

From *Ordo* to *Pax*:
The Formation of a Central Political Concept of Augustine

by
Shinji KAYAMA
Exeter College

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at
THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Trinity Term, 1997

ABSTRACT

To Augustine peace (*pax*) was a key concept central to his social and political thinking. This study aims to demonstrate how it was first formed in his ecclesiology during the Donatist controversy, and how it developed into a Christian political philosophy in *De civitate dei* XIX.

The development of the concept can be traced in three distinct stages, with a close connection to the doctrine of order (*ordo*) mediated by its key concept of providence (*providentia*).

<1> Originally (c. 386-391) peace was a minor derivative notion of order: it signified the tranquillity of the creation-order, a perfect state of the ontological relationship between God, the creation, and man. <2> For the next twenty years (c. 391-411) peace was developed separately from order, though they were correlated through a theory of providence. On the one hand, order was transformed eschatologically in terms of the duality of providential order, which opened a historical horizon in Augustine’s understanding of human sociality. On the other hand, peace gained importance biblically and socially and became a “flag-ship” concept of his anti-Donatist campaign—the “peace of the church” (*pax ecclesiae*), which justified the authority of the Catholic church, Christian participation in socio-political activities, and religious coercion, all within the framework of providential pedagogy. <3> Finally, in *De civitate dei* (413-427) peace incorporated order as the theoretical basis and providence as the historiographical framework of a political philosophy. Though ontologically rooted, political peace (*pax civitatis*) was an unnatural but necessary good used commonly by the city of God and the earthly city for different ends. Political peace was established in an earthly political community (*res publica*) united by civic consensus on the common objects of love. It was maintained by political authority (*imperandum*) endowed with judicial power to enforce the law and to punish and correct wrong-doers. In the end, Augustine’s theory of peace understood politics as a provisional and residual function: provisional, because it was necessary only within the bounds of human history; residual, because the more it was based on love, the less it would become like domination.

ABSTRACT

(For the Faculty of Theology)

To Augustine peace (*pax*) was a key concept central to his social and political thinking. This study aims to demonstrate its origin in his ecclesiology formulated during the Donatist controversy, and its development into a Christian political philosophy in *De civitate dei* XIX.

For generations scholars have acknowledged the importance of the concept of peace in *De civitate dei* XIX and in Augustine’s political thinking. However, there is surprisingly little literature which examines its significance in his theology as a whole, or even its implications for the theory of the two cities, a topic so closely scrutinised. Instead, the scholarship of Augustine’s political thought has often tried to reconstruct his possible views on modern issues, such as the church-state relationship, (relative) justice, and the common good: he has been presented as an advocate of the Christian state or a secularist, as a philosopher of natural law or a political realist, and as a Christian liberal or a communitarian. However, all these debates have one problem in common—that the focus of attention has been dictated by broader theoretical concerns than what Augustine has made central in *De civitate dei* and other political writings. For instance, it is a common mistake to try to delineate Augustine’s view of “the state” rather anachronistically, which he simply did not have. As a typical pre-modern thinker he presumes a public sphere (or “political community”) not based on the separation of the political and the social spheres, the distinction which underlies our contemporary political discourses. The theme Augustine chooses to write instead in *De civitate dei* XIX is “peace”, which holds the key to the correct understanding of Augustine’s political thought.

Among those scholars who have examined Augustine’s concept of peace, H. Fuchs and J. Laufs remain especially important. Fuchs’ *Augustin und der Antike Friedensgedanke* (1926) focuses on the core text in *De civitate dei* XIX (12-17) and concludes: <1> that peace is a concept of crucial importance to Augustine as a divine gift of salvation in the life to come; <2> that his exposition of peace is heavily influenced by Hellenistic ideas of peace; <3> that he was probably

ABSTRACT

(For the Faculty of Theology)

To Augustine peace (*pax*) was a key concept central to his social and political thinking. This study aims to demonstrate its origin in his ecclesiology formulated during the Donatist controversy, and its development into a Christian political philosophy in *De civitate dei* XIX.

For generations scholars have acknowledged the importance of the concept of peace in *De civitate dei* XIX and in Augustine’s political thinking. However, there is surprisingly little literature which examines its significance in his theology as a whole, or even its implications for the theory of the two cities, a topic so closely scrutinised. Instead, the scholarship of Augustine’s political thought has often tried to reconstruct his possible views on modern issues, such as the church-state relationship, (relative) justice, and the common good: he has been presented as an advocate of the Christian state or a secularist, as a philosopher of natural law or a political realist, and as a Christian liberal or a communitarian. However, all these debates have one problem in common—that the focus of attention has been dictated by broader theoretical concerns than what Augustine has made central in *De civitate dei* and other political writings. For instance, it is a common mistake to try to delineate Augustine’s view of “the state” rather anachronistically, which he simply did not have. As a typical pre-modern thinker he presumes a public sphere (or “political community”) not based on the separation of the political and the social spheres, the distinction which underlies our contemporary political discourses. The theme Augustine chooses to write instead in *De civitate dei* XIX is “peace”, which holds the key to the correct understanding of Augustine’s political thought.

Among those scholars who have examined Augustine’s concept of peace, H. Fuchs and J. Laufs remain especially important. Fuchs’ *Augustin und der Antike Friedensgedanke* (1926) focuses on the core text in *De civitate dei* XIX (12-17) and concludes: <1> that peace is a concept of crucial importance to Augustine as a divine gift of salvation in the life to come; <2> that his exposition of peace is heavily influenced by Hellenistic ideas of peace; <3> that he was probably

working with a pagan treatise on peace, which Fuchs identifies as Marcus Varro's lost tract, *De Pace*. Against Fuchs' characterisation of Augustinian peace as perfectionist and otherworldly, Laufs presents an alternative approach in his *Der Friedensgedanke bei Augustinus* (1973): to analyse the relationship between *pax* and *ordo*. As the so-called "table of peace" suggests, Augustine describes various forms of peace on the basis of the doctrine of order. In his detailed exegesis of XIX.12-17 Laufs distinguishes two categories of order, between the non-ethical ordering of a being independent of its relation to God's will and the ethical ordering of a rational being dependent on its relation to God's will. In the end, Augustine's concept of peace is categorised into three kinds: the rightly ordered peace (of the city of God), the perversely ordered peace (of the earthly city), and the neutrally ordered peace (common to both).

Against Fuchs and Laufs this study aims to offer a third approach—to trace the development of the concept of peace *chronologically* and *in relation to* its underlying concept of order. The philological approach of both scholars is too limited to appreciate the breadth, depth and integrity of what Augustine achieved—a *Christian political philosophy* of peace. Instead, we shall examine how exactly Augustine related peace and order in his theology prior to the writing of *De civitate dei*; at which point and in what context he came to recognise the crucial significance of peace as a social and political good; finally, what the implications were to his mature political thinking.

In Chapter One we will analyse the formation of the doctrine of order in the earliest period of Augustine's literary career (c. 386-391). Inspired by Neoplatonism and demonstrated against Manichaeism Augustine's concept of order represented a Christian worldview (the creation-order), in which the omnipotence and righteousness of the creator God could be defended against the prevalence of evil in the created world, especially of moral evil (sin) caused by human will. Therefore, *ordo* signified the moral order of man, too—a right ordering of God, soul and body in accordance with his created nature. Chapter Two deals with Augustine's early ethics of order, which was rigidly ontological in its orientation: it was a search for a knowledge of the normative mode of

existence, cosmologically as well as existentially. In the early doctrine of order, peace was ontologically understood as a minor correlative notion which denoted the tranquillity of order of all things; socially, it was occasionally mentioned as one of the objectives of temporal laws.

The ordination in 391 marked a watershed in Augustine's theology, the ontological basis of which was gradually transformed over the next ten years. In Chapter Three we will closely follow the transformative process, which we characterise as the *historicising* of the doctrine of order. The transformation consisted of three thought-experiments carried out almost in parallel: the doctrine of grace, positive teleology, and eschatology. The first exposed the incomprehensibility of order to human mind and its imperfectibility without the gift of grace—both due to human sinfulness. From the second experiment Augustine learned the notion of use (*usus*), which opened his eyes to the possibility of human abuse of the created order, and to the instrumentality and relativity of human institutions. The third experiment, finally, inspired him to construct a historiography based on biblical narratives from the creation to the last judgement. In the end, the interaction of the three experiments produced what can be termed as a concept of “dual providence”: divine providence governs the universe through two channels, nature and the will. The realm of human will is not just ontologically conditioned by the creation, but also *historically* conditioned by the world of time and change: a human order, even if ontologically perverse, may be justified culturally and socially as necessary and/or legitimate, depending on the circumstances. Nevertheless, all historical orders are *eschatologically* governed by the providential ordering of things, thus proving the ultimate omnipotence and righteousness of God's will.

Chapter Four illustrates how the transformed doctrine of order prepared Augustine for his long battle against Donatism (c. 391-411). In this controversy Augustine came to use peace as a “flagship”-concept of his campaign: in *pax ecclesia* lay a this-worldly (hence limited but authentic) representation of the unity and harmony of the heavenly society. In the ecclesiological concept of peace the ontological aspect (denoting the tranquillity of order, whether in its perfect form or in its approximate realisation) was incorporated with the biblical aspect (as a testimony to God's

creational and eschatological righteousness, the divine gifts of forgiveness, reconciliation and salvation through Christ). Before Augustine both the Donatist and the Catholic churches had constantly appealed to peace in defence of the authority of each camp; the most notable example was Optatus of Milevis in his *De schismate Donatistarum* (c. 384). However, it was Augustine who constructed a comprehensive theory of “ecclesiastical peace”, which established the authority of the Catholic church and justified a moral and social principle of peacemaking through love. Most significantly, his theory of peace was inherently political, as he legitimised the religious coercion as part of a providential pedagogy of peace. Precisely at this juncture the flag-ship concept of his moral and political theology changed—from *ordo* to *pax*.

In Chapter Five, finally, we will witness in *De civitate dei* how Augustine expounds a political theology which culminates in the theory of peace in Book XIX. Here, too, order and providence provided the theoretical basis and framework for his exposition. The political philosophy of peace was an integral part of his theological historiography of the two cities, which proceeded through various “order of eras” (*ordo temporum*) arranged through the volitional channel of providence. From the perspective of historical providence Augustine sought to explain the origin, function, meaning, and limitation of political life in terms of peace. Political peace (*pax civitatis*) is an unnatural but necessary good commonly used by the city of God and the earthly city for incompatibly different ends; it was established in an earthly political community (*res publica*) which was united by civic consensus on the common objects of love; and it was maintained by political authority (*imperandum*) endowed with judicial power to enforce the law and to punish and correct wrong-doers. In a sense, Book XIX was a political reformulation of what he achieved in the Donatist controversy—but, as the “table of peace” amply testifies, with a more conscious and explicit effort than previously to incorporate *pax* with *ordo*.

From *ordo* to *pax*—in the transformation of a central political concept Augustine synthesised his ontology, biblical exegeses, and ecclesiology. Augustine’s understanding of peace can be summarised in terms of: <1> a sharp distinction between perfect and imperfect peace, <2> a

multi-dimensional understanding of peace from bodily to spiritual, from individual to social, from earthly to heavenly, and <3> the legitimisation of earthly peace as the proper, though unattainable, goal of political activities. In conclusion, his political philosophy based on the concept of peace is characterised by the following features: <1> the *eschatological premise*, which acknowledges politics as a limited but necessary accommodation to the historical reality of human society; <2> *utilitarian pluralism* concerning earthly peace, which provides a pluralist (though not neutral) parameter to be used for different ends; <3> *a pre-modern concept of the political unit*, which presupposes a “community” united by a common good, instead of an apparatus of government (“the state”), which embodies political functions as distinct from social; <4> *consensus politics*, seeking civic agreement and co-operation in the pursuit of common goods, which are, therefore, neither neutral nor pluralist, nor even normative; <5> *a juridical model of political authority*, which is a limited reflection of divine authority, consisting of judgment and punishment, to maintain the existing moral and social order, rather than direction and administration, to create the normative common good (like on the Aristotelian-Thomist model); <6> *dual jurisdiction* in the Christian community, in which ecclesiastical authority is related to political authority as a moral advisor, constantly reminding that the law be enforced in the spirit of love.

The world of politics Augustine envisaged consisted of a multitude of communities—great and small, belligerent and peace-loving, but each with a distinct moral identity—coexisting within the perimeter of provisional peace. In it politics was assigned a function, which was provisional (because it was destined to be dispensed with in the eschatological horizon) and residual (because its coercive nature might be moderated to the degree to which it was based on love).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	x
Abbreviations	xi
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE—Cosmic Order: The Young Augustine’s Worldview	14
1. The Idea of Order in the Cassiciacum Dialogues	14
(1) <i>Ordo</i> and the question of worldview	14
(2) <i>Ordo</i> in the Cassiciacum dialogues	16
2. <i>De Ordine</i>	19
(1) The Manichaean question	19
(2) The concept of order	22
(3) Order and evil: achievements and shortcomings of <i>De ordine</i>	25
3. Correlative Notions	28
(1) Key ontological notions: being, nature and form	29
(2) Categories of order common to cosmos and existent: unity, harmony and beauty	31
(3) Supplementary notions: number, justice, tranquillity	32
4. The Development of the Doctrine of Order	35
(1) The pivotal years: 387-389	35
(2) <i>De vera religione</i> and <i>De libero arbitrio</i> II, III: a Christian doctrine of order	45
(3) God, creation, and a notion of cosmic providence	50
CHAPTER TWO—Moral Order: Love, Law and Society	55
1. Creation and Happiness: the framework of the ethics of order	55
2. The Order of Man	58
(1) The existential order	59
(2) The cosmological order	63
(3) The order of ascent	67
3. Order and Love	70
(1) Cosmic love	70
(2) The object of love	73
(3) Neighbour-love	76
4. Order, Law and Society	83
(1) Human sociality	83
(2) Augustine’s early theory of law	86
(3) <i>Duo genera</i> : history of mankind	90
(4) The wise and human society	92
CHAPTER THREE—Dual Order: Transformative Years	96
1. The Historicising of the Doctrine of Order: elements of the paradigmatic shift in 391-400	96
2. Incomprehensibility and Imperfectibility: the impact of the doctrine of grace	100
(1) Grace, free will and the law: Augustine on Paul	100
(2) Grace and original sin in <i>Ad Simplicianum</i>	104
(3) The incomprehensibility and imperfectibility of order	106
3. <i>Usus</i> and <i>Instituta Hominum</i> : the impact of positivist teleology	110
(1) <i>Fruitio, usus</i> and <i>ordinata dilectio</i> : Augustine and positivist teleology	110
(2) Human institutions: relativity and instrumentality	117
4. History and Providence: eschatological duality of order	121
(1) History: dualism, chiliasm and eschatology	121
(2) Providence and the duality of order	127
(3) An ethics of dual order	131

CHAPTER FOUR—<i>Pax Ecclesiae</i>: the Donatist Controversy and Augustine’s Ecclesiastical	
Theory of Peace	138
1. From <i>Ordo</i> to <i>Pax</i> : ontological and biblical Peace.....	138
(1) Ontological peace.....	140
(2) Biblical peace.....	144
2. The Problem of Peace in the Donatist Controversy: historical background.....	149
(1) Issues at the heart of the Donatist controversy.....	151
(2) The problem of peace in the controversy and the significance of Optatus of Milevis.....	154
3. Augustine’s Ecclesiastical Theory of Peace.....	159
(1) From Optatus to Augustine: the Catholic retort.....	159
(2) <i>Pax ecclesiae</i> : theological and ecclesiological fundamentals.....	162
(3) <i>Ecclesia catholica</i>	165
(4) Love of peace: moral principle.....	167
4. Pedagogy of Peace: Augustine on “religious coercion”.....	168
(1) Augustine and “religious coercion”: scholarly debates.....	168
(2) The “change of heart”.....	171
(3) <i>Correctio</i>	174
(4) <i>Disciplina</i>	177
(5) Love of peace: peacemaking as ecclesiastical pedagogy.....	180
(6) <i>Pax ecclesiae</i> , political authority and <i>tempora christiana</i>	182
CHAPTER FIVE—<i>Pax Civitatis</i>: Political Theology of <i>De civitate dei</i>	189
1. <i>Civitas Dei</i> and <i>Civitas Terrena</i> : the providential order of history.....	189
(1) <i>Tempora christiana</i> , <i>tempora Romana</i> and <i>ordo temporum</i> : a Christian Critique.....	190
(2) <i>Civitas dei</i> and <i>civitas terrena</i> : a Christian Apologia.....	197
2. <i>Pax Aeterna</i> and <i>Pax Terrena</i> : the political philosophy of Book XIX.....	205
(1) XIX.1-4: eschatological eudaemonism.....	205
(2) XIX.5-10: social miseries.....	207
(3) XIX.11: <i>pax aeterna</i> and <i>pax terrena</i>	209
(4) XIX.12: ontological analogy.....	210
(5) XIX.13: the table of peace.....	214
(6) Augustine’s political philosophy of peace: against Laufs.....	218
3. Peace and Political Community: Augustine on the common good.....	225
(1) XIX.14-17: <i>concordia</i> and <i>compositio voluntatum</i>	225
(2) XIX.21-24: justice and love.....	229
(3) A “common good” and the “duty of love”.....	232
4. Peace and the Judge: Augustine on political authority.....	237
(1) The origin and function of political authority: a juridical model.....	237
(2) Punishment.....	241
(3) Peace and war.....	245
CONCLUSION	252
BIBLIOGRAPHY	258

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Eight years have passed since I first read Augustine's *De civitate Dei* in Japan for my M.A. degree in the history of Western political thought. The intellectual journey through the mind of one of the greatest Christian thinkers has been an invaluable experience—bewildering, at times daunting, but none the less rewarding. Fortunately I have been able to consult with extensive scholarship on Augustine, particularly with the works of dedicated and insightful scholars, such as E. Gilson, P. Brown, and R. A. Markus. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to three teachers, who have supervised me at three different universities. Dr. Kiyoko Takeda Cho, Professor Emeritus of International Christian University (Tokyo), taught me as an undergraduate student and inspired me to study the social and political thought of Christians both in Japan and the West. It was the late Professor Yasunobu Fujiwara of Waseda University Graduate School of Political Science (Tokyo) who suggested and encouraged me to take up Augustine, whose *political* thought was (and still is) a rather unscrutinised area of Augustinian scholarship in Japan. This study is dedicated to the memory of Professor Fujiwara. For the last four years at Oxford I was fortunate to work in such a stimulating environment with excellent teachers (such as Dr. Nigel Biggar and Dr. Mark Edwards among others) who taught me the basics of theology, as I ventured into the field with little preparation. But my understanding of Augustine has deepened and my thoughts on Christian moral and political philosophy have been shaped under the close supervision of Professor Oliver O'Donovan, who has guided me through the labyrinth of Augustine's mind and works with patience, kindness and dedication. If I have achieved in this study something which may contribute to the understanding of Augustine, all the credit goes to Professor O'Donovan; any shortcoming, of course, is my own.

I would also like to thank Rotary Foundation, Denyer & Johnson Theological Fund, Squire and Marriott Bursaries and Josephine Butler Memorial Trust for their generous financial support, without which this study could not have been completed.

Finally, I am grateful for all the support, encouragement and excitement that I received from my dear friends both in and outside the U.K. Still, my special thanks go to my family in Japan who have always been supportive spiritually as well as financially all these years, and to the O'Donovans who have made my life in Oxford so comfortable and unforgettable.

ABBREVIATIONS

Acad.	<i>Contra Academicos</i>
agon.chr.	<i>De agone christiano</i>
bapt.	<i>De baptismo contra Donatistas</i>
bon.conj.	<i>De bono conjugali</i>
brev.coll.	<i>Breviculus collationis cum Donatistis</i>
catech.rud.	<i>De catechizandis rudibus</i>
conf.	<i>Confessiones</i>
cons.ev.	<i>De consensu evangelistarum</i>
Cresc.	<i>Contra Cresconium grammaticum</i>
DBV	<i>De beata vita</i>
DCD	<i>De civitate dei</i>
DDC	<i>De doctrina christiana</i>
DGCM	<i>De Genesi contra Manichaeos</i>
DIA	<i>De immortalitate animae</i>
DLA	<i>De libero arbitrio</i>
DMEC	<i>De moribus ecclesiae catholicae</i>
DO	<i>De ordine</i>
DQA	<i>De quantitate animae</i>
DVR	<i>De vera religione</i>
duab.anim	<i>De duabus animabus</i>
en.ps.	<i>Enarrationes in Psalmos</i>
ep.	<i>Epistulae</i>
ep.fund.	<i>Contra epistulam quam vocant fundamenti</i>
exp.Gal.	<i>Expositio epistulae ad Galatas</i>
exp.Rom.	<i>Expositio quarundam propositionum ex epistula ad Romanos</i>
Faust.	<i>Contra Faustum Manichaeum</i>
Felic.	<i>Contra Felicem Manichaeum</i>
fid. symb.	<i>De fide et symbolo</i>
Fort.	<i>Contra Fortunatum</i>
Gaud.	<i>Contra Gaudentium Donatistarum episcopum</i>
Gen. ad litt.	<i>De Genesi ad litteram</i>
inch.exp.Rom.	<i>Epistulae ad Romanos incohata expositio</i>
Ioh.ev.	<i>In Iohannis evangelium tractatus CXXIV</i>
mag.	<i>De magistro</i>
mus.	<i>De musica</i>
nat.bon.	<i>De natura boni contra Manichaeos</i>
nat. et grat.	<i>De natura et gratia</i>
Parm.	<i>Contra epistulam Parmeniani</i>
Petil.	<i>Contra litteras Petiliani</i>
post coll.	<i>Post collationem ad Donatistas</i>
ps.Donat.	<i>Psalmus contra parte Donati</i>
Quaest.in hept.	<i>Quaestiones in heptateuchum</i>
Q83.	<i>De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus</i>
retr.	<i>Retractationes</i>
Simplic.	<i>Ad Simplicianum de diversis quaestionibus</i>
serm.	<i>Sermones</i>
serm.dom.	<i>De sermone domini in monte</i>
sol.	<i>Soliloquia</i>
trin.	<i>De trinitate</i>
unit.eccl.	<i>De unitate ecclesiae (or Ad catholicos epistula contra Donatistas)</i>
util.cred.	<i>De utilitate credendi</i>

INTRODUCTION

(1) Augustine, Politics and the Problem of Peace

The nineteenth book of *De civitate dei* (c. 425-427), the centrepiece of Augustine's political thought, is an exposition of "peace" (*pax*). One passage at the end of the book succinctly summarises its gist:

However, our own proper peace is the peace with God, [experienced] here by faith, too, not only by sight in eternity. Yet here there is no peace, neither that shared peace nor our own proper peace, which is more than a solace to unhappiness; there is yet no delight in happiness.¹ (XIX.27)

Distinguished here are three kinds of peace: eternal, earthly, and what he calls "our own proper" peace.² *Pax aeterna* is a heavenly peace yet to be seen directly: it is "our final good, as we have already said eternal life is" (11), "the just peace of God [...], the peace of the righteous" (12), "the peace in which those who will not die remain, without any obstacle to overcome" (20). *Pax terrena*, in contrast, is a "peace available here to mortal men" (10), that is, "the temporal peace of the meantime which is shared by the good and the wicked alike" (26). In between stands a third kind, *pax nostra propria*, which the city of God on pilgrimage maintains "by faith"; in this peace "all use of temporal goods [...] is related to the enjoyment of eternal peace" (14), though it is still "the forgiveness of sins rather than a perfection of virtue" (27). For Augustine, above all, peace is a political concept: "so great a good is peace, that even in earthly and mortal affairs nothing more pleasing is usually heard, nothing more desirable is aspired for, and finally nothing better can be found" (11); it is the goal of social and political activity, pursued even by war (cf. 12); and "the peace of a city is the ordered agreement concerning command and obedience among the [fellow-] citizens" (13, 16).

¹ The translation is mine hereafter, unless indicated otherwise; however, for *De civitate dei* XIX, I owe much to Professor O'Donovan's private translation based on a learned and insightful exegesis.

² Cf. O. O'Donovan, "Augustine's *City of God* XIX and Western Political Thought", *Dionysius*, XI (1987): 99.

Generations of scholars have acknowledged the importance of the concept of peace in *De civitate dei* XIX and in Augustine's political thinking. However, there is surprisingly little literature on the concept, which examines its origin and significance in his theology as a whole, or even its implications for the theory of the two cities, a topic so closely scrutinised. Instead, the scholarship of Augustine's political thought has often tried to reconstruct his possible views on modern issues, such as the church-state relationship, justice, and the common good.

For instance, equating the *civitas dei* with the church and the *civitas terrena* with the state, some scholars (largely Protestant) have claimed that Augustine negated the intrinsic value of politics, while others (largely Catholic) have argued that he was the first advocate of the "Christian State". The former stress the eschatological nature of the city of God, which transcends human relations on earth, and insists that the theory of the two cities rather anticipated a kind of Lutheran separation between the spiritual and the political. The holders of the latter view have pointed to Augustine's relative appreciation of human society as a temporal good, and even deployed a Thomist analogy between the natural and the supernatural, portraying Augustine as a precursor of the medieval theocracy.³

The controversy over the church-state relationship has been duly criticised by many commentators for misrepresenting the Augustinian formula, since the two cities are *both* eschatological entities not wholly identifiable with any earthly institution, whether church or state. The critique, however, has only created a new dimension of scholarly debate—this time over the relationship between the state and justice in the theory of the two cities. Some maintain that the state stands somewhere between the two cities as a morally neutral sphere;⁴ others suggest an Augustinian

³ On the controversy, see U. Duchrow's summary in his *Christenheit und Weltverantwortung: Traditions-geschichte und Systematische Struktur der Zweireichelehre* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1970; reprint, 1983), 273-274. According to Duchrow, the holders of the former view include H. Reuter, E. Troeltsch, W. Kamlah, and F.G. Maier; those who belong to the latter camp are O. Schilling, J. Straub, J. Ratzinger, as well as R. Seeberg, a Protestant.

⁴ For example, S. Cotta, *La città politica di Sant' Agostino* (Milan, 1960; cited in Duchrow, 288-290); H.-I. Marrou, "Civitas Dei, civitas terrena: num tertium quid?", *Studia Patristica* 2 (T & U. 64, 1957): 387-392. In his monumental work, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970; the revised paperback edition, 1988), R. A. Markus seems to come close to the same conclusion—that the state belongs to the *saeculum*, a neutral overlap between the two cities—despite his cautious and sensitive handling of the issue throughout the work (see esp. 60-71).

concept of “relative” natural law or justice as the basis of the state;⁵ still others present Augustine as a political “realist” who sought to minimise, not to negate, the moral function of the state.⁶

More recently Augustine’s political thought has also been discussed in the debate between liberals and communitarians. To Christian liberals Augustine’s theocentric understanding of the city of God and pessimistic portrait of politics amount to a defense of liberal pluralism by minimising the political sphere and maximising the private and social sphere. Communitarians assert that, despite his awareness of the ambiguities and tensions of all earthly existence, political or ecclesiastical, Augustine still assigns politics a task to achieve an earthly common good, albeit temporal and incomplete, as a partial realisation of the complete common good of the city of God.⁷

All these debates have one common problem: that the focus of attention has been dictated by broader theoretical concerns than what Augustine made central in *De civitate dei* and other political writings. Especially, those who try to understand his concept of the “state” need to be cautioned against the lure of an anachronistic approach to an ancient thinker. For Augustine did not have a concept of “the state” as we understand it today; as a typical pre-modern thinker he presumes, in his usage of terms such as *civitas*, *res publica* and *populus*, a public sphere—or “political community”—not based on the separation of the political and the social spheres, the distinction of which underlies our contemporary political discourses.⁸ Moreover, the theme Augustine chooses to write in *De civitate dei* XIX is “peace”, which is also featured throughout most of his literary career. *Pax* holds the key to a correct understanding of Augustine’s political thought.

⁵ Most notably, E. Troeltsch, *Augustin, die christliche Antike und das Mittelalter: Im Anschluß an die Schrift, De civitate dei*” (München, 1915; reprint, Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1963), 130-137, 146-149; and E. Barker, “Introduction”, H. Healey trans., *The City of God* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1931; reprint, 1934), xxv-xxviii. More recently E. L. Fortin emphasises Augustine’s idea of natural right/law in his *Political Idealism and Christianity in the Thought of St. Augustine* (Villanova, P.A.: Villanova University Press, 1972), 15, 30-31.

⁶ Most notably, Reinhold Niebuhr and H. A. Deane. See, R. Niebuhr, *Christian Realism and Political Problems* (London: Farber & Farber, 1954), 114-139; Deane, *The Political and Social Ideas of St. Augustine* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 116-117, 151-152, 234-241.

⁷ For a succinct summary of this controversy, see D. Hollenback, “The Common Good Revisited”, *Theological Studies* 50 (1989): 79-85. Hollenback presents G. Meilaender as a champion of liberal Augustinian and J. Stout as an Augustinian communitarian. Cf. Meilaender, *The Limits of Love: Some Theological Explorations* (University Park, PA.: Pennsylvania State University, 1987), 130-133, 138; Stout, *Ethics after Babel: The Languages of Morals and Their Discontents* (Boston: Breacon, 1988), 233-236.

⁸ Cf. O. O’Donovan (1987), 98-99.

(2) *Pax est perfecta*: H. Fuchs' approach

In 1912 H. Scholz commented that “there was no ancient cultural philosopher who could grasp the value and good of peace with such sharpness and clarity as Augustine”.⁹ Since then there have been only a few academic works dedicated to the analysis of peace in Augustine, along with a little more than a score of articles.¹⁰ In *Augustin und der Antike Friedensgedanke* (1926) Harald Fuchs thoroughly examines Augustine's use of the concept of peace in *De civitate dei* XIX.12-17, contending:-

<1> *Pax* is a concept of crucial importance to Augustine, who summarises his own religious experience in “the shortest possible phrase” in *Confessiones* X.27.38: “Thou didst touch me, and I arose into thy peace” (p. 1); as a divine gift of salvation in the life to come, he exalts peace more highly than anyone else before him (p. 48);

<2> As its contents and style suggest, *De civitate dei* XIX is inspired by, while at the same time contending against, its opponents' Hellenistic (probably Stoic) idea of peace (pp. 16-17);¹¹

<3> Most fundamentally to Fuchs, the awkwardness and disrupted flow of Augustine's argument result from the fact that he was working with an unidentified pagan treatise on peace as he wrote Book XIX (pp. 139-145).

The unknown “Latin model” is, according to Fuchs, Marcus Varro's lost tract *De Pace* (pp. 145-154).

⁹ H. Scholz, *Glaube und Unglaube in der Weltgeschichte. Ein Kommentar zur Civitas Dei* (Leipzig, 1912), 51. Quoted in H. Fuchs, *Augustin und der Antike Friedensgedanke. Neue philologische Untersuchungen* (Berlin, 1926; the Garland Edition with a new introduction by W. F. Bense, New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1973), 16, n.1.

¹⁰ In addition to two essential works (by H. Fuchs and by J. Laufs) dealt with in this study, there is a third scholarship which unfortunately came to my notice too late to be incorporated. In *Doctor Pacis: Theologie des Friedens bei Augustinus* (Innsbruck and Wien: Tyrolia-Verlag, 1988) S. Budzik also argues against Fuchs and Laufs by reviewing Augustine's works comprehensively. However, his examination leads to a conclusion which slightly differs from ours: Augustine is presented as a “theologian of peace”, rather than a “political philosopher of peace” as we contend. For articles up to 1970, see Laufs, *Der Friedensgedanke bei Augustinus. Untersuchungen zum XIX. Buch des Werkes De civitate dei* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1973), 35 (n.1).

¹¹ The contents Fuchs suggests as Hellenistic (and strongly Stoic) are: <1> a characterisation of war in terms of the will to peace (17-20, 25-27); <2> a definition of peace as being (*natura*), which is incorporated with Augustine's own theological standpoint (21-33); <3> the “table of peace” in XIX.13 (37, 43-55).

While this hypothesis has been viewed negatively as rather conjectural, Fuchs' exegesis of *De civitate dei* XIX has been widely accepted by many scholars, including U. Duchrow and R. A. Markus.¹² The strength of Fuchs' work also lies in an extensive comparative study of Greek, Roman and biblical ideas of peace, through which he identifies traditional elements absorbed in Augustine's thinking (Cf. Beilagen 1-3). The consequence is twofold. First, Fuchs characterises the Augustinian peace as essentially "otherworldly" (pp. 48-49); in *pax perfecta* lies the key to understanding his conversion experience as well as his social and political thought. In contrast, earthly peace is not really a peace: it is at best a "consolation" for the absence of the true peace (pp. 89-90), and, at worst, its "perverse imitation" (pp. 31-32). Secondly, Fuchs finds a serious incongruity between Augustine's account of perfect (religious) peace, which stems from his personal experience and theology, and that of earthly (political) peace, which is based on Varro's tract. In the end, Augustine's concept of peace is said to have failed to appreciate the "biblical" concept of peace correctly, which describes man's relation to God in both personal and social dimensions (pp. 1, 40-43, 205-223).

(3) *Pax est ordinata*: J. Laufs' approach

Fuchs' study, his hypothesis as well as exegesis, is thoroughly reviewed and criticised by another German scholar, Joachim Laufs, in *Der Friedensgedanke bei Augustinus* (1973). Laufs defends the originality and integrity of Augustine's thought in XIX.12-17, arguing that Fuchs is categorically mistaken on two fronts: the main theme of the relationship between the two cities, and a philosophical concept of order, which underlies Augustine's exposition of peace. Contrary to what Fuchs claims it is the contrast between *civitas dei* and *civitas terrena*, not between heaven and the world, that constitutes the backbone of *De civitate dei*; as a result, Fuchs neglects an argument

¹² Cf. H. Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics* (Stockholm, Goteborg, and Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1967), 624-628; Duchrow (1983), 268-291; Markus (1988), 68 (n.3), 205 (n.1). H. Leisegang acknowledges that Fuchs may be right in his review in *Philologische Wochenschrift* 47 (1927): 1177-1180. Both Hagendahl and Leisegang are cited by W. Bense in his introduction to Fuchs' work (cf. Fuchs, intro., p. 6).

crucial to Augustine about the meaning of this-worldly existence of the *peregrini*, the citizens of the city of God on earthly pilgrimage (pp. 45-46).

Moreover, what gives coherence to the exposition of peace in Book XIX in particular is the foundational concept of *ordo*, by which Augustine defines peace in the so-called “table of peace” in the thirteenth chapter: *pax est ordinata*. In a detailed analysis of the relation to *pax* and to another key notion *natura*, *ordo* is described with regard to the essential definition, three spheres of operation, and two categories:-

<1> *Ordo* is the proportional distribution (*dispositio*) of diverse goods in the universe according to the eternal law (pp. 54-55, 62-63, 133);

<2> Augustine distinguishes three spheres (*Bereiche*) in which the divine ordering of things operates (pp. 133-134):-

<i> the “spatial” (*räumliche*) ordering, by which all created beings share an indestructible nature, a desire for existence, prompting them to seek some kind of order and peace instinctively;

<ii> the “grading of things” (*Stufung der res*), which can be divided into two kinds:

<a> the ordering of non-rational beings;

 the ordering of rational beings based on the “relation to the will of God”;

<iii> the “proportionate relationship between sin and punishment” (*Entsprechung von Schuldmaß und Strafmaß*), which concerns the ordering of sinners in different ways:

<a> the punitive ordering of mankind in general as the damned mass, or

 the punitive ordering of the wicked who constitute the earthly city;¹³

<3> In short, there are two categories of order distinguished in Augustine’s exposition of peace (p. 134):

<i> an ordered state of a being independent of its relation to God’s will (2-i, ii-a);

<ii> an ordered state of a rational being dependent on its relation to God’s will (2-ii-b, iii-a & -b).

¹³ On point 2-i, cf. *ibid.* 28, 67; on 2-ii, 53-54 (on 2-ii-a, 65-66; 2-ii-b, 45-55); on 2-iii, 62-63, 108, 134 (n..20).

Laufs maintains that the concept of order enables Augustine to incorporate his thought on peace not only with his theory of the two cities, but also with his general theological and philosophical thinking. Especially important are two facets of the Augustinian peace. First, Book XIX is a treatise on peace written for the earthly pilgrims of the city of God, with the “table of peace” as their guiding principle (pp. 51-55, 118). For the “ordered peace”, personally as well as socially, results only from the “piety” of those who seek the true peace experienced now by faith and then by sight (pp. 46-55). Secondly, according to Laufs, Augustine ultimately distinguishes three categories of peace: the rightly ordered, the perversely ordered, and the neutrally ordered. The first is the heavenly peace enjoyed by the city of God, including pilgrims; the second is the peace enjoyed by the citizens of the earthly city; the third is what Augustine calls “temporal peace” common to both cities. The third, temporal peace is a morally neutral area, which belongs to the first category of order independent of the agent’s piety (3-i above); this non-ethical peace comprises three low grades of peace in the peace-table (*pax corporis*, *pax animae irrationalis*, *pax corporis et animae*) as well as other basic necessities (*vita*, *salus*, *incolumitas*, *societas*) to sustain human beings and their society (pp. 65-66, 83-87). Laufs’ thesis in the end offers an intriguing interpretation of XIX.17: when the city of God on pilgrimage is said to “safeguard” (*tueri*) or “pursue” (*appetire*) an earthly peace so far as the piety allows, what is desired in relation to the true, heavenly peace is not the earthly peace itself—but the temporal peace preserved within the earthly peace (pp. 117-124).

(4) From *Ordo* to *Pax*: eschatology, ecclesiology and politics

Against Fuchs and Laufs this study aims to offer a third approach to the understanding of Augustine’s exposition of peace in *De civitate dei* XIX: to trace the development of the concept of peace *chronologically* and *in relation to* its underlying concept of order. With both Fuchs and Laufs we agree that *pax* is the central theme of Book XIX. With Laufs, and against Fuchs, we will argue that *ordo* is the concept underpinning *pax*, giving cohesion to Augustine’s argument not only within Book XIX but beyond it. However, we will criticise both scholars for focusing their analyses too

narrowly to the core chapters (XIX.12-17); even Laufs fails to elaborate on his frequent reference to Augustine's other relevant remarks on the topic within and outside *De civitate dei*. The philological approach of both scholars proves too limited to appreciate the breadth, depth and integrity of what Augustine achieved—a *Christian political philosophy* of peace. Instead, we shall pose three questions. How exactly did Augustine relate *ordo* and *pax* in his theology prior to the writing of the *opus magnum*? At which point and in what context did he come to recognise the crucial significance of *pax*? And what were the implications of elevating *pax* as a key concept of his political thinking?

The formation of *pax* must be traced back to the earliest period of Augustine's literary career (c. 386-391), when the first theoretical basis of *ordo* was laid in a Christian philosophy inspired by Neoplatonism (particularly Plotinus) and demonstrated against Manichaeism. To solve the controversial problem of evil, he conceived a concept of order which articulated a Christian worldview (the creation-order), in which the omnipotence and righteousness of the creator God could be defended against the prevalence of evil, especially of moral evil (sin) caused by human will. Therefore, *ordo* signified the moral order of man, too—a right ordering of God, soul and body in accordance with his created nature (Chapter 1). Augustine's early ethics was rigidly ontological in its orientation: it was a search for a knowledge of the normative mode of existence, cosmologically as well as existentially. In the early doctrine of order *pax* was also ontologically defined as a minor correlative notion which denoted the tranquillity of order of all things; socially, it was mentioned occasionally as one of the objectives of temporal laws (Chapter 2).

The ordination in 391 marked a watershed in Augustine's theology, the ontological basis of which was gradually transformed over the next ten years. The transformative process—here characterised as the *historicising* of the doctrine of order—was composed of three thought-experiments carried out almost in parallel: the doctrine of grace, positive teleology, and eschatology. The first exposed the incomprehensibility of *ordo* to human mind and its imperfectibility without the gift of grace because of the fundamental sinfulness of human beings. From the second experiment Augustine learned the notion of use (*usus*), which opened his eyes to the possibility of human abuse

of the created order, and to the instrumentality and relativity of human institutions. The most crucial of all was the third experiment, which inspired him to construct a historiography based on biblical narratives from the creation to the last judgement. In the end, the interaction of the three experiments produced what can be termed as a concept of “dual providence”:¹⁴ divine providence governs the universe through two channels, nature and the will. The realm of human will is not just ontologically conditioned by the creation, but also *historically* conditioned by the world of time and change: a human order, even if ontologically perverse, may be justified culturally and socially as necessary and/or legitimate, depending on the circumstances. Nevertheless, all historical orders are *eschatologically* governed by the providential ordering of things, thus proving the ultimate omnipotence and righteousness of God’s will (Chapter 3).

The impact of the transformed doctrine of order was tremendous. On the one hand, it offered a theoretical basis to the emerging theory of the two cities at around the turn of the fourth century. On the other hand, the perspective of dual providence prepared Augustine for his long battle against Donatism, which began soon after his ordination and reached its peak in the first ten years of the new century. It was in this controversy in which Augustine used *pax* as a “flagship”-concept of his campaign: in “*pax ecclesiae*” lay a this-worldly (hence limited but authentic) representation of the unity and harmony of the heavenly society. Ontologically, peace denotes the perfect state of being (or the tranquillity of order); but it also connotes an approximate realisation of order within the limits of this world. Biblically, of course, peace is an important notion which vindicates God’s creational and eschatological righteousness, especially the divine gifts of forgiveness, reconciliation and salvation through Christ. Moreover, during the prolonged controversy, both the Donatist and the Catholic churches appealed to peace in defense of the authority of each camp; the most notable example was Optatus of Milevis in his *De schismate Donatistarum* (c. 384). These elements formed a background against which Augustine conceived a comprehensive theory of “ecclesiastical peace”, providing a theological justification of the Catholic church and a moral and social principle of

¹⁴ Markus calls it “the dual order of providence” in idem (1988), 92.

peacemaking through love. Most importantly to our thesis, Augustine was also aware of the political implication of his theory of peace, when he deployed it to legitimise the religious coercion as part of a Christian pedagogy of peace. Precisely at this juncture the “flagship”-concept of his moral and political theology changed—from *ordo* to *pax* (Chapter 4).

De civitate dei, finally, was a culmination of the formative process of the concept of peace on the basis of the transformed concepts of order and providence. From the outset the apologia for Christianity was politically motivated, that is, to defend the authority and integrity of its teachings against fierce criticisms of pagan philosophers, as the Roman Empire gradually succumbed to successive “barbarian invasions”. Augustine’s argument was not a simple defense of the Christian institution known as the “Christian era” (*tempora Christiana*), but a critical examination of the fundamental relationship between Christianity and political community from the perspective of the “order of eras” (*ordo temporum*). Within the providential order of history the “Christian era” is one phase, with a special meaning of its own, alongside various Roman eras before it and many other eras outside the Roman history; and through the order of diverse eras the two cities proceed towards their appointed ends. The nineteenth book, which opens the narrative of the ends, explicates a “political” theory of peace, seeking to desacralise the myth of *pax Romana* and to justify the relevance of Christian teachings in the social and political life. In a sense, the exposition of peace can be seen as a political reformulation of what Augustine achieved in the Donatist controversy—but, as the “table of peace” amply testifies, with a more conscious and explicit effort than previously to incorporate *pax* with *ordo* (Chapter 5).

From *ordo* to *pax*—in the transformation of a central political concept Augustine synthesised his ontology (understanding the order and nature of beings, both cosmologically and existentially), biblical exegeses (especially with regard to divine justice, which is promised Christologically and historically, to be fulfilled eschatologically), and ecclesiology (aiming at a forgiving reconciliation with neighbours and enemies through persuasion and, if necessary, through coercion). The result was a political philosophy of peace, which consists in: <1> a sharp distinction

between perfect and imperfect peace, <2> a multi-dimensional understanding of peace from bodily to spiritual, from individual to social, from earthly to heavenly, and <3> the legitimatisation of the earthly peace as the proper, though unattainable, goal of political activities. In the end, our examination will point out three aspects—eschatology, ecclesiology and politics—of the Augustinian peace which are overlooked by Fuchs and Laufs.

Eschatology: *Ordo* and *pax* are related to each other not twofoldly (i.e. ethically and non-ethically) as Laufs asserts, but threefoldly: ontologically, historically, and eschatologically in particular. The twofold division blurs the consistently ethical orientation of Augustine’s ontological argument that peace is the order of created beings, the existence and activity of which ultimately suggest the goodness of the creator. More importantly, however, Laufs (let alone Fuchs) fails to appreciate fully the eschatological perspective which penetrates Augustine’s exposition of peace, sharply distinguishing two conditions of life—between now and then. As a result, throughout his study, he does not distinguish the ethical peace/order of the pilgrims sharply enough from that of the heavenly citizens. Augustine’s eschatology dictates that, on the one hand, all earthly existence, not just the earthly city but also the city of God, is a historical one, characterised as a “punishment of sin” (Laufs: 2-iii-a, above); on the other hand, God’s judgement, which concerns not only the punishment due for the earthly city (2-iii-b), but also the reward of eternal peace, will not be revealed until the end of time. Until then even the pious pilgrims must endure the conditions of the peace available on earth for the sake of the promised peace in heaven.

Ecclesiology: Although *De civitate dei* does not discuss ecclesiastical peace directly, its key elements developed during the Donatist controversy are incorporated in Augustine’s political philosophy of peace: peace as a temporal good common to the pious and the wicked, as a Christian spirit of forgiveness and forbearance, and as the primal objective of political authority. Neither Fuchs nor Laufs knows this ecclesiological origin of Augustinian peace, precisely because they are simply engaged in a philological examination of *De civitate dei* XIX.12-17, without giving due consideration to the formation of the conceptual pair, *ordo* and *pax*. In Book XIX, the unique status

of ecclesiastical peace is represented by *pax nostra propria* distinguished from *pax aeterna* and *pax terrena*: it is a “solace of unhappiness”, like *pax terrena*, but nonetheless the “forgiveness of sins” which is a guiding principle of Christian life on earth (XIX.27). In this respect, too, Laufs is wrong in his categorisation of peace (the eternal, the earthly, and the temporal), since the temporal peace is another name for the earthly peace, with an emphasis on its mutability (cf. XIX.13) or on its attribute as an existence of the meantime (cf. XIX.26).

Politics: The Augustinian peace in its final form is a fundamentally political concept, another point which is overlooked by both Fuchs and Laufs. Augustine’s arguments about a perverse peace sought by wars, brigands and kings (cf. XIX.12), about social peace as a cooperative order (cf. XIX.13), about the common utility of the earthly peace for both cities (cf. XIX.17), and about the redefinition of political community (*res publica* or *populus*, XIX.24)—all these arguments suggest that Augustine has consciously chosen *pax* to represent his political thought in Book XIX. Political issues at the heart of common scholarly debates (e.g., the state, civic virtue, justice, law, authority) must be understood within a larger framework which he adopted, namely a political theory of peacemaking. An outline of the Augustinian politics can be summarised on three central issues: <1> “*pax civitatis [terrenae]*” (or political peace) is a provisional good, providing a pluralist parameter within which various activities can be pursued for differing interests and allegiance, even as radically polarised as those of *civitas terrena* and *civitas dei*; <2> “*concordia*” (or a common good) constitutes a political community and differentiates it from others by a civic agreement on the object of love, thus leaving no room for the overlapping of citizenship between the two cities; <3> “*imperandum*” (or political authority) is in its origin an unnatural, post-lapsarian institution, established for the purpose of maintaining political peace and the common good of the community, and recognised as a judicial power to judge right from wrong, and to punish, correct, and coerce wrong-doers back to political peace—all within the limitation of a provisional order.¹⁵

¹⁵ Therefore, liberal commentators are wrong in understanding the state or political community as a pluralist institution (for it is political peace which is pluralist); communitarian commentators are right in suggesting the importance of a common good (or a “common concern” (*res communis*) for the objects of love in Augustine’s own word) in his view of political community. However, the liberals are correct to point to a volitional or consensual—and not normative—

orientation in his definition of *concordia*, a common will of majority which constitutes a political order (peace or community). Communitarians are ambiguous about: <1> Augustine's differentiation between *the* common good (i.e. God) and *a* political common good, <2> the volitional aspect of the latter kind of common good, and finally <3> his negative view of the origin of political authority, which is generally regarded in the communitarian camp as natural—hence intrinsic—to human sociality.

CHAPTER ONE

Cosmic Order: The Young Augustine's Worldview

1. The Idea of Order in the Cassiciacum Dialogues

(1) *Ordo* and the question of worldview

Augustine's early theology has been examined closely and critically by scholars, who have paid special attention to the influence of Manichaeism and Neoplatonism.¹ However, few have fully analysed the formation of a key concept, *ordo*, which plays a crucial role in his strategic attack on the Manichees by integrating the philosophy of Plotinus with that of Christianity. The following examination of Augustine's thought during its formative years (386-391) will show the importance of the concept of order in two ways: first, *ordo* reflects his early preoccupation with the formation of a worldview which will explain the relationship between God and man, good and evil, within the order of the universe; secondly and consequently, *ordo* functions as a measure to trace the subtle and gradual development of various theological components—such as cosmogony, ontology, theories of evil and will—of his early Christian worldview.

Throughout his life Augustine sought to grasp the right concept of God. In *Confessiones* (III.4.7) he tells us how his youthful, inquisitive mind was preoccupied with the understanding of the eternal truth. It was this strong longing for truth, initially inspired by Cicero's *Hortensius*, that threw

¹ Among many, two works still remain essential: J. J. O'Meara, *The Young Augustine: The Growth of St. Augustine's Mind up to his Conversion* (London, New York, Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1954), and R. J. O'Connell, *St. Augustine's Early Theory of Man, A.D. 386-391* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press, 1968). Cf. also J. Burnaby, *Amor Dei: a Study of the Religion of St. Augustine* (London, 1938; reprint in paperback, by The Canterbury Press Norwich, 1991), 25-82; P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de Saint Augustin* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1950); E. Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, trans. by L. E. M. Lynch (London, 1961); A. H. Armstrong, *St. Augustine and Christian Platonism* (Villanova: Villanova University Press, 1967c); G. O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* (London: Duckworth, 1987).

the young Augustine into an intense and prolonged journey through philosophical confusion. Having studied the Bible, only to be disappointed with the simplicity of its style, Augustine then became heavily involved with Manichaeism, which would leave a remarkable influence upon him even after his nine-year association ended; then he turned briefly to Scepticism before his conversion to Neoplatonism, which was catalytic for the final return to Christianity. At the end of this famous philosophical pilgrimage Augustine found in the Christian God the true explanation of what God is.

If God is the eternal truth, he must be the *summum bonum* (supreme good) that leads its possessors to the *beata vita* (happy life): the right knowledge of God makes a person virtuous and happy. The eudaemonist framework of thinking formed the nucleus of Augustine's conception of God throughout his life. Nevertheless, most disturbing to him was the undeniable fact that man could not attain such sense-oriented knowledge with ease, if at all, because of the confusion and wickedness inherent in him. Hence the fundamental paradox of the universe: if the world is governed by the highest good, why does evil exist, where does it come from, and how can it be cured? And it was precisely this perplexing relationship between God and evil that made Augustine vulnerable to Manichaeism, which explained it as a cosmic battle between forces of good and evil.² According to this Gnostic dualist cosmology, evil deeds are not the product of own power, but of the external force working upon him; the force which conquers the evils comes also from outside human capacity—from God.

For Augustine, however, the Manichaean answer turned out to be only a tentative solution. The crucial defect lay in an essentially mythical aspect of its cosmology. Because of its incapacity to explain such natural phenomena like the alternations of the length of days and nights or the solar and lunar eclipses, Augustine found Manichaeism as ignorant as astrology and far less convincing than the liberal disciplines of philosophers (e.g. conf. V.5.8-6.11). The young philosopher was desperate

² Once an ardent Manichee, Augustine admitted his mistake, as most vividly portrayed in conf. III.6.10-11, and fiercely attacked Manichaeism prevalent in North Africa throughout his life. The influence and difference of the Manichaean worldview has been studied extensively. Cf. O'Connell (1968), 88-93; cf. also J. J. O'Meara, 61-91, P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA.: University of California Press, 1967; paperback edition, 1969), 46-60.

for an alternative worldview which could explain the origin and mechanism of the universe so that the existence of evil would not detract from the goodness of its creator. The fruit was an Augustinian synthesis of Neoplatonism and Christianity mediated by the concept of order.

