoners were down in the cave. This power is potent, this power is unstoppable. And, as per my example *par excellence* of the modern anthropologist, it continues to dominate today. And therefore, we say that the high point of its expression remains—for student and citizen—what can be read plainly in the great works of Plato and Aristotle. There you will encounter, time and again, the great and apparent virtue of *surrender*. That is, the surrender of the passionate part of man to his rational part. The surrender of the heart to the mind. In other words, what the anthropologist does to the newly discovered tribe in the jungle is only possible because of what she has first done to herself. It is only because she has first been educated into the virtue of the *surrender*; it is only because she has first looked through herself, and ordered herself, that she can now sit so quietly and concentratedly in front of the tribe, and not be moved by the feeling and energy in their dance, and instead catalogue it for knowledge and posterity, as an example of behaviour *x*.

This whole approach to life, this whole method of life, in which reality and truth are that which the wise man, which the philosopher, must always *see through* to, is as much a discovery for “thought” as it is for “politics.” But in pressing it to its extreme in tightly argued dialogues, Plato and Aristotle ensured that its enduring image would indeed be the *polis*: or the final setting in which the human animal is able to observe itself acting in perfect obedience to Nature. This classical Greek idealism is taken to such a high pitch that it is possible to “walk right the way around” the ideal image of man in society which it presents and see always the same thing; that is to say, to see no difference of genesis between society and man. Society can look back at man and see the mirror image of itself; and man can look back at society and see the same. Man stands in relation to society as the acorn stands in relation to the oak tree. In this perfect idealism which so pleases and soothes the mind, there is also—I repeat—a *perfect ambiguity of genesis*. Man, who before was disordered and disobedient, heart to mind; man, who before stood apart and fearful of Nature in his “self-consciousness and subjectivity,” is now as seamless a part of its wholesale operation as the acorn, or the squirrel. He is no longer the spanner in the works. He has instead been conformed to the highest instinct (to the highest *telos*) of his being. From his point of view, this is *virtue*. From the point of view of the world of ideas, it is *justice*.

To recap. The classical Greek discovery of man as a *zoon politikon* is in actual fact the discovery of a perfect and eternal world of ideas from which man stands in alienation by virtue of his disobedience. His rational faculty makes it possible for him to disobey; and this disobedience is experienced by him in the first instance as the series of choices that he must make. A series of choices whose linear progression mark out the dimension which he calls “time.” From this starting place, the ladder of perfection must be to use knowledge (*science*) with the purpose of now beginning to make these choices correctly (*ethics*). This ladder, properly scaled, returns man to the state of perfect justice; which for him, is the true and ideal *polis*. Or should it rather be said, that the scaling of this ladder introduces man to the state of perfect justice? Here we encounter again that key phrase of mine from above: “A perfect ambiguity of genesis.”

For all that it does, then, classical Greek political thought also launches the Western mind into the paradox of this phrase. I repeat again, the idealist solution to the problem of human life, when taken to its classical Greek extreme of conclusion, actually eradicates all proof, save of itself. Plato’s great work, *The Republic*, eradicates all proof, save of itself. Plato’s *Republic* uses human beings. It arranges them in the perfect patterns which then *become* it, and become justice itself.³

Reason allows man to “wake up!”—to see the Universe as science sees it, and to see at once his messy discordance from it. It allows him to develop and learn the way back into coordination with it. The good life, the happy life. But the moment that this new life has been achieved; the moment that he has moved from time into eternity; this same reason of his offers him no explanation (or we should say even “memory”) of where he once was, or how he entered into the perfection that he now has. For he, and the Universe, are now in unshakable *status quo*.

I wrote at the start of this section that this idea of the *status quo* is precisely that which socialism and communism react against. However, students of Western political thought have for a long time now been coached to see it somewhat differently. Ever since World War Two, in fact; and then the Cold War, and the 20th-century experiments in totalitarianism. I must explain what I mean by this.

³ I discuss this thesis of mine at length in my book *Inventing Socrates*, but especially in chapter 2, “The way of truth.”

The Dominance of the (Psychological) Problem of Evil

The fact is that these telling events have tended to be analysed theoretically, in the universities, as gigantic assaults on the colour and spice of individual freedom. The image of drab and uniform Eastern bloc streets has been paraded as the proof-horror of what happens when “freedom” is permitted to be defined collectively, as the corporate destiny and national possession of a people—rather than as the personal destiny and possession of the single-unit “man” of modern, constitutional, liberal democracy. An entire generation has been taught in this way to regard the *status quo* as the special and peculiar conspiracy of ethical monism.⁴ This is true as far as it goes. From the point of view of individual freedom and ethical pluralism, the *status quo* is something that can only come into being through an enormous, total effort of policing, repression and control. In this picture, the *status quo* is what happens when your birth-right is taken from you. This birth-right is your freedom to pilot your own course through life. (It is the antithesis of obeying the orders of Plato’s *philosopher kings*). However, for precisely this way that it constructs and presents itself, this analysis—this theory—can really only then be a partial view of the matter. Partial in the sense that it is dominated and directed by the great question of the 20th Century, which being the question of “human evil”—namely, “How could the atrocities of National Socialism and International Communism have occurred?” Or more to the point, “How could human beings have been manipulated so as to have been their willing instruments?” The answer, from the point of view of the (Western) liberalism of today, is that they were made to act as *one*. However, if you can now peel yourself away from this great question of the 20th Century, and if you can focus instead on where I began this section—viz., with Heraclitus and his realism—then you may begin to realize a whole wider and longer look on the matter.⁵ That is to say, if Heraclitus was merely being rational in relation to the true facts, if he was merely stating the proto-science that the history of philosophy credits him with, and if the post-Socratic science of the good life was really this realism’s high example, then the *status quo* that it brings about must be just as much socialism’s nemesis as it is the capitalist West’s (as ethical monism). If the daily exempla of the human condition and human nature are to be seen through and studied for

⁴ In the English-speaking world, the landmark works of this School are still Karl Popper’s *The Open Society and its Enemies*, and Isaiah Berlin’s *Four Essays on Liberty*.

⁵ For cutting-edge accounts of the cracks now appearing in the Western edifice of the “Open Society,” see Kaufman (494-507); and Breyfogle (554-566).

the reality which underlies them, and if this cold hard fact looks like Heraclitus' dictum, or Plato and Aristotle's aristocratic inequality of man, then the socialist impulse for fairness and justice must run up against the immovable object of the "scientific condition of man," or "human nature."

In this way, socialism allows us to see something very clearly (but which it is in the habit of the history of Western political thought to overlook). The scientific cast of mind—which is the Western mind to this day—and which began with the classical Greek reduction of the natural and human worlds to their laws and processes—must inevitably tend, in the first instance, to the kind of dictatorship and eugenics that Plato proposed. What is more, this political programme, because it is based upon a total belief in the possibility of total knowledge—plus the belief that man has nothing occult in him (such as the Christian "original sin") that would withstand this knowledge—must then go on to rub out all historical trace of man's deviant condition before enlightenment. If Plato is telling us that the whole problem of the human race up until *philosophy* was the straightforward lack of the proper knowledge of how to order itself individually and collectively (because man, when enlightened, cannot but act in accordance with it), then his human race post-*philosophy* must by this very logic contain no "memory" of its previous state: for any such retention would provide for the possibility (and it needs only be a "possibility" to negate the force of Plato's system) of a return, or a fall, to it. I believe that this is what Ernst Troeltsch (404) meant when he talked of Platonism's "rationally necessary conceptual element." The purely idealist solution to the problems of human life, and by that we mean to politics itself, must for all its purity deliver man into a Heaven on Earth that is eternal, and that in being eternal, "cannot account for why he would have entered it in the first place." Man is redeemed, but at the expense of the sense of that word, which disappears from view. This unforeseen result is the shadow which haunts Western political thought. But which, as I hinted at earlier, is hardly if ever remarked upon; for it has been covered over by the theoretical explanations and denunciations of radical socialism which I have given above. These fixate on the spectacle of mass psychology, and walk it back to Plato. All the while, radical socialism itself looks to Plato, and finds in him the parent of its own great fear, which is that Western rationalism will become such a sharp blade that it will cut right through all human hope of change and peace and show the inequality of man to be, in fact, the first and last law of history—quite impossible to resist, once discovered. Like when Charles Darwin discovered the comparable role of the law of "natural selection" in the kingdom of the non-rational animals.

What radical socialism—and by that, I mean the new theory of human history developed and preached by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels—correctly sees, is that the Platonic—then Aristotelian—idea of true knowledge “as knowledge of what is conceptually stable and predictable in the Universe” must have the eventual, and irreversible, consequence of delivering the human race into the method of life by which it would finally line up on that *reality*. And once that were to happen, history would be “locked in” to its eternal pattern. In effect, there would be no human element in it—no man to make appeal to. No man to make the emotional appeal of social justice to. Instead, it would be like trying to appeal to a stone, or a planet, or mathematics, or physics. The radical socialism of Marx and Engels requires the engine of history to become something that can bear regret; and as I put it at the start of this chapter, “culpability.” Only man, or better, only a class of men, can do this. Only a class of men can be viably identified as the engine of history, then logically redirected under a comprehensive programme of re-education, and yes, redemption. Only a class of men can be subject to the valence of “right” and “wrong.” If man is the pilot of history, rather, say, than God, or even atoms, then there is a chance that he might yet still arise and save himself (his corporate self, the Stateless, final communistic world society).

A Perfect Ambiguity of Genesis

Some pages earlier, I talked of the “spiralling logic” of Western political thought and noted that it became especially tight in its Christian era. I can now set this comment down in its proper context. In attempting to understand the world and his place in it by means of his mind, critically and reductively, man births reason and science—along with the final proof of universal “process,” if not “design.” Of course, Christian philosophy comes quickly to learn to emphasise “design,” and to use science as the final proof of what its doctrine had been teaching all along. This goes well, until eventually there come those, like Thomas Hobbes, who can see the long-hidden danger in this confluence. If obeying God is now the same thing as obeying the laws of nature, and vice versa, and if this obedience (this “surrender,” as I put it earlier) stands to reason (indeed, is the definition of reason), then Man has become like unto an automaton, and all the great questions of humanism, including the greatest question of all, which is the question why man should submit to God and law (and society) in the first place, become unanswerable (because they can no longer sensibly be asked). We are back to the strange situation that I have characterised in the phrase, *a perfect ambiguity of genesis*. And “genesis” is very much the operative word

here, for we can at once see that the question of human obligation is in actual fact subset to the terminating question of any human life, which goes: “Why was I born into this station of life, rather than some other? Why should some be born free, and others slaves?” Hobbes’s famous and ingenious solution to all of this is to craft, or contrive, a genesis for the great law which this great question anticipates. Moreover, a *human* genesis. That is, a human genesis for a law which should otherwise stand outside and apart from all such historical generation because really it is a precondition, or axiom, of history itself—*The Leviathan*. Let us be clear: Hobbes solves at great effort and length what Emmanuel Kant said that it would be better that we simply accept. Namely, that the ultimate “laws of the Universe” can only be what they are if we first accept that no human hand played a part in their creation. In other words, human rationality is plainly such that it needs laws. But by the same token, it needs those laws to be *inhuman* and *ahistorical*. As the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein put it best:

To ask whether a formal concept exists is nonsensical. For no proposition can be the answer to such a question. (So, for example, the question, “Are there unanalysable subject-predicate propositions?” cannot be asked. (Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, 4; 1274).

Clearly the laws of logic cannot in their turn be subject to laws of logic. (There is not, as [Bertrand] Russell thought, a special law of contradiction for each “type”; one law is enough, since it is not applied to itself) (Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, 6, 123).

Mathematicians do not in general quarrel over the result of a calculation. (This is an important fact.) (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, II, 11).

In sum, the theoretical picture of the world which science has given man the power to construct turns out to contain no natural place for him. Law is perfect and eternal, and man, it seems, is neither of those things—or more accurately, he can only ever be partly those things. He can touch eternal perfection in his mind, but he cannot hold to it for any serious length of time, for want of the will and concentration. This “want” is precisely what has always been addressed and treated in the coercive aspects of life in society. Classical Greek political thought notes this, but includes this coercion in its general, positive conception of reason and law—it teaches that man will always choose willingly to submit to law as soon as he sees that it is the same thing as right reason. The Christian tradition after Paul and Augustine, learns to take a different view of the matter. This is because it has a radical alternative to the idea of human

perfection as something that must be realized and proved in society on Earth. It has the Heavenly City, to which it transposes all true and final justice and happiness. This allows it to take a more literary and artistic view of man's inveterate deviancy. This deviancy is sin, yes, and is therefore "bad." But it also signifies and demonstrates the way that the heart and soul of a man is secret and subject only to God's final judgement to come. That is to say (*post hoc, ergo propter hoc*), it is precisely because no utopianism—no totalitarianism—has ever been able to succeed on Earth that we get to see the proof of man's final, supernatural destination. This Christian tradition says, then, that society and its coercion is important, but that it is only *remedial*—it cracks a man on the back, but it doesn't reach inside him and judge and correct his inner self. Only God can do that.

I repeat, the Pauline and Augustinian view of political life actually gives to sin the role of a radical "double-life." In the first doctrinal instance, it is the sense in which we are born damned, and in which there can never be a "heaven on Earth," no matter how hard we try. Then, in the second instance, it is the very reason why every giant historical scheme to create monism and conformism has failed. For in every instance, these schemes have succeeded only in showing that there is something in the human animal that makes it naturally resistant and impervious to God's Law as much as to "human law presented as God's Law." There is art in the human animal that will simply always rebel. And what it will rebel against each time, is not the content of the laws, but the prison of the concept of law itself. Christian orthodoxy is obliged to call this art "sin," simply because it cannot logically call it "good." But at the same time, it is well aware—at least, it is in the purpose of this chapter of mine to show that it *should be* well aware—that this very art by which Adam and Eve first disobeyed God's Law and fell, must also then be the route back to him; for it is no more, or less, than what Augustine would set down for all time as the *cor inquietum* ("restless heart") (*conf.*, 1, 1, 1).

This radical double-life of sin is famously described by Paul as a whole new law of its own, supervening on and wrecking the hitherto certainty of pagan humanism, that it can both know and isolate good and evil—and then act decisively and faultlessly on the former: "I find, then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me" (Rom. 7, 21).

Augustine's development on it, is to create a whole new literary register and genre based upon it. We have since learnt to call it "autobiography;" though in Augustine's case, we are more strictly talking of "spiritual autobiography."

This whole new way of thinking about the human condition takes the double-life of sin—takes Paul’s new law—and sets it within the meta-narrative of the Garden of Eden. Man bites the apple in order to enter into an intellectual freedom from God. Man bites the apple in order to find himself, by himself (pride), within the law of the Universe which his freedom from God now gives him scope to discover. Yet each time he is doomed (and the story of every human life to Augustine now becomes the story of this tragedy played out) to discover only that law qua law is sufficient unto itself; that it takes care of itself; and that in discovering it, man therefore discovers nothing, save what a Universe bound by law would look like.⁶ As Augustine will explain it (in his Wittgensteinian voice), the postlapsarian question of God and law is really a question of measurement rather than truth. If we decide to measure God’s creation by laws, then it is laws that we will discover (in the same way that we would discover kilograms, if we chose to measure God’s creation by them rather than pounds). The truth doesn’t enter into it. It is simply a case of man’s choosing—of man’s choosing apart from God. Of man’s prideful choosing apart from God. Of original sin.⁷

The poet William Blake would put the situation rather brilliantly succinctly in his poem, “The Human Abstract” (Blake). Its final stanza shows that the tree of knowledge did not represent something ontological, that God forbid man to possess, but that man only found what he went looking for. Man went looking his pride, and he found it in his brain: “The Gods of the earth and sea/Sought ‘thro Nature to find this Tree; /But their search was all in vain: /There grows one in the Human Brain.”

Augustine’s innovative description of all of this is to say that we are never really searching for the truth, but for ourselves in the truth: “What do I want to say, Lord, except that I do not know whence I came into what I may call a mortal life or a living death” (*conf.*, 1, 6, 7).

In other words, when we are scripting monumental theories of justice such as Plato’s, or more recently John Rawls’, we are never really depicting what we think we are depicting. We think we are depicting the future careers in happiness of men and women, but really all that we are depicting is the unfeeling career of *rationality* itself. Yes, only rationality is being described in these

⁶ I explain the implications of this for historical and future philosophy (mathematical and political) at length in my *Ludwig Wittgenstein* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2018); but in this instance, see especially, pp. 1-32.

⁷ For more on this, see Hollingworth (195-213).

hundreds of thousands of pages. As for men and women, their only part in the scheme can be to play their part and surrender and obey. In other words, it is men and women, correctly arranged, who create the ideal conditions for “deliberative rationality” (Rawls 566).⁸ They become the precondition of the condition which is to bind them.⁹ Or what is the same thing, rationality incorporates itself out of the third-person perspective which it collects from everyman and everywoman.¹⁰ By this means, Western political thought—and especially its modern form—has learnt to disregard what I have called “the terminating question of any human life” (viz. “Why me, here, now?” “Why was I born into the 3rd World rather than the 1st World?”). How far this is from Augustine’s view of the matter—from his radical political voice—will now be made apparent.

Finally, I have invoked Ludwig Wittgenstein to make a point bearing vitally on this essay. Consequently, I have spoken of Augustine’s “Wittgensteinian voice” as something readily apparent. If the reader remains concerned by this, or would simply like to know exactly what I mean by the latter term in particular, they should consult my essay “Time and Freedom in the *Confessions* and the *Tractatus*,” in the volume *Augustine and Wittgenstein*. They should also consider the other essays in that volume as excellent examples of the dynamic possibilities of reading these two thinkers together (Hollingworth “Time and Freedom” 151-168).

Predestination in the City of God

Let us consider the following passage from Augustine’s *The City of God*, which may be considered the highpoint of his predestinarian view of human society:

Wicked men do many things which are against God’s will. So great is his wisdom, however, and so great his might, that all things which seem to be at odds with his will tend towards those outcomes or ends which he himself has fore-known as good and just. For this reason, when God is said to change his will—

⁸ “The idea is to approximate the boundaries, however vague, within which individuals and associations are at liberty to advance their aims and deliberative rationality has free play” (566).

⁹ See Rawls (587): “The perspective of eternity is not the perspective from a certain place beyond the world, nor the point of view of a transcendent being; rather it is a certain form of thought and feeling that rational persons can adopt within the world.”

¹⁰ See Plato (*The Republic*, 604d): “One must accept the way the dice fall and then order one’s life according to the dictates of reason. One ought not to behave like children who have stumbled, wasting time wailing and pressing one’s hands to the injured part.”

as, for example, when he becomes angry with those towards whom he was formerly gentle—it is the people who change, rather than God. They find him changed, but only in the sense that their experience of him has changed, just as, to injured eyes, the sun “changes” and becomes, in a sense, harsh where once it was mild, and hurtful where it was once delightful, even though, in itself, it remains exactly as it was before. By God’s “will” we mean that which God produces in the hearts of those who obey his commandments, of which the apostle says, “For it is God who worketh in you both to will” [Phil. 2:13]. So too, God’s “righteousness” is not only that whereby God himself is called righteous, but also that which God produces in the man who is justified by him. Again, what we call the “Law of God” is really the Law of man, given by God. For it was assuredly to men that Jesus spoke when he said, “It is written in your Law” [John 8:17]; and, in another place we read that “the Law of his God is in his heart” [Ps. 37:31]. Thus, according to this will which God produces in men, He is said to will what he does not actually will in himself, but causes his people to will; just as He is said to know what he causes the ignorant to know... According to this sense of “God’s will,” therefore, whereby we say that God “wills” what He causes others to will, to whom the future is not known, God “wills” many things which he does not actually perform. His saints, for example, with a holy will inspired by him, will that many things should come to pass which do not in fact do so: as when they offer pious and holy prayers for others but what they pray for does not happen, even though, by his Holy Spirit, God has produced in them the will to pray. Thus, when, according to God’s teaching, the saints will and pray that someone may be saved, we can, in a manner of speaking, say that God wills it but does not perform it. For what we mean when we say this is that God wills something when he causes others to will it. According to his own will, however, which, together with his foreknowledge, is eternal, God has certainly already made all things in heaven and on earth which he has willed: not only things past and present, but also things future. But before that time arrives at which he has willed that something is to come to be which he has foreknown and disposed before all time, we say, “It will come to pass when God wills it.” This does not mean that God will then have a new will which he did not have before; but that something will then come to pass which has been prepared in his immutable will from all eternity (*civ.*, 22, 2).

