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The Two Cities in Saint Augustine

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The Two Cities in Saint Augustine

No utopia, as the very prefix declares, has any right to be real. And yet the most renowned " utopia " of them all is not only real, but, at least in the view of its first great exponent, the only true republic in the universe.

Halfway through the last decade of an exceedingly stormy intellectual and pastoral career, the greatest of the Latin Fathers and " the first modern man "[1] completed his masterpiece. At his death [2] uncivilization was enjoying its final triumph. But in *Civitas Dei*,[3] Augustine left to western culture one of its most influential pieces of literature, philosophy, and theology. Its theme is the nature and history of the greatest and most unusual nation in existence.[4]

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1. " Harnack's phrase " (J. CHRISTOPHER, " St. Augustine : Founder of the Christian Philosophy of History," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, VI [1930], 80).

2. A. D. 426.

3. Welldon makes some remarks on the genesis of the idea of the two cities. Although the definition is Saint Augustine's own, the idea originated with Our Lord Himself, Who came on earth to create a kingdom opposed to " the world " (see J. Welldon, in his edition of *De Civitate Dei* [London : Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1924], I, xlviii). " St. Paul was the first Christian writer who spoke of the company of Christian people as a State " (*ibid.*, II, 647). And Saint Augustine's conception may have been suggested to him " by his master Tychonius " (*ibid.*, p.651, the reference is to " Hahn, ' Tychonius Studien,' p.115 ").

Bardy expands this last item. Tychonius, commenting on the opposition of Jerusalem and Babylon in the Apocalypse, had written : " ' Voici les deux cités, celle de Dieu et celle du diable . . . Il est évident qu'il y a deux cités, deux royaumes, deux rois, le Christ et le diable : chacun d'eux règne sur l'une d'elles . . . Elles travaillent en commun, l'une et l'autre, l'une pour trouver le principe de sa damnation, l'autre pour trouver le principe de son salut.'

Augustin connaissait l'œuvre de Tychonius . . ." (G. BARDY, *Saint Augustin. L'Homme et l'œuvre* [Paris, Desclée, 1946], p.358.

We should add Saint Augustine's own references to the occurrence of " Civitas Dei " in the Psalms : Ps 86 3 ; 47 1, 2, 9 ; 45 5, 6 (XI, 1 [187]).

(The series of three numbers in the last parentheses is the first of many references in these notes to the text of *The City of God*. They refer to the translation under that name by D. B. ZEMA, S.J., Gerald WALSH, S.J., Grace MONAHAN, O.S.U., and D. J. HONAN, in *The Fathers of the Church*, vols. VIII, XIV, and XXIV [New York : Fathers of the Church, 1950-54]. Numerals only will be used in these citations, referring to book, chapter, and page in that order. The volume-number will not be given — Books I to VII are in Volume VIII, Books VIII to XVI in Volume XIV, and Books XVII to XVII in Volume XXIV.)

4. " Werner Jaeger (*Paideia*, II, 77) goes so far as to say that St. Augustine took Plato's Republic and Christianised it into his City of God. This surely requires some qualification " (J. BURLEIGH, *The City of God* [London, Nisbet, 1949], p.155). It surely does. Plato's utopia never existed ; Saint Augustine's City is real. The Christian character, then, is scarcely the *only* difference.

These are the facts that account for the extremely high interest which *Civitas Dei* has consistently generated during the last millennium and a half. These facts again, with the additional one that scarcely a single item among the major controversial issues stirred up by its appearance has ever been resolved, justify the continued investigation of its doctrine and difficulties. We shall entertain with Saint Augustine an analysis of the nature and history of the City of God and of its diabolical antithesis, the " City of the Devil " ; then we shall examine some of the major problems these strange polities have caused later students and interpreters of Saint Augustine's social philosophy.

The Composition of the City of God

Even a nodding acquaintance with the text of Saint Augustine suffices to label as a misconception the popular " utopian " understanding of the City of God. In Saint Augustine's eyes, the City of God is a real entity — the commonwealth of the good angels [1] and the Communion of Saints.[2] Nor is there question of *two* good societies, one of angels and one of men — the single City of God comprises them both,[3] uniting them in function of Saint Augustine's new political rationale (which we shall investigate below). It is true indeed that the " most blessed " part of the holy city is with the angels, who have never sinned and hence have never departed from it,[4] and who are assigned the task of guiding their less fortunate compatriots along the course of this earthly pilgrimage ; [5] yet there are places left open in heaven by the defection of the bad angels, and these will at last be filled to overflowing [6] by the souls of men — those now in heaven,[7] those in purgatory or limbo,[8] and those still sojourning below.

Men's half is of highly diversified makeup. It comprises all the predestined,[9] selected from every nationality [10] and even from various religious [11] and moral systems.

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1. X, 25 (163); XI, 7 (196-97), 24 (225), 28 (233); XII, 9 (262), 28 (296-97); XXII, 1 (415-16).

2. X, 21 (154).

3. XII, 1 (245).

4. XI, 9 (199).

5. X, 7 (128).

6. XXII, 1 (417). "A valuable admission " (J. RICKABY, S.J., *St. Augustine's City of God* [New York : Benziger, 1925], p.95). It seems that at least some before Saint Augustine thought that the number of the elect is limited to the number of fallen angels. Figgis thinks Saint Augustine himself did (overlooking this passage) ! "Au-

gustine seems to have held the view that men are created to fill the gaps in the celestial choir caused by the exclusion of the fallen angels ; that the elect are to fill up that number and no more " (J. FIGGIS, *The Political Aspects of S. Augustine's ' City of God '* [London : Longmans, Green, 1921], p.40 ; cf. p.76).

7. V, 16 (277-78).

8. XII, 9 (262).

9. See below, page 215.

10. XVII, 1 (17), 16 (66); XVIII, 28 (122), 47 (166); XX, 11 (282), 21 (309).

11. XIV, 1 (347). Even the pagan Sibyl belongs to the City of God (X, 27 [167]; XVIII, 23 [116]).

The same surprising variety extends through time. The human citizens of the City of God are elected from every age of the world, even from pre-Christian times.[1] Abel and Seth were its founders,[2] Abraham its father,[3] the patriarchs and prophets its citizens.[4] The Virgin Mary[5] and Christ its Citizen-Founder-King,[6] ended the Old Testament list. But the reality of the earthly contingent of the City of God is not found best in Old Testament times, during which the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem " lay hidden " from view ; it is found best in the New Testament, among the faithful who " belong openly " to Christ.[7] All the citizens of the City's present earthly pilgrimage are " the people of Christ." [8]

The New Rationale of Statehood

Then what sort of " city " can this be ? It has no visible head (at least Saint Augustine does not mention one), nor indeed *any* formal political administration ; there is no ordinary communication between the various divisions of its members ; its citizens do not even live together in one place.