Ordo, together with its correlative notions, is a philosophical complex in which various aspects of Augustine's early theology converge. God's presence and man's position in the cosmic hierarchy of beings, the origin and nature of evil, God's punitive justice and salvific mercy—all these presuppose an underlying image of cosmic order. The following discussion is an attempt to reconstruct Augustine's pattern of thought—characterised as the doctrine of order—out of an intricate and often obscure web of theological and philosophical arguments in his early years. The process of the doctrinal development can be roughly divided into three stages: <1> his first, undeveloped treatment of the problem in Cassiciacum in 386; <2> the pivotal period between 387 and 389; <3> the culmination in *De vera religione* (and the second and third book of *De libero arbitrio*) at about the time of his ordination in 391. Among his early works, however, *De ordine*, for all its inherent shortcomings, remains indispensable to an understanding of the basic questions and assumptions involved in the emerging doctrine of order.

(2) *Ordo* in the Cassiciacum dialogues

In September, 386, Augustine retired to Cassiciacum to lead what he later called a “*Christianae vitae otium*”, an ideal life of contemplation according to the Christian manner.³ The outcome of his intense dialogues with his close circle in Cassiciacum appeared in four treatises written within a short period of time.⁴ Neither of the first two treatises, *Contra Academicos* and *De beata vita*, deals with the question of *ordo* in particular; the former is concerned with the availability of truth to knowledge, and the latter, with the definition of the happy life. However, underneath these

³ retr. I.1.1. Cf. Brown (1969), 115-127.

⁴ D. Ohlmann suggests that they were written in a fortnight between the 10th and the 23rd of November, 386, in his *De Sancti Augustini dialogis in Cassiciaco scriptis* (Dissertatio inauguralis. Strasbourg: Argentorati, 1987), 27.

unmistakably eudaemonistic arguments lies Augustine's profound interest in the problem of order. For instance, at the beginning of *Contra Academicos* (I.1.1) Augustine states that the main problem of philosophy is to understand the power of "virtue" in guiding all people to good fortune (*fortuna*) and wisdom (*sapientia*) with the help of God. Then he writes:

Indeed what is popularly called fortune is perhaps governed by a certain hidden order (*occulto quodam ordine*). And, among things, we call no other thing chance but [those], the reason and cause of which are secret; and nothing, either welcome or unwelcome, happens to any part, which does not correspond to and agree with the whole.

God's providence (*providentia*) "extends so far as to include us", as is instructed by "the teaching of a very rich doctrine" (ibid.).

While carelessly identifying *fortuna* with *providentia*,⁵ Augustine nevertheless demonstrates his basic framework of thinking characteristic of this earliest period. Human endeavour to attain to the virtuous and happy life is ultimately governed by a "hidden order" which is called fortune or providence; and every small incident in this world has its reason and cause, the hidden meaning of which is revealed only when viewed in the wider context of the whole. Implied in these passages are essential ingredients of his formative worldview: order (*ordo*), agreement and harmony (*convenire*, *congruere*), the part-whole (*pars-universum*) relationship, and providence (*providentia*). Also indicated is the source of this teaching: the true philosophy—Christian philosophy, that is—which he thinks more or less compatible, at this early stage, with Neoplatonism.⁶ As Augustine himself reveals a few sections later, "this [philosophy] liberated me thoroughly from that superstition [of Manichaeism]", by teaching that "whatever is discerned by mortal eyes, whatever any sense achieves, should not be worshipped but condemned" (ibid. I.1.3). The allusion is obviously to Neoplatonism, especially to that of Plotinus.⁷ While Plotinus attributes to the power of "providence" (*pronoia*) the unity of the universe (*kosmos*) as a whole with different levels of beings encompassed

⁵ Cf. retr. I.1.2. Cf. also DCD. V.1-11 for his later doctrine of providence; see below, pp. 192-194.

⁶ Cf. conf. VII.9.13; cf. O'Connell (1968), 4-6, 26-28.

⁷ Scholars have debated whether the source of Neoplatonism for Augustine was Plotinus, or Porphyry, or both. I have disregarded the possible influence of Porphyry, following O'Connell's argument: cf. idem (1968), 25.

under the transcendental being, the One,⁸ Augustine, too, is convinced of God's government over all things, visible and invisible, corporeal or incorporeal. Above all, "the hidden providence has decided to awaken that which is divine in you"; otherwise, such divinity remains asleep (ibid.).

Except for the beginning of *Contra Academicos I*, however, Augustine does not elaborate on the topic of providential order and care until his third Cassiciacum dialogue, *De ordine*. The entire argument in between concentrates on the issues of whether truth can be known (discussed in the rest of *Contra Academicos I*) and of whether man can be happy in the mere search for truth without discovering it (discussed in *De beata vita*). Here, at this point, he decides to change his tactic. Still uncertain about the accessibility of truth, he puts his polemic against the Academics on hold, and writes instead *De beata vita* to define what constitutes the happy life: it is "a life according to reason", "possessing" (*habere*) and "enjoying" (*perfrui*) truth (Acad. I.9.24; DBV. 4.34). In concluding his discussion of beatitude, Augustine returns once again to the initial question of a perfect knowledge of truth (cf. DBV. 4.35): it is a knowledge of <1> who leads one to the attainment of truth, <2> what kind of truth one should enjoy, and <3> what binds the pursuer to truth best. Having thus defined what the perfect knowledge is, it would have been natural for Augustine to return straight to his suspended refutation of Scepticism in *Contra Academicos*; instead, however, Augustine goes on to write still another treatise *On Order*.⁹ But how are we to understand the progression from *Contra Academicos I* to *De beata vita*, and then on to *De ordine*?

At the beginning of *De ordine* Augustine tells us how he has come to discuss the "order of things" (*ordo rerum*). Although none of his company has raised the question before, the topic has been on the agenda in his mind for some time. In Book I (7.20) he reveals that he has actually discussed the matter with his friend Zenobius, to whom this treatise is dedicated; in fact, it is Zenobius who has urged repeatedly to give him a sufficient account for what "order" is, most

⁸ E.g. Enn. III.2-3 and VI.4-5 (esp. VI.4.3) on the universality of providential care. Cf. O'Connell (1968), 52. The translation of *The Enneads* follows Armstrong trans., *Enneads*, The Loeb Classical Library, 6 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966).

⁹ For the writing of the second and third books of *Contra Academicos* which followed the first book of *De ordine*, cf. Ohlmann, 27.

recently in the form of a poem. Augustine has not answered immediately due to the “obscurity” of the subject matter and “lack of time”.

Indeed, a close look at the context suggests a logical transition of argument from the end of *De beata vita* to the beginning of *De ordine*. One of the aims of Augustine’s Christian *otium* is to prove against other philosophies that Christianity is the true philosophy, the criteria for which he has presented at the end of *De beata vita* (4.35): by whom we are led to truth, what sort of truth we should enjoy, and how to maintain it. Hence arises a possibility that *De ordine* may have been an attempt at demonstrating—in terms of *ordo*—how Christianity satisfies these criteria. In order to justify this hypothesis, we may recall Augustine’s main preoccupation at the time of the philosophical retreat, namely, the refutation of Manichaeism. While New Academic scepticism is the direct object of criticism in *Contra Academicos I* and *De beata vita*, the author has another project in mind: to formulate a Christian worldview by which the true philosophy is defended against the false worldview—“superstition”—of Manichaeism (Acad. I.1.3). We shall see as we go on that, to Augustine, the establishment of the true philosophy is inseparable from the refutation of the false philosophy of Manichaeism, since the dualism of the latter undermines what Augustine regards, at this early stage, as the true idea of God: the unifying force of the universe.

2. *De Ordine*

(1) The Manichaean question

Augustine begins *De ordine* by telling Zenobius the complexity of the matter:

The order of things, O Zenobius, how difficult and rare it is for men to follow, and to grasp what is proper to each; and, indeed, to recognise and explain *the order of the universe*, by which this world is embraced and governed! (DO. I.1.1—Italics added)

The central question, succinctly put, concerns the perception of *ordo rerum* and *ordo universitatis*: the order of things assigned to each (*cuique proprium*, by implication a notion of justice) and the

structure of God's cosmic government.¹⁰ Then follows a statement of what is commonly known as "the Manichaeian question":

How is it that God takes care of human affairs and, yet, such perversity is prevalent everywhere in human affairs; and how is it that it should not, so it seems, be attributed either to God's administration or even to his servants', if such power were given to them?¹¹ (ibid.)

Thus at the heart of the problem lies the apparent contradiction between God's care (*curare*, *procuratio*) and the existence of evil (*perversitas*). Where does evil come from and who is responsible for it? Many people are so puzzled by the question of the origin of evil that they eventually give up and hastily conclude that "divine providence does not extend to these ultimate, lowest things" or that "all evils are committed according to God's will" (ibid.). In the meantime, Manichees lure the confused to believe, as Augustine once did, their story about the universe as the battlefield between God and the Devil, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. Evil is not the result of anyone's fault; it is a subsistent cosmic force.

In this opening passage of *De ordine* we hear an obvious echo of the beginning of *Contra Academicos I*, where Augustine also assures Romanianus of the universal care of *providentia* (or *fortuna*) in man's pursuit of beatitude (cf. I.1.1). In *De ordine*, however, the question becomes more specific: the (in)compatibility of providential care with evil deeds, or that of order with perversity. Once enticed into a deep abyss of Manichaeism and still dismayed even after his conversion to Christianity, Augustine is determined to confront the formidable challenge of Manichaeism with Christian philosophy.¹² After stating the Manichaeian question, Augustine suggests what lies at the core of the true philosophy, that is, a perspective on a higher plane of "the whole" (*universum*), rather than that of "the part" (*pars*); viewed from above, like a mosaic floor, everything, even evil, is endowed with a specific purpose and function as a part of the cosmic whole (DO. I.1.2). Here again,

¹⁰ The three notions—*ordo rerum*, *ordo universitatis*, and justice—are essentially identical.

¹¹ Cf. also DO. I.7.17-18, II.1.2 & 17.46.

¹² Courcelle suggests a strong influence of Ambrose on this point, mediating Neoplatonic approach to Augustine. Cf. Courcelle, 78-92; cf. also J. J. O'Meara, 116-130. O'Connell acknowledges the importance of Ambrose as a medium, but also points out certain uneasiness felt by Augustine about the "compromise between Christianity and Plotinianism": cf. idem (1968), 18; also 26-27.

as in the beginning of *Contra Academicos I*, Augustine is obviously inspired by Plotinus' teaching. The idea of the whole-part relationship in the universe corresponds closely with the Plotinian concept of providence explicated, for instance, in the *Enneads* III.2.1, where he explains the unity of multiple beings in terms of "archetype" and its "image"; the ultimate perspective to understand the whole comes from the contemplation of the One, the Archetype of all beings.¹³ Augustine's indebtedness to Plotinian cosmology is most evident in *De ordine* I.2.3: "Thus the soul which returned to itself understands what the beauty of the universe is, and the universe is obviously synonymous to one (*unum*) [...]". The Christian answer to the Manichaean question is founded on Plotinus' accounts of cosmic order, soul, and evil.

At first glance one may find Augustine's arguments in *De ordine* incoherent and unorganised: following the introductory part (I.1-2), the main discussion begins with the story of running water that prompted their argument concerning the "order of causes" (*ordo causarum*) in natural phenomena (I.3-6); he then tries to clarify God's relation to order and evil (in a way that appears vestigial in the light of later achievement) in order to specify the origin of evil (I.7); by the end of Book I he has not arrived at a conclusive definition of *ordo* (I.9-10). At this juncture Augustine decides to spend the next few days (20-22 November) completing the remaining part of *Contra Academicos* (II and III). However, by the time he re-engages in *De ordine II*, he has reformulated his thoughts on the Manichaean question in terms of the order of learning (*ordo disciplinae*). After a brief restatement of the definition of order, Augustine starts a discussion of wise men who "are with God", especially of their soul's "purification" (*perpurgare*) (DO. II.2.5, 6). The soul's purification results from a rigorous philosophical training through various liberal disciplines, because they all point to "the fountain of order", God (II.5.14). The right order of learning is expounded in the latter half of Book II (8-18).

First of all, the programme of the soul's purification consists of two orders: one is *ordo vitae*, the "order of life" which instructs moral and social code of behaviour (8.25); the other is *ordo*

¹³ Enn. III.2.1.

eruditionis, the “order of education” which leads to the perfect perception of the ultimate “principle” (*principium*) of things (9.26). The latter, higher form of order can be learned through two paths: one, by “authority” (*auctoritas*), which is “prior in terms of time” and more effective for “the uneducated mass”; the other, by “reason” (*ratio*), which is “prior in terms of reality” and fitted for the few “erudite men” (9.26). It is the power of reason (cf. 11.30-34), finally, that arranges the development of liberal disciplines, from elementary grammar of letters and calculation to history, then from dialectics and rhetoric to music, all the way to geometry and astrology (cf. 12.35-15.42). Finally, after a restatement of the Manichaean question (cf. 17.46) Augustine concludes his examination of *ordo* with a reassurance of the effectiveness of his programme in answering the two fundamental questions of philosophy: what the soul is, and what God is (cf. 18.47). At the end of its purification the soul understands the nature of one (*unum*) itself and becomes united to its ultimate object of love, God the Unity of all unity (cf. 18.48).

(2) The concept of order

To judge whether Augustine satisfactorily answers the Manichaean question, let us first review the basic assumptions underlying the concept of order. As stated clearly in the opening sentence of *De ordine*, it is in the idea of the “order of things” (*ordo rerum*) that he finds the key to understanding the problem of evil. For the *ordo rerum* is nothing but God’s ordering (*ordinare, ordinatio*) of the universe, extending to natural phenomena (such as running water and fighting between cocks) as well as to human injustice. Yet it is more than a *structural* ordering of creatures: expressed in it is his universal “love” for them.¹⁴ The hierarchical order of created beings is, at the same time, a reflection of the inherent drive of creature towards the creator, by which diverse beings are integrated into a single whole; for intelligible creatures in particular, it serves as a path to the attainment of wisdom, to the perfect knowledge of the supreme good.

¹⁴ Cf. DO. I.7.17-18.

On the one hand, therefore, the *ordo rerum* is God's act towards the creation. The fundamental belief in the divine ordering is succinctly described in a phrase repeatedly used in the treatise: "nothing can exist outside order".¹⁵ *Ordo*, which "emanates (*manat*) from and is with God", conveys the creator's will and power—or *providentia*, as Augustine understands it—to sustain his creation in unity and harmony, by "distribution" (*distribuere*) and "arrangement" (*dispositio*) of things in their proper places (DO. I.7.17-19). In the *ordo rerum* Augustine thus finds God's power directed from the cosmic centre, as it were, outward to all created beings. This is the first, *derivational* mode implied in the concept of order. The most frequently used term to express the derivational mode is "government", with variations such as *regere*, *administrare*, *gubernare*, *potestas*, *dominio*.¹⁶ By the notion of government Augustine envisages God's absolute rule over his kingdom: nothing in his dominion escapes the power of God the Creator, the Supreme King. Yet, at the same time, *ordo* as God's government is identical, to Augustine, with the notion of divine "procuratio" (*procuratio*) in every single event and for the smallest and lowest of all creatures (I.1.1); for God "loves order and hates evil" (I.7.18).¹⁷ Above all, *ordo*—the divine rule, care and love of creation—is a manifestation of *iustitia dei*, God's justice. The universe remains intact thanks to the divine ordering, which gives "each its due" "according to its merits" (I.7.19); the *ordo rerum* results from God's act of "judging" (*iudicium*, *iudicare*) and "dividing" (*tribuere*, *separare*) good from evil (II.7.22).

On the other hand, the *ordo rerum* can also be explained from the perspective of creatures' relation to the creator. The most important feature of the cosmic hierarchy of beings—from lifeless material up to immortal rational beings called angels—is each and every creature's complete dependence upon the creator. Without a being's natural attraction—or what he will later call

¹⁵ E.g. *ibid.* I.3.8, 7.19; II.7.23-4, 19.51.

¹⁶ For *regere*, see *ibid.* I.1.1, II.2.4; for *administrare*, I.5.14, II. 2.4; *gubernare*, in II.1.2, 5.15; *potestas* and *moderatio* in I.1.2, *potestas*, *dominio dei* in II.17.46.

¹⁷ For the divine ordering of creation, cf. e.g. I.5.14, 7.18, 8.25.

“gravitation”—towards God, the universe would disintegrate into endless multiplicity.¹⁸ This second, integrative mode of *ordo rerum* is expressed in various definitions of *ordo*: order is “that which leads to God” (I.9.27), or “that which all that God created are driven by” (I.10.28). *Ordo* is the ontological imperative drawing creatures towards the creator, who has ordered things according to the meaning and purpose of each.

The *ordo rerum* in this integrative sense has a crucial importance to human beings, providing a path to wisdom through which they are “converted towards God” (I.8.23). Salvation (i.e. the soul’s purification) is nothing other than the right understanding of how all things in the universe are “ordered” (*ordinata*) by the creator. However, a close look at parts alone does not give us an overall design of the whole order; we can grasp it fully, only when we view it from its designer’s viewpoint (cf. I.1.2). Following this characteristically Neoplatonic idea of the whole-part relationship, Augustine emphasises the unifying aspect of order. *Ordo* is a kind of “unity-in-diversity”, where a multiplicity of beings at different levels is somehow integrated into one intimate, interwoven organism.¹⁹ Moreover, the integrative mode of the *ordo rerum* is also paraphrased as *ordo causarum*, “order of causes” (I.3.8; cf. I.4.11, II.5.15). Since nothing in the universe exists without a cause or reason, no matter how hidden or obscure, someone with the right perception may be led through a succession of causes up to the ultimate cause of things in the universe (cf. I.5.14). In the *ordo disciplinae* the soul becomes gradually purified as it climbs up the ladder of different disciplines—i.e. the *ordo rerum* arranged by reason—until it discovers the “fountain of order” (II.5.14). In other words, the *ordo disciplinae* is a pre-requisite for man’s pursuit of the *beata vita*; only the perfect knowledge of the order of things and their causes can purify synoptic comprehension, or “the gaze of the mind” (*acies mentis*, sol. I.4.12).

¹⁸ Cf. II.18.48, where he discusses the unifying power of love. For *nutus animi*, see DQA. 22.38; for *motus animi*, see DGCM. I.20.31, DLA. III.1.2. See below, pp. 37, 72.

¹⁹ See DO. I.2.3-4; also I.5.14 for the “successions” of things. Compare with Enn. III.2-3, esp. III.3.5. Cf. Armstrong’s notes on Enn. III.2 & 3 in his translation (1966); also D. J. O’Meara, *Plotinus: An Introduction to the Enneads* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 86-87.

Ultimately, these two modes—integrative and derivational—of the *ordo rerum* are two sides of the same thing: the harmony and goodness of the universe. Led by this conviction, Augustine rigorously contends against the Manichees in *De ordine* that God is not the creator of evil. But how precisely is evil related to *ordo*? Contrary to what one might expect, he does not undertake to give an alternative account of the origin of evil, but rather to undermine the threat of Manichees’ dualist cosmology. Defending the unity, stability and goodness of God’s government, Augustine puts an almost exclusive emphasis upon the integrity of the cosmic order, which embraces both good and evil, beauty and ugliness (cf. I.6.16). For instance, a fool is said to keep his place in the *ordo rerum* thanks to divine providence; even an executioner or a prostitute is integrated in the order of human society (cf. II.4.11-12). Evil—whether as the disturbance of cosmic integrity (cf. I.1.1, II.17.46) or as an epistemological obscurity (foolishness and ignorance; cf. II.3.9-4.11)—is, in the end, simply incapable of doing harm to God’s providential order.

(3) Order and evil: achievements and shortcomings of *De ordine*

Is God the creator of evil? To this question *De ordine* endeavours to offer a persuasive answer based on the “true philosophy”, especially on the key concept of order. The two-volume treatise demonstrates Augustine’s fundamental worldview rooted in a staunch conviction about the justice of God’s cosmic government and about the effectiveness of the academic programme for the soul’s purification. On the problem of evil in particular he repeatedly states the Manichaean question and distinguishes two types of evil, the epistemological evil of ignorance, and a perversion of the cosmic harmony. What he fails to accomplish in this treatise is a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon and origin of evil, and of its precise relation to the providential order of the universe.²⁰

²⁰ For instance, he refers to what would later become a crucial concept in his theory of evil—*poena* (punishment)—only once in a passing remark at the end of the treatise (cf. II.17.46), without elaborating on how and why it still remains under God’s control. O’Connell argues that Augustine himself was aware of the limitation of his answer to the Manichaean question; cf. *idem* (1968), 169.

Both the achievements and shortcomings of *De ordine* stem from the twin perspective of the work: intellectualism and cosmology. The rigorous intellectualism of Augustine's early philosophy is the hallmark of the pedagogical programme of *ordo disciplinae*. The order of learning is a logical extension of the pedagogical dialogue engaged in Book I with his young disciple Licentius and others; the academic order serves as a connecting point between the cosmic order as the whole and the soul's order as its part. The soul's obscured perceptual order should be restored stage by stage as it climbs up the ladder of liberal disciplines until it finally reaches the vision of the order of things in the universe and its true source, God. Augustine proudly declares:

This is the order of the studies of wisdom, by which anyone becomes fit to understand the order of things, *that is, to distinguish the two worlds and the father of the universe himself.* (II.18.47—Italics added)

As the last sentence (in italics) suggests, the intellectualism of *De ordine* is a reflection of the author's indebtedness to his mentor, Plotinus. Here at the end of the whole discussion, Augustine reveals at last what the *ordo rerum* really means: it is the "two worlds" (*duo mundi*) and their creator (*parens universitatis*).

In Plotinus' cosmology the interaction between the three primary hypostases—the One, Intellect and Soul—produces the universe (*kosmos*) consisting of the "intelligible, immaterial" part and the "sensible, material" part.²¹ As a result, Plotinian ethics focuses on the return of individual souls ("wanderers"²² of the universe) to the One, after leaving the lower material world, passing through and beyond the intelligible world. The union with the One is the ultimate goal of the making of a truly wise soul, while the fate of the uneducated mass is largely ignored in Plotinus' intellectualism. In Augustine's programme of *ordo disciplinae* intellectualism intensifies, especially when he emphasises the understanding of faith through reason more than through authority.²³ Authority alone opens the door to the path of wisdom, but it is the wise with the ability to follow the dictates of reason who can be saved in the true sense of the word, that is, to have his soul purified for

²¹ On the three hypostases, see Enn. V.1.2-7 and 10-11; on derivation of the order of beings, cf. V.2; the relationship between two worlds, cf. VI.4-5.

²² O'Connell (1968), 73-76.

²³ Cf. esp. DO. II.9.26, 11.30-34.

the final vision; meanwhile, the uneducated mass must stay on the level of faith, nurtured by authority (cf. II.9.26). Underlying the view of the polarised human race is an assumption that good and evil are almost reducible to an epistemological problem. The *beata vita* means the perfect knowledge of truth gained by the purified soul of a wise man, whereas human misery is believed to stem from deception and falsehood.²⁴ Hence emerges the most fundamental problem in Augustine's scheme of soul's purification: evil becomes almost identical with foolishness (*stultitia*) and ignorance (*ignorantia*).²⁵ Evil, the breach of cosmic order, is little more than a perceptual confusion, and this is the furthest Augustine can advance in *De ordine*.

This treatise, for better or worse, was Augustine's first attempt at formulating an *ontological* ethics based on a Christian worldview: it vigorously defended the integrity of cosmic order and proposed an intellectualist solution, but failed to grasp fully two other aspects crucial to solving the Manichaean question, both of which actually played decisive roles in Plotinus' Neoplatonism. The first problem reflected Augustine's preoccupation with the question of worldview: his discussion of order was *cosmologically* oriented, focusing on the notion of order as the whole, and, in return, leaving aside the notion of order within each particular being—or the *existential* aspect of *ordo*.²⁶ If Augustine had followed Plotinus' philosophy faithfully, he would have declared, as he did some years later, that the order of a particular being was essentially good since its existence reflected an image or trace of the whole order of the universe. But Augustine was still inhibited from developing a concept of evil which was anything more than a breach in the universe caused by perceptual confusion; he could not yet speak of evil (or disorder) as an existential problem (i.e. as perversity). The other, closely related problem was the lack, again unlike Plotinus,²⁷ of a clear distinction between ontological (cosmological and existential) evil and moral evil (or sin). As we have noted, an evil (*malum*) as Augustine understood it in *De ordine* was no more than a

²⁴ Cf. e.g. *ibid.* II.16.44.

²⁵ Cf. e.g. *ibid.* I.10.29.

²⁶ Cf. O'Connell (1968), 129.

²⁷ Cf. *Enn.* I.8, for his sharp distinction between the absolute, metaphysical evil and secondary moral evils.

“defect” or “fault” (*vitium*) of the otherwise wholesome order of the universe.²⁸ But the most serious disorder in the universe was, as he eventually found out, a sin (*peccatum*) peculiar to higher rational beings. Unable to elaborate on the existential aspect of *ordo*, of course, it is not surprising that Augustine at this stage could not trace the origin of a defect down to a human agent and further to the agent’s will.²⁹

3. Correlative Notions

The period between the completion of *De ordine* (386) and his ordination as a priest (391) was one of the most intensive and fruitful in Augustine’s literary career. In order to overcome the shortcomings of *De ordine* the subsequent treatises were devoted especially to a detailed analysis of the human soul and an overall apologia for Christianity. In *Soliloquia*, the first treatise written after *De ordine*, Augustine carried on his attempt to prove that truth could be known, but this time he focused on the nature of the soul, its immortality and greatness. The examination continued in four treatises (*De immortalitate animae*, *De musica*, *De quantitate animae*, and *De libero arbitrio I*). At the same time, during the same period, Augustine engaged in a comprehensive campaign against Manichaeism in defence of Christian morality (*De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae et De moribus Manichaeorum*), cosmogony (*De Genesi contra Manichaeos*) and pedagogics (*De magistro*). The finest fruits of Augustine’s intensive intellectual activity were *De vera religione* and *De libero arbitrio II* and *III*, the most eloquent expositions of his early Christian philosophy.

In these works *ordo* remained the key concept of Augustine’s worldview developed on the basis of a deeper understanding of Plotinus’ teachings. There slowly emerged a “doctrine” of order, the development of which can be described by way of various correlative notions deployed to

²⁸ Cf. DO. I.1.1, II.17.46, although Augustine is yet to conceptualise an ontological aspect of evil (*defectus*, *vitium*) as a perversity (*perversitas*) Cf. DVR. 11.21, 20.38; DLA. III.13.37, 14.40.

²⁹ Cf. DO. II.7.23, for Augustine’s awareness of the shortcomings in *De ordine*, as he expresses frustration about the progress of his discussion on the evil as “non-existence” (*non esse*)—a potential, though abortive, breakthrough to the existential level of *ordo*.

describe *ordo*. Among these correlatives we have chosen nine important notions, dividing them into three groups as follows: <1> key ontological (particularly, existential) notions—being, nature, and form; <2> notions denoting the essential quality of *ordo*—unity, harmony, and beauty; <3> other supplementary, yet important notions closely related to *ordo*—number, tranquillity, and justice. After a further scrutiny of key texts we shall have a full picture of how these correlative notions are related to *ordo* in the final form of the doctrine.

(1) Key ontological notions: being, nature and form

(a) being (*esse*, *essentia*, *substantia*): Most crucial to the development of Augustine’s doctrine of order is his gradual awareness of its existential aspect: *ordo* not only denotes the cosmic order as a whole, but also the order of its parts on the level of each individual existent. In this existential ontology the term *esse* (being or existence) is closely linked with *ordo*. First of all, *esse* is the product of *ordo*, since it is *ordo* that causes, arranges and maintains the existence of a being (cf. DMM. 5.7-7.9). *Esse*, therefore, implies the dependence of a thing which is caused to exist—thus called *subiectum*—upon that which causes its existence: for instance, the body is a *subiectum* of the soul, while the soul is a *subiectum* of reason (e.g. DIA. 1.1, 5.7). Moreover, by *esse*, Augustine means the essential nature of the existent, which is described as *essentia* or *substantia* of a being (e.g. DMM. 2.2). In this sense, the creator God is called the “*prima essentia*” (DIA. 12.19), which is demonstrated in the idea of the Trinity (cf. DLA. III.21.60). Finally, *esse* has the moral implication of realisation, especially in relation to its negative form, *non-esse*. Obviously influenced by a Plotinian notion of “Matter” whose “absolute indefiniteness” represents the “absolute evil”, that is, “non-existence”,³⁰ Augustine’s idea of *non-esse* testifies to the “goodness” of existence conversely. As he frequently says, “things are good insofar as they are realised”.³¹

³⁰ Enn. III.4.1; I.8.3.

³¹ DVR. 11.22. The formulation of the idea remained premature in the 380s (cf. DQA. 36.80, DMM. 5.7-7.9). For later references, cf. conf. VII.12.18, nat.bon. 1.1, DCD. XI.23.1.

(b) nature (*natura*): Each being, in the meantime, has distinctive characteristics of its own kind. This generic quality of a being is what Augustine calls *natura*. To denote the essential quality of a being, he uses *natura* almost interchangeably with *esse*, *essentia* and *substantia* (e.g. DMM. 2.2). The nature of all beings, therefore, is good as far as it exists (e.g. DLA. III.13.36). Each nature is also determined according to its peculiar “mode” (*modus*) of being by which any given being is classified into its own particular kind (*genus*). For instance, the characteristic of man’s *esse* lies in belonging to a *genus* whose *modus* of being is rational and mortal. Furthermore, *natura* also retains a cosmological connotation, since the nature of a being indicates its proper position and function in the *ordo naturae*, the cosmic ordering of God’s creation. In the order of nature man occupies a “middle” position between angels and animals, sharing rationality with the former and mortality with the latter (DGCM. II.9.12).³² As an ethical concept in the doctrine of order, moreover, *natura* becomes important especially in relation to the problem of free will (*voluntas libera*, *liberum arbitrium*): the nature, an indication of order and goodness of a being, becomes defective and faulted (*vitium*), as a result of a choice made by human will.

(c) form (*forma*, *species*): Nevertheless, *esse* and *natura* are not enough to describe the fundamental order of a being, for they do not explain the actual activity of ordering itself. According to Augustine this “power” of creating and qualifying a being is called “form” (*forma* or *species*).³³ The function of a form is to create and sustain the existence of its *subiectum*; thus the mind is called the *species corporis*, “form of the body”.³⁴ In this sense *ordo* is an activity of *forma*, giving its *subiectum* a *genus*, a specific form and mode of being. A *forma* is hence the qualifier of a being, determining its *natura* and *modus* and assigning each being a proper position in the order of nature. Lastly, a *forma* also functions as a medium of God’s creation, transferring the existential nature—such as goodness, beauty and harmony—of the creator to all the creatures; a being is thus an image (similitude, trace or shadow) of God in so far as it retains an order which reflects its creator’s nature.

³² Cf. DGCM. I.17.28-20.31, DLA. III.11.33. See below, pp. 66-67.

³³ DIA. 8.13-15, DVR. 20.40.

³⁴ Cf. sol. II.18.32, DIA. 8.13, 15.24

(2) Categories of order common to cosmos and existent: unity, harmony and beauty

In addition to these key ontological notions there are three important notions which explain some fundamental qualities common to all created beings on both cosmological and existential levels. The creation and qualification of a being by its form is a diverse activity, by which one creature is differentiated from another; and yet, Augustine never ceases to emphasise that there are some features shared by all creatures in respect of their order and existence.

(a) unity (*unum, unitas*): The most essential characteristic implied in *ordo* and *esse* is unity. This notion of “oneness” (*unum*) of a being is Plotinian in its inspiration, but also Pythagorean in its origin, as is shown by Augustine’s analysis of the derivation and order of numbers from one in *De musica*. To order a thing is to give its existence a certain uniformity and harmony (cf. DMM. 6.8). So, existentially, creatures’ natural disposition to become “one” (*unum*) is an indication of the innate image or similitude of the creator, who is the ultimate simplicity and unity.³⁵ Cosmologically, the entire universe is a collective body of diverse pursuits of “unity” (*unitas*) according to the *genus* of each being (cf. DLA. III.23.69-70).³⁶ Hence the word “*universitas*” (universe), which Augustine believes to derive from “*unum*” (DO. I.2.3). And a wise man is one who can perceive the unity in the order of things both existentially and cosmologically.³⁷

(b) harmony (*convenire, congruentia, consentire*): In this way, Augustine’s preoccupation with the unity of order does not ignore the fact that the order of nature consists of diverse creatures of different qualities. Augustine explains this—again unmistakably Plotinian—idea of “unity-in-diversity” in terms of harmony;³⁸ the terms most frequently used are *convenire* (to come together), *congruentia* (to coincide, agree) and *consentire* (to agree), all of which mean an agreement of

³⁵ The idea of God being the source of unity of a being is very similar to the Plotinian One, although Augustine distances himself from a “pantheistic” implication of Plotinus’ idea. For a careful comparative study of the concept of “omnipresence” conceived by the two thinkers, see O’Connell (1968), e.g. 32-35, 45-46, 51-64, 81-86, 117-121.

³⁶ Cf. e.g. DMM. 6.8, DVR. 32.60.

³⁷ Cf. DO. II.16.44, 18.47-48; DVR. 30.55-56.

³⁸ Cf. e.g. Enn. VI.4.14, VI.5.6, VI.7.12.

different parts indispensable for any existence and order. The harmony of the universe as a whole (macrocosm) is reflected in a degree of harmony realised in each part (microcosm), while the actual measurement of the partial harmony is determined by its own form (e.g. DIA. 2.2, mus. I.12.22). The cosmic order is an intricate and interconnected network of diverse modes of being. Moreover, in the idea of harmony, Augustine finds both aesthetic and moral aspects: on the one hand, harmony implies “health”, “beauty” and “pleasantness” as a result of an agreement of different parts,³⁹ while, on the other hand, the soul’s harmony or agreement with reason is the foundation of all virtues.⁴⁰

(c) beauty (*pulchritudo*, *pulchrum*): To Augustine ethics is inseparable from aesthetics: a creaturely existence, disposed to seek unity and harmony suitable for its nature, realises a beauty (*pulchritudo*) of its own. The qualifier of the existential beauty is its specific *forma* or *species*: the body is beautiful, though in the lowest form of beauty, as far as it exists in accordance with its nature (cf. DVR. 20.40, 40.74-76). A human being is attracted towards beauty, which inspires his moral activity in search of an agreement with the dictates of reason; for beauty is the object of contemplation, love and enjoyment (cf. DO. II.14.39, mus. VI.13.38). In relation to *ordo*, *pulchritudo* is the essential quality of a being as realised in its perfect order, measurement and harmony. Again, the relationship between order and beauty is both cosmological and existential: the order of the universe is beautiful due to the unity and harmony among its diverse parts, while each part is also beautiful in so far as its order reflects the beauty of the whole in its own way (cf. DQA. 36.80, DVR. 40.76). Similarly, even the order (whether personal or social) restored by punishing wrong-doers is considered as a form of cosmic beauty (cf. DVR. 41.77).

(3) Supplementary notions: number, justice, tranquillity

Augustine’s discussion of *ordo* from cosmological, existential, aesthetic and ethical points of view is further supplemented by other ontological notions. Among them the following deserve special

³⁹ On *salus*, DQA. 19.33, DVR. 30.55; on *pulchritudo*, DVR. 30.55, 43.80; on *voluptas*, DVR. 39.72.

⁴⁰ Cf. e.g. Acad. I.2.5, DQA. 16.27; the idea is markedly Stoic in origin, but also Neoplatonist.

attention, not only because of their significance as components of the *ordo* doctrine, but also because they directly represent the philosophical traditions which inspired Augustine in the formation of the doctrine.

(a) number (*numerus*): Almost synonymous with *ordo*, *numerus* (pl. *numeri*) is another term often used in reference to a being's existence and its formation. As shown in the most intensive analysis of the term in *De musica*, Augustine deploys the term *numerus* to describe not only each creature's *esse* and *forma* but also its ultimate source, God's wisdom, the form of all forms (cf. mus. VI.4.7, DVR. 40.74).⁴¹ Like form, therefore, *numerus* connotes the active ordering of a being; this numerical ordering is an activity of reason, as is exemplified in the order of liberal disciplines and the order of different rhythms. While Augustine refers to Sap. 11:20 ("Thou hast ordered all things by measure and number and weight") as the biblical source of the idea of number, it is quintessentially Pythagorean in its origin, incorporated by Plotinus into his famous idea commonly known as emanation. In describing the formation of a hierarchical model—*τό ἓν* (the One), *νοῦς* (Intellect), *ψυχή* and *σώματα* (the body)—of the Pythagorean cosmos, Plotinus understands it as a process of emanation or derivation of things from the One downward, based upon a geometrical rule that one produces two, and, with the aid of two, three and the rest.⁴² In this way, most importantly for Plotinus, each being can be traced back to the One and understood to retain its image as far as it exists. In *De musica* Augustine faithfully reproduces this Plotinian theory of number in order to solve the mystery of the cause and formation of different rhythms. An acute observer is here said to be able to detect, in every rhythm or existence, the law of number which determines the regularity and equality of a being's movement and activity.⁴³

⁴¹ The problematic relationship between the sixth book and the rest of *De musica* is not under consideration here, following O'Connell; cf. idem, *Art and the Christian Intelligence in St. Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 66-67, 178-188.

⁴² Cf. e.g. Enn. V.4.1.1-5; cf. mus. I.12.20-25. For the Neopythagorean background of the numerical theory, cf. Armstrong, "Plotinus" (1967b), in idem ed. *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967a), 236-239.

⁴³ Cf. e.g. mus. I.11.18-19, VI.11.29, 13.37-38.

(b) justice (*iustitia*): In Plotinus' theory of emanation the idea of kosmos (order) implies equality, as shown in the regular and equal measurement of various numbers' derivation from one. As far as *De musica* is concerned, Augustine basically follows this Pythagorean-Plotinian geometrical idea of equality (*aequalitas*). In other places he explains the geometrical equality in terms of "justice" (e.g. DQA. 9.15), although the connotation of this latter term is far more extensive, ranging from geometrical to cosmological and social dimensions.⁴⁴ As we have seen, *iustitia dei* is God's universal ordering which brings about certain regularity and equality to diverse phenomena. Augustine's idea of order is thus linked more explicitly with ideas of equality and justice than Plotinus' theory of number.⁴⁵ Moreover, the linkage of order with justice is further intensified in Augustine's idea of the order of punishment (*ordo poenarum*)—God's cosmic government through judging and punishing evil. In this sense it may be justified to point out that Augustine's *ordo* goes, beyond his direct source in Plotinus, right back to Plato's idea of cosmic justice most vividly expressed in Books IV (715E-716B) and X (903B-E) of *the Laws*.⁴⁶ In other words, the overall perspective of cosmic order is what Augustine re-discovered in Plotinus' merely implicit allusion to Plato.

(c) tranquillity (*tranquillitas, pax*): While *iustitia* is a judicial aspect of *ordo*, its ethical aspect is denoted by *tranquillitas* and *pax*. Closely related to the notion of harmony, tranquillity is the final condition achieved when all parts are in agreement. This notion gains crucial importance in Augustine's doctrine of order as the goal to which the soul strives to attain by self-purification. Still torn between its natural tendency towards unity and its actual condition of multiplicity in the process of purification, the soul cannot help but seek to attain some kind of equilibrium—tranquillity and peace, that is—in order to overcome its confused state. At the end of a toilsome pilgrimage the soul of a wise man finally reaches a serene and peaceful contemplation of the truth (God).⁴⁷ The notion of

⁴⁴ Cf. Enn. I.2.1.

⁴⁵ Cf. *mus.* VI.11.29; cf. O'Connell (1968), 170-171 for a comparison with Enn. IV.3.12.

⁴⁶ Cf. Burnaby, 192-200.

⁴⁷ Cf. Acad. I.9.23, DQA. 33.73, DVR. 26.49.

the tranquillity of order (*tranquillitas ordinis*) is derived directly from the Stoic concept of *ἀπάθεια*, want of sensation (and to some extent the Epicurean notion of *ἀταραξία*), achieved by the virtuous.⁴⁸ At this early stage of his thought-development Augustine's idea of tranquillity (and peace) was in this way markedly Stoic and Neoplatonic, rather than Christian, since he did not yet know the exact biblical texts to support the idea that God is the source of soul's tranquillity and peace.⁴⁹ The notions of tranquillity and—more importantly for his later (political) ethics—peace did not become fully Christianised until he began to understand the eschatological and social dimensions of these notions.

4. The Development of the Doctrine of Order

(1) The pivotal years: 387-389

In the years after the completion of *De ordine* Augustine gradually developed a more comprehensive concept of *ordo* with the aid of correlative notions, as he started investigating various philosophical and theological issues, such as the soul, evil, will, creation and fall. In the formulation of his early Christian philosophy in general and his doctrine of order in particular, the following three points were decisive: <1> a better understanding of Plotinian ontology; <2> an intensive analysis of the order of the soul; <3> a reformulation of the Manichaean question, adding a new question concerning the nature of evil to the question of its origin. In our discussion below we will first examine the “pivotal” period between 387 and 389 when Augustine embarks on a multi-dimensional investigation of various philosophical and theological issues; we will then present the doctrine of order as formalised in *De vera religione* and *De libero arbitrio* (especially Book II and III), written around and after his ordination in 391; finally, we will conclude this preparatory

⁴⁸ E.g. Seneca, *Tranquillitas Animae*: see M. T. Griffin, *Seneca: A Philosopher in Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 321-334; J. Rist, *Stoic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 97, 103-5.

⁴⁹ See below, pp. 144-145.

examination of the formation of Augustine's *ordo*-doctrine with a brief, critical review of Augustine's answers to the initial question of worldview.

<the internalising of *ordo*>

A new phase in Augustine's philosophical enterprise began with the first treatises he wrote in Rome (early March, 387) after returning from Cassiciacum: *De immortalitate animae* and *De quantitate animae*. As the titles suggest, he chose this time to concentrate on the investigation of the nature of the human soul. The issue had already been touched upon in the final Cassiciacum dialogue, *Soliloquia*, in which he had defended the knowledge of truth concerning one of the two core problems of philosophy: the soul's "origin and nature" (DO. II.5.17). A key was provided by the idea of "immortality", the essential nature which the soul was understood to share with its object of contemplation and enjoyment—the truth.⁵⁰

In relation to Augustine's understanding of *ordo* these two treatises on the soul produced one major and two minor results. Most important was the internalising of *ordo*, that is, a gradual discovery of the existential dimension of the concept of order. *De immortalitate animae* repeatedly discusses the soul's relationship with the body and reason, using, for the first time, the *forma-subiectum* formula: the body is inferior to the soul and the soul to reason, insofar as they are dependent (or "subject") upon that which creates and sustains their existence (or "form"). Although the point would be difficult to prove, this may quite possibly be the result of Augustine's better understanding of Plotinus' ontology, especially the archetype-image relations: like the steersman in the ship, the presence of a thing (soul, for instance) in an object (body) indicates the object's actual dependence on the thing.⁵¹ The whole network of diverse *forma-subiectum* relations is the "order of

⁵⁰ Cf. e.g. sol. I.15.29. In this connection, the two post-Cassiciacum treatises on the soul can be regarded as a continuation of the unfinished investigation in the *Soliloquia*. Cf. O'Connell (1968), 135.

⁵¹ Cf. Enn. IV.3.9, 3.21; cf. also VI.4.7. The example of steersman in Enn. IV.3.21. Plotinus also describes the dependency of the object in terms of a hand holding some object in VI.4.7; cf. O'Connell (1968), 58-62; D. J. O'Meara, 26-27.

nature” which embraces various beings from the lowest, the most totally “subject” (the body) to the highest (the angels), all under the rule of the highest *forma* (reason) (cf. DIA. 15.24-16.25).

In the next treatise, *De quantitate animae*, Augustine explains his newly discovered ontology of the soul in a more articulate manner. Among the six fundamental questions of the soul—origin, nature, greatness, relation to the body, its result, and separation from the body (cf. DQA. 1.1)—most of his argument is devoted to the third question of how great the power of the soul is. The highlight of his discussion is the description of the seven “stages” of the soul’s greatness. It is the “order” through which the soul “climbs up to the top” of its excellence (cf. 35.79): the first three are stages of the soul’s power (*vis, potentia*) in relation—externally—to the body, senses, and memory; the next two stages in relation—internally—to the soul’s own purification; and the final two stages in relation—transcendentally—to God (cf. 33.70-76). Demonstrated by this seven-stage programme of the soul’s ascent is the right *ordinatio* of the soul itself, less academically inspired and more existentially examined than in the case of the *ordo disciplinae*.

In addition to this new insight there are two improvements, less remarkable but still noteworthy, to the doctrine of order. The first concerns Augustine’s understanding of evil, whereby a *defectus* or *vitium* is now clearly defined as a “tendency towards nothing”, rather than as a cosmic obscurity (cf. DIA. 7.12, 12.19). He also begins to associate this ontological aspect of evil with its ethical aspect, *peccatum*, as represented by the vainglorious desire to be like God (cf. DQA. 34.78). He maintains, however, a markedly intellectualist notion of moral evil as perceptual confusion which can be cured by self-purification.⁵² Secondly, Augustine makes the first conscious reference to “will” (*voluntas*) as the driving “force” (*vis, nutus*) of the soul’s activity (DQA. 22.38). The term “free will” also appears in connection with God’s law which preserves natural order by punishing and rewarding the souls, although, unlike *De libero arbitrio*, the remark does not yet discuss free will in relation to the origin of evil (cf. *ibid.* 36.80). In sum, Augustine’s concentration on the problem of the human soul marks a significant step forward in his understanding of the ontology of

⁵² Cf. e.g. DQA. 19.33-20.34, 36.80.

ordo and, to a lesser extent, the beginning of his serious reflections upon evil and will; the overall scheme, however, remains the same as in the *De ordine*, in that he is still preoccupied with the intellectual salvation of the soul in the framework of the cosmic order (cf. *ibid.*).

<order and evil: ontological reflections >

A brief but articulate summary of Augustine's new insight appears in an anti-Manichaean treatise, *De moribus Manichaeorum*. In this detailed account of what he views as absurd moral customs of the Manichees, especially noteworthy are the first eight chapters which serve as a philosophical introduction to his emerging ontology. Starting with the definition of the chief good (God) as the "supreme and original existence", he proceeds to contemplate the familiar and still puzzling question of evil posed by the Manichees; however, he quickly points to a new dimension of the question, adding, "You [Manichees] ask me, 'whence is evil (*unde malum est*)?'; I ask you in return, 'what is evil (*quid malum est*)?'" (DMM. 1.1). Here we find a reformulation of the Manichaean question, a decisive breakthrough in Augustine's reflections on evil.

Augustine's answer consists of three tiers: <1> evil is that which is "contrary to nature" and, therefore, "falls away from essence and tends to non-existence" (2.2); <2> in contrast, the existence and nature of a created being is good, but only by "participation and by having [something bestowed]" (4.6); <3> God is the supreme and unchangeable good and, henceforth, is "the author of all natures and substances", "not the author of evil" (2.3). By a distinction, far clearer than before, between the creator and the created (e.g. 6.8) Augustine can now locate the nature and origin of evil in each created being, safeguarding God from an accusation of having created evil. As a result, he can stress the existential aspect of evil over its cosmological aspect, as vividly demonstrated in two chapters (5.7 and 6.8) which explain the nature of evil directly in terms of *ordo*.

In 5.7, asking the Manichees a third time what evil is, Augustine proposes a "general definition": it is "corruption", for "what is corrupted is perverted, and what is perverted suffers the loss of order, and order is good". It is not an absence, but simply a deprivation, of good. In the next

chapter (6.8) Augustine then elaborates. Corruption or perversion happens only in “the created substance” because “that which is not created is incorruptible”; this negative effect in the nature of created beings is a sign of their changeability, whether for the worse or for the better. At the heart of the problem of evil, therefore, lies the fact that evil exists only in so far as there is “perversion”, namely something “contrary to the order” of things:

Now things which tend towards existence tend towards order, and, attaining order, they attain existence, as far as that is possible to a creature. For order reduces to a certain uniformity that which it arranges; and existence is nothing else than being one. Thus, inasmuch as anything acquires unity, to that extent it exists. For unity comprises operation, uniformity and harmony, by which compound things exist as far as they have existence. For simple things exist by themselves, for they are one. But things not simple imitate unity by the agreement of their parts; and so far as they attain this, so far they exist.

“This arrangement”, concludes Augustine, “is the cause of existence, disorder of non-existence; and perversion or corruption are the other names for disorder”. And, most importantly, it is “the goodness of God” that prevents anything from being corrupted to the extent of complete annihilation, by way of keeping its existence “where it is most suitable” (ibid.). Thus all corrupted things still continue to exist, “till in the order of their movements they return to that from which they fell away” (7.9).⁵³ In a word, the Manichees’ misconception arises from their inability to discern such cosmic work of “providence” (ibid.).

In this way, the re-examination of the Manichaeic question in *De moribus Manichaeorum* has proved to be more successful in identifying the nature of evil as an ontological disorder than in answering the other question concerning evil’s origin, which is discussed only briefly in terms of the perversity of will (1.1), choice (2.4), and free will (7.9). Nevertheless, the first eight chapters of the treatise show a significant development in the *ordo*-doctrine; here lies a blueprint of the later complete form of the doctrine: the sharp distinction between the creator and the created, the cosmic and existential aspects of *ordo*, and the ontological and volitional aspects of evil—all of which are articulated in *De libero arbitrio*.

⁵³ Still, compared to his mature thinking, the ontological notion of evil as disorder is markedly Plotinian, though not in Origen’s line of thought, as Augustine later comments: cf. retr. I.7.6.

<evil and will: volitional reflections>

De libero arbitrio, one of Augustine's best known and most influential works, examines the human will, focusing on its capacity of free choice (*liberum arbitrium*), and concludes that free will is the origin of evil and, simultaneously, the source of virtues. The theory of will, as best exemplified in the much later Pelagian controversy, has a critical importance for the development of his ethical thinking and, subsequently, of his doctrine of grace. Yet its significance for the doctrine of order should not be overlooked. Here we would like to call attention to the specific context in which this treatise was produced: the anti-Manichaean campaign in defence of the true Christian philosophy.⁵⁴ The rudimentary reflections on the will are part of Augustine's preoccupation with *ordo rerum*.

"Whether God is the author of evil or not"—*De libero arbitrio* begins with this familiar question repeatedly asked since *De ordine*, and clarifies what the work aims to achieve: to disprove God as the origin of evil and to prove the integrity of his cosmic government (DLA. I.1.1). While the main discussion appears in Books II and III written somewhat later (probably by 395),⁵⁵ the first book is no less important for our examination, since Book I shows Augustine's deepening insight into the question of evil. Not only does he distinguish the question of the origin of evil from that of its nature, but the second question is posed in a way that distinguishes two different phenomena. One is evil caused by human will (*malum fecisse*), and the other, evil inflicted as punishment by God

⁵⁴ For all its historical influences, far and wide, the famous treatise on free will proved problematic to Augustine, especially in a later controversy with the Pelagians, who objected that he had abandoned free will in favour of grace. There is no doubt that Augustine's understanding of free will and grace underwent a significant change, as we will demonstrate in our third chapter; nevertheless, he never thought of their relation as mutually exclusive, but as complementary. As he comments later in *Retractationes*, two elements must be considered, both of which concern the doctrine of order: first, the apologia for the will in *De libero arbitrio* is polemically conditioned to refute the Manichaean view of evil as a cosmic necessity (cf. I.9.3); secondly, the compatibility between free will and grace is already implied, as Augustine argues (cf. I.9.4), in the ontological notion of good (*bonum*), according to which the middle good (free will) ultimately derives from the supreme good (God). The link between the Manichaean question of evil and Augustine's ontological reflections of will is suggested in Markus, *Conversion and Disenchantment in Augustine's Spiritual Career*, The Saint Augustine Lecture 1984 (Villanova: Villanova University Press, 1985), 14-41. Cf. G. R. Evans, *Augustine on Evil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982; reprinted paperback edition, 1993), 112-118; also Burnaby, 184-192. In contrast, J. Wetzel's careful study of Augustine's theory of will and virtue fails to give due consideration to Augustine's ontological preoccupation underlying his writing of *De libero arbitrio*: cf. idem, *Augustine and the Limits of Virtue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 61-68; in 70, he refers to Manicheism in a passing remark.