Here we see, spectacularly clearly, the main elements involved in this view of Augustine’s—and how they have made it so notorious down the years. On the one hand, there is the insistence that no matter what, the Christian God

is good in everything he does, and indeed doing everything that is done to constitute being. He is the eternal, all-seeing Author of life Itself. On the other hand, there is the recognition that from the human point of view at least, the course of this life can, and will, throw up events which could not, on any sane view, be called "good." Moreover, as we have been noticing throughout this chapter, political logic in the West since Plato has relied completely on the human mind's facility to correctly differentiate between what is good, and what is not; then on developing scientific methods of attaching the human mind permanently to the former, by means of encountering it at the level at which there can be no mistakes of misapprehension, and no dissolution of what is there: the essential level. Over the millennia, this science of the Good Life has been advanced to such a degree, that even great wars have been fought in the name of the certain knowledge of what is good for man, and what is not. They continue to this day. So, we—in the Christian West at least—say that we know exactly what good and evil are; and believe that we have techniques for holding to and furthering the former. Yet according to the orthodoxy and doctrine of Christianity, God is just as much responsible for the evil that we shun as he is for the good that we embrace. This brings us to the tipping point of Augustine's predestinarian view. In order for God to be the author of all that is, he has also then to have been eternally aware of what he was always going to author. (The point stretches even our grammar here on the page; but then it has to). Thus, situated as he is in eternity, God is in foreknowledge of all that is. Every good thing and every evil thing, is in his gift. This sets up an immediate collision between our wisdom and God's. If we are not Christians, this collision will be more than enough to confirm us in our decision not to be. If we are Christians, then it must become the immediate source of some considerable anxiety on our part. This anxiety is referenced in what Augustine has to say in the passage above on the saints, and how they pray for the souls of men and women, and how only a certain number of those prayers can ever be answered by God.

God already knows who is going to Heaven and who is not, because he was the one who made the decision in the first place, in his eternal foreknowledge. There are two logical responses to the anxiety of this thought. The first is apathy—to sit on one's hands and do nothing; for on this view there is clearly no point in doing anything (if the ultimate prize of life has already been distributed). The second is a redoubled effort at Christian virtue. In this second response, made famous as Max Weber's *Protestant Work Ethic*, the pilgrim grasps to the fact that, if God has preordained life, then man is nonetheless

still living it (out in time). And if man is doing that, and if in Church on Sundays he still hears of the Ten Commandments, and of how he can and must cling to them, or repent and amend his ways if he has not; and that all of this will be reckoned and weighed at the end on the scales of his final judgement; then he can only conclude that notwithstanding the devastating logic of predestination, he has yet been granted the responsibility for his actions and the course of his life. Given this, might he not then work and earn his way into Heaven? This ethic, made consciously or unconsciously against the withering onslaught of God's majesty, has therefore gone on to become the beacon of modern Capitalism's sense of wellbeing when it is in bullish mood. And because it was made in the face of predestination's towering logic, as a means of effectively harnessing it to ride with it, it is curiously then also as non-Christian as it is Christian. To fully take this in, we need to think of everything compassed above under our investigation of—to use Troeltsch's term again—the “rationally necessary conceptual element” of Western thought, after Plato.

For example, look at our passage above from Augustine. Look at the enormous care he takes to distance God from any condemnation according to the vicissitudes of life. Does this not remind us of what I said above on Hobbes, and of his own reaction to the imputation of this view, that obeying God becomes no more than obeying the laws of Nature? It should. Hobbes saw that when God is distanced like this in answer to the great, troubling questions of life (Why was I born poor and unprivileged? Why did God provide for the (manifest) evil of it?), then he also dissolves into the very logical—into the very scientific—view which has made the questions visible to us in the first place. That is to say, as man comes into the full power of his ability to explain the Universe rationally, on a principle (à la Greek philosophy), he also comes into the full power of his ability to script passages like Augustine's above. It is only when once we can conceptualize the Universe irreligiously—as atoms and process rather than living forces and daemons—that we can mount the full, Augustinian, predestinarian view. It is only when once we have rendered the Universe inanimate, that we can bring in the idea of ultimate responsibility for its state as such.¹¹

Think of it like this. You first have to have defined the crime before you can bring in the accused. If God is now in the dock, then it is for the crime of having knowingly created this apparently unfeeling Universe, in which good and evil come to be distributed arbitrarily.

¹¹ Consider, for example, how this twist of logic is replicated in Adam Smith's “invisible hand”—the beneficent Deity who makes it that free-market forces will work to the higher good (182-183).

Now relate this to the ground that we have covered in this chapter. We are saying that materialism—whether it be of the presocratic or Marxist-Leninist kind—replicates exactly the logic that Augustine has put to work in his passage above. In reaching as far as Augustine is prepared to, right to the very summit of God’s omniscience, we do two things. One, we render God indistinguishable from the totality of operations that constitute the universe of being—and then call that awesome spectacle his “majesty.” And two, we then fall automatically to using man, the human animal, as the increment and metric of the universe of pleasure and pain—for if we are disbarred from saying that God undergoes anything that could constitute the changes associated with volition or emotion, if we are disbarred even from saying that he can undergo the revelations in time that constitute the “point of experience,” then it is man who must be recruited into this role instead. Augustine makes this quite clear in what he says above. By declaring God responsible for the “totality of operations,” as I have called it, Augustine logically disqualifies him from bearing responsibility for any particular moral event in time. In fact, the definition of such a “moral event in time,” becomes the description of the partial line of sight which it is man’s lot to bear as a created being. All that can be said of God in relation to moral events—and by that we mean to the cruel happenstance of them—is that he will somehow and mysteriously work them all to good in the end. The effect of all of this, then, is no different to the effect of materialism. Materialism kills religion and kills God, only to find that it has not killed the “religious question.” The scientist looks into the cosmos’s unblinking eye and realizes that it is now up to him to do good or evil with the knowledge he has come into. So, too, does the political ideologue. So, too, again, does Weber’s protestant worker. From within theology, this has also been the source of the charge often levelled at Augustine, that his God is so far distanced from man as to be no different, in practice, to such severe conceptions as Plotinus’ One.

To me, however, all of this comes as positive news; for it is, in fact, what I regard to be the essence of Augustine’s radical political voice.

The Unfairness of Birth

We must think again of the passage from *The City of God* above. We must think carefully of quite what exactly establishes the distance in it, between us and God. Is it not the very fact that we have had no input or control as regards the cardinal decision of our life, which has been our birth into this Universe? In a temporal world, it is logically impossible for any of us to choose to be born.

That decision must always be made for us by others, by our parents, and by their parents before them, and so on; all the way back to Adam and Eve. And from them, to God. God, in other words, is the termination of what I have been calling “the terminating question of a human life.” And this, I now want to suggest, comes out as the principal difference—and distance—between him and us. It is the very difference between temporality and eternity. And it is the difference that has made for the logic of politics in the West, as I have defined it in this chapter. If we are each of us catapulted into life on the whim of God, some rich some poor, then it is God who must bear the final responsibility for the social injustice—the social unfairness—which it has become the principal business of ethics and politics to correct. And if, like Augustine, we are Christians, then we have simply like him to shrug our shoulders and state it as an article of Christian faith that the ultimate justice of it all will one day be seen at the final reckoning. What we cannot do, however, is to go so far as to actually try to “reverse engineer” God’s whim. What we cannot do is to go as far as Plato went in *The Republic* and apply systematic eugenics in the attempt to eradicate the accidents of birth. And let us remember as well, the resurgent popularity of eugenics closer to our own time, in the 20th century, and how it was coterminous with the development of the modern, cradle-to-grave State of the capitalist West. Nor, for that matter, can we make the philosophical move of radical socialism, and call the accident of birth the accident of class—and try to resolve the matter at that level.

That we must not try to reverse-engineer God on his whim (or his wisdom), is because of the supreme danger of rationality—not of the danger of it identified in the post-World War Two years, to which I have already made reference in this essay. The danger of historicism and what another analyst of the problem, Michael Oakeshott (29), was to call the “bogus eternity of an ideology.” No. The supreme danger of rationality to which I refer is the mesmerism by which we lose touch with our true home, our true cry, our true nostalgia. Augustine’s *restless heart*.¹²

I mean how any grand, systematic and orchestrated solution to the problem of the unfairness of birth—any ideal city—must always also have the consequence of explaining away the very door which Augustine is trying to leave open.

Augustine knew full well that the plain act of looking for God’s majesty in words must eventually reproduce the exact same logic of realism that godless

¹² The same mesmerism by which Pelagius reverse-engineered Grace so as to arrive at the “debt” which it repays. See Augustine, *grat. Chr.*, 1, 24.

science claims for its own. Whether you are a Pre-Socratic believing in eternal cycles of just retribution, or a biologist believing after Darwin that Nature selects, or a Marxist believing that history progresses, you are all of you believing what the Augustinian Christian believes when he refuses to be detained by the (mere) appearance of chaos and caprice in the Universe and holds steadfastly to the conviction that there is some underlying—or in his case overlying—purpose to it all. However, in Augustine’s case, this does not mean that these beliefs are all of a piece. Instead, it is all of it an illustration of the chief limitation, that is the chief pride, of the fallen human mind. When Adam and Eve turned from God, they began humankind’s long journey of losing contact with the supernatural part of its story. For Augustine, it becomes the very definition of the fallen human mind that it relegates the supernatural to the realm of appearance. That, technically speaking, is the first and only positive move that it makes. From then on, everything that it does is negative and tautological. It is the description of what is there, for what it is—plus the ethic of doing that.

Ultimately, the tragedy of this comes home to man as his own peculiar form of self-harm and self-mutilation. In creating a new, natural, Godless, inanimate and material Universe for himself to inhabit, man really only succeeds in placing himself at odds with the rationality of that schema. In constructing the grand theories of society and peace which would require the perfect cooperation of humans for their proof, man really only succeeds in proving the inveterate disobedience of his species. As painstaking and detailed a manual for peace as Rawls’ theory is (and all such like it), it is a manual for insects not men. There is a reason why the word “utopianism” has its force of meaning.

For Augustine, the difference between a man and an insect is that the man has a supernatural meta-narrative. For the insect, everything of importance in its life, plays out within the span of its life, birth to death. For the man, it is the opposite: “For God will not judge a man according to how he changes for better or worse in the midst of his life; rather, he will judge him according to how he is found at the end of it (*civ.*, 17, 4).

Augustine’s radical political voice uses predestination to bring us alive to this fact. Insects move like atoms and can have no sense of the difference between the natural and the supernatural, whereas man is the centre of exchange who makes out the balance. For example, only a man—only a fallen man—can write as Augustine did in book XXII above, because only a fallen man satisfies the conditions required for the “sense of injustice.” When Augustine observes that God “wills” what He causes others to will,” he is observing nothing more re-

markable than were he to observe that “God wills for the ants to build nests and collect food.” Likewise, when he observes that on occasions, the saints may “offer pious and holy prayers for others but what they pray for does not happen,” he is marking out the difference between the human sense of injustice and the rational principle of *Divine Fiat*. From the point of view of establishing that latter principle in words on the page, the content of what God ordains cannot be relevant; just as were we to use the example of a martyr being burnt at the stake to establish the principle of the second law of thermodynamics. Or—and here is the real point of this chapter—were we to follow Marx in using the concept of class to establish the law of revolutionary change. If you will only zoom far enough out, then every little thing becomes the example of some law; while laws seduce us into certainty concerning political good and evil—for that is how rationality works. What matters, and what Augustine is really wanting to draw our attention to, is man’s role in breaking this pattern.

When man chooses, as Augustine does above, to praise God’s law, he is doing what no citizen of an earthly political utopia could, or would, ever do. Man can only write and praise as Augustine does when he knows as certain fact that God has damned him then enlightened him. His knowledge of this certain fact is what makes his choice real and meaningful. He loves God’s law not because it makes sense, but because it does not make sense. And as he continues in this radical love, he learns to be radically suspicious of all institutions and arguments—all polities—that present us with something that it would make sense to love. For in us, as Augustine puts it, there is a *distinguitur tempore* (“distinction in time”): “because we were first darkness, and then were made light” (*conf.*, XIII, 10, 11). In us, then, there is always the “sense of genesis”; and because our genesis is always in God’s hands not our own, there can be the sense also of the injustice of it as we survey a world of rich and poor and our own, unasked for beginning in it.¹³

Conclusion

Augustine was deeply moved by human suffering and would do whatever he could to alleviate it. At the same time, he was the first major Christian philosopher to grasp the otherworldly trajectory of Christian hope and love—plus the political implications of that new stance in a hitherto pagan world

¹³ See Augustine, *ench.*, 8: “None of us is born because he will, and none of us dies when he will: [Christ], when he would, was born; when he would, he died: how he would, he was born of a Virgin: how he would, he died; on the cross.”

of strictly earthly allegiances. The long, vexed history of the interpretation and reception of his political ideas since has been the struggle to locate him (and his Pilgrim City) between these diverging facts. All that I have tried to show here, is that the key to the answer at last may lie in how we make the cut. If you try to cut through the history on the question of Christian citizenship of earthly cities, you get nothing more out of Augustine and his adherents than timeworn common sense: render unto Caesar what is Caesar's. However, if you cut through on the question of political knowledge (viz., the scientifically acquired knowledge of the good life), then you release the full resources of his mature theology and arrive at a deep and deeply useful understanding of what he meant by dividing all humanity into two cities according to two loves. When Lenin wrote "Practice is higher than (theoretical) knowledge, for it has not only the dignity of universality, but also of immediate actuality (213)." He was really only being honest about what I have called the "spiralling logic" of Western political thought. The scientific approach to human life seeks out the materialistic common denominator which then threatens to entrench some patrician *status quo* and/or extend to meaninglessness the actuating sequence of change. Marxism-Leninism overcomes this through practice, but at the expense of forcing men to love a vision so picture-perfect—so obedient to itself—that within it, they disappear from view. (Liberal democracy has been able to duck the question altogether by evolving a virtue-moral pluralism—that cannot be distinguished from the free-market capitalism denominating it). For Augustine, this turns out to be the key to our real location and real need—which, of course, is the same for the rich man as it is for the poor. The point of his magnum opus work, *The City of God*, the point of its 1500-page doctrine of predestination, is not what is inside it but that it was written by a man. If no man had written it, Augustine thinks that it would have existed anyway. It would simply be the truth. It would simply be God's immutable will. Heaven and Hell, and who goes where.¹⁴

Augustine's radical message of peace, his single instruction to rich and poor alike, is that nothing is therefore resolved between the covers of history save history itself. The serial record of natural events may or may not go on to be written up in books like his *The City of God*. But if they are, then the humans writing them will always be left on the outside looking in. And what they will

¹⁴ I hope there is nothing disturbing in my calling Augustine's *City of God* a "1500-page doctrine of predestination." My point is no more than the old one that "there are no pockets in a shroud," or to bring in Wittgenstein one final time, 'He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.' (Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, 6.54)

see through that window will only ever be the injustice of predestination. For how could it be otherwise? (The ants, if they could see, would only be able to see justice and their seamless part in it; which goes to show what I am saying here, which is that the human eye is a “moral eye,” blinded by its own need to see everything through the lens of *necessity*).¹⁵

The great projects of pagan social and political theory have always looked to history as the single City in which the final perfection of man will be decided and proved. However, Augustine would use his own life to decide and prove the great counter idea, which is that this single city—this material existence which we call life on Earth—only really exists insofar as it can be observed from out of the vantagepoint called the “supernatural,” which we participate in by means of our soulful selves. This is why his *Confessions* begin with their famous invocation; which is actually Augustine’s astonishment that we can call on God at all, given the evident sufficiency of the psychological and empirical methods of accounting for a life. It is not that those methods are wrong. No! Augustine’s point is rather that because they are logical, whatever they go on to depict must itself then also be perfectly logical. Yet this is clearly an inhuman requirement (remember what I said about the “double-life of sin”), and so man always stands apart from his observed self. “Where can I go beyond heaven and earth!” Augustine will write in desperation, “So that you may come to me, my God, who have said, ‘I fill heaven and earth!’ [Jer. 23:24]” (*conf.*, 1, 2, 2).

Man can only have the intellectual perspective on his own life and wider events in the world—he can only produce normative theories of society and state—because he can never in fact locate himself in those selfsame creations of his. And that he cannot, is because they are never the true diagnosis of who he is, and where he is, and most importantly, where he is from, but rather the set of instructions for how he would have to behave in order to be the agent of those theories of his, on the page, in the city. Augustine’s definition of the Roman “commonwealth” against Cicero in book XIX of *The City of God* is the arch-example of this. It is utterly indiscriminate and impersonal, such that anyone, anywhere, could follow out its rationality, but no-one could recognise it as their home (*civ.*, 19, 24).

Augustine will insist on this distinction between Creator and created—this “distinction in time”—right on up to the City of God in Heaven. There, at the climax of the fulfilment of God’s plan, it is saved from collapsing into the dead-dry predestination of the page by the fact that it clings in willing and self-con-

¹⁵ See Augustine’s explanation of this with reference to the Stoics at *civ.*, 5, 9-10.

scious love to its Creator God. Because of this, the *City of God* can never be talked of, and written of, in the second-hand, as though it were like the Earthly City, constituted and known through the mechanical interactions of its parts. No! For the City of God is a person, not a pattern. It has no analysable substance, and cannot be replicated on that basis; for it is no more, or less, than the continuing love of its members for God:

Hence it is in such wise from you, our God, that it is completely other than you and not the selfsame. Not only do we find no time before it, but not even in it, because it is adapted always to behold your face and is never turned away from it. Thus it comes about that it is never varied by any change. Yet there is in it a certain mutability, from which it would become dark and cold, unless it clung to you with a mighty love so as to shine and glow from you as at eternal noontide (*civ.*, 12, 15, 21).



Works Cited

- Breyfogle, Todd. "Political Realism and the Open Society: The enemy within." *The Edinburgh Companion to Political Realism*, edited by Robert Schuett and Miles Hollingworth, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2018, pp. 554-566.
- Berlin, Isaiah. *Four Essays on Liberty*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1969.
- Blake, William. "The Human Abstract". *Songs of Experience*. 1789.
- Hollingworth, Miles. *The Pilgrim City: St. Augustine of Hippo and his Innovation in Political Thought*. London, New York, Bloomsbury, 2010.
- . *Inventing Socrates*. New York, London, Bloomsbury, 2015.
- . "Time and Freedom in the *Confessions* and the *Tractatus*." *Augustine and Wittgenstein*, edited by John Doody, Alexander R. Eodice and Kim Paffenroth, *Augustine in Conversation: Tradition and Innovation*, New York, Lexington Books, 2018, pp. 151-168.
- Lenin, Vladimir. "Conspectus of Hegel's *The Science of Logic*." *Collected Works*, vol. XXXVIII, Moscow, 1961.
- Oakeshott, Michael. *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*. London, Methuen & Co., 1967.
- Popper, Karl. *The Open Society and its Enemies*. 2 vols., London, Routledge, 1962.
- Kaufman, Peter Iver. "Political Realism and Nationalism: Can Nationalism be Liberalized?" *The Edinburgh Companion to Political Realism*, edited by Robert Schuett and Miles Hollingworth, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2018, pp. 494-507.
- Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1972.
- Ryan, John A. Were the Church Fathers Communists? *International Journal of Ethics*, vol. 14, no. 1, Oct. 1903, pp. 26-39.
- Smith, Adam. *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1976, pp. 182-183.
- Troeltsch, Ernst. "Empiricism and Platonism in the philosophy of religion: to the memory of William James." *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 5, no. 4, 1912.
- Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010.

**How do We Use Our Words
in the World where Lies
are Rampant? From Augustine's
Argument on Lying**

¿Cómo usamos nuestras palabras
en un mundo donde las mentiras son rampantes?
El argumento de Agustín sobre la mentira

11

Makiko Sato
University of Toyama, Japan



Abstract

This chapter examines how Augustine inspires us to live at peace with our world where lies are rampant. We see many cases of lies having power and truths being ignored in politics, media and other situations. In some of his works, Augustine expresses the idea that every kind of lie is a sin. His strict ban on lying has often be seen as abstract and unrealistic, because we consider lying to be sometimes useful and helpful, while regretting the situations in which lies are rampant. In the first part of this chapter, the author points out how Augustine's ban on lying has a certain kind of permissibility and that he leads us to focus on whether a liar loves truth/God or not. Augustine sets a certain criterion for the sin of lying in one's mindset in terms of loving truth/God or not. The second part of this chapter will show that Augustine thinks a person who tells a lie willingly does not love truth, and as a result she or he will lose true happiness. Augustine thinks that the liar's mindset, which willingly tells a lie, will cause great evils as well. This mindset also loses the healing of Christ. In the last part of the chapter, the author argues that Augustine finds utility in words that prevent our being liars and enable the enjoyment of the unity of truth and God. According to Augustine, we can speak truth when we speak what we heard from the truth. The truth is the Word, Christ. Augustine's argument on lying deeply connects with his Christology and that enables him to suggest how to use our words in the world where lies are rampant.