To call it a " city " is of course a literary figure — quite a timely one and no doubt very effective. *The City of God* was written just as the greatest political organization history has seen was teetering and swaying before its collapse. The Roman *state* as such was a very real, anxious concept in those troubled decades, and the notion of *civitas* played a very large part in the thinking of Saint Augustine's audience — it was in some respects the master-notion of the times.

But Saint Augustine means " city " literally, as well. Man is as social by nature as he is anti-social by sin,[9] and the hierarchy of human associations is not limited to the family and the political state — it can stretch to the four corners of the world.[10]

Of course, to extend the notion of *civitas* to a group as vast and as unique as the one with which he is dealing, Saint Augustine will have to improve upon its definition a trifle. Cicero's " a multitude united by the recognition of a law and a community of interests " [11] will have to give place to " a multitude of reasonable beings voluntarily

1. XV, 1 (485), 9 (505), 10 (505), 43 (567).

2. See below, page 217.

3. XVI, 16 (520); XVII, 1 (17).

4. XVII, 16 (66), 20 (77), 1 (18), 20 (73).

5. XVII, 16 (66).

6. Citizen : *ibid.* Founder : I, Prol. (17, 18); II, 21 (110); X, 18 (150), 32 (186); XV, 8 (430), 20 (461); XVII, 4 (25), 15 (62-63); XVIII, 1 (83), 29 (124). King : I, Prol. (18); II, 21 (110); XV, 8 (430), 20 (460, 461); XVIII, 4 (25), 15 (63), 20 (76, 77); XVIII, 29 (124).

7. XVII, 1 (18), 12 (58).

8. XVI, 41 (561).

9. XII, 28 (295-96).

10. XVIII, 7 (205).

11. XIX, 24 (243).

associated in the pursuit of common interests." [1]   But this is not a very drastic amendment (only the *necessity* of *purely human* law [2] is dropped, and why not?) — the essence of polity, Saint Augustine believes, is preserved.[3]

The Nature of the City of God

The " common interest " our definition requires is theocentric : the City knows and worships one God only,[4] and lives by His Law.[5] Its directing virtues are *faith* [6] in Him Who intends to save the city and *humility* [7] in His sight.   This is the faith which is necessary for salvation, and without which there is no return to the City — for which therefore the martyrs have borne whatever might come ; and it is this humility which principally distinguishes the citizens of the City of God from their irreconcilable enemies, the subjects of the Devil.

The City of God is *just*.   The Roman republic never had genuine justice, because justice is the earmark of a true *res publica, res populi*.[8] Only the City of God is perfectly and entirely " the common weal."

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1. ". . . coetus multitudinis rationalis rerum quas diligit concordi communione sociatus " (*ibid.*) — cf. " Fecerunt itaque civitates duas amores duo " (XIV, 28 [410]) and note 3, page 217 of this article. (Latin texts from *De Civitate Dei* in this article are from the Welldon edition unless otherwise noted.)

Gilson says that in this definition Saint Augustine has in mind especially the Church (*Les métamorphoses de la cité de Dieu* [Louvain, Publications Universitaires de Louvain ; Paris, J. Vrin : 1952], p.43).

Similar definitions : " Concors hominum multitudo " (I, 15 [44]) and " Hominum multitudo aliquo societatis vinculo conligata " (XV, 8 [431-32]).

Res publica (" the weal of the people "), on the other hand, will have to be defined much more strictly.   " [Rome] . . . was never a true republic, because in it true justice was never practiced, . . . a commonwealth of a sort . . ." (II, 21 [110]).   A *city* can be unjust, but not a *commonwealth*.

2. The divine law, of course, remains. See I, Prol. (18).

3. Can Rickaby have missed this ? " Every great work, in so far as it is a work of man, is open to criticism. This of St Augustine lies open to the criticism that the Two Cities are not organized as cities . . .

In this life there is no *great gulf fixed* (Lk 16 26) between the good and the bad. St. Augustine's dichotomy is too absolute . . . A city is a visible, organized construction . . ." (RICKABY, *City of God*, p.3).

But there *is* a " great gulf " — what greater could there be than between good and evil *will* (*De Catechizandis Rudibus*, cap.19 [see note 149]) ?   And " fixed " — by predestination (see page 215).

Further, *why* does a city have to be *visibly* organized ?   Saint Augustine simply does not think so.   " City," of course, is a *word*.

4. X, 25 (163); XIX, 17 (227).

5. I, Prol. (18); XVII, 3 (20).

6. I, Prol. (17); XV, 18 (457); XIX, 17 (226, 227, 228), 18 (229); XXII, 6 (430).

" Messiahs " other than Christ always approach very curiously the establishment of " the universal society, announced by the Gospel, on its true foundation — it does not matter to them what that foundation is, provided only it be other than that of the Gospel. This latter is a scandal to reason because it transcends it. It is faith." (E. GILSON, " Foreword " to *The City of God* [New York : Fathers of the Church, 1952], VIII, lxxxv).

7. XIV, 13 (382).

8. II, 21 (110-11).

The City of God is God's temple [1] and true Sacrifice. [2] While physically distinct from the Offering of the Mass, [3] it is mystically identical with it. [4]

Ultimately, the only title to citizenship in this glorious state is not merit, [5] but the altogether gratuitous predestination of God's grace. [6] Formally, granted, it is sinlessness ; but this is only the effect of grace. [7]

The Composition of the Earthly City

Like its antithesis, the *Civitas Terrena* is composed of angels and men. But in this case the angels are devils — those who opposed the good angels in the beginning, and deserted their God. [8] Satan himself is their king, and the ruler of the wholy city [9] — hence the city's other name, " City of the Devil."

The human members of the City of the Devil are all those who, because of freely chosen sin, are not predestined to heaven. [10]

The Nature of the Earthly City

The citizens of this " other city " are wretched [11] captives of the devil, [12] earth-born and earth-bound, [13] cut off from God [14] by a perverse

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1. XII, 9 (262); XVIII, 47 (167).

2. X, 6 (125-27), 20 (153); XII, 9 (262) ; XVIII, 54 (182); XIX, 23 (242).

3. X, 20 (153).

4. *Ibid.* ; X, 6 (125-27); XIX, 23 (242).

5. XIV, 26 (407-8); XXII, 1 (417). The emphasis is on " ultimately." Figgis goes much too far : " Those who escape have no merit, not even a turning of the will, for that is the work of irresistible grace " (FIGGIS, *Political Aspects*, p.44).