⁵⁵ The date is suggested by Brown in idem (1969), 74.

(*malum per se*); and he declares that God is the author of evil only in the latter sense (I.1.1). In search for an answer to the remaining question—namely, the origin of active evil caused by human agent—Augustine spends the rest of the book analysing the ordering of the soul and society through will and law. The reflections on free will and evil enrich his moral thinking, in the end, with the clear distinction between a moral dimension of evil known as sin (*peccatum*) and ontological defect (*vitium*),⁵⁶ although his approach still remains intellectualist and cosmologically oriented.⁵⁷

After all, *De libero arbitrio I* is a polemic against the Manichees on the question of order and evil. The new theory of will opens up the volitional and moral aspect of evil without denying the basic ontological formula that evil is some sort of disorder (*perversitas, vitium*). Evil is now understood as a multi-dimensional phenomenon, ranging from ontological to moral, from social to cosmological levels, but always a negation of *ordo*. Augustine's main interest remains unchanged since *De ordine*—the right ordering of man. As we shall discuss in the next chapter, here lies a clue to understanding why he takes up the new subject of eternal and temporal laws in relation to the initial question of the origin of evil in libido: the essential function of law is to create and sustain order. Eternal law, for instance, is defined as “that which is just so that all are arranged in the best order”, from which the temporal positive laws are believed to derive (I.6.15). Following this brief examination of the ordering of society (I.5-7), Augustine discusses the major issue, that is, the right ordering of man's inner self: “how man is best ordered in himself” (I.7.16). It is in this context of the soul's order, which occupies the latter half of the book, that Augustine discusses for the first time the moral function of free will.

<creation and fall>

The development of the *ordo*-doctrine during this pivotal period between 387 and 389 thus resulted in the internalisation of evil and order to the level of individual soul. In addition to this

⁵⁶ E.g. his argument of libido and sin in DLA. I.3.6-4.10, III.10, 13-15.

⁵⁷ Cf. *ibid.* I.9.19, III.9.24-28.

treatise on free will there is one more work which anticipates the culmination of the process in *De vera religione* and the rest (II and III) of *De libero arbitrio*. The work in question is *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, the first of many attempts at an exegesis of the opening chapters of the Book of Genesis. Although fragmentary and far less comprehensive than his later exegeses, Augustine's early interpretation of *Genesis* is nonetheless highly important; it not only inspired him to incorporate various outcomes of the internalisation of *ordo* against Manichaean cosmogony, but, as a result, it also gave him the first insight into a Christian historiography—beginning with the creation and Adam's fall and running through Christ's Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection to the Last Judgement—which would later give a new framework to his worldview in his mature political theology and ethics.

Augustine's exegesis is rigidly cosmological and specifically Plotinian, focused on the "unity" of the created world—or what we would like to call the "creation-order".⁵⁸ Against the Manichees who ridicule the creation story of *Genesis* he defends its credibility by stressing that God's creation of the heavens and the earth, light and darkness, firmament and waters, and the rest—all these are "expounded through order (*per ordinem*)" in the Book of *Genesis* by the hand of God who "arranged the forms of all things in their own places and seats through an ordered distinction" (DGCM. I.3.5). With this declaration of his belief in the order of God's creative work Augustine sets out to interpret the first three chapters of *Genesis* to prove the integrity of the universe maintained by God's ordering and distinction (cf. I.12.18).⁵⁹

In this eulogy of God the Creator, nevertheless, he shows the first sign of moving slowly away from Plotinus' theory of creation. As we have seen, the Plotinian One remains immobile as the ultimate archetype in the creation of the universe, emanating its images in particular forms downward to lesser beings through such intermediaries as Intellect and Soul. Augustine's God, on

⁵⁸ For the best comparison between *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* and *Enneads* (especially IV.3 and IV.8), see O'Connell (1968), 156-165, although his argument focusses more on the concept of the middle position of the human soul.

⁵⁹ For the doctrine of order in this work, cf. e.g. I.9.15, 16.26, 21.32; II.9.12, 29.43.

the other hand, is the creator (*artifex, conditor*)⁶⁰ who is directly in charge of the creation and government of the world. Consequently, Augustine increasingly emphasises the “created” nature of being, denying the divinity of creatures. The human soul, which was previously viewed as something divine,⁶¹ is now completely desacralised. It is an “*imago dei*” but with a decisive difference from God: it did not create itself (cf. I.17.27-28).⁶² In this connection the emerging idea of creation “out of nothing” (*ex nihilo*) enables him to describe the reason why creatures are changeable and tend towards *non-esse*.⁶³ In the order of nature man’s “ordered integrity of his own nature” lies in its position between “corporeal nature” and “God’s nature”, entrusted by God “to hold dominion” over other creatures “understood in a spiritual way” (I.20.31).

Like *De libero arbitrio I*, *De Genesi* distinguishes the question of the cosmogony from the problem of evil, and divides the latter into the two questions of its origin and nature. While tending to discuss the first question of origin more (in the polemical circumstances), he does articulate a view of the nature of evil. In *De libero arbitrio I* evil is explained either as man’s tendency towards non-existence caused by himself, or as God’s punishment inflicted upon him. In the former sense, *De Genesi* also explains it as something caused voluntarily “by a will to sin” or “a consent of sin” (II.39.43). However, in *De Genesi*, Augustine explores the problem further. In the beginning of *De libero arbitrio I* (3-4), he points to *libido* or *cupiditas* as the cause of evil deeds; in *De Genesi* he describes three major components of *cupiditas*, namely, *concupiscentia*, *curiositas*, *superbia*.⁶⁴ As O’Connell rightly points out, this “triad of sins” is an allusion to Johannine account of sin (I John.2:15-16), which will be repeatedly referred to in his later analysis of evil and sin.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Cf. e.g. *ibid.* I.8.13, 16.25, II.24.43.

⁶¹ Cf. e.g. Acad. I.1.3. On the problem of the soul’s divinity in Plotinus (in *Enn.* V.1.2; also III.2-3, VI.4-5), see O’Connell (1968), 113-120. See below, pp. 65-66.

⁶² The “*imago dei*” is also called “*homo interior*” (DGCM. I.17.28, II.7.9)

⁶³ *Ibid.* I.6-7, II.29.43. The idea of *creatio ex nihilo* has a certain affinity with Plotinus’ idea of the “absolute evil” as “non-being”, but is essentially Christian with regard to its emphasis on the authorship of the universe.

⁶⁴ Cf. esp. DGCM. II.27.41.

⁶⁵ See also *mus.* VI.14.44; cf. O’Connell (1968), 174.

With regard to the second category of punitive evil (“*poena peccati*”)⁶⁶ Augustine also benefits from his close reading of *Genesis*, especially the story of Adam’s fall, punishment, and expulsion from paradise. From a Christian point of view he can describe the origin of evil inflicted upon man not just as God’s punishment of sin in general, but in a more concrete manner as God’s punishment of the very first sin committed by the common ancestor, Adam (cf. II.27.41). In addition to this first indication of the doctrine of original sin we should also point to a passage where he implicitly mentions the transmission of the original sin and its punishment to Adam’s descendants: “the life in sin, which is usually called death in the Scriptures” results from “what all of us who were born from Adam owed to nature from the beginning” (II.21.31, 32). Although he does not elaborate more on the subject of hereditary sin in *De Genesi*, Augustine is now keenly aware of the distinction between *ante-* and *post-peccatum* worlds, between man’s original position before Adam’s Fall and his post-lapsarian position.⁶⁷ As a consequence of the fall human beings are now understood to hang somewhere in the middle between the higher intelligent self and the lower corporeal self. It is the power (*virtus*) of the soul, therefore, that restores the right ordering between the two selves which is disturbed because of original sin.⁶⁸

Finally, Augustine’s exegesis of *Genesis* produces his first description of the “history” of mankind from a Christian perspective (cf. e.g. II.2.3). Although still in a very primitive form lacking any soteriological and eschatological perspective, his view of human history marks the beginning of what would in the end lead to the well known theory of the two cities, begun in *De vera religione* and perfected in *De civitate dei*.⁶⁹ Inspired, probably by Ambrose,⁷⁰ to apply an allegorical

⁶⁶ Cf. DGCM. passim; see esp. II.19.29.

⁶⁷ Cf. e.g. I.19.30, II.4.5-5.6.

⁶⁸ See esp. II.9.12. Although the nature of sin is discussed explicitly as an ontological disorder or perversion in this treatise, it is obvious from the context (as most remarkably demonstrated in II.9.12-10.14) that his moral teaching here is mainly concerned with the re-ordering of the soul which lost its original “order and integrity” (i.e. “*medietas animae et ordinata integritas*”).

⁶⁹ Against Duchrow and others. The first clear “historical” account of the two kinds of people can be found here in the *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* before *De vera religione* as Duchrow claims. Cf. Duchrow, 215-216; also Markus (1988), 45.

⁷⁰ Suggested by O’Connell, following Dudden; cf. idem (1968), 156, and F. H. Dudden, *The Life and Times of St. Ambrose*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), II.459.

interpretation to the first seven days of the creation, Augustine attempts to describe the history of mankind in terms of the “seven days of the world” (I.23.35). According to the principle of “the order of days” (*ordo dierum*, I.23.41; also II.3.4) history goes through the following seven phases: <1> infancy (*infantia*) from Adam to Noah; <2> childhood (*pueritia*) from Noah to Abraham; <3> adolescence (*adolescentia*) from Abraham to David; <4> manhood (*iuventus*) during the reign of David; <5> middle-age (*declinatio, senior*) from the Babylonian captivity until the birth of Christ; <6> old age (*senectus*) since the Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection of Christ; <7> final peace (*requies*) at the end of history (cf. I.23.35-41). As mankind proceeds through these historical stages, according to Augustine, there emerge two kinds of man, *homo carnalis* and *homo spiritualis* (40) and consequently two kinds of people, on the one hand those represented by the “*populus Judaeorum*” who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as the son of God (39), and, on the other, the “*populus dei*” (37) who gradually grow out of the first *homo spiritualis*, Adam before the Fall, and now are gathered in the church (40). In this way, the history of mankind is ontologically conditioned, as he remarks: “that is the exposition through the *order of days*, [and] one thus judges the history of things done, so that he can observe as much as possible the prediction of the things in the future” (I.23.41).

(2) *De vera religione* and *De libero arbitrio* II, III—a Christian doctrine of order

The skeleton of Augustine’s early Christian philosophy slowly emerged out of his investigation of basic theological issues—Trinity, creation, providence, soul, evil, salvation, and history—all from the perspective of *ordo* in search of a Christian worldview. Now the development of the early doctrine of order was approaching its final culmination, as is most vividly demonstrated in *De vera religione* and also in the second and third books of *De libero arbitrio*.

De vera religione begins with a proclamation that “all the path to the good and happy life has been wholly established in the true religion”, which consists of the worship of “the one God” and a pious recognition of the “origin” of all the natures in the universe (DVR. 1.1). In the young

Augustine's mind religion and philosophy are identical as far as the ultimate goal—the attainment of beatitude and the knowledge of cosmic order—is concerned. Compared with his earlier remarks, however, *De vera religione* no longer identifies the true religion simply with Neoplatonism, because only in the teachings of “*ecclesia catholica*” can one find the true religion which surpasses the ancient philosophy of Socrates and Plato in its clarity and certainty with regard to truth and happiness (6.10; cf. 3.3). Fundamental to it is the work of providence, that is, the *ordo rerum* in human history:

The principal [theme] to be pursued in this religion is the history and prophecy of *the temporal dispensation of divine providence* for the salvation of mankind, reforming and restoring [them] to the eternal life. (7.13—Italics added)

The true religion assures that such providential ordering will lead the believer through a “purification of the mind” all the way to a perfect perception of God the Trinity and his “most ordered government” of the whole created world (*ibid.*). In this way, all the philosophical and theological issues—eudaemonism, providence, Trinity, salvation, cosmic order—are implicitly linked with his intense polemic against the Manichees.⁷¹

Fundamental to the Christian refutation of Manichaeism is the ontological understanding of evil: it is what is contrary to the creation-order. The creator of all creatures ensures that every existence is by nature good, though changeable and corruptible because of its origin in nothing. The ontological goodness of beings also endorses the essential unity of their distinct and diverse natures held together by divine providence. This is the creation-order (or *ordo rerum*)—an Augustinian reformulation of Plotinus' concept of the universe, the “unity-in-diversity”.⁷² Evil is henceforth nothing but a falling-away (*defectus*) from the original cosmological and existential order towards a “lesser good” or even further towards non-existence (*non-esse*). Evil can be described only negatively as a “deficiency” or “privation” of the primary good bestowed in the creation-order.⁷³

⁷¹ Cf. DVR. 9.16, DLA. I.1.1.

⁷² Cf. esp. DVR. 18.35. For *ordo rerum*, cf. e.g. *ibid.* 7.13, 23.44, DLA. III.14.40; for *ordo universitatis*, cf. DLA. III.3.6, 9.26; for *ordo creaturae*, cf. *ibid.* III.9.24, 11.32. See above, p. 31, n.38.

⁷³ DVR. 13.26 for *inopia*, 19.37 for *vitium* and *privare*. Cf. also DVR. 11.21, 20.38-39, DLA. III.13.37, 14.40-41.

This ontological tension between the goodness remaining in the order and the perversity shown in the disorder of a certain form of existence is the first, essential feature of Augustine's theory of evil.⁷⁴

Secondly, evil is an anthropological problem of volitional disorder (active evil). In the order of nature man as the *imago dei* occupies a special position between angels and animals and, by performing a "duty to maintain all things", is "to become the ornaments of the universe" along with the immortal rational being (angel).⁷⁵ Nevertheless, the higher nature (intelligence and the will) enables man to choose to defect from his original position. Hence the Manichaean question of the origin of evil is not a mere ontological problem, but, more fundamentally, a moral issue.⁷⁶ The volitional disorder called sin (*peccatum*) is a diverse phenomenon, ranging from bodily desire and avarice to a perverse imitation of God, as most notably exemplified by the three major sins in the Johannine Scripture (the lust of flesh, curiosity, and pride). Whether spontaneous or caused by temptation, a sin is voluntary (*voluntaria*), a result of consent (*consentire*).⁷⁷ At the heart of the problem of sin lies a paradox that its cause (free will) is an essential good bestowed to enable us to live righteously.⁷⁸

On the third level of the phenomenology of evil there is another, passive notion of evil as God's punishment of sins (*poena peccati*). For instance, such human inconveniences as ignorance, difficulty, and mortality are not sins themselves, but they are called evil (*malum*) insofar as they are inflicted upon man as divine punishment.⁷⁹ The origin of this passive, penal evil is vividly portrayed in the Scriptures, especially in Adam's fall. Every subsequent fall caused by human will finds its ultimate origin in the first instance; as Adam was expelled from paradise to a lower position in order, all his descendants are born with a tendency to fall "from eternal good to temporal good, from

⁷⁴ Cf. DVR. 11.21, 23.44, 20.38-39; DLA. III.13.36-38, 14.40-41.

⁷⁵ DLA. III.11.32-33. Cf. also DVR. 16.30, 44.82.

⁷⁶ Cf. esp. DVR. 12.23, DLA. I.1.1-3.8.

⁷⁷ For I John 2:15-16, cf. e.g. DVR. 38.69-71; also DLA. III.17.48 for a biblical reference (1 Tim. 6:10) on avarice. On the voluntary nature of sin, cf. esp. DVR. 12.24, DLA. III.10.29.

⁷⁸ Cf. DLA. II.1.3, 18.48.

⁷⁹ Cf. DVR. 12.23, 15.29, 40.76, DLA. III.18.50-19.54. Ignorance as sin in a derivative sense marks a clear departure from a purely intellectualist notion of evil. See above, pp. 26-27.

spiritual good to corporeal good, from intellectual good to sensible good, from the highest good to the lowest good” (DVR. 20.38). The most conspicuous and the gravest consequence which befell Adam was death; otherwise, he would have enjoyed his immortality along with angels (cf. 11.22). Similarly, Adam’s descendants are destined to live in fear of death; mortality is symbolic of all evils that arise from the “original sin” (*primum peccatum*)—the very first sin committed by the first man (12.25).

The notion of passive, penal evil leads us to Augustine’s early theory of justice and soteriology. For Christianity, as the true religion, should point to the right way for justice, that is, redeeming men from their fallen state, both hereditary and voluntary.⁸⁰ To be more precise and truer to the doctrine of order, salvation is a process of recovering man’s lost nature and order as *imago dei* (or what Augustine also calls *homo spiritualis* or *homo interior*), a process initiated both by God’s admonition through his punishment of sins and by man’s will to return to his original state in adherence to God.⁸¹ Augustine’s earliest form of soteriology in *De vera religione* reaches its climax in a section (chs.24-36) where he takes up once again a salvific theme of *De ordine*—the two paths of salvation, by authority and by reason. In essence salvation is a fruit of the divine “medicine of the soul”:

Thus that medicine of the soul, too, which is brought about by the divine providence and the ineffable beneficence, is most beautiful in its grades and distinctions. For the medicine is divided into authority and reason. Authority demands faith and prepares man for reason. Reason leads to intellect and perception [...]. (24.45)

What follows is Augustine’s description of the path shown by authority, that is, the stages (*gradus*) of the soul’s salvation, which are determined “gradually and distinctly” according to the order of providence. The authority of the bible tells us that the life of the “old, external, earthly man” (*homo veter et exterior et terrenus*), who remains sinful and yet under God’s government, consists of six stages from birth to death, through which his fallen nature becomes fit enough to constitute a well-

⁸⁰ Cf. DVR. 6.10-11.

⁸¹ On *poena peccati* as divine admonition, cf. DVR. 15.29; on recovery of order, cf. DLA. III.20.56; on *homo spiritualis* in reference to I Cor. 11:15, cf. DVR. 12.24, 31.58; on *homo interior*, cf. DVR. 26.49, 39.72, 40.74. On adherence to God by good will, cf. DVR. 12.24, DLA. II.19.52-53, III.20.55-58.

ordered society. On the other hand, the “new, internal, heavenly man” (*homo novus et interior et caelestis*) becomes regenerated, gradually through seven stages, by destroying its old part and finally resting in peace as a “perfect man” (26.48-49). Meanwhile, the second salvific instrument, *ratio*, prompts those who have sufficient intelligence, first to “turn inward” to the inner self where the traces of original order and power still remain, and then to start an ascent from the temporal and visible to the eternal and invisible, until they reach the contemplation of God and the vision of the creation-order.⁸²

As we shall explore closely in the next chapter, Augustine’s account of the soul’s gradual salvation has an unmistakable resemblance to the educational programme of *ordo disciplinae* in *De ordine*, especially, though much more muted, in its intellectualist and rationalistic tendency. Nevertheless, Augustine has now begun to understand that the soul’s salvation leads not only to a purified perception of perfect knowledge, but more essentially to the eternal life which had once been promised but then lost due to original sin. Salvation is an operation which is moral and religious rather than purely intellectual, because it is moral evils (sins) that the soul must be delivered from, and it is divine providence that is in charge of the whole operation. For instance, when he urges his reader to find within the inner man (*homo interior*) a trace of God’s image and to nurture its gradual growth according to “his own spiritual ages” (26.49), we find the familiar underlying idea of restoring a lost order; yet, the doctrine of order has been Christianised through a deeper understanding of original sin and through a reawakened realisation of the need for providential cure (*divina medicina*).

Finally, there is yet another notable, albeit still immature, development in the doctrine of order: an emerging sense of history, which gives Augustine a perspective which encompasses all the three components—creation, evil, and salvation. Essential to his view of history is an awareness that the salvific medicine of providence concerns both individual sinners and the damned mass at large:

⁸² On the traces of order and power, cf. DVR. 40.75, 42.79. On the soul’s ascent, cf. DVR. 29.52-53. On the final contemplation, cf. DVR. 34.63-36.67, DLA. II.9.25-27.

“For divine providence looks after not only single men privately as it were, but also all the human races publicly” (ibid. 25.46). The idea of collective salvation is rooted in Augustine’s doctrine of original sin, a hereditary defect originated in Adam’s fall and transmitted to his posterity. As we have seen in *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, he made his first attempt at an allegorical interpretation of human history in terms of the “order of days”, *ordo dierum*. Now, in *De vera religione* (26.48-27.50), while applying the same principle of the order of historical progress directly to individual men, whether earthly or heavenly, Augustine retains a markedly collective point of view when he sums up their course of life, by saying: “so in the same analogy, the whole human race, just as the life of its individual member from Adam all the way to the end of this world, is so governed by the laws of divine providence, that it is obviously divided into two kinds” (27.50). What was previously explained in terms of *ordo dierum* is here paraphrased as God’s historical ordering of individual as well as collective human beings, a new historical consciousness which eventually produces a monumental theology of history.

(3) God, creation, and a notion of cosmic providence

In the intense dispute against Manichaeism Augustine thus formulated his early Christian philosophy, with the concept of *ordo* at its basis and with the biblical story of creation as its framework. And, within five years since the retreat to Cassiciacum, he was able to give comprehensive answers to the initial questions on what evil was, where it came from, and why God and the creation could still be regarded as good and unified amidst the formidable existence of evil. Trinity, creation, fall, soul, evil and original sin, salvation, history—all these arguments were linked to his endeavour to establish a Christian worldview, in which God’s relation to his creation could be explained satisfactorily. Nevertheless, the ambitious project first needed the help of what Augustine once regarded as the true philosophy compatible with Christianity: Plotinian Neoplatonism. Since the core teaching of Plotinus lay in his grand exposition of the derivation and structure of the universe (*κοσμος*), it was quite natural for Augustine to adapt Plotinian cosmology as a guiding principle of

his philosophical analyses, until he became aware of the differences between Christian and Plotinian teachings, especially in terms of the very question of God's relation to the created world.

Against two essential principles of Manichaeism, the dualist worldview and the spatial, material image of God,⁸³ Plotinus offers Augustine a unified account of how the whole universe came into existence from the invisible and incorporeal principle called the One; through this process of derivation the whole universe of diverse natures maintains its unity essentially owing to the common image of the archetype shared by each individual beings as far as permitted by its own capacity. Now Augustine can argue that, since the One (or God) is also the ultimate source of goodness, each being is considered to be good in its nature as an image of the supreme good. In contrast, evil is not a subsistent existence as powerful as God (contrary to the Manichees' claim), but rather explicable only in a negative manner in terms of non-existence or a perversion of order. Manichaean dualism, in which the two parallel worlds of light and darkness compete, is here replaced by Plotinus' ontological dualism—a view of the universe with two tiers, the higher-intelligible-immaterial world and the lower-sensible-material world; a human being, as the soul trapped in the body, is situated somewhere in the middle between the two.⁸⁴ While a moral agent's inability to perceive the whole structure of the universe stems from a weakened state of the soul as a result of its coexistence with the body, he is encouraged to go through a rigorous intellectual training to "purify" his soul, to ascend from the sensible to the intelligible world and beyond it to the final union with the source of its own existence, the One/God.

Sketching how much Augustine owed to Plotinus, we notice how far he has also deviated from the mentor's teaching by the time he wrote *De vera religione*. First of all, upon the Plotinian theory of cosmic derivation, Augustine builds a notion of the *ordo rerum* or *ordo naturae*, but the unity-in-diversity of the creation-order is no longer thought to be maintained by an indirect force

⁸³ Cf. J. J. O'Meara, 70-73; for a good summary of Plotinian cosmology and anthropology, see Armstrong (1967b), 222-263.

⁸⁴ From the beginning Augustine differs from Plotinus in his theory of man as a composite of soul and body, whereas Plotinian anthropology is preoccupied with the state of the soul. The important implications of the difference will be discussed fully in the next chapter. See pp. 59-64.

emanating from the ultimate principle; it is now clear to him that God the Creator directly governs and maintains the creation-order through divine providence. Secondly, on the existential level, he is convinced (like Plotinus) of the intrinsic goodness of each being, including the lowest material creatures; however, he has gradually become aware of the unbridgeable gulf between the creator and the created, which is only implicit in Plotinus. For the Christian idea of *creatio ex nihilo* differs from the Plotinian idea of “non-existence” in its sharp contrast of the dependence and changeability of creatures against the transcendent authority and power of God.⁸⁵ On the third point, which concerns the problem of evil, Augustine differentiates himself from Plotinus in his theorisation of the active aspect of evil, epitomised by the notions of volitional evil and original sin. Consequently, the doctrine of salvation of the soul has undergone profound changes, first with regard to the meaning of the soul’s purification, from a mere knowledge of *ordo rerum* (God, the soul, and the universe) to the eternal life enjoyed when sins are healed; another alteration in the early soteriology is the view of salvation as a both collective and historical act, a gradual process of dividing the human race into two camps—the new, heavenly people who are to be saved, and the old, earthly people destined for eternal damnation.

The crux of the young Augustine’s worldview lay in the intrinsically cosmic notion of providence (*providentia*), a converging point of various philosophical and theological arguments. On the one hand, his earliest notion of providence, an almost mechanistic structuring of the universe like a pure mathematical order, has turned into a view of the creator’s organic government and loving care of his creation throughout history, as a result of his deeper understanding of Plotinus as well as the Scriptures. However, the Christianising of *providentia* remains incomplete, since it still misses two fundamental elements—the doctrine of grace and eschatology—in order for Augustine to transform the legacy of Plotinus into a fully Christian worldview.

For instance, Augustine’s early description of God’s relation to the creation is essentially legalistic and at the same time cosmic. The *ordinatio* by providence is conceived as a threefold

⁸⁵ Cf. Enn. I.8.3.

operation: God has created the world, punishes wrong-doers, and rewards the righteous with eternal life. While maintaining this basic framework throughout his life, he relates these three elements—creation, punishment, and salvation—to one another differently at each stage of his theological development. In his early Christian philosophy of order, the creational order ends up embracing the latter two kinds of order: both the punitive and salvific acts of providence are little more than a mere vindication of the original act of creation, as demonstrated in the idea of the “order of punishment”. From *De ordine* onward Augustine never doubted that divine law restrains any evil within the order of nature by turning it into a sort of order and beauty; thus evil, whether ontic or moral, is ultimately perceived as a cosmic disorder.⁸⁶ When he explains the beauty of a “thing ordered” (*ordinatum*) even within the “punitive order” (*ordo poenarum*) in reference to Rom. 13:1 (“*Omnis ordo a deo est*”), Augustine reveals a strong conviction in the medicinal power of cosmic providence (DVR. 41.77). The ambiguous identification of *ordo poenarum* with *ordo naturae* in *De quantitate animae* (36.80) is repeated in the final book of *De libero arbitrio* (III.9.26), where both voluntary evil and penal evil are understood to vindicate the ultimate perfection of the universe, for sin is always ordered back to the creation-order by divine punishment.⁸⁷

The young Augustine remained faithful, consciously or unconsciously, to Plotinus with regard to the fundamental worldview based on the theory of the two worlds. Plotinus’ distinction between the higher intelligible world and the lower sensible world, which Augustine adopted in *De ordine*, formed the nucleus of his worldview in *De vera religione* and *De libero arbitrio*, though more sharply differentiating the creator from the creation. *De vera religione* no longer maintained so simplistically that Christianity was “not that philosophy of this world but of the other intelligible world” (Acad. III.19.42); yet he still based his description of the transformation from an old, earthly self to a new, heavenly self upon a contempt of sensible and material things and an aspiration for the

⁸⁶ Compare DO. I.7.18 with DVR. 40.75-41.77.

⁸⁷ Note the cosmological rationale for the providential ordering of sin. Also worth noting is the analogy used in the next section, i.e. the order and beauty of a household maintained by punishing slaves (DLA. III.9.27). See also Augustine’s long apologia for the cosmic order maintained both by the “order of justice” and the “order of changeable things” in *ibid.* III.14.40 (see the context: 11.32-14.41).

“return” to the intelligible, immaterial things (cf. DVR. 4.6).⁸⁸ In a word, salvation still means becoming wise, and the “kingdom of God” is where these perfect sages belong (cf. *ibid.* 28.51, 46.88). This world, Augustine insists, “we must not love, for all the things which are in this world, are lust of flesh and lust of eyes and pride of this world” (1 John 2:15-16; DVR. 45.107). *De libero arbitrio II* and *III* show much less obvious but still sufficient indications of his adherence to the Plotinian worldview underneath the Christian framework of argument (cf. DLA. II.16.41-44).

We have demonstrated how the young Augustine formed a Christian worldview based on the doctrine of order, in which the relationship between God and his creation was kept intact by providence according to the order of nature in the universe in spite of human fall and sins. Within this cosmic framework of the creation-order human beings were supposed to lead their individual and social life according both to nature and the will. However, we are still left with profound ambiguities concerning the moral and social implications of Augustine’s early ontology. For instance, does he retain or change the measures proposed for restoring the soul’s disorder at each stage of his intellectual development? In moral activities, how reliant does he think the agent is on the innate *virtus* (power) and how much help is needed from providence? If the moral agent is a Plotinian wanderer of the universe going back and forth between the two worlds, does his action remain coherent, or differ, in each realm? On the social front, too, there are unsolved problems, such as the inter-personal relationship both in the process of soul’s purification and in the ordinary social life. What about the relation of the wise to the uneducated? Do the former simply leave the latter behind in their ascent, or do they have any moral and social obligation to them? More fundamentally, does the doctrine of order require social life at all, if its major moral concern is the soul’s purification? If it does, what is the theological ground for the existence of human society? In the end, we shall ask, how successfully does Augustine describe the problem of *moral order* on the basis of *cosmic order*?

⁸⁸ Cf. also DVR. 42.101, 45.107.

CHAPTER TWO

Moral Order: Love, Law and Society

1. Creation and Happiness: the framework of the ethics of order

Augustine's ethical thinking comprises three interrelated concepts: knowledge, virtue, and love. First of all, he agrees with the classical tradition on the inseparable link between philosophy and ethics, between right knowledge and the knower's moral well-being. The knowledge of truth (wisdom) is the guiding principle for the knower's choice of a right action. To this classical link between knowledge and virtue Augustine adds a third concept, love, which makes him one of the earliest thinkers who have contributed to the wide currency of the concept in the history of moral philosophy.¹ Love is an encompassing concept, denoting various dispositions from impulses and emotions to desires and will. In its relation to knowledge and virtue love signifies a dynamic nature of moral action. Virtue does not result simply from acquiring perfect knowledge; it requires the inner drive or commitment of the moral agent to the pursuit of truth. Virtue is, therefore, more than an objective recognition of what is true; it is a psychological phenomenon in which the agent must aspire to possess the recognised truth. This intricate triad of knowledge, virtue and love forms the crux of Augustine's moral theology: virtue is the fruit of *both* perfect knowledge *and* right love.²

The development of the Augustinian triad can be traced from the Cassiciacum dialogues, in which all three components are intimately related in the doctrine of order. However, in this early phase, he takes a firmly classical line in his emphasis on the linkage between knowledge and virtue, and particularly in his conviction of the intelligibility of the creation-order. As we have demonstrated, his programme of *ordo disciplinae* aims precisely at intellectual purification, namely gaining perfect knowledge of the *ordo rerum* (cf. DO. II.18.47-19.51). The order of things is the

¹ Cf. O. O'Donovan, *The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980), 4, and idem, "Usus and Fruitio", *JTS* 33 (1982): 375.

² Cf. DVR.31.58 Cf. also Markus, "Marius Victorinus and Augustine", in Armstrong (1967a), 386-389.

objective reality to which the moral agent must strive to attain and conform to; conversely, as Augustine puts it somewhat later, virtue is “the disposition of the mind whereby it agrees with the ways of nature and reason” (Q83. 31.1). In short, *ordo* is the “flag-ship” concept of his worldview based on the doctrine of creation. Expressed in the creation-order are the creator’s omnipotence and goodness, and the integrity of the creation; it provides the backdrop of the moral journey of human beings, from their initial fall to their return to the original self, through a long and rigorous process of purifying the mind. Morality is a matter of participating (by knowledge) in the intricate organism of creatures, of rediscovering one’s own natural purpose and place in the universe, amidst an acute tension between rational intelligibility and corporeality, between eternity and changeability, and between the original created self and the perverse self after the fall.

In the objective reality (i.e. *ordo*) Augustine finds the fundamental premise of human morality: universal desire for happiness. In what is traditionally known as eudaemonism moral duties are inseparable from a pursuit of one’s own happiness. Human beings still want to be happy when they are most desperate: for instance, suicide is a pursuit of happiness, albeit in perverse and desperate way, by putting an end to the current misery (cf. DLA. III.8.23). This desire for happiness is innate in the existential order of man; it remains indestructible even in a fallen nature as long as they exist.³ The key lies in human rationality, an argument which is markedly Stoic. In *Contra Academicos* (I.2.5) Augustine describes the happy life (*beata vita*) as the life “according to that which is the most excellent in man”, that is, according to “mind or reason”.⁴ In *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* a virtuous life is envisaged as a rational pursuit of happiness; yet the Stoic definition is also Christianised, for moral happiness lies in “loving” and “possessing” the supreme good, which is no longer mind or reason, but “God” (3.4, 8.13). In *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* (I.20.31) he further examines the relationship between the end of virtue (i.e. happiness) and its

³ As O’Donovan’s careful study points out, there are two sides in Augustine’s interpretation of eudaemonism: his early thought, centred upon the doctrine of order, is nevertheless predominantly ontological and realist in its approach, while the positivist interpretation gradually develops in the next stage of transformative years (391-400). Cf. O. O’Donovan (1980), 16-17 (also see 138, n1), and O’Daly, 5-6. See below, pp. 110-121.

⁴ Cf. retr. I.1.2.

objective reality (i.e. *ordo*) in terms of the creation. Most importantly to human existence the divine commission to have dominion over other creatures is a testimony to the ontological superiority of reason over senses; accordingly, “it is the happy and tranquil life of man, where all his impulses agree with reason and truth”.⁵ Happiness consists in conforming to the creation-order, by distinguishing the supreme being (God) from the rational being (man), and this from the other non-rational beings.

Another important facet of Augustine’s re-interpretation of classical eudaemonism is the centrality of the concept of “love” (*amor, dilectio, caritas*) as an aspiration for the supreme good and happiness through the creation-order. Throughout the early works he stresses that moral well-being starts from “love” for wisdom, truth and the supreme good (e.g. DMEC. 3.4 & 11.18, DVR. 31.58). The love which pursues happiness is different from an ordinary aspiration or desire, in that it aims specifically to reach the “vision”, “possession”, and “enjoyment” of the supreme good.⁶ Even at this stage knowledge of the *ordo rerum* alone is not thought to be sufficient. A pursuit and understanding of God makes the pursuer truly happy, only when his love becomes firmly fixed—or, as Augustine puts it, “adheres”⁷—to God the Creator.

This ontologically eudaemonist concept of love—or what O. O’Donovan terms as “cosmic love”⁸—symbolises the core teaching of the young Augustine’s theory of virtue. Moral goodness can only be judged from the ultimate viewpoint of whether the moral agent understands and loves *ordo* properly, that is, whether his action is based upon the right love of an object in accordance to its proper value assigned in the order of nature. God is the ultimate centre of gravity, drawing all loves towards his own supreme goodness (cf. sol. I.1.2); human beings, too, have their proper mode of love based on the knowledge of their ontological position, both cosmologically and existentially.

⁵ Cf. Markus (1967), 381.

⁶ For vision, cf. e.g. sol. I.1.3, 6.13; for possession, cf. DBV. 2.10, DO. II.7.20, DLA. I.13.29; for enjoyment, cf. DO. II.7.20, DLA. III.21.60, or *gaudium* in DLA. I.13.29. Cf. O. O’Donovan (1982), 374-375.

⁷ For *haerere* and its derivatives, cf. e.g. DIA. 6.11, DVR. 48.93, DLA. II.19.52.

⁸ O. O’Donovan (1980), 19-24.

2. The Order of Man

What is man?: is he a body, a soul, or both of them?; what is his definitive nature? In *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* (4.6) Augustine ponders three possibilities: man consists either of the two substances (like “a double harness” or “a centaur”), or of the body only (like a “lamp” which can denote both the “shade” and the “light”), or of the “mind” only (like the word “horseman”, which signifies the man controlling the horse, not both of them). To the young Augustine a conceptualisation of human existence proves problematic. On the one hand, he is heavily influenced by Plotinian anthropology, which understands human nature in terms mainly of the rational soul. But the body, too, must be an essential part of human nature, as thrice vindicated by the Christian God in the Creation, the Incarnation, and the Resurrection. In search of a Christian definition of man Augustine examines the nature of the soul and its relation to the body.⁹ Issues involved in the first question are:

- (a) where the soul comes from (origin);
- (b) whether it is of material substance (materiality);
- (c) whether it is mortal or immortal (mortality);
- (d) whether it is divine and what its proper relation to God is (divinity).

On the second question Augustine discusses:

- (a) the origin of the embodiment of the soul;
- (b) the nature of the association of soul and body;
- (c) its consequences for the soul;
- (d) the condition and destination after death (will the soul be separated from the body at death? and if so, where does it go?).

The attempt at a comprehensive anatomy of human existence is ambitious and complex, generating many delicate and often ambiguous terminological distinctions concerning the general concept of the

⁹ Cf. O'Daly, 3-5.

soul (*anima, animus, mens, spiritus*), its cognitive function (*mens, ratio, intellectus*), and its desiring or volitional function (*voluptas, cupiditas, voluntas, intentio, amor*).¹⁰

However, the complexity and ambiguity inherent in Augustine's early theory of man will be resolved, at least to some extent, if understood in the fundamental framework of his ethical thinking at this stage—the doctrine of order. For all these anthropological questions are part of his effort to understand the *order of man* as arranged at the creation. Accordingly, we will reformulate the issues in question, dividing them into three categories:

- (1) *the existential order*, which concerns the nature of the soul and of the body as well as the association of the two;
- (2) *the cosmic order*, namely, the human position in the wider context of the creation-order in terms of divinity, *imago dei*, and *medietas animi*;
- (3) *the order of ascent*, an ontological-ethical model proposed for the recovery of the original selfhood.

(1) The existential order

In defining man's existential order, Augustine offers three different approaches. Most commonly, a human being is defined to be “composed of soul and body” (*compositus ex anima et corpore*).¹¹ The bipartite definition is useful because of its broad scope which can accommodate a variety of human faculties and activities, ranging from bodily movements to irrational desires as well as rational cognition and judgement. However, this view of man is so inclusive that it does not

¹⁰ Cf. DBV. 1-2; DO. II.5.17, DQA. 1.

¹¹ E.g. DBV. 2.7, DMEC. 4.6, DGCM. II.7.9. In addition to this bipartite definition Augustine sometimes uses, mostly in much later works, a body-soul-spirit trichotomy based on 1 Thess. 5:23; for the earliest and yet still ambiguous implication of this tripartite view, cf. DBV. 2.7; in later works, cf. e.g. fid.sym. 10.23. On this problem, see O'Daly, 58-60. Furthermore, on a Platonic (but Christianised) trichotomy (heart, soul, mind), cf. DMEC. 8.13, Q83. 35.2, DDC. I.22.21.

convey a sharp distinction between man and other non-rational animals, since, without any specific qualification in terms of the soul, both can be seen as a soul-body composite.

One alternative is to specify the human faculty of reason: “man is a rational and mortal animal” (*homo est animal rationale mortale*), a definition which was commonly held by the main stream anthropology of the late antiquity.¹² In *De ordine* (II.11.31) Augustine refers to the definition as a convincing argument that “moves us greatly”, because it describes the *genus* of man (as *animal*) with two further *differentiae* (*rationalis* and *mortalis*) added to it. As G. O’Daly points out, the division of a genus into species (*differentiae*) directly links Augustine to the tradition of the Middle Platonists, such as Albinus.¹³ This classical definition gives Augustine a better leverage to understand human nature in terms of reason attached to the mortal body. Nevertheless, the general rationalist approach still lacks an answer to the most confusing problem—the presence of the rational soul in the body.

The third definition is hinted in Neoplatonist anthropology itself: the soul as a life-giving principle, the source of life in a living body.¹⁴ The idea itself may be traced back to Aristotle and the Stoics, both with a more or less materialist theory of the soul as a mortal quality (immanent “form”) of the body (Aristotle) or as a cosmic entity like spirit or breath organising a purely passive matter into a complex material reality (Stoics).¹⁵ In contrast, Plotinus makes a radical distinction between body and soul. The body is a material substance, composed of four basic constituents (fire, air, water, earth), completely passive without any ability of self-movement or self-organisation, and, therefore, lifeless itself. The soul is the cause of movement and the giver of life to the body (cf. *Enn.* IV.7.2-8). Most importantly to Plotinus, the soul is present in the body, and yet, not dependent on it. The contradictory situation needs to be understood from a “categorically” different point of view, because the preposition “in” signifies the dependence of the container on that which is contained, just

¹² Cf. *DO.* II.11.31, *DQA.* 25.47; *mag.* 24. Cf. Cicero, *Acad.* II.21.

¹³ O’Daly, 54.

¹⁴ Cf. O’Daly, 11, 69.

¹⁵ Cf. D.J. O’Meara, 16-17; P. Merlan, “Aristotle” and “The Stoa”, in Armstrong (1967a), 41-49, 124-132.

like the steersman in the ship; in a figurative sense, it is the body that is “in” the soul’s hand.¹⁶

Consequently, the embodiment of soul does not disprove its immortality. The incorporeal soul must be immortal, since, otherwise, it would be contradictory to its definitive character as the principle of life. The soul remains immortal while in the body, precisely because its higher part still belongs to the upper world of Intellects.¹⁷

The Neoplatonist formula is faithfully followed by the young Augustine, at least initially. The body is understood as a “mixture” (*commixtio*) of four natures, whose material organisation (*temperatio*) is bound to disintegrate in the end (DIA. 10.17). The soul is the life of the body, its incorporeal mover, and, therefore, an immortal entity which is the “life” itself; it can abandon that which is dependent (i.e. body) but not itself.¹⁸ Within the Neoplatonist framework Augustine now reinterprets the second, rationalist and classical definition, with emphasis on the dominant role of *ratio* in the incorporeal and immortal soul. In Augustine’s general terminology *anima* has the widest range of meaning as the life-principle of both animal and human soul; but when a qualitative distinction for human soul is needed, he tends to use *rationalis anima*, *animus* or *mens*.¹⁹ Especially, *mens* is closely associated with *ratio* which is a special faculty of the mind. As the “gaze” (*acies*) of the mind reason recognises truth intuitively without the means of body (cf. sol. I.6.12, DIA. 6.10); or, as the “law” (*lex*) of the mind it shows the right orientation to the mind’s activity of self-ordering (cf. Acad. I.9.24, mag. 8.24). Understanding the rationalist perspective from the Neoplatonist, Augustine revisits, in effect, the Stoic element implied in Neoplatonism, as he proclaims that *ratio* is the “life” of the soul, that is, the highest form of the life principle, endowed with the power of

¹⁶ Cf. Enn. IV.7.8⁵, IV.3.21, against Aristotle; also *ibid.* VI.4.7. Cf. D. J. O’Meara, 16-17; see 26-27 for a “categorical mistake” concerning the soul’s presence “in” the body.

¹⁷ Cf. Enn. I.1.9, IV.7.10, V.2.1. Cf. D. J. O’Meara, 14-15.

¹⁸ On the life of the body, cf. e.g. DQA. 33.70. On the mover of the body, cf. DQA. 13.22-14.23. On immortality, cf. DIA. 10.17.

¹⁹ For *anima*, cf. DBV. 2.7, DQA. 28.54, DGCM. I.25.43; *rationalis anima*, cf. e.g. DVR. 20.38, 23.44; DLA. II.11.31. For *animus*, cf. Acad. I.1.1, DQA. 1.1, 34.77; *animus* and *anima* may be used almost interchangeably as in *De immortalitate animi*. For *mens* regarded as identical with *ratio*, cf. Acad. I.2.5, DIA. 2.2, mag. 8.24.

judgement and, more fundamentally, with the capability of contemplating truth: in fact, reason in the purest form is the contemplated truth itself.²⁰

Based on the premise that the soul is an incorporeal, immortal and rational life-principle, we can now unveil Augustine's third definition of man which gives a full account of the soul's relation to the body: man is "a rational soul using a mortal and earthly body" (DMEC. 27.52), or an *animus* which is "some substance sharing reason and fitted to rule a body" (DQA. 3.22). In a sense, the third definition clarifies the ambiguities inherent in the other two, by focusing exclusively on the functional relationship of soul with body within their association. It is for using and ruling of the body that the soul is embodied.

Still, how exactly is it possible for this superior rational substance to exist in the lower material substance? The final key to this mystery of human nature comes, once again, from Neoplatonism, especially from a concept known as *unio inconfusa* (ἄμικτος, ἀσύγχυτος ἔνωσις). The concept stresses the "union" of the two different substances but without being mixed into a new third substance, as asserted by the Stoics.²¹ Although the idea becomes much clearer in his later writings,²² the "unconfused union" of soul and body is already implied in a passage from *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* (II.7.9):

the soul forms (*conformat*) the material of the body to animate [it] into a harmonious unity (*in unitatem concordem*), and does not allow [it] to disintegrate nor to be dissolved. The phraseology—*unitas, concors, conformare*—is undoubtedly Neoplatonist and, at the same time, shows an anthropological articulation of Augustine's doctrine of order: the soul's association with the body, without compromising its commanding position, represents the "unity", "agreement" and "conformity" of human nature.²³

²⁰ On the power of judgement, cf. mus. VI.10.25, DVR. 31.58, DLA. III.20.56. On the definitions of *ratio*, see DIA. 6.10.

²¹ Cf. Markus (1967), 358.

²² E.g. Ioh.ev. 19.15; ep. 137.3.11-12; trin. I.10.22; DCD. X.29.2.

²³ Augustine's description of the soul-body dichotomy in terms of the relationship between the subject (*subiectum*) and what is in the subject (*in subiecto*) in DIA. 2.2 (and 10.17) can be understood as a further application of the Neoplatonist concept of *unio inconfusa* within the framework of the *ordo*-doctrine, see. Cf. O'Daly, 36-37. See above, pp. 30, 36-38.

The young Augustine's overall view of man's existential order is markedly Plotinian. However, it must be noted that there is one crucial difference between the two. While Plotinus regards the soul, particularly its higher rational part, as the essential component that determines human existence, Augustine finds the first bipartite definition equally important as the third one for all its ambiguities. For, to him, both soul and body signify the creational reality of man, particularly as the rightful objects of salvation, while the third definition is useful specifically for clarifying the soul's functional relation to the body.²⁴ Plotinus knew a theory of the soul; Augustine had a theory of man.

(2) The cosmological order

The existential order of man corresponds to the hierarchical relationship between the two components: the corporeal, sensible and changeable part governed by the incorporeal, rational and immortal part. However, there still remains a profound ambiguity with regard to the soul's third qualification of immortality. If immortal, is it then a divine substance, something similar to God? If it is like God, how did it come into being? Did it create itself? Or, if not divine, how was it created? The questions of the divinity of the soul is thus inseparably linked to that of the origin of the soul; and, these two remaining questions on the human soul concern the cosmological order of man, that is, his position in the creation-order as a whole.²⁵

From the beginning Augustine frankly admits the difficulty of the soul's divinity and origin, confused by various philosophical hypotheses (cf. DO. II.17.46, DLA. III.21).²⁶ For example, Manichaeism maintains that a human being is a "divine spark" inserted into the hostile world of

²⁴ The importance of body especially with regard to the Christian concept of resurrection drew Augustine's attention very slowly. For his early remarks, cf. DQA. 33.76; DVR. 44.82. The concept of bodily resurrection was developed in the 390s in conjunction with 1 Cor. 15:35-57: cf. exp.Rom. 35.1 & 51.2, DDC. I.19.18, Faust. 11.3-8. See below, pp. 74-75, 78, 102, 108.

²⁵ For the argument below, cf. Markus (1967), 359-361, O'Connell (1968), 112-131, O'Daly, 31-38.

²⁶ For an articulate summary of the problem, see esp. O'Connell (1968), 116-121. Scholars disagree as to what precisely puzzled the young Augustine: compare Courcelle, 202-210, and J. J. O'Meara trans., *Against the Academics*, ACW [Ancient Christian Writers series] 12 (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1950), 169, and O'Connell (1968), 112-113.

matter, while retaining the original divinity in the embodied soul. The Stoic idea of the soul also insists on the divinity of the rational soul based on a pantheistic idea of immanent, material deity called logos. Plotinus argues that, although individual embodied souls are not the divine One itself (cf. Enn. III.2.8-9), each of them, as far as delivered by the third hypostasis (World-Soul), reflects the ultimate divinity of the One, which is transmitted to the soul's higher intelligible part through the process of the making of the universe.²⁷

Initially, Augustine is drawn to the Plotinian distinction between the perfect divinity of the One and its imperfect trace imprinted in each human soul: though degraded in its embodied situation, the soul seems to present sufficient evidence—incorporeality, rationality and immortality—to prove its divinity. The young Augustine is particularly faithful to Plotinus in the *Cassiciacum* dialogues, in which he refers to the “divine soul” (*divinus animus*, Acad. I.1.1) or “something divine” in man (ibid. 1.3), describing the soul (*anima*) as a “unity closest to God among things” (DBV. 1.4).²⁸ However, in *De immortalitate animae* and *De quantitate animae* Augustine is far less unequivocal. On the one hand, the soul is not only “immortal” because the eternal truth known should be inseparable from the knowing soul (cf. DIA. 2.2, 3.3), but it also appears to be “immutable”, since, as the mover of the body, it should remain unchanged amidst corporeal movements (cf. DIA. 6.10-11). In this sense, the soul is similar to God, though not God himself (cf. DQA. 2.3, 3.4). On the other hand, Augustine is acutely aware that the soul, having fallen into the present embodiment, must be “mutable” in a fundamental way (cf. DIA. 5.7, 7.12-13). But how can something which is ontologically good and immortal be “corruptible” as well?

The first step towards a solution comes from within the Neoplatonist doctrine itself—through the notion of ontological corruptibility, which renders the soul immortal, but not immutable. The formula allows a distinction between an incorporeal, temporal and psychological corruption of

²⁷ Cf. Enn. V.1.2-5, 10-11. On Augustine's ambiguous attitude towards Plotinian World-Soul, see DIA. 15.24, DQA. 32.69. Cf. O'Connell (1968), 122, O'Daly, 62-69.

²⁸ Also, on reason as one with Reason, cf. Acad. I.3.9, DO. II.11.30-31.

the soul (like sin) and a corporeal, spatial and physical corruption in a body (like injury),²⁹ while safeguarding the soul's metaphysical immortality epitomised by the presence of reason in it. However, the second step Augustine takes is more decisive and, in essence, Christian: he now interprets the cause of the soul's mutability according to the biblical story of the creation. As a result, the Neoplatonist notion of ontological corruption is incorporated with the Christian doctrine of original sin, mediated by the idea of *creatio ex nihilo*: all creatures—including the human soul—are changeable because of its origin in nothingness, while the creator alone remains simultaneously divine and immutable.

The key text is Genesis 1:26, which teaches us that man with the rational soul and the mortal body was “created” by God “according to his image and likeness”. The passage is quoted in as early as *Soliloquia* (I.1.4) and *De quantitate animae* (28.55), but it is in his first exegetical work on Genesis that Augustine establishes his own theological perspective on human nature as the image of God. *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* (I.17.28) refutes Manichaean criticism and establishes two pillars of the “*catholica disciplina*”—God's incorporeality and man's creation according to his image; Augustine then inserts his own interpretation of Genesis 1:26, identifying the *imago dei* as “the inner man, where there is reason and intellect”. As is paraphrased in another passage (I.25.43), man's rationality as God's image is the source of the “stability of mind”, which then brings forth the “spiritual fruits” of “good thoughts” and the “rule” of various impulses under “reason and justice”. “In this way indeed” (*Ita...etiam*), Augustine concludes, “man is made according to the image and likeness of God, male and female, that is intellect and action [...]” (ibid.). The image of God is thus an indicator of the existential order of the rational creature. Only in this sense can human nature be considered “similar to God” (ibid. I.17.28).