Keywords: inner-dialogue, lying, truth, *veritatem facere*, will.



Resumen

Este capítulo examina cómo Agustín nos inspira a vivir en paz en nuestro mundo donde las mentiras son desenfrenadas. Vemos muchos casos donde se valoran las mentiras y se ignoran las verdades en la política, los medios de comunicación y otras situaciones. En algunas de sus obras, Agustín expresa la idea de que todo tipo de mentira es un pecado. A menudo, se ve su prohibición estricta sobre mentir como abstracta y poco realista, porque consideramos que mentir a veces es útil, al mismo tiempo que lamentamos las situaciones en las que las mentiras son desenfrenadas. En la primera parte de este capítulo, el autor señala cómo la prohibición de mentir de Agustín tiene un cierto tipo de permisibilidad y que nos lleva a centrarnos en si un mentiroso ama la verdad/Dios o no. Agustín establece un criterio para mentir en la mentalidad de uno en términos de amar la verdad/Dios o no. En la segunda parte de este capítulo, veremos que Agustín piensa que una persona que dice una mentira voluntariamente no ama la verdad y, como resultado, perderá la felicidad verdadera. Agustín cree que la mentalidad del mentiroso, que de buena gana dice mentiras, también causará grandes males. Esta mentalidad también pierde la curación de Cristo. En la última parte del capítulo, el autor argumenta que Agustín encuentra utilidad en nuestras palabras ya que impiden que seamos mentirosos y nos permiten disfrutar juntos en la unidad de la verdad/Dios. Según Agustín, podemos decir la verdad cuando hablamos lo que escuchamos de la verdad. La verdad es la Palabra, Cristo. El argumento de Agustín sobre mentir se conecta profundamente con su cristología y eso le permite sugerir cómo usamos nuestras palabras en nuestro mundo donde las mentiras son desenfrenadas.

Palabras clave: mentira, verdad, voluntad, diálogo interno, *veritatem facere*.



Sobre el autor | About the author

Makiko Sato [makiko.sat@gmail.com]

Makiko Sato is a professor in the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Toyama, Japan. She researches Saint Augustine's thought, especially the relationship between his language theory and his anthropology. Her recent research focuses on the concept of femininity in the biblical exegesis of late antiquity.



Cómo citar en MLA / How to cite in MLA

Sato, Makiko. "How Do We Use our Words in the World where Lies are Rampant. From Augustine's Argument on Lying." *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendimez y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2019, pp. 321-340, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.11

Is Augustine's Absolute Prohibition of Lying Unrealistic?

Lies have power. Politicians who often tell false stories still gain supporters; Internet media earns money by sharing false but shocking news. People can showcase their lives on social networking services with fictitious stories and selective photos. The terms “post-truth” and “alternative facts” have emerged. People seem to enjoy disrespecting truth and sharing falsehoods. On the other hand, it is true that we fear living in our world where lies run rampant. In such a world, people who can lie successfully have power and others may feel threatened. Legal justice and science lose meaning. How to confront this ongoing situation is an urgent issue for us.

As Bok pointed out, lying or deceiving was not focused on as a topic of academic research in the twentieth century, although there were many opportunities to think about problems concerning such topics.¹ Brinton (437) also pointed out that “the subject of persuasion were neglected by twentieth century religious and philosophical writers concerned with the ethics of belief.” Whether telling a lie is acceptable when a speaker intends to persuade others for good reasons is a major issue with lying. Although twentieth century philosophers “have done so little to analyze the problem of deception” (Bok 10), as Brinton says, Socrates and Plato already had an interest in the ethics of persuasion, and Augustine, being in line with the aforementioned philosophers, worked on examining the issues raised by lying.² Augustine's two books on lying, *De mendacio* (394/5) and *Contra mendacium* (420), which are said to be the first books written on the theme of lying, are classics on the topic. It is clear Augustine's doctrine on lying influenced arguments made by later writers: Gregory the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Kant and so on.³

In his *De mendacio* and *Contra mendacium*, and also in some arguments in his other works, Augustine consistently argues that every kind of lie is a sin, and that we should not tell any lie.⁴ Although his doctrine has authority, this strict ban on

¹ “The striking fact is that, though no moral choices are more common or more troubling than those which have to do with deception in its many guises, they have received extraordinarily little contemporary analysis” (Bok XIX).

² Brinton explains the influence of Plato on Augustine and the difference of their arguments on the ethics of persuasion. Regarding the argument on lying from Plato to Augustine, see Sarr.

³ Regarding the evident citations from Augustine by Gregory the Great and Aquinas, and the difference between Church fathers, see Ramsey (1985). Regarding the arguments on lying by Aquinas, Kant, Newman and Nietzsche, compared to the Augustinian position, Griffiths (“Lying”) is introductive.

⁴ “Every lie must be called a sin” (*ench.*, 7. 11). After the Bok's book (1979) was published, many articles that examines Augustine's arguments on lying started to be published. Three papers

lying seems to be unrealistic and not workable in our actual lives, because we sometimes consider lying to be useful and helpful. We can easily imagine situations in which lying would save lives. For example, when non-Jews lied to the government in Nazi Germany to save Jews; as such, it feels difficult to follow Augustine's total ban on lying. In fact, Bok says that Augustine's speculation "goes beyond the realm of ethics and belongs squarely in that of faith" (Bok 46), and she expresses her agreement with "the rejection of the absolutist prohibition of all lies" (48). While trying to defend Augustine's position, Griffiths seems to be on the same side with Bok. He explains that what Augustine means when he expresses a strict ban on lying is not to exhort one to just stop lying, but to illuminate sin's nature, to recommend confession and to turn the gaze away from the lie and toward the truth and God (Griffiths "Lying" 225). However, he also admits that "a community in which the Augustinian ban on the lie was taken seriously—a community of truth—would look very different from any we now know" (229); and that "the consistent Augustinian cannot lie to save innocent life, whether one or a million; he cannot lie to comfort the sad, preserve public order, prevent physical suffering, or even to prevent apostasy or blasphemy" (230).

Does Augustine really think that one should never lie under any circumstance? Decosimo suggests there is greater nuance in the prohibition on lying by Augustine. Based on Griffith's ("The Gift") account, which focuses on the notion of God as "Giver" of speech to human beings, Decosimo explains that although Augustine sees lying as intrinsically sinful for human agents, he permits lying only when "one is functioning as God's instrument," in other words, only when "God or the justly acting state is the true agent" (Decosimo 689 and 693). Augustine does not explicitly express the statement the way Decosimo interprets, but his interpretation is persuasive. I'd like to present two texts that Decosimo does not mention in his paper, but from which we could interpret that Augustine admits a certain kind of permissibility in lying.

One text is in *De mendacio*. Augustine explains as following:

by Feehan ("Augustine on lying"; "The morality"; and "Augustine's own examples") are important in clarifying Augustine's arguments. Although Augustine examines the definition of lying in his *De mendacio*, the definition is not necessarily definite. While saying that "a lie is a false statement made with the desire to deceive," Augustine suggests there is still a room for consideration, saying that "but, whether this alone is a lie is another question" (*mend.*, 5.; tr. Muldowney 60). To consider what is lying, Adler and Carson are beneficial. Regarding jokes that Augustine intentionally excluded from the examination, see Levenick. I also exclude the theme of jokes and fictions from the examination of this chapter, although they are an important theme when we discuss utility of our words. I'll examine them in another paper.

Therefore, in regard to the passage: “The mouth that belieth, killeth the soul” (Sap. 1:11), the question arises as to what mouth is signified. When Holy Scripture uses the term “mouth,” it often signifies that inner chamber of the heart where whatever is uttered by the voice when we speak truthfully pleases us and is determined upon. Hence it is that he lies in his heart who takes pleasure in lying; but he cannot lie in his heart who through his speech so expresses something other than what is in his mind that he knows he is doing evil solely for the sake of avoiding a greater evil and knows that both evils are repugnant to him (*mend.*, 16, 31; tr. Muldowney 92-3).⁵

The scriptural phrase “the mouth that belieth, killeth the soul” is a phrase that those who think no lie is permissible use as a testimony for their opinion. Lies are spoken with a physical mouth in so far as lying is regarded to be an act of speech. Augustine, however, interprets here that a mouth is also in one’s heart. The mouth in one’s heart is not one that speaks words silently before the words it uttered with sounds.⁶ Augustine distinguishes between those who utter falsehoods with pleasure from those who utter falsehood with displeasure, and regards the latter as not telling a lie with the mouth in his or her heart, although she or he tells a lie with his physical mouth. The mouth in one’s heart is an expression that signifies whether one has a mindset that loves the truth/God and is pleased to be veracious or not. The mouth can be expressed as one’s state of will. In fact, interpreting the scriptural phrase “Be not willing to make any kind of lie [Noli velle mentiri omne mendacium]” (Eccl. 7, 14) in the following argument, Augustine focuses on the term *velle* in the phrase, and explains that “the will itself is considered as the mouth of the heart” (*mend.*, 17, 34; tr. Muldowney 96). For a person who really loves the truth/God and wants to be veracious, to utter falsehood even for the sake of avoiding a greater evil goes against his or her will in so far as what she or he utters is false. However, even if she or he utters the truth, to cause a greater evil by uttering the truth goes against his or her will in so far as she or he causes what she or he does not want to cause. Augustine pays attention to the situation that one is involved inevitably in a sin,

⁵ “Sic ergo quod scriptum est: os autem quod mentitur, occidit animam; de quo ore dixerit, quaeritur. plerumque enim scriptura cum os dicit, conceptaculum ipsum cordis significat, ubi placet et decernitur quidquid etiam per vocem, cum verum loquimur, enuntiat: ut corde mentiatur, cui placet mendacium; possit autem non corde mentiri, qui per vocem aliud quam est in animo ita profert, ut maioris mali evitandi causa malum se admittere noverit, cui tamen utrumque displiceat” (PL 40).

⁶ Augustine argues also on internal words uttered silently in one’s mind and their relationship with external words, non-linguistic words and divine words, for example in *De magistro*, *De doctrina Christiana* and *De Trinitate* 15. See Toom (231-8).

and finds a certain kind of permissibility in one's mindset that is not pleased with telling a lie, as this mindset signifies his/her love toward the truth/God.

In another text, we find a similar understanding by Augustine.

It cannot be denied that people who lie only for the salvation of others have made great progress in goodness; but it is the good will of those who have made such progress, not their lying, that is rightly praised and even rewarded with temporal gifts. It is enough to excuse their lying without praising it as well, especially in the case of the heirs of the new covenant, to whom these words are addressed: "Let your word be yes, yes or no, no: anything more than this comes from the evil one" (Mt. 5, 37).⁷

Augustine leads us to focus on one's good will (*benevolentia*). He does not prohibit the act of lying itself in a case that one has a good will.⁸ He admits that the act of lying is excused. However, he does not admit that the act is praised. This explanation accords with what we read in the previous text.⁹ Augustine focuses on the mindset of a person who tells a lie willingly or unwillingly, and argues that he or she should not be praised and should not be pleased with the act of lying even if he or she tells a lie for a good reason. He finds a consistent love toward truth/God in the mind of a person who tells a lie unwillingly. Therefore, we should not simply say that Augustine's ban on lying is absolute. We should interpret that with more nuance he thinks that we should not tell any lie willingly, because every lie is a sin.

Augustine's focus on the mindset of a person who tells a lie willingly or unwillingly as a criterion for discerning whether the person is a liar or not is unique. In the beginning of *De mendacio*, he starts his argument on what is a lie by examining the case of inconsistency between the speaker's belief or opinion and the fact or the utterance, but he does not set out the criterion of lying in these inconsistencies. Proceeding from the argument about what is a lie and moving to the argument on whether a lie is sometimes useful, Augustine mentions the idea of a lie by the mouth in one's heart that we saw above. In

⁷ See Augustine *ench.*, 7, 22: "Plurimum quidem ad bonum profecisse homines qui non nisi pro salute hominis mentiuntur, non est negandum; sed in eorum tali profectu merito laudatur, vel etiam temporaliter remuneratur, benevolentia non fallacia; quae ut ignoscatur sat est, non ut etiam praedicetur, maxime in heredibus testamenti novi, quibus dicitur: sit in ore vestro: est est; non non: quod enim amplius est a malo est" (PL 40). English translation by Harbert.

⁸ Whether one has a good will or not is not decided by his or her self-judgement. It depends on whether the will goes righteously toward God who is the ultimate goodness.

⁹ This accords with Decosimo's interpretation as well in the point that Augustine mentions "the case of the heirs of the new covenant" whose words are in accord with divine words.

this argument, he sets the criterion of lying in one's mindset that ought to love truth/God. We can see that Augustine develops his argument in this book and shows his unique criterion for discerning whether the person is a liar or not. A similar idea is shown in his *De doctrina Christiana*. In the argument on how to discover the truth in the contents of the Scriptures, he says that,

Anyone who derives from the divine scriptures an idea which is useful for supporting this double love of God and neighbor but fails to say what the writer demonstrably meant in the passage has not made a fatal error, and is certainly not a liar (*doctr. chr.*, 1, 36, 40; tr. Green).¹⁰

He suggests focusing on the love that an interpreter has when one discerns whether his or her interpretation is correct or in error. Augustine's emphasis on one's mindset toward truth/God is continuous.

Results of Telling a Lie

However, whether one tells a lie willingly or unwillingly, the result seems to be the same, in that the lie that is uttered is the same. Is there any difference in the result when, for example, a politician tells a lie to citizens willingly for a public benefit, as opposed to when a politician does the same unwillingly? As we see above, Augustine thinks that the difference between telling a lie willingly and telling it unwillingly depends on whether the person loves truth/God or not. Let us refer to Augustine's argument on what happens to those who do not love truth. In book 10 of *Confessiones*, he explains that enjoyment is what all people want, since "all agree that they want to enjoy [*consonarent se velle gaudere*]" (10, 21, 31), and that truth also is what all people want, since even those who would gladly deceive others do not wish to be deceived.¹¹ So he concludes that all people "prefer to rejoice over the truth [*de veritate se malle gaudere*]" (10, 22, 33).¹² Then, if everyone wants to rejoice over the truth, why can it be that some

¹⁰ Partly changed in the citation, it is noteworthy that Augustine mentions the mindset of a liar in this argument as well. Also in *De mendacio* 19, 40, Augustine focuses on the importance of loving God and neighbor after the argument about the mouth in one's heart.

¹¹ See *conf.*, 10, 23, 33. "Everyone wants this happy life, this life which alone deserves to be called happy; all want it, all want joy in the truth. I have met plenty of people who would gladly deceive others, but no one who wants to be deceived. Where else, then, did they come to know this happy life, except where they also came to know about truth? Since they do not wish to be deceived, they must love truth" (tr. Boulding 259).

¹² The object that one enjoys signifies what his or her will (*velle*) intends. The intention of the will is, as it were, an intention toward an ultimate aim of his or her life. Solignac adds a comment to the term *gaudium/gaudere*: "Les mots latin 'gaudium. gaudere' sont plus riches, semble-t-il, que les correspondants français 'joie, se réjouir'. Ils indiquent un épanouissement

do not love the truth and would gladly deceive others? Augustine explains that those people “love truth in such a way that those who love something else wish to regard what they love as truth” (10, 23, 34).” In this argument in *Confessiones*, it is not obvious whom Augustine has in mind when he criticizes those who deceive others,¹³ but it is obvious that he thinks that they love what they should not love, while intending to love truth. Their will (*velle*) drifts in the wrong direction, that is, if they even have will at all.

He explains what would happen to those people as a result.

They love truth when it enlightens them, but hate it when it accuses them. In this attitude of reluctance to be deceived and intent to deceive others they love truth when it reveals itself but hate it when it reveals them. Truth will therefore take its revenge: when people refuse to be shown up by it, truth will show them up willy-nilly and yet elude them. ...It is paid back in a coin which is the opposite to what it desires, for while the soul cannot hide from truth, truth hides from the soul (*conf.*, 10, 23, 34; tr. Boulding 260).¹⁴

Generally, a liar or a deceiver has parallel realities of truth and falsehood in his or her mind (*mend.*, 3, 3). Liars think that they themselves know and uphold the truth. If they do not know or believe something to be true, they cannot be liars. Therefore, we should not interpret that the truth that Augustine argues here is a specific reality in one’s mind. The truth that would elude liars is one that is identifiable by joy (*gaudium*) and a happy life (*beata vita*).¹⁵ Augustine thinks that a person who enjoys what he or she should not enjoy cannot enjoy a truly happy life.¹⁶ In this way, a person who gladly deceives others loses joy, a

parfait de l’âme dont le bonheur est essentiellement lié à la possession et à la jouissance de la vérité, c’est-à-dire de Dieu. (Skutella, Solignac, Tréhorel and Bouissou 201.)

¹³ It would be natural for us to suppose that he keeps Manicheans in his mind, according to Kotzé’s examination.

¹⁴ “Amant eam lucentem, oderunt eam redarguentem. quia enim falli nolunt et fallere volunt, amant eam, cum se ipsa indicat, et oderunt eam, cum eos ipsos indicat. inde retribuet eis, ut, qui se ab ea manifestari nolunt, et eos nolentes manifestet et eis ipsa non sit manifesta. (...) contra illi redditur, ut ipse non lateat veritatem, ipsum autem veritas lateat” (Latin text from Skutella, Solignac, Tréhorel and Bouissou).

¹⁵ To Augustine, *veritas* is the object of quest. Kuntz explains the range of Augustine’s quest for truth, selecting eight phases.

¹⁶ See *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum*, 1, 3, 4. “We all certainly desire to live happily; and there is no human being but assents to this statement almost before it is made. But the title happy cannot, in my opinion, belong either to him who has not what he loves, whatever it may be, or to him who has what he loves if it is hurtful or to him who does not love what he has, although it is good in perfection. For one who seeks what he cannot obtain suffers torture, and one who has got what is not desirable is cheated, and one

truly happy life—that is to say, that they lose truth. The same applies to a person who tells a lie willingly for a good reason. Regardless of whether it is for a good reason or not, he or she would lose true happiness, because he or she is happy with lying, when he or she should not be happy at all. Augustine thinks that a liar’s mindset causes the loss of true happiness as a result.

We can find other consequences of lying that Augustine suggests in his texts. In the beginning of *conf.* 10, Augustine explains the purpose of confessing. That is, that even if he does not confess himself to God, everything would still be naked to His eyes (10, 2, 2). To other people, however, he can offer no proof that he confesses truthfully (10, 3, 3). Nonetheless, he does confess also to other people, as “the charity that makes them good assures them that I am not lying when I confess about myself; that very charity in them believes me” (10, 3, 4). Augustine thinks that to confess is to do the opposite of lying. In the argument in book 10, Augustine relates the act of his confession with the expression of “*veritatem facere*.” He begins his confession with a declaration: “Truth it is that I want to do [*volo eam (veritatem) facere*]” (10, 1, 1). Then, what is “*veritatem facere*”? “*Veritatem facere*” is a scriptural phrase (*Io. ev. tr.*, 3, 21; 1, 6). Augustine explains it in *Io. ev. tr.*:

And when your own deeds will begin to displease you, from that time your good works begin, as you find fault with your evil works. The confession of evil works is the beginning of good works. You do the truth, and come to the light. How is it you do the truth? Thou dost not caress, nor soothe, nor flatter yourself; nor say, “I am righteous,” while you are unrighteous: thus, you begin to do the truth (12, 13; tr, Schaff).¹⁷

Also, in this argument, Augustine links confession with doing the truth. Augustine does not think that doing the truth is an act that can be completed within a single action. Not caressing, not soothing, not flattering oneself makes him or her “begin to do the truth (*incipere facere veritatem*).” Augustine regards “doing the truth” as a continuous act which is done with the mindset of recognizing one’s evil and not justifying oneself.

who does not seek for what is worth seeking for is diseased. Now in all these cases the mind cannot but be unhappy, and happiness and unhappiness cannot reside at the same time in one man; so in none of these cases can the man be happy. I find, then, a fourth case, where the happy life exists, –when that which is man’s chief good is both loved and possessed. For what do we call enjoyment but having at hand the objects of love?” (tr. Scothert).