Nowhere does Saint Augustine oppose divine predestination to a very real human freedom. He could not, of course, foresee the heresies of the Reformation which would caution later Catholic writers against discussing predestination without stressing simultaneously the freedom of the human will. For a clarification of grace and free will in Saint Augustine see C. BOYER, s.j., " Le système de s. Augustin sur la grâce," *Recherches de science religieuse*, XX (1930), 501-25. See also notes 1, page 216, and 4, page 217, of this article.

6. I, 35 (72); XII, 28 (297); XIV, 1 (347), 26 (407-8); XV, 1 (414), 2 (417); XVIII, 47 (166-67); XX, 7 (268); XXII, 1 (417).

7. XV, 2 (417).

8. XI, 1 (188), 28 (233), 34 (244).

9. XVIII, 41 (152). Cf. XIX, 9 (209). Cf. also " in hac daemonicola civitate," XVIII, 41 (150) — the bad pagan gods, for Saint Augustine, if they exist, are the devils, just as whichever *good* pagan gods are real are angels : VIII, 24 (70); XI, 1 (187-88).

10. XIV, 26 (408); XIII, 23 (335) ; cf. XX, 7 (268).

These constitute the vast majority (*multo plures*) of mankind — XIII, 23 (338). Whether Saint Augustine is to be understood literally here is surely not beyond question. He is a rhetorician as well as a theologian.

The author has found nothing in Saint Augustine asserting a positive divine reprobation. Burleigh, àpropos of eternal punishment for the *multo plures*, claims that Saint Augustine " does not hesitate to say they are predestinated to it " (BURLEIGH, *The City of God*, p.147). This is not really accurate.

11. XIX, 26 (245).

12. XX, 7 (268).

13. XVII, 4 (26).

14. XIX, 26 (245).

free will.[1] They are the ones who live " according to man "[2] or
" according to the flesh."[3] Worshipping false divinities in contempt
of the true God, their chief vice is humility's contrary, pride.[4]

Their interests are private, yet they lust to dominate the world.[5]
As a result their city is torn by passion, plague, and revolt.[6] They
only unite,[7] it seems, against a common enemy — the City of God :
glorying in their numbers and strength,[8] they persecute[9] that city —
to the latter's advantage ! God controls these persecutions[10] so that
the good effects (like an increase in the number of the martyrs)[11] far
outweigh the disadvantages. Saint Augustine's sanguine but sober
theological optimism is at its best here.

The last persecution[12] God will permit is the one which will rage
during the last " three years and six months " of the world's duration.[13]
Satan will be released — again with careful controls — only that all
may see how mighty a foe has been overcome by the City of God and
her Redeemer-King.[14]

Really the most deadly persecution the devil and all his hellish
minions can launch is that against the Faith itself, by inspiring heresy.[15]
He would, if he could, deprive the elect of God's Revelation, of their
unanimous subscription to the teaching of the few writers of Sacred
History, and scatter them among the adherents of the numberless
philosophers of the City of Confusion.[16]

The Origin of the Cities

The second half of *The City of God* is divided into three parts :[17]
the first of these (Books XI to XIV) treats the *origin* of the cities of
God and of the Devil, the second (Books XV to XVIII) treats their
progress, and the third (Books XIX to XXII) their *ends*. We shall

1. XI, 33 (241).

2. XIV, 9 (372).

3. *Ibid.* ; XVII, 4 (26). Cf. XIV, 4
(353-56), 9 (372).

4. XI, 33 (240); XIV, 9 (373), 13
(382).

5. I, Prol. (18).

6. XIV, 9 (373).

7. Saint Augustine did not foresee,
as Gilson remarks (" Foreword," pp.lxviii,
lxxii ; *Métamorphoses*, p.65), that the *mystical* City of the Devil, in his day split and
stormy for lack of dogma, could conceivably
become a *physical* one once its teaching
were unified (by force). It could become a
perverted image of the unidoctrinal City of
God, a kind of Antichurch. This we call
Marxism.

8. XVII, 4 (26).

9. Notes 10-14; I, 1 (18); V, 16 (277).

10. X, 21 (154).

11. *Ibid.*; heresies also strengthen the
Church, and show her wisdom, love, justice,
and power of doing good — XVIII, 15(172).

12. XX, 11 (281-82).

13. XX, 8 (271).

14. *Ibid.* (270-71).

15. XVIII, 51 (171).

16. XVIII, 41 (152), 51 (171). The
Varro Saint Augustine admired had computed 288 philosophical sects as logically possible — XIX, 1 (184).

17. SAINT AUGUSTINE, *Letter to Firmus*, Appendix to Vol. VIII of *The Fathers of
the Church* series (*City of God*, Books I-
VII), (New York : Fathers of the Church,
1950), p.400.

advert to as many of the points presented in these twelve books as will be necessary for an introductory acquaintance with the history of Saint Augustine's famous two cities.

We have seen that the angels compose a very important part of both cities. The cities began when some of the angels in " heaven " sinned by pride [1] and opposed the others.[2] Thus the rationale of the City of God was, from the very first, love of God, and that of the City of the Devil was self-love.[3]

The *human* history of the two cities began with the creation of Adam. In Book XII then, Saint Augustine passes to the history of the human race as unfolded in the Old Testament.[4] Both cities find their origin in Adam — not in actuality, however, but only in the foreknowledge of God.[5]

The Development of the Cities

As with the origin of the two cities, Saint Augustine treats their progress simultaneously (in Books XV to XVIII), and we shall follow his example.

The transition from " origin " to " progress " occurs with the flowering of the cities as virtually present in Adam to their actual presence in his eldest sons, Cain and Abel.[6] After Abel's murder the citizenship of the Heavenly City passes to his brother Seth, and henceforward two distinct lines descend from Seth and Cain.[7]

Saint Augustine pays more attention, naturally, to the progress of the City of God than to that of its antithesis. The former passes through Seth's son, Enos, down to Noah, from Noah to Abraham,[8] and from Abraham to Christ,[9] the City's Founder (although He appears at the end of the Old Testament line) and King.

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1. XIV, 13 (382).

2. XI, 1 (188), 28 (233) ; also XII, 1 (245), 9 (262).

3. XIV, 13 (382), 28 (410-11). The latter chapter is a very well known one, frequently quoted in its entirety ; e.g. FIGGIS, *Political Aspects*, pp.14-15.

4. In Books XI-XXII, " the course of human history is interpreted in terms of the eternal will of God " (CHRISTOPHER, *Proceedings of Am. Cath.*, p.82) ; of course " without the loss of human liberty " (*ibid.*, p.85).