However, the idea of *imago dei* also qualifies human nature as radically different from God himself, for it is only an image, a creation. Augustine has gradually come to understand that the creation story not only describes the origin of man in God's image, but also points clearly to the

²⁹ Cf. DIA. 5.7 and esp. DVR. 10.18.

unbridgeable gulf between the creator and the created. With the notion of *creatio ex nihilo* (cf. *ibid.* I.6.10-7.11) Augustine now acknowledges changeability as the common feature of all creatures; in man's case ontological changeability is also linked with moral corruptibility. In the end, this insight into the corporeal aspect of human nature leads to a confident refutation of the Manichaean theory of human divinity, and to a further clarification of the ambiguity inherent in the Plotinian theory (cf. II.8.11).

Rational and created, immortal and yet mutable—the *imago dei* occupies a particular position in the world of creation, as described in the same passage quoted above (*ibid.* I.17.28). According to Genesis 1:26 the creation of human beings is followed by the conferral of dominion over other creatures; the image of God is bestowed “not for the sake of body..., but for the sake of the power by which he is superior to all animals”. The creation-order assigns human beings, on the merit of rationality and intelligence, to the kingship of the created world, “like God” (cf. also I.18.29-20.31). To portray the human position in the creation-order, Augustine effectively deploys the notion of *medietas animi*—Neoplatonist in origin, but Christian in content—that the image of God occupies a “middle” place between animals and God in the created universe.³⁰

The idea of *medietas animi* accounts for a twofold tension within and outside man: existentially, between his mortal corporeality and his immortal rationality within himself, and cosmologically, between animal and God within the creation-order.³¹ In the middle-rank of the creation-order can one find the “ordered integrity of his own nature” (*ibid.* II.9.12). For the rationality of soul is “ordered to be in the middle of things”, as allegorically expressed in the position of the tree of life and knowledge standing in the midst of the garden of Eden (*ibid.*). Moreover, the *medietas animi* is closely associated with another, ethical insight into the ambiguity of human existence—a tension between the condition “*ante peccatum*” and that “*post peccatum*” (cf. I.19.30, II.4.5-7.9). In short, a human being is a mid-rank creature not only in terms of space (in the creation-

³⁰ Cf. *Enn.* IV.8.7. Cf. Markus (1967), 359, O'Connell (1968), 155-161, 193-197, O'Daly, 38-39.

³¹ Cf. *DIA.* 15.24. O'Connell suggests *DBV.* 2.8 as Augustine's earliest allusion to *medietas animi*: cf. O'Connell (1968), 196.

order), but of time (before and after the fall) as well (cf. also I.18.29). All three modes—existential, cosmological and ethical—of interpreting *medietas animi* stem from Augustine’s view of the objective reality in which Adam’s descendants live: torn between the original self and the present self, they are desperate to ease the profound ambiguity of their *ordo*.

(3) The order of ascent

Despite his awareness of man’s bipartite nature, the young Augustine describes the process of moral betterment exclusively as a problem of the soul: it is a moral journey from the lowly tainted condition of corporeality back to the higher original state of intellectual contemplation (cf. DO. II.11.30-31). Traditionally, the soul was understood either as a purely rational entity, or as a composite of the irrational and the rational parts, or as a Platonic tripartite amalgam of the spirited, desiring and controlling faculties.³² Augustine uses the first definition in the programme of *ordo disciplinae* in *De ordine* (II.12.35-16.44), focusing on the purification of the rational *anima* to contemplate both the creation-order and the creator. In *De quantitate animae* (33.70-76, 35.79, 36.80) the idea of the order of ascent is elaborated more articulately and less academically as a seven-stage (*gradus*) process of purification, which is an interesting application of the other two definitions of the soul. While the basic premise is the irrational-rational division (cf. DQA. 14.23-24), the specific account of the ordered progress is based on the tripartite division common both to Platonism and Neoplatonism.

The “power” (*potentia*) of the soul over the lowest order common to all creatures, the body (stage I), appears as the principle of “life” (*animatio*, DQA. 79) maintaining the body’s “harmony and measurement” (ibid. 70). The second function of the soul is an irrational one (stage II), common to all animals, including sense-perception, movement, basic desires, sexual and parental instincts, and mental abilities (cf. 71): this is the level of “sense” (79). Up to this point Augustine’s account on

³² Cf. O’Daly, 13-15.

these lower—vegetative and animal—functions of soul corresponds to the classical tripartite distinction;³³ but his description of the next five stages proper to reason becomes markedly more Neoplatonist.

The third stage (III) of “memory” and “arts” demonstrates the basic ability of man’s discursive reason—common both to the educated and the uneducated, the good and the bad—as manifest in arts and sciences, in cultural and social institutions, as well as in language, rhetoric and speculation (ibid. 72, 79). The fourth stage (IV) of “reason” and “virtue” marks the beginning of moral goodness, an ambiguous phase in which the soul starts to value the spiritual over the material (though without undermining human society), while remaining in profound moral anxiety rooted in the seduction of worldly affairs and the fear of death (73, 79, 80). The soul then enters the fifth stage (V) of moral perfection when it enjoys “tranquillity” as a result of “purification”; nevertheless, it is still a preparatory phase for a even further progress towards intellectual perfection (74, 79, 80). The penultimate stage (VI) is the unhindered and purely spontaneous quest for the highest truths, when the gaze (*acies*) of the mind is directed toward the true light, God (75, 79, 80), before the soul finally reaches the ultimate state of “vision” and “contemplation” (stage VII), in which the soul returns to its own proper dwelling (76, 79, 80).

This is the order of moral ascent according to the functions of the soul, the process which is, at the same time, existential, cosmological and moral, progressing <1> from the material substance to the rational principle within man, <2> from the lower material world to the higher intelligible world and further to the creator of the universe himself, and <3> from the lowest created good to the supreme good. On the whole, as O’Daly points out,³⁴ Augustine’s seven-stage account of the power of soul follows the philosophical mainstreams of Platonism, Peripateticism and Stoicism; the first three levels are commonly held by philosophers since Aristotle. However, Augustine is more directly

³³ Possibly mediated by Varro, as implied in a later work, DCD. VII.23.1. Cf. O’Daly, 13.

³⁴ Cf. O’Daly, 15.

under the spell of Neoplatonism in his characterisation of the final four levels as a twofold process of the soul's moral purification (IV-V) and its intellectual purification (VI-VII).³⁵

In *De vera religione* (26.49), as our examination at the end of this chapter will show, Augustine develops the scheme of the order of ascent into another seven-stage ascent of the “new, inner, heavenly” man—this time with a more original, more markedly Christian interpretation of the Neoplatonist doctrine of the soul. Firstly, Augustine does not subscribe to the Neoplatonist (or, to be precise, Porphyrian) idea of “paradigmatic virtues”, which are higher than “contemplative virtues” (which are themselves higher than “civic virtues”) and can be achieved only by the intellectually purified soul in the union with the One. For these paradigmatic virtues imply a certain divine nature shared by the higher part of the human soul, which actually is only a mutable, though immortal, creature.³⁶

A second hint of Augustine's originality is something that can only be inferred from the wider context of his philosophical and moral discourses at this stage: the doctrine of order. Interestingly but significantly, there is a subtle shift of emphasis in the relationship between “authority” and “reason”, particularly in their roles in the human understanding of truth and the “*ordo rerum*”. In *De ordine* (II.5.16 and 9.26) and *De quantitate animae* (7.12) Augustine remains a rigorous rationalist who regards reason as a higher guiding principle than authority, which is merely a “short cut” (DQA. *ibid.*) for the uneducated mass. In *De vera religione* (24.45), however, he is prepared to recognise the positive role of authority, now understood as the work of grace (23.44), in guiding the soul to salvation, or contemplation of God. The divine “medicine” for the healing of human souls is initiated by authority, calling them to faith and preparing them for reason which then leads to understanding and recognition of truth. Importantly, as Augustine emphasises, reason does not discard authority altogether when the soul enters the final contemplation (24.45),

³⁵ The successive process of conversion and ascent in two phases is both Plotinian and Porphyrian, although every detail does not correspond to the latter's fourfold division of virtue. Cf. Enn. I.2.4 and Porphyry, *sententia* 32. Cf. O'Daly, 15.

³⁶ Cf. O'Daly, 15.

contrary to his previous remark in *De quantitate animae* which implies the self-sufficiency of reason at the final two stages of ascent.³⁷ A decisive affirmation of authority appears shortly afterwards (26.48-28.51), where he explains the progress of “two kinds” of people arranged by divine providence; this is his first reference to salvation through authority.³⁸ In this way, as O’Daly suggests,³⁹ the essential compatibility between the two accounts of the seven-stage order of ascent goes only so far as their common theme—the spiritual progress of man. Underneath the strongly Neoplatonist framework Augustine is slowly but gradually shifting the essential orientation of the order of man. For the existential, cosmological and moral (re)ordering of the self is ultimately governed by the authority of God the Creator, rather than by the purely rational power of the soul.⁴⁰

3. Order and Love

(1) Cosmic love

A pursuit of the perfect knowledge of *ordo* is to be judged from a simple criterion on the basis of the creational hierarchy of beings: “Whatever is *for* something else is necessarily of less value than what that it is *for*” (mag. 9.25, 26—Italics added). The preposition “for” (*propter*) suggests that the value of each created good can be graded according to whether it exists for something else (means) or something else exists for it (end) within the context of the *ordo rerum*. An interesting corollary is that such a simple criterion inevitably inhibits an investigation of morality, because of its exclusive focus on the ontological values of the objects of choice, rather than on the choice, or will, itself. Somewhat absurdly, it follows that a singer who sings for the sake of money or fame, which is ontologically lower than music itself, is said to be ignorant about music (cf. mus. I.6.12).⁴¹

³⁷ Cf. O’Connell (1968), 270-271.

³⁸ See how he starts the “other” means of salvation, reason, in DVR. 29.52.

³⁹ Cf. O’Daly, 15.

⁴⁰ As we shall see in the next chapter, the shift corresponds to his deeper understanding of Christology, prompted by the reading of Paul. On the ambiguous treatment of authority in his early Christology, cf. O’Connell (1968), 258-278.

⁴¹ Cf. O. O’Donovan (1980), 16.

Nevertheless, the psychological and volitional aspect of human morality is not totally ignored in the intellectualist ethics of order. Thus enters the third ethical component, love, into our examination, which began with the definition of virtue: the knowledge and love of truth, the pursuit of which is universally ingrained in human nature as desire for happiness. Augustine's earliest concept of love is a "cosmic" one, identified with the law of nature (*lex naturae*), both as a cosmic necessity common to all creatures by which their diverse existence and activities are united with the supreme principle of creation. So Augustine asks, "what is all love? Does it not wish to be one with that which it loves, and, if it touches [the object], does it not be one with it?" (DO. II.18.48). Cosmic love is the natural aspiration of creatures to conform to God's government; man aspires to it through knowledge which shows the final destiny of his ordered moral progress, and through love which directs the actual ordering, an objective ordering of the self according to the cosmic law of nature.

Augustine's early treatment of love is diverse and fragmentary, but consistently aimed at explaining man's natural longing for God. In the creation-order love is first shown by the creator towards the creation (cf. DGCM. I.2.4, DVR. 3.3); his particular love for fallen creatures is demonstrated by his providential care and salvation of human soul (cf. DVR. 3.3-4, DLA. III.20.56), above all, through Christ (cf. DMEC. 11.18). In general, however, Augustine uses love as an inclusive anthropological concept, denoting a wide range of movement of the mind, from basic desires and passions, to an intimate affection among friends (cf. Acad. III.6.13, sol. I.3.8), and to the sexual impulse of libido (cf. DLA. I.4.10). Nevertheless, to the young philosopher, love is essentially a high volitional function peculiar to intelligible beings. So, on a purely analytical level, love can be defined as a general psychological movement towards a desired goal. To love is "to wish" (*velle*) for possessing the good desired (DVR. 46.87, DLA. III.7.21), or for the soul "to turn" (*attendere*, *convertere*) to it (sol. I.1.3, DLA. II.10.28). It is *desiderium* (cf. DBV. 4.35),⁴² a longing for that which man is now separated from; the "love for beauty and wisdom" is like a "seed" planted in human heart (Acad. II.2.6), driving us to seek truth, to crave for return to the homeland where our

⁴² Latin is "*sitiare*"; *desiderium* is taken from en.ps. 29(1).5. See O. O'Donovan (1980), 22.

souls once dwelt (cf. DBV. 1.2). Furthermore, love is more than mere desiring of happiness: it is the fulfilling of the desire. Love not only desires “union” with its object, but signifies the “union” itself—the “possession” of, the “adherence” to, the “delight” in, and the “enjoyment” of, the object desired.⁴³ In short, love is the psychological drive for and of cohesion: when the soul conforms to the divine will, it “maintains” the order of nature, by loving God as its superior and the neighbour as its equal, and “orders” other inferior beings without being tainted by them (mus. VI.14.46).⁴⁴

Based on these psychological analyses Augustine develops an ethical concept of love in conjunction with the will, or free choice (*liberum arbitrium*). In an oft-quoted passage (DLA. III.1.2) he compares the movement of human soul with the falling of a stone, and argues that, whereas the latter is a “natural movement” necessitated by the law of gravity, the former does not necessarily follow its natural desires and impulses, but is entirely a “voluntary movement” capable of selecting its own direction. The will is thus a psychological force “proper” to the intelligible nature of man (DLA. III.1.2), generating the “gravity of the soul” (*nutus animi*, DQA. II.22.38). In his favourite analogy of *ratio* as the “eyesight” (*aspectus*), “gaze” (*acies*), or “attention” (*intentio*), of the soul Augustine presupposes its underlying volitional power to direct or turn itself to a desired object.⁴⁵ Only in this volitional sense, therefore, love can be blamed for being morally right or wrong, since it is “in our power” (DLA. III.1.3) to direct the movement of the soul. Then what is God’s intention of giving this faculty of free choice to the fallible creature? Augustine answers: so that they themselves can prove to be “righteous” (cf. DLA. II.1.3). Conversely, the wrong love of temporal things is a human fault, stemming from the perverse will, namely, a deliberate and conscious choice of a wrong object of enjoyment *contra naturam*. The volitional aspect of love is thus a medium good which can either accomplish a moral action by clinging to the common and unchangeable good, or degrade it into sin by averting from the common good towards private and lesser goods (cf. DLA. II.19.53).

⁴³ Cf. above, p. 57, nn. 6, 7. On union, cf. DO. II.18.48, DMEC. 12.20, DLA. III.7.21.

⁴⁴ Cf. O. O’Donovan (1982), 379.

⁴⁵ For *aspectus*, cf. DQA. 14.24, 27.53, DVR. 20.39. For *acies*, cf. sol. I.4.12, mag. 8.21. For *intentio*, cf. DIA. 3.4.

The moment he distinguishes the volitional from the natural phenomenon of human psyche, Augustine has to face a serious dilemma. For the coherence of the cosmic notion of love is undermined by the very capability of the will to choose not to obey the law of nature: the ordering of man can be performed subjectively, quite apart from the objective reality. However, such a positivist notion of love is to be discovered gradually in the next transformative stage of the doctrine of order.⁴⁶ In the second and third books of *De libero arbitrio* Augustine is still convinced that all loves—therefore virtues and vices—can be understood in terms of the creation-order; an injustice caused by a “volitional affection” will be contained in the end within the cosmic order through divine punishment (cf. DLA. III.9.26, 12.35). For the young Augustine love is essentially an ontological imperative, rooted in human nature and motivating a pursuit of the good by which the agent orders his dispositions and actions.

Finally, the premise of the ontological concept of love is best articulated in a budding concept of what will later be articulated as the “order of love” (*ordo dilectionis*) or an “ordered love” (*ordinata dilectio*). Love not only “orders” but also is itself “ordered”. In *De vera religione* (48.93) Augustine sums it up, writing: “this is the perfect justice, by which we love better things better and lesser things less”. The passage, along with the above-quoted passage (“whatever is for something else is of less value than the thing it is for”, mag. 9.25), represents the core teaching of his early ethics based on cosmic love. In the ontologically preferential love (to love better things better), the moral agent needs, once again, the knowledge of the creation-order by which he can designate each being to its proper place according to its natural worth.

(2) The objects of love

The order of love must, therefore, be preceded by a clear understanding of what to love and to what degree. However, the young Augustine struggles to define the objects of love, particularly to

⁴⁶ On the development of other aspects of Augustine’s concept of love (“positive”, “rational”, and “benevolent” love), see O. O’Donovan (1980), 10-36.

synthesise two different moral criteria, the Neoplatonist order of ascent and the Christian command of love. How exactly does the Christian command (to love God and your neighbour as yourself) fit in the Neoplatonic *ordo rerum* (of the One, the Intellect, the Soul and the Matter)? Especially problematic is human objects. In loving the neighbour (or the self) is it the higher soul (intellect and reason), or the lower soul (growth-principle and senses), or both soul and body, that one loves? In either way, what precisely does it mean to love and treat the neighbour as equal to the self?

There are two objects of love, radically polarised in value, which are unambiguously understood: God and the body. God the Creator and the Supreme Good is the most obvious object that commands the highest form of love. In the Cassiciacum dialogues he refers to wisdom, truth, and God interchangeably as the proper object of our love.⁴⁷ As the intellectualist Neoplatonist definition gradually gives way to a more Christian one, he begins to use the term, “the love of God”, as the centrepiece of his ethical discussions: as Christ commands us (Matt. 22:37), we ought to love God “with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind” (DMEC. e.g. 8.13, 11.18). In the ontological framework, as O’Donovan suggests, God has “a totalitarian claim”⁴⁸ on human love, for the love of God consummates all other loves of different degrees.

On the other end of the creation-order lies the body, or anything composed of material substance, which is perishable and can be lost “against will” (DLA. I.15.33). As a natural outcome of the Neoplatonist identification of “the world” (*mundus*) with senses and materiality⁴⁹ and the biblical support for it, all material goods in this world are either to be despised as the root of evils (cf. 1 John 2:15-16), or to be “used rightly”, but never to be loved (cf. 1 Cor. 7:31).⁵⁰ Various human institutions can only be appreciated, at best, in this relative instrumental sense as means for the passing life on earth.⁵¹ Above all, at this stage, there is very little room in Augustine’s view of

⁴⁷ For love of wisdom, see Acad. II.3.7, DO. I.8.21; love of truth, see DO. I.3.6; and love of God, see DBV. 1.5, sol. I.1.3.

⁴⁸ O. O’Donovan (1980), 22.

⁴⁹ Cf. DO. II.18.47, DVR. 4.6.

⁵⁰ Cf. Acad. I.1.3, DQA. 3.4. For 1 John 2:15-16, cf. DVR. 55.107. On the use of temporal goods, cf. DLA. I.15.33, DVR. 47.91. For 1 Cor. 7:31, cf. DMEC. 35.77.

⁵¹ Cf. DQA. 33.73, DVR. 26.48. Cf. below, 117-121.

the body for a more characteristically biblical kind of materialism—the body as an object worthy of final redemption.⁵²

Between these two poles, God and the body, lies the human soul. In the early writings the soul is often paired with God almost as one homogenous object of philosophy (love of wisdom): the one concerning the self, and the other, its source.⁵³ Both God and the self (or the soul) are proper objects of love. The love of the self is surely subordinate to, but still “coextensive”⁵⁴ with, the love of God, since the proper self-love can be achieved only simultaneously with the love of God, or more precisely, the self is properly loved only when God is loved better (cf. DMEC. 26.48).

Up to this point Augustine’s ontological ethics coherently demonstrates the hierarchically ordered objects—God, soul, body—which determine the quality of love and hence of human morality. And the underlying dualistic worldview endorses a rather simplistic and optimistic prospect for man’s moral betterment. For, as long as one loves God, everything else—love of the soul and use of the body—will follow just naturally. Based on this ontological argument Augustine reinterprets the classical cardinal virtues of prudence, fortitude, justice and temperance, each as a form of the love of God:-

(a) Prudence, with a strong connection with wisdom, concerns the understanding of order which enables us to make a right decision;⁵⁵

(b) Temperance, with its ontological connotation closely associated with order and measure, concerns maintaining the soul’s integrity by loving God, especially in restraining passions and desires;⁵⁶

(c) Fortitude consists in enduring hardships in and for the sake of the love of God, especially against the fear of losing temporal goods;⁵⁷

⁵² Cf. O. O’Donovan (1980), 23-24.

⁵³ Cf. Idem (1982), 375.

⁵⁴ Idem (1980), 37.

⁵⁵ Cf. DMEC. 15.25, 24.44, 24.46; DLA. I.13.27; mus. VI.13.37.

⁵⁶ Cf. DMEC. 15.25, 19.36, 21.39-22.40, 24.46; DLA. I.13.27; mus. VI.15.50-16.51.

(d) **Justice** concerns the due arrangement of temporal goods, especially the proportionate love for them while loving and serving God.⁵⁸

Augustine's Christian interpretation of the classical cardinal virtues at this stage is far from being complete or satisfactory. They are, in the end, merely four different accounts of the same phenomenon, the love of God—all demanding an ascent to the eternal away from the temporal. More importantly, in contrast with the classical tradition since Plato and Aristotle, the socio-political dimension of the cardinal virtues is dormant in the young Augustine, who, like Plotinus, simply dismisses these “civic” virtues as part of temporal goods and as mere “traces” of heavenly intellectual virtues (“*contemplatio, sanctificatio, impassibilitas, and ordinatio*”).⁵⁹ In other words, Augustine's early ethics does not find its social horizon in the Christian-Neoplatonist redefinition of the cardinal virtues. What prompts him to go beyond his strictly eudaemonist orientation, which focuses on the relationship between God and the soul, and to examine an inter-personal and social dimension of morality is the second part of the divine love-command, “love your neighbour as yourself”. And in this remaining problem of neighbour-love lies the most incongruous aspect of Augustine's early ethics of order.

(3) Neighbour-love

The Christian command of love tells us two things about the neighbour: that neighbour-love is a requirement, together with the love of God, for attaining the moral end, the *beata vita*; and that the neighbour has an ontological status absolutely equal to the self as an object of love.⁶⁰ But how

⁵⁷ Cf. DMEC. 15.25, 22.40, 25.46; DLA. I.13.27; mus. VI.15.50-51, 54.

⁵⁸ Cf. DMEC. 15.25, 24.44. The classical definition, “to give each his due”, is the basis of Augustine's understanding of justice as a virtue of distinction and distribution (cf. DO. I.7.19, DQA. 9.15). While accepting a conventional notion of justice as a social principle of fair distribution and doing no injury to others (cf. DLA. I.13.27), he ultimately understands it in existential terms, as the right ordering of the soul, in serving God and ruling other lower creatures (including the body and lower faculties of the soul, cf. mus. VI.15.50, 51). Cf. also justice as God's cosmic government (DO. I.7.19), as the order of love (DVR. 48.93).

⁵⁹ Acad. III.17.37, mus. VI.15.55. Cf. Enn. I.2.1-3, 2.7.

⁶⁰ For the following argument, see O. O'Donovan (1980), 112-136.

do the Christian principles of neighbour-love agree with the Neoplatonist worldview of which the young Augustine is so convinced? Various questions which concern Augustine's early concept of neighbour-love may be summarised in four points: <1> the quality (in what way should we love our neighbour as ourselves?); <2> the quantity (how much should we love him?); <3> the relation to the love of God (how do we love him in relation to our love for God?); <4> the ontological position in the eudaemonist context (in loving the neighbour, how does he help us attain to the moral goal, the *beata vita*, and, vice versa, how do we help him attain to it?).

In *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* Augustine deals with the Christian love-command fully for the first time. Having demonstrated the totalitarian claim of God on human love (1.1-14.24) and redefined the classical virtues from the viewpoint of the first command of love (15.25-25.47), he proceeds (quite abruptly but not entirely unexpectedly)⁶¹ to expound “what remains” (*cetera*)—the meaning of the second command (26.48). The core argument is twofold: first, the coextensiveness of God and the self, because “it is impossible for one who loves God not to love himself”, and, secondly, a “bond of mutual love” among human beings as the “sur[est] step towards the love of God” (*ibid.*). While self-love is considered as a natural consequence of the love of God, neighbour-love is a command (“precepts of life”) to be obeyed as “the duties of human society” (26.49). Augustine further elaborates on the significance of neighbour-love in relation to his bipartite view of man: the neighbour is to be loved as “a rational soul with a mortal and earthly body in its service” (27.52). In other words, neighbour-love is like “medicine” of the body and the “discipline” of the soul (*ibid.*): it involves, on the one hand, compassionate provisions for material needs of the neighbour, including food, drink, clothing, shelter and safety (27.53-54); on the other, it restores the “health of the mind” by “restraint” of “fear” and “instruction” of “love” (28.55-56).

In the end, what Augustine has clarified in this treatise is our first point concerning neighbour-love, its qualitative aspect: the neighbour is, like the self, to be loved as a bipartite

⁶¹ Augustine does turn his argument to the second command “quite unexpectedly” (O. O'Donovan), but within a justifiable flow of argument; for Augustine must have had the second command (Matt. 22:39) in mind all along in his preceding discussion of the first command based on Matt. 22:37. Cf. O. O'Donovan (1982), 375.

composite, or, simply, as human—the image of God (cf. 26.49). In his analogy of bodily medicine and spiritual discipline he seems to start embracing “biblical materialism”, an assertion that we ought to love the body of the neighbour, like his soul, as the proper object of our love. However, the idea of bodily medicine merely refers to the “material” benefits of our love for the neighbour; it is the soul that is to be loved and enjoyed, while the body remains as the object of use.⁶² Similarly, in other early moral treatises, Augustine refers consistently to *imago dei*, *homo interior* and *homo spiritualis* as the qualitative criterion of neighbour-love: we ought to love our neighbour as ourselves not “carnally” but “spiritually”, that is, for the sake of the common *natura humana* as a rational soul created in God’s image.⁶³

As to the rest of our questions Augustine gives a comprehensive reflection in the final section of *De vera religione* (46.86-48.93). First, he asserts the eudaemonist premise, namely the inexhaustibility of God as the object of love, since he can be shared without limit both in quality and in quantity; he is the ultimate common good (*communis res*) that becomes all the more delightful as more people share it (46.86 & 88; cf. also 47.90). In this conjunction neighbour-love is described as a sharing of the common good without “envy” (*invidia*) among the sharers.

Upon this premise Augustine further expounds the neighbour-love-as-self not only in terms of its quality but, this time, also of its quantity, while relating the second command as a whole more carefully to the first. The qualitative aspect of neighbour-love consists in the love for humanity (cf. 46.87-88), or, ontologically, for the common human nature of rationality (cf. 46.88-89) as the image of God (cf. 47.90). He even insists that the proximity of human relations (e.g. family and friendship) should not get in the way of the universal love for mankind (cf. 46.88).⁶⁴ Augustine also answers implicitly the second question, how much we should love our fellow human beings: no more or no less than ourselves, but just “as much as” we love ourselves.⁶⁵ In loving the neighbour equally we

⁶² Cf. O. O’Donovan (1980), 23-24.

⁶³ Cf. DMEC. 28.55-56, DVR. 46.88-89.

⁶⁴ Cf. O. O’Donovan (1980), 122-123.

⁶⁵ Not exactly from DVR, but see en.ps. 39.4. Cf. O. O’Donovan (1980), 114-115.

aim at restoring his original nature by sharing with him the love and enjoyment of God. Neighbour-love thus establishes the right ordering among God, the self and the neighbour, as he writes:

The rule of love (*regula dilectionis*) is that the good one wishes to happen to oneself, one must wish for the other man as well; the evil one does not wish to happen to oneself one should not wish to happen to him; this is the attitude one should adopt towards all man. (46.87)

Incorporated into this egalitarian principle of neighbour-love is a negative concept of “justice” in the classical tradition (to inflict no harm to anyone)⁶⁶ mediated by a biblical passage in Rom. 13:10 (“Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law”). Social order stems from loving the neighbour as quantitatively equal to the self; the *regula* must be extended even to our enemy (cf. 47.92).

Still, the quantitative aspect of neighbour-love exposes profound ambiguity inherent in Augustine’s early ethics, especially in relation to its eudaemonist premise. Is the love for other human nature in an equal measure to our own required for the attainment of the *beata vita*? How does love of neighbour help us or our neighbour in loving God? Precisely how much should we love our neighbour in comparison to our love for God? In short, if both the self and the neighbour occupy an equal status under God and above other creatures in the creation-order, how exactly are the two equal objects of love related to each other in our endeavour to reach the moral goal?

In answering these remaining questions (concerning the third and the fourth aspects of neighbour-love) *De vera religione* deploys the concept of “use” (*usus, uti*). First, Augustine discusses the relation of neighbour-love to the love of God. As we have seen, the love for humanity, whether for the lover himself or for his neighbour, ultimately aims at sharing the love for God; the lover and the neighbour are to be treated equally in the pursuit of the supreme good. “However,” Augustine adds, “he [the lover] does not need them [other people]”, because “what he loves in them, he has in himself entirely and perfectly” (47.91). Once again, here is the monist principle of his eudaemonism: it is not the neighbour nor the self that is needed, but “he needs only him [God], by clinging to whom he becomes blessed” (ibid.). Augustine’s early eudaemonism is in tension with

⁶⁶ Cf. e.g. Cicero, *De officiis* I.7.20.

Christian love-command, implying that the neighbour is not a prerequisite for the self to achieve the *beata vita* in the love for God. Rather, both the love for self and neighbour is a corollary of the love for God; neighbour-love is a supplementary command and duty necessitated by human society (cf. also above-quoted DMEC. 26.49).

Augustine tries to resolve the difficulty, at this stage, within the terms of the Neoplatonically inspired worldview, according to which there arises one fundamental difference between the two ontologically equal objects of love: while the self is subordinate to—but coextensive with—God in the order of love, the neighbour is not coextensive, merely subordinate. The neighbour is a means, as it were, for the reordering of the self in loving God. He is the object of “use” (47.91):

<1> This man [who clings to God], as long as he is in this life, uses (*utitur*) a friend for returning favour, uses an enemy for patience, uses those whom he can for beneficence, uses all people for benevolence. <2> And he would not love whatever is temporal, [and] he himself uses the temporal things rightly, and cares for people according to their lot, if he cannot care (*consulit*) for them all equally. (numbering added)

In the end, Augustine evaluates the neighbour in terms of the temporal-eternal dichotomy by an analogy of the instrumentality of temporal goods. He then goes as far as to describe neighbour-love as a form of “use” (47.92).⁶⁷ The motivation is obvious: to maintain the coherence of his eudaemonism, in which only the eternal good, God, is the proper and ultimate object of love, while the neighbour is a subordinate good, and the self is the loving agent. The whole argument is governed by the ontological criterion of his ethics that “whatever is for something else (*propter aliud*) is of less value than the thing it is for” (mag. 9.25). The neighbour exists “for” God, hence subordinate and instrumental.

However, this ontological situation of the neighbour—as an object of love subordinate to God, equal to the self, and similar to temporal goods—immediately invites a series of questions. How can his ontological status be simultaneously that of a fellow *imago dei* and of an object of use? In Augustine’s terminology, is *usus* not sharply distinguished from *amor*, as man’s right (indifferent)

⁶⁷ As O’Donovan points out, until now, “love” had been used in reference to the pursuit of a goal, thus synonymous for “enjoyment”, whereas “use”, a synonym for the pursuit of a means, had always been in opposition to “love” and “enjoyment”. Cf. DMEC. 20.37, DLA. I.15.33. See O. O’Donovan (1980), 25 (n.46).

attitude towards temporal goods without loving them? Then, how can the use of neighbour be reconciled with the love-of-neighbour-as-self? Ambiguities persist.

A convincing interpretation of this passage is offered by O'Donovan, who argues that neighbour-love in *De vera religione* is a primordial form of “use-love” to be developed fully in *De doctrina christiana*.⁶⁸ Drawing attention to the second sentence of the passage quoted above (DVR. 47.91), he suggests that Augustine “appears to distinguish between the ‘use of temporal things’ (which is, now as before, a case of not loving temporal things) and ‘taking thought for mankind’”. In other words, *usus* is analogically deployed to illustrate the ontologically subordinate position of the neighbour in the order of love, but without suggesting a pure utilitarian view of human relations as, like temporal goods, an instrument for the good of the self. For the use-love for the neighbour is nonetheless genuine care (*consulere, prodesse*: cf. 47.91) for humanity, an ontological good superior to other creatures.

All in all, on the question of neighbour-love, *De vera religione* is a significant step forward compared with *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae*. Augustine emphasises the common human nature (*imago dei*) far more clearly as the qualitative criterion for the love-of-neighbour-as-self. The quantitative aspect is newly revealed in the form of *regula dilectionis* to love the neighbour as much as one does himself. The previously unexplained relationship between the two commands of love is here explained in terms of the sharing of the common good and of the love-as-use. Finally, in connection with use-love, the neighbour's ontological position is clarified as equal to the self but inferior to God. Hence the ontological criterion of love:

One who takes delight in liberty would desire to be free from love of mutable things, and one who takes delight in ruling would adhere in subjection to God the sole ruler of all things by loving him more than himself. *And this is perfect justice that we love better things better and lesser things less.* (48.93—Italics added)

Once again, Augustine identifies love with justice—but this time with a positive classical concept: to give each his due, that is, to love an object according to its natural value defined in the creation-order.

⁶⁸ Cf. O. O'Donovan (1982), 378-379.

Nevertheless, *De vera religione* belongs to a transitory phase in the development of Augustine's moral thinking. Firstly, he has not explained successfully how self-love defined as adherence to God is reconciled with neighbour-love essentially as an approval of another person's humanity. For, as O'Donovan points out, "the 'cleaving' which [one] does for himself" is different from "the 'commending' he does for the neighbour."⁶⁹ The former implies ontological dependence of each individual upon the supreme good, while the latter, in the ontological-eudaemonist framework, is a mere external, though spiritual and divinely inspired, aid for another person's endeavour to recover his original relation to God. In other words, Augustine's early concept of love can explain two relationships, first, between God and a human being (in terms of a creature's dependence upon the creator) and, secondly, between the self and the neighbour (in terms of an equal and mutually independent position in the creation-order); but what it cannot explain is the precise role the neighbour plays in the lover's eudaemonist relation to God.

Also hardly resolved is the tension between the "universalist" principle of love of neighbour for his humanity and our "particular" relations to our proximate neighbours.⁷⁰ In *De vera religione* Augustine maintains that proximate relations should be preferentially helped, "because one cannot help all those who he loves equally" (47.91). Since the remark appears in the discussion of use-love, Augustine can be taken to imply that a "preferential attachment" (O'Donovan) to proximate relations is due to the constraints of the fallen condition of our moral life. But is a particular care for proximate relations really a mere temporal requirement in the post-lapsarian state (cf. DVR. 46.88)?; rather, is the preferential love not a universal phenomenon found even in the pre-lapsarian state, as he later admits (cf. Retr. I.13.8)? How does he reconcile the universalist and the particular claims in his concept of neighbour-love? In any case, can all social obligations—both universal and particular—be drawn from the same source of the divine command of neighbour-love, as he tries to do here in *De vera religione*?

⁶⁹ Idem (1980) 116-117.

⁷⁰ Ibid. 120-123.

In the last place, and most importantly, there remains a serious incongruity between the two key ethical ideas, the use-love of neighbour and the ontologically ordered love. For the predominant sense of *usus* in Augustine's early writings is that of instrumentality, that is, of a temporal and intermediate need, while a person as *imago dei* cannot be treated wholly as a temporal subordinate good to be "used" in a purely instrumental way. For, in ontological eudaemonism, human value of the neighbour is not *subjectively* determined according to the need of the moral agent, but solely *objectively* according to the creation-order. However, Augustine has not yet conceptualised a human being as a genuine object of enjoyment, like God, though in a subordinate way. In a matter of few years, the tension between the instrumentality and the ontological value of the neighbour will pose a fundamental challenge to Augustine's ethical theory in *De doctrina christiana* I, a decisive watershed in the development of his doctrine and ethics of order.

4. Order and Law

(1) Human sociality

In the early doctrine of order social life is the least examined area. The ontological and eudaemonist orientation leads Augustine to focus on salvation through intellectual purification of individual souls, rather than on human sociality and functions of human society. Apart from the precept of neighbour-love, his reflections on man's social life are dominated by two traditional political concepts—*ordo* and *lex*. But let us first review his basic assumptions on human sociality.

The intellectualist, individualist and otherworldly framework of mind envisages the perfect state of *beata vita* as a mere collection of divinised souls without much social interaction among them. In Plotinus' imagery the purified Intellects celebrate the vision of the One with dance and songs; but the union is essentially an "escape in solitude to the solitary", in which "one sees with one's self alone That alone, simple, single and pure".⁷¹ Augustine also puts it quite bluntly that the

⁷¹ Enn. I.6.7, VI.9.11; cf. VI.9.8 for the dance and songs in the union. In spite of some commentators' attempt at illustrating social aspects of *The Enneads*, Plotinus writes very little on human social life. For a suggestion of

kingdom of God would not need such carnal and proximate relations as family, relatives and citizens, and all those bound by birth and death (cf. DVR. 46.88). Human nature in the perfect form is essentially self-sufficient in pursuing and achieving the *beata vita*. Rather, social life is of secondary importance, a by-product of the fall which commands the care for other souls as a result of the supreme love for God. Human sociality is, therefore, best characterised in terms of *necessitas* and *peccatum*. Social life is a legitimate temporal good: arts, technology and all familial, political, economic and legal institutions are all “remarkable”, “magnificent” and “proper to man” (DQA. 33.72); for, ontologically, it has “some measure of its own beauty” and remains in the creation-order (DVR. 26.48). Yet, the wise treat this temporal good “temporarily”, though “without deceit”, (ibid. 10.18); for the worth of human society consists merely in “utility”, “welfare” and “peace” for the fallen world.⁷² The Neoplatonist view of sociality as a necessity, or constraint, is fortified by the Christian doctrine of original sin, which underlines the flawed existential condition of Adam’s descendants as a whole.

On the classical issue of social nature Augustine is profoundly ambiguous at this stage. On the one hand, he assumes the natural collectivity of human life. In one passage (DO. II.12.35) he discusses that *ratio* innate in man binds rational beings together “by a natural bond” (*naturali vinculo*). But the acknowledgement merely indicates Augustine’s indebtedness to the classical tradition and the conventional social views of his time, though they are yet to be integrated with the concept of neighbour-love to form a Christian doctrine of human sociality. The most obvious influence is Stoicism (mediated possibly through Ambrose and Neoplatonism) which holds that man is a social animal and that each individual is integrated not only in a particular political society but also in the wider, universal community of gods and men.⁷³ Sometimes, Augustine also sounds more

“democratic” elements in Plotinus, see J. Rist, *Human Value: A Study in Ancient Philosophical Ethics* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1982), 110, 153; on his “unrealized project” to found an ideal city, Platonopolis, see D. J. O’Meara, 108-109.

⁷² For utility, e.g. DGCM. I.25.43, DVR. 28.51; for welfare, e.g. DLA. I.6.14; for peace, e.g. DVR. 26.48, DLA. I.5.13, 15.32.

⁷³ The Stoic influence is suggested to have been mediated through Ambrose (Duchrow) and through Plotinian Neoplatonism (O. O’Donovan). Cf. Duchrow, 202-207; O. O’Donovan (1980), 134.

like a Platonist than a Stoic, when he argues that the wise who know the supreme good are ontologically bound in a temporal society to instruct the mass, whereas the Stoic wise would be involved with politics only voluntarily. On a more superficial level Augustine adopts, without any doubt or criticism, the Roman social structure. The most notable example is *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* (30.62-63), particularly in the “rule of life” based on Christian neighbour-love, an inclusive moral instruction for children and the aged, for “domestic society” (married life, parenthood, master-servant relations) and political society (citizenship and kingship). His contemporary social structure is here simply accepted and, what is more, the rule of life is substantiated by conventional Roman civic virtues.

All these different and unintegrated elements have contributed to the character of Augustine’s earliest social ethics, the ontological foundation of which can be described in two ways.⁷⁴ First of all, social order is deemed analogous to the individual order of the soul; more precisely, the latter is the prerequisite for the former. Augustine often associates “pride” with the “rule” in human society, both of which indicate perverse imitation of God’s rule. Man, the *imago dei*, naturally desires not to be ruled save by the creator; however, the ordering of man, both internal and social, will be disturbed without the love of God, since the soul will be ruled by the body and, consequently, he, by other men. Worse still, as in the case of idolatry, the perversion may go so far as to mislead human beings to be ruled by animals and mythical creatures.⁷⁵ Social order and disorder originate in the morality of individual constituents. Secondly, Augustine can still appreciate a relative value of human society on the basis of the Plotinian dualistic worldview. For social life of the lower, material world is a necessarily flawed, but nonetheless genuine, reflection of the higher

⁷⁴ On Augustine’s early social ethics Cranz and Markus still offer the most articulate account. Cf. F. E. Cranz, “The development of Augustine’s ideas on society before the Donatist controversy”, *HTR* 47 (1954), 258-269, Markus (1988), 77-80.

⁷⁵ Cf. DVR. 45.84-85. Cranz (1954), 267-8.

intelligible world: it is a step towards the eternal *patria*.⁷⁶ In the creation-order even social disorder is partially restored and reintegrated by divine punishment into the greater scheme of providence.⁷⁷

The key texts for these fragmentary arguments are in *De libero arbitrio* (I.4.9-15.33) and *De vera religione* (26.48-28.51). In the first Augustine discusses law in relation to the problem of free choice. Corresponding to the cosmic dichotomy, human society is dictated by two laws, temporal and eternal; the eternal law guides and rewards those of good will, while restraining those of perverse will indirectly through punishments of temporal laws. The discussion of the two laws is then developed into a short but articulate description of the two groups of mankind in *De vera religione*, which marks the beginning of a long process of formulating the famous theory of two cities, *civitas dei* and *civitas terrena*.

(2) Augustine's early theory of law

The inner ordering of man is a combined work of reason, judging the right value of an object, and of love, striving to unite with the object as much as its worth permits. The moral activity is also assisted by law (*lex, ius*), which provides a set of criteria to judge moral decisions. Existentially, *lex* governs individual souls, which naturally seeks the “centre” of their order and unity, just as a geometrical circle is “united” toward its centre “by a kind of law of equality” (DO. I.2.3). Cosmologically, *lex* signifies God’s immutable will which maintains the “equality, unity and order” (*aequalitas, unitas, ordinatio*) in the universe (cf. mus. VI.11.29). More importantly, by *lex*, “time imitating eternity is created, ordered and regularly arranged” (ibid.). For the “laws of order” (DO. II.4.12), or the “order of laws” (DLA. III.9.28), which maintain the creation-order, should also govern all temporal arrangements for and of the fallen creature; thus it is said, “those who do not obey the law will be guided by the law” (mus. VI.11.30, 14.48). Through *lex* eternity encompasses time.

⁷⁶ Cf. DQA. 33.72-73.

⁷⁷ Cf. DLA. III.9.24-28, esp. 9.27. Also see above, pp. 52-54.

Central to this ontological theory of law is the concept of the eternal law (*lex aeterna*). It derives from the classical tradition, defined in a markedly Stoic fashion: the eternal law is the “supreme reason”, which “is just, so that all things are best ordered” (DLA. I.6.15). For the function of maintaining the creation-order the eternal law is specifically called natural law (*lex naturae, lex naturalis*).⁷⁸ The existential ordering of the soul, therefore, should observe natural law, namely the “divine law [...] transcribed into the wise soul” (DO. II.8.25); the intellectual training of *ordo disciplinae* or *ordo animi* aims precisely at the soul’s rediscovering the hidden eternal law imprinted in human nature.⁷⁹ As to the ordering of human society, too, the eternal law issues the divine command of love, requiring equal treatment of neighbours as “rational souls”, as “fellows and partners under the same law [of God]” (mus. VI.13.41).

Meanwhile, the moral and social life of the fallen people is governed by another kind of law: *lex temporalis*. It is a law, <1> “promulgated in written forms”, <2> “established for governing political societies”, <3> but more specifically, aimed to assist “miserable men”, that is, the ignorant and wicked who are unable to observe the eternal law, and <4> “which, although it is just, can still be justly changed through [different] times”.⁸⁰ *Lex temporalis* is a variable written law which is legitimately established by and for the society of the fallen. For instance, Augustine compares two different temporal laws, one allowing citizens to elect their magistrate, and the other taking away such power from them and leaving it to the judgement of one or a few chosen wise. He reckons that the two laws can both be “just” under appropriate circumstances: the former is legitimate, if each citizen is “well restrained and the most diligent protector of important common welfare, everyone of whom values private good [as something] less than public good”; the latter is also legitimate, if the same citizens, “declining gradually, would prefer private good over public, have suffrage ready for

⁷⁸ Cf. DO. I.8.25, DQA. 22.37, DVR. 29.52.

⁷⁹ Cf. also Acad. I.9.24, mag. 8.24 for law and the soul’s order. For the laws impressed in human nature, cf. sol. I.1.3, DLA. I.6.15.

⁸⁰ Cf. DLA. I.6.14, 5.13, 15.31-32, 6.14, respectively.

bribery, and, having been corrupted by those who love honours, entrust the government to disgraceful and wicked men” (DLA. I.6.14).

Legitimacy of any temporal law, therefore, derives from the sole fact that it maintains the order of society. The fundamental objectives are protection of citizens (cf. DLA. I.5.12) and establishment of “peace” by punishing crimes and removing social evils (ibid. 5.13); more specifically, temporal laws protect basic goods essential to the “peace of human society”, such as bodily good (health), proximate relations (family, relatives, friends and servants), political values (liberty, fatherland, honour and glory), and private property (money and all that may be legitimately sold or bought) (ibid. I.15.32). The reflection on distributive justice, however, is prematurely concluded with a remark on the punitive function (“*potestas in vindicando*”) of temporal laws: it is limited to confiscating a part or the whole of those temporal goods with an intention to maintain “a certain limit suitable for the bond of political society” (ibid.). While differently established and altered according to time and place, customs and needs, all temporal laws are a legitimate, punitive and restrictive measure of social ordering.

Despite the fundamental differences in their origin and function, the two laws, eternal and temporal, are not totally separated; for the young Augustine is convinced that the latter are ontologically rooted in the former, which is the source of all laws. The idea of divine derivation of law is best articulated in *De libero arbitrio* I.6.15 (cf. also I.15.31):

That law which is called the supreme reason must always be observed, by which bad people deserve a life of misery and good people the blessed life, *and moreover, by which that [law] which we have said to call temporal is rightly made and rightly changed.*
(Italics added)

The eternal law (*summa ratio*) maintains the creation-order not only by rewarding and punishing moral activities, but more directly by establishing and amending temporal laws of human society. The intimate ontological connection between the two laws is characteristic of the earliest Augustine. A few sentences later, it is confidently proclaimed that “in that temporal law, [there is] nothing just and legitimate, which men will not have derived from this eternal [law] for themselves”, and that “whether any temporal change [of law] is just is judged from that eternity”. In short, no temporal law

is legitimate unless it conforms to the eternal law. Temporal laws are not merely punitive and restrictive, but also prescriptive and constructive, for in them lies the vision of perfect order according to the eternal law, however distant and faint the temporal reflection may be. For instance, Augustine refers to the social necessity of such detestable occupations as executioners and prostitutes (cf. DO. II.4.12), or to the domestic order, where a bad slave is rightly ashamed and punished by having to clean sewage (DLA. III.9.27); all these necessities and punishments in human society are ultimately related to God's cosmic government. At least those who can observe the eternal law will be able to detect this positive and creative aspect of temporal laws, guided by the eternal law indestructibly imprinted in human conscience. When Augustine declares that "those who cling to the eternal law with good will do not need a temporal law" (DLA. I.15.31), it does not mean that they do not observe temporal laws, but that the wise are free from the constraints of those laws, the objectives of which are already fulfilled in the eternal law they observe.

However, the close ontological association between the two laws is subtly revised in *De vera religione* (31.58).⁸¹ First of all, Augustine now understands amendment of temporal laws as less flexible than before, writing that the temporal legislator is authorised to evaluate temporal laws at the time of their institution; but, "when they have been instituted and confirmed, it is not lawful for a judge to pass judgment upon them, but only to give judgment in accordance with them." Once established, laws are to be enforced but not to be altered. For at stake is the authority of law, divine or temporal, as the guiding principle of moral activities. Secondly and more importantly, Augustine's insistence on the ontological agreement of temporal laws to the eternal law is more muted than in *De libero arbitrio* I: the latter is no longer the absolute precondition for the former to be legitimate and just, as he writes:

However the author of temporal laws, *if he is a good and wise man*, takes into consideration that very eternal law upon which no soul is permitted to pass judgment, so that in accordance with its immutable rules he may determine what is to be commanded and forbidden according to circumstances. Therefore, what the eternal law is pure souls may know, but they may not pass judgment upon it. (Italics added)

⁸¹ Cf. Deane, 90; Markus (1988), 89.

It is now conceded that temporal laws can and may conform to the eternal law, if the legislator happens to be good and wise. Within a larger context of the formation of Augustine's doctrine of order, the moderation corresponds to his deepening understanding of human mutability and fallibility, especially based on his awakened awareness of original sin and grace in *De vera religione*. He begins to understand that human society at large and temporal laws in particular are destined not only to be changeable, but fundamentally imperfect. Many evil deeds will remain unpunished by temporal laws, until divine providence brings them to justice in the end (cf. DLA. I.5.13). The order of temporal laws are henceforth properly called "servile" justice: "under the laws, prohibition of sins [becoming] more rigorous, and punishment of sinners repressing servilely, the impetus of lust produces more hideous [desires] to carnal souls and doubles all offences. For it is not a simple sin to commit an evil (*malum*) but also a moral offence (*vitium*)" (DVR. 26.48). The implicit admission of the separable link between the two laws is a small but significant step in the formation of Augustine's political thought towards a positivist view of temporal law and order.

(3) *Duo genera*: history of mankind

In close relation to the ontological theory of law Augustine develops a historical and collective idea of the "two kinds" (*duo genera*) of human beings. Human history is understood within the framework of the Neoplatonist dichotomy (between the eternal and the temporal, and between the wise and the unlearned) identified with the Christian-Pauline distinction (between the spiritual and the carnal, and between the inner and the outer man). The very seed of the dualist argument can be found in the Cassiciacum dialogues, in which Augustine describes wisdom, virtue and beatitude in terms of a stark opposition between the learned (*sapiens*) and the unlearned (*stultus*, *indoctus*). In *De libero arbitrio I*, as we have seen, the dichotomy is theoretically examined in terms of the two contrasting laws. In one passage (16.34) Augustine describes three types of this dichotomy, between eternal and temporal objects, between the eternal law and a temporal law, and, lastly, between "lovers of temporal things ... [and] of eternal things". The legal perspective brings the

two kinds of human existence into a sharply ontological focus as part of the *ordo rerum* in the universe.⁸²

Augustine further expounds the collective dichotomy in a historical context. In *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* (I.23.35-41), as we have also observed, the history of mankind is depicted by “the order of days” (*ordo dierum*) divided into six progressive stages. It is a process of “God’s people” gradually leaving the fallen world, first as “a people in pilgrimage”, and, after the first coming of Christ, as “the church”.⁸³ The historical interpretation of human destiny is then formalised in terms of *duo genera* in *De vera religione* (26.48-28.51). The context of the discussion concerns the “medicinal” work of providence, which extends not only to the individual, but also “publicly” to “the whole human race” (25.46). Augustine introduces the life of an “earthly man”, who is destined to die as a result of sin, and yet whose “nature and education” are cared for by “the temporal arrangement and medicine of divine providence” (26.48). His growth is arranged in the following order: <1> infancy, of bodily nourishment, <2> childhood, when memory starts to function, <3> adolescence, of propagation and family life, <4> manhood, when he engages in many public duties under the rule of law, and <5> old age till death, when “some peace” is granted for his previous work for the public. This is the life of the “old, outer, earthly” (*vetus, exterior, terrenus*) man. Collectively, the “political society” (*civitas, populus*) of earthly men may also be “well organised” and retain “a certain measure of beauty of its own”. Yet, however happy and peaceful they may be, the earthly social life is governed by “servile” justice, steeped in the vicious circle of sin and punishment.

In the next section (49) Augustine contrasts this temporal servile life with that of the “new, inner, and heavenly man” (*homo novus, interior, caelestis*), whose spiritual growth is described in

⁸² Note how Augustine contrasts the *duo genera* in terms of eternity and temporality in DLA. I.15.31.