¹⁷ “Cum autem coeperit tibi displicere quod fecisti, inde incipiunt bona opera tua, quia accusas mala opera tua. Initium operum bonorum, confessio est operum malorum. Facis veritatem, et venis ad lucem. Quid est: Facis veritatem? Non te palpas, non tibi blandiris, non te adulas; non dicis: Iustus sum, cum sis iniquus, et incipis facere veritatem” (PL 35).

Here also it is noteworthy that Augustine focuses on one's mentality to displease oneself with their deeds. As we saw above, in the arguments on lying, Augustine argues that one should not be praised and should not be pleased with the act of lying even if he or she tells a lie for a good reason. Following this argument, Augustine also says that "your sin would not have displeased you, if God did not shine into you" (12, 13). He emphasizes the necessity of God's support in order to recognize one's own sin. That is, if you tell a lie and are pleased with it, you are without God's support. In the following argument, Augustine mentions the name of Christ and explains as follows:

Awake, then, while it is day: the day shines, Christ is the day. (...) He that walks in His love and mercy, even being free from those great and deadly sins, such crimes as murder, theft, adultery; still, because of those which seem to be minute sins, of tongue, or of thought, or of intemperance in things permitted, he does the truth in confession, and comes to the light in good works: since many minute sins, if they be neglected, kill. Minute are the drops that swell the rivers; minute are the grains of sand; but if much sand is put together, the heap presses and crushes. Bilge-water neglected in the hold does the same thing as a rushing wave. Gradually it leaks in through the hold; and by long leaking in and no pumping out, it sinks the ship (*Io. ev. tr.*, 12, 14).¹⁸

Augustine explains here the result of not confessing. He warns that even a minute sin would be able to bring about a much greater sin, using the metaphor of a grain of sand having the power to crush a ship when the grains are added together. If we focus only on the direct result of a single act of lying—for example, the fact that a life was saved by telling a lie—there might seem to be no difference between an act that is done willingly and an act that is done unwillingly. That is to say, the act might look like a good thing that should be praised. However, Augustine does not think this result is the end result of the lie. He encourages us to see additional things that will result from the will that is pleased with one's act, justifies it, does not reflect on oneself and does not confess his or her evil. Augustine warns that such a mindset can bring about a greater evil. As we

¹⁸ "Evigilate ergo cum dies est: lucet dies, Christus est dies. ...In dilectione autem eius et in misericordia eius qui ambulat, etiam liberatus ab illis lethalibus et grandibus peccatis, qualia sunt facinora, homicidia, furta, adulteria; propter illa quae minuta videntur esse peccata linguae, aut cogitationum, aut immoderationis in rebus concessis, facit veritatem confessionis, et venit ad lucem in operibus bonis: quoniam minuta plura peccata si neglegantur, occidunt. minutae sunt guttae quae flumina implent: minuta sunt grana arenae; sed si multa arena imponatur, premit atque opprimit. hoc facit sentina neglecta, quod facit fluctus irruens: paulatim per sentinam intrat; sed diu intrando et non exhauriendo, mergit navim."

confirmed above, he thinks that doing the truth is a continuous act. He finds repetitive avoidance of the truth in the mindset of a person who tells a lie willingly.

Let us refer to the argument in *conf.* 10 again to see another result of lying. O'Donnell points out the connection between Augustine's mention of "*veritatem facere*" in the first chapter of the book (10, 1, 1) and the examination of the current state of his desires in the last half of the book (10, 30, 41-39, 64), quoting the above argument in *Io. ev. tr.* 12.¹⁹ In fact, in the examination of his desire in *Confessiones* book 10, Augustine confesses minute sins of his own, just as he emphasizes the necessity of confessing minute sins in the above quotation from *Io. ev. tr.*, 12, 14. In a similar examination of the state of his desires in *Soliloquia*, he asserts his self-confidence in overcoming sinful desires (*sol.*, 1, 10, 17). Conversely, in the examination in *Confessiones*, he emphasizes the weakness of his will and the difficulty of knowing himself and of overcoming sinful desires. "It is frequently hard to tell whether proper care for the body indicates that further support is needed, or deceitful, pleasure-seeking greed is demanding what will gratify it" (10, 31, 44); "whatever discernment there is in me is shrouded by dismal darkness and hidden from my sight, so that as my mind questions itself about its powers, it can scarcely trust any reply it receives" (10, 32, 48); "I have become an enigma to myself, and herein lies my sickness" (10, 33, 50). Augustine regards the weakness of will and the ignorance of what we should do as the evidence of the corrupted nature (*natura vitiata*) of human beings (*pecc. mer.*, 1, 37, 68-39, 70; *ench.*, 22, 81). We cannot heal this corrupted nature by ourselves; rather, Augustine thinks that Christ is the only one who can heal it. As such, he concludes book 10 with an argument for Christ.²⁰ For Augustine, the examination of his desires is a demonstration of doing the truth (*veritatem facere*), and such examination is the way to find hope in Christ; i.e., in true healing. Now it is not difficult to imagine that Augustine thinks that a person who tells a lie willingly and does not do the truth cannot walk the way to find the hope; an example of the loss of true healing due to weakness and ignorance is the result of lying.

How do We use our Words?

As we see in the first part of this chapter, if we accept Augustine's ban on lying as an absolute prohibition of every kind of lie and try to follow it, we actually might not be able to say anything. It would be the same also for Augustine. We are often involved inevitably in a sin, as Augustine highlights in his argument

¹⁹ See O'Donnell commentary for the word "*qui facit eam*" in 10, 1, 1.

²⁰ *Conf.*, 10, 43, 68-70 is appropriated to the argument on Christ: "You will heal all my infirmities through him who sits at your right hand and intercedes for us" (69).

on lying. Moreover, even when we believe that we act for a good reason and the result of the act seems to be good, it is difficult for us to judge whether the act is actually good or not, because we human beings do not know precisely what the truth is, nor what the ultimate goodness is.²¹ However, Augustine himself continues to speak. It does not come from his arrogance nor does he believe he might be wrong. As we saw in the second part of this chapter, Augustine performs “doing the truth” through confessions. Confessing is the act of speech/writing by which Augustine is able to examine himself and recognize his actual state of being. Augustine says: “O truth, you hold sovereign sway over all who turn to you for counsel, and to all of them you respond at the same time, however diverse their pleas” (*conf.*, 10, 26, 37). The expression “hold sovereign sway over” is “*praesides*” in Latin. *Praesidere* originally means to sit (*sidere*) in front of (*prae*) something. Augustine thinks that the inner-dialogue is a dialogue with the truth that sits in front of him, within himself.²² “They all appeal to you about what they want, but do not always hear what they want to hear” (10, 26, 37). The people who “love truth in such a way that those who love something else wish to regard what they love as truth” (10, 23, 34) are those who do not have a dialogue with truth within themselves, because they do not love the truth that lets them recognize the actual state of being. The inner-dialogue with truth prevents the person from being a liar, one who loves what he or she should not love.

Having a dialogue with truth is not beneficial only for oneself; Augustine finds benefits in it also for others. By expressing such a dialogue through verbal or written words, he confesses “also in the ears of believing men and women, the companions of my joy and sharers in my mortality, my fellow citizens still on pilgrimage with me, those who have gone before and those who will follow, and all who bear me company in my life” (10, 4, 6), so that “both hymns and laments ascend into your presence from the hearts of my brethren, which are your censers” (10, 4, 5). Here, Augustine refers to “those people (which includes us) as “the companions of his joy.” Sharing the same joy means loving the same thing, because we find enjoyment in what we love. The metaphor of censers signifies the unity of the direction of the people’s love/will. Augustine thinks that the words spoken/written when one confesses encourage people to love the truth together. That is, to recognize our inevitable weakness and igno-

²¹ “Perhaps God will concern himself with why we lie, will forgive some liars and punish others, but we should never presume to make such judgements ourselves. To do that is to follow the Devil’s path, and that path lead nowhere but to our damnation” (Denery 116).

²² As well known, in *Soliloquia*, the dialogue is performed with his *Ratio*. Regarding the development of the dialogue, see Stock.

rance and have hope for healing by Christ. Augustine finds utility in our words to change others' minds, prompting them to do the truth and not be liars.

That being the case, how do we use our words among people who do not love the truth and do not share our joy? In *conf.* 12, where he interprets the book of Genesis and examines others' interpretation, Augustine mentions those people.²³ Here, he points out that there are people who say "Moses did not mean what you say, but what I say" (*conf.*, 12, 25, 34), yet he does not deny that what each of them says is true. Augustine criticizes such people, saying that "they are proud, and without having grasped Moses' idea they are infatuated with their own (*amant suam*), not because it is true but because it is theirs" (12, 25, 34). Since Moses' idea is considered to be the truth, people who love their own idea as if it is Moses' do not love the truth, but love what they want to love. Augustine depicts them here as people who stubbornly insist upon their own idea without thinking much of others'. We should think back on recent events where people have insisted that facts that were inconvenient for themselves personally were "alternative facts."²⁴ They do not deny others' statements, agreeing that they are facts, yet do not think much of it, insisting simply that their statements are "alternative facts." We often have this kind of experience, where someone insists that what is convenient and favorable for them is a "fact." Such experiences show how difficult it is to change their mind by only presenting facts to them. We also find that Augustine struggles dealing with such people. What he does to counter said objectors is to "meet the challenge calmly, and reply on the lines he has already indicated," and to "patiently put up with such people" (*ibid*). Continuing to criticize them, Augustine never seems to give up changing their minds peacefully by continually speaking to them—or in other words, by using words.

In the same argument, Augustine further elaborates upon such people.

This is why we must tremble before your judgement, O lord, for your Truth is not mine, nor his, nor hers, but belongs to all of us whom you call to share it in communion with him, at the same time giving us the terrible warning not to arrogate truth to ourselves as private property, lest we find ourselves deprived of it. For anyone who appropriates what you provide for all to enjoy, and claims as his own what belongs to all, is cast out from the truth to a lie

²³ Kenney (2010) examines the dialogues with the *contradictores* in book 12. The argument in 12, 25, 34 is not mentioned there.

²⁴ CNN Politics, Conway: Trump White House offered "alternative facts" on crowd size. See <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/01/22/politics/kellyanne-conway-alternative-facts/index.html>

[*mendacium*]; for anyone who lies is speaking from what is his own (*conf.*, 12, 25, 34; tr. Boulding 333).²⁵

Augustine has his own idea that he thinks to be true, but he says that the truth is not his. It does not indicate an attitude of relativism, as Augustine continues to criticize people who say that “Moses did not mean what you say, but what I say,” yet does not deny that what each of them says is true. In Augustine’s understanding, the people in question love what they want to love. The love toward what they want to love is not in accordance with love towards the truth, even if they believe that they love truth. Augustine expresses the state of the people who love what they want to love as people who “arrogate truth to themselves as private property [*veritatem velle havere privatam*].” The mindset of someone who wants to have the truth as private property does not agree to share the truth with others. If everyone had such a mindset, a relativist mindset, everyone’s love would go in different directions and there would be no chance for us to enjoy the unity of truth/God together. For that reason, Augustine criticizes them.

It is noteworthy that Augustine mentions the term *mendacium* in the above citation as well. Those who insist on presenting their own ideas as a truth that is their private property would not feel like they are lying. However, Augustine explains that they are cast out from the truth to a lie (*a veritate ad mendacium*), as is in the above quotation. The reason that they are cast out from the truth to a lie is that they arrogate truth to themselves as private property, even though truth belongs to all of us. They love the truth in the wrong way. In other words, they do not love the truth in the right way, even though they might think they do. Thus, they are cast out to a lie. You see that the concept of *mendacium* here is in accordance with the one that we read in *De mendacio* in the first part of this chapter. Whether one tells a lie with the mouth in one’s heart depends on whether he or she truly loves the truth or not. The direction of one’s love/will decides which way he or she will go, be it towards truth or lie. Furthermore, Augustine includes the scriptural phrase “anyone who lies is speaking from what is his own” (Io. 8: 44). The subject of, speaking from what is his own, in the scriptural text is the devil. Based on these things, we can suppose that the reason that Augustine never stopped speaking to them is as follows: Even if objectors look like devils, we need to believe they are just fallen angels and to keep on speaking with them, because we cannot enjoy the unity of truth/God together if we are alone. If you are a

²⁵ “Ideoque, domine, tremenda sunt iudicia tua, quoniam veritas tua nec mea est nec illius aut illius, sed omnium nostrum, quos ad eius communionem publice vocas, terribiliter admonens nos, ut eam nolimus habere privatam, ne privemur ea. nam quisquis id, quod tu omnibus ad fruentum proponis, sibi proprie vindicat et suum vult esse quod omnium est, a communi propellitur ad sua, hoc est a veritate ad mendacium. qui enim loquitur mendacium, de suo loquitur.”

relativist, or you try to destroy your objectors, you will never be able to enjoy the truth together with others. Augustine thinks that we love truth in the right way when we love it together with others including people who are seen as objectors.

Regarding “from what is his own,” Augustine says in *conf.* 10 that “Your best servant is the one who is less intent to hearing from you what accords with his own will, and more on embracing with his will what he has heard from you” (10, 26, 37). In the beginning of book 10, he already declares that “I can say nothing right to other people unless you have heard it from me first, nor can you even hear anything of the kind from me which you have not first told me” (10, 2, 2). Augustine thinks that hearing from God/truth precedes speaking truth. Therefore, the dialogue with truth within oneself is necessary for speaking truth to others. Speaking truth is *veritatem facere*, that is, a confession. When we use words for our inner dialogue with the truth, those words help us enjoy a truly happy life together with others. It may feel as if our inner dialogue is independent of the external world in which we live, but Augustine thinks that the inner dialogue develops a loving relationship with the external world.

Conclusion

In the first part of this chapter, I suggested that Augustine’s ban on lying was not unrealistic. In fact, the ban has a certain kind of permissibility. Augustine’s argument is that since every lie is a sin, no one should tell any kind of lie willingly, because someone who tells a lie willingly is pleased with lying and does not love the truth. What is the difference between the results of a lie that was told willingly and a lie that was told unwillingly? In the second part of the chapter, we saw what Augustine has found to be the results of lying, including: 1. The mindset of not loving the truth does not lead a person to true happiness; liars lose true happiness as a result; 2. The mindset of lying willingly can cause great evil that could harm others, even if the lie is minute, because such a mindset finds evading God customary; and 3. Such mindsets also deprive one of hope for healing, that is, hope for healing from the inevitable weakness and ignorance that all human beings have. Christ is the only being who can perform the healing. Augustine thinks that liars’ minds do not seek out the Savior, because they believe they can act honorably by themselves. As a result, they lose any chance at eternal healing. In the last part of the chapter, we saw that Augustine found utility in our words. To avoid being a liar and to change the mind of a liar, Augustine thinks that having an inner-dialogue with truth within oneself is useful. When the dialogue is performed within oneself, the words assist in uncovering our actual state of mind, preventing us from being a liar who does not love truth; a liar

who loves what he or she wants to love. When we speak to others with the words that we hear through the inner-dialogue, the words help us to enjoy the truth together with others, because the words make people recognize the weakness and ignorance within themselves and invites them to listen to the others' ideas.

Therefore, Augustine's strict ban on lying does not come from unrealistic doctrine. Rather, it comes from his insight into reality. He actually realizes that there are situations where we cannot avoid telling a lie. He realizes our true arrogance when we tell a lie willingly for a good reason. It can be said that Augustine's idea approaches the philosophers who argue that we humans can never grasp the ultimate truth as long as we live in this world. However, Augustine doesn't think that we should be allowed to judge what is true and what is false practically for the present, like a Sophist does, by thinking that we would be able to arrive at the truth only by means of our intelligence. Focusing on our arrogance when we tell a lie willingly is unique to Augustine. This focus comes from his recognition of our ignorance and weakness; the "ignorance" being that we cannot fully know the states of our own will, and the weakness being that we cannot fully control the state of our will. Christ, as the healer of said ignorance and weakness, therefore takes on a practical and essential role in Augustine's argument on lying. The act of confessing to God and neighbor is set as an act done by listening to truth/Christ and speaking with words. Confession is the path that Augustine finds for living in our world where lies are rampant.

In our world, some tell a lie to gain reputation. Some tell a lie to fill their pockets. You may say that their lies are harmless in so far as they do not harm others, but Augustine would not agree with that opinion. As those people who tell a lie for their own benefit love what they want to love. Even in the event that someone tells a lie willingly to save others' lives, he would criticize such a person. Augustine thinks that their mindset would prevent them from true happiness, and that their mindset would cause great evil in the future. He cautions that even a sin that we may regard as minute would be able to threaten our peace. However, in our world where lies are rampant, Augustine is not merely lamenting the situation. He finds hope in the fact that we have words with which to love truth together with others. We use our words both for telling lies and for searching for the truth. Augustine tells us how to use our words to create a peaceful world. Feehan (181) says that "we must count Augustine as one of the principle thinkers over time who has helped us to understand just what is morally wrong with lying and liars." I'd like to add that Augustine does not only teach us the evil of lying, he also helps us understand how fortunate we are to be able to overcome evil. Such fortune, a gift from God, can be found in our words which connect us with the truth and with other people by love.



Works cited

- Augustine of Hippo. "Lying." *Treatises on Various Subjects*, Translated by Mary Sarah Muldowney, New York, NY, Catholic University of America Press, 1952, pp. 46-110.
- . *The Confessions*. Translated by Maria Boulding, New York, NY, New City Press, 2015.
- . "The Enchiridion on Faith Hope and Charity (tans.);" *The Augustine Catechism*, translated by Bruce Harbert, edited by Boniface Ramsey, New York, NY, New City Press, 1999.
- . "Les Confessions: Libres VII-XIII." *OEuvres de Saint Augustin*, edited by Martin Skutella, Aimé Solignac, Eugène Tréhorel and André Bouissou, Paris, Études augustiniennes, 1996.
- Brinton, Alan. "St. Augustine and the Problem of Deception in the Religious Persuasion." *Religious Studies*, vol. 19, 1983, pp. 437-50.
- Bok, Sissela. *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*. New York, NY, Vintage Books, 1979.
- Carson, Thomas L. "The Definition of Lying." *NOÛS*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2006, pp. 284-306.
- Chrétien, Jean-L. *Saint Augustin et les Actes de Parole*. Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2002.
- Decosimo, David. "Just Lies: Finding Augustine's Ethics of Public Lying in his Treatments of Lying and Killing." *Journal of Religious Ethics*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2010, pp. 661-697.
- Denery II, Dallas .G. *The Devil Wins: A History of Lying from the Garden of Eden to the Enlightenment*. Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2015.
- Feehan, Thomas D. "Augustine on lying and deception." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 19, 1988, pp. 131-139.
- . "The Morality of Lying in St. Augustine." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 21, 1990, pp. 67-81.
- . "Augustine's own Examples of Lying." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 22, 1991, pp. 165-190.
- Griffiths, Paul J. "The Gift and the Lie: Augustine on Lying." *Communio: International Catholic Review*, vol. 26, Spring, 1999, pp. 5-30.
- . *Lying: an Augustinian Theology of Duplicity*. Michigan, Brazos Press, 2004.
- Jordan, Mark. "Words and Word: Incarnation and Signification in Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 11, 1980, pp. 175-196.

- Kenney, John P. "The Contradictores of Confessions XII." *Augustine and philosophy*, edited by Phillip Cary, John Doody and Kim Paffenroth, New York, Lexington Books, 2010, pp. 145-165.
- Kotzé, Annemaré. *Augustine's Confessions: Communicative Purpose and Audience*. Leiden, Boston, Brill, 2004.
- Kuntz, Paul G. "St. Augustine's Quest for Truth: The Adequacy of a Christian Philosophy." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 13, 1982, pp. 1-21.
- Levenick, Cristopher D. "Exceptis Igitur Iocis: Augustine on Lying, Joking, and Jesting." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 35, no. 2, 2004, pp. 301-323.
- O'Donnell, James J. *The Confessions of Augustine: An Electronic Edition*. 1992, <http://www.stoa.org/hippo/>
- Ramsey, Boniface, O.P. "Two Traditions on Lying and Deception in the Ancient Church." *Thomist*, vol. 49, 1985, pp. 504-533.
- Sarr, Pierre. "Discours sur le Mensonge de Platon à Saint Agustin: Continuité ou Rupture." *Dialogues d'Histoire Ancienne*, vol. 36, no. 2, 2010, pp. 9-29.
- Stock, Brian. *Augustine's Inner Dialogue: The Philosophical Soliloquy in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge & New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Tollefsen, Cristopher. *Lying and Christian Ethics*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Toom, Tarmo. *Thought Clothed with Sound: Augustine's Christological Hermeneutics in De doctrina Christiana*. Bern, Peter Lang, 2002.