5. XII, 28 (296). It would have been difficult for Saint Augustine to decide in which of the two cities to place Adam actually. On various of his criteria we can place him first in the City of God, from the Fall to his repentance in the City of Satan,

and after that perhaps in the City of God permanently ; but Saint Augustine is interested *here* in initiating two discrete descents of citizenship, one for each city, and cannot begin by placing the first man in both.

6. XV, 1 (414), 5 (420).

7. XV, 15 (448). It will be noticed that Saint Augustine traces the holy citizenship from Abel to Christ in a very full line indeed. This is not to be interpreted as a restriction of the total number of citizens to this small group : " We cannot say that... true religion was confined solely to those who were in the direct succession from Sem, through Arphaxad, to Abraham " — XVI, 10 (507).

8. XV, 15 (447).

9. XV, 20 (460).

Saint Augustine's narrative of the progress of the cities is largely a summary of the history of the human race as related in the Old Testament, amplified with interpretations and original observations. These latter consist principally in an emphasis on the prophetic and prefigurational value of the facts of Old Testament history. This aspect looms so large that it will be well worth a few words of summary.

Saint Augustine warns against pushing scriptural accommodation far,[1] but he is sure that the sacred writers were constantly prophesying the City of God in their history of the " people of Israel," [2] the " terrestrial Jerusalem," [3] and the " daughter of Sion." [4] (While the *holy* Israelites actually *belonged* to that stage of the City of God, *all* the Jewish people *prefigured* the City.[5])

Noah's ark was, of course, a real ship — but we thoroughly misunderstand the sacred writer if we think that the deluge which assails the Pilgrim City in our own day was not prophesied by him in his story of the Flood.[6]   And the so carefully preserved details of the ark's construction are not very significant otherwise than as a prefiguration of Christ and the Church.[7]

Cain and Abel, besides belonging physically to their respective cities at their inception, also *prefigured* these cities in their entirety. Cain was the first-born, as nature preceeds grace, and birth baptism ; Abel was persecuted by him, as the good city by the evil one.[8]   Following Abel, Seth and Enos prefigured the City of God.[9]

The history of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, too, is a preview of Abraham's spiritual progeny in his carnal progeny — the representation of the City of God among all nations today in the Jewish people of yesterday.[10]   The son of Abraham's slave, indeed, foreshadows the terrestrial Jerusalem, but his freeborn son is a symbol of the City of God, of the children regenerated by grace, the citizens of the free city.[11]

The "Age of Kings " continues this parallel.[12]   The prophets prefigure or even actually prophesy the Heavenly City ; [13] and the *Canticle of Canticles* is, in advance, the mystical marriage of Christ the King and His Queen, the Church — the City of God.[14]   The Old

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1. XVI, 2 (490).

2. XV, 8 (430), 20 (461); XVI, 3 (493).

3. XV, 20 (461).

4. X, 25 (163).

5. XVI, 3 (493).

6. XV, 26 (478-79).

7. *Ibid.* (477). Cf. " When events without a significance are recorded, it is for the sake of those which have some meaning " — XVI, 2 (490).

8. XV, 1 (414), 15 (447-48).

9. XV, 21 (446). Even the *names* of the early characters of the Old Testament are analyzed for their symbolic value by Saint Augustine. See for instance XV, 18 (457-58), 21 (466).

10. XVIII, 3 (20-21).

11. XV, 2 (416), 3 (418); XVII, 3 (20).

12. XVII, 3 (20-21).

13. XVII, 1 (17), 15 (62-63).

14. XVII, 20 (77). Other symbolic references : XI, 7 (196-97); XVII, 20 (73); XVIII, 47 (166).

Testament prefigured the Earthly City in Babylon, the " City of Confusion." [1]

Saint Augustine places a great deal of emphasis on the " pilgrim " character of the City of God.[2] A captive on earth,[3] imperfect [4] and not yet solidly established,[5] the City fares through time in a spirit of hope,[6] looking for the kingdom of eternity [7] and keeping her heart ever set upon her heavenly home.[8]

And she must deport herself accordingly.   Many in numbers, she nonetheless refrains from taking up arms for purely temporal gains,[9] and must subordinate the temporal prosperity she does enjoy to her eternal end.[10]   But now we are anticipating.

The End of the City of God

After discussing the origin and progress of the Heavenly City, Saint Augustine concludes his mammoth task with four books on the City's end.[11]   This, it would seem, is the most important part of *The City of God*, for the author distinguishes the cities throughout the work principally by their ends.[12]

Now, " end " for Saint Augustine in this context means primarily the City's *terminus, stopping place, final stage*. The citizens of the imperfect pilgrim city are to attain in heaven to the very perfection of the angels.[13] But if heaven is the City's *de facto terminus* and *destiny*, then it is its *aim* and *goal*, something to be sought after and striven for.   " End " thus takes on a clearer teleological hue : " Where are we going ? " becomes " What are we here for ?"   The two questions are simply diverse aspects of one and the same notion, but the slants are genuinely distinct, and it will be simpler and more convenient to look into each by itself.[14]

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1. E.g. XVI, 10 (505). Compare the " beast " of the Apocalypse — XX, 9 (278).

2. Notes 3-8, also V, 16 (278) ; XV, 15 (448), 26 (447); XVI, 3 (493), 9 (505) ; XVIII, 3 (20): XIX, 17 (228).

3. XIX, 17 (226-27).

4. XV, 26 (477) ; XIX, 27 (246).

5. I, Prol. (17).

6. XV, 18 (457).

7. XV, 1 (415).

8. XV, 15 (447).

9. XXII, 6 (428) ; and this in spite of the fact that it is in essential conflict with the other city (XI, 34 [244] ; cf.XIX, [227]).

10. XIX, 17 (226-27).

11. See XVIII, 54 (182); XIX, 1 (183). Cf *Letter to Firmus*, p.400.

12. Cf. XIX, 24 (243).

13. XV, 26 (477).

14. In other words, there are important statements about how the citizens of the City of God are to deport themselves which do not refer explicitly to the terminal stage of the City, yet which are obviously made for the purpose of correlating end and action.

Burleigh too will be found to distinguish between end as " termination " and end as " the good aimed at in human action " (*City of God*, pp. 134-35).

(a) " End " as Final Stage.   The reward of the earthly pilgrims is everlasting life, eternal blessedness in heaven.[1]   Mingled though they are, perforce, with the citizens of the " other city " while in this life,[2] still they have not long to suffer this ; the benign judgment of Our Lord [3] at the end of time will award them Himself,[4] in Whom is all their victory, truth, holiness, happiness, life, and peace [5] — all their love, joy, and freedom from fear [6] and envy.[7]   Perfect even as God's holy angels are perfect, the elect will be co-heirs with Christ [8] for eternity.