⁸³ DGCM. I.23.37, 39, 40. Note Augustine’s conscious deployment of the political term “*populus*”. In the Roman legal system it is a synonym for *res publica* or *civitas*, <1> narrowly defined as a group of rational beings organised by agreement on legal and political matters as well as on public rituals, or <2> more widely understood as a community with various activities and levels of self-consciousness. In either case, *populus* signifies a well articulated sense of community based upon a shared agreement not only on some basic functions of the society, but, more fundamentally, on its cultural and religious identity. Cf. J. Adams, *The Populus of Augustine and Jerome* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971); on the Roman usage of the term, *ibid.*, 2.

seven stages: <1> when he needs the instruction of stories and examples, <2> when he starts to aim at divine things by the guidance of his own reason rather than of the authority of others, <3> when the life begins to become righteous, as reason controls the body and is joined to the mind (intellect) of the higher world, <4> when he emerges as a perfect man with an ability to overcome all troubles and anxieties, <5> when peace and quietude are achieved in the life of the eternal world of wisdom, <6> when, reformed as the perfect image of God, he starts to be transported into the eternal life, leaving the temporal world completely behind, and <7> when he rests in perfect and perpetual tranquillity and happiness. Whereas the earthly man lives in the order of descent or decline, the heavenly man is engaged in ascension, the order of which is markedly Stoic and Neoplatonist, closely corresponding to the order of ascent described in *De quantitate animae* (33.70-76).⁸⁴

Moreover, in *De vera religione*, Augustine goes further to explain the interaction between the two peoples: just as in the case of an individual, who is born old and earthly, but may become new and heavenly thereafter, so the human race is destined to be fallen, some of whom may be righteous thereafter; for “no one in this life could live as a new and heavenly man without being old” (ibid.). As a result, the duality of human history is supplemented by a further division within the community of the heavenly people, between the righteous who lived between Adam and the Baptist under “the old testament”, and “the new people” with “the new testament” after the first coming of Christ till the day of judgement, whose existence is foreshadowed by the first group (27.50). The order of collective ascent is a two-stage transformation: first from the old and earthly into the renewed, but still bound by the old testament; then further into the perfectly renewed by the new testament.

⁸⁴ To be precise, this seven-stage ascent is a further articulation of the stages III to VII in the order of ascent described in *De quantitate animae* (33.70-76): stage 1 in DVR corresponding to stage III in DQA, stage 2 and 3 to stage IV, stage 4 and 5 to stage V, stage 6 to stage VI, and stage 6 to stage VII. Besides, the account in *De vera religione* has further stages beyond the achievement of peace, which would be the end of Stoic-Neoplatonist order of ascent. Cf. Duchrow, 219.

(4) The wise and human society

We have examined in this chapter the structure of Augustine's early ethics of order. Morality is cosmologically oriented, consisting in the order of ascent from the lower material and temporal world to the higher immaterial and eternal world. In this ontological framework virtue results from both knowledge and love; or, to be more precise, virtue is defined as the rightly ordered love based upon the perfect understanding of the value of each object of love. Individual morality concerns the inner ordering of individual souls, by loving God above self, the soul above the body, reason above passion, while using necessary, temporal goods (which ambiguously include the neighbour). The immortal, immaterial and yet changeable soul is to be restored to its original nature as *imago dei*, and rediscovers and occupies its right cosmic position below its creator, alongside other human souls, and above other irrational, vegetative, and material beings.

Human society is ontologically identified with the lower, temporal world, since the heavenly life is a self-sufficient enjoyment and contemplation of God. Social life is a necessity called forth by Adam's original sin, rather than natural impulse innate in man. Within human society, however, there exist not only the earthly people, whose sinful life needs to be restrained by changeable and coercive temporal laws, but also the heavenly people who, abiding by the eternal law of nature, need little assistance of temporal laws. In this condition social duties mainly aim at maintaining a degree of order among citizens by the authority of temporal laws. The larger the number of the uneducated, the more coercive and punitive the order of law becomes, whereas temporal laws may be instituted in the best possible manner, if the legislator is good and wise who takes counsel with the eternal law.

In this way, we have once again returned to the very nucleus of Augustine's early ethics: its elitist and perfectionist orientation. While the earliest individualist and intellectualist tendency is moderated and balanced by the growing collectivist and providential perspective, the young Augustine remains focused on the moral well-being of the chosen few who can achieve the total regeneration in this life and understand the authenticity of morality and society according to the *ordo rerum*. The uneducated majority stay under the constraint of servile justice, while the few wise try to

help them follow the long path of moral ascent, if not by reason, then by faith in divine authority. Notably, the account of the order of ascent in *De vera religione*, quoted above, concludes with a passage revealing such strong elitism. Whether in “the age of the earthly people” or of “the new people”, those who have achieved the “illumination of inner man” are expected to help others according to the necessity of time and circumstance, sometimes by showing the signs, at other times by prophecy or even by withholding the difficult matters from “many greedy and weak men”. For the “law of divine providence” dictates that “no one would be helped to recognise and perceive God’s grace, unless superior men have helped the inferior to that [end] with pure affection” (DVR. 28.51).

In the end, the young Augustine’s rather fragmentary remarks on the social responsibilities of Christians,⁸⁵ consist of three different elements. First, he follows the conventional social norms embodied in the key notion of civic virtues, which are merely faint reflections of the true virtues; in the second place, God’s people (i.e. the wise) become involved in the earthly society on a purely altruistic basis for the sake of others (the uneducated mass), so that they may eventually achieve the *beata vita*, too; lastly, the whole argument of Christian social morality is represented by the second command of neighbour-love. The most problematic of all is the second element, because the Neoplatonist dualism is naturally otherworldly, without necessitating the wise to intervene with the society of the uneducated. However, it is the third Christian element of neighbour-love that has prompted Augustine to look into the social interaction between the two peoples, and consequently enabled him to embrace the Roman norms of civic duties within a Christian social ethics, albeit in a premature way. In the essentially apolitical Neoplatonism the divine command of neighbour-love has opened a social horizon which is both new and old: new because it is fashioned in a Christian language, and old because it has simply revived the social dimension originated in Plato’s account of the philosopher’s political duty. In Augustine’s early social ethics of order, these three elements interact in a peculiar concept of neighbour-love: it is a social duty of the wise towards the uneducated mass, as is best exemplified in the budding concept of love-as-use.

⁸⁵ Cf. e.g. DMEC. 26.49, 28.55-57, 30.62-64; DVR. 41.78, 46.86-88, 47.90-92.

In the long process of the development of Augustine's political theology the culmination of the ontological doctrine of order marked the beginning of transformation. Cosmic dualism of the created world, moral ascent towards salvation, and social duties of the wise in the form of neighbour-love—all these themes contained contradictions, ambiguities, and omissions which would challenge the integrity of the doctrine. For instance, the relationship between reason and authority would have to be re-examined from a new perspective of the doctrine of grace. The self-sufficiency and perfectibility of the wise soul and the historical dichotomy of the two peoples would both be subject to fundamental changes as a result of a deeper understanding of eschatological messages of the Scriptures. Cosmic love would also prove to be merely one of several aspects of love. The neighbour would be given a new status as the legitimate object of love as well as enjoyment (instead of use). Succinctly put, at stake was the foundational worldview that supported Augustine's early ethics. The process of transformation had already begun in *De vera religione* (and in the second and third books of *De libero arbitrio*); it would intensify in the decade following his ordination in 391, as he discovered the positivist aspect of all three key constituents—order, love and law—of the doctrine of order.

CHAPTER THREE

Dual Order: Transformative Years

1. The Historicising of the Doctrine of Order: elements of the paradigmatic shift in 391-400

The decade that followed Augustine's ordination in 391 witnessed a crucial development in his theological thinking: its major components—Christology, the doctrine of grace, anthropology, ecclesiology and eschatology—would all emerge during this period. The search for a more articulate apology for the *vera religio* was profoundly experimental, full of ambiguities and contradictions. Nevertheless, the theoretical experiments were of significant importance to the development of Augustinian political theology and ethics, for two reasons. First, as we shall see in the next chapter, it is important because his immersion into the Scriptures acquainted him with biblical ideas of peace, paving the way to the next stage when *pax* would gradually take over from *ordo* as the “flagship”-concept of his social and political analysis. Secondly, as we shall observe in this chapter, the Neoplatonically-inspired doctrine of order was to meet tremendous challenges from the complex world of the Scriptures. The transformation of the doctrine of order would occur on three major fronts: the cosmic dualism of its worldview, the autonomous and rational ascent towards salvation, and the social duties of the wise in the form of neighbour-love-as-use. The fruit was the historical reformulation—the historicising—of the cosmic doctrine of order into a providential theory of dual order.

In what follows we will scrutinise the transformative process in a roughly chronological—but essentially thematic—manner: <1> the impact of the doctrine of grace (inspired by Pauline theology) on Augustine's negation of moral and salvific perfectibility in this life; <2> the impact of positive teleology (borrowed from classical eudaemonism) on his new awareness of the subjective

aspect of human order; <3> the impact of Christian eschatology (learned from Tyconius as much as from both Testaments) both on the historiography of the two cities, and on a revised worldview based on providential government through two separate channels, nature and the human will. However, as a preliminary step, let us briefly summarise the existing logical tensions, first those implicit in the early cosmic doctrine of order, and then those that became explicit in various thought-experiments during the first few years of his priesthood.

In his early anti-Manichaean campaign Augustine was helped by Neoplatonist ontology, which enabled him to offer an alternative explanation of the origin and nature of evil, and to defend the ultimate goodness of the creator and the creation. However, from the beginning, the integrity of the ontological doctrine was under serious threat due to conflicting elements within it. We have already noted several problems: an acute tension between the ontological account of disorder and the volitional account of its cause, an inarticulate account of the collectivity of human sinfulness, an incoherent description of how human reality stands in between the higher-eternal-immaterial-intelligible world and the lower-temporal-matierial-sensible world. On a purely ethical plane theoretical tensions between authority and reason, and between grace and will, underlined the awkward marriage between Neoplatonism and Christianity. Augustine's early confidence in the autonomy of moral agents in the ascent towards salvation was constantly undermined by another insistence on the soul's ultimate dependence upon the divine illumination from the world above. More crucially, his early ethics of order fails to incorporate Christian precepts of love into the overall eudaemonist framework.

In 391 Augustine was ordained priest, with considerable reluctance; he soon found himself incompetent in performing the exegetical task demanded of him, and asked his bishop, Valerius, for a time of quiet retreat to study the bible (cf. ep. 21.2-3, 6). In the meantime the expectations of his peers were considerable; in a matter of a few years, the newly ordained priest was already representing the catholic church in North Africa, once at a succesful public debate against Fortunatus, a local Manichaean leader (392), and at another time giving an address on the creed at

the General Council of Africa (393). Under these circumstances Augustine groped for the right direction and theoretical tools to understand the Scriptures well enough to defend the authority of the church. The result was further explication of Christian philosophy (*De libero arbitrio II-III*, *De diversis quaestionibus*), more anti-Manichaean works (*De duabus animabus*, *Contra Fortunatum*), and the early ecclesiological and exegetical works (*De utilitate credendi*, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 1-32, *De fide et symbolo*, *De sermone Domini in monte*).

In these works Augustine took diverse, often unconnected, approaches to various biblical issues, ranging from familiar themes (the creation, the fall), to fairly new ones (Christology, grace and the law), and to hitherto untouched ones (justification, eschatology), while clearly intent on preserving the existing framework of Neoplatonist ontology. Consequently, the old elements came to assume markedly Christian tones. As was already apparent in *De vera religione*, the anthropological dichotomy between soul and body, between the wise and the uneducated, and between the new and the old, was identified with the Pauline distinction between the spirit and the flesh, between the inner and the outer man, and between the just and the damned.¹ Similarly, the cosmic duality was understood increasingly in terms of an Old Testament contrast between the heavenly and the satanic society.²

Among various thought-experiments at this stage, two deserve special attention. One is the adoption of positive teleology from classical eudaemonist philosophy. In order to describe the two objects of Christian love adequately within the ontological-eudaemonist worldview, Augustine began to adopt a Ciceronian distinction between the good per se (*honestum*) and a good to be used for something else (*utile*); he categorically identified the conceptual pair with another pair, *fruitio* and *usus*, to denote the relationship between ends and means (cf. Q83.30). As a closer examination will show, the positivist thought-experiment helped Augustine understand that a moral agent might *subjectively* determine what was an end to be sought and what was a means to be used to achieve

¹ Cf. esp. DVR. 26.48-28.51; Q83. 36.2, en.ps. 1.4, 2.8. Cf. Cranz, 273, 303-4.

² Cf. en.ps. 9 (esp. §4, 8, 10). Cf. Duchrow, 233-234.

that end, although he was still unaware of the potentially subversive implication of positive teleology for his ontological ethics.

The other experiment concerns Augustine's continued analysis of the human psyche. First treated in the first book of *De libero arbitrio*, the problem of the human will was then articulated in a famous passage in its third book (III.1.1-2) which contrasted the *motus animi* with the *motus naturalis* of a stone. Exploring further the psychology of moral evil, he also came to grasp sin in terms of the power of habit (*consuetudo*) over the human soul and in relation to the biblical understanding of sin.³ Gradually, the dark shadow of sin started to cloud Augustine's hitherto fairly confident view of moral perfectibility.⁴ He began to emphasise the need of God's help,⁵ while moral ascent was deemed far less self-sufficient than it used to be. Reason slowly gave way to authority as the decisive moral factor; correspondingly, the knowledge of order became less adequate and decisive for attaining the *beata vita*. In this process Augustine was strongly inspired by Pauline epistemology in 1 Cor.13:12 ("For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face"), which was interpreted, if not yet in an eschatological sense to distinguish between now and then, but at least as a testimony to the difference between human knowledge in general and the contemplative possession of truth in particular.⁶

Yet, Augustine's doubt about the autonomy of ethics was still far from admitting the moral agent's dependence upon authority of grace, and hence his imperfectibility in this life. On the one hand, Augustine started to suspect that the final state of moral well-being might be different from what was achievable by mortal beings even with divine help. On the other hand, he was firmly convinced of moral perfectibility based on the comprehensibility of the truth.⁷ For instance, the partial knowledge Paul speaks of in 1 Cor.13:12 was understood as an allusion to the uneducated,

³ On *consuetudo*, cf. Fort. 22, serm.dom. I.3.10; on the biblical notion of sin, cf. e.g. Fort. 21 and en.ps. 9.15 on 1 Tim. 6:10, and en.ps. 8.13 on John. 2:15-16.

⁴ Cf. util.cred. 12.27, serm.dom. I.4.12.

⁵ Cf. Q83. 57.2, serm.dom. I.2.9.

⁶ Cf. fid.symb. 8.20, serm.dom. II.21.71, Q83. 65.

⁷ Passim; e.g. en.ps. 5.7-8, fid.symb. 10.23, and esp. serm.dom. I.2.9-3.10, 4.12.

not to the perfectly wise whom Christ blesses as “peacemakers” in the Sermon on the Mount.⁸ The underlying paradigm remained unchanged: there were people who could purify their minds to become perfectly wise in this life with the help of divine providence. Hence, at this stage, Augustine held fast to the familiar concept of the graded order of moral ascent; even the beatitudes were interpreted in terms of the “degrees” of perfection.⁹

A decisive breakthrough came in the mid-390s. The paradigmatic shift of Augustine’s ontological ethics was first prepared in his intensive reading of Paul in 394-395, which gave him a deeper insight into the biblical concept of *auctoritas* and helped to establish the doctrines of grace and original sin.

2. Incomprehensibility and Imperfectibility: the impact of the doctrine of grace

(1) Grace, free will and the law: Augustine on Paul

In his examination of the “meaning” (*intentio*)¹⁰ of Paul’s epistles Augustine wrote *De diversis quaestionibus* 83 (qq. 66-71, 73-76), *Expositio quarundam propositionum ex Epistola ad Romanos*, *Epistolae ad Romanos inchoata expositio*, *Expositio epistolae ad Galatas* (all probably c. 394/5), and *De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum* (396). Augustine had already been familiar with Paul, first as a Manichaean hearer and then in Italy as a Catholic catechumen; his early campaign against Manichaeism appealed to the authority of Paul, according to which the Manichees also defended their own dualism.¹¹ But for a better understanding of Pauline theology Augustine’s exegeses had a threefold task: <1> to understand Paul’s doctrine of grace correctly; <2> to explicate

⁸ Cf. *fid.symb.* 8.20, *serm.dom.* I.2.9.

⁹ Cf. esp. *serm.dom.* 4.11-12; also Q83. 53.1.

¹⁰ Cf. *Simplic.* I.2; cf. Brown (1969), 154.

¹¹ See e.g. Fort. 7, 17. Cf. also P. F. Landes (trans.), *Augustine on Romans* (Chico, CA.: Scholars Press, 1982), ix. The translation of *exp.Rom.* and *inch.exp.Rom.* follows Landes.

the relation of free will to grace; <3> to defend the authenticity and truthfulness of the Old Testament, and thereby its congruity with the New. Particularly problematic was the second question, since the correct reading of Paul would require a total re-orientation of Augustine's early ethical premise, namely moral autonomy and perfectibility based on reason and free will. Deeply affected by the anti-Manichaean polemic, he was initially determined to find a right balance between grace and free will as well as between grace and the law.

The most notable outcome of Augustine's reflections on grace in this period was a new anthropological-historical scheme of salvation, in which moral progress was portrayed in four stages: *ante legem*, *sub lege*, *sub gratia*, and *in pace*.¹² Still predominantly ontological in his thinking, he understood the four stages as a gradual order of ascent; he was yet to realise its full potential to force a fundamental change due to a profound tension between the middle two stages, "under law" and "under grace" (cf. exp.Rom. 13-18.2).¹³ The four-stage scheme is deployed to explain how grace is compatible with both law and free will. First, in the stage prior to the law, a human agent lives as he desires, without any sense of morality; then God gives the law according to which the agent is made aware of sins, thus marking the beginning of the process of salvation. Nevertheless, the law and the knowledge of sin are not sufficient for a further progress. It is the work of grace that urges the agent to repent and seek salvation. How, then, does one move from *sub lege* to *sub gratia*? By free will. It is the agent's own decision whether or not to accept grace as the guiding principle of his life leading him to the final stage of eternal life in the promised peace. In this exegetical argument Augustine at least succeeds in describing the salvific operation of grace, in which the law is assigned a proper function. In line with Paul he comes to embrace a less dualistic understanding of the relationship between grace and the law: the Mosaic law is a divine institution to reveal sin and to be fulfilled by Christ and his followers.¹⁴

¹² Cf. exp.Rom. 13-18.1-13; also earlier in Q83. 61.7 concerning Mt. 14:16.

¹³ Cf. Q83. 61.7; exp.Rom.13-18.12-13.

¹⁴ Cf. exp.Gal. 58.

Another, more significant result of the four-stage scheme is Augustine's fresh doubt about human perfectibility, particularly the comprehensibility of order. His waning confidence in moral autonomy, already apparent prior to these Pauline expositions,¹⁵ is intensified by a new conviction that "our will does not suffice unless God helps" even to do good works (exp.Rom. 62.1), let alone to enter the fourth stage of perfect peace, a distant "hope" to be materialised only "at the resurrection of the body" (exp.Rom. 13-18.10). In the revised relationship between grace and law the moral agent is not only denied self-sufficiency in his ascent at the final two stages; but perfectibility in this life itself becomes doubtful. As moral autonomy and perfectibility undergo critical scrutiny, the very basis of the early ethics—namely, the knowledge of order—also comes into question. For the human mind, now admittedly unautonomous and imperfect, cannot be fit to know on its own the facts and reasons behind God's providential execution of justice, as Augustine used to believe. For example, in divine preference of Jacob over Esau (Gen. 25:21-23) or the hardening of Pharaoh's heart (Exod. 9:12) God's intention and purpose are "hidden" behind the veil of inscrutability (Q83. 58.2, 68.4).

On free will, in contrast, Augustine fails to reach the same level of clarity concerning its relation to grace in the Pauline expositions—precisely because of the gulf between Paul's *intentio* and Augustine's. As we have noted, Augustine is still deeply involved in the anti-Manichaean polemic, determined to maintain his original, positive attitude towards free will despite his deeper understanding of grace. As a genuine moralist, he tries to maintain a substantial human contribution to moral betterment and ultimate salvation; as a theologian, he is ready to admit the limitations of free will and the authority of grace in morality and salvation. A tentative answer is offered in a notion of the "freely chosen response to God's call" at the transition from *sub lege* to *sub gratia*. First of all, the work of grace is based on the universal premise that everyone is born into the same sinful "mass"¹⁶ as a descendant of Adam. Secondly, *gratia* is the "gift" of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom. 5:15-16).¹⁷ The "*donum spiritus*" is the ultimate proof of God's free and abundant love for mankind

¹⁵ Cf. Q83. 27, 53.2.

¹⁶ Exp.Rom. 62.19; cf. Q83. 68. 3.

¹⁷ E.g. exp.Rom. 1.1, 29.4-5, 60.10.

despite their disobedient and sinful acts (cf. Rom. 5:5; exp.Rom. 60.5-6). The gratuitous nature of grace is most evident in “election” (*electio*), through which God gives “eternal life” to the pious and righteous;¹⁸ consequently the “elect” will be able to do good, the effect of which is also called “justification” (*iustificatio*).¹⁹ Thirdly, the very first “call” (*vocatio*) to faith itself is also the work of grace according to Rom. 8:30 (“Those whom he called, these also he justified). But calling is not just an invitation to justification and the subsequent work of election, but essentially an admonition to repent before receiving the grace of justification (cf. exp.Rom. 55.2, 4).

In this mechanism of grace, from *vocatio* to *electio* (and *iustificatio*), how does freedom of choice function? The answer lies in between *vocatio* and *electio*: man is free to choose to respond to God’s call (i.e. to have faith); but he cannot determine his election. Human will is not yet so free “as not to sin, but only so much that we do not want to sin” (exp.Rom. 13-18.12); “man’s free will remains, whether for belief in God so that mercy follows, or for impiety followed by punishment” (62.13). Ever intent on securing some room for the human will and merit in the doctrine of grace, Augustine insists that *electio* must be based somehow on merit, because “all are equal prior to merit, and no choice can be made between absolutely equal things” (60.8). Consequently, *iustificatio* is appropriately called the “merit of faith”, since faith, acceptance of divine call, is freely chosen (62.12): “faith initiates merit” (62.9).²⁰

Logical incongruities are apparent in this ambitious attempt at balancing the power of free will with the gift of grace. At the crux of the problem there is one simple question: is it not inconsistent of Paul to attribute any merit to human work in the matter of faith and justification? If free choice of faith is to merit the subsequent rewards of justification and election, how can the transition from *sub lege* to *sub gratia*, as Augustine argues, be the result also of the helping hand of divine grace?²¹ At stake is the omnipotence of God, which is preconditioned by human choice to

¹⁸ Cf. exp.Rom. 60.1-15; inch.exp.Rom.18.14 for *electio*; also exp.Rom.29.4 for eternal life.

¹⁹ Cf. inch.exp.Rom. 1.1; cf. also exp.Rom. 55.1-4.

²⁰ Cf. also exp.Rom. 20.2, 60.15. Cf. retr. I.23.3.

²¹ Cf. exp.Rom. 44.1-3. Against Cranz, who refers to this passage as an example of Augustine’s conviction of the absolute necessity of divine grace in salvation. Cf. Cranz, 282, n.92.

believe in Him. In one place (exp.Rom. 55.1-4), referring to Mt. 22:14 (“Many are called, but few are chosen”), Augustine distinguishes two kinds of *vocatio*, between a general call for faith and a special one “according to the purpose” for the elect, both of which originate from divine “foreknowledge and predestination” (ibid.). He stresses that what God foreknows is perfectly compatible with what man does on his own will, and, therefore, that there is no conflict between “merit” and “omnipotence” (60. 11; 62.15). But the rhetorical manoeuvre fails, because the notions of *praescientia* and *praedestinatio* suggest that God’s omnipotence initiates even faith. Augustine can understand the relationship between free will and grace more articulately and adequately, when he gives up his adherence to the idea of “merit” as a prerequisite for salvation.

(2) Grace and original sin in *Ad Simplicianum*

Two years after his first experimental expositions of Pauline literature Augustine wrote *Ad Simplicianum*, which once again took up the *Epistle to the Romans* in relation to the same topics: “grace and the law” (ch.1, q.1) and “grace and will” (ch.1, q.2). In the development of his theological thinking the treatise marked an important breakthrough in terms of grace and original sin. It offered a blue print of what was to be articulated later in the *Confessiones*. First of all, on the question of grace and the law Augustine simply reiterates his discussion in the earlier Pauline expositions. Using the four-stage scheme, he highlights the inner conflict of man in the second stage (*sub lege*), defends the goodness of the law which is a pointer to human sinfulness, and concludes that the law can be fulfilled solely by grace, by which man is renewed spiritually and moves from *sub lege* to *sub gratia*.

As for the second question, it must be noted how readily and clearly Augustine admits moral transition from the second to the third stage as the work of grace; consequently, he has eventually to deny his previous position on free will. The text in question is Rom. 9:10-29, in which Paul is understood to focus on a single issue that “no one must boast of the merit of his deeds”; grace, not the work, is “evangelical”, bringing the good news to man, and, therefore, “grace of faith” comes

before “works” (I.2.2). This is not to demean the existence and function of free will: it is a natural good bestowed by the creator, and its power is strong enough to disobey—or agree with—his commands (cf. I.2.12).²² Yet, Augustine is convinced that the volitional choice to believe in God has been foreknown by him (I.2.5-6). The authority of grace is not compromised by human works and merits, and its salvific operation is thoroughly comprehensive, encompassing the entire process from *praescientia* and *vocatio* to *electio* and *iustificatio*, and to *vita aeterna*.

In this conjunction, Augustine has come to contrast human sinfulness with grace more acutely and articulately than before. First, the phenomenology of evil is existentially elaborated. Whereas moral evil (or sin) was earlier understood ontologically as a kind of cosmic disorder caused by human psyche (or will), its more existentially psychological aspect is being discovered. Sins are not merely volitional, but habitual, as epitomised by human *affectus*, or emotion moved by an object of delight (cf. I.2.13, 22).²³ Although his language is markedly ontological, describing sin as “disorder” (*inordinatio*), or turning away from God towards the creatures (I.2.18), Augustine no longer attributes it to a cosmic necessity (e.g. the soul’s “embodiment”) but, more existentially, to the movement of the mind (e.g., will, emotion, or delight) itself. Moreover, the active aspect of evil (*peccatum*) is deemed inseparable from its passive and collective aspect (*poena peccati*): human being is not only responsible for his own sin, but he cannot escape from it as a result of divine punishment for the fall. Here, at this juncture, a psychology of sin turns into a theology of sin. Augustine radicalises man’s moral accountability, with better clarity and stronger conviction, deploying recently conceived notions such as *tradux mortalitatis* and *massa peccati*.²⁴

Ad Simplicianum is an experimental treatise, anticipating the completion in *Confessiones*. Having established a totally gratuitous and comprehensive idea of grace, there should be little room left for the human will to merit salvation. Nevertheless, on the one hand, Augustine obstinately

²² For the succinct but articulate summary of Augustine’s theory of free will, see Deane, 24-28.

²³ Brown calls the new insight into sin “the psychology of delight”, developed further in *Confessiones*. Cf. Brown (1969), 154-155, 169-172.

²⁴ Cf. Simplic. I.2.16-17, 19-21.

insists, albeit somewhat more moderately, on the need of the “agreement of our will” to the divine call into faith (I.2.12): “In this mortal life one thing remains for free will, not that a man may fulfill righteousness when he wishes, but that he may turn with suppliant piety to him who can give the power to fulfill it” (I.1.14). On the other hand, Augustine no longer acknowledges any claim for “merit” with regard to salvation. Grace itself stimulates the “gravity of will” and “elects” the good will, by inciting the will to turn to what is truly suitable and pleasant for the moral agent (I.2.21-22). Given in between *vocatio* and *electio*, in short, good will and faith are among the “gifts” of grace (I.2.7) bestowed only on the chosen, who will then willingly participate in the work of providence. Thus the Augustinian doctrine of predestination was born.

(3) The incomprehensibility and imperfectibility of order

In *Confessiones* Augustine skilfully and dramatically incorporates theological developments in *Ad Simplicianum* on grace, original sin, and predestination into a monumental narrative of intense self-scrutiny before God. Particularly noteworthy is its bold synthesis between the doctrine of grace and the eudaemonist ethics of order. In the opening chapters (I.1.1-5.6), for example, Augustine declares—in the form of a prayer—what his *intentio* is: it is a *confessio*, an acknowledgement of his own sinfulness and, at the same time, a praise of God’s mercy and grace.²⁵ While the basic perspective is rooted in his new theological and anthropological standpoint, we find in its format a familiar resonance with another prayer written nearly a decade before in his rational monologue, *Soliloquia* (I.1.2-6). In both Augustine prays for God’s help with his search for wisdom and truth; it is a cry of the soul wandering in a foreign land, yearning for its fatherland (*patria*). Ten years apart, and still the basic framework—creation, estrangement and return—remains as ontological as ever. From this viewpoint *Confessiones*, together with other contemporary works,²⁶ may be regarded as

²⁵ Cf. Brown (1969), 175.

²⁶ The following discussion, while focusing on *Confessiones*, also deals with its roughly contemporary works (written in late-390s to early 400s) such as *De doctrina christiana* I-III, *Contra epistolam quam vocant fundamenti*, *Contra Faustum* as well as *De natura boni*.

an attempt at implanting his newly formulated theological anthropology into the soil of the doctrine of order, as suggested also by his free, imaginative allegory on the opening chapters of *Genesis* (conf. XI-XIII), which successfully deploys the achievements of his previous thought-experiment on grace in describing the origin of the creation-order.

On the whole, Augustine's frame of mind in the second half of the 390s continues to center on the core concept of cosmic order: the unity-in-diversity, the hierarchy of natures, the goodness of the creator and the creation as a whole. The favourite passage from Wis. 11:21 ("Thou hast ordered all things in measure, and number, and weight") is frequently referred to as the most articulate demonstration of God's government of the creation-order.²⁷ In the cosmic order a moral agent maintains his mid-rank status between the creator and animals, between *vita aeterna* and *non-esse*, and between the redemptive gift of grace and the volitional, punitive state of sinfulness. Hence a similar line of argument: "the natural order in man" lies in the subjection of the body to the soul, of the irrational part to the rational part of the soul, and of the active reason to the contemplative reason (Faust. 22.27). Virtue aims at restoration of the tainted order of man through gradual stages of "ascent", as is instructed by the Christian doctrine: beginning from "fear of God", moving from "piety", "knowledge", "fortitude" and "sympathetic counsel", to the cleansing of the "eye of the heart", till finally reaching "wisdom" (DDC. II.7.9-11). Similarly, evil, which stems from a volitional perversion, produces a disorder in the order of nature, cosmologically as well as existentially; all familiar elements—creation out of nothing, original sin, and divine punishment—make the moral agent accountable for his own sin, or, ontologically put, for a changeability towards the lower creation away from the supreme good.²⁸

Within the rigidly ontological framework, however, new ideas of grace, original sin and predestination are slowly making an impact, causing subtle, intricate and yet dramatic changes. The most significant shift of all is his predominantly existential and anthropological interest in *ordo*,

²⁷ Cf. conf. V.4.7, VII.13.19, XIII.18.23; also Faust. 21.6, nat.bon. 21-23.

²⁸ On the ontological disorder, cf. e.g. ep.fund. 35.39, nat.bon. 17, 36. For *ex nihilo*, cf. ep.fund. 36.41, nat.bon. 25-26. For volitional cause of sin, cf. conf. VII.16.22, nat.bon. 11, 28.

rather than in the cosmic order as a whole. This is a prelude to a fundamental reformulation of his thinking, which results in a Christian theory of man and a new worldview based on another type of duality. The body, formerly a representation of the lower world symbolising human sinfulness, is now accepted as an authentic part of the created nature of human beings. For according to the doctrine of grace the body is not the cause of moral degeneration and, more importantly, is a created good and legitimate object of salvation just as the soul is. The discovery of “bodily resurrection” at the transition from *sub gratia* to *in pace* opens Augustine’s eyes to the biblical message of the wholeness of human redemption.²⁹

The formation of the Christian theory of man coincides with a shift in the underlying worldview. Acknowledging that human changeability and sinfulness can no longer be attributed simply to human corporeality or to the lower world as a whole, Augustine has to review his cosmology based on the Neoplatonist distinction between the eternal and the temporal worlds. Also to be scrutinised is his simple identification of the Pauline distinction between the outer and inner man with other patterns of anthropological dichotomy between the earthly and the heavenly, between the carnal and the spirit, between the old and the new. Augustine is more conscious of Paul’s real *intentio*: it is not to signify the conflict between the body and the soul or between the two worlds, but the reality of human existence in tension between two kinds of life, whether to obey God or not.³⁰

Underlying Augustine’s fundamental re-evaluation of anthropology and worldview is a repudiation of the very premise of the original ethics of order—the knowledge of order. Among the conceptual triad (virtue, knowledge and love), the knowledge of truth played a crucial role in his earlier ethics, as in the case of *ordo disciplinae*. In contrast, *Confessiones* shows Augustine’s shattered confidence and optimism about the ability of human intellect, portraying human beings as powerless and ignorant, totally dependant on grace. Man is now proved totally imperfectible within this world, only to live by the hope of perfection in the unknown future.³¹

²⁹ The key biblical passage is 1 Cor. 15:35-57. Cf. Faust. 11.3.

³⁰ Cf. esp. Faust. 24.1-2. Cf. Cranz, 303-304.

³¹ Cf. Brown (1969), 156-157.

The shift came gradually. First, Augustine grew suspicious about, and eventually denied, the autonomy of human morality, as he began to perceive the importance of authority over reason, and grace over will. Then, almost in parallel, the comprehensibility of the *ordo rerum* and providential justice came under scrutiny in his Pauline exegeses, particularly on 1 Cor.13:12; the earlier differentiation between the “perfect knowledge” attainable by reason, and “perfect rest” in contemplative peace bestowed by grace (cf. en.ps. 4.5) was revised into a distinction between two phases of knowledge, between *nunc* and *tunc*.³² As Cranz rightly suggests, the incomprehensibility was no longer a mere hiddenness of the “facts”, epistemological as well as historical, in the divine order of providence; it began to signify the fundamental inaccessibility of the “intentions” and “reasons” behind those facts as arranged by divine providence.³³ Having thus denied man’s moral autonomy and comprehensibility, Augustine was just one step away from a total denial of moral perfectibility. In the latter half of the 390s, when he finally abandoned the idea of human initiative in faith and accepted the omnipotence of grace, he could still write, albeit occasionally, about “the purest wisdom” of “the perfectly wise”.³⁴ For Augustine to repudiate man’s moral perfectibility completely there was one decisive factor missing—an eschatological understanding of man’s fallen nature.

Still, the new awareness of the limitations of human morality prompted a shift of emphasis in Augustinian ethics from the graduality of moral regeneration to the more starkly dualistic tension between the damned and the saved. When he wrote about the seven stages of the ascent in *De doctrina christiana*, about the creational scheme of “seven days”, or about the Pauline “four stages”, the new assumption that the knowledge of order was inaccessible dictated that the “ordered” progress could no longer reach perfection, nor claim to present definitive criteria for ethics. The objective reality of *ordo* would always remain an “enigma”, and henceforth, a moral agent was left without a definitive prescription for his moral activities. The epistemological scepticism was here linked to the

³² Compare the earlier view (e.g. Q83. 59.2, 4 and *ibid.* 65) and the later view (e.g. *conf.* XIII.5.6, 15.18).

³³ Cranz, 286 (n.106). Cf. Q83. 68.4, *exp.Rom.* 63.1-2. Cf. *Simplic.* I.2.16, *conf.* VIII.1.1.

³⁴ Cf. e.g. *ep.fund.* 4.5, *agon.christ.* 20.22, *conf.* XIII.18.23.

gradual transformation of his worldview which we have just examined. The Christian worldview was dualistic, but differently from the earlier cosmology: based not on a dichotomy between eternity and temporality or between immateriality and materiality, but on that between the “two laws” (Rom. 7:23, 25) within the moral agent himself.³⁵ Now that the idea of gradual purification of the soul lost its viability, the destiny of mankind as a whole also had to be described, analogically, in terms of the existential duality between the damned and the saved, and between the love of self and the love of God.

Having admitted the incomprehensibility of *ordo*, Augustine was groping for a new orientation of the concept. For, contrary to what he maintained,³⁶ it was inconsistent to assert that the imperfect sinful state of human nature was still an integral part of the creation-order. Instead, he had to present a new scheme of divine government, according to which the creation-order and man’s fallible ordering of things were differentiated, but ultimately contained, within the integrity of the whole. The new formula was developed in two stages: Augustine needed, first, a better understanding of the “positivity” and “subjectivity” of human order, and, then, a comprehensive reformulation of his Christian historiography from an “eschatological” point of view.

3. *Usus and Instituta Hominum:*

the impact of positive teleology

(1) *Fruitio, usus, and ordinata dilectio:* Augustine and positive teleology

Alongside the doctrine of grace, another transformative experiment was in process. Roughly parallel in chronology, though separately developed, this thought-experiment was first inspired by a positivist interpretation, rather than a realist interpretation, of classical eudaemonism: a moral activity consists in choosing or “positing an end” (*finem ponere*) for one’s happiness. The positive

³⁵ Cf. Duchrow, 225, n. 197.

³⁶ Compare, e.g. ep. fund. 37.43 with Faust. 22.27. Cf. Markus (1988), 90-93.

teleology (especially, Cicero's) shared with the realist teleology the same eudaemonist pursuit of moral goodness, the ultimate good and the *beata vita*. But the former differed from the latter specifically in their focus on the subject of a moral activity, rather than its ultimate goal objectively and universally conceived. For central to the positive view was the moral agent's "pursuit" and "achievement" of an "end" which was something that one "posited". The positive teleology thus presupposed a kind of "subjective" ordering of "preferred objects" which were conceived for an "final end" (*finis bonorum*) arbitrarily chosen, whereas its realist counterpart was fundamentally concerned with the objective reality of nature governed by the supreme good (*summum bonum*), to which the subjective ordering of the moral agent must agree to achieve the *beata vita*.³⁷ Essentially, Augustine was a realist whose teleology was doubtlessly ontological, directing all moral activities towards God, the ultimate source of all existence and goodness in the universe. At the same time, the young ambitious philosopher found the positivist language useful for articulating his realist pursuit of the *summum bonum* and the *beata vita*. Thus invented was a conceptual pair, *fruitio* (enjoyment) and *usus* (use), which derived from the positivist tradition.

In Q83. 30 Augustine introduces the pair, writing: "There is the same difference between the terms 'honorable' and 'useful' as between the terms 'enjoyable' and 'useful'".³⁸ The positivist overtone of the subjective ordering is audible in his definition of *usus* as "that which we refer towards something else from which pleasure derives"; a predominant connotation of the term "use" is that of instrumentality. However, the framework of mind is unambiguously ontological, as he demonstrates in a key remark which immediately follows the first sentence quoted above:

the term "honourable" more appropriately and usually means 'that which is pursued for its own sake (*quod propter se ipsum expetendum est*) and the term "useful", 'that which is referred to something else (*quod ad aliud aliquid referendum est*).

³⁷ Cf. O. O'Donovan (1980), 16-18, idem (1982), 365-367.

³⁸ Probably written in Thagaste between 388 and 391. On Q83. 30, cf. O. O'Donovan (1982), 363-373; to the same article, the following argument in this section owes much. R. Holte suggests that the formula suggests a strong affinity with a Stoic distinction between *teloj* and *adiafqora*, or between a final end and intermediate means; however, O'Donovan convincingly refutes Holte's hypothesis and points to the general positivist tradition within classical eudaemonism. Cf. K. Holte, *Béatitude et Sagesse* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1962), 201-203, and O. O'Donovan (1982), 365-367.

Augustine's deployment of the *fruitio-usus* distinction presupposes the objective reality of the creation-order, and intends to explain the relationship between the supreme good and other derivative goods to be used for achieving that ultimate goal. Contrary to a purely positivist interpretation, therefore, enjoyment and use are not "mutually exclusive". Both of them concern the right "ordering" (*ordinatio*): it is "also named virtue, to be willing to enjoy what ought to be enjoyed and to use what ought to be used"; what opposes "enjoyment" is not "use" itself, but a "perversion" which is "to use what ought to be enjoyed and to enjoy what ought to be used."

In the rest of Q83. 30 Augustine's moral discourse is based on a precarious balance between the overall ontological intention and the positivist implication of *usus*. The objective reality which the right order of enjoyment and use is supposed to reflect is easily contradicted by the moral agent's subjective—and therefore inherently perverse—valuation of objects to be enjoyed or used. Particularly problematic is the instrumental connotation of *usus*, which denotes <1> the subjectivity of the choice of ends and means, <2> the utility of objects used as means to achieve the ends (suggesting the deficiency or need on the part of the subject), and <3> the temporality of the means (because eternal objects cannot be used but only enjoyed). To resolve the tension, he invents an ontological sense of instrumentality described in three ways: <1> providential utility of all created objects for the supreme good; <2> rationality of use, by which the subject judges the intrinsic value and purpose of each object; <3> its antithesis, abuse, which results from a wrong ordering contrary to the order of nature. To Augustine, so it seemed at this point, the difference between *fruitio* and *usus* consists, not in a purely instrumental distinction between ends and means, but fundamentally in an ontological distinction between "the intrinsic worth of any object of desire" and "the contingent benefits that flow from it" (O'Donovan).³⁹

The thought-experiment with positive teleology reached its peak in *De doctrina christiana* I (c.396/7), which engaged in a positive conceptualisation of the "order of love". The ambitious project was an extension and consummation of what he had already tried in *De vera religione*

³⁹ O. O'Donovan (1982), 367. Cf. Q83. 31.2, 3.

(roughly contemporaneous with Q83. 30) with regard to the Christian love-command ontologically understood and to the definition of neighbour-love as a kind of “use”. With *usus* now paired with *fruitio*, Augustine confidently embarked on an exposition of what O’Donovan calls “positive love”.⁴⁰ In a carefully conceived scheme he first proposes to explain two tasks of biblical exegesis, “understanding” and “communication”,⁴¹ as well as two objects of the first task, “*res*” and “*signa*”, that is, things which signify nothing else but themselves, and things which can also signify other things beside themselves (I.1.1-2.2). The *fruitio-usus* distinction is then deployed to differentiate three categories of “*res*”, things “to be enjoyed”, things “to be used” and “others that enjoy and use”: the first objects of enjoyment “make us happy”; by the second objects, “we are helped” in our pursuit of happiness; and the third is a new addition to the formula—human subjects positioned “between the two” (3.3). Elaborating on the rhetorical pair in relation to love, Augustine describes enjoyment as “to cling with love to something for its own sake”, while use is “to refer the object of use to the achievement of the object of love” (4.4).

In this introductory section Augustine identifies “enjoyment” with “love” per se and “use” as a means for it. The formula is in essence a restatement of the main theme in DVR. 46.86-48.93: to articulate the Christian command of love within his ontological framework of mind. However, by the time *De doctrina christiana I* was written, Augustine’s thinking had been substantially Christianised and was rapidly moving away from his initial Neoplatonist mould. The tension is acutely felt when he adds in DDC. I.4.4 an emerging eschatological theme of Christian “pilgrimage” in the world (cf. 2 Cor.5:6). Christian pilgrims, who “cannot live happily save in the fatherland”, benefit from the *fruitio-usus* distinction, which teaches that “this world is to be used, but not to be enjoyed”; in the end, they will be able to “grasp eternal and spiritual things through material and temporal things” (I.4.4; cf. also 22.20). In between the love command of Christianity and the ontological

⁴⁰ Idem (1980), 24-29.

⁴¹ Both terms by O’Donovan’s translation in idem (1982), 384. He also suggests two points of innovation, made during the presbyterate (391-395), which eventually contributed to the positivist experiment in *De doctrina christiana I*: <1> deployment of *propter* for associating the instrumental notion of use with the ontological pursuit of the *summum bonum* (cf. serm.dom. II.16.53-55, en.ps. 9.11, exp.Gal. 4, Q83. 71.7); <2> discovery of *fruitio* and *usus* as a rhetorical pair (cf. en.ps. 4.8). Cf. O. O’Donovan, ibid. 381-383.

eudaemonism of Neoplatonism stands the positivist concept of love. The main objective is to describe what he has failed to clarify previously, that is, where precisely in this ontological framework man fits as the object as well as the subject of Christian love. But, of course, the trouble is that man is not perfectly identifiable either as an eternal or a temporal object.

Acknowledging the aporia (“*magna quaestio*”), Augustine is determined to solve it in a reformulation of the order of love based on the *fruitio-usus* distinction (I.22.20). The problem is twofold, concerning a human object and the divine subject. The first problem arises from the ontological worldview, according to which God alone is the object of enjoyment, while “all other things” (*cetera*) are to be used. The logic dictates that man belongs to the category of use; however, man is “something great”, an “image and similitude of God”, which cannot simply be reduced to a mere means to an end. Augustine tries to solve the aporia by reinterpreting the Christian command of neighbour-love by another strongly positivist distinction between “*propter se*” and “*propter aliud*”. He writes: “For if [we love him] for the sake of himself (*propter se*), we enjoy him; if for something else (*propter aliud*), we use him. However, it seems to me that [he should be] loved for something else (*propter aliud*)” (ibid.). As O’Donovan proves, Augustine’s new conceptual tool is based on a simple “equation”: “*usus = diligere propter aliud, fruitio = diligere propter se*”.⁴² In short, the “rule of love” (*regula dilectionis*) instructs us that a human object, the self or the neighbour, is a proper object of love—not of enjoyment, namely, “love *propter se*”, but of use, namely, “love *propter aliud*” (22.21). And, naturally, this use-love for human objects is to be distinguished ontologically from the general use of other lower objects (cf. 23.22).

Inspired by the positive teleology Augustine proceeds to redefine the order of the objects of love (cf. 23.22-26.27). At the top of the scale is the object “above us” (*supra nos*), God, the only legitimate object of enjoyment. Then come human objects, which are subdivided into three categories: ourselves (“*nos ipsi*”), our neighbours (“*iuxta nos*”), and our bodies (“*infra nos*”); among these, the first two are to be loved and “referred to God” equally, whereas the body commands

⁴² O. O’Donovan (1982), 386.

a qualitatively different love, because of its lower ontological status “related to us” but not directly to God.⁴³ (And at the bottom of the scale are various temporal goods of pure instrumentality which are not to be loved.) Augustine summarises:

Meanwhile, a man who is a sound judge of things lives justly and holily; now this is the one who has ordered love (*ordinata dilectio*), so as not to love what should not be loved, nor not to love what should be loved, or to love more what should be loved less, or to love equally what should be loved more or less, or to love more or less what should be loved equally. (27.28)

The formula clarifies what Augustine has left ambiguous in *De vera religione*: “*ordinata dilectio*” is the right love for the right objects, judging the ontological worth of each object and caring for it more or less in an appropriate degree. In positive love he manages to fit all his main ethical principles: two different sets of criteria (the *fruitio-usus* distinction and the Christian love-command), twofold worldview (*aeterna* and *temporalia*), and three categories of objects (*fruenda*, *utenda*, and both *fruenda* and *utenda*).

Nevertheless, the positivist thought-experiment fails to complete Augustine’s ethics of order, as he admits that there is “something awkward” (*ambiguum*) in his solution (31.34-32.35). The discontent centres on the second problem noted above, a hitherto undiscussed theme of God’s love for man in the order of love. The question poses a serious challenge to the core equation of positive love that enjoyment is love for its own sake and use is love for the sake of something else. On the one hand, God’s love for man must be a use-love, because its ultimate end is not internal to the object (man) but external or *propter aliud*, namely the subject (God) himself (cf. 31.34). On the other hand, as Augustine acknowledges, God’s love for man must also differ from human love for the neighbour, since the latter love is “beneficial” (*ad utilitatem*) both to the subject and the object alike, whereas only the object benefits from the former (32.35).

The crux of the problem comes down, once again, to the sense of utility or instrumentality implied in the term “use”: either use in general or use-love in particular, *usus* indicates a necessity, an existential deficiency which requires not only an external end (God) to exist, but external means

⁴³ Still it is a notable change from the early position that Augustine includes the body as a legitimate object of love shows how far Augustine has moved from the earlier, Neoplatonic contempt towards it.

(neighbour and temporal goods) as well. In contrast, for God, there is no such need for means; he is the end itself. The incongruity is intensified by Augustine's ontological worldview, which assumes that the *fruitio-usus* distinction corresponds to the Neoplatonic dualism of eternity-*versus*-temporality. Man as the object of use-love is supposed to belong to the realm of temporal goods, but it contradicts Augustine's own definition of man as a mid-rank being. After all, man cannot be reduced either to a temporal or an eternal good. In the final analysis, the positivist thought-experiment has undermined, rather than solidified, the ontological foundation of Augustinian ethics.⁴⁴

Understood in a wider context, the two thought-experiments, separately developed thus far, finally met at this juncture; both "grace" and "use" ended up disproving the original doctrine of "order". By the mid-390s Augustine's intense reflections on grace had prompted a thoroughly existential reevaluation of the ontological foundation of his ethics; the focus shifted from the cosmic order and human position in it to the internal ordering of man itself. Meanwhile, the positivist experiment was begun to safeguard the integrity of the Neoplatonically-inspired worldview: the reformulation of the order of love using the *fruitio-usus* distinction aimed to illustrate the subjective aspect of ordering, namely how the loving subject should love different objects appropriately in accordance with the creation-order. In the end, the failure of the positivist experiment only reconfirmed what the doctrine of grace had exposed—the flaw in the basic assumption of his worldview. The dualist distinction between the eternal and the temporal could not fully explain the structure and operation of the Christian love-command. Man, after all, is a unique creature which shares the image of the eternal God and yet presides in the temporal world, both as the loving subject and the object to be loved for the sake of God as well as for himself.

⁴⁴ The subsequent development of Augustine's theory of love produces two interrelated results: <1> dissociation of "love" from "use" and redefinition of man as the object of enjoyment; <2> reformulation of the concept of ordered love on the basis of human rationality (or "rational love" as O'Donovan calls it). The first point is already hinted in DDC. I.27.28-30.33 and 34.38-40.44, where Augustine more comfortably argues without referring to the term "use". On the second point, see below, p. 120, n.53.

(2) Human institutions: relativity and instrumentality

Having failed to take root in an ontological mould, nevertheless, positive teleology left an important legacy in Augustine's ethical thinking: a realisation of the limited function of human order, or what he describes as "human institutions" (*instituta hominum, humana instituta*). The challenge of grace and positivism to ontologism did not merely concern moral perfectibility, but also the ultimate continuity between natural order and human order presumably maintained by the omnipotent providence. For the writing of *De doctrina christiana* I made Augustine aware of the peculiarity of human condition that the special creature, at the same time an image of God and sinner, was capable of pursuing a moral objective (*finis bonorum*), independently and subjectively outside the objective reality governed by the supreme good (*summum bonum*). Man became a "wanderer", not only within the universe, but also potentially away from it.

The analysis of human institutions appears in the second book of *De doctrina christiana*, in which Augustine intends to explain the second object of exegetical understanding, "*signa*", as distinguished from "*res*" (cf. prooem.1). According to his detailed semantic theory, signs are objects of pure instrumentality, not to be loved, but to be used to signify something else.⁴⁵ Human institutions belong to the category of "*signa data*" and, more specifically, to its subcategory of "*signa ignota*". As some point out,⁴⁶ Augustine uses the predicate "*data*" intentionally, to specify the "given" nature of signs, that is, the conventionality and intentionality implicit in their forms and purposes. For "given signs" are products of human activity of *significare* (or communication, as we know it today), volitionally construed in the subject's mind and then transferred into the object's; they are part of man's positive and subjective ordering (cf. II.1.1). Furthermore, human institutions are analysed in terms of "*signa ignota*", because the bible is filled with mysteries and allegories, contradictions and ambiguities, which are historically and culturally "unknown", or alien, to ordinary readers. Augustine's exposition of human institutions in II.25.38-26.40 is far from being an

⁴⁵ For further classification of "*signa*", cf. DDC. II.1.2-2.3, 10.15.