**Peace through Order: Applying
Augustine's Concepts of
Society, Security and Conflict
in a Disordered World**

La paz a través del orden: la aplicación
de los conceptos de Agustín de sociedad,
seguridad y conflicto en un mundo desordenado

12

Matthew A. Gaumer
United States Army, United States of America



Abstract

The purpose of this chapter is to contextualize Augustine's world and show how that world shaped his understanding of the nature of war, peace and security, before identifying possible applications for today's geopolitical situations. The emphasis of this contribution is on connecting the reception of Augustine's thought with the current global environment, in order to assess how future challenges might be addressed, and to determine how stability, peace, and prosperity might be achieved for the maximum amount of people in the twenty-first century.

Keywords: conflict short of war, just war, peace, social order.



Resumen

El propósito de este capítulo es contextualizar el mundo de Agustín y mostrar cómo ese mundo dio forma a su comprensión de la naturaleza de la guerra, la paz y la seguridad, antes de identificar posibles aplicaciones para las situaciones geopolíticas de hoy. Esta contribución enfatiza en conectar la recepción del pensamiento de san Agustín con el entorno global actual, evaluar cómo podrían abordarse los desafíos futuros y determinar cómo se puede lograr la estabilidad, la paz y la prosperidad para la cantidad máxima de personas en el siglo XXI.

Palabras claves: guerra justa, orden social, paz, conflicto sin guerra.



Sobre el autor | About the author

Matthew A. Gaumer [matthewgaumer@gmail.com]

Captain Matthew Gaumer is a Defense Strategy Analyst for the Russia Strategic Initiative of the U.S. European Command, at Stuttgart, Germany. He has commanded at the company level and served in multiple operational and joint assignments in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America. He holds a BA in Philosophy from Loyola University Chicago, a MA in Catholic Thought from Saint Meinrad School of Theology, an Advanced MA in Theology; Religious Studies from the University of Leuven, a MA in Logistics Management from American Military University, and a dual PhD / SThD from the University of Leuven (Belgium). His military education includes the Transportation Basic Officer Leader Course and Combined Logistics Captain Career Course.



Cómo citar en MLA / How to cite in MLA

Gaumer, Matthew. "Peace through Order: Applying Augustine's Concepts of Society, Security and Conflict in a Disordered World." *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguarte Bendimez y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2019, pp. 341-355, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.12

Global Unraveling and New Forms of Sovereignty

The well-known writer, Robert D. Kaplan, made waves among international affairs literati with his short but poignant December 2013 article “Augustine’s World, What Late Antiquity Says About the 21st Century and the Syrian Crisis.” His central insight captured something that had been percolating in the conversations of the well-connected, the scholars, media analysts, and the like for years: that is, not only is there an evolving disintegration of governmental authority and social systems, but the “postmodern version of Late Antiquity has just begun” (Kaplan 4). Augustine’s time, like our own, was not marked by an outbreak of peace.

This assessment is not a cause for panic, however, but rather for the humble acknowledgement that the world most of us have known, with its mostly static nation states, largely similar economic systems, and derivative ways of life, is in the process of changing (Haass; Kupchan). Evoking a comparison between Augustine’s Late Antiquity and our world means that societies and the world order are once again undergoing a fundamental transformation, and not just a moderate realignment. It is possible to infer from this transformation the potential for a reversion to our not-so-long-ago past: significant breakdowns in social controls, a greater proliferation of violence, and the overall degradation of human existence on this planet (Diamond 154-66 and 286-92).

With this in mind, it is interesting to discover that lessons can be learned from the reception of Augustine of Hippo in terms of how he understood the unraveling of the Roman world, the purpose and nature of social order, and his concept of peace. The remainder of the chapter is dedicated to analyzing the current global environment through Augustine’s lens, in the hope that the tectonic changes of our time might be addressed, thereby leading to an equitable outcome for all, with peace as an end-state.

The Late Roman Context

Data from various scientific disciplines, such as economic history, archaeology, and military history, invariably lead to a picture of Late Antiquity riven by disorder, disruption, and decay. Between the years of Augustine’s birth and death, 354 to 430, those alive saw a Roman Empire undergoing distressing changes. Two major Roman military campaigns (Battle of Adrianople in 378 and the Sack of Rome in 410) ended in the worst catastrophes since Hannibal’s invasions of the Italian peninsula during the Second Punic War (218-216 BCE), and the Teutoburg Forest massacre (9 CE) (Davis 82-87). There were eighteen major battles between Roman forces and internal and external enemies (Nodegoat). At

the same time, substantive imperial leadership all but disappeared until Theodosius' ascension in 379, border controls and taxation mechanisms collapsed, and Roman imperial troop levels surged, while liminal garrisons simultaneously emptied and assumed a defensive posture (Southern 262-64), deploying troops to more contested areas of the empire (Bachrach 62; Wijnendaele 22).

For Augustine and contemporaries, the heart of civilization appeared to be collapsing from internal decay and external pressures, a slow-motion reversal of *imperium sine fine*. This was also evident in the dissolution of the imperial supply chain and manufacturing base, and the resulting economic difficulties (Cowen). It would not have been difficult for a Roman to see the writing on the wall: manufacturing output and building construction were rapidly shrinking; metal and ceramic products were degrading in quality; there was less money in circulation; less trade throughput between seaports; and notably fewer foodstuff transfers between entrepôts (Ward-Perkins). In Roman Africa, traditional urban architectural preference for wall-free "open cities" changed too in the fifth century, with stone and less-permanent palisades appearing in cities and settlements throughout the region (Sears 120).

Matching this malaise in security and the economy, the Roman imperial administration, so highly regarded for its effective control over central institutions and far-flung provinces, was now split between Constantinople, Milan, Ravenna, and Rome, with a new preoccupation on internal policing with imperial forces (Fuhrmann 239-42). In the last two decades of Augustine's life, he learned of Rome's sack by Visigoth troops in 410 (De Bruyn 411; Arbesmann 316); the ordered departure of the imperial mission from Britannia; the disintegration of border settlements and forts in Germania (redeployment of forces from frontier zones intensified instability as the deterrent effect of Roman armies vanished; Goldsworthy); and the siege of his own North Africa by Vandal elements (though he passed away before they took Hippo in 430) (Wijnendaele 92-96).

With this background in mind, a viable way to analyze Augustine emerges: there seems to be consistency in his treatment of war and the role of the State throughout his career. This contrasts with his views on other themes, which changed pronouncedly over time, for example: the permissibility of coercing heretics, the nature of law, and the doctrines of Cyprian of Carthage (Gaumer).

Augustine's Views on War and Peace, Order and Security

As early as 388, before his return to Africa, Augustine began to use language that would endure throughout his writing. It was language that connected the

utility of war as a mechanism of the State, to effect order with setting the conditions for peace in human society: "...bellum geritur ut pax acquiratur" (*ep.*, 189 qd. in Lenihan 41 and 48). He supported these views across most categories of his literary corpus: philosophical and exegetical works, letters, sermons, polemical writings, and especially in *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* and *De civitate Dei*. While Augustine's writings, as applied to war, peace, and order, are well known, and consensus has been long established in several main areas, I find this consensus to be constricted by the historical schools of thought that has shaped it. Too often Augustine is used as a foil by one side against another to show how the Late Antique thinker either despised or endorsed the crossover of worldly concerns into the life of the Church.

At this point, I would like to offer an alternative understanding of the interplay between war, peace and order, by touching on Augustine's "two cities" paradigm, which is articulated in *De civitate Dei*. While not entirely linear, Augustine seems to have a relational model of the two cities, the earthly and heavenly cities. Before going further, it is important to note that the earthly city is not simply made up of those who are here and now in the material world, versus those in an immaterial heaven (Cary-Elwes). Augustine makes it clear that believers are already citizens in the heavenly city, albeit imperfectly, while simultaneously living in the midst of the earthly city. This is the juncture where war, peace, and order enter my analysis.

The goal of happiness, or a human's strongest driving force, can only be achieved in a state of peace (Renna). Peace itself is internal (it is personal harmony of the heart with God) and external to a person (*concordia* between people), and both are predicated on the proper ordering of things (a certain type of harmony or *concordia*): "...pax omnium rerum, tranquillitas ordinis" (*civ.*, 19,13, qd. in Lenihan 60). In concrete terms, it is difficult to be happy and for a heart to be raised up if one's basic needs are not met with food to provide energy, shelter to stay warm, or the reasonable assurance that oneself, one's neighbors, and those one loves will not be violently killed. These basics can only be delivered when a baseline stability and general order are in place (Fukuyama 546-47). Without these basics, or when they are overindulged, interior peace is unattainable for the individual and exterior peace impossible for a community (Swift 377).

One significant way stability and order are facilitated is through laws guiding personal and group behavior. This question is much too expansive to be covered here, but, what happens when the desires of one person or group physically threaten another? For Augustine, as a pastor and Roman citizen, the unfortunate reality is that in the earthly city armed force is necessary to

protect a group's stability and order against inordinate desires, such as greed, lust, envy, or hatred (Berrouard 643); it is, in a sense, "the normal condition of society" (Markus 13). In a manner, war is defensible if it is intended to assure peace, stability, and order (Swift 382; Russell 875).

So, while the perfect peace of the heavenly city—total *concordia*, cannot be attained in the earthly city, we can have a foretaste thereof, and peace is a good that should be sought as the *sine qua non* for happiness in this life.

Ensuring Stability in the Post-Westphalian System

Returning to the present day, the remainder of this chapter is about ensuring order and peace in an increasingly disordered world.

Before moving headlong into an application scenario, it is important to clarify something. While there are stunning similarities between the geo-strategic contexts of modern society and the late Roman Empire, they cannot be directly equated. More to the point, the central problem in the late Roman Empire was that of hypo-coherence. Also known as *complexity theory* in medical and physics fields (Solomon and Shir 2003), hypo/hyper-coherence is also used in the humanities (Cline 165-66; Flannery) to classify regulatory mechanisms that keep complex organizations and societies healthy, but which begin to decrease unified action to meet changes in time and space. We can take as an example the virus that the human immune system cannot detect and fight. The key issue facing our global society today is the opposite: hyper-coherence. This is the propensity for a system to overcompensate in relation to changes, challenges, and threats, with a normative and monolithic response: more of the same (Dark).

Our world faces dramatic challenges because there are currently too many such changes, they are simultaneous, and increasingly interconnected (Khanna). An example would be climate change, caused by excess CO₂ (Bourne 156-58). Behind this effect is the positive causal story of efficiency, economic growth, a rise in living standards, and technological progress worldwide (Morris). The bad news is we are producing too many emissions and destroying our ecosystems. Despite the warning signs, the factors that drive CO₂ production must keep pace with growing human populations, resulting in a warming planet, contested natural resources, and the stage set for an overdue disease pandemic. In sum, instead of mitigating the problem, the hyper-coherence of our global systems means the problem is getting exacerbated and creating unparalleled risk for efficient governance and societal management (Patel and Palotty).

Hyper-coherence actually transforms the myriad structures that support our daily lives into a system of systems that is forecast to become a critical vulnerability (Sarathy). This is a vulnerability that most people probably do not think about: the fragility of our global life support system (Cowen 56; Sharma). For the most part, the public do not realize that even a partial disruption to the world's integrated physical and digital supply chains would cause financial markets, food stocks, and energy supplies to overcompensate for the shortfall, cascade into panic mode and become frozen within a matter of one or two days. At worst, an eventual breakdown of our modern way of life could occur within weeks of a global supply chain breakdown. For example, cities around the world have only have approximately one to three days' food and energy to sustain their populations (Bourne 4). It is easy to envisage the chaos that could ensue without continuing supplies. Our society could survive without internet, perhaps, even without easy flights around the world, but throughout the world, society would come to an immediate halt without constant energy and a steady source of nourishment for our seven or more billion people.

Another consequence of the hyper-coherence of our global system of systems is already evident in the return of major power competition. Unlike in past centuries, or during the Cold War, major powers no longer seek to impose ideologies, but seek instead to control supply chains to ensure stability for their populations (Khanna 138-50). Even though major power competition has returned, this should not be considered a validation of nation-State sovereignty in the long term.

Our global system, with its interconnected communications networks and the rapid transmission of ideas and people, means national borders are becoming less significant (Sassen 2006, 2008, 2013; Elden, 2009, 2013). Furthermore, events such as the Arab Spring and the many color revolutions in years past demonstrate nation-States only have a fragile control over their populations even while inequality within groups retains its historical specter (Scheidel).

One more aspect I should comment on is the global increase in alternative methods of conflict, which is one of the most immediate dangers today. Alternative methods of conflict are actions short of armed combat, but that seek the same ends as a traditional war. In the past few years this practice has surfaced around the world: unattributed cyber-attacks against critical infrastructure (Segal); influencing of other populations through misinformation; unattributed combat support; and the manipulation of international law to carry out policy objectives (Mazower).

These acts are difficult to confront as they fall outside historical patterns of warfare, yet they have already caused entire regions of the planet to become destabilized and have increased the risk of major wars. This is just one more example where conventional just war theory fails to satisfy modern realities (Clark 141).

The Way Ahead

Instead of finishing on a depressing note, it seems more appropriate to end in the spirit of Augustine: with a focus on hope and love. To put it simply, world events today are testing the survival of our species. Geo-political undercurrents ensure that the violent tendencies of humanity will only be magnified unless a new approach to controlling threats and the application of security is developed (Randers 180-89). While that might seem impossible, Augustine's writings from 1600 years ago do have value today. His overriding concerns for order, stability, and peace in the earthy city are simple yet relevant. This warrants further elucidation.

There are four overlapping areas that are strategic focal points for realizing a future that is ordered, stable, and peaceful: hedging against ecosystem crises, hardening of resources, ensuring an equitable economic system, and global threat reduction. The first point has been touched on throughout this essay. An increasingly depleted and abused planet means all life is placed at a higher level of risk. In this regard, what can be planned to mitigate calamities arising from ecosystem deterioration?

For starters, government authorities should anticipate the sort of unified response that would be required as climate change makes densely populated areas of the planet uninhabitable. The sorts of emergency responses to tsunamis, hurricanes, and the like, would be significantly less disruptive than the forecasts modelling southern Asia, with its billions, as uninhabitable in the not-too-distant future (Im, Pal and Eltahir). Part of anticipating such extreme events is the reality that potentially hundreds of millions of people would require resettlement. To get climatological refugees to greener pastures would require in-transit humanitarian assistance. Militaries, such as the United States', have mature doctrine and demonstrated capabilities in this area, but no single organization could handle a global calamity alone. As the mass migration from Asia and Africa into Europe in recent years has shown, governing authorities ought to dedicate more assets to safeguarding refugees from exploitation, violence, and dangerous transport conditions.

Closely associated with vigilance in responding to the human dimension of ecosystem degradation is the existential imperative to accelerate planning development to protect life-sustaining resources. This specifically means protecting fresh water, energy reserves, farms, building minerals, and global common goods such as oceans, forests, and clean air against man-made despoliation. It may seem evident this ought to be a critical priority to anyone concerned with social order and life of humans, but in practice this is easily taken for granted. Unless one has faced serious drought, famine, or desertification, it is hard to understand how quickly “normal life” can be turned into a race for survival. As the planet becomes more crowded, more contested, and less hospitable, the primary means of avoiding a worst possible scenario is in collaborative solution making. One model, small in scale but powerful in its promise, is the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, an island far to the north of mainland Norway. This example shows that governments can in fact overcome parochialism in jointly investing in the face of potential life-ending danger.

Connecting anthropology with ecology and agrology is the third focal point: generating a more equitable economic model. This proposal is not a recommendation for wealth redistribution, rather a consideration of the types of emphasis the future will need. One of the key weaknesses in the global economy today is the obsession with consumption and growth that depends on depleting resources. A more equitable model is centered on ensuring enough is provided globally to sustain populations, thus reducing ballooning demand that triggers mass migration in search of life support. Another aspect is the role of protecting the global supply chain so that the only beneficiaries of it are in wealthier “fortress” countries. No amount of insularity can stop a wave of hungry and motivated souls indefinitely. On the flip-side, a more equitable global economic system would have greatly reduced protectionism with nominal borders that allow for the freedom of movement of goods, not antiquated customs requirements that hurt the most vulnerable. Greater emphasis ought to be placed on making economic support available in a decentralized way. Such subsidiarity would allow more even and nimble access to resources that can stabilize communities that are at risk. A final note in the economic sphere is the importance for governing authorities to emphasize more investment in research and development. The best solutions besetting the world today are likely yet unthought or unformulated.

The final focal point is imminent in its potential consequences. Order, stability, and peace are simply pipe-dreams at this stage in human evolution without guarantors of safety: defense and policing agencies. Such organizations hedge

against human compulsion to violence and more importantly can deter and eliminate lethal threats. What I mean in this regard is that the reduction of global threats is more important than ever. Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and electromagnetic risks are abundant and humanity is at an elevated risk by proliferated weapons systems that can easily distribute such deadly harbingers.

In coming decades, global threat reduction will be most evident in the utility of coordinated responses to some of the most likely trends: pandemic detection and containment, protection of infrastructure (waterlines, energy conduits, food storage, and transportation arteries as examples), and protection of cyber and space domains (hardening lines of communication). One aspect that cannot be left out is the increasing demand for the ballooning rise of megacities to be secured against internal and external threats. While the majority of the human population already lives in urban areas today, within the next 30-40 years, the percentage that will live in cities with more than 20 million people will take on even greater preponderance in the global political order. That means megacities stand to be bastions of stability or potentially cauldrons of misery and violence. It is an important ending thought to realize that while this author approaches these strategic focal points from a military perspective, the only feasible way to get after them is through a whole of society approach. In this construct, security forces serve as a bulwark against man's darker angels.

While it is perhaps unrealistic to aspire to a post-violent human society where governments no longer furnish protection and security for their populations, it is not foolish to imagine people coming together to contain and solve global threats to our existence and way of life (Naím 233-44). It is worth imagining a world where all governments eliminate all stocks of nuclear and chemical weapons, and where militaries and security agencies protect against poaching of the environment and against human rights abuses. Since the global supply chain network is the enabling mechanism for nearly every material feature of our lives today, it is only logical that armed forces should be transitioned away from the policy concerns of individual nations and re-focused on hardening supply chains so that civilian populations do not pay dearly for criminal acts (Lakoff).

Augustine speaks to us today: order, stability, peace among people, and oneness are goods worthy of our efforts; in fact necessary (Keohane). Human nature and behavior dictate armed forces are necessary for the time being (Coker 89), but productive cooperation can evolve at the pace of global threats: ensuring peace, reducing lethal means of action, protecting interconnected networks, and most importantly, working to support the survival of our species and planet.



Works cited

- Arbesmann, Rudolph. "The Idea of Rome in the Sermons of St. Augustine." *Augustiniana*, vol. 4, 1954, pp. 305-324.
- Bachrach, Bernard S. "On Roman Ramparts 300-1300." *The Cambridge History of Warfare*, edited by Geoffrey Parker, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Berrouard, Marie-François. "Bellum." *Augustinus-Lexikon*, vol. 1, edited by Cornelius Mayer, Basel, Schwabe, 1986, pp. 638-645.
- Burt, Donald X. "Peace." *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids, MI, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999, pp. 629-632.
- De Bruyn, Theodore S. "Ambivalence Within a 'Totalizing Discourse': Augustine's Sermons on the Sack of Rome." *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, vol. 1, 1993, pp. 405-421.
- Cary-Elwes, Columba. "Peace in the 'City of God.'" *La Cuidad de Dios*, vol. 167, 1955, pp. 417-431.
- Coker, Christopher. *Can War be Eliminated?* Cambridge, Polity Press, 2014.
- Cowen, Deborah. *The Deadly Life of Logistics: Mapping Violence in Global Trade*. Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 2014.
- Dark, K. R. *The Waves of Time: Long-Term Change and International Relations*. New York, Continuum, 1998.
- Flannery, Kent V. "The Cultural Evolution of Civilizations." *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics*, vol. 3, 1972, pp. 399-426.
- Fuhrmann, Christopher J. *Policing the Roman Empire: Soldiers, Administration, and Public Order*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Fukuyama, Francis. *Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy*. New York, Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2014.
- Gat, Azar. *War in Human Civilization*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Gaumer, Matthew. *Augustine's Cyprian: Authority in Roman Africa*. Leiden, Brill, 2016.
- Goldsworthy, Adrian. *Pax Romana: War, Peace and Conquest in the Roman World*. New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2016.
- Haass, Richard. *A World in Disarray: American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order*. New York, Penguin Press, 2017.
- Im, Eun-Soon, Jeremy S. Pal and Elfatih A.B. Eltahir. "Deadly heat waves projected in the densely populated agricultural regions of South Asia." *Science Advances*, vol. 3, n.o 8, e1603322, 2017, <http://advances.sciencemag.org/content/3/8/e1603322>.

