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

2

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

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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 explore *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.

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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

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[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-

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[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).

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[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

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[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

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[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

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[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

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[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 prefiguration 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

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[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 character-istic 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 in-spires 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-

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[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:

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[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

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[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

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[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 affirm 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

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[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).

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[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

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[32] "Pax itaque corporis est ordinata temperatura partium, pax animae inrationalis 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.

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[33] "Age nunc, videamus homo ipse quomodo in se ipso sit ordinatissimus. Nam ex hominibus una lege sociatis populous constat, quae lex, ut dictum est, temporalis est."

[34] "Ut igitur breviter aeternae legis notionem, quae inpressa nobis est, quantum valeo, verbis explicem, ea est, qua iustum est, ut omnia sint ordinatissima."

[35] "Simul etiam te videre arbitror 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.

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