⁴⁶ Cf. Markus, "St. Augustine on signs", *Phronesis* 2 (1957), 72-76; B. D. Jackson, "The Theory of Signs in *De Doctrina Christiana*", *REAug.* 15 (1969), 15-17

appendix or “digression”, as one scholar understands it.⁴⁷ It is an integral part of his overall semantic examination of the human ordering of temporal goods, which is both creative and at the same time potentially perverse. Like the *fruitio-usus* distinction, the *res-signa* distinction serves in Christian education as an important tool to guide the believers’ “ascent” through “grades” towards “reverent fear of God” (7.9-11).

Central to Augustine’s analysis is the term *instituta*. As part of *signa data* it signifies the instrumentality of human establishment, such as commodities, customs and other socio-cultural systems created for human needs. In II.19.29 he engages in the discussion of human institutions to elaborate on the preceeding exegesis (of Rom.1:21-23), and then distinguishes “two kinds of pagan doctrine”, one on human institutions (cf. 20.30-26.40) and the other on customary and divine institutions (cf. 27.41-38.57); the first category is further divided into two groups, either superstitious or not (cf. II.19.29). Now “superstition” is an “unnecessary superfluous” thing “instituted” for the worship of idols (20.30, 25.38). The elaborate system of pagan beliefs and rituals are *signa data*, that is, concordant arrangements which are “agreed upon” (*conventa, pacta*), by giving special meanings (*significare*) to the objects of worship through the “consent” (*consensio*) of each member of society.⁴⁸ Art (pictures and statues) and literature (fictional stories and fables) may be also counted among “superfluous and luxurious” institutions agreed upon among men (25.38). However, there are many human institutions which are regarded “appropriate and necessary” (ibid.), and without which “there is no human society or, if at all, with less comfort” (25.39). Among them are clothes, cosmetics, measurement, money, and various customs and manners.

In the development of Augustine’s social ideas, this is a significant remark which confirms, for the first time, the fully-fledged legitimacy of human order on the basis, not of the ontological analogy of archetype and image, but of pure necessity and utility.⁴⁹ Of course, it does not mean to

⁴⁷ Cf. L. M. J. Verheijen, “Le De Doctrina Christiana de saint Augustin”, *Augustiniana* 24 (1974), 10-20. Others disagree and insist on Augustine’s consistent *intentio* in his treatment of human institutions: e.g. H. J. Sieben, “Die ‘res’ der Bibel: Ein Analyse von Augustinus, De doctrina christiana, I-III”, *REAug.* 21 (1975), 80-85; G. A. Press, “Augustine’s *De doctrina Christiana*”, *Augustinian Studies* 11 (1980), 114.

⁴⁸ For *conventa* and *pacta*, see DDC. II.20.30, 22.34, 23.36; for *consensio*, cf. ibid. 24.37.

⁴⁹ Cf. Markus (1988), ix.

deny the ontological analogy completely; in fact, he writes at the beginning of 26.40, “human institutions are a kind of shadow (*adumbrata*), similar in one way or another to natural things”. The remark testifies to Augustine’s growing awareness of man’s social nature, on which his earlier discussions remained profoundly ambiguous.⁵⁰ In the second half of the 390s he was able to present an articulately Christian theory of human sociality in terms of both the creation and the fall: human society is a product of human nature as well as of divine punishment.⁵¹ Yet, in DDC. II.26.40, without elaborating on the ontological sociality, Augustine immediately proceeds to emphasise the concordant origin and instrumental function of all human institutions, whether superfluous or necessary. In contrast, some institutions, most notably academic disciplines, are not man-made; they have been either “handed down through history” or “divinely instituted”, and discovered by human faculties, especially of reason (27.41; cf. 28.42-38.57).

Human institutions are relatively good and useful. Augustine has thus ceased to perceive human society simply as a lower material sphere of the universe, but something beyond ontological dualism, in which lies the limited and yet proper conditions of life of fallen men. Accordingly, Christians are repeatedly instructed not to avoid, but to use these man-made goods with appropriate moderation for the sake of something more important.⁵² Augustine particularly warns young Christians, in the search for wisdom and truth, not to engage in the study of academic disciplines “without caring for the attainment of the *beata vita*” (which exists outside the academic order itself) and to “appreciate them with sobriety and diligence” (39.58). This is a remarkable shift from his early programme of *ordo disciplinae*. What differentiates Christian philosophy from pagan is its rational judgement of the relativity and utility of temporal goods. Christians should “not ignore” temporal goods necessary and useful for society, but “use” them for something else, that is, “for the right purpose of proclaiming the gospel” (39.58, 40.60).

⁵⁰ See above, pp. 83-86.

⁵¹ Cf. bon.conj. 1.1, conf. III.9.17, XII.11.12.

⁵² Cf. DDC. II.25.40, 26.40, 39.58, 40.60.

In retrospect, Augustine's experiment with positive teleology was ambiguously fruitful. On the one hand, the attempted synthesis between the *fruitio-usus* distinction with the Christian command of love failed to deliver a consistent account of *ordinata dilectio* as intended; rather, Augustine was led by this failure to a further exploration of "rationally ordered love".⁵³ On the other hand, the concept of "use" and its instrumental implication proved to be a stumbling block both for defining the eudaemonist position of the neighbour as the object of love, and for differentiating God's use-love of man from our use-love of the neighbour. Yet the concept of use provided an effective perspective to understand human society as a relative and necessary provision in relation to the ultimate end, the enjoyment of God in the eternal peace.

The formation of a comprehensive and coherent view of the instrumentality of temporal goods was carried out from two different directions. Throughout the transformative period in the 390s, an ontological view of creaturely instrumentality continued to dominate Augustine's thinking. The best illustration was his determination to describe the creation-order in two ways, first in an ascending sense that the moral agent uses all the subordinate goods and fellow human beings as means to the enjoyment of the supreme good, God, and secondly in a descending sense that the creator also "uses" created goods for his cosmic government. However, the simplicity of ontological instrumentality was exposed by the second, positive instrumentality. Augustine realised that the moral agent was capable of using created goods as means to a subjectively conceived end without any reference to the ontological instrumentality of the means. From this ability of free choice and subjective ordering of things derives the diversity and changeability of human institutions.

At this juncture, the two aspects of instrumentality start to drift apart. Augustine has come to a point where he has had to admit the complexity of *ordo*. There was the natural order of God's creation; and there was human order subjectively conceived and socio-culturally agreed upon. The

⁵³ The rationalist theory of love is a form of love which recognises, judges and approves the object's ontological value according to its created nature in the positivist definition of the "ordered love" (DDC. I.27.28). It commands neighbour love to be extended to the wicked and the enemy on the basis of <1> the created nature as *imago dei* (ibid.) and <2> his possibility for salvation (ibid. 29.30). Moreover, Augustine points out three practical measures of rational love: to love the neighbour with absolute equality, with unlimited extension and with unlimited quantity of love. Cf. O. O'Donovan (1980), 29-32, idem (1982), 387-389; also Burnaby, 18.

integrity of *ordo rerum* was on the brink of collapse, and the omnipotence of Christian God was at stake. To cope with this crisis, Augustine was compelled to develop another perspective, from which these conflicting orders could be comprehended as two aspects of a unified phenomenon. The solution lay in a revised understanding of providence, which viewed the relativity and instrumentality of human society from a historical standpoint. In a new theory of history and providence, an eschatological horizon was about to open before Augustine's ever inquisitive *acies mentis*.

4. History and Providence: eschatological duality of order

(1) History: dualism, chiliasm, and eschatology

"History" is the order of events in the succession of time.⁵⁴ What Augustine meant by the order of events or time, however, changed as his doctrine of order underwent transformation. We have thus come to examine Augustine's third thought-experiment: the historicising of order. In subtle and intricate relation to the doctrine of grace and the positive experiment, his view of history gradually developed from a mere Neoplatonist account of different stages of collective moral ascent, to a distinctively Judeo-Christian theology of history narrated from a perspective of eschatology—the theory of the historical end (eschaton).

In the early doctrine of order, as we have seen, Augustine viewed history as dualistic, gradual and providential. Historical events were understood to occur within the perimeter of cosmic

⁵⁴ For instance, his earliest definition of history was *ordo dierum* in DGCM. I.23.41, II.3.4; cf. also *ordo saeculorum* in DVR.22.43 and *ordo temporis* in *ibid.* 24.45.

duality between the intelligible world and the sensible world. History was not simply a random succession of events, but fundamentally an ordered progress through different grades, from the lower world to the higher world; even the biblical framework of time from the creation to the eschaton was understood in terms of ontological ascent. The order and coherence of history originated from the mysterious power of divine providence which governs the entire creation-order.

In the first half of the 390s Augustine's view was further inspired by two intellectual sources, Paul and Tyconius. In the doctrine of grace, as we have observed, Augustine gradually abandoned the idea of gradual ascent and eventually adopted historical duality based on Paul's anthropology (of existential dichotomy and moral imperfectibility). The other influence came from a lay Donatist exegete, Tyconius, as early as 390.⁵⁵ As U. Duchrow points out, Augustine's portrait of two human groups (*duo genera*) in *De vera religione* (26.48-28.51) implies a Tyconian insight added to the underlying ontological dichotomy. In the predominantly Neoplatonic language the dichotomy also has an apocalyptic tone when he refers to the "second death" (DVR.27.50), which Duchrow suggests as an allusion to Revelation (2:11, 20:6, 14) inspired by Tyconius's commentary.⁵⁶

However, appreciation of the eschatological perspective and a radical *historicising* of the concept of order proved to be a slow and painstaking process. The process of transforming a gradual order into a dual order, and a cosmic duality into an existential, and further into eschatological and historical duality, can be divided into four stages: <1> a further development of existential dualism and a primitive conceptualisation of the two cities; <2> a brief chiliastic interlude characterised by an optimistic hope for moral perfection; <3> formation of eschatological dualism as a corollary of the doctrine of grace, Christology and soteriology; <4> the final formulation of an eschatological

⁵⁵ Duchrow summarises the Tyconian influence on Augustine on three points: <1> an apocalyptic insight into the notion of *duo genera* of mankind, <2> a terminological inspiration, especially the pair of *civitas terrena* and *civitas diabolis*, and <3> an ecclesiological understanding of *corpus permixtum*. Cf. Duchrow, 232-233; cf. also 221-224, 233-237.

⁵⁶ Cf. Duchrow, 221-223. As we will examine later, Augustine's reference to the church as *corpus permixtum* in DVR.27.50 may also point to Tyconius as a possible source of inspiration, although Augustine retains, for the first half of the 390s, a chiliastic understanding of the apocalypse contrary to Tyconius' view.

historiography of the two cities, which highlights human existence in the suspended temporality stretching between the beginning and the end of time.

The first development came as a fruit of Augustine's concentrated reading of the *Psalms*. In various passages in the first thirty-two expositions on the Psalms, written in 392, he describes the tension rooted in the fallen existence with three interchangeable terms of anthropological dichotomy: the Neoplatonist one between the wise and the unlearned, the Pauline one between the new-inner and the old-outer, and the Tyconian one between the pious and the impious.⁵⁷ The existential duality at an individual level is also understood collectively in terms of the historical conflict between the two "cities" (*civitates*), between the "heavenly city" and the "city of the devil".⁵⁸ On the whole, dualism in these expositions was essentially ontological, ultimately absorbed into the cosmic dichotomy between the eternal and the temporal worlds, while the gradual transition from one to the other was prescribed mainly for the wise. Nevertheless, as a result of his acquaintance with the prophetic view of the last judgement, Augustine began to discover a notion of the historical end in Christian historiography.⁵⁹

In the second phase of the development Augustine attempted a different, abortive interpretation of the Apocalypse. For a brief period between 392 and 394 he hesitated over "chiliasm", an imminent expectation for the second and final coming of Christ and his eternal kingdom, which was widely shared with his predecessors and contemporaries in the church.⁶⁰ Compared with others, Augustine was far less convinced about the literal meaning of the millennium of the Lord's reign in the bible (cf. e.g. *serm.dom.* II.6.20-24). Still, millennial expectations were echoed, however faint, in his explicit optimism about man's moral perfection. Augustine is especially graphic in his portrait of "the life of a man of consummate and perfect wisdom" (*ibid.* I.2.9, 4.11-

⁵⁷ For the inner versus outer, cf. e.g. *en.ps.* 1.4, 8.10; for the new versus the old, e.g. *ibid.* 5.7, 6.9, 8.10, 21.1; for the pious versus the impious, e.g. 6.10.

⁵⁸ For *civitas diabolis*, cf. e.g. 9.8. However, *civitas dei* is not fully developed in *en.ps.* yet, but more loosely in terms of the "heavenly" city of the righteous: cf. 5.18, 9.12, 15.3, 32.12. Cf. Duchrow, 233-237.

⁵⁹ Cf. e.g. *en.ps.* 6.1, 3; 7.16.

⁶⁰ Markus lists Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and Tertullian; cf. *idem* (1988), 19-21, 25, 41.

12).⁶¹ In short, the chiliastic view of the Apocalypse was regarded as a biblical confirmation of the Neoplatonic union with the One.

A decisive breakthrough came in the mid-390s as a byproduct of Augustine's two thought-experiments. The deeper understanding of grace and sin had now radicalised his view of existential duality as the inescapable reality of human life until the final grace of election. The other experiment with positive teleology also helped Augustine to realise both the flaw in the cosmic dualism underlying his ethics, and the growing breach between natural order and human order, individual as well as social. Both experiments thus laid the groundwork for Augustine's further reinterpretation of his apocalyptic view of the historical end. Most significantly, the eschatological transformation of duality coincided with his Christological development, particularly on Christ's Passion and Resurrection. Through Christ, God has revealed a new type of reality, in which present sufferings are transcended by the divine promise of salvation and perfect peace. Christians are to live in this eschatological reality which is already begun, but, at the same time, remains to be fulfilled. Also important is the social connotation of the eschatological duality. Augustine became aware of the collective duality only gradually, first inspired by the apocalyptic perspective held between *De vera religione* and *De sermone Domini*, then formalised in his Pauline exegeses. In a sense, he was enabled by Paul to rediscover Tyconius: only with a mature insight into grace and original sin could Augustine fully appreciate the Tyconian eschatology which he understood prematurely at the end of 380s.⁶² In his ecclesiology Augustine was ready to utilise Tyconian concepts of *duo genera*, *praefiguratio* and *corpus permixtum*.

In conceptualising eschatological duality Augustine revealed his maturity and dexterity as an exegete.⁶³ For example, the Pauline distinction between the perfect and imperfect knowledge in 1

⁶¹Cf. Markus (1985), 15-16.

⁶² For instance, Duchrow mentions DDC. III.30.42-37.56, where Augustine interpretes Tyconius' "Rules": idem, 224-229.

⁶³ Most vividly in *Contra Faustum*: on the eternal kingdom in reference to Dan. 7:13-14, cf. 12.44; on Christ as the anointed king to whom all nations obey (cf. Gen.49:10 & Dan.9:24), cf. 22.85; on the apocalyptic worship of God (cf. Rev. 19:10, Dan. 6, Ps. 49[50]:23), see 20.21.

Cor. 13:12 continued to be the backbone of Augustine's deepening awareness of the gulf between now and then, between the earthly life and the eternal. The fruit was the famous axiom: the *beata vita* is "not yet realised but in hope" (*nondum in re, sed in spe*).⁶⁴ In this one word "*nondum*" lies the fundamental character of the world, which Augustine finds expressed in 1 John 3:2, often in a close association with 1 Cor. 13:12.⁶⁵ It is the world of "meantime"—or an "interim" world—lying suspended between the fall and salvation, where Christians are not yet allowed to enjoy the fruit of their faith. It is like a life of "pilgrimage" (*peregrinatio*) to their "fatherland" (*patria*), as is best illustrated in 2 Cor. 5:6-7: "[...] we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight".⁶⁶ The Christian pilgrim differs fundamentally from the Neoplatonic cosmic wanderer, precisely in that the Christian pilgrimage to salvation is sustained until the end of history, even for those who are regarded as perfect and wise by earthly standards. For it is a providential operation, depending on the power, not of reason and intellect, but of faith and divine grace.⁶⁷

With the duality of human life thus transformed from an ontological into an eschatological conception, Augustine reached the final stage in the development of his historiography. From the perspective of the eschaton individual and collective existence was deemed essentially "historical", a reality rooted in the tension between the original (and future) nature and the present, perverse nature. Man and his society were to proceed through the succession of time, encapsulated in the interim world of relativity and instrumentality. With this insight into the historical nature of human existence Augustine unveiled the new keynote of his historiography: the theory of the two cities. According to the new worldview the historical pilgrimage of mankind is, like individual existence, characterised by

⁶⁴ E.g. DDC. I.22.20, en.ps. 54.3, 145.2, 148.5. Cf. Duchrow, 237, n.242.

⁶⁵ Cf. e.g. conf. XIII.15.18; also Faust. 15.6, 32.18. Also compare conf. XIII.13.14 with earlier exp.Rom. 53.7 for Augustine's more eschatological interpretation of 1 John 3:2, a passage often quoted in close connection with 1 Cor. 13:12 (e.g. trin. XV.8.14-9.16).

⁶⁶ Cf. DDC. I.4.4; also conf. XIII.13.14, catech.rud. 25.47. 2 Cor. 5:6-7 too is often associated with 1 Cor. 13:12; cf. e.g. conf. X.5.7. Also on the theme "*ad patriam*", see DDC.I.10.10, conf. XII.16.23.

⁶⁷ Compare his earlier remarks (Acad. I.1.1, III.2.3; Sol. I.1.5) and his later remarks (DDC. I.4.4-10.10, conf. XII.16.23).

two different attitudes towards the supreme good: the love of God and the love of temporal goods. Human society is a battleground, as it were, between two communities, between the heavenly *civitas* and the diabolic *civitas*, or, according to the Old Testament allegory, between Jerusalem and Babylon.⁶⁸ In *De catechizandis rudibus* (17.28-21.51) Augustine writes:

Thus there are two cities, one of the wicked and the other of the holy, which are carried down from the beginning of the human race even to the end of the world; now [they are] comingled (*permixta*) in their bodies, but separated in their wills, but in the day of Judgement destined to be separated also in their bodies. (19.31)

Particularly noteworthy is the description of the nature of the interim world as a “mixture” (*permixta*) of the two cities. In *De vera religione* (27.50) we have noted the first hint of the idea of historical commingling in allusion to Matt. 3:12 and 13:24-30 under Tyconian influence.⁶⁹ However, the intellectualist assumption in the passage has been totally denied by the time *De catechizandis rudibus* is written around 399/400. The commingling of the two kinds of people are now doubly conditioned: existentially as the incessant conflict between the flesh and the spirit in one person; eschatologically as the suspended tension between now and then. Mediated by Rom. 7:25,⁷⁰ the two kinds of duality are synthesised in a historical realisation—or, what may be termed as historical realism—that human reality is essentially a state of probation, in which the promise of the new aeon is not yet (*nondum*) fulfilled, and God’s pilgrims (*peregrini*) remain commingled (*permixti*) with the earthly people, until the the judgement already made—whether one is saved or damned—will finally be proclaimed and executed.

⁶⁸ See above, p. 124, n. 58. The contrast between Jerusalem and Babylon appears, e.g. in en.ps. 148.4, 9-10 and Faust. 12.36. Cf. Duchrow, 241, nn. 257, 258.

⁶⁹ See above, p. 123, n. 56.

⁷⁰ E.g. exp.Rom. 45-46.1-7, Q83. 66.3-7. Cf. Duchrow, 225-226. This insight into the existential conflict between two loves leads to Augustine’s anthropological dictum, “*parte iustus, parte peccator*”. Cf. e.g. en.ps. 140.15, serm. 154.7.9.

(2) Providence and the duality of order

The transformation of a cosmological into a historical worldview is best reflected in the key concept, *providentia*. Initially, Augustine identified providence with the order of nature, both as manifestations of God's will in the creation: providence, natural order (or law) and the eternal law were different synonyms for the same cosmic order (cf. Acad. I.1.1). Cosmic providence was to provide "divine medicine" for the salvation of the tainted soul, preparing the way of reason for the wise and the way of authority for the uneducated (cf. DVR. 24.45). The ultimate aim of salvation was simply the recovery of the lost order of creation. A similar ontological concern always remained in Augustine, who was convinced that providence provided the objective criteria of morality. However, by the late-390s, he could no longer subscribe to a view of providence as merely cosmic and creational. The incomprehensibility of divine order, the imperfectibility of human morality, the subjectivity of human order and the relativity of the interim world—all these conditions disproved the validity of the old concept of cosmic providence. The historical conditions of human life must be distinguished from the natural creation-order, for the government of which providence was supposed to be responsible. Providence and its government, too, must be historically understood.

The *historicising* of providence originates in a redefinition of law.⁷¹ Augustine's earliest concept of law consisted of two tiers: the eternal law identified with natural order, and temporal laws as its distant and often distorted "shadows". The first hint of change can be observed in his treatment of temporal laws. Already in *De vera religione* Augustine was already inclined to dissociate the eternal law from a temporal law on the ground that the latter might or might not be modelled after the former. A few years later in *De utilitate credendi* Augustine radicalised the qualitative difference, describing temporal laws as generally coercive, employing fear of punishment (3.9); but in the church, while useful for protecting the Catholic faith (7.18), it is implied that coercive temporal laws were not necessary because Christian love already fulfilled the requirement of laws

⁷¹ On this matter, see Markus (1988), 86-93; cf. also Cranz, 300-301. See above, pp. 85-90.

(7.19). By the mid-390s, however, Augustine ceased to grant Christians any exemption from the obligation to temporal laws, as he realised the historical limitations of ecclesiastical life.⁷²

Only in the late 390s did Augustine come to see the remaining inconsistency in his theory of law: still identified with natural order, the integrity of the eternal law was undermined, since it implied God's vulnerability to human precariousness and subversion. The first reference to a distinction between the order of creation and the order of justice can be found in *Confessiones* (I.10.16), where, in an almost passing remark, Augustine differentiates God's creational ordering of nature from his punitive ordering of sins: "God is the creator (*creator*) and ordainer (*ordinator*) of all natures", but only the "ordainer of sins". The intention is quite clear: to deny any suggestion of God's liability for human sins, while defending the absolute power and righteousness of his government. Although a familiar concern may be traced back in *De ordine*, the quoted remark reveals a more conscious differentiation between God's government over human affairs and over nature.⁷³

What Augustine lacked at the time of writing *Confessiones* was a concept of eschatological duality which could explain God's special government of human affairs. And in *Contra Faustum* Augustine finally severs the original association between the eternal law and natural order: "The eternal law is divine reason or the will of God commanding to preserve natural order [and] forbidding [any] perversion" (22.27, *passim*).⁷⁴ The new formula finely adjusts the threefold relationship between the eternal law, natural order and human order. On the one hand, as Markus points out,⁷⁵ natural order is no longer viewed as identical with the eternal law, but rather as its object. Far removed from the earlier cosmological view of divine *logos*, Augustine has come to separate the created artefact from the creative artifice itself. On the other hand, the formula also has

⁷² Cf. DDC. II.39.58, III.13.21; *conf.* III.8.15.

⁷³ Elsewhere in *Confessiones* Augustine fails to exploit the transformative potential of the distinction between two providential order.

⁷⁴ Cf. also Faust. 22.28-30, 43, 61, 73, 78.

⁷⁵ Markus (1988), 90-91; also Cranz, 301.

a potential, though implicit, to allow Augustine to embrace human actions, even those *contra naturam*, within the scope of the eternal law. In 22.74-76 he expounds on the justifiability of war in terms of right authority, just cause, soldiers' killing as a legitimate duty in the battle, and the right inward disposition in the killing. On authority (22.75) Augustine can still write that "the natural order, which seeks the peace of mankind, ordains that the king should have the power of undertaking war if he thinks it advisable"; but he immediately clarifies his point, stating that "there is no power but of God, who either orders or permits" (cf. Rom. 13:1). In other words, the king can wage a war justly, if God deems it necessary in order to protect the natural order, namely, "the peace and safety of the community" (22.75). God's government is not only cosmic but also historical, maintaining the natural order of creation, even through unnatural human actions.

In the new distinction between the eternal law, a temporal law, and natural order Augustine has found the final key to reformulating his conception of providence, as he states in *Contra Faustum* 22.78:

[...] in the view of *divine providence*, which pervades all things from the highest to the lowest, time can neither add anything nor take away; but all things go, or come, or remain *according to the order of nature or desert* in each separate case, while *a right will of man is united with the divine law*, and unruly passion is restrained by the order of divine law; so that a good man wills only what is commanded, and a bad man can do only what is permitted, at the same time that he is punished for what he wills to do unjustly. (Italics added)

In this way, divine providence is the putting of the eternal law in operation—the ordering of all things through two separate channels: one is nature and the other, the human will.

The duality of providential government—or what Markus calls the "dual order of providence"⁷⁶—was later elaborated in his voluminous commentary on Genesis. According to a

⁷⁶ Markus (1988), 92.

theory of “the twofold operation of providence”.⁷⁷ The two realms of nature and of the human will are uniquely distinct, though not totally separate, and yet equally subject to God’s will. Firstly, the sphere of will is distinct from the sphere of nature in that human institutions (such as language, culture, and technology) are products of will and consent, and are ultimately subject to “volitional providence” (*providentia voluntaria*), instead of “natural providence” (*providentia naturalis*). But the two realms are not completely dissociated. Even in a wicked man the perverse relationship between body and soul is governed by “the power of nature” to live, to sustain his existential order, while urging his “power of will” to acquire commodities necessary for his life (*ibid.*). In this way, providence is now understood to accommodate even unnatural human deeds and actions alongside the order of nature: God “creates natures by his goodness and orders wills by his power” to preserve the whole world of creation through different kinds of subordination (23.44). For natural subordination of a lesser to a greater being is simply ontological, based on a hierarchically determined value innate in each; in contrast, subordination among rational beings concerns “power” and “justice”: a man’s subjection to another, which is a result of agreement in some way or other, is wrong in the light of the order of nature, but still justifiable in the light of the eternal law (*cf.* also 24.45). Human morality is to be judged differently from a purely ontological perspective of the creation-order.

(3) An ethics of dual order

The concept of dual providence culminated in the transformation of Augustine’s doctrine of order in the 390s. It was a process of the *historicising* of the ontological doctrine of order, through which his understanding of human order, existential as well as social, was reformulated outside the cosmic context of the creation-order, and within the interim world characterised by unresolvable

⁷⁷ Gen. ad litt. VIII.9.17; also 12.25, 19.38, 23.44, 24.45; IX.14.24, 15.28. Augustine embarked on this long commentary probably around 401, and wrote Book VIII by 410.

tensions between nature and sin, between righteousness and evil, and between salvation and damnation. God's providential government became the ordering (*ordinatio*) of the two disparate spheres, preserving the creation-order by accommodating human order to the limitations and functions of historical reality.

Human morality is, after all, not reducible to a matter of natural existence (although the ontological concern remained an important factor in Augustine's ethical thinking). Moral action originates in the volitional decision (concerning intention and agreement) of the moral agent within the context of the relativity and instrumentality of human institutions, which are ultimately governed by what we would like to call *historical providence*.⁷⁸ At the same time, since, from the divine ordainer's point of view, the two kinds of providential order are not separate but integral parts of his government and justice, there arises a strong argument for another moral criterion: human order may and should be used in accordance with God's will, particularly by the earthly "pilgrims" of the heavenly kingdom. For them the interim world is a legitimate instrument for their government of the subordinate creatures (descending instrumentality) as well as for their obedience to divine justice as much as is permitted by their historical existence (ascending instrumentality). We can discern in the concept of dual providence three moral criteria to evaluate the use of the world: <1> an ontological assessment from the viewpoint of *secundum/contra natura*; <2> a historical assessment from the viewpoint of the relative usefulness for the maintenance of human society; <3> an eschatological assessment from the viewpoint of the ultimate usefulness for bearing witness to God's justice in his dual government of nature and human will.

Out of the second and the third criteria emerges a new ethical horizon: a hitherto unarticulated sphere of "relative" justice, appropriate and legitimate—though not necessarily natural—for the maintenance of human society at large, which includes both godly and ungodly people. The new orientation in Augustine's political thought is most vividly demonstrated in his

⁷⁸ The earliest premature form of historical providence may be found in DDC. II, esp. 40.60.

understanding of human judgement, especially of political authority. First, eschatological duality dictates that any form of human authority is essentially an imperfect imitation of divine authority, prone to perversion caused by “pride”.⁷⁹ Within its relativity political authority is to be legitimatised, no longer in terms of the cosmic analogy of government, but of the threefold providential instrumentality—ontological, historical, eschatological: God uses political authority to accommodate man’s social nature to historical conditions, and to maintain human society for the time being, so that heavenly citizens can use it in the love of God as part of their social “duties” of neighbour-love.⁸⁰

In *Ad Simplicianum* (I.2.16) Augustine defines human justice as an “image” or “vestige” of divine justice. Earlier, the realm of human justice was called “servile justice”, which might or might not derive from God’s; in any case, it was deemed unnecessary for the wise who could keep divine precepts.⁸¹ In contrast, by mid-390s, Augustine learned of the moral imperfectibility and instrumentality of the interim world, redefining the “vestige” of divine justice less ontologically and more historically as a limited provision for the social ordering of fallen men. In *Confessiones* (III.7.13-9.17) Augustine conceptualises “relative” justice more effectively, particularly concerning the inherent tension between the two kinds of justice, the argument which corresponds to the parallel distinction we have mentioned above between God’s ordering of nature and of sins (cf. I.10.16). First, he distinguishes “moral customs” (*consuetudines, mores*), which are time-bound and changeable, from the eternal unchangeable “justice” (7.13-14). Ultimately, Christians’ allegiance lies with the latter, even though it may contradict the requirement of the former; still, “human society is just that serves [God]” (9.17). Nevertheless, human customs are legitimate institutions authorised by divine justice, which “distribut[es] and command[s] what is proper for each era” (7.13-14). Even if a ruler commands what is prohibited by God, “it is a general agreement of human societies to obey their rulers” (8.15). The Christian theory of justice is concerned not solely with whether to obey

⁷⁹ Compare DVR. 45.84 & mus. VI.13.40-41 with DDC. III.15.23 & conf. III.8.16 and X.36.59.

⁸⁰ See conf. X.36.59 for an expression “*humana societatis officia*”; cf. also DMEC. I.26.49.

⁸¹ DVR.26.49; on Christians’ exemption from human justice, see util.cred. 7.18, nat.bon. 13.15. Cf. above, p. 128.

human or divine authority, but, just as importantly, how much obedience is due to each in a given circumstance.

The idea of relative justice is biblically substantiated by an eschatological reinterpretation of Rom. 13. Christian obedience to the authorities is no longer described in terms of the ontological nature, or “bodily needs”, of the temporal life, but as a means for obedience to God, who is the source of all order and authority.⁸² Political authority which derives from God is less a cosmic necessity than a historical instrument of divine justice. Its function lies in protecting customs and agreements, and establishing and/or enforcing laws; the subjects are to obey the human authorities just as “parts” agree with “the whole” (conf. III.8.15, 16). Although the relationship between political authority and civic obedience is still described in the characteristically ontological way, Augustine’s observation has begun to be based on historical and eschatological realities. Historically, political authority and obedience is conditioned differently in each socio-cultural institution; it is not a cosmic constraint peculiar to the lower material world, but universally observed in the world of fallen men. And, eschatologically, the Christian teaching of political obedience amounts to an acknowledgement of its divine origin and providential instrumentality.

Having established the theoretical basis of political authority, Augustine now assigns it two key functions: judgment and punishment.⁸³ First and foremost, the objective of political authority lies in maintenance of civic “peace” and “order”, whether it is for bodily needs only (as he insisted earlier) or for the general security necessary for human society as well as for the spiritual life of

⁸² For the ontological exegesis of Rom. 13:1 in the 390s, cf. e.g. exp.Rom. 72.1-74.3, exp.Gal. 28. However, Augustine came to understand Rom. 13:1 more faithfully to the Latin text (“*quae autem sunt a deo ordinata sunt*”) than his earlier, characteristically ontological misquotation in DVR. 41.77 (“*omnis ordo est a deo*”; cf. Retr.1.13:8); cf. Simplific. II.1.4, Faust. 22.75, nat.bon. 32; catech.rud. 21.37. Another important biblical text on political authority is 1 Tim. 2:1, the prayer for earthly kings and magistrates: cf. Faust. 12.36, catech.rud. 21.37. Cf. Cranz, 302, 310-11; Markus (1988), 81-82.

⁸³ Among the fragmentary and scattered remarks on the functions of political authority, the most substantial is *De sermone domini*, where he discusses <1> three degrees of liability (i.e. judgment, counsel and the last judgement) in an exegesis of Matt. 5:38-42 (I.9.24), <2> different degrees of justice (I.19.56-57), <3> Christian attitude towards punishment (I.20.63, 66), <4> the intention of action as the object of judgment (II.13.45-46, 18.60). As we shall see in the final chapter, these fragmentary thoughts at this stage eventually culminated in the “juridical” model of political authority envisaged in the later works, especially *De civitate dei*. See below, pp. 237-251.

Christians.⁸⁴ The political peace is based on the judicial power of the authorities to judge and punish wrong-doings within the legal system accepted by the society. In executing its judicial power, political authority must judge the intention rather than the act itself to decide the innocence or guilt of the accused (serm.dom. II.13.46).⁸⁵ From an eschatological point of view, however, human judgement is conditioned by its fallibility, since, as Augustine admits even in his chiliastic period, “nobody can look into another’s heart... no matter how thoroughly cleansed his eye may be” (ibid. II.25.82).⁸⁶

Within the limits of relativity Augustine analyses human judgement further from a biblical point of view to make some qualitative differentiation. For example, Augustine takes up Matt. 5:38-42 as a paradigm case of the Christian view of justice, describing it in terms of grades towards perfection (serm.dom. I.19.56-57): <1> to do evil to another without any injury inflicted; <2> to return greater injury than what is committed; <3> to retaliate with an equivalent injury; <4> to return lesser evil than the injury done; <5> to endure the injury (i.e., not to resist evil); <6> to be ready to receive even further evil (i.e., to turn the other cheek). Later, even when the “ladder” of perfection ceases to be plausible, Augustine would employ a similar distinction between moral anarchy, the Law, and Christ’s precepts, with an added emphasis on moral imperfectibility: the authority of the law represents the conventional jurisdiction based on human customs and laws, which is legitimate and good in itself and preferred to lawlessness; the authority of Christ represents the higher, spiritual jurisdiction over sins which are beyond the capacity of human judgement.⁸⁷ Even under the law, furthermore, human judges may be able to appreciate the socio-cultural background of their legal system, namely to “to compare sensibly” the causes and purposes of their own customs and laws with those of previous ages or other cultures alien to them (conf. III.7.13).

⁸⁴ Compare the earlier (cf. DLA. I.15.31-33, exp.Rom. 72-74, exp.Gal. 28) and the later views (Faust. 12.36, 22.75 and catech.rud. 21.37) of political order and peace.

⁸⁵ Cf. also exp.Rom. 79.2-3, conf. III.9.17, Faust. 22.43.

⁸⁶ Cf. also serm.dom. II.19.64, Faust. 22.67.

⁸⁷ Cf. conf. III.9.17, Faust. 19.25.

The second feature of political authority is the “counsel”, or pronouncement of punishment: a punitive and corrective measure to maintain political peace and order. Having judged the accused as guilty, the authority must inflict the rightly measured punishment on the convicted.⁸⁸ When it comes to the actual proportion and execution of punishment, Augustine seems to stand in the Stoic-Senecan tradition of a theory of kingly *clementia*, insisting on the generosity and mercy of the judge.⁸⁹ However, whereas Seneca regards *clementia* or *amor hominum* theoretically as an affirmation of humanity (*humanitas*) and practically as the best means to promote “the good morals of the society”,⁹⁰ Augustine interprets Seneca’s humanitarian and utilitarian verification from two different angles. First, from an eschatological perspective, judges are advised to be merciful because their judgment may be as wrong as the crime committed: they too are human after all, bound by “common frailty”.⁹¹ The other point made for punitive clemency is the correctibility of criminals; for human judgment should care for things about which it has “corrective authority” (*potestas corrigendi*) to make the offender a better person.⁹² Hence the general rules of punishment: <1> to be “inflicted by one who really is endowed with authority”; <2> “as affectionately as a father would punish his little child”, out of “the love for the offender”, <3> with an intention “to make the offender happy by a correction, rather than unhappy by a punishment”, <4> in case of failing to correct the offender, “to be ready at all events to tolerate calmly even further injuries done to him” (serm.dom. I.20.63). This is “the Christian mind” appropriate for the execution of punishment, moved by “compassion for the weakness of the offender” (ibid. 20.66).

Still, at this stage Augustine’s view of political authority was immature, compared with his later achievements. Especially lacking in his newly conceived eschatological ethics was a deeper and

⁸⁸ Cf. serm.dom. I.20.63, 66.

⁸⁹ On the Stoic concept of *clementia*, see e.g. Seneca, *De Clementia* I.3.3, 5.1-2, 13.4, 22.3. On Augustine’s plea for clemency and mercy, see e.g., serm.dom. I.20.63, 66, Faust. 5.8

⁹⁰ *Clementia* I.22.3. On the juridical practicality of *clementia*, see also his claim of utility in ibid. I.10.2, 19.6-8, 22.1, 23.1, and his list of specific definitions in II.3.1-2; on the three aims of punishment, I.22.1. Cf. M. T. Griffin, *Seneca: A Philosopher in Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 157-9, 163-4.

⁹¹ Serm.dom. II.19.64, 25.82.

⁹² Conf. XIII.23.34; cf. exp.Rom. 80.5.

more comprehensive understanding of the political implications of the Old Testament passages on law, judgment and authority; also missing was a more articulate reflection on his pastoral involvement with social and political affairs concerning daily matters in his diocese as well as the Donatist controversy. Above all, the paradigm of relative justice was underdeveloped especially in terms of providential instrumentality: he was yet to discover the inherent and intricate tension between the ontological, the historical, and the eschatological aspects of providential order.

The most telling indication of this remaining ambiguity was the idea of *tempora Christiana*: the Christianised Roman Empire as a representation of a special stage in salvation history.⁹³ For all his thought-experiments in the 390s Augustine at the turn of the century still shared a peculiarly Constantinian-Theodosian view of the divine Rome with a wide circle of the patristic tradition, for instance, Eusebius, Lactantius and Ambrose. Augustine was confident and optimistic about the role of the Empire as the protector of the catholic faith and about Christ's guidance for it, as best exemplified by the swift extinction of paganism by Christian Emperors (Faust. 12.4, 13.7).⁹⁴ The central to the idea of the "Christian era" was a conviction about the imminent fulfilment of God's promise.⁹⁵ Though the earlier chiliastic inclination was virtually discarded, the qualitative differentiation between historical and eschatological instrumentality was obscured by the sanction of the Roman Empire as a divine institution of salvation.

In less than a decade, in 410, Augustine was to witness another historic event, but this time a devastating one: the sack of Rome the Eternal City. With the end of the myth of *pax Romana* Augustine's worldview would undergo another transformation for the third time. The concept of dual

⁹³ Cf. Markus (1988), 27-29; also Cranz, 305; Brown, "St. Augustine's Attitude to Religious Coercion", *JRS* 54 (1964), 110.

⁹⁴ On Christ's guidance of earthly kings, cf. also catech.rud. 21.37. Augustine repeatedly refers to the positive contribution of the Christianised Empire to the expulsion of paganism: cf. en.ps. 6.13, for the earliest account; also Faust. 22.60, 76, cons.ev. I.13.20 & 34.52, en.ps. 62.1 & 149.7. As we shall see in the next chapter, the reason for Augustine's silence about the virtual extinction of heresy (outside Roman Africa) by the beginning of the fifth century must have much to do with the Donatist controversy with which he had been involved since the ordination.

⁹⁵ Most remarkably in catech.rud. 3.5. Biblical passages quoted in relation to this point are Ps. 71[72]:11, Jer. 16:19, Isa. 2:11. Cf. Faust. 13.7, 9, 22.38, 76; cons.ev. I.26.40-41. On this point, see Markus (1988), 29-40. See below, p. 185, n. 121. On the far cry of the earlier chiliastic attitude on the swift coming of Christ, cf. bon.conj. 10.10.

providence would retreat into the background; the eschatological historiography of the two cities would take over as the main framework of the monumental work, *De civitate dei*. The Roman Empire would be thoroughly desacralised, and all human institutions even further relativised. The citizens of the city of God on pilgrimage would be instructed precisely how to evaluate and deal with the earthly society from a thoroughly eschatological viewpoint. And, at last, in place of *ordo*, Augustine would come to use *pax* as the “flagship”-concept of his political philosophy.

However, the transition from the doctrine of order to a doctrine of peace still requires much explanation. Where does “peace” come from? How is “peace” related to “order”? What exactly is wrong with “order”? The clue lies in the Donatist controversy, through which Augustine develops a highly refined social theory in terms of “ecclesiastical peace”.

CHAPTER FOUR

Pax Ecclesiae:

the Donatist Controversy and Augustine's Ecclesiastical Theory of Peace

1. From *Ordo* to *Pax*: ontological and biblical peace

In the preceding chapters we have examined how Augustine's doctrine of order was formed within a Neoplatonic cosmology and how it was subsequently transformed into a distinctively Christian concept of providence. *Ordo* began as an ontological concept denoting a comprehensive worldview within which all philosophical and moral problems—the creation of the world and the soul, the goodness and beauty of living creatures, the origin and nature of evil, the sociality and destiny of mankind—can be answered. However, by the late 390s when Augustine wrote *Confessiones* and *Contra Faustum*, he had virtually discarded this worldview of a bipolar universe (eternity-*versus*-temporality, intellectuality-*versus*-materiality). Instead, the order of the world had come to be understood *historically*: it was a world after the fall, an “interim” lying between creation and salvation, still governed by divine providence, though in a way totally distinct from its government of the world of nature.

Accordingly, Augustine transformed his idea of the ordering of man, both existentially and morally understood. The existence of man was inherently paradoxical, torn between his created nature and his fallen nature; so also was his moral activity, which naturally sought what was best for himself, but often ended up with a perverse outcome. This new insight forced Augustine to reconsider his earlier confidence in the power of rigorous intellectual training to purify the tainted soul. The “order of love” (*ordo amoris*) was no longer a matter of restoring the disturbed *acies mentis* through the order of academic disciplines. It was conditioned by the imperfectibility and relativity of interim history, and depended less on the merit of human will than on the salvific work

of grace. In effect, Augustine's new ethics of order acquired a threefold criterion of value: <1> whether something was in accord with creation and nature (the ontological criterion), <2> whether it was permissible by the standards of human custom and necessity (the historical criterion, which scholars often refer to as "relative justice"), and <3> whether it was finally authorised by the destiny of the people of God (the eschatological criterion, already present in Augustine's thought though not so prominent as it would become).

Nevertheless, the culmination of Augustine's reflections on *ordo* marked only one point in the development of his moral and political theology. In the second half of the 390s, as the theorising of dual order reached its completion, there emerged another flagship-concept, *pax*. At first, *pax* was merely a synonym for *ordo* or, more precisely, for *tranquillitas* (the perfectly ordered state of a being); soon, however, through the influence of his exegetical work, it began to acquire connotations of the biblical use of peace (*shalom*, *eirene*). But it was the Donatist controversy over the unity of the church that offered Augustine the opportunity to formulate an ecclesiastical theory of peace in connection (albeit still prematurely) with his revised doctrine of order. This development poses two questions: precisely on what grounds is *pax* preferred to *ordo*? and what becomes of *ordo* when *pax* takes over the foreground?

In search of a satisfactory answer to these questions, we will examine the first two decades (391-411) of Augustine's thirty-year involvement in the Donatist controversy. Our aim is to demonstrate:-

- <1> Throughout its development *pax* remained interrelated with *ordo* at an ontological level, that is, when creation and nature were concerned;
- <2> However, for most of the 390s Augustine's view of *pax* was deepened particularly by his biblical exegesis, though it generally remained within the framework of the doctrine of dual providence;

<3> At the height of the Donatist controversy in the first decade of the fifth century Augustine's discussion of peace was fundamentally ecclesiological, dealing with the nature and government of the church;

<4> After 405 Augustine's "change of mind" about religious coercion is best understood from the perspective of the ecclesiastical pedagogy (*disciplina*) of peacemaking.

On this account Augustine's concept of peace is at the same time ontological, biblical and ecclesiological. The transformed doctrine of order and the concept of dual providence appear to have been sidelined; however, as will emerge, Augustine subtly incorporates the framework of *ordo*-doctrine in his theory of *pax ecclesiae*, thus paving the way for his later, political concept of peace as *ordinata concordia* in Book XIX of *De civitate dei*.

(1) Ontological peace

At first *pax* was just another ontological concept, subordinate, along with other concepts, to the dominant concept of *ordo*; it signified an indestructible good innate in every existence and nature.¹ Augustine once ridiculed a Manichaean myth about the "princes of darkness", arguing that the princes could not be wholly evil as the Manichaeans believed, since they would always retain a degree of created goodness insofar as they existed and possessed traces of beauty, measure and harmony, an order of rule and obedience among their bodily parts, or simply an "*ordinata pax*" or "*ordo pacatus*".² From this relatively inconspicuous beginning compared with other terms (such as *unitas*, *forma*, *concordia*, *tranquillitas* and *quies*) *pax* began to attract Augustine's attention in the 390s. Its abundant biblical use assisted the three thought-experiments through which he reformulated the doctrine of order. In Augustine's hands, ontological peace, like *ordo* itself, has a twofold

¹ Cf. DVR. 11.21, ep.fund. 33.36, nat.bon. 41.

² Cf. ep.fund. 30.33-31.34, nat.bon. 41.

meaning: cosmologically, peace is the plenitude of God's creation-order; existentially, it is the spiritual tranquillity and rest desired and achieved by a well-ordered soul.

As we have seen, the core teaching of Augustine's Neoplatonic Christianity is summarised in a passage loosely alluding to Rom. 13:1: "all order is from God" (*omnis ordo a deo est*, DVR. 41.77).³ Earlier in *De vera religione* (11.21) the ultimate authority of the creator is expressed in a similar way, but with *pax* replacing *ordo*: "A body has a certain peace in its form, without which it could not exist. Therefore He is the creator of the body from whom all peace is (*a quo pax omnis est*), who himself is the uncreated form and of all forms the most formly". Here the cosmological link between *pax* and *ordo* is perfectly clear. Peace denotes the completion or "plenitude" of the creation-order, where the smallest of all forms (*formae*) fulfils its destiny in adherence to the highest form (*forma*) of the creator.⁴ Later in *Confessiones* Augustine rephrases this ontological theme in an eschatological context in the form of a prayer:

O God our Lord, give us peace, for you have given us all things. Give us the peace of quietness, the peace of the Sabbath, peace without any evening. For in fact all this most beautiful order of things, however good, is to pass away when they have finished their due courses. Among them, indeed, are both the morning and the evening that were made. (conf. XIII.35.50)

This prayer for peace, which concludes a unique exegesis of the beginning of Genesis, reaffirms the goodness of the order of creation while pointing to the ultimate salvation of the soul in eternal life. The unwavering conviction that creation-order underlies peace runs, in a somewhat less obvious way, throughout Augustine's ecclesiology during the Donatist controversy.⁵

However, Augustine's use of an ontological conception of peace is more than merely cosmological: it includes the tranquil condition of mind characteristic of the original and perfected state of man. At the existential level the right ordering of man consists in the believer's "use" of the bodily senses in obedience to the love of God "to pacify his own nature" (DVR. 54.106). Peace here

³ See above, p. 133, n. 82.

⁴ Cf. "*pax plenaria*" in conf. X.30.42. In this way, as we shall see in the next section, peace is an attribute of God the creator, like *ordo* and *forma*. Cf. DVR. 55.112 and conf. V.12.22, IX.4.11; also conf. IX.2.2.

⁵ See below, sections 3 and 4, but here is one such example: the "unity" and "bond of peace" of the church is preserved by "the ordinance of God" (ep. 43.27).

is closely associated with other more frequently used terms, “tranquillity” (*tranquillitas*) and “rest” (*quies, quietudo*).⁶ Augustine’s initial idea of spiritual tranquillity and rest owes something to Stoic inspiration, particularly when defined as the absence of “emotional disturbance” (cf. Acad. I.8.23) or as a mind without “fear”, “lust” or “corruption” (DVR. 42.79, 52.101), without “trouble” (Mus. VI.5.13), or without “contention or adversity” (serm.dom. I.2.9). Peace is the state of contemplation for which the soul strives in its order of ascent; Augustine calls such a state “complete peace” (*pax omnis*) in conjunction with the promised vision of God in 1 Cor. 13:9 (DVR. 53.103).⁷

In the meantime, as a consequence of his ordination, Augustine became better acquainted with biblical passages on peace, and came to interpret this tranquil, contemplative “perfect” peace as the salvific gift of God’s grace. The first reference to such an idea in a biblical context appears in en.ps. 4.9, where Augustine touches upon “supreme peace” (*summa pax*) in connection with Ps. 4:8 (“In peace, together, I will sleep, and take rest”); and then, in his brief flirtation with chiasm in *De sermone domini*, he interprets Christ’s blessing upon the “peacemakers” as a message of “perfect peace” (*pax perfecta*), the highest spiritual condition attainable in the order of ascent.⁸ By the mid-390s *pax perfecta* is more unambiguously Christianised (if not yet fully understood eschatologically): true peace is distinguished from its worldly “image” or “trace”, and it is no longer deemed “attainable” before the final resurrection, either autonomously or even with the help of grace. The new view of perfect peace is most notably exemplified in Augustine’s four-period scheme of history inspired by Paul’s contrast between the Law and grace: *ante legem, sub lege, sub gratia*, and *in pace*.⁹ For all its salvific and gratuitous implications, however, throughout the 390s peace

⁶ On the tranquillity of the mind emphasised in other early works, Acad. I.8.23; DO. II.8.25; DLA. I.13.27, III.20.56, 22.64-65; DVR. 35.65; mus. VI.5.13-14.

⁷ Also in DMM. 13.32. It is one of the perfect virtues (alongside *iustitia* and *gaudium*) achieved in the kingdom of God (also in DVR. 44.82, Q83. 81.2). On peace and tranquillity in the order of the soul’s ascent, see also DQA. 35.79, DVR. 26.49, serm.dom. I.3.10.

⁸ Cf. serm.dom. I.2.9-4.11-12 & 19.56; II.6.23. In this connection, I suggest that serm. 347, for which no definite date is proposed (Verbraken, 146), may be inferred to belong in the 390s, possibly around 393-4, contemporary with *De sermone Domini*. For <1> it treats the beatitudes as an explicitly ontological ladder of spiritual progress to perfect peace; <2> it defines peace as the contemplative rest enjoyed by the wise (compare serm. 347.3 with serm.dom. I.2.9 & 4.11); <3> it describes each stage of the progress in similar terms (compare serm. 347.3 with serm.dom. I.3.10). Cf. E. Hill, whose note in his translation of the sermon suggests a much later date, “about 420”, without offering any reasons.

⁹ See above, pp. 101-104.

continues to be thought of in the context of the order of ascent. Even at the height of his campaign against the Donatists Augustine presupposes the basic ontological orientation in his ecclesiological use of the concept of peace; his readers and congregation will often be reminded of the meaning of Christian peace as first and foremost the relative order and rest to be sought within the soul through rightly ordered love for God, self and neighbour, which leads at last to eternal enjoyment of the vision of God.¹⁰

There are, however, even at this period the beginnings of a social dimension to the ontological account of peace. On the one hand, peace, as a contemplative and otherworldly orientation generally operates in a social context as a restrictive principle which limits, rather than encourages, involvement in the life of action (cf. DMEC. 27.53-54); *pax* in a social life is closely associated with the *vita quieta* at the monastery (cf. ep. 48.2). On the other hand, Augustine already regards peace as the horizon of social life: both “tranquillity” and “peaceful life” (*pacata vita*) are the goal of *ordo vitae* for the general public (DO. II.8.25); temporal laws protecting necessary goods such as money and private property are justified for the sake of “peace and human society” (DLA. I.15.32); and maintenance of peace is the essential duty of kings assigned by the order of providence (cf. Faust. 22.75).¹¹ Particularly notable in relation to future developments is the emergence of the idea of “love of peace”. Augustine testifies that love of peace was one of the themes explored in his very first book, *De pulcro et apto*: “to love peace in virtue”, while shunning discord in vice (conf. IV.15.24). But the contrast between virtue and vice, between peace and discord, is essentially existential and implicitly cosmological, and there is nothing to suggest that Augustine understood *virtus* and *pax* as social qualities at that time. Love of peace is also touched upon in *De vera religione* (53.103), where Augustine describes “*pax omnis*” as a gift promised to those who “love only truth in thought, only peace in action, and only health in body”. Truth, peace and health are all natural goods, though ontologically differentiated according to the corresponding mode of human

¹⁰ The existential order of peace is also mentioned in his later writings: cf. ep. 127.5; serm. 53A.12. On the salvific gift of eternal peace as contemplative life, cf. epp. 96.1, 127.5, 147.34; serm. 168.2.