(b) " End " as Aim.   This promise is to be an object of hope and a source of inspiration for the sojourners on earth, so that they will labor for a *heavenly* crown, in spite of persecution and reproaches [9] — taking their example in an *a fortiori* style from the deportment of the heroes of the Roman Empire, who labored so hard for the earthly reward which " they have already received." [10]

With the pilgrims, then, there is fear as well as desire, grief as well as rejoicing.[11]   Emotions profitless and vain in the impious are right and good in the elect, because justice is determined by *ends*, and the life of the elect is rightly ordered — the City of God subordinates everything to the hope it entertains of its final destiny.

This hope results in peace [12] — a peace possessed already on earth (imperfectly), to be completed in heaven ; a peace obtained by directing toward this heavenly completion every good act done for God or man ; a peace which belongs solely to the citizens of the City of God, and cannot be shared with the other city.[13]

But that other city must share *its* peace with God's elect.[14]   The earthly peace springing from the natural harmony of the observance of human laws is useful to the City of God [15] in its status as earthly sojourner, because in this capacity it must make use of temporal goods.[16]   To secure this temporal peace the City of God cooperates with civil authority,[17] prays for temporal rulers (even for pagans),[18]

1. V. 16 (277-78); XI, 24 (225); XV, 18 (458); XXII, 1 (415) ; cf. XV, 1(415).

2. See below, pages 222-223.

3. XVIII, 54 (182); XXI, 1 (339).

4. X, 18 (150).

5. II, 29 (127).

6. XIV, 9 (372).

7. XXII, 30 (507).

8. XVII, 3 (20).

9. V, 16 (277).

10. V, 15-16 (276-78).

11. XIV, 9 (366).

12. " Peace is the end of this City which is the theme of this work " — XIX, 12 (212).

13. XIX, 17 (228-29), 27 (246).

14. XIX, 26 (245-46).

15. XIX, 17 (228), 26 (245).

16. XVIII, 54 (182).

17. XIX, 17 (228).   Notice, however, that " leur manière d'observer des lois est bien différente, car les citoyens de la cité terrestre la considèrent comme une fin ... les justes ... comme un simple moyen ... Lorsque César demande ce qui lui est dû, le chrétien le lui rend, non pour l'amour de César, mais pour l'amour de Dieu " (E. GILSON, *Introduction à l'étude de saint Augustin* [Revised edition — Paris : Vrin, 1943], p.235).

18. XIX, 26 (245-46).

and indeed goes so far as to obey unjust laws when this is necessary. A common *religious* legislation, of course, the two cities cannot share, opposed as they are precisely in respect of ultimate end.[1]

Thus there are two kinds of peace — each chosen and enjoyed by the city that lives for each ;[2] but the earthly peace is also wisely used as a temporal *means* by the City of God, which subordinates it to the true goal of every good,[3] the peace of heaven.[4]

The End of the Earthly City

Saint Augustine discusses the end of the Earthly City more briefly.[5]

Again we find a correlation between " end " as final stage and " end " as purpose or goal on earth : the elect sojourns on earth with a view to the eternal blessedness in heaven, while the " other city " lays up for itself an eternity of pain [6] by the aims and behavior which deserve it. The formality of the latter behavior and attitude consists in an utter and absolute dedication to the things of earth : the ultimate good of the City of Earth is here below.[7] Let that unfortunate community seek all its joys here,[8] and here alone it will find them. The specification of this dedication to earth wich Saint Augustine stresses most is a striving after an earthly peace, a peace limited to the harmony necessary for a comfortable mortal existence, one which does not go beyond purely human laws.[9]

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1. XIX, 17 (227-28).

2. XIV, 1 (347).

3. XIX, 27 (246).

4. XIX, 14 (220-21), 17 (228). This heavenly peace is the ultimate *end*, then, not just a higher *means*. It is the possession of God himself.

5. Saint Augustine handles the end of this city with that of the other (in the last four books) : XIX, 1 (183) ; *Letter to Firmus*, p.400.

6. XV, 1 (413); XIX, 28 (248); XX, 7 (268); XXI, 1 (339), 24 (390).

" Augustine, if he had lived in the twentieth century A. D., could never have contended that the sin of Adam was so tremendous as to involve all his posterity for all time in the danger of everlasting punishment, or that temporary guilt could be justly visited with everlasting punishment, or that the great majority of human beings would be condemned on the final day to awful suffering, and that a suffering without end " (WELLDON, *City of God*, I,

xli-xlii). Note the reference to the *multo plures* of note 10, page 215.

To this Bourke replies : " Hell is indeed a terrible prospect, but modern Catholic are as certain as was Augustine that it entails punishment in real and ever-lasting fire. See the comments of J. RICKABY [*City of God*], pp.89-94 ". (V. J. BOURKE, *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom* [Milwaukee : Bruce, 1945], p.279 n.). Why would Saint Augustine change his mind merely in changing his century? Again, how can one and the same doctrine be " irreconcilable with the beneficence of God " (WELLDON, *City of God*, I, xli) and yet time upon time be insisted upon by Him in His revelation?

7. XV, 17 (455).

8. XV, 15 (448).

9. XIX, 14 (220), 17 (226). This peace is *attained* indeed — XIV, 1 (347) — but it is such an imperfect sort of peace that it cannot really be said to be peace at all ; because it was abused from the beginning

Contrasts and Relations

As Saint Augustine tells us, his only purpose in representing the " other city " in his work on the City of God is to glorify the latter, that it may " gleam the more brightly " by the contrast.[1] Here, in summary, are the main points of the antithesis.

The City of God is composed of angels and saints, the Earthly City of devils and sinners ; every age and nation finds representation in each.   Virtually, the earthly history of the cities began in Adam — in actuality, the City of God began in Abel and Seth, continuing through the patriarchs and prophets (the righteous) to Mary, Christ, and the people of Christ, while the City of the Devil began actually in Cain and descends from him through the sinners of all times.

The City of God worships the one true God in humility and faith. The Earthly City worships false gods and the devil himself in pride and dedication to earth.[2]   The principal distinguishing characteristics of the two cities are humility and pride.[3]

The citizens of the City of God are predestined to heaven.   Those of the Earthly City are not predestined to heaven.[4]

The people of Israel symbolized the City of God, and their prophets foretold it.   The symbol of the City of the Devil is Babylon.

The City of God will rejoice forever in heaven.   The City of Earth will be damned forever in hell.   Accordingly, the former, a pilgrim on earth, seeks here below a heavenly peace, one as yet incomplete, and subordinated to the peace it hopes for.   The City of the Devil seeks a purely human peace, natural and tangible.