- Johnson, Neil. *Simply Complexity: A Clear Guide to Complexity Theory*. Oxford, OneWorld Publications, 2007.
- Kaplan, Robert. "Augustine's world: What Late Antiquity says about the 21st century and the Syrian crisis". *Foreign Policy*, n.o 203, 2013, pp. 16-18.
- Keohane, Robert O. *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Khanna, Parag. *Connectography: Mapping the Future of Global Civilization*. New York, Random House, 2016.
- Kupchan, Charles A. *No One's World: The West, The Rising Rest, and the Coming Global Turn*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Lakoff, Andrew. "From Population to Vital System: National Security and the Changing Object of Public Health." *ARC Working Paper*, n.o 7, 2007.
- Lenihan, David A. "The Just War Theory in the Work of Saint Augustine." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 19, 1988, pp. 37-70.
- Markus, R. A. "Saint Augustine's View on the 'Just War.'" *The Church and War. Papers Read at the Twenty-First Summer Meetings and the Twenty-Second Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, edited by W. J. Shields London, Basil Blackwell, 1983, pp. 1-13.
- Mazower, Mark. *Governing the World: The History of an Idea, 1815 to the Present*. New York, Penguin Books, 2012.
- Morris, Ian. *War: What is it Good For? The Role of Conflict in Civilisation, from Primates to Robots*. London, Profile Books, 2015.
- Náim, Moises. *The End of Power: From Boardrooms to Battlefields and Churches to States, Why Being in Charge isn't what it Used to Be*. New York, Basic Books, 2013.
- Nodegoat Public Interface. Battles, <http://battles.nodegoat.net/viewer.p/23/385/scenario/1/geo/fullscreen>. Accessed 1 dec. 1 2017.
- Pacioni, Virgilio. "Order." *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids, MI, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999, pp. 598-599.
- Patel, Ronak B. and David P. Palotty IV. "Climate Change and Urbanization: Challenges to Global Security and Stability." *Joint Force Quarterly*, vol. 89, n.o 2, 2018, pp. 93-98.
- Randers, Jorgen. 2052: *The Global Forecast for the Next Forty Years. A report to the Club of Rome commemorating the 40th anniversary of The Limits of Growth*. White River Junction, VT, Chelsea Green Publishing, 2012.
- Renna, Thomas. "The Idea of Peace in the Augustinian Tradition 400-1200." *Augustinian Studies*, vol. 10, 1973, pp. 105-112.
- Russell, Frederick H. "War." *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan D. Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids, MI, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999, pp. 875-876.

- Sarathy, Ravi. "Security and the Global Supply Chain." *Transportation Journal*, vol. 45, n.o 4, 2006, 28-51.
- Scheidel, Walter. *The Great Leveler: Violence and the History of Inequality from the Stone Age to the Twenty-First Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017.
- Sears, Gareth. *The Cities of Roman Africa*. Gloucestershire, The History Press, 2011.
- Segal, Adam. *The Hacked World Order: How Nations Fight, Trade, Maneuver, and Manipulate in the Digital Age*. New York, Public Affairs, 2016.
- Sharma, Ruchir. *The Rise and Fall of Nations: Ten Rules of Change in the Post-Crisis World*. London, Penguin Books, 2016.
- Solomon, Sorin and Bran Shir. "Complexity; a Science at 30." *European Physical Society*, vol. 34, no. 2, 2003, pp. 54-57.
- Southern, Pat. *The Roman Army: A Social and Institutional History*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Swift, Louis J. "Augustine on War and Killing: Another View." *Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 66, n.o 3, 1973, pp. 369-383.
- Ward-Perkins, Bryan. *The Fall of Rome and End of Civilization*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Wynn, Phillip. *Augustine on War and Military Service*. Minneapolis, MN, Fortress Press, 2013.

**Practicing Peace, Preaching
Psalms: The Centrality
of the *Enarrationes in
Psalmos* to Augustine's
Developing Theological
Understanding of Peace**

Practicando la paz, predicando los
salmos: la centralidad de las
Enarrationes in Psalmos para la
comprensión del desarrollo
teológico de Agustín sobre la paz

13

Kevin G. Grove
University of Notre Dame, United States of America



Abstract

This chapter claims that while the subject of peace permeates the Augustinian corpus, Augustine's theological understanding of peace—which progressed from an absence of conflict to the graced concord of love as the whole Christ—developed as he labored to preach on the Psalms. Augustine began to preach on the Psalms in the 390s and continued to do so for the rest of his life, rendering his *Enarrationes in Psalmos* his longest work. The Psalms, replete with the language of peace—interior and exterior peace as well as the peace of Jerusalem—were the texts Augustine regularly expounded as he preached *ad populum* in his own Basilica of Peace. By looking at Augustine's theology of peace through the *Enarrationes*, the chapter shows that peace as it appears in his preaching is only fully understood for Augustine when seen through his Christology. The *Enarrationes in Psalmos* provide evidence of the practice of peace. Augustine suggests earthly peace and love might be exercised both within his congregation and among the dwellers of North Africa of the fifth century. Having examined the *Enarrationes* themselves, the chapter suggests the relevance of this reading for two other texts, considering the examples of an early and a late treatment of peace: *de Sermone Domini in Monte* and *De civitate Dei*, respectively.

Keywords: Psalms, preaching, peace, christology, *Christus totus*, Jerusalem.



Resumen

Este capítulo afirma que, si bien el tema de la paz impregna el cuerpo agustino, la comprensión teológica de la paz de Agustín –que progresó de una ausencia de conflicto a la honrada concordia del amor como todo Cristo– se desarrolló mientras trabajaba para predicar sobre los salmos. San Agustín comenzó a predicar sobre los salmos en 390 y continuó haciéndolo por el resto de su vida, discutiéndolo de sus *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, su trabajo más largo. Los salmos, repletos del lenguaje de la paz, tanto la paz interior y exterior como la paz de Jerusalén, fueron los textos que Agustín exponía regularmente cuando predicaba *ad populum* en su propia Basílica de la Paz. Al observar la teología de la paz de Agustín a través de las *Enarrationes*, el presente capítulo muestra que la paz, tal como aparece en su predicación, solo se entiende completamente para san Agustín cuando se la ve a través de su cristología. Las *Enarrationes in Psalmos* proporcionan evidencia de la práctica de la paz. Agustín sugiere que la paz y el amor terrenales se pueden ejercer tanto dentro de su congregación como entre los habitantes del norte de África del siglo quinto. Después de examinar las *Enarrationes*, el capítulo sugiere la relevancia de esta lectura para otros dos textos, considerando los ejemplos de un tratamiento temprano y tardío de la paz: de *Sermone Domini in Monte* y *De Civitate Dei*, respectivamente.

Palabras claves: salmos, predicación, paz, Cristología, *Christus totus*, Jerusalén.



Sobre el autor | About the author

Kevin G. Grove [kgrove1@nd.edu]

Kevin G. Grove, CSC, is an assistant professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame. He completed his Ph.D. in philosophical theology at the University of Cambridge (Trinity College) and postdoctoral research at L'Institut Catholique of Paris and the Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study. Grove's research interests include St. Augustine, Christology, memory, and Basil Moreau.



Cómo citar en MLA / How to cite in MLA

Grove, Kevin G. "Practicing Peace, Preaching Psalms: The Centrality of the *Enarrationes in Psalmos* to Augustine's Developing Theological Understanding of Peace" *Agustín de Hipona como Doctor Pacis: estudios sobre la paz en el mundo contemporáneo*, edited by Anthony Dupont, Enrique Eguiarte Bendimez y Carlos Vilabona, Editorial Uniagustiniana, 2019, pp. 357-383, doi: 10.28970/9789585498235.13

Introduction

The Psalms functioned like a scriptural and theological laboratory in which the thought of Augustine concerning peace developed as he preached. From his earliest years as priest and bishop in the 390s until nearly the end of his life, Augustine continued to preach and comment upon the Psalms, rendering the collection of these texts, his *Enarrationes in Psalmos* (cited hereafter, *en. Ps.*), his longest work both in number of words and in number of years that it took to complete. In his *Confessiones* (cited hereafter, *conf.*), as Williams has pointed out, Augustine wrote that the Psalms of David were not only a part of his conversion, but that the texts themselves refashioned Augustine.

As a priest and bishop, Augustine preached upon psalms in the basilicas of Carthage and Hippo in Northern Africa. These sermons, both on feast days and regular occasions, reveal a classically trained rhetor drawing on the depths of his training as he figuratively explicated scriptural texts for his people. Augustine understood himself to be in competition on Sunday afternoons with the amphitheater in town. He commends his congregants for standing to hear and engage a full sermon rather than those in the amphitheater seated and entertained (*en. Ps.*, 147,21). Scholars like Hildegund Müller suggest that the interior of Augustine's basilica would likely have been rather plain. After the singing or reading of the text, Augustine would have stood to preach and remained standing. His sermons were recorded by *notarii* as he spoke. That others wrote them down adds to the value of the *en. Ps.* because Augustine never went back to revise them. They are not commented upon in his *Retractationes* (cited hereafter, *retr.*). On account of this, the texts preserve the dynamic relations and even side comments that Augustine makes to his congregation. He will explain to them that they have labored hard enough for one day and that they will pick up with the remainder of a particular psalm the following day or following liturgy. He will reference the heat and the weather, exhort people to pay attention for a short while longer, or comment on a reaction that he might have received after saying something deliberately provocative. Thus, sermons of Augustine the exegete not only reveal him as a thinker and theologian, but him as thinker in the midst of his praying congregation. Augustine, as Michael Fiedrowicz has explained, is both performing and inhabiting the texts, for the scriptures function as both mirror and medicine in his theology.

Besides the Psalms' importance for Augustine in terms of his longstanding exegetical engagement as a preacher, they are simultaneously full of the language of peace. Other than the book of Leviticus, which includes repeated

instruction on peace offerings, the Psalms are the scriptural book with the highest density of peace language in both the Old and New Testaments. In the Psalms one finds the two cities trope of Jerusalem and Babylon which structures Augustine's *De Civitate Dei.*, (cited hereafter *civ.*) The psalms give expression both to the experience of not knowing how to sing the songs of Zion at the rivers of Babylon as well as how to make ascents—physical in the case of the actual pilgrimage to Jerusalem and spiritual for Augustine and his hearers—up to the city of Jerusalem. Augustine, who commented on all 150 psalms, treats the issue of peace in his expositions of nearly fifty of those psalms.

Yet, the frequency of Augustine's investigating the issue of peace in his preaching on the Psalms is only part of the reason for choosing the *en. Ps.* for this study. As Augustine scholar Michael Cameron has suggested and my own work developed, Augustine's understanding of Christ grew as he continued to preach on the Psalms. For he, like other patristic authors, read the Psalms as words of and in Christ. This is a most happy confluence for this study of Augustine's theological development concerning peace. In the texts where Augustine is most frequently grappling with and commenting on the issue of peace, he is also working to expound and explain his own account of the mediation that Christ brought and continues to impart. And so, this study draws out from Augustine's preaching on the Psalms a theology of Christ's peace being mediated to Augustine and his North African hearers. In encountering the Psalms, we examine a site of Christological praxis where peace is not merely theorized but inhabited and desired by the living, breathing, body of Christ.

Method

The approach of this paper builds upon two complementary methods of assessing Augustine's theology of peace in extant scholarship—peace as inner peace and peace as eschatological collective (this second type of peace also relates to earthly peace).

George Lawless treats the issue of inner peace as an aspect of Augustine's theological anthropology in *conf.* The word *pax*, in its variant forms, occurs nearly as much as the word *confessio* (45). As such, Lawless points out that, the quest for peace, part and parcel of the quest for God, forms a major axis in early Augustinian thought (60). One need not look further than the climactic address to God in the middle of Augustine's exploration of memory in *conf.*, 10: "You called, shouted, broke through my deafness; you flared, blazed, banished my blindness; you lavished your fragrance, I gasped, and now I pant for you;

I tasted you, and I hunger and thirst; you touched me, and I burned for your peace” (*conf.*, 10, 27, 28). Augustine describes the experience of God in terms not only of sensory experiences fulfilled but also of peace. Yet, Augustine will continue from this high Latin poetics to investigate his sensory experiences and desires for the remainder of *conf.*, 10. I have argued in my own work that though Augustine searches for God in his own desires, he cannot find God as located or contained there. Peace is not fully found in Augustine’s sensory experiences, just as earlier in the book he was not able to establish God fully within his own memory (13–28).

Thinkers like Lawless show the desire for inner peace to be a primary expression for the individual’s quest for God, even when that quest might be partial and frustrated. Lawless intimates, but does not investigate, the correlation between individual peace and both the concord and discord which characterize human corporate relations in *civ.* Nevertheless, Lawless establishes the centrality of the trope of peace for the individual’s search for God.

Concerning the eschatological collective, Thomas Camelot, in his article “St. Augustine, Doctor of Peace,” highlights the heavenly and eschatological dimension of Christian peace. Christian peace, as Camelot explains, is the hope of the heavenly city, a perfectly ordered and harmonious enjoyment of God and one another (p. 79). Those on earth work—inspired by eschatological hope of true peace—in faith to enjoy peace here below. Though “imperfect and fragile” this peace is the pursuit of Christians in the earthly city. Camelot and others (Dodaro; Elshtain) who comment upon *civ.*, rightly point out the eschatological nature of peace in the heavenly city, even as people strive for peace as an earthly good.

Building from both of these methods of examining peace—one from the interior search of *conf.* and the second in terms of the heavenly city, *civ.*—I will follow a method that includes both the individual and the collective. I acknowledge that the collective in Augustinian understandings of peace is at times about the state and politics, but I limit this study to focus on the Christological collective. This method is what I will call the *Christus totus* method of the *en. Ps.* The *Christus totus*, or “whole Christ,” was a communal construct of head and members which Augustine developed while preaching on the Psalms. It allowed him to hold together the eschatological perfection of Christ ascended into heaven (Christ the head) along with those who individually and together are journeying here below (the members). In as much as head and members form one, whole Christ, terms like “peace” are not only held in hope, but practiced in practical ways by Christ’s members here below.

This method is productive for five distinct outcomes for considering Augustine's theology of peace, each of which we will treat in turn. In the first instance, focusing on Christology helps to hold together a very diverse semantic field for peace. Second, because Augustine is convinced that Christ is peace (Eph 2:14), tracking the development of his whole Christ simultaneously reveals developments in his ideas of peace. Third, his mature Christology is one of speaking, singing, and participating as the Psalms image the vibrant life of the whole Christ. This whole Christ becomes the place for preaching, singing, and participating in peace as well. Fourth, the whole Christ assumes that human beings do not have peace on their own. This assumption on its own could seem to reflect the darkened and grim view of human persons which the late Augustine is sometimes alleged (BeDuhn). However, as I intend to demonstrate, in the whole Christ, the admission of the failures of or lacks in peace are ever a restatement of the need for healing in the whole Christ. In the final section, I place this work into relief with two of Augustine's treatises. I explore how Augustine's preaching on peace is suggestive for interpreting his later work (*civ.*) as well as how it might hint at development from his earlier (*De Sermone Domini in Monte*) (cited hereafter *s. Dom. mon.*).

Psalms and the Semantics of Peace

The *en. Ps.* show forth a diverse semantic field for the term peace. In his conclusion to *en. Ps.* 134, Augustine explains peace as it relates to Jerusalem, which, he preaches to his congregants, means "vision of peace" (134,36). Augustine is speaking of the eschatological vision of the heavenly Jerusalem, a city where people will live without worry of the walls crumbling. Christ himself lives in the city and guards it. This "vision of peace" actually contains quite a number of terms and concepts brought together. Augustine writes that such a peace: cannot be praised sufficiently by the human tongue; those experiencing a vision of peace will have no further exposure to enemies within the Church, no exposure to enemies outside of the Church, no exposure to enemies in their own flesh, and no exposure to enemies in their own thoughts (134,36). Thus, the peace that correlates with rest and defines citizenship in the heavenly Jerusalem can be described as effecting multiple strata of reality. Peace affects one's thoughts, physical body, the body of the Church, as well as relations with those outside of the Church. This is important because heavenly peace is peace in all of these aspects. Augustine's treatment of peace in his *en. Ps.* might treat one aspect of peace or another in a particular sermon. Yet, in moments of summary when he reminds his congregants of his pedagogy, Au-

gustine will employ the “vision” of Jerusalem to maintain the theological unity of these various aspects of peace.

At times, Augustine’s taking up the topic of peace arises from discord within the self (*en. Ps.*, 102,15). At other times, a single figure will achieve an inner peace that figures the whole body of Christ (*en. Ps.*, 76,8; Grove). Sinners in this world below seem to enjoy a peace of this world (*en. Ps.*, 72,10) while members of Augustine’s congregation do not have peace. Those who learn to sing a new song are learning the song of peace (*en. Ps.*, 149,2). Augustine grapples with the relation between the Law and peace (*en. Ps.*, 118,31,5). These are but a sampling of the multiform ways in which the word “peace” extends broadly within Augustine’s preaching. The result, as we shall see, is an expanded semantics of peace as the action of rightly ordered desire: singing, working in harmony, praying, preaching, and praising.

A question at this point arises: do these diverse formulations and applications of peace theologically cohere for Augustine? This essay claims that they do. Each of them has a place within Augustine’s whole Christ. Thus, in order to appreciate the unifying center of his diverse expressions of peace, we must first have in place Augustine’s unifying Christology.

Developing Christology, Developing Peace

Augustine’s Christology evolved as he continued to preach on the Psalms and read more deeply in Pauline texts. The scholarly consensus on Augustine’s Christology has also recently evolved. Twenty-five years ago, as noted by Michael Heintz (1993), it was debatable as to whether or not one could describe Augustine as having a Christology. However, as scholars have looked to Augustine’s figurative exegesis as a source of his theology (I grant that “theology” is our word, not Augustine’s), more work is coming forth about the relationship between his thinking about Christ and the act of sacred reading. I will trace a Christological development in two moments. For the first, I rely on the work of Michael Cameron’s *Christ Meets Me Everywhere* (2012). For the second, I rely on my own *Memory and the Whole Christ* (2015). Both Cameron and I are attempting to articulate watershed moments in Augustine’s development. Both moments have to do with the exegesis of Christ’s voice concerning the word “me.” Once we have established these two moments, we will be able to appreciate fully Christ’s voice as that of peace (*en. Ps.*, 84,10).

Psalm 21 stands as a foundational moment in Augustine’s exegesis. This psalm provided Augustine with a model for how the human and the divine in the

incarnate word might relate and interact. The phrase at the heart of the problem is Christ's cry of dereliction from the cross: "O God, my God, why have you forsaken me, and left me far from salvation?" (*en. Ps.*, 21,1,1). Augustine opens his explanation of the first verse by stating that "the words of this psalm are spoken in the person of the crucified one, for here at its beginning is the cry he uttered while he hung upon the cross" (*en. Ps.*, 21,1,1). With the question of who is speaking having been solved from the outset, Augustine has to explain how it is that these words could make sense on the lips of the crucified one. Augustine's earliest psalm expositions showed him wrestling with the problem of how it was that the human flesh of Jesus could speak in the text without seeming like the human part of Jesus were praying to the divine part of Jesus. The same problem is at issue here. If Jesus were truly divine, then he would have never been forsaken by God. If Jesus were truly human, then he would have known the human feeling of abandonment. Augustine clarifies the speaker by plunging into the mystery of redemption. Christ is indeed speaking, but he speaks in "the character of our old self, whose mortality he bore and which was nailed to the cross with him" (*en. Ps.*, 21,1,1). In assuming human flesh, Christ also assumed a human voice and a human death. He spoke in human words so that human beings might speak in his. He died a human death so that humans might die in him.

This is mediation with a universal effect. Augustine uses "Adam" as a trope for all men and women, representing fallen humanity after sin. Christ did not speak in imitation of, on behalf of, or even for the benefit of Adam. Rather Christ—who himself shares Adam's flesh—speaks *in the voice* of Adam because he has taken it up as his own (Cameron 154). Augustine styles this as a great, redemptive "exchange"—death for life—transacted in human flesh (Babcock 30-45). The Manichaeans had thought that someone other than Christ died upon the cross; divinity abhorred entanglement with material. Augustine's insight moved him in precisely the opposite direction. By taking up humanity's cry of dereliction, Christ did not eliminate dereliction but made it possible that those who experience dereliction—or pray the words "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me" (Ps. 21:1)—might not do so alone but in him. This opened up a new way that Christ was a mediator of divinity to humanity. In taking up flesh, the Word also took up death and a voice. Christ on the cross could not have been more human and so his salvific exchange overcame the two most human problems: sin and death. Death and dereliction no longer needed to be experienced alone, but in him.

Augustine's insight into Christ the crucified mediator employed one of his rhetorical skills. *Prosopopeia* was a Greek term for an author's impersonation of

the voice of a character either well known or invented. Known as *fictiones personarum* in the Latin rhetorical tradition, this tool makes present the voice of a person. One sees through the eyes and speaks through the voice of another. But the concept is even older than rhetorical handbooks. The psalms themselves are written such that the one who prays the Psalms sees God coming in majesty, gates lifting high their heads, and laments as one in exile. Cameron explains that “by this device the self transcends itself to become the other, even if only briefly” (181).

Augustine began to experiment with *prosopopeia* in his early psalm expositions, and it provided him a theological and basic hermeneutic for his later ones. At first, this method allowed a multiplicity of voices to speak in various ways: at times the Christian might speak, at times Christ, and at others the Church. These voices began to pray within each other—the individual in the Church, and the Church in Christ. Different voices came to form a “whole” in Christ. The practice of *prosopopeia* gave Augustine the mechanism by which Christ could speak in Adam’s voice and thereby reveal the redemption of the cross. Cameron summarizes: “*Prosopopeia*’s rhetorical transposition of voices provides Augustine with the Christian theological pattern that articulates that momentous exchange” (199). Augustine would continue to treat the crucifixion in six other early psalm expositions. In each, Christ speaks in the first person from the cross (*en. Ps.*, 15, 16, 17, 21, 27, 29, and 30).

The picture of Christ the mediator that emerges from Augustine’s consideration of Psalm 21 hinges on the theological union of voices. Christ speaks in Adam’s voice, employing *prosopopeia* not for the purpose of theatrics or declamation but for the purpose of redeeming human flesh from sin and death. In its mature formulation, Augustine’s Psalm 30 presentation of Christ the mediator and the exchange of voices captures what Augustine’s consideration of the crucifixion added to his understanding of mediation:

But in fact he who deigned to assume the form of a slave, and within that form to clothe us with himself, he who did not disdain to take us up into himself, did not disdain either to transfigure us into himself, and to speak in our words, so that we in our turn might speak in his. This is the wonderful exchange, the divine business deal, the transaction effected in this world by the heavenly dealer. He came to receive insults and give honors, he came to drain the cup of suffering and give salvation, he came to undergo death and give life (*en. Ps.*, 30.2.3).

Augustine’s second watershed insight came with his considering the relevance of Acts 9:4, and the theology of the ascension, for his continued considerations

of speaking in Christ's voice. I have shown that Augustine's mediator Christ comes to its complete configuration after the ascension, which Augustine explains in conjunction with Acts 9:4, the conversion of Paul (Grove 35-57).

When Saul was rebuked by God on the road to Damascus, a voice from heaven asked him the question: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" (Acts 9:4). Saul asks the voice to identify itself and Jesus responds: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting" (9:5). Augustine points out that Christ had certainly already ascended into heaven, and that Saul's actions could not have directly harmed the resurrected and ascended flesh of Christ (*en. Ps.*, 30,3,3). Rather, Saul had been "raging against" Christians on earth (*en. Ps.*, 30,2,3). Augustine asks why it might have been that Christ did not say why are you persecuting "my saints" or "my servants," but rather "why are you persecuting me?" (*en. Ps.*, 30,2,3). His conclusion is that when the voice of Christ spoke to Saul it was saying the equivalent of "why attack my limbs? The Head was crying out on behalf of the members, and the Head was *transfiguring the members into himself*" (*en. Ps.*, 30,2,3). The voice from heaven indicated that head and body were one. Further, Augustine explains that the relationship between head and body is continually established and renewed by means of the head. As a result, the head continues to transfigure the members into himself, even after ascending to heaven. This is Augustine's complete configuration of head and members imagery. In speaking through the members, the head "transfigures" the members into himself. Christ's mediation after the ascension is an ongoing action of transfiguration of his own body still on earth.

The central consideration of this scriptural text hinges on the same word as Augustine's consideration of Psalm 21: "me." In Psalm 21, Christ speaks from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" The "me" of the cry of dereliction is Christ, who is speaking in the voice of Adam. In Acts 9, Augustine again determines the referent of "me." This time "me" is Christ speaking in his members.

Augustine's exegesis of Acts 9:4 helped him to discover the indispensable part played by the ascension in Christ's mediation (Grove 48-57). In Augustine's homilies that treat the ascension, he builds on the language of "taking up" we have encountered in considering the incarnation and crucifixion. Christ had taken up human flesh in the incarnation of the word. Christ had also taken up other aspects of the human condition, including taking up a human death and a human voice such that he could speak in the voice of Adam on the cross. After the resurrection, Christ ascends—literally taking up a human body—to heaven. One could imagine this being the end of Christ's mediation as Augustine is clear to say

that humans do not yet glory in immortality. Christ, however, does not set down again what he has taken up. Augustine reminds his congregants that if Christ purchased their redemption in his death and resurrection, he is now gathering up after the ascension that which he bought (Grove 50). Christ the individual's body ascended, but the ascension made Augustine consider Christ's being head of a body of which human beings are members (1 Cor. 12:12). Augustine maintains that the members of the body remained connected to the head in grace, even though physically they might be on earth. From heaven then the head would experience and understand the sufferings and plight of the members.

Augustine puts this point vividly. The whole Christ functions like the tongue of a body speaking in the name of the foot. When one's foot is trampled in a crowd, the tongue cries out, "You are treading on me!" not, "You are treading on my foot." (50-51). The tongue was not crushed; the foot does not speak. Nonetheless, the unity of tongue and foot within the body allows the tongue to say "me" for both. Augustine thus does not differentiate among voices speaking Psalm 30, such as "Christ is speaking here in the prophet," for he can simply say "Christ is speaking." Christ speaks because on the cross Christ "transfigured the body's cry and made it his own" (*en. Ps.*, 30,2,11; Grove 50). The ascension extends that speaking relationship beyond Christ's immediate bodily presence on earth. Head and members mean that once separate voices within a psalm—in this text the prophet, the people redeemed, and the people in fear—are all be transfigured into the one voice from the one body of Christ.

For Augustine, the mediatory acts of Christ on earth—like transfiguring humanity's cry by taking up Psalm 21 from the cross—did not cease after he ascended to heaven. Rather, Augustine transfers these mediatory relations to the interaction between head and body. Both head and members maintain unique voices on account of the actual difference of Christ being in heaven and humans being on earth. Nevertheless, in the mystery, or *sacramentum*, of their union, as intimate as bridegroom and bride, head and members speak together.

This union of voices provides the most useful way of assessing the development of Augustine's theology of peace. Peace maps onto the same development that I have just established. A comparison of two psalm expositions, one from his very first commentaries before his whole Christ was fully configured and one from his mature exegesis, proves this point.

The first example is *en. Ps.* 28, an early exposition before the whole Christ was a fully formed concept for Augustine. The psalm closes with the line "The Lord

will bless his people with peace.” Augustine’s sermon here is flatly descriptive. Augustine simply states that peace was not promised to people here below and that strength is required to endure the “world’s storms and squalls” (*en. Ps.*, 28,11). Augustine continues to explain, however, “This same Lord will bless his people by granting them peace in himself, for he said, ‘My peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you.’” (*en. Ps.*, 28,11). Two observations are possible at this juncture. First, Augustine’s people are to be aware that life on earth has storms and squalls. Secondly, Augustine uses an insight from the Gospel of John—another important locus of his considering peace—to claim that the peace which might bless his people and be left with them is going to come from Christ.

In Augustine’s early exegesis much is undeveloped. Though the word peace actually occurs frequently in these early expositions (*en. Ps.*, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 15, 16, 28, 29), Augustine has not yet configured how it is that the peace of Christ is mediated to his earthly body. By the time of his later expositions, this has become clear. *Enarratio in Psalmo 125* provides a clear example. The psalm line of interest is, “Those who sow in tears will reap with joy” (*en. Ps.*, 125,11). Augustine describes this life as a tear-filled life in which those who sow are planting the good works of mercy. Further, Augustine describes that the place where these works of mercy are to be planted is Christ. For, he preaches, “no place is vaster than Christ” (*en. Ps.*, 125).

Those who sow works of mercy in Christ have a single harvest: peace. Yet, this peace is not for those who give half-heartedly. They imitate the kenotic gift of Christ. Augustine shows this with examples from the scriptures. He holds up Zacchaeus who welcomes Christ and gives half of what he owns to the poor (Lk. 19:8). He mentions the widow who gives of her two small coins (Lk. 21:1-4). These are the sowers and reapers of what Augustine describes as “peace on earth to people of good will” (*en. Ps.*, 125,11). Inasmuch as they are in Christ, they are ever more aware of cultivating this good will, the sowing of mercy, and the reaping of peace. Augustine writes,

“Perhaps you are also aware of some need suffered by your own kin, and then you offer help if Christ is in you; and you offer it to strangers too. And the same holds good for beggars among themselves: professional beggars, I mean. Even they have the means to help one another in times of trouble” (*en. Ps.*, 125,12).

Implicating everyone in his congregation from wealthy to families to beggars, Augustine uses their location in the whole Christ to show that the peace which

they might reap is only that which is produced by showing mercy. He continues with a flourish,

“One person is disabled and cannot walk; let another who can walk lend his feet to the lame man. Let someone who can see lend her eyes to the blind. And let one who is young and healthy lend his strength to another who is old or ill and carry him” (*en. Ps.*, 125,12).

This is the Christological body in which peace is reaped by those who sow with earthly tears. Those who reap the harvest of peace are always planting works of mercy and charity within the body of Christ.

In this section we have traced the development of Augustine’s whole Christ. It has allowed us to see, in its mature formulation, that Augustine understood the whole Christ as a location in which the members were ever being transformed and transfigured by their head. Because Augustine also correlates Christ with peace, this head and members relation within Christ also neatly configures an Augustinian exegesis of peace. It is to the practical ways in which peace is mediated within Christ that we now turn. We look at the actions of the whole Christ: preaching, singing, and participating.

Preaching, Singing, Participating

In *Enarratio in Psalmo 121*, Augustine describes how it is that the whole Christ allows individuals to participate in the being of God. Augustine extends that participation to peace. Augustine begins by describing participation in the “Selfsame” or “Being-Itself” (*Idipsum*) as a difficult idea to comprehend. He encourages his congregants to struggle, to try to understand, to strain at the edges of their intellects. After identifying Being-Itself with the Exodus theophany (3:14), I am who am, Augustine turns to Christ. In the paragraph of his sermon which follows, Augustine preaches about participation in Being-Itself based on the same insights he gathered from Psalm 21:1 and Acts 9:4. The Word from the beginning became a participant in what we are so that we might participate in the Word. Augustine preaches:

You cannot take it in, for this is too much to understand, too much to grasp. Hold on instead to what he whom you cannot understand became for you. Hold onto the flesh of Christ, onto which you, sick and helpless, left wounded and half dead by robbers, are hoisted, that you may be taken to the inn and healed there. Let us run to the house of the Lord, run all the way to that city, so that our feet may stand there, in that place which ‘is being built like a city,

which shares in the Selfsame.’ To what am I telling you to hold fast? Hold onto what Christ became for you, because Christ himself, even Christ, is rightly understood by this name, I AM WHO AM, inasmuch as he is in the form of God. In that nature wherein ‘he deemed it no robbery to be God’s equal,’ there he is Being-Itself. But that you might participate in Being-Itself, he first of all became a participant in what you are; ‘the Word was made flesh’ so that flesh might participate in the Word (*en. Ps.*, 121,5).

The ongoing Christological participation of Augustine’s hearers with Christ their head is the way in which they can know the more difficult concept of the being of God. Yet in the same passage Augustine references the place where his and his hearers’ feet might stand, namely the “forecourts of Jerusalem,” as Augustine read in Psalm 121.

As the psalmist writes that peace might reign for Jerusalem, Augustine interrogates his hearers as to what makes for the peace of Jerusalem? Augustine’s answer is simple. The peace of Jerusalem consists in acts of mercy and love (*en. Ps.*, 121,9-12). As he preaches, he recalls passages which he has used before and with which his hearers might be familiar. In describing the peace of Jerusalem for his hearers, he again calls forth the contribution of Zacchaeus and the giving of even a cup of cold water in the name of Christ (*en. Ps.*, 121,10). It is through acts of charity and mercy that people here below participate in the peace of the heavenly Jerusalem. The root of this participation, according to Augustine, is a rising above one’s own “self-seeking” in order to seek the good of the other. Thus, Augustine is able to say that the ascent to God—a common trope both in the Psalms and his modified Neoplatonism—is undertaken by the Church, the saints, the pilgrims, and the needy together (*en. Ps.*, 121,11-14).

Participation in Christ is how Augustine justifies his continuous preaching of peace. He quickly admits—and does so consistently throughout his sermons—that there is not the fullness of peace for the body of Christ during its pilgrimage on earth. Augustine preaches, “I do not yet enjoy your peace, but I preach of your peace to others. I preach it not for my own gain, as do the heretics who seek their own advancement as they say, ‘Peace be with you,’ when in truth they do not have the peace they preach to the peoples” (*en. Ps.*, 121,13). Rather, Augustine preaches peace for the sake of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, so that even now his hearers might “Pluck fruit from it, eat, drink, grow strong, and seize the prize” (*en. Ps.*, 121,14). He does not promise his hearers that they will produce the fullness of peace in their midst. Instead, by straining toward the courts of Jerusalem, they participate—together, not alone—in the peace which is rightly theirs in Christ.

In addition to Augustine's preaching, one of his favorite expressions for learning to participate in the heavenly peace of Christ is to learn to sing. The new song, which is the song of the whole Christ, is the song of peace (*en. Ps.*, 97,1). It is not a song of this world, but one learned through the scriptures and sung by whole Christ (*en. Ps.*, 149,2). To learn to sing such a song, however, is inherently difficult on account of the discordant voices of bodily desires, fatigue, vexations, cravings, and wants that plague human singers (*en. Ps.*, 84,10). The song is not determined by these things however. The voice that speaks peace is always Christ's. Augustine preaches, "The voice of Christ, the voice of God, is peace, and it calls us to peace. Come, he says, love peace, all you who are not yet at peace, for what greater benefit to yourselves can you find in me than peace?" (*en. Ps.*, 84,10). It is important here to see that Augustine is saying that the voice of Christ speaks to and in his people in the present. Though the fullness of peace is not realized on earth, the desiring of it, learning to sing of it, and speaking of it with the words of Christ simultaneously moves them along in their journey toward its attainment.

Augustine is creating in his hearers a desire to speak of the city of God without end. He heightens this desire in his congregants:

be in a city... my brothers and sisters, when I begin to speak about that city I do not want to stop, especially when offenses grow rank all around us. We cannot help desiring that city, whence no friend departs, where no enemy gains entrance, where there is no tempter, or disturber of the peace, no one to cause divisions within God's people, none to collude with the devil in harassing the Church when the prince of demons is flung into the eternal fire, along with all those who support him and refuse to abandon his service. A peace made pure will reign among God's children: they will all love themselves as they see themselves full of God, and God will be all in all. [...] He himself will be our peace, perfect and total (*en. Ps.*, 84,10).

This is his description of the peace that is currently being spoken by the voice of Christ into him and his congregation. The final line gives the heart of Augustine's eschatology of peace: it produces a vision of the self and the neighbor as full of God. The members of Christ will have fully assumed their identity. Yet, it would be a mistake to see such eschatological language as removed from the current bodily lives of his congregants. As much as Augustine seeks to lift their hearts, desires, and voices toward the peace which satisfies, this rhetoric functions as a spiritual exercise for those who undertake it. Those who seek and desire peace also, he claims, begin to act justly or to love justice as "peace's friend" (*en. Ps.*, 84,12). Quarrelling with peace's friend includes for

Augustine: stealing, committing adultery, doing to another what one does not wish to endure, or saying to another what one would not wish to hear (*en. Ps.*, 84,12). By acting justly, one simultaneously lives more fully his or her identity as Christ's peace. Augustine says of those who act justly, "You will not need to seek [peace] for long, for she will run to meet you, so that she may kiss justice" (*en. Ps.*, 84,12). One acts justly and becomes just. As one desires, sings, and speaks of peace, he or she participates in Christ's peace. Augustine describes this transfigurative journeying together as Christ refashioning those who follow in his footsteps precisely by the fact that they are following, speaking, singing, and participating in the "Selfsame" along the way.

In each instance, the movement toward peace in Christ is a movement toward unity. The care extended in mercy to the poor draws together the body of Christ. At the conclusion of his sermon on Psalm 147, Augustine describes those who see God as ones at peace. Augustine asks "In what peace?" and he answers his own question "in the peace of Jerusalem, for the psalm says, 'He has established peace on your frontiers.' There we shall praise him. All of us will be one in the one Christ, and all of us will be intent upon him who is one, for nevermore shall we be a crowd of scattered individuals" (*en. Ps.*, 147,28). The sermon ends with one of Augustine's enduring concerns, that the process of seeking, desiring, and loving peace, whether by preaching, singing, or participating, might also have the effect of drawing along those who are scattered into the one Christ.

As inspiring of a vision as that is, it is secondary evidence of the divisions within North African Christianity about which Augustine was well aware and frequently preached. Thus, from Augustine's clear desire for union among those who are scattered, we turn now to his treatment of those situations where peace is not to be found.

Lacking Peace, Seeking Peace

Augustine's articulation of peace through the whole Christ is relevant for those lacking peace and those seeking peace. As such, three discernable theological points emerge.

First, earthly peacemakers in some way attain the peace that is our common good (*en. Ps.*, 127,16). This qualifies Augustine's more frequent statements that human beings are in conflict with themselves—their own bodies, desires, and wills. Humans are also in conflict outside of themselves, agreeing at times to partial peace that is "treacherous, unstable, precarious, unreliable" (*en. Ps.*,

127,16). Yet, Augustine qualifies these honest statements about the difficulties and battles of the temporally embedded life by stating that we can see the fruits of our good works. He specifically brings up works like almsgiving. Peacemakers, he says, “surround the Lord’s table like a nursery of young olive trees” (*en. Ps.*, 127,16). These young trees are fruit bearing and do so by means of their deeds for Christ. The Lord, who comes hungry, thirsty, naked, and a stranger, is the beneficiary of their fruitfulness (Mt. 25:35-40). In other words, the other members of Christ are the recipients of the good works of the peacemakers. The consequence is that peace is never established for the self or self-interest. Peacemaking is inherently a communal and community-creating exercise. The whole Christ, for Augustine, extends to the ends of the earth and includes all creation. Peacemakers who truly share in the peace of the heavenly Jerusalem have this communal end.

Second, Augustine learns from Psalm 119 to deal peaceably with those who hate peace. His first worry is about hypocrisy on the part of one who has begun to sing the new song of peace. He writes that one can test the truth of what he or she is singing only if one’s actions are in harmony with his or her song (*en. Ps.*, 147,9). If one sings the song of peace yet is not at peace, there is a dissonance between song and act. A song of Christ is equally on the heart and the actions of the lips. This proved to be a challenging teaching, especially concerning one of Augustine’s frequently commented on North African antagonists, the Donatists.