¹¹ Cf. also catech.rud. 16.25, 21.37.

existence, i.e. bodily, rational and affective; and by implication peace is a *social* good sought after in the life of action. In these fragmentary reflections Augustine merely touches upon love of peace, which will need further development in a fundamentally different context before it can become a central social principle in Augustine's social thinking.

(2) Biblical peace

It was Augustine's ordination and subsequent immersion in the task of exegesis that spurred his growing interest in the concept of peace, which would otherwise have remained a rather insignificant by-product of the doctrine of order. In fact, references to *pax* increased dramatically in the early 390s in stark contrast with this infrequency in his earlier works. The main sources were the Psalms, Matt. 5:9 (Christ's blessing upon the peacemakers), Lk. 2:14 ("on earth peace to men of good will") and Jn. 14:27 (peace as Christ's parting gift).¹² Consequently, upon the ontological foundation Augustine built a multifaceted, biblical concept of peace, at once Christological, eschatological, ethical, socio-political and ecclesiastical.

The theoretical basis, in the first place, derives from his ontological worldview supported by several scriptural passages. We have observed Augustine's use of a loose allusion to Rom. 13:1. Lk. 2:14 also articulates both cosmic and existential aspects: God's gift of "peace to men of good will" not only supports Augustine's early emphasis on the power of the will, but affirms the justice of the ordering of divine providence.¹³ The cosmological perspective may be detected in the above-quoted prayer for peace in *Confessiones* (XIII.35.50): the prayer begins with a sentence ("O Lord God, give peace to us"), which strongly echoes, as some scholars point out, Is. 26:12 ("O Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us"), and less obviously Num. 6:26 ("The Lord lift up his countenance upon you,

¹² For references to the psalms, cf. e.g. en.ps. 4.9 and conf. IX.4.11 (on Ps. 4:9[8]); en.ps. 28.11 (on Ps. 29[30]:11); Faust. 13.16 (on Ps. 120[121]:7); ibid. 19.28 (on Ps.120[121]:6). On Matt.5:9, cf. serm.dom. I.2.9 & 4.11 & II.25.85, conf. XI.1.1, Faust. 5.7 & 22.52. On Lk. 2:14, cf. (DMM. 7.10,) Q83. 27 & 68.5, serm.dom. I.2.9 & II.6.21, exp.Rom. 13-18.13. On Jn. 14:27, cf. en.ps. 28.11, inch.exp.Rom. 8.3, Q83. 75.1.

¹³ Cf. esp. DMM. 7.10; also Q83. 27. Augustine's early existential morality is also supported by Rom. 14:17 in DMM. 14.32, DVR. 44.82.

and give you peace”) and 2 Thess. 3:16 (“Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways”).¹⁴ The existential perspective finds support from Ps. 4:9[8] (“In peace I will both lie down and sleep”) and Matt. 5:9 in addition to Lk. 2:14, all in connection with the perfect peace to be achieved in the well-ordered man.¹⁵

A decisive conceptual development, linked to the formation of the theology of grace, is found in Augustine’s increasingly Christological interpretation of *pax*. We find peace identified as <1> an essential attribute of God, <2> a Trinitarian work of grace, and, most importantly, <3> a salvific gift of Christ. In Book IX of *Confessiones*, Augustine twice describes peace as a divine attribute, alluding to the main theme (“meditation of Thy law”) of Ps. 118[119]:70 (IX.2.2) and recalling the impact of Ps. 4:9[8] in his Cassiciacum days (IX.4.11).¹⁶ The theocentric definition of peace is also explored from a Trinitarian point of view in various sections in the unfinished exposition of Paul’s *Epistle to the Romans*. For instance, in two chapters (chs. 11-12), Augustine compares Paul’s greeting in Rom. 1:7 with other apostolic greetings. The precise wording of the verse (“grace and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ”) is understood as a testimony to Paul’s Trinitarian faith, because Paul must be using grace and peace to refer to the Holy Spirit, and all three are “God’s gift”: “For grace, which frees us from sin, and peace, which reconciles us to God, are given to men only through the Holy Spirit” (inch.exp.Rom. 11.1-2).¹⁷ Elsewhere in the same work, Augustine refers to grace and peace as the gift of God through the Holy Spirit; they represent reconciliation to God (cf. *ibid.* 8.5, 14.1 and 23.6) and the forgiveness of sins (cf. 22.4, 23.6).

In this Trinitarian context Augustine’s biblical concept of peace takes a decisively Christological turn. For Christ alone can mediate the gift of God to sinful men: Christ is the Lord

¹⁴ See J. J. O’Donnell, *Augustine: Confessions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), III, 418.

¹⁵ Ps. 4:9[8] is cited in en.ps. 4.9 (the text is reconstructed, e.g. by O’Donnell (1992), III, 91-94).

¹⁶ This latter passage is to be read in the context of IX.4.7-12, which as a whole comprises a small psalm-exegesis. The interpretation of Ps. 4:9[8] is clearly more theocentric than that in en.ps. 4.9. On God as peace, compare DVR. 55.113 and conf. IX.4.11; and for God’s peace, compare inch.exp.Rom. 8.3 with conf. IX.2.2.

¹⁷ Similarly interpreted in a Trinitarian sense are other apostolic greetings in 1 Pet. 1:2 (grace and peace), 2 Pet. 1:2 (grace and peace), 2 Jn. 1:3 (grace, mercy and peace), Jd. 1:1-2 (mercy, peace and love), together with 1 Jn. 1:3, 3 Jn. 1:1 and Jms. 1:1 which mention peace only implicitly, because “greetings (*salus*) can exist only through the gift of God, wherein is also grace and peace” (inch.exp.Rom. 12.9; cf. 12.1-8).

and the giver of peace (cf. *inch.exp.Rom.* 22, 23). In *en.ps.* 28.11, written slightly earlier than *Expositio incohata Epistulae ad Romanos*, Augustine refers to Ps. 28[29]:11 (“The Lord will bless His people in peace”), first distinguishing the peace promised there from the “peace in this world” referred to in Jn. 16:33, and then specifying Christ as the Lord and giver of peace described in Jn. 14:27 (“My peace I give unto you, My peace I leave with you”). In *Epistulae ad Romanos incohata expositio* Augustine expresses the peace of Christ’s kingdom with the simple phrase, “*pax Christi*”; only here can one receive the true forgiveness of sins, the true reconciliation to God and the true salvation in eternal life.¹⁸ The peace of Christ’s kingdom can be also found in reference to Lk. 2:14 (cf. *serm.* 70.3), and to Eph. 2:14 (“He is our peace”) which will serve later as one of the key passages in Augustine’s ecclesiology (cf. *serm.* 89.4, *Faust.* 22.76). Furthermore, the peace of Christ’s kingdom is interpreted politically with reference to Ps. 71[72]:11 (“All the kings of the earth shall bow down to Him; all nations shall serve Him”) as a prophecy of the coming of the Christian empire (cf. *Faust.* 13.7, 22.76).

Moreover, both ontological and Christological aspects are analysed from the pivotal perspective of eschatology. As we have seen, except for a brief chiliastic period in 393/4 *pax perfecta* always means the *ordo hominis* completed by grace in salvation, but Augustine becomes increasingly emphatic in distinguishing the final state of peace from intermediate degrees of peace—intermediate no longer merely in terms of perfection, but more fundamentally in terms of time. Perfect peace is not temporal but eternal, not of this world but otherworldly; it follows the resurrection of the body and the last judgement.¹⁹ In this eschatological reinterpretation, the ontological implication of Lk. 2:14 is significantly transformed: the earthly peace Christ promises to men of good will may still suppose cosmic government and the right ordering of man, but it simply remains imperfectible by the human will within the boundaries of human history.²⁰ Eschatological

¹⁸ For *pax Christi*, see esp. *inch.exp.Rom.* 18.12, 23.12.

¹⁹ Cf. *serm.dom.* I.19.56, *exp.Rom.* 51.1-3, Q83. 66.6-7.

²⁰ Compare Augustine’s treatment of Lk. 2:14 in Q83. 68.5 and *exp.Rom.* 13-18.13 with his earlier treatment in DMM. 7.10, Q83. 27, *serm.dom.* I.2.9.

peace is vividly described in the prophetic image of Jerusalem, which is also called “Sion” (*speculatio*)—or “*visio pacis*”²¹ of the heavenly society of angels and saints, portrayed in sharp contrast to the city of “confusion”, Babylon. The “peace of Jerusalem” is the “weight” (*pondus*) of our souls, our destiny where heavenly intellects dwell in peace (conf. XIII. 9.10); it is “the fatherland of peace”, the land of promise where the peace of eternal life abounds (ibid. VII.21-27).²²

As an ethical consequence, biblical peace is now understood to command a peculiarly Christian moral life, in which on the one hand the moral possibilities are relativised while on the other a measure of order is still to be pursued. The seventh beatitude, the blessing upon the peacemakers, is a command to be obeyed within the confines of the imperfectibility and relativity of earthly life. The historical reality of human morality is symbolised by the “commingling” (*permixtum*) of two societies, biblically explored through Christ’s parables of the wheat and the chaff in Mt. 13:24-30 (cf. ep. 43.21-22) and Lk. 3:17 (cf. ep. 23.6).²³ In catech.rud. 21.37 Augustine draws on another important passage: the “city of Jerusalem” is mingled with the “city of Babylon” till the end of time and, as Jeremiah prophesies in Jer. 29:7 (“for in its [the city] peace you will find your peace”), God’s people are to lead their life in the peace provided by the kings of this world. That is why Christians are instructed to obey higher powers (Rom. 13.1) and to pray for them (1 Tim. 2:1-2). In other words, from the perspective of eschatological peace, earthly peace can be described as “pilgrims’ peace”: Christian moral life is like a pilgrimage of peacemaking; “in Christ” the pilgrim leads “two lives” simultaneously, the mortal life of action and the eternal life of contemplation.²⁴

²¹ Cf. en.ps. 9.12, 50.22, 64.2-4; also cath.rud. 20.36, DCD. XIX.11. On the exegetical background since Philo about *visio pacis*, see Duchrow, 235-237, nn. 238, 242.

²² For *patria pacis*, see conf. VII.21.27; also Jerusalem is called “*mater mea pax matris carissimae*” in conf. XII.16.23. For the use of Ps. 36[37]:11, see en.ps. 36.9, 11.

²³ Cf. e.g. epp. 43.21-22, and 23.6, respectively.

²⁴ “Pilgrim’s peace”, a notion typical of an increasingly eschatological thinking in the late-390s, is not exactly Augustine’s term, but see Faust. 12.36, where Augustine describes peace found in Babylon in relation to 1 Tim.2.2. In Faust. 13.16 he also talks about being “peaceful among them that hated peace” (Ps. 119[120]:7). On the “two lives in the body of Christ”, see ibid. 22.52.

Probably the least explored dimension of the biblical concept of peace is the socio-political one. Augustine's investigation of human sociality remained sporadic and fragmentary in his Neoplatonically inspired ontology until in the mid-390s he began to reflect seriously on two Christian themes—namely, the common destiny of mankind from the creation through the fall to the resurrection, and the Christian command of neighbour-love. However, even in *Contra Faustum* 22, which contains his most consciously socio-political arguments of the time, the theme of *pax* is touched on only in a few passages: the conjugal “peace and harmony” (19.26) or “the bond of peace” in marriage (22.61); the “peace of mankind” and “the peace and safety of community” as the prime objective of just war (22.74-75); “the peace of Christ” shared by Christian kings in accordance with divine providence (22.76). Despite the importance of these remarks as indications of Augustine's maturing social and political ideas, we must admit that the view of social peace at this time is scarcely supported by biblical references, the only exceptions being 1 Tim. 2:1-4 (the prayer for peace, used in association with Jeremiah's counsel of peacemaking among haters of peace in Jer. 29:7), and Eph. 2:14 (as a fulfilment of Ps. 71[72]:11, “All kings of the earth shall bow to Him, all nations shall serve him”).²⁵

Nevertheless, these underdeveloped reflections are compensated for by an emerging “theory” of Christian society in terms of “ecclesiastical peace”.²⁶ Augustine's concept of “ecclesiastical peace” includes not only the perfected state of the true (invisible) church, but also the earthly (visible) church in its still imperfect state. In one passage (Q83. 75.1) Augustine describes the peace of the earthly church as the divine “inheritance” of Christ shared by his “coheirs” (Rom. 8:17), “a peace of the church” (*pax ecclesiastica*) which we possess “in this life through faith in the [divine] dispensation of temporal [things]”; ecclesiastical peace is the eschatological gift promised by Christ *collectively* to all faithful followers (Jn. 14:27), to be fulfilled “at the end of the age” (1 Cor. 15:54).

²⁵ Faust. 22.76. Gradually, of course, Augustine uses the Scriptures more frequently in his discussion of social peace than before: for instance, his reference to Lk. 3:14 (John the Baptist blessing soldiers), along with Matt. 8:9-10 (Jesus blessing a soldier) and Matt. 22:21 (return to Caesar what is due to him), in his Christian justification of war; and his use of Rom. 13:1-7 to define peace and order as the prime objective of political authority. Cf. *ibid.* 22.74-75.

²⁶ The term *pax ecclesiae* appears as early as DVR. 6.11 in 388, and *pax ecclesiastica* also appears in *inch.exp.Rom.* 5.13 and Q83. 75 (c. 394/5).

Also in a sermon preached in 397 (serm. 101.5, 11), Augustine expounds Lk. 10:2-6 and places *pax* at the centre of Christian mission: to spread the gospel of peace to the world as “sons of peace”, paying heed to the danger of wrong, godless peace (cf. Jer. 8:11) and clinging to the peace of Christ promised to all men of good will (cf. Lk. 2:14).

Ecclesiastical peace gradually took shape in the anti-Donatist campaign in the second half of the 390s. In letters to Donatist bishops Augustine uses *pax* quite regularly in his earnest appeals for the “unity” of the church (ep. 43.6, 14, 23-24). Ecclesiastical peace is in essence reconciliation in Christ, who unites people of diverse opinions and persuasions. Eschatologically, however, reconciliatory peace remains imperfect, and this fact requires patience of all Christians towards one another. In due course, Augustine will find the message of reconciliatory peace expressed in Eph. 2:14 (Christ is “our peace, who has made us both one”), and the message of “peaceable endurance” in Eph. 4:2-3 (“supporting one another in charity, careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”).²⁷ These references to Lk. 2:14, Eph. 2:14 and Eph. 4:2-3 are only an embryonic sketch of the concept of ecclesiastical peace. But soon, in fact in a matter of a few years as the Donatist controversy intensifies and escalates, Augustine will successfully integrate other facets of biblical peace into a fully ecclesiological concept.

2. The Problem of Peace in the Donatist Controversy: historical background

Augustine’s involvement in the Donatist controversy began soon after his ordination in 391 and lasted until his last anti-Donatist treatise, *Contra Gaudentium* in 421. Out of this long battle against the schismatics emerged Augustine’s original theory of a Christian society, developed in order to restore the broken unity of the existing *ecclesia*; Augustine’s careful study of the history of the schism aimed at disentangling the complex issues involved, locating the common threads in the

²⁷ Cf. e.g. Faust. 22.76 and serm. 89.4 for Eph. 2:14; epp. 43.23, 44.11 for Eph. 4:3.

arguments of both sides, and integrating them with his own theological and moral concepts derived from the concept of dual order. The result was a uniquely Augustinian ecclesiology, with a “flagship”-concept of *pax ecclesiae* at its centre: “the peace of the church” was a theoretical synthesis of his multi-faceted but hitherto fragmentary reflections on biblical peace, drawn together within a comprehensive and coherent view of the nature, function and destiny of the church.

Here at this point, let us pause for a moment to survey the historical background of the Donatist controversy, which shaped Augustine’s ecclesiastical theory of peace and led him to justifying the so-called “religious coercion”. In this section we will <1> review the essential issues involved in the controversy, and <2> highlight how the problem of peace, among all issues, was treated in the controversy, most notably by Optatus of Milevis, whose deployment of *pax* in his anti-Donatist treatise *De schismate Donatistarum* (c. 384) may be regarded as a precursor of Augustinian peace.²⁸

²⁸ Important and interesting as it is, a full portrait of the controversy will not be given here. It suffices to note the outline of its historical development up to Augustine’s time, which can be divided into three stages:-

<1> The origin at the beginning of the fourth century, when the end of Diocletian’s great persecution (303-305) caused profound confusion and antagonism in the Christian community in North Africa, particularly Carthage and Numidia, concerning the allegation of “collaboration”—or *traditio* (surrender) as it was known then—committed by bishops and church officials;

<2> The development in the 310s and the 320s, when the initially local conflict grew bitter and extensive, involving the whole Roman Africa, and the imperial litigation by Constantine at two councils, at Lateran (30/09/313) and at Arles (01/08/31), both of which condemned Donatus and his party;

<3> Successive persecutions of Donatism from the mid-fourth century onwards, most notoriously that of the imperial notary Macarius under the auspices of Emperor Constans—the so-called *tempora Macariana* (347-348)—, while the Donatists remained defiant under the leadership of Donatus and his successor Parmenian, though with a mixed blessing, as they succeeded in obtaining an imperial favour, albeit briefly (361-363), from Julian the Apostate, but suffered from recurring internal conflicts (between Silvanus and Nundinarius in 320, between Parmenian and Rogatus in the mid-360s to 375, and between the new Donatist Bishop of Carthage, Primian, and Maximian in the 390s).

My argument in this section is largely indebted to a detailed and reliable research in W. H. C. Frend’s *The Donatist Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), though *without* subscribing to his underlying thesis that the religious differences between the two churches derived from the wider social and ethnic divisions in Roman North Africa (Frend, p. 11), the point which is critically made by P. R. L. Brown. See Brown (1969), 217 (n.4); also idem, “Religious Dissent in the Later Roman Empire: the case of North Africa”, *History* 46 (1961), 83-101. For the date of Optatus’ *De schismata Donatistarum*, I follow M. Edwards’ suggestion in his translation of the work, *Optatus: Against the Donatists* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997), xvi-xviii.

(1) Issues at the heart of the Donatist controversy

The Donatist controversy involved a wide range of intertwined issues: the facts concerning Caecilian's consecration, sacramental purity and rebaptism, biblical exegesis, interpretation of Cyprian's ecclesiology, violence, martyrdom and the relationship between the church and political authority. At the heart of all these issues lies the problem of *traditio*, in which we can distinguish four different aspects—historical, theological, ecclesiological and political. Historically, the Christian church under successive persecutions had always faced the dilemma whether and how the church should accommodate a collaborator or “lapsed” Christian (*lapsus*), having once condemned him for degrading the purity and integrity of the church. In this particular case it was almost impossible to judge fairly whether an act of *traditio* had been committed, particularly considering the time and circumstances of Diocletian's persecution. Nevertheless, the North African church was deeply rooted in the great tradition of confessors and martyrs led by Tertullian and Cyprian, who had fought and died for the faith in defiance of authority, thus nurturing a puritanical and often fanatical movement within their church. As scholars often point out, the controversy between the Donatists and their Catholic opponents was uniquely North African in its origin and development, to the extent that both sides shared common sources of information and inspiration such as Cyprian's *De lapsis* and *De unitate ecclesiae*.²⁹

However, as each camp attempted to discredit the other and prove its own legitimacy, the bitter local controversy of the North African church was transposed onto a theological and ecclesiological plane universally relevant to the entire Christian world. For the focal point of the Donatist criticism of *traditio* was a loss of purity of faith, both in the individual heart and in the sacramental existence of the church. Theologically at stake was nothing less than the doctrine of grace and sin: according to Donatism, the sign of grace was a “pure heart”, revealed in the strong will of one who persevered, whereas the *traditor* had lapsed back into sin, and, worst of all, invalidated any sacrament he conducted. Here is the characteristically Donatist twist to the doctrine

²⁹ Cf. Frend, 125-140; Markus (1988), 105-132.

of sacrament, concentrating almost exclusively on the inner state of the minister of the sacrament. Since baptism by the hand of a *traditor* was essentially heretical, rebaptism was demanded, following the custom in the time of Tertullian and Cyprian, for those who had been baptised improperly. Similarly, the communion was made holy and the consecration valid only if the ministers were proved to maintain holiness and purity, that is, to be beyond suspicion of a connection with *traditio*.³⁰ In short, the state of grace could be maintained, restored and perpetuated by the hand of untainted bishops, whereas an act of *traditio* would once and for all disqualify the agent from the sacred ministry, at least in theory.³¹

With the strong emphasis on the doctrine of sacrament, and especially on the spiritual quality of the ministers, Donatism was highly ecclesiological in its basic orientation, while retaining a very simple and underdeveloped doctrine of grace and sin, the weakness of which would later be exploited by Augustine. Its strength lay in a clear vision of the true church untainted by *traditio*, and in the strength of its appeal to the common conviction of the members, however many discrepancies occurred in practice. The Donatist image of the church of the pure was often supported by Cyprian's metaphor of Noah's Ark, within which the chosen few were safely sheltered from the calamity outside and from the fate of the drowning multitude. To the Donatists the visible church was something more than a society, the existence and legitimacy of which was sanctioned by the will of God, as Lactantius and, later, Augustine might argue. More fundamentally, as Frend succinctly puts it, the Donatist church was "a spiritual brotherhood, with the Spirit manifesting Himself in the righteousness of the individual members of the priesthood, encouraging all to martyrdom and self-denial, abiding in them as they administered the Sacrament".³² Throughout the controversy both Catholic and Donatist churches appealed for the "unity of the church", and both appealed to the

³⁰ On Cyprian's practice of rebaptism and its Donatist interpretation, see Frend, 119-20, 137-9. The Donatist idea of "purity" is also mentioned in Brown (1969), 218-9.

³¹ In practice, however, as Augustine would repeatedly point out, the Donatists often readmitted schismatics within the Donatist church, such as Rogatists and Maximianists, without rebaptism or disqualification.

³² Frend, 141.

authority of Cyprian; but Donatist ecclesiology differed from Catholic in its argument that only the purity of faith and sacrament guaranteed the unity of the church.

Lastly—and somewhat ironically, considering the Donatist conviction of the purity of the church—*traditio* was an inherently political problem from the very beginning of the schism. For the judgment of *traditio* was entrusted to political authority outside the church: the favoured side could always press the authorities further to criminalise the opponent, while the condemned side could endlessly protest and demand further inquiry. Imperial support for one side and condemnation of the other did not quench the flame of the bitter dispute. As the controversy dragged on, the quest for theological and ecclesiological legitimacy became inextricably entangled with political appeals on different levels and with inconsistent imperial edicts, which varied from Julian's support of Donatism, to toleration, limited condemnation, or even to the extremes of the Macarian persecution, depending on the ever-changing political circumstances of the fourth century AD.

The political nature of the Donatist controversy was also apparent in the use of violence, for which both sides were to blame, but particularly the Donatists in their opportunistic exploitation of the Circumcellions, whose belligerent acts (albeit sporadic) were inflamed both by fanatical religious belief and nationalistic separatism. Within the Donatist church itself, too, political authority was often called in to coerce internal schismatics. In 320 a quarrel between Silvanus, Donatist bishop of Cirta, and one of his deacons called Nundinarius had to be settled by Zenophilus, *consularis* of Numidia. Then in the first half of the 370s the Donatists led by Parmenian ventured on a political gamble, supporting Firmus's rebellion against the emperor Theodosius in exchange for help in repressing a moderate splinter group led by Rogatus. In the time of Augustine's bishopric in 397 Optatus of Thamugadi led an army of Circumcellions and forced the schismatic Maximianists to yield to the authority of Primian, Parmenian's successor as Carthaginian Primate, relying at the same time on an ill-fated alliance with Gildo, Firmus's younger brother, who became the virtual ruler of Africa in the 390s until his death in 398.³³

³³ For these three schismatic incidents within the Donatist church, see Frend, 161-2, 197-199, and 208-226 (esp. 222-224) respectively. The quarrel between Silvanus and Nudinarius is vividly recorded in *Gesta apud Zenophilum*,

(2) The problem of peace in the Donatist controversy and the significance of Optatus of Milevis

In this complicated controversy, *pax* was a key “watchword”³⁴ which served both Donatists and Catholics to represent the unity of the church restored in the spirit of reconciliation, as exemplified by Christ Himself. The term “peace” had often been deployed in the earlier history of the North African church, for instance in Cyprian’s plea to his fellow Christians for the unity of the church, or in the record of the seventh Council of Carthage (256 AD).³⁵ Donatists, too, often referred to “peace”, as far as existing records show: first during the quarrel between Silvanus and Nundinarius in 320; then at the Council of Bagai held by the Primianists against Maximianists in 394; and lastly in the episcopal letters of Augustine’s opponents, Petilian and Gaudentius.³⁶

The Donatists support their argument with various biblical references from Old (Ps. 85:10, Is. 59:8, Jer. 8:11) and New Testaments (Mt. 5:9, Jn. 14:27, Eph. 4:1-3).³⁷ Although *pax* in Donatist usage seems to retain the conventional meaning of the “time of peace” after Diocletian’s persecution,³⁸ at the heart of their idea of peace is a message of reconciliation. Facing the danger of schism within their church the Donatist bishops strenuously try to persuade Silvanus and Nundinarius to be “reconciled to peace”, by giving up “dissension and rivalries”.³⁹ Also the Council

reconstructed in O. Vassall-Philippus trans., *The Work of Saint Optatus against the Donatists* (London: Longmans, 1917), appendix II.

³⁴ Frend, 237-238; also G. G. Willis, *Saint Augustine and the Donatist Controversy* (London: SPCK, 1950), 36-38, 172-174.

³⁵ Cf. Cyprian, epp. 69.5.1, 73.26; cf. also Augustine, Bapt. IV.8.11, V.17.22, VII.49.97. For the record of the Carthage Council VII (01/09/256), cf. Conc. Carth., where the following bishops are recorded to have referred to peace: Caecilius of Bilita (CCL. 1; Bapt. VI.8.11), Nemesianus of Tubunae (citing Eph.4:3, CCL. 5; Bapt. VI.12.18), Sedatus of Tuburbo (CCL. 18; Bapt. VI.25.46), Cassius of Macomades (CCL. 22; Bapt. VI.29.55).

³⁶ Cf. *Gesta apud Zenophilum* (esp. remarks by Purpurius, Fortis, Sabinus, and Nundinarius); Emeritus, *Sententia Consilii Bagaiensis* (PL.11, 1189-1191); Petilian of Constantine, *Epistola ad Presbyteros et Diaconos*, reconstructed in P. Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l’Afrique chrétienne depuis les origines jusqu’à l’invasion arabe*, 7 vols. (Paris: Leroux, 1901-1923), vol. 5, 311-328 (hereafter all page references are from vol. 5); Gaudentius of Thamugadi, *Epistolae ad Dulcitius* (reconstructed in Monceaux, 329-333).

³⁷ For Ps. 85.10, Is. 59:8, see Emeritus, *Sententia*; Jer. 8:11 contrasted against Eph. 4:1-3 by Petilian in *ep. apud Presby. et Diac.* (in Monceaux, 309); Jn. 14:27 is oft-quoted by Donatists in *Gesta apud Zenophilum* and by Petilian as well as Gaudentius.

³⁸ Cf. Nundinarius in *Gesta apud Zenophilum*, 371

³⁹ Ibid. 362.

of Bagai opens with an exhortation to the Maximianists to surrender to the Holy Spirit and return from “sacrilegious schism” to the “peace and concord” of “close brotherhood”.⁴⁰ In this policy of reconciliation the Donatists often quote Jn. 14:27 for Christ’s authority as the giver of peace, insisting that schism must be avoided for the sake of “*pax Christi*”.⁴¹ On the other hand the false peace of their opponents is sharply contrasted with the true peace enjoyed by the Donatists, citing such biblical passages as Is. 59:8 (“The way of peace they do not know”) and Jer. 8:11 (“saying, ‘Peace, peace’, when there is no peace”).⁴² However, these instances suggest at best that, while the Donatists did find “peace” an important concept in their ecclesiology, their usage of the term remained underdeveloped and ideological.

In sharp contrast, Optatus, Catholic bishop of Milevis, deployed the term *pax* consciously and coherently as an ecclesiological concept against his opponents in his *De schismate Donatistarum*. Optatus himself was an outcome of what Frend describes as “the Catholic ascendancy” in the mid-fourth century,⁴³ which paved the way for a more organised and successful anti-Donatist campaign led by Augustine and his colleagues half a century later. Optatus’ work has been widely acknowledged as one of the most substantial records of Donatism written by a contemporary figure, despite its partisan standpoint. Now the judgement of Optatus’ importance can be consolidated further by our suggestion that his ecclesiological concept of peace already embodies the basic framework of Augustine’s. Though it must be a matter of conjecture, it seems very likely that Augustine was inspired by Optatus, considering what they have in common—extensive use of “peace” as the key word for restored ecclesiastical unity, supported by similar detailed biblical

⁴⁰ The opening sentence, which starts with “*Cum omnipotentis Dei et Christi eius Salvatoris nostri voluntate,...*”, continues to declare that through the council “*placuit Spiritui sancto, qui in nobis est, pacem firmare perpetuam, et schismata resecare sacrilega*”, and ends with a sentence saying, “*Optata quidem pacis et concordiae est iuncta germanitas*”.

⁴¹ *Gesta apud Zenophilum*, 361-3; Gaudentius, *Epistulae* 2.9.

⁴² See above, p. 154, n. 37.

⁴³ Frend, 182-187; cf. also Willis, 23-25.

exegesis, and consciously deployed to justify the use of political authority. Optatus only lacks the depth, imagination and integrity of Augustine's theological and philosophical mind.⁴⁴

"Cunctos nos Christianos, clarissimi fratres, omnipotenti Deo fides una commendat"—

with this confident proclamation of the Christian faith in God, Optatus opens his treatise against the Donatists (1.1); his credo then proceeds to the praise of Christ the Son, his Incarnation, Atonement, Passion and Ascension. Then Optatus writes:

Also, before ascending to Heaven, whence he had descended, he left behind, through his apostles, as his parting gift,⁴⁵ to all Christians, *peace*. (1.1 —Italics added)

By putting *pax* in the context of credal affirmation, Optatus presents the term as a core element of the Gospel. Christ is the giver of peace, as declared in Jn. 14:27: "My peace I give unto you, My peace I leave unto you." But who is "you", the receiver of Christ's parting gift? The apostles only? To this, Optatus answers that it was given "through apostles" but "to all Christians", connecting Jn. 14:27 with Mk. 13:37 ("That which I say to you, I say to all", 1.1). In this way, he finds three messages inseparably linked in Jn. 14:27: <1> peace is "God's property" (*res dei*),⁴⁶ inasmuch as Christ says "my peace"; <2> peace is the divine gift universally given to believers; <3> given to all "*per apostolos*", the peace of Christ belongs properly to the Catholic church established on the apostolic tradition.

In most of the remaining argument Optatus engages in a lengthy critical review of the history of the Donatist controversy. His accusation, later made famous by Augustine, that the Donatist schism "has raised altar against altar (*altare contra altare*)" (1.15; also 1.19) forms the backbone of his criticism. Against the false peace and unity enjoyed by the Donatists, Optatus sets out to establish what true peace consists of: the *unity*, the *bond* and the *love* of peace. In 2.5 he expounds

⁴⁴ Though the importance of Optatus in relation to Augustine is widely acknowledged, there is little scholarship which examines the latter's intellectual indebtedness to the former through critical textual analysis. Cf. Vassal-Phillips, introduction to *The Work of St. Optatus*, vi, viii-ix; the translation of *De schismate Donatistarum* cited here follows Vassal-Phillips. Cf. also Monceaux, 241-306; Willis, 23-25 in general, 105-10 on ecclesiology; Brown (1969), 212-225, esp. 216.

⁴⁵ "*Itoriam*", not "*storiā*" as in PL. 11. 866, is chosen here, following Vassall-Phillips' suggestion (cf. *idem*, 3, n.2).

⁴⁶ Optatus declares that peace is essentially divine, and therefore remains "integral and inviolated" (*integra inviolataque*). Cf. Optatus, 1.2.

the biblical notion of peace, citing various passages from the Scriptures. The Donatists “have put peace to flight (*fugaverunt*)”, in dividing the church, which amounts to dividing Christ Himself. They should now observe the counsel of the Holy Spirit and “turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it” (Ps. 33:15 [34:14]); indeed, they are called to become “the sons of peace” (*fili pacis*). *Pax* is the will of God in the Law, as expressed in the Old (Ps. 71[72]:3, 75[76]:3, 84:9 [85:8]; Is. 60:17) and the New Testaments (Lk. 2:14, Jn. 14:27, 2 Cor. 9:6⁴⁷); the whole divine precept of peace is repeatedly reaffirmed by Paul’s epistolary greetings (1 Cor. 1:3, Rom. 1:7 etc). So in 2.5 Optatus repeatedly advises his opponents (with reference to Ps. 33:15 [34:14]): “seek peace and pursue it”.

However, elsewhere in the treatise, Optatus’ interpretation of biblical peace is given a more ecclesiological than theological development. Although the schism has broken the “unified peace” (2.15) and “the bond of peace” (1.11), the Catholic church still “embraces all the sons of peace in her bosom and breast” (3.10). Speaking of “the House of God”, Optatus now engages in an interesting exegesis (which will also be deployed by Augustine), combining Eph. 2.20-21 (Christ as the cornerstone of the church) with Eph. 4.3 (the bond of peace): “Nor can a single wall have the corner stone—the stone which is Christ, who, receiving into himself two peoples—Gentiles and Jews—joins both walls with the bond of peace (*nodo pacis*)” (ibid.). In other words, the bond of peace enjoyed by Christians must be based on Christ’s act of reconciling “the two walls”, people of different opinions and cultural backgrounds. The unity of the church of Christ is further revealed geographically in the fact that the church is now “universal” (*catholica*), “spreading all over the world”, another apologetic device to be used by Augustine (1.26; also 2.2, 9)

Throughout the treatise Optatus tirelessly appeals to his opponents—to *fili dei*—to return to the bond of peace of the universal church, for which the Son of God (*filius dei*) himself has come to us (4.2):

⁴⁷ Obviously from a slip of memory, Optatus quotes the passage as follows: “*et Paulus ait: qui pacem serit, pacem et metet*”. Cf. Vassal-Phillips, 76, n.7.

We have both been made and are called [His sons]; you have been made His sons, but are not so called, because you are not willing to be in peace, or to listen to the Son of God Himself, when He says: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” (Matt. 5:9). Christ by His coming recalled God and man to peace (*revocavit ...in pacem*): “and he made both one, taking away the wall of partition” (Eph. 2:13).

In this way Optatus appeals to the Donatists, in the spirit of reconciliation, to be “the sons of God”, “the sons of peace”, “peacemakers” and “those lovers of peace”. However, the bottom line of his appeal is firmly partisan: reconciliation through Christ means return to the Catholic church, which alone preserves the true peace. His agenda of peace—called “*disciplina christiana*”—aims to re-educate Donatists to become the true Christians that they now falsely claim to be. *Pax* embodies God’s “moral instruction” (*disciplina*), “commandments” and “covenant” (4.4)

Finally, we must note another significant element in Optatus’ concept of peace, his apologia for the Catholic appeal to political authority. While the emperor Julian is condemned as a destroyer of peace (2.16), Macarius is defended as a legitimate authority with a proper cause and purpose (3.4-5, 7-8). The severe persecution during *tempora Macariana* was provoked by the wickedness and violence of the Donatists, and was conducted by the imperial delegates with an aim to restore “peace” in the church: they were truly “the makers of unity” (cf. 3.4). Though unclear as to whether the persecution is to be justified on the ground of criminal justice, or of protection of the Catholic church, or even of the enforcement of true doctrine, Optatus at any rate tries to distinguish Macarius’ acts from religious “war” (or persecution) against Christians, in which case the victims would properly be called martyrs. First, against the criticism that Macarius and the Catholic church disobeyed the divine commandment, “Thou shalt not kill”, Optatus argues that the act of killing itself is not contrary to the Law, since there are instances in which God commanded prophets and kings to kill (3.5), and the will of God justifies any act, even killing, as in the cases of Moses, Elias and Phineas (3.7). Since peace and unity are the will of God, the inevitably harsh suppression of Donatists was not sacrilegious and the victims cannot be called martyrs (3.7-8). In Optatus’ rather inconclusive defence of political intervention, we can find a conscious effort to legitimise the existence and function of political authority not only for practical but also for theological reasons—to maintain the ecclesiastical peace sanctioned by Christ, the Lord of peace. Now as we proceed to

examine Augustine's ecclesiastical theory of peace, we will hear Optatus' main thesis resonating like a distant echo from the past.

3. Augustine's Ecclesiastical Theory of Peace

(1) From Optatus to Augustine: the Catholic retort

De schismate Donatistarum must have served Augustine as a definitive and ample source of information on the controversy. Optatus was a fellow African Catholic who, against the high tide of Donatism in the mid-fourth century, tried to give a convincing answer to the central problem, "where is the church (*ubi ecclesia*)?". It is not unreasonable, therefore, to count Optatus as a significant figure in the developing Western theory of the church.⁴⁸ However, with regard to the concept of peace, it is more ambiguous how much direct influence Optatus may have had on Augustine. It is true that Augustine's first anti-Donatist work, *Psalmus contra partem Donati* (393), cites Optatus' memorable phrase, "altar against altar", but it is generally agreed that the thematic refrain—"All you who rejoice in peace, now judge the truth"—originates from a popular Donatist chant or slogan.⁴⁹ Nevertheless the structural proximity of the two theories of peace inclines us to suppose that Optatus might be a source of inspiration at this point, too, although Augustine's was a vastly more refined and original theory in its scope, coherence and integrity.⁵⁰ At any rate we can comfortably recognise in Optatus more than a historian of the schismatic controversy: he was a profound ecclesiologist of the post-Constantinian establishment, who, like Augustine, but on a lesser

⁴⁸ Cf. A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, v. 38, 42 (cited in Vassall-Phillips, vi).

⁴⁹ That the refrain was Augustine's appropriation of Donatist ideas is inferred by Frend from the furious reaction of Petilian (cf. Petil. II.17.38); cf. Frend, 238. Monceaux also indicates Pamenian's *Psalms* as the source of inspiration for Augustine's anti-Donatist psalm, as referred to in Augustine's ep. 55.18.34; cf. Monceaux, 226. Willis points out that the word *pax* was "extremely common" in the epigraphy of North Africa at this period; cf. Willis, 37, n.2.

⁵⁰ Willis, who points out the importance of the term *pax* in Augustine's ecclesiology, also suggests a strong connection between Optatus and Augustine in many respects, but not in terms of the parallels between the two theologians' concept of peace; cf. Willis, esp. 135, 173-4 on Augustine's concept of peace; and on Optatus and Augustine, 23-25, 105-110.

scale, mediated the rich theological tradition of the Roman African church since Tertullian and Cyprian to his contemporaries in the newly created socio-religious environment of the Christianised empire.

Augustine's involvement in the Donatist controversy began soon after his ordination as priest in 391. By that time both sides had become so entangled in a complex web of slander, intrigue and violence that Augustine found himself thrown into an antagonistic stalemate like "a Cold War" (Brown); he tried hard to protect his flock from interference by the Donatists, promising not to meddle with theirs.⁵¹ His campaign stretched over three decades, which can be divided roughly into five periods as follows:⁵²

Period 1: from 391 to 395, when Augustine was occasionally engaged in epistolary dialogue and open debate with local Donatists, while producing a pamphlet (*Psalmus contra partem Donati*, 393) and his first controversial treatise (*Contra Epistulam Donati haeretici*, 393/4) now lost;

Period 2: from 395-400, when Augustine became involved in the controversy all over Africa, attending the third Council of Carthage (397) and stepping up his campaign by frequent pastoral correspondence with Donatist bishops (epp. 33, 43, 44, 49, 51, 52), repeated proposals for open debate, and another non-extant work, *Contra partem Donati* (397);

Period 3: from 400-405, the most prolific period during which Augustine realigned the different strands of his thought—ontology, Christology, anthropology, eschatology and historiography—into a systematic ecclesiology elaborated in three major anti-Donatist

⁵¹ "You hold on to what you have got; you have your sheep, I have mine; don't you interfere with my sheep; I do not interfere with yours" (en.ps. 21(2).31). Quoted in Brown (1969), 229; cf. also idem "St. Augustine's Attitude to Religious Coercion", *JRS* 54 (1964), 109.

⁵² For a generally accepted periodisation, cf. Willis, 36-92, which slightly differs from mine in details concerning the dates of the work and the actual periodisation of events.

treatises, *Contra epistolam Parmeniani* (c.400),⁵³ *De baptismo contra Donatistate* (400) and *Contra litteras Petiliani* (401-405), while actively taking part in the successive Councils at Carthage which resulted in the imperial Edict of Unity in 405;

Period 4: from 405-411, between the Edict of Unity and the decisive Conference of Carthage (*collatio*) in 411, the period during which Augustine finally came to endorse political intervention, not merely for the sake of civic protection but more controversially to “coerce” the heretics into the Catholic unity, as argued extensively in his correspondence (epp. 88, 93, 105, 128);

Period 5: 411 and after, when, having played a significant role in shaping the deliberations of the *collatio* in 411, Augustine’s preoccupations focused on the return of schismatics to the Catholic church. His literary work consisted of two versions, a full record and a convenient digest, of the *collatio* and repeated pleas to the authorities for merciful punishment (epp. 133, 134), as well as an apologia for the policy of religious coercion (ep. 185).

Augustine’s deepening involvement in the controversy simultaneously spurred intense theological reflection on the nature and function of the church, which brought his ecclesiastical theory of peace to its fullest expression. In the first two periods the term *pax* was constantly used, but in isolation from its role in his biblical exegesis and the ethics of dual order. Not until the third period did Augustine systematically reorganise his ideas into an ecclesiology which centred on the “flagship”-concept, *pax*.

How did this reorganisation come about? The key lay in the philosophical flexibility of his biblical concept of peace. We have shown how biblical peace had already integrated the ontological elements of his earliest concept of peace. It was by now sufficiently developed to serve as an effective intellectual tool to master the controversy over the schism, since it accorded at once with the

⁵³ While Willis dates it at 398, I follow Pope, Deane and Brown who all put it at 400. Cf. Willis, 42; H. Pope, *Saint Augustine of Hippo* (London: Sands & Co. Ltd., 1937), 374; Deane, 188, n.34; Brown (1964), 110.

philosophical framework of his mind, the scriptural message and the tradition of the African church. Here lies a clue to understanding the decisive shift from *ordo* to *pax* that occurred in Augustine's moral theology in his mid-career. *Ordo* was not discarded, but was in operation in the background of *pax*.

In this section we will examine the basic structure of Augustine's ecclesiastical theory of peace in its final form (periods 3-4) with a minimum but sufficient attention to subtle changes in the course of development. Then in the final section we endeavour to retrace the inner logic of endorsing the coercive policy, i.e. the ecclesiastical pedagogy of love of peace.

(2) *Pax ecclesiae*: theological and ecclesiological fundamentals

At the core of Augustine's ecclesiological concept of peace lies faith in the trinitarian God: the peace of the church is the promise of God the Father, fulfilled by Christ the Son, and bestowed on his people through the Holy Spirit. As we have seen, Augustine has always maintained that *pax*, like *ordo* and *forma*, is an attribute of God the Creator: however, where the earlier Augustine would have understood it mainly in terms of creational cosmology, "God's peace" has now taken on a biblical colour, denoting the "testament of peace" (Ezk. 34:25) that God has made with His people (serm. 47.22), rather than a simple affirmation of the creation-order. In Augustine's ecclesiology God's peace is also unambiguously Christological. The "peace of Christ" (*pax Christi*) is the consummate state of the society of the faithful as prophesied and witnessed in the two Testaments;⁵⁴ Christ is the ultimate *pacificus* who blesses human *pacifici* (Mt. 5:9), the giver of peace through the apostles (Jn. 14:27, 20:19,21) or, simply, "our peace" on earth (Lk. 2:14); ecclesiologically, he is the cornerstone that connects the walls of the church and "has made us both one" (Eph. 2:14).⁵⁵ Finally,

⁵⁴ The term *pax Christi* appears frequently throughout Augustine's anti-Donatist campaign, especially contrasted with *pax Donati*. Cf. Parm. II.3.7, III.6.29; Bapt. II.12.17, IV.7.10; Petil. I.13.14, 24.26; Cresc. IV.39.46; epp. 51.2, 76.3, 185.4.17.

⁵⁵ The biblical references concerning *pax Christi* are as follows: Mt. 5:9 in Petil. II.68.154, serm. 358.6; Jn. 14:27 in Petil. II.22.50, serm. 47.22; Jn. 20:19 & 21 in Petil. II.15.35; Lk. 2:14 in Bapt. IV.7.10, serm. 70.3; Eph. 2:14 in Petil. II.70.158, serm. 25.7.

it is the Holy Spirit who directly mediates Christ's peace (Gal. 5:22) to the people of God united in the church.⁵⁶

In its essence the Trinitarian gift of peace is still markedly ontological: salvific peace is the right order of soul and body (cf. serm. 53A.12), spiritual purification (cf. serm. 53.16), mental fitness for contemplation of the truth (cf. ep. 147.17.43) and the absence of conflict between flesh and spirit (cf. serm. 25.4, 7).⁵⁷ However, the emphasis is now more existential than cosmological: the theme of "cosmic redemption" drops out of sight.⁵⁸ Instead, salvific peace is an eschatological and providential gift for the world of sinful human beings. It is the genuine but still unconsummated end of human destiny, "peace in abundance" (Ps. 71[72]:7), an undeniable reality which encourages the faithful to live righteously but is still to be fulfilled in the life to come (ep. 55.6.10).⁵⁹

In this context of eschatological and providential salvation *pax* becomes decisively ecclesiastical. The church is a divine institution by which the faithful are guided through the snares and conflicts of earthly life to the life of everlasting peace. Like Optatus Augustine confidently declares that the Catholic church alone maintains the "peace of salvation" (ep. 43.8.21), the blissful state to be given by "the Lord of hosts" at "the ultimate resurrection of the body" (serm. 50.12).⁶⁰ The peace maintained in the earthly visible church is an *imperfect* but nonetheless *genuine* representation of the true peace of the heavenly invisible church. For this society of the faithful now extended "all over the world" (*toto orbis terrarum*) is the fulfilment of prophecy (e.g. Dan. 2:35) and of Christ's promise (Lk. 24:39, 46-7). To Augustine, therefore, the *universality*—and hence the

⁵⁶ Cf. Bapt. I.18.28, serm. 37.28, 163A.4.

⁵⁷ Cf. also serm. 23.16-18, 81.1-3; ep. 127.5.

⁵⁸ On cosmic redemption, cf. Armstrong (1967c), 16-24. Armstrong criticises Augustine and the subsequent theological thinking dominant in the West for "the lack of any broad human and humane interest and concern with the world around us", which existed among Eastern Fathers (Irenaeus, Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus the Confessor). While acknowledging the criticism as valid in essence, I would just like to add one point: that Augustine's ontological interest in the *ordo* of man and the cosmos was never discarded throughout his life, whereas his salvific interest the *ordo* is anthropocentric—or thoroughly existential—because in the whole creation-order man alone can breach God's command and live in perversity. With the final separation of the righteous from the wicked the creation-order will be restored to its natural and perfect condition.

⁵⁹ See also serm. 168.2; cf. epp. 69.1, 118.3.13.

⁶⁰ Both passages are from mid-390s, revealing Augustine's still somewhat optimistic tone of voice. Serm. 50.12. is an exegesis of Haggai 2:9: "And in this place I will give peace, says the Lord of hosts". As early as in ps.Donat., Augustine identifies peace with salvation; cf. also Petil. II.1.3.

legitimacy—of the Catholic church was an obvious fact, compared to the *partiality* of the Donatist church which was confined to North Africa.⁶¹

In short the church is the guardian of salvific peace with a special mission to disseminate the “gospel of peace” (Eph. 6:15) throughout the world, as the prophet foretells in his blessing on the “herald of peace” (Is. 52:7).⁶² Like Optatus a few decades earlier Augustine repeatedly preaches from Ps. 33:15 [34:14]: to “seek peace, and pursue it”.⁶³ Another favourite passage is Christ’s seventh beatitude in Matt. 5:9. Peacemaking (*pacare, pacificare*) is a moral mission blessed by Christ, which aims to make further peacemakers out of sinners. In a sermon (serm. 53A) preached at a later stage of the Donatist controversy Augustine describes the act of peacemaking as starting from within—“pacify yourself”—and then promoting “the business of reconciliation” between troubled neighbours (ibid. 12).⁶⁴ Simply put, the Christian ethic of peacemaking aims to teach believers to “love peace”; in fact, as we will soon see, “love of peace” (*amor pacis*) is the recurrent theme of Augustine’s ecclesiastical campaign against the Donatists.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Cf. Petil. II.70.158 for Dan. 2:35 and Petil. II.73.164 for Lk. 24:39, 46-7; especially Lk. 24:46-7 is the key passage in Book II of Petil.: e.g. 8.20, 69.154, 84.187, 104.239. See also ep. 105.4.14-15, where Augustine cites biblical passages extensively as prophecies for the universality of the church. On Augustine’s ontologically inspired contrast between the two churches in terms of the whole-part relation, cf. esp. Cresc. III.72.84, IV.54.65. For Augustine’s contrast between the “universal” church and the locally confined Donatist church, see also Bapt. II.9.14, Petil. II.70.158, ep. 52.1. On the physical universality and therefore superiority of the Catholic church, cf. Parm. I.1.1, Bapt. I.1.2, serm. 71.28, epp. 93.9.29, 105.4.14-15.

⁶² For Eph.6:15, cf. en.ps. 59.11; for Is. 52:7, serm. 113A.9. Cf. also Petil. II.69.154; serm. 101.5, 11. As his anti-Donatist campaign reaches its climax at the Council of Carthage in 411, Augustine repeatedly preaches on peace before and after the *collatio* (e.g. serm. 23, 25, 47, 81, 168). Especially important are two sermons (358 & 359) preached to the Catholic congregation at Carthage two weeks before it. See below, pp. 166-167.

⁶³ Cf. en.ps. 34.18, 84.12, 98.7, 84.12, 143.9, 147.16; serm. 16.1, 4, 5, serm. 25.7.

⁶⁴ Cf. also serm. 357.3. For Matt. 5:9, see above, p. 162, n. 55. There are abundant references to *pacifici* in Augustine’s anti-Donatist campaign: e.g. Parm. II.2.4, Cresc. II.35.44; serm. 357.1, 4; epp. 93.10.39, 105.1. Augustine often portrays himself as a peacemaker; cf. Petil. I.1.1, ep. 93.1.1.

⁶⁵ As is best exemplified by Eph. 4:2-3, peace is inseparably linked with love, as much as with unity, in Augustine’s ecclesiology, and later in his political ethics, too. For the concept of love of peace in Augustine’s anti-Donatist campaign, cf. especially *De Baptismo*: I.9.12, III.1.1, VI.5.7-8, 7.10, 14.23, 22.39; cf. also Petil. II.78.174; epp. 43.23, 61.2, 76.2, 87.10, 88.5, 185.10.43.

(3) *Ecclesia Catholica*

The most obvious difference lies in what constitutes faith. We have observed that for the Donatists “faith” consists in an idea of religious purity in relation to sacramental ministry, which is too narrowly defined and as it is so unacceptable to Augustine’s theological anthropology, based on the doctrines of grace and original sin. Whereas, in their condemnation of *traditio*, the Donatists insist on the “purity” of the heart to be maintained by both believers and ministers, Augustine has a more sober view of religious purity as something to be sought after, but fundamentally unachievable by the flawed human will, because spiritual peace is the work of grace and will be completed only after the resurrection and last judgement.