In the mind of the author of *The City of God*, the whole series of antitheses can be reduced to one : " two loves have made two cities " — love of God versus love of self.[5]

Diametrically opposed as they are in nature, the two cities are nevertheless " inextricably intermingled . . . in the concrete reality of

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(sought for its own sake instead of being subordinated to a higher peace) it is never really to be *enjoyed* — XIX, 26 (245-46). This is surely the correct reconciliation between Saint Augustine's statements that the earthly peace is attained by the citizens of the Earthly City, and that it is not.

1. I, 35 (72); XVI, 2 (490).   One of the functions of the " ugly " is, according to Saint Augustine, to enhance by contrast the " beautiful."

2. Cf. XIV, 28 (410-11) and note 3, page 217 of this article.

" St Augustine's Two Cities, Jerusalem and Babylon, reappear in St Ignatius's Two Standards.   We recognise still Satan's

throne of fire and smoke, and his vamping up of riches and worldly glory, culminating in huge pride ; and the opposite attitude of Christ our Saviour, with His gospel of poverty and humility " (RICKABY, *City of God*, p.5).

Interesting, but the specific parallel between Saints Augustine and Ignatius seems somewhat far-fetched !   The opposition between the devil's pride and Christ's humility is too universally Christian.

3. XIV, 13 (382).

4. XIX, 26 (245).

5. XIV, 28 (410-11) ; translation mine. Cf. note 3, page 217

history." [1] They are like the good and bad fishes caught in the same net,[2] or the cockle growing up right along with the wheat.[3] They will be separated only at the end of time.[4] This is the first interrelation, a physical and social one.

The second is religious. It is the possibility, to be hoped for and striven after,[5] of converting the apparent members of the City of the Devil to membership in the City of God.[6] (The opposite sort of " conversion " is one to be avoided, of course, at all costs. This is what made devils of angels.[7])

Thus far Saint Augustine's own tale of the two mystical cities — the exhaustive and mutually exclusive communities of rational creation. Let us turn now to some of the disagreements his doctrine has aroused among the scholars and statesmen of the past fifteen centuries.

The Two Cities — Church and State ?

There is obviously *some* sort of " identification " between Saint Augustine's City of God and the visible Catholic Church. Several passages make this evident.[8] The question, then, is *how* they are " identified." [9]

1. X, 32 (186). Cf. : " Thus there are two cities, one of the wicked, the other of the just, which endure from the beginning of the human race even to the end of time, which are now intermingled in body, but separated in will, and which, moreover, are to be separated in body also on the day of judgment " (SAINT AUGUSTINE, *The First Catechetical Instruction* [*De Catechizandis Rudibus*], tr. by J. P. Christopher ; Vol. II of *Ancient Christian Writers*, edited by J. Quasten and J. Plumpe [Westminster : Newman, 1946], p.61.

2. XVIII, 49 (169).

3. XX, 9 (278).

4. XVIII, 54 (182); XX, 9 (278), 11 (282).

Other references to this *perplexitas* : I, Prol. (17); XI, 1 (188); XIV, 1 (347); XIX, 26 (245).

Thus the City of God, like an Aristotelian quality, is usually represented as pure in itself but scattered or diluted when considered in its place in physical reality. Once, however, the City of God is described as harboring some of the nonpredestined within its very ranks (I, 35 [71-72]). The explanation is that Saint Augustine is not a systematizer, and that here, simply and without warning, he is speaking of the City of God in its " looser " sense, probably as synonimous with the Church.

5. " To this Country we pleadingly invite you. Join its citizens . . ." (II, 29 125-26).

6. I, 1 (18), 35 (71, 72); II, 29 (125-26); XX, 7 (268). *Prevailing will* is the thing that determines citizenship (see GILSON, " Foreword," p.lxiv).

7. XI, 9 (199), 28 (233).

8. VIII, 24 (67-68); XIII, 16 (319); XV, 26 (477); XVI, 2 (489); XVII, 4 (25 *bis*), 15 (63), 20 (77); XVIII, 29 (124); XX, 11 (281).

9. " . . . an exceedingly difficult question, and the answers offered have differed considerably. Holl sharply criticizes Scholz. Figgis corrects Reuter, but himself, according to Gilson, falls into error " (BURLEIGH, *City of God*, p. 166). The " error " Gilson speaks of in a note (*Introduction*, p.238) is an identification of the City of God with the *Regnum Christi*, in spite of Saint Augustine's distinction of the latter into *provisory* and *definitive* (the former being the Church, it would seem ; the latter is the City of God).

So there *is* a question, even if there need not be.

Modern scholars do not *usually* make the rather naive mistake of identifying the two cities simply and absolutely. (Exceptions seem to be Harnack,[1] Scholz,[2] and Marshall.[3]) Indeed, it is so clear that the visible Church cannot be *altogether* the same with the City of God, and Saint Augustine himself is so full on the matter, that it is somewhat difficult to appreciate how these writers could have committed the error. Here are the clearest reasons for a real distinction (at least partial) between the two groups :

1. Not every member of the visible Church is predestined to heaven.[4] But citizenship in the City of God is by predestination.

2. Some of the members of other religions, even among the enemies of the Church and even before the time of Christ, are members of the City of God.[5]

Of course, the contrary error is equally to be avoided — the exclusion of the visible, hierarchical Catholic Church from *any* correlation with the City of God. Reuter[6] and Burleigh[7] make this mistake. Those who assert a merely *representational* " identification " of the City of God with another religious society, as does Figgis,[8] should at least be careful to admit with him that it *is* the visible Catholic Church that is this representative.

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1. See WELLDON, *City of God*, I, li-liii. The reference there is to " ' Glaube und Unglaube,' vol. ii., p.121."

2. See *ibid.*, p.lii.

3. R. T. MARSHALL, *Studies in the Political and Socio-Religious Terminology of the* De Civitate Dei (Washington : Catholic Univ., 1952), p.87.

Brushing close to the same error is E. Barker (" Introduction " to John Healy's Translation of *The City of God* [London : Dent and Sons, 1947], p. xxi) : ". . . the thought of Saint Augustine about this relation varies, according as his thought glows into a fervour of incandescence, or restricts itself within the bonds of theological logic."

No, it is not Saint Augustine's *thought* that varies, but only his *expression* of that thought. He does not really and fully identify the two even at his most incandescent — he merely expresses himself in that manner. They are one symbolically and representationally, with the *fundamentum in re* which Gilson explains in his " according to the Church " passages (see note 5, page 225).

4. I, 35 (71-72); XX, 9 (276-278). Cf. BARDY, *Saint Augustin*, p.360 ; GIL-

SON, *Introduction*, p.238 ; WELLDON, *City of God*, II, 651.