Augustine describes the Donatists as those who, at their own choosing, compromise the unity of the whole Christ. At one point, using the metaphor of the body, he refers to them as Christ’s self-amputating arm, a society only of the pure and self-selected (Cameron). In terms of peace, Augustine includes the Donatists among those who hate peace because they tear apart unity within the Catholic Church. Of great importance, however, is Augustine’s holding open the possibility that those who hate peace might be drawn again into it. Augustine shows a hesitance to cut anyone off from the possibility of reunion within the body of Christ. He writes,

Whose voice is it in this psalm—ours or theirs? You must decide! The Catholic Church says, ‘Unity must not be sacrificed; God’s church must not be rent apart. God will judge later between the bad and the good. If the bad people cannot be sorted out from the good now, they must be borne with for the time being. Bad people can be with us on the threshing-floor but cannot be in the barn. In any case, those who appear to be bad today may be good tomorrow, just as those who today are proud of their own goodness may tomorrow turn

out to be bad. Anyone who humbly tolerates bad people for a time will attain everlasting rest. This is the Catholic voice (*en. Ps.*, 119,9).

To be certain, Augustine would preach without relenting against Donatism, as Michael Cameron has shown. What makes this passage of interest is his approach to the church. Peace is not merely to be made with good people, for the church itself is a mixture of wheat and chaff on the threshing floor. Within the church these roles are not fixed. One who is good might become bad and vice versa. Thus, while Augustine supports the unity of the Catholic Church against any division, he fully realizes that those who strive for eternal peace will also tolerate those who sever and break the temporal peace of the church. It is a difficult conclusion: those who love peace and strive for it will tolerate even those who hate and break peace. For the lover of peace is one who tirelessly works for union and cannot make the mistake, as Augustine alleged that the Donatists did, of leaving behind many good people whom they stigmatized as evil (*en. Ps.*, 119,9).

Augustine summarizes the way in which those who work for peace follow the uniting, incarnational pattern in Christ. He writes, "If Christ is peace because he made two into one, how can you make one into two? In what sense are you promoters of peace, if when Christ makes two into one, you make one into two?" (*en. Ps.*, 119,9). Augustine, committed to dealing peaceably even with those who hate peace, holds union and unity as that which cannot be compromised because Christ cannot be divided.

The third point concerning Augustine and situations that lack peace returns to the Christological in-speaking which we have discussed in the evolution of the whole Christ. Following one of his oft quoted psalm lines "Seek peace and pursue it" (*en. Ps.*, 33,2,19), Augustine is honest about the ways in which peace is lacking. The individual struggles with the lusts of the body over and against the spirit. One gives alms and still takes what does not belong to him or her. One clothes the poor while still in some way taking advantage of them. Augustine reminds his hearers that they are still engaged in this earthly contest. And his advice to them is to speak, ask, and "say to God" their desire for peace. He reminds his hearers, "Listen there to our head joining his voice to ours" (*en. Ps.*, 143,9). This joining is both performed in recitation of the text of the psalm concerning peace and it is also enacted in their own lives. Augustine is trying to foster peace by stimulating and sustaining in his congregants an ongoing relationship of speech with Christ. By speaking in Christ's words, or experiencing his words joined to their own, Augustine and his congregants again know and

incarnate a word of peace which their voices and their circumstances could not otherwise produce. Those who seek peace speak in Christ.

Relevance for Reading Other Augustinian Formulations of Peace

On Augustine's teaching peace throughout his writings, Timo Weissenberg has argued that Augustine's presentation of peace is unsystematic. Weissenberg resists approaching Augustine's understanding of peace as developmental (19–32). This chapter has opened the question about Augustine, development, and peace through a different lens: Christology. In accord with a growing body of literature, I have above presented representative evidence from the *en. Ps.* for the manner in which Augustine's Christology developed as he preached on the psalms—texts in which he was looking for Christ's voice. The question now becomes: if one takes seriously the relationship between Christ and peace for Augustine, then does Augustine's developing Christology—in the places that it touches peace—reshape how he presents peace? This claim does not over-systematize his ideas of peace, but is suggestive for how peace might be studied through Christ.

To demonstrate this claim, I examine here two prominent places in which Augustine treats peace outside of the *en. Ps.* The first, *s. Dom. mon.* was completed between 392–395. It is interesting for this article because it antedates the development of Augustine's *Christus totus* logic which I have laid out above. Further, Augustine returns to issues of peace in *s. Dom. mon.* in his *retr.* (427) near the end of his career. The second example comes from *civ.* where Augustine takes up the issue of peace at length in book 19. In the first example, the relation between Christ and peace is set forth primarily through anthropology with no evidence of psalms or of the *Christus totus*. In *civ.* one compelling passage suggests that the *Christus totus* of the *Enarrationes* has aided Augustine's presentation of peace and that the two texts can work together for increased understanding of his later thought.

In *s. Dom. mon.*, Augustine interprets the line in the beatitudes that the peacemakers shall be called children of God (Mt. 5:9). Augustine's presentation of peace is largely characterized by Lawless's aforementioned category of inner peace as an aspect of anthropology. Peacemakers, as Augustine presents them, resist God in no way. They bring their bodily lusts into right relation by means of reason; they further submit their reason to Christ who

is truth (s. *Dom. mon.* 1.2.9). In this way, both the inferior and the superior within Augustine's anthropology are correlated to Christ as truth. This process of drawing harmony out of disordered lusts is akin to the way in which Augustine describes the triple *concupiscentiae* (lusts of the flesh, eyes, and pride, cf. Gen. 3:6) in his *conf.* (10,30,41; 10,41,66) such that it resolves at the end of the book through Christ the true mediator (*conf.*, 10,42,67-70). This correlation to Christ presents hope for the healing of the individual human divided against the self on account of sin. When Augustine later envisions "perfect peace" in the second book of s. *Dom. mon.*, that peace—realized only in the eschaton—is the condition of no antagonism to beatitude such that the soul and body might be reconciled entirely (s. *Dom. mon.*, 2,6,21-23). When Augustine revisits this work in his *retr.*, he reaffirms that there would always be earthly discord within the human person, rebellion against peace on account of movements against reason until the fulfillment of all things (*retr.*, 1,19,1-2). Again, the dominating focus is on reconciling the individual at war within the self.

Much more could be said of the manner in which peace within the human person might be sought and practiced in these early works. But for the purposes of this argument they show forth the relationship of Christ to peace as that of the true mediator who reconciles the post-lapsarian *distentio* of human body and soul as well as desires of the eyes, of the flesh, and pride of life. These issues of anthropological healing do not disappear for Augustine, and certainly they are present in his treatment of peace in his much later work of *civ.* It is, however, the whole Christ's relation to peace that beckons in this later text. For there one, finds an important reference to the "cry of the members."

In *civ.* 19-22, Augustine concludes his treatise with four books on the eternal destinies of the two cities. His most extensive presentation on peace is in the book 19, beginning with the meanings of peace (e.g. eternal peace as the ultimate good versus the way in which peace is at times used to describe mortal affairs of the earthly city, 19,11) and continuing through numerous issues of peace, justice, the person, the republic, and how one desires the peace that comes only with eternal life. Psalm references related to peace occur at the beginning and end (19,11; 19,26-27).¹

¹ Augustine also cites or alludes to Psalms 96 and 113 in 19,11, but his rhetorical focus at those points is against Porphyry.

At the outset, Augustine presents Jerusalem as the definition of the peace that is the ultimate good of human persons (*civ.*, 19,11). Augustine cites Psalm 147, “Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem” which also includes the line that the Lord “has made your borders peace” (147: 12-14). This definition is relatively straightforward, but helpful in two ways. First, in interpreting the meaning of the name of Jerusalem as Augustine understood it, he references what he had said before, Jerusalem means a “vision of peace” (*civ.*, 19,11). The place in which he said it “before” was in his *en. Ps.*, 64,2 or 134,36. This reference itself indicates that Augustine is considering in *civ.* what he had worked out in his preaching on the Psalms. When one looks back to see what Augustine preached on the psalm, one discover that he explicitly cites (147: 12-14), one finds tremendously powerful rhetoric. Augustine exhorts his hearers, “Be Jerusalem, all you who are here today” (*en. Ps.*, 147,7) and “I implore you, citizens of Jerusalem, I charge you by the peace of Jerusalem, by her redeemer, by Jerusalem’s builder and ruler” (*en. Ps.*, 147,1). This rhetoric works in the boundary space between individuated lack of peace (which his hearers have) and eternal peace (which they do not yet have). Augustine can thus preach without contradiction, “The psalm says, ‘sing united praise’ because you, Jerusalem, are comprised of many; but it adds ‘Praise him’ because you have become one” (147,1). This exposition is thought to be written during the first decade of the fifth century (circa 403), antecedent to *civ.* and after Augustine has started using the *Christus totus* in a mature manner in his preaching (Boulding 6.441). This rhetoric provides Augustine a temporally flexible space—already and not yet—where within the whole Christ he can consider that which the head has already attained and the members await with groaning and labor.

At the end of *civ.* 19, Augustine returns to cite Psalm 143:15: “Blessed the people whose God is the Lord” (19,26). Again, Augustine’s *Enarratio in Psalmum* 143,15 is replete with *Christus totus* rhetoric, “What about you, body of Christ? What about you, who are Christ’s members?” (143,19). It is also here that the head and members rhetoric appears explicitly in *civ.* in the context of peace. Augustine writes in the oft quoted passage:

The peace that is proper to us, in contrast, we both have now with God through faith and shall have for all eternity with God through sight. But the peace that we have here, whether the peace common to both the good and the evil or the peace proper to us alone, is a solace for wretchedness rather than the joy of blessedness. Our justice, too, although it is true justice because it is directed to the true supreme good, is such that in this life it consists in the forgiveness of sins rather than in the perfection of virtue. The prayer of the whole city of

God that is on pilgrimage here on earth bears witness to this point. In all its members it cries out to God... (19,27).

Augustine is careful here to maintain a distinction between peace as final good and peace in the earthly city, likewise justice as perfection of virtue and justice as forgiveness. At the end of these careful distinctions, two aspects of the final line of this citation merit further reflection. First, the city of God is on pilgrimage. That statement opens questions of place, mode of pilgrimage, and how one journeys there together. It would be foolish to isolate *civ.* from the scores of *en. Ps.* that treat precisely this pilgrimage of the corporate Christological person—whether figuratively described as Jerusalem, Idithun, whole Christ, or any other number of titles that Augustine used as he continued to preach. Second, and most importantly, Augustine employs the “cry of the members.” If one only read the *civ.* without the complete picture of Augustine’s preaching, then this cry—whether the cry of peace as solace for wretchedness or the cry of justice as forgiveness of sin—remains simply the expression of hope within the vicissitudes of the earthly condition. But, in light of Augustine’s preaching, one knows that Christ “transfigures” that cry by making it his own not only on the cross but after the ascension in the ongoing speech of the members. This ongoing transfiguration forms the juncture between the peace and justice of the earth and the peace and justice of the final good. That, in sum, is what Augustine’s Christology, worked out in the psalms, contributes to understanding peace in *civ.* Further, for scholarship, it suggests that Augustine’s preaching, especially in the places where he treats peace in the context of the *Christus totus*, can provide an instructive complement that deepens appreciation for the terms and possibilities in *civ.*

It may well be the case, as Weissenberg has suggested, that one cannot impose a too simple developmental progression onto Augustine’s occasional presentations on peace. Yet, his Christology does develop and inasmuch as it does, it provides nuance to his treatment of peace. *civ.* 19,11 and 19,26-27 are but suggestive examples, which could open onto larger scale research throughout Augustine’s corpus.

Conclusions

Augustine, *doctor pacis*, could be accused of being rather pessimistic about earthly peace. Within ourselves and our desires, human persons cannot sustain the peace that we seek. In our communities, we divide rather than unite. Even when we find the courage within ourselves to feed, clothe, and serve, we

can do good things for the wrong reasons, failing the integrity of purpose and being that characterize the citizens of the city of God.

A more charitable reading of Augustine would be that he, in his *en. Ps.* took as a starting point the brokenness of the world around him, including within himself. Searching for peace began from division, both within the self and society. Moreover, the search for peace pushed him to look to the fullest and final example of the heavenly Jerusalem. He would explore this heavenly peace and the search for it in many ways, from seeking it at the height of his spiritual exercises in *conf.* 10 to the theological configuration of the heavenly Jerusalem in *civ.*

However, Augustine believed eschatological peace is indeed mediated to those who lack peace now. That structure of mediation, for Augustine, is the whole Christ—an earthy, all-encompassing, and uncompromisingly united Christ. In this structure, which Augustine realized through the practice of his own spiritual reading of the Psalms, those here below can participate in their head as they journey along their way. The way is also the end. Augustine preached, “I could not have seen it myself if I had not seen it through the eyes of Christ, if indeed, I had not been in him” (*en. Ps.*, 118,30,4). His helping his congregants to realize their location in Christ gave them an already-but-not-yet experience of peace. That desire, yearning, and journeying to complete peace, however, also implicated them in their works. For journeying toward peace in Christ means becoming rightly disposed to both oneself and others. The poor, the needy, the repentant sinner, and the neighbor all became figures of primary importance in Augustine’s theology of peace. Peace simply cannot be practiced or attained if any of Christ’s members is ignored.

Augustine’s vision of peace is Christ’s. Yet he does not pass it off as an unattainable goal or a contemplation removed from the slings and arrows of discord which he and his community faced on a daily basis. Rather, Christ, in whom he and his congregants found themselves, spoke in their words so that they might speak in his. He united himself to their humanity so that they might be united to his divinity. This union is ongoing for Augustine. Christ speaks and sings a song of peace so that humans might be able to sing such a new song not only with their own voices but with Christ’s, not only with their own actions, but Christ’s. Indeed, for humans who seek peace, Augustine’s theological advice is that they—with all of their being—learn in Christ together to speak and then to sing.



Bibliography

- Augustine of Hippo. "Confessions." Translation by Maria Boulding. *The Works of Saint Augustine*. Hyde Park, New City Press. 1997.
- "The City of God." Translation by William Babcock. *The Works of Saint Augustine*, vols. 1-2, Hyde Park, New City Press, 2012-2013.
- "Expositions of the Psalms." Translation by Maria Boulding. *The Works of Saint Augustine*, vols. 1-6, Hyde Park, New City Press. 2000-2004.
- "The Lord's Sermon on the Mount." Translation by Michael Campbell. *The Works of Saint Augustine: New Testament I and II*. Hyde Park, New City Press, 2014.
- "Revisions." Translation by Roland Teske. *The Works of Saint Augustine*. Hyde Park, New City Press, 2010.
- Ayres, Lewis. "Christology as Contemplative Practice: Understanding the Unity of Natures in Augustine's Letter 137." In *In the Shadow of the Incarnation: Essays on Jesus Christ in the Early Church in Honor of Brian E. Daley, S.J.*, edited by Peter W. Martens, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2008, pp. 190-211.
- Babcock, William S. *The Christ of the Exchange: A Study in the Christology of Augustine's Enarrationes in Psalmos*. (PhD dissertation). ProQuest (7216166), 1971.
- Baker, Kimberly. "Augustine's Doctrine of the Totus Christus: Reflecting on the Church as Sacrament of Unity." *Horizons*, vol 37, no. 1, pp. 7-24, 2010.
- van Bavel, Tarsicius. "The 'Christus Totus' Idea: A Forgotten Aspect of Augustine's Spirituality." *Christology*, edited by Thomas Finan and Vincent Twomey, Dublin, Four Courts Press. 1998, pp. 84-94.
- BeDuhn, Jason. *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma: Making a "Catholic" Self*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, 2013.
- Burt, Donald. Peace. *Augustine through the Ages*, edited by J. Cavadini, M. Djuth, J. O'Donnell, and F. van Fleteren, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1999, pp. 629-632.
- Camelot, P.T. St. "Augustine, Doctor of Peace." *Cross and Crown*, 6, 1954, pp. 69-80.
- Cameron, Michael. *Augustine's Construction of Figurative Exegesis against the Donatists in the Enarrationes in Psalmos*. (PhD dissertation). ProQuest (9711185), 1996.
- *Christ Meets Me Everywhere: Augustine's Early Figurative Exegesis*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2012.

- , "The Christological Substructure of Augustine's Figurative Exegesis." *Augustine and the Bible*, edited by Pamela Bright, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1999, pp. 74-103.
- , "'Totus Christus' and the Psychagogy of Augustine's Sermons." *Augustinian Studies*, vol 36, no. 1, 2010, pp. 59-70.
- Dodaro, Robert. *Christ and the Just Society in the Thought of Augustine*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Elshtain, Jean Bethke. *Augustine and the Limits of Politics*. Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1995.
- Fiedrowicz, Michael. *Psalmus Vox Totius Christi: Studien Zu Augustins Enarrationes in Psalmos*. Freiburg, Herder, 1997.
- Grove, Kevin. *Memory and the Whole Christ: Augustine and the Psalms*. (PhD dissertation). University of Cambridge, ProQuest (10658617), 2015.
- , "When Christ Speaks in Us: Augustine, the Psalms, and Transfiguration." *Approaching the Threshold of Mystery: Liturgical Words and Theological Spaces*, edited by Joris Geldhof, Regensburg, Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 2015, pp. 61-73.
- Heintz, Michael. "The Immateriality and Eternity of the Word in St. Augustine's Sermons on the Prologue of John's Gospel." *Augustine: Presbyter factus sum*, edited by J. Lienhart, E. Muller, and R. Teske, 1993, pp. 395-402.
- Lawless, G.P. "Interior Peace in the Confessions of St. Augustine." *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 26, 1980, pp. 45-61.
- Madec, Goulven. "Le Communisme Spirituel." *Homo Spiritualis: Festgabe für Luc Verheijen*, edited by Cornelius Mayer, Würzburg, Augustinus, 1987, pp. 225-239.
- Meconi, David. *The One Christ: Augustine's Theology of Deification*. Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press, 2013.
- Mersch, Émile. *Le Corps mystique du Christ*. Paris, Desclée, 1936.
- Müller, Hildegund. "Preacher: Augustine and His Congregation." *A Companion to Augustine*, edited by M. Vessey, Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, 2012, pp. 297-309.
- Renna, T. "The Idea of Peace in the Augustinian Tradition 400-1200." *Augustinian Studies* 10, 1979, pp. 105-111.
- Weissenberg, Timo J. *Die Friedenslehre des Augustinus: Theologische Grundlagen und ethische Entfaltung*. Stuttgart, Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2005.
- Williams, Rowan. "Augustine and the Psalms." *Interpretation*, vol 58, no. 1, 2004, pp. 17-27.

Pares evaluadores de la obra

Agradecemos inmensamente a los pares evaluadores que hicieron parte de la revisión académica y de contenidos de los capítulos que conforman esta obra.

Pamela Chávez, *Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile*
Maximiliano Prada Dussán, *Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Colombia*
Diego Rosales Meana, *Centro de Investigación Social Avanzada, México*
Ignacio López, *Universidad Católica Argentina*
Philip W. Schoenberg, *Western New Mexico University, Estados Unidos*
Thomas Clemmons, *The Catholic University of America, Estados Unidos*
Tamara Saeteros Pérez, *Fundación Cervantina San Agustín, Colombia*
Gonzalo Soto Posada, *Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Colombia*
Olga Consuelo Velez Cano, *Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia*
David Hunter, *University of Kentucky, Estados Unidos*
Joseph Grabau, *Catholic University of Louvain, Bélgica*
Miles Hollingworth, *Independent Scholar, Reino Unido*
Adam Ployd, *Eden Theological Seminary, Estados Unidos*
Kim Paffenroth, *Iona College, Estados Unidos*
Pierre-Paul Walraet, *Order of the Holy Cross (Crosiers), Italia*
Paul van Geest, *University of Tilburg, Holanda*
José María Sicialini, *Universidad de San Buenaventura, Colombia*
François Gagín Gagín, *Universidad del Valle, Colombia*
Camilo Andrés Gálvez, *Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Colombia*
John D. Sehorn, *Augustine Institute, Estados Unidos*
Scott Dunham, *The University of New Brunswick, Canadá*
Johannes Brachtendorf, *Institut für philosophische Grundfragen der Theologie, Alemania*
Han-luen Kantzer Komline, *Western Technological Seminary, Estados Unidos*
Kitty Bouwman, *Editor in chief of Herademing, Holanda*
Mathias Smalbrugge, *Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Holanda*
Aäron Vanspauwen, *Catholic University of Louvain, Bélgica*

Este libro fue editado y publicado por la Editorial Uniagustiniana.
Su texto se compone con letra tipo Lora a 10 pts.

Se terminó de imprimir y encuadernar en los talleres
de CMYK Diseño e Impresos S.A.S., en agosto de 2019,
sobre papel Holmen Book de 55 grs, con un tiraje de 200 ejemplares.