Similarly on the sacraments, Augustine argues against the Donatists from the perspective of ecclesiastical peace, insisting that baptism, communion and consecration are sanctified not by the purity of the minister but by the very power and holiness of Christ the Lord that unites the congregation of sinners in peace.⁶⁶ Accordingly, Augustine formulates his theory of baptism around the following five points: sanctity, integrity, validity, effect and perfection: <1> the holiness of the sacrament derives from the triune God; <2> the sacrament is incorruptible and integral, independent of the goodness or badness of the minister and the baptised; <3> baptism is valid, because of its transcendent holiness and integrity, even if ministered by heretics outside the Catholic church; however, <4> its effect—namely, the forgiveness of sins—, which is the gift of grace, remains dormant until those baptised by the heretics return to the Catholic church; and finally <5> the effect of baptism will be completed after this life in the gift of salvation, to be granted only to the good people chosen by God.⁶⁷ Baptism is a divine good but does not guarantee the holy life at once (cf. Bapt. V.24.34); it represents a pledge of faith on the receivers’ part and a sign of salvation promised by God, which can be possessed “badly” or “lawfully” (Cf. *ibid.* III.10.13); therefore, the use (*usus*)

⁶⁶ On peace and sacrament, cf. Bapt. I.8.11 & 10.14 & 12.18.

⁶⁷ On point <1> cf. e.g. Bapt. I.1.2, VI.17.29; on <2> cf. *ibid.* I.1.2-3.4, V.5.5; on <3> cf. IV.4.5, 21.28; on <4> cf. I.12.18, VI.2.4; on <5> cf. IV.23.30, 25.32, VII.19.37.

and work (*opera*) of the sacrament must be carefully distinguished from its nature (*natura*).⁶⁸ With the same refined argumentation that explicates the sacrament of baptism, Augustine describes how these principles apply to the achievement of peace at each stage and how the diverse degrees of peace embody the unity of the Catholic church.

All in all, the decisive difference between Augustine's ecclesiology of peace and that of his opponents arises from its eschatological aspect. Augustine, too, strongly believes in the true church of the perfect and pure as a reality which actually exists now, as claimed by the Donatists, but not in the historical sense: *pax Ierusalem* is only partly realised in the heavenly society of the angels and the saints, whom the rest of its members will join at the end of history. The church as historical reality—or “on pilgrimage” as Augustine describes it—remains conditioned by an inherent tension between the two eschatological times, now and then, and between the “old” and “new” existence—“mixed” together, the characteristic which is well articulated by three passages in the Gospel (Matt. 3:12, 13:24-30 and 13:47-48).⁶⁹ The idea of *commixtio*⁷⁰ is so essential to Augustine's theory of the duality of church that there is no room left for the perfectionist purism of Donatism: their favourite image of Noah's Ark, identified with the “church without spot or wrinkle” (Eph. 5:27), is reapplied by Augustine as a symbol of baptism, the water through which people are saved (Cf. Bapt. V.27.38-28.39).⁷¹ The Catholic church is “universal” (*catholica*) in terms of what it figures, but it is the peace of pilgrims that the church now embodies. There the good and the bad are separated *spiritually*, but, *physically*, still united in the church owing to divine providence.⁷²

⁶⁸ Cf. Bapt. VI.1.1.

⁶⁹ The idea of the church in pilgrimage, see Bapt. I.15.24, IV.9.13. The contrast between the wheat and the chaff in Matt. 3:12 is treated e.g. in Bapt. I.17.26, Petil. II.26.61, III.2.3, ep. 93.11.48. For the wheat and the tares in Matt. 13:24-30 (and 36-43), e.g. Bapt. I.4.5, Petil. II.26.61 III.2.3, ep. 93.9.34. For good and bad fish, e.g. Petil. III.2.3; ep. 108.3.10.

⁷⁰ Cf. e.g. Parm. III.2.16; brev.coll. III.9.16; post coll. 4.5.

⁷¹ Cf. also Bapt. VI.40.78, ep. 108.7.20. Eph. 5:27 is cited e.g. in Bapt. I.17.26, ep. 185.9.38. On this debate, see Friend, 4, and Brown (1969), 221. Cf. above, p. 152.

⁷² Cf. ep. 43.9.27. On the separation of the good and the bad, cf. Bapt. VI.5.7, Petil. III.38.44.

(4) Love of peace: moral principle

On two successive occasions (17th and 19th of May, 411), just before the decisive victory at the Conference of Carthage, Augustine preached on the “peace of the church”. Significantly, these sermons do not mention the concrete issues to be discussed in the council, but emphasise its *spirit*.⁷³ In the first (serm. 357), Augustine praises *pax* as “our beloved and our mistress”, love of which brings lovers together in “a quiet mutual trust”. But here he does not wish to elaborate on the “praise” of peace, which is harder, because of its intense intellectual demand, than “possessing” it (1). Indeed, “to love it is to have it”; for peace is a spiritual good which can be obtained by merely loving it, unlike material goods. What is more, a lover of this spiritual good can share it with others without fear of losing it; in fact, the more it is shared, the more it increases, like the Lord’s bread which fed five thousand people (1-2). In seeking to share peace, Christian peacemakers must first be at peace with themselves and then with others, especially with the haters of peace, with whom they are encouraged not to engage in dispute but to show their meekness and endure their abuse (3-4). Similarly in the second sermon (serm. 358) Augustine continues to advocate the “peace and charity” to be exemplified by his fellow-Catholics, while consolidating his argument for the legitimacy of the Catholic church. His message is simple: as the Lord commands us to love one another, the Donatists should accept the invitation to embrace our peace, so that all of us may become the blessed peacemakers (6).

The message of “love of peace” at the heart of Augustine’s ecclesiology is composed of three main thematic elements. First of all, love of peace is a call for *reconciliation*: as God and man are reconciled in *pax Christ*, so are people of different opinions, like Catholics and Donatists (cf. Eph. 2:14).⁷⁴ He likes to argue that the internal conflicts within the Donatist church have been reconciled, even without rebaptism in the case of the Maximianist dispute, for the sake of their own

⁷³ Cf. Willis, 69-70.

⁷⁴ For peace and reconciliation, see Bapt. I.12.18, III.16.21 in reference to 1 Pet. 4:8. For Augustine’s ecclesiological reference to Eph. 2:14, see Petil. II.70.158, serm. 25.7.

peace, not for *pax Christi* but for *pax Donati*.⁷⁵ On the other hand Augustine is firmly convinced that both sides can be reconciled in the true peace of Christ preserved by the Catholic church, because the true love of peace can cover many sins (cf. 1 Pet. 4:8).⁷⁶ This leads us to the second theme, *forgiveness of sins*. In the church on pilgrimage, where the good and the bad coexist, peace and unity result not from the perfect virtue of its members but from the forgiveness of sins granted in Christ's name (cf. Lk. 24:46-47) and effected through baptism.⁷⁷ The final ingredient is *tolerance*. Toleration of evil is urgently demanded since, in the coexistence of the good and the bad, it is the only way to preserve the divine gift of peace and unity.⁷⁸ Coexistence is a divine test of the faith of the good, allowing the bad to continue to exist until punishment is appropriate. Later, in *De civitate dei*, this ecclesiological idea of peace as forgiveness of sins will be applied further in his political theory of peace to indicate the fundamental feature of communal life in the "interim" of world history.

Love of peace for the sake of reconciliation in the spirit of forgiveness and forbearance—this is the core message of Augustine's ecclesiastical theory of peace. This is what he proudly calls "the way of peace" (*via pacis*); the phrase comes from Ps. 13:3 and Is. 59:8, although a more powerful biblical influence is exercised by Paul's counsel of love and peace in Eph. 4:2-3: "forbearing one another in love, and endeavouring to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace".⁷⁹ The phrase "bond of peace" (*vinculum pacis*)⁸⁰ expresses the totality of his thought about peace in the anti-Donatist writings—*pax Christi*, *pax salva*, *pax ecclesiae*, *pacifici*, *reconciliatio*, *remissio peccatorum* and *toleratio*, with the exception of one remaining aspect, to which we now turn:

⁷⁵ For Augustine's reference to the Primianists' treatment of the Maximianists, cf. Parm. I.4.9, Petil. I.11.12-14.15, epp. 108.2.5, 185.4.17. Augustine's favourite contrast between *pax Christi* and *pax Donati*, see above, p. 162, n. 54.

⁷⁶ Cf. also epp. 88.7, 93.10.38, 108.3.9, 185.10.43.

⁷⁷ Lk. 24:46-47 plays an important part in Augustine's refutation of Petilian's ecclesiology; cf. Petil. II.10.20, 14.33, 68.154, 74.164, 84.187, 96.221, 104.239.

⁷⁸ Cf. e.g. Parm. II.4.8; Bap. I.18.28, IV.8.11, VII.51.99; Petil. II.22.50, 78.174; epp. 93.11.48, 105.3.15; serm. 4.35.

⁷⁹ See above, p. 164, n. 65.

⁸⁰ Cf. Parm. II.1.3, 2.4; Bap. VII. 51.99; Petil. II.15.35, serm. 71.28; epp. 93.5.18, 185.6.24.

disciplina, or the moral guidance for peacemaking, which ranges from peaceful endurance to legitimate persecution, all for the achievement of the unified peace of the church.

4. Pedagogy of Peace: Augustine on “religious coercion”

(1) Augustine and “religious coercion”: scholarly debates

The ecclesiastical theory of peace had to be implemented amidst provocation and violence. Augustine blamed the Donatists for vicious attacks on Catholic bishops and congregations, particularly those committed by their fanatic wing, the Circumcellions. To Donatists Augustine’s message of “reconciliation in the spirit of forgiveness and forbearance” meant forceful assimilation to the Catholic church, especially now that schism could be punished by the laws against heresy; Catholics were accused of resorting to another persecution like that of the “*tempora Macariana*” half a century before. In fact both churches had by now a long history of appealing to political authority, while trying to avoid the appearance of persecution. But no one apart from Optatus had thoroughly reflected on the relationship between church and political authority until Augustine discussed the legitimacy of using force and the function of political authority. In principle how could a Christian justify the use of what was evil to eradicate another evil? What kind of procedure and objective were required to call for political intervention against the “enemy” of the church?

To generations of scholars Augustine’s justification of religious coercion has proved profoundly problematic, resulting in diverse interpretations which P. Brown summarises succinctly.⁸¹ Some have found in Augustine a theoretical origin of the Inquisition in the Middle

⁸¹ This summary of scholarly debates over Augustine’s view of religious coercion and the following argument owe much to the insightful work of Brown in particular and of Markus, except on a few points to be discussed in due course. Cf. particularly Brown (1964), 107-116, and Markus (1988), 133-153. Cf. also Brown (1961), 83-101; idem, “Religious Coercion in the Later Roman Empire: the case of North Africa”, *History* 48 (1963), 283-305; idem (1969), 212-243.

Ages, or indeed of religious intolerance in general.⁸² There are also more historical approaches which understand the coercive policy as an inevitable outcome of harsh and violent circumstances, whether simply of an “age of intolerance” or more specifically of the difficulties of a bishop’s role in the community.⁸³ To make the matter more complicated, Augustine’s attitude towards “religious coercion” went through some fundamental changes and displayed a profound ambivalence. Some scholars have suggested “expediency” as the possible key to reconciling Augustine’s later endorsement of coercion with his overall “liberal” principle,⁸⁴ while more recent scholarship stresses the logical tensions in his justification of religious coercion.⁸⁵

We would like to suggest that, for all the confusing pointers, Augustine’s view of religious coercion is remarkably consistent. His remarks often appear contradictory and ambiguous, while his own admission of the “change of heart” is candid and casual, his support of the coercive policy firm and thorough. Nevertheless, one should not overlook the subtle coherence that underlies his ostensible change of view. It may not be a “doctrine”, as Brown reasonably insists, but is more consistent and comprehensive than an “attitude”, as Brown prefers to describe it.⁸⁶ In fact we find in Augustine’s justification of religious coercion a “theory” —an embryonic “political theory” based on an pedagogical programme (*disciplina*) of punishment (*correctio*) for restoring the broken *pax ecclesiae*.⁸⁷

⁸² Cf. esp., H. Maisonneuve, ‘Croyance religieuse et contrainte: la doctrine de S. Augustin’, *Mél. de science relig.* xix (1962), 49-68: cited in Brown (1969), 240. For liberal criticism, cf. E. Lamirande, “Un siècle et demi d’études sur l’ecclésiologie de S. Augustin: Essai bibliographique,” *REAug.* 8 (1962), 1-124: cited in Brown (1964), 107.

⁸³For references and criticisms concerning the first point, see R. Joly, “S. Augustin et l’intolérance religieuse,” *Rev. belge de philol. et d’histoire* xxxiii (1955), 263-94: cited in Brown (1964), 107. For the violence threatening Augustine and his colleagues, cf. Possidius, *Vita*, IX.4, XI.; cf. also Brown (1969), 299, 330. On the second view, cf. Frend, 227-43; J.-P. Brisson, *Autonomisme et christianisme dans l’Afrique romaine* (1958), 269-288: cited in Brown (1964), 107.

⁸⁴ For instance, G. G. Willis emphasises that Augustine was “compelled” to harden his view gradually, while he was “never comfortable about the use of coercion”; cf. Willis, 127-128. Cf. also A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (1964) II, 935: cited in Brown (1964), 108.

⁸⁵ Cf. Deane, 220; Markus (1988), 133-134.

⁸⁶ Cf. Brown (1964), 107-8.

⁸⁷ Cf. Markus (1988), 143; also Lamirande (1975), 43.

(2) The “change of heart”

Throughout the 390s Augustine campaigned against the Donatists, first in his neighbouring parishes (period 1) and then all over Roman Africa (period 2). However, at this stage his activity consisted mainly of correspondence with his opponents, repeatedly asking them to review the history of the controversy “peaceably” (ep. 33.4, 34.5) and to accept his proposal of open debate or conference “with all peace and quietness of mind” (ep. 49.1). At this point he clearly objects to compulsion by the authorities, assuring his opponent that “on [his] side there shall be no appeal to men’s fear of the civil power” (ep. 23.7) and that he does not “intend that anyone should be forced into the Catholic communion against his will” (ep. 34.1). These remarks indicate not only a sincere wish for a “peaceful” solution, but at the same time a diplomatic pragmatism in the religious “Cold War”: while demarcating the territory of each camp, he declares the “peaceful” intention of his side, rejects any possibility of “first-strike”, and yet reminds the opponents of regrettable but inevitable consequences if they fail to act appropriately.⁸⁸ In the meantime, as violence against African Catholics escalated, the emperor Honorius issued in 398 a decree making any attack on church property punishable with the death penalty; then in 399 he took a further step, condemning Donatism as heresy and making it punishable by existing laws which fined heretics ten pounds of gold and forbade them to receive or make donations and legacies.⁸⁹ Under these circumstances Augustine was increasingly aware of the accusation that the Catholic alliance with the authorities was religious persecution. Up to this point, however, he offered no alternative account of the political protection enjoyed by his church.⁹⁰

In the next five years (period 3) the successive Catholic Councils at Carthage escalated their campaign against the Donatists: first they sent missionaries into Donatist areas to publicise Donatist

⁸⁸ Cf. Brown, 229.

⁸⁹ Cf. *Codex Theodosianus* XVI.2.34 & 5 & 6.4. Cf. Willis, 129-30; Frend, 225, 249.

⁹⁰ In ep. 43.8.21, written in 397 or early 398, Augustine refers to “common human authority” and “temporal penalties”, but stressing his regret for the opportunity missed by his opponents to repent and avoid the eternal punishment; in another letter (ep. 51.3) written in late 399 or early 400, Augustine rebuffs the Donatists’ accusation by pointing to the opponents’ past record of political appeal, most recently against the Maximianists.

appeals to political authority in the past (401, Carthage VI); they then proposed an open conference with their opponents (403, Carthage VIII); when the proposal was rejected, they requested the Proconsul to “admonish” the Donatists (403, Carthage VIII); and they finally agreed on a policy of open persecution (404, Carthage IX). The Catholic offensive culminated in Honorius’ Edict of Unity of 405, by which the Donatists were once again pronounced heretical, their property handed over to the Catholic church, their houses confiscated, their meetings and services banned, and their clergy forced into exile.⁹¹

As the Catholic campaign was intensified, Augustine developed his ecclesiastical theory of peace. On the issue of political intervention he was still cautious, limiting its objective to civic protection and its application to the Donatist leaders. His chief interest lay with the effect of the punishment as a warning and deterrent to their followers.⁹² The Edict of Unity was to be enforced resolutely so that the impious heretics be “healed by warning rather than painfully removed afterwards by punishment” (ep. 86); contrary to Donatist accusations, the Catholic church did not seek persecution through the edict, but only self-defence, i.e. “protection at the hands of the legitimate powers against the lawless and secret violence” of the Donatists (ep. 87.8). Confirming his original position on coercion, Augustine declares that “no one is indeed to be compelled to embrace the faith against his will” (Petil. II.83.184).

The first clear sign of approval of the policy of “religious coercion” appeared in 406 in a letter (ep. 89) to a Christian official, Festus. Now the enforcement of punitive laws is justified not merely for protective reasons but, more fundamentally, for the spiritual well-being of the punished. It is an act of love, like parental love: “the more a father and mother love their children, the more they compel them to a good life without pretence” (ep. 89.2). Two years later the coercive policy is fully approved in a long letter (ep. 93) written to Vincent, an old friend of Augustine’s and now a Donatist bishop. *Epistula XCIII* is almost a short political treatise, explaining the necessity of

⁹¹ For the detail of these Catholic decisions, see Frend, 257-264.

⁹² Cf. Petil. II.83.184; ep. 66.1. Cf. Deane, 188-191.

correction through fear of punishment by political authority. Considering the excessive violence of the Donatists, Augustine writes, “it seems to me it would be advisable for them to be restrained and corrected by the powers established by God” (1.1). Especially emphasised is human sinfulness, which remains in our “strange force of habit” (1.1) and the “weight of their [the Donatists’] deadly custom” (1.2). Fear is indeed “useful” in forcing the erring to turn their minds to the truth; for, even if the coercive measures sometimes fail to bring good results, it does not mean “a remedy is to be discontinued because the illness of some patients is incurable” (1.3).

This is a shift from the previous positions—first the denial, then the limited approval of political intervention—which were based on the conviction that no one can be converted against his will. Augustine describes the “change of heart” in the following manner (ep. 93.5.17):

I have, then, yielded to the facts suggested to me by my colleagues, although my first feeling about it was that no one was to be forced into the unity of Christ, but that we should act by speaking, fight by debating, and prevail by our reasoning, for fear of making pretended (*ficti*) Catholics out of those whom we know as open heretics.

The passage is often interpreted as Augustine’s clear departure from the earlier “liberal” attitude, seeking the *voluntary* conversion of the schismatics through *rational* persuasion.⁹³ However, we must note his practical reason for the earlier position: the pressing concern about the influx of “*ficti*”, or false converts, anticipated as a result of the coercive policy.⁹⁴ Then he continues:

But this opinion of mine has been set aside, not by opposing arguments but by reason of proved facts. First of all, the case of my own city was set before me, which had been wholly on the side of Donatus, but was converted to Catholic unity by the fear of imperial laws, and which now holds your ruinous hatred in such detestation that one could believe it had never existed there at all. Similarly, many other cities were recalled to me by name, and by these examples I recognised how truly the word of Scripture could be applied to this case: “Give an occasion (*occasionem*) to a wise man, and he will be wiser” (Prov. 9:9).

In this way, either before or after the change of heart, practicality seems to dominate his tactical decision. Convinced by the “proved facts” that the Christian emperors’ legal right of “*cohercitio*”⁹⁵—to punish, restrain and repress the heretics—is an efficient and sound tool of the

⁹³ Cf. epp. 22.1.4-5, 34.1, 35.4.

⁹⁴ For Augustine’s concern with *ficti*, see Brown (1964), 111.

⁹⁵ Cf. ep. 104.34; post coll. 4.6. Cf. Brown (1964), 114.

Christian mission, Augustine now openly insists that obstinate Donatists should be given the right opportunity, *occasio*, even by force, to be guided into the right direction.

Reviewed in the historical context, therefore, the “change of heart” appears to have been motivated *pragmatically*, by concern for the expediency and stability of the church; one could even argue that Augustine merely followed—and theologically justified—the gradual escalation of the Council’s policy. Nevertheless, his casual acknowledgement of the “change” is misleading. For the issue at stake was not whether he was once “liberal”, nor whether the change was merely pragmatic, but fundamentally how he reconciled the two major ingredients of his moral theology, i.e. will and fear, in the new ecclesiological context. Augustine never stopped believing in the voluntary character of conversion (in that sense one may say he was a “liberal”); at the same time he became convinced of the importance of fear as a powerful motivation of will (so he was never a “liberal” in a radically voluntarist sense). And from the interaction of will and fear in his thought emerged a pedagogical theory of punishment as part of his doctrine of *pax ecclesiae*.

(3) *Correctio*

Throughout the anti-Donatist campaign, before and after the “change of heart”, there is a certain thematic continuity, discernible in the following four aspects: <1> *correctio* as the mode of Christian moral training; <2> *disciplina* as the nature of the corrective process; <3> love of peace (or peacemaking) as the end of the corrective operation; <4> political authority as an integral part of pedagogical peacemaking in the church.⁹⁶

The necessity and usefulness of “correction” (*correctio*) had always been a focal issue of Augustine’s moral theology. The intellectual programme of *ordo disciplinae* in *De ordine*, the rudimentary reflection on the “counsel” of judges in *De sermone domini in monte*, and the Christian moral teaching of *ordo amoris* in *De doctrina christiana I*—all these share the same premise (i.e.

⁹⁶ Cf. Petil. II.86.191, epp. 93.1.1-3.10, 185.6.21-24, 7.28-31, 10.45-47. The more overtly political theory of punishment explicated in epp. 153 and 155 will be dealt with later in Chapter 5.

the fallen condition of human morality) and the same goal (i.e. the re-ordering of the moral disorder), together with abundant use of remedial expressions such as “medicine”, “remedy” and “cure”, “mending” and “correcting”. In question, therefore, was not the notion of *correctio* but its method, or more precisely, how to redirect the will of a moral agent through rational rather than forceful measures (cf. ep. 22.1.4-5). In his more developed doctrine of grace and original sin, it became clearer to Augustine that reason and will alone could not improve the moral state of the agent, although he remained uncertain how efficient external force could be as a corrective means, especially as a means to conversion. This uncertainty persisted until about 400. In *Contra litteras Petiliani* we can still find him writing that “no one is indeed to be compelled to embrace the faith against his will”; for “no one can do well unless he has deliberately chosen, and unless he has loved what is in free will” (Petil. II.83.184). Yet he is increasingly vocal about the need of correction through fear of punishment to keep obstinate evil desires in check (cf. Petil. II.94.217). By 408 the uncertainty between will and fear had disappeared: fear had come to dominate his moral agenda, as best—and perhaps most infamously—exemplified by the slogan, “*compelle intrare*”.⁹⁷

This does not mean that Augustine had come to strip human will of all moral significance. What had changed was his understanding of the exact relation of will to fear. In another passage from *Contra litteras Petiliani* (II.84.186) the ethical dilemma between the voluntaristic and the coercive orientation is acutely felt in his interpretation of Jn. 6:44 (“No man can come to me, unless the Father who has sent me draws him”), where he admits that the apparent contradiction with free will is “difficult of solution”, a truth “which few have intellect enough to penetrate”. A tentative solution is offered: in drawing man to the Son, God does not deprive him of free will but only “warns”. And the same logic is deployed to justify the anti-Donatist laws as non-coercive warning measures: “those warnings which are given by the correction of the laws do not take away free will”. In this ambivalent phase Augustine has started to reinterpret the relationship between will and fear as

⁹⁷ Reference is to Lk. 14:23; e.g. ep. 93.2.5, serm. 112.8. See below, pp. 178, 181.

a complementary rather than contradictory one. Fear and punishment can be used positively as a warning and an opportunity thrust upon the moral agent to correct himself voluntarily.

This was the rationale used to endorse political intervention at first as a mainly protective measure. And soon the logic at its very heart—fear as admonition—was to broaden Augustine’s theoretical horizon to justify harsher measures, escalating from civic protection to the prevention of further evil and to coercive correction.

But how was he able to reinterpret fear as complementary to the will? What was the theological ground for such a radical reevaluation? Augustine’s original, antithetical view of will and fear stemmed from his early ontological ethic, which presupposed the natural ability of human beings to choose what was good for them. In this connection fear was simply identified with compulsion, as an antonym of the will defined as *liberum arbitrium*, freedom of choice. In the first half of the 390s the problem of fear was examined from a new theological perspective, i.e. in relation to the Law and grace. In the four-stage scheme of moral progress fear became a negative moral feature of the second stage, “*sub lege*”, to be overcome in the higher stage, “*sub gratia*”, where one would begin to choose moral good in freedom from fear and compulsion, though not yet perfectly until the final stage, “*in pace*”. Now, as we have seen, Augustine soon reexamined the initial antithesis between the Law and grace; it was a natural consequence that he should also reexamine the antithesis between fear and will. In the new eschatological historiography (most notably in *Contra Faustum*) the Law was not simply an antithesis of grace, or an inferior state to which only sinners belonged. Rather, it was an anterior prophetic stage pointing to the future coming of Christ. And anthropologically the Law corresponded to a condition of human nature which, though distorted, was destined to be healed by grace.⁹⁸

Like the Law fear could be understood as an inevitable preparatory phase of human morality; conversely, again like the Law, fear could have a positive use as a necessary remedy

⁹⁸ For instance in Book XVI he compares the Law and grace in terms of Moses and Christ: fundamental differences are contrasted (15-16), their similarities are pointed out (18) and Moses is presented as a prophetic prefiguration of Christ (23, 25-26). For Christ as the fulfilment of the Law, see *Faust.* 17.5-6, 19.7. On fear identified with the Law, see esp. 15.7-8.

prescribed by grace. In this way the logic behind Augustine's justification of fear as a corrective means had been worked out by the late 390s.⁹⁹ Ten years later he would confidently state that fear must not be a "habit" (ep. 93.1.1) but is "legitimate" (1.2) and "useful" (1.3) against the enemy of peace, if deployed in the right spirit of "*correctio*" (1-3) —that is, to re-educate the misguided followers of Donatism.

(4) *Disciplina*

The pedagogical aspect of correction is often described as "*disciplina*".¹⁰⁰ The term itself is a familiar one already used in *De ordine* as a programme of intellectual purification. However, in the anti-Donatist campaign, it is decisively more Christological, ecclesiological and eschatological: it is the church's teaching about peace, appealing to the commands of Christ and applying them within the historical context. *Disciplina* is a dynamic process of struggle against recurrent failure through intellectual enlightenment (by the divine illumination of the Word) and through moral training (under the authority of the church). More fundamentally Augustine's ecclesiastical *disciplina* is doubly conditioned by divine providence: negatively as a necessity (*necessitas*) rooted in the transitory nature of the fallen world, and positively as a rich source of moral examples (*exempla*) for the good and faithful to model themselves on.

The notion of providential *disciplina* is obviously inspired by the biblical examples of "*eruditio per molestias*" or "divinely-ordained impingements", particularly in the Old Testament.¹⁰¹ It involves different instructions, given at different times, through different means such as praise and blame, encouragement and fear—all because of God's love for us:

Love mingled with severity is better than deceit with indulgence. It is more profitable for bread to be taken away from the hungry, if he neglects right living because he is sure of

⁹⁹ E.g. Faust. 22.21. Augustine's early association of the Law with paedagogical usefulness, util.cred. 9, serm. 62.8. Cf. Brown (1969), 113-114.

¹⁰⁰ Passim; cf. e.g. Petil. II.83.184, III.4.5; after the Edict of Unity of 405, cf. brev.coll. III.9.16, epp. 108.7.20, 133.2, 185.10.45. The importance of the idea of *disciplina* is stressed by many: cf. Brown (1964), 112; idem (1969), 236-237; Markus (1988), 142-143.

¹⁰¹ Brown (1964), 112; Markus (1988), 143.

his food, than for bread to be broken to the hungry, to lead him astray into compliance with wrong-doing. [...]. Who could love us more than God does? Yet He continually teaches us sweetly, as well as frightens us for our good. Often adding the most stinging medicine of trouble to the gentle remedies with which He comforts us, [...]. (ep. 93.2.4)

There are ample biblical examples of providential *disciplina*. In Genesis God “tries the patriarchs, even good and devout ones, by famine”; He “chastises a stubborn people with heavier punishments” (ibid. 2.4), over whom the prophet despairs, saying “In vain have I struck your children; they have not received correction” (Jer. 2:30; ep. 93.1.3).¹⁰² The providential *disciplina* is often carried out through human agents, the good punishing the bad or vice versa, with different lessons to be taught (cf. ep. 93.2.6). For instance, when Sara “readily punished” Hagar, who bore Abraham’s son Ishmael at her mistress’s request, God intended to teach us how the spiritual restrain the pride of the carnal (Gen. 16:1-6; ep. 93.2.6). Also the same affliction may be differently judged by God: whereas Pharaoh’s oppression of Israel was a crime against God’s people, Moses’s punishment of the same people was just because they had fallen into idolatry (Exod. 5:6-18); whereas Jezebel wrongly murdered prophets, Elijah rightly killed false prophets (ibid. 32:25-28; both in ep. 93.2.6). The New Testament, too, has equally abundant examples of divine compulsion and severity: Saul was famously converted by “the great violence of Christ’s compulsion” (2.5); “the sword of Peter [was] ordered back into its scabbard” (2.7); men may sometimes be “delivered up to Satan so that ‘they may learn not to blaspheme’” (2.7); Christ even blesses those who suffer persecution, “for the sake of justice” (2.8).¹⁰³ Finally, in this context, Augustine introduces for the first time the (in)famous phrase, *compelle intrare*, in reference to Lk. 14:21-23: “Whomever you find, compel them to come in” (2.5).¹⁰⁴

All these instances of divine compulsion have one pedagogical purpose: to force people to embrace the truth and lead them to salvation. This intention alone distinguishes good *correctio* from

¹⁰² Cf. Gen. 12:10 (Abraham), 26:1 (Isaac), 41:54 (Joseph), 42:1 (Jacob), 43:1 (sons of Jacob).

¹⁰³ Cf. Acts 9:3-18, Matt. 26:51-2, Jn. 18:10-11, 1 Tim. 1:20, Matt. 5:10, respectively.

¹⁰⁴ In spite of its notoriety, the phrase *compelle intrare* in Lk. 14:23 is actually referred to only several times: apart from ep. 93.2.5, cf. also serm. 112.8 (written between 411-420), epp. 173.10 (416), 185.6.24 and ibid. 10.46 (417). Augustine also refers to Christ’s purging of the temple (Matt. 21:12-13 etc) as another example of divine coercion: cf. Petil. II.80.178.

bad: “the point to be considered is not whether anyone is being forced to do something, but what sort of thing he is being forced to do, whether it is good or bad” (ep. 93.5.16). The good punishment therefore stems from the spirit of Christian love, God’s love for us and ours for the neighbour. Throughout his life Augustine contrasts love with fear; but, as in the case of will and fear, love and fear are not necessarily antithetical: just as grace fulfils the Law, the new law of twofold love does not negate, but perfects the old law of Moses based on fear and compulsion. It is a divine imperative that Christians mitigate the fear and severity of punishment with “love” and “Christian mildness”, so that the punished are encouraged and prepared to be “taught” of their past mistakes and the divine truth.¹⁰⁵

The actual implementation of *disciplina* in the church includes all that is necessary for “the vigilance of correction” (*emendationis vigilantia*) such as “correction, degradation, excommunication and other coercive measures”.¹⁰⁶ While the last category of “*ceterae coercitiones*” obviously includes legal punishment (*coercitio*) by political authority, Augustine consistently objects to vindictive punishment (cf. epp. 91.9, 100.1, 104.3.8), to torture which was legally accepted method to extort confession (epp. 91.9, 133.2), and, even more so, to the death penalty (epp. 93.3.18, 100.1, 134.4). The objection to the death penalty is based on a practical argument (avoiding Donatist claims to martyrdom) as well as a theological one (securing the opportunity for true repentance, epp. 100.2, 104.3.8). Furthermore, the theological reason comes from his belief in the correctibility of sinners, as is vividly illustrated in his repeated warning not to despair of correcting the Donatists, because they are still in the image of God.¹⁰⁷ Whether a person is ultimately saved or damned is for God to decide, and will be revealed at the end of time. In the meantime Christians continue to learn patiently through encouragement, warning and punishment—with a dim but undeterred hope of daily improvement (cf. 2 Cor. 4:16) in a world of relativity and imperfectibility.

¹⁰⁵ Ep. 93.2.3, 2.4, 3.10. Cf. also Petil. III.4.5, epp. 104.2.5, 3.8, 4.14, 185.10.45.

¹⁰⁶ Post.coll. 4.6; cf. also brev.coll. III.9.16. See above, p. 173, n. 94.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Bapt. IV.14.21, epp. 93.10.40, 185.11.50.

(5) Love of peace: peacemaking as ecclesiastical pedagogy

In ecclesiastical *disciplina, correctio* aims at establishing *pax* between the believer and God and among believers, through fear of punishment if necessary but always out of love. The church is the school of human morality, with the principle (love), the goal (reconciliatory *vinculum pacis*) and the spirit (forgiveness and forbearance) of peacemaking. Again in *Epistula XCIII* Augustine presents himself as “an eager seeker for peace” (1.1) and his Donatist correspondent Vincent is called to become a “peacemaker” (11.49), following the great examples of Cyprian (9.34, 10.38-39) and Constantine (4.13-14), and to embrace the peace of the Catholic church (11.51). Donatists may have to be forced by laws initially, but will be patiently tolerated by their fellow-Christians until corrected in the love and bond of peace (16.17-19).

Thus coercive measures can be justified as ultimately beneficial for sinners in the ecclesiastical pedagogy of peacemaking. A more explicit apologia for coercive peacemaking appears in *Epistula CLXXXV* written at a much later stage (417). Augustine’s main theme here is the contrast between “*pax Catholica*” and “*pax Donati*”, between the adherents and the enemies of “*pax Christi*” (4.17-18). Lk. 14:23 and the slogan “*compelle intrare*” are once again deployed to justify the coercive integration of Donatists into the “unity” and “bond of peace” of the body of Christ to teach them the truth, virtue and love (6.24, 10.46). The “peace of Christ” is not easy to maintain, as is demonstrated in the Old Testament story of how David preserved the peace of his kingdom by killing his rebellious son Absalom (2 Sam. 18, 22); similarly, it takes the pain and patience of the mother church to keep her sons, faithful or unfaithful, in peace (ep. 185.8.32). In the end, however, all the troubles will benefit particularly the repentant former Donatists, who will receive the divine gifts which accompany “peace”, that is, its “compensating power”, and “love which covers a

multitude of sins” (cf. 1 Pet. 4:8; *ibid.* 10.43). Indeed, only for the sake of peace can “a rigorous *disciplina*” and coercion be justified (*ibid.* 10.45).¹⁰⁸

In the end the moral pedagogy of peace was a product of Augustine’s overall ministerial concern. Even the apologia for religious coercion based on Lk. 14:22-23 is motivated less politically than pastorally. In ep. 93.2.5, where the theme of “*compelle intrare*” first appears, it intends simply to describe the main features of divine corrections, namely its necessity, benefit (cf. 2.4-7) and severity mitigated by Christian love and mildness (cf. 2.4, 3.10)—all out of one concern:

lest the sheep of Christ should wander off, too, and have to be called back in some other way. Thus, by the coercion of exile and loss of goods, they are led to reflect on what they are suffering and why, and they learn to prefer the reading of the Scriptures to the rumours and false tales of men. [...]. But, in correcting and restraining you, a method is used rather to warn you to give up your error than to punish you for a crime. (3.10)

“The sheep of Christ” can be gathered only in “the sheepfold of peace where there is ‘One fold and one shepherd’ (Jn. 10:16)” (*ibid.* 5.19). The other two letters (epp. 173, 185) which use the slogan are also written with earnest pastoral concern. In ep. 173 Augustine is anxious about the salvation of his Donatist correspondent (1), like Christ who cares for the wandering through “the injunction to compel you to return to his fold, rather than acquiesce in the will of the wandering sheep and allow you to be lost”, as is foretold in Exod. 15:22-24 (3) and told in Lk. 14:23 (3.10). Religious coercion is, at least in Augustine’s mind, a pastoral rather than political matter: he is merely “following the example of her [the church’s] Lord”, and, as “a part of the care of the shepherd”, asks political authority to help heretics and schismatics return to the flock of peacemakers (ep. 185.6.23-24; cf. also 10.46-47). His call “to compel them to come in” is indeed, as Markus rightly puts it, part of the overall “pastoral strategy”.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Cf. also epp. 88.7, 133.1, *serm.* 112.8.

¹⁰⁹ Markus (1988), 140-145.

(6) *Pax ecclesiae, political authority, and tempora christiana*

In the same manner the nature and function of political authority (*potestas*) was treated within the framework of pastoral strategy. Augustine did not understand the authorities purely functionally as *institutions* (as in the modern concept of “the state”), but in terms of the concrete positions *and persons* of those who legitimately held power and responsibility.¹¹⁰ Insofar as he is Christian, therefore, a king or a magistrate remains “a faithful son” of the church (ep. 185.11.51) to be cared for and, if necessary, admonished by the ecclesiastical authority.¹¹¹ The earthly *potestas* is legitimated in the ecclesiastical theory of peace on the basis of: <1> its origin as a divine establishment (cf. Rom. 13.1); <2> its judicial function as a guardian of public peace and order; <3> its sphere of operation restricted to the earthly life, and so, essentially distinguished from the eternal judgement of God (cf. Rom. 13:2, Matt. 22:21); <4> its ultimate duty to God as a “minister of God” (cf. Rom. 13:4).

The first point signifies the fundamental change in the underlying assumption of Augustine’s political thinking. At a glance its basic view of power (*potestas*) appears little changed since *De ordine*: the appropriate ordering (*ordinatio*) of man, society and the universe in accordance to the immanent divine will—the message which has always been at the heart of Augustine’s interpretation of Rom. 13:1.¹¹² However, the transformed theory of providence distinguishes political order from the creation-order: one is historical (i.e. human and relative); the other, ontological (i.e. natural). The Pauline text is reinterpreted accordingly, not as a natural, but as a corrective institution ordained through the historical channel of providential order with a view to containing human sinfulness and protecting the creation-order. The “ordered powers” (*ordinatae potestates*) are established not

¹¹⁰ Markus is right in pointing out “atomistic personalism” characteristic to Augustine’s political thinking: cf. idem (1988), 148–153. However, as is suggested by O’Donovan and will be discussed later in detail, this subtle and careful study is mistaken in assuming that Augustine had a concept of “the state”, which Markus uses almost interchangeably with “political authority” (cf. ibid. 86, 93–95) or, more loosely, with the earthly *civitas* of Rome (cf. 72, 98). Cf. O. O’Donovan (1987), 99.

¹¹¹ Cf. also epp. 133.3 and 134.3. In fact Augustine even says that he would deal with a non-Christian magistrate “differently”, though in the same Christian spirit (ep. 134.3).

¹¹² Augustine’s exegesis of Rom. 13 at this stage can be found in Parm. I.10.16, epp. 87.7–8, 93.6.20, 134.3.

merely for conventional reasons (as customs or *instituta hominum*), or for functional reasons (as a *necessitas* of human society), but more fundamentally because its exercise of power, whether right or wrong, is ultimately an integral part of God's providential government of his creation.¹¹³

Secondly the function of political authority consists primarily in the power of *judgment* on the right or wrong of any potentially subversive action against the existing social order—establishing and enforcing laws, and executing and commuting punishment as appropriate for the correction of the offender.¹¹⁴ In this respect too Augustine is persistently ontological: like the divine authority, political authority judges, according to laws and pronouncing punishments, precisely for the purpose of “public peace” (ep. 133.1) and “public order” (ep. 134.1), so that “all things” are “put in the right order” (brev.coll. 1.5).¹¹⁵ In two letters written to Roman officials (epp. 133, 134) Augustine describes what is required to be a “Christian judge” (133.2, 134.4). He should maintain public peace and order through legal punishment of criminals “in proportion to their deeds” (133.1), with a twofold aim: to find out the truth (ibid. 2) and to seek the benefit of the punished, that is, to guide them to the way of repentance and peace (ibid. 1). No less important is a distinctively Christian spirit of gentleness and mildness which the Christian judge must demonstrate in avoiding death penalty (133.1 134.4), torture or something harsher than “rods” to gain confession (133.2, 134.2), and any punishment for the sake of retaliation or vengeance (133.2-3). The Christian judge ought to be like “a loving father”, who shows anger for the wrong done, but makes allowance for human weakness, indulges in no vengeance, and always strives “for the cure of sins” (133.2; also cf. 134.4).

The remaining two points demonstrate the tension between the two *potestates*, earthly and heavenly. In Parm. I.10.16, arguing against the Donatist accusation of religious persecution, Augustine compares four biblical passages to describe the legitimacy of using political authority which is a divinely established (Rom.13:4) judicial and punitive power (Gal. 5:19-21) with a distinct

¹¹³ See esp. Petil. II.20.45; cf. also unit.eccl. 20.54, ep. 87.7.

¹¹⁴ On the judgement and punishment—its legitimacy and limitation—of political authority, see especially ep. 95.3, 6. Cf. also Petil. II. 83.184, 84.186, epp. 88.8-9, 93.11.48, 133.1-3.

¹¹⁵ Cf. also epp. 105.11, 129.4-5.

sphere of influence in which Christians duly perform their civic duties (Matt. 22:21 and Rom. 13:7). Political authority is *analogous* to divine authority in its origin, function and purpose. But the power of kings and magistrates is not the same as God's because it is *eschatologically* conditioned: human judgement is merely a faint reflection of the true judgement of God—a necessity rooted in the fallen state of human life. Donatists object that the Catholic church has initiated persecution and puts false faith in human authority; Augustine argues that the Catholic church deploys political authority legitimately while taking heed to the prophetic warning (e.g. Ps. 117[118]:8-9 and Jer. 17:5) not to place false hope or confidence in man but only in the Lord.¹¹⁶ On the contrary, Christians know the limitation of human judgement, and obey the authorities as far as is required by the flaws of human society. Human authorities, ecclesiastical or political, are bound to make mistakes in their judgement, and face dilemmas, such as how to show the right proportion of punishment against a sin committed, how much toleration and clemency should be allowed, and, particularly, when and how to follow the seemingly contradicting counsels of the bible, some encouraging to judge and reproach (Matt. 18:5, 1 Tim. 5:20, Rom. 14:4) and others discouraging it (Matt. 7:1, Lk. 6:37, 1 Cor. 4:5).¹¹⁷

At the same time, precisely due to the inevitably flawed condition of the interim world, some people are appropriately required to act in obedience to the law and judgement of Christ to become judges to secure the peace and order necessary for basic social life (cf. ep. 105.6). In other words, rule and obedience are part of human “service” and “ministry” for God. Christian kings and magistrates derive not only basic common duties “as a private individual”, but also special duties “in virtue of their several gifts” from the God who gives faith and power; Christian rulers can and should exercise their power to coerce schismatics to return to the unity and peace of the Catholic church, an act which is “impossible for any who do not have the power of kings” (Petil. II.92.210).¹¹⁸ As part of its Christian duty to God the church can talk openly about the “right use” of the “friendship” with Christian kings (Petil. II.92.203), about the duty of rulers in the “Christian

¹¹⁶ Cf. Petil. II.97.224 for Ps. 117[118]:8-9; cf. Parm. II.4.8 for Jer. 17:5.

¹¹⁷ Cf. ep. 95.3.

¹¹⁸ Cf. also Cresc. III.51.56, epp. 93.3.9, 185.5.19.

commonwealth” (ep. 100.1), and more explicitly about their function as “ministers of God” (ep. 87.7-8) and “the servants of Christ” (ep. 93.11.48).¹¹⁹

In the final analysis, the link between religious coercion and political authority in Augustine’s ecclesiastical theory of peace stems from something much deeper than the pragmatism of his “pastoral strategy”. Its logic is embedded in a particular view of history forged in the theory of providential order and eschatological historiography: the idea of the “*tempora christiana*”.¹²⁰ In the previous chapter we have seen how providential historiography began to be formulated in terms of dual order and two cities at the turn of the fourth century in *Contra Faustum* (22.78), *De catechizandis rudibus* (17.28-21.51) and *De Genesi ad litteram* (VIII.9.17).¹²¹ In *De consensu evangelistarum*, written in 400, Augustine discusses the characteristics of the “Christian era” as a special phase of redemption history: the age when prophetic promises have been fulfilled by Christ and materialised in the expansion of his authority and the church all over the world in the Christianised Rome.¹²² Most significantly, the “Christian era” have witnessed the success of the legal repression of paganism as foretold by the prophets.¹²³

The idea of *tempora christiana* provided a useful perspective in the battle against the Donatists, to explain not only how, but also why, political authority was to ally itself with the Catholic church. For instance, in *Contra litteras Petiliani* II.92 (203-213), Augustine takes up Ps. 2:10-11 (“Receive instruction, you that judge the earth. Serve the Lord in fear”), which the Donatists interpret as a divine testimony to the superiority of ecclesiastical authority over political, prohibiting the latter from interfering with religious matters. Their interpretation is criticised for taking the

¹¹⁹ Cf. also epp. 105.7, 11 and 185.7.28.

¹²⁰ Cf. en.ps. 71.13, 80.1, 111.2, 140.18; epp. 31.5, 118.3.21; serm. 62, 81, 105, 113A. As Markus rightly points out, the Christian era is identified less with the whole epoch between the Incarnation and Parousia than with the Christianisation of the Roman Empire (cf. *ibid.* 34, n.2, and 35). See above, p. 136, n. 93.

¹²¹ See above, pp. 136-137.

¹²² Cf. e.g. cons.ev. I.16.24, 33.51. This is the central ambiguity in Augustine’s eschatology at this stage: while his worldview and anthropology became essentially eschatological by this time, his ecclesiology still emphasised the special place of the “Christian era” in salvific history, a view which would be seriously tested by the Sack of Rome in 410; cf. Markus (1988), 37-38.

¹²³ Cf. cons.ev. I.14.21, 26.40, 34.52.

passage out of context; for Psalm 2 as a whole is a microcosm of divine history, moving from the ungodly times (vv.1-2) to the prophecy of the coming Christian era (7-8) and to its fulfilment (10-11). Accordingly, verses 10-11 must be understood in connection with the preceding verses 7-8: “The Lord has said to me, ‘You art my son, today have I begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession”. Contrary to the Donatist argument verses 10-11 promise the fulfilment of the promise of “the inheritance of Christ” already given in verses 7-8, telling the sons of Christ to serve him in fear:

“Serve the Lord with fear”, wherein they can serve Him in so far as they are kings. For all men ought to serve God, in one sense, in virtue of the condition common to them all, in that they are men; in another sense, in virtue of their several gifts, whereby this man has one function on the earth, and that man has another. For no man, as a private individual, could command that idols should be taken from the earth, which it was so long ago foretold should come to pass. Accordingly, when we take into consideration the social condition of the human race, we find that kings, by virtue of the fact that they are kings, have a service which they can render to the Lord in a manner which is impossible for any who have not the power of kings. (Petil. II.92.210)

So the particular understanding of his own era underpins Augustine’s justification of religious coercion as a service and ministry for God. Like Constantine, the “emperors in the Christian era” are not simply within their rights, but are obliged to act on behalf of the unity and peace of the church (ibid. 92.204). The legal suppression of pagans and schismatics is a remarkable sign of the times in accordance with the providential order of history.¹²⁴

Human history consists of a series of periods, each with a distinctive role, meaning and destiny. As a whole, history is a school of divine *disciplina* with lessons to be learned by perceptive students; each period containing occasions (*occasiones*) through which God reveals his special relationship with His own people.¹²⁵ As we have seen, Augustine proclaims as his justification of religious coercion: “Give an occasion to a wise man, and he will be wiser” (ep.93.5.17). These words from Prov.9:9 describe for Augustine the strategic practicality of the coercive policy, behind which is a firm conviction in the righteousness of providential government of history. As is amply demonstrated in the Old Testament, legal repression of Donatists is an *occasio* of divine *correctio*

¹²⁴ Cf. also ep. 93.3.9.

¹²⁵ Cf. esp. Brown (1964), 112; also Markus (1988), 143.

for the wondering and of divine *eruditio* for the wise and religious—given at an appropriate time and place, through warning, fear, constraint and other forms of inconvenience, if necessary. As one *occasio* succeeds another, the whole sequence of different occasions comprises what Augustine calls “*ordo temporum*”, the providential dispensation of different ages.¹²⁶

Pax is a conceptual pointer to subtle changes in Augustine’s intellectual development —the early ontological phase, the distinctively biblical but highly experimental phase, and the controversial, ecclesiological phase. *Pax* represents the theological synthesis achieved in the first twenty five years of Augustine’s literary career: it epitomises the fulness of God’s government over his creation both through nature and through will, and, particularly for the fallen creature, it is a gift of grace necessary for life on earth, a foretaste of the perfect gift of salvation through Christ at the end of time. By *pax* human history is both justified (as a witness to the unfolding of prophetic promises being fulfilled) and limited (as a passing interim of the process). In *pax*, finally, lies the goal of moral and political activity: Christians are to make peace with themselves and their neighbours; the church is the centre stage of the Christian *disciplina* of peace, where ample lessons are drawn from the bible to nurture peacemakers, who are prepared to perform necessary duties of human society while patiently looking forward to the promised peace of the end. Religious coercion is part of such Christian peacemaking, appropriate for the “Christian era” though limited by the circumstances of historical reality.

Augustine’s ecclesiastical theory of peace is the penultimate stage in the development of his political conceptuality. For it still lacks a full appreciation of the distinctive features of politics, the

¹²⁶ Cf. ep. 185.5.20. Also serm. 112 (1, 8) is very noteworthy in that the sermon on Lk. 14:16-24 comments on the theme of *compelle intrare*—not in the usual pragmatic context of pastoral strategy so prevalent in his epistles, but rather in relation to the meaning of the “era” when Christ’s compulsory invitation to His dinner is realised by political authority.

The same logic was deployed later against Pelagians—this time without hesitation, considering the “success” of the coercive law against heresy. Scholars suggest a fundamental contradiction between this vein of thinking and Augustine’s mature political thought, which ceased to expect politics to serve as an instrument for salvation. As will be discussed in the next chapter, however, he never assumed that political authority could correct the punished in the true sense. Cf. Brown (1969), 340-364; Deane, 211-214. For true repentance and conversion to God was the business of the church, although Christian political authority may be said to help the corrective process indirectly by executing the law in the spirit of love and, through it, prompting the offender to seek salvation.

realm of moral and social activity rooted in the fallen nature of mankind. In the Donatist controversy he discussed political matters (such as authority, judgment, law and punishment) within the context of ecclesiastical administration and order; consequently political authority was evaluated in a positive way, its legitimacy and usefulness overweighing its eschatological limitations. In *De civitate dei*, however, the balance tips the other way, to emphasise the limited nature of political functions, which are identified with the realm of *civitas terrena*; hence a sharper distinction becomes perceptible between political peace and ecclesiastical peace. The occasion for this reevaluation came in 410, when the eternal city, Rome, fell to the Goths, together with the myth of *pax Romana*. And by the time the political treatise of Book XIX was written (c.425/7), he had expanded the horizon of his theory of peace, which had become more sharply attuned to the tension between the two ages (now and then), the two authorities (divine and political) and the two societies (heavenly and earthly).

CHAPTER FIVE

Pax Civitatis:

Political Theology of *De Civitate Dei*

1. *Civitas Dei* and *Civitas Terrena*: the providential order of history

De civitate dei (413-427) was a product of a historic political crisis—the fall of the Roman Empire. The catastrophe gave rise to a hitherto frustrated, yet persistent discontent with Christianity, accusing it of being the cause of the decline of the empire. Christian intellectuals were on the defensive. In Africa they turn to Augustine, urging him to refute pagan criticisms.¹ In a letter (ep. 138) Augustine proposes an ambitious enterprise: the exposition of a Christian political philosophy. For the issue central to the pagan criticism is the integrity of Christianity, particularly in relation to the welfare of a political community (*res publica*) based on the moral order—or “*concordia*”—of its citizens (cf. 