5. XIV, 1 (347); XVI, 41 (561) ; Books XI to XVIII of *The City of God* are devoted largely to tracing the pre-Christian history of the City of God. See also notes 11, page 212 and 1 of page 213 of this article. Cf. GILSON, *Introduction*, p.238 ; BARDY, *Saint Augustin*, p.360 ; FIGGIS, *Political Aspects*, p.68 ; RICKABY, *City of God*, p.3. " To identify the Church on earth with the elect would be a gross piece of Jansenism, such as Clement XI . . . condemned . . ." (RICKABY, *City of God*, p.4).

6. FIGGIS, *Political Aspects*, pp.68-69.

7. BURLEIGH, *City of God*, p.182 : " From what has been said [about only a part of the Catholic Church being predestined, and some non-Catholics being predestined], it will appear likely that the City of God is none other than the Invisible Church of Wycliffe and Huss, Luther and Calvin. Saint Augustine does not use the terms Visible and Invisible Church, but all the materials for the distinction are to be found in his writings."

8. *Political Aspects*, pp.68-69.

And this, it would appear, is very near to the mind of Saint Augustine. " The Church represents the *Civitas Dei* rather by symbol than by identification," [1] he would be likely to say — or loosely rather than strictly. Saint Augustine is not a systematizer. [2]

Gilson reconciles these strict and loose usages of Saint Augustine quite skillfully. He explains that although the predestined and the nonpredestined do not coincide perfectly with the Church and those outside the Church (as witness sinful Catholics, or Saint Paul before his conversion [3]), and although predestination is indeed the ultimate criterion of citizenship [4] — nevertheless it must be remembered that nonpredestined Catholics are not living *according* to the Church [5] (while *in* it, we could say, they are not *of* it) ; and this mixture is the one side of the famous *perplexitas* of the two cities. [6] Thus the Church and the pilgrim " Incarnation of the City of God " [7] could be said to be identical *de jure*, but not (perfectly) *de facto*. [8] In this way Gilson corrects often enough the impression he sometimes gives of simply identifying the City of God with the visible Catholic Church. [9]

The correlative problem is whether the Earthly City is to be identified with the political state. [10]

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1. *Ibid.*, p.51.

Saint Augustine " was too much in contact with reality " (CHRISTOPHER, *St. Augustine*, p.86) to make the naive identification of Scholz and the others. Cf. V. J. BOURKE, "The Political Philosophy of St. Augustine," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, VII (1931), 49.

2. I am indebted for these latter two phrases to the explanation of Dr. Bourke in his graduate seminar in Saint Augustine's social philosophy. Just as Rome is loosely the same as the Earthly City, so the Church is loosely identified with the City of God ; strictly, of course, the cities are respectively the evil and the good — at least evil and good according to *prevailing will* (see Gilson, " Foreword," p. lxiv), which God alone knows. "We can never understand S. Augustine if we think of him as a system-maker " (FIGGIS, *Political Aspects*, p.7).

3. E. GILSON, *Les métamorphoses*, p.57.

4. *Ibid.*, p.52.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58 ; " Foreword," p.lxv.

6. *Les métamorphoses*, p.57.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

8. " Or ce n'est pas le cas de l'Église. Si étroitement qu'on la conçoive ..." it still harbors citizens of the Earthly City (*ibid.*, p.56).

9. His remarks in the " Foreword " (p.xxv) seem to identify the two strictly. But see *ibid.*, p.lxiii ; *Introduction*, p.238.

10. The difficulty should not be a purely terminological one. We are *not* raising the question whether Saint Augustine ever uses the *expression* " civitas terrena " for " political state " — this he surely does (e.g. XV, 2 [417]) ; but in these few cases " civitas terrena " is not synonymous with " civitas diaboli " (as it usually is).

Gilson recognizes this distinction in his " Foreword " ; perhaps it is the necessary brevity of his treatment of the two cities in his condensed *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York : Random House, 1955) which leads to the impression that he ignores it there. He writes as if the earthly city to which the heavenly is opposed is this morally indifferent one : "All men, pagans and Christians alike, live in temporal cities ... But *besides being members of these temporal cities* [italics mine], Christians make up another one [the City of God]. Considered as organizing themselves in view of earthly

" Harnack argues that Augustine '. . . roused the conviction that . . . the independent State [*sans phrase* was the Kingdom] of the devil'." [1] But Harnack is an exception (*if* indeed he thinks Saint Augustine *intended to* " rouse the conviction "), for here again there are few among modern scholars who would defend a simple identification. The Earthly City " does *not* include the righteous, who are to be found in any state " [2] — and this simply disqualifies its claim of identification with the state. The question whether the City of the Devil and the temporal state are *altogether* identical should not, it seems, be a difficult one.

But there is apparently *some* relationship between them, as between the City of God and the Church, although more tenuous. Here again we can equivalate the temporal, political state (and especially Rome) with the Earthly City only *largo modo*, while speaking strictly we must simply say that that city comprises all " bad people." [3]

But what is the precise relationship ? In *what* large sense is Rome or any other civil state the City of the Devil ? [4]

Gilson seems to us too strong in his assertion that for Saint Augustine the Roman state was *de facto* simply a piece of the City of Satan on its way to hell. [5] Saint Augustine was not prepared to damn the whole Empire (among whose members he found himself), *de facto* or otherwise. No, we may justly, it would seem, go no further than to

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goods and apart from God, all temporal cities can be considered as forming together a single Earthly City, . . . considered as organizing themselves into a Church, whose aim and scope it is to lead them to eternal beatitude, all Christians integrate a single Heavenly City, which can justly be called the ' City of God ' " (GILSON *History*, p.79). Perhaps we should not object to this verbal identification of the City of God with the Church — Gilson has defended himself well elsewhere (see page 225 of this article), although his treatment in the *History* is misleading without these explanations — but it is not accurate to oppose to the City of God *only* that " Earthly City" to which members of the City of God may belong — the " Earthly City" in the decidedly secondary sense which the first paragraph of this note explains.

" Ever since the origin of mankind, these two cities have been blended together," he continues. This is of course a perfectly true statement, but the " blending " which *Saint Augustine* speaks of (see pages 220 and 223 of this article) is that of the City of God and the City *of the Devil* —

not the " Earthly City " of " Christians . . . considered as organizing themselves in view of earthly goods."

One wonders whether Gilson's view of Saint Augustine's attitude towards the Roman Empire (explained on page 226 of this article) has any connection here.

1. In WELLDON, *City of God*, I, li-lii. The reference there is " ' History of Dogma,' pt. ii., bk. ii., ch.iv. (vol.v., p.151, of the Theological Translation Library)."

2. BARKER, " Introduction," p.xvii. Cf. BARDY, *Saint Augustin*, p.360 ; BOURKE, " Political Philosophy," p.49 ; GILSON, " Foreword," pp.lxi, lxiii ; *idem*, *Introduction*, p.233.

3. Dr. Bourke's oral explanation.

4. We must beware of requiring too much scientific exactness of Saint Augustine's rhetorical presentation, but we shall be able to make *some* precisions.

5. GILSON, *Les métamorphoses*, pp.54-55. *De jure*, Gilson admits, the earthly city is a mystical designation having nothing directly to do with civil society. Cf. " Foreword," p.lxi.

note with Gerosa " Roma messa a capo della Città terrena nella sua qualità di dominatrice "[1] — Rome, the " Second Babylon "[2] (the name she merits through her " greed for earthly advantage "[3]). Thus " only partially and for certain purposes is the *Civitas terrena* represented by any earthly polity."[4] Rome is often a convenient *symbol* of the City of Satan ; and she may be, in many of her citizens, " at its head " ; but it would be difficult to find a closer correlation which would not somehow misrepresent the attitude of Saint Augustine himself.[5]

A Visible " City of God " ?

There is nothing in the text of Saint Augustine that advocates a visible Holy Empire as the incarnation of the mystical City of God. Assertions like that of H. G. Wells are gratuitous :

St. Augustine . . . gave expression to the developing political ideas of the Church in *The City of God*. The City of God leads the mind very directly into a theological and organized kingdom of heaven.[6]

Such statements miss the mind of Saint Augustine altogether.

Nonetheless it must be admitted that with his " notion of a universal religious society "[7] in general, and statements like " Omnium Christianorum una respublica est "[8] in particular, Saint Augustine accidentally " prepared the way "[9] for the mistaken desire to clothe the mystical Christian community with flesh.[10] Gilson even claims that " in his notion of a universal religious society is to be sought the origin of that ideal of a world society which is haunting the minds of so many today."[11]

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1. P. Gerosa, "Sant' Agostino e l'Imperialismo Romano," *Miscellanea Agostiniana* (Rome : Vatican, 1931), II, 1023.

2. XVIII, 2 (86). Babylon, similarly, is the " first Rome " (*ibid.*).

3. *Ibid.* (85).

4. Figgis, *Political Aspects*, p.51.

5. But see note 7, page 216.

6. H. G. Wells, *The Outline of History* (reprint, January, 1930, Star Edition, New York), p.525. Quoted and criticized by V. J. Bourke, " Political Philosophy," p.45.

7. Gilson, " Foreword," p.xi.

8. Quoted by Figgis, *Political Aspects*, p.84. His reference is faulty.

9. *Ibid.*

10. He cannot have been the *only* inspiration, since the idea had preceded the writing of *The City of God*. The pope Prudentius, according to Gilson, propagandized it as early as 389. " Only baptize [the Roman] Empire, and it could become the center of a Christian universal society, so that, by the very fact of being a Christian, a man could enjoy membership in that Society " (" Foreword," p.xxxvi).

In fact, the Roman dream of a universal hegemony " n'a guère été combattu par les chrétiens. . . . comme Rome semblait maîtresse de toutes les parties du monde connu, ils s'en réjouissaient comme d'une victoire de leur religion . . .

" Ne demandons pas à saint Augustin d'endosser cet impérialisme de commande. Il trouve l'Empire assez grand, trop grand " (G. Combès, *La doctrine politique de saint Augustin* [Paris : Plon, 1927], pp.224-25).

11. " Foreword," p.xi. ". . . we should not read the *City of God* in the hope of finding therein the solution, however" (*ibid.*).

The most famous incarnational idea, and the only one on which we shall tarry here, [1] was the dream of Charlemagne :

Charlemagne, who made of *The City of God* his *livre de chevet*, comments on [Book V, Chapter 24] [2] in his instructions to his people : " My beloved brethren," he cried to the great assembly at Aix-la-Chappelle, " attend ! We have been sent here for your salvation, to exhort you to follow the law of God exactly and to convert you in justice and mercy to the laws of this world. [3]

Thus Charlemagne seems to have thought that the duties of a Christian ruler, as outlined by Saint Augustine in the passage in question, were meant for the ears of a visible head of the City of God on earth, and that he was that ruler.   Indeed, "why would the Emperor have found delight in such a book as *The City of God*, were it not because the empire which he himself had built was the embodiment of the City of God ?" [4] The opinion that Saint Augustine's great book inspired the empire of Charlemagne is apparently unchallenged ; and it renders an understatement Lord Bryce's remark, " It is hardly too much to say that the Holy Roman Empire was built upon the foundation of the ' De Civitate Dei '. " [5]

But the only pertinent doctrine in Saint Augustine himself is his deploring large empires !

The empire would, indeed, have remained small if the peace and fairdealing of their neighbors had provoked no wars.   Thus, in a happier state of human relations, all kingdoms would remain small, and rejoice in their neighborly concord.   Thus also, there would have been in the world a great many nations, as there are many families in a city. [6]

Not that it is difficult to appreciate how Saint Augustine's mystical empire of good citizens can have inspired daydreams of a physical one. But it is equally evident that Saint Augustine never intended his City of God as anything but the mystical union of the good people of

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1. For a condensed presentation of Saint Augustine's influence in later political thinking (especially on the question of a visible City of God), see Figgis's last two lectures (*Political Aspects*, pp.81-117). One notes with interest, for instance, the words of Pope Sylvester II to Emperor Otto III : " Nostrum, nostrum est imperium Romanum " (*ibid.*, pp.87-100).

2. Pages 296-7 of the Fathers of the Church translation ; cited by COMBÈS, *Doctrine politique*, p. 414.

3. Charlemagne, qui faisait de la *Cité de Dieu* son livre de chevet, en commente le passage célèbre dans ses instruc-

tions au peuple. ' Mes bien-aimés frères, s'écrie-t-il à la grande assemblée d'Aix-la-Chappelle (802), écoutez. Nous avons été envoyé ici pour votre salut, afin de vous exhorter à suivre exactement la loi de Dieu et à vous convertir dans la justice et la miséricorde aux lois de ce monde ' " (COMBÈS, *Doctrine politique*, p.415 ; translation mine. Combès' reference is to *PL*, Vol. XCVII, cols. 239-42).

4. GILSON, " Foreword," pp.lxxxiii-iv.

5. Quoted by FIGGIS, *Political Aspects*, p.84.

6. IV, 15 (211).

all nations.   The understanding that the City of God is an accomplished fact — something real at this moment, and not some utopia elaborated as the last goal of political and social progress — would have forestalled attempts at its artificial realization in a purely temporal and political human society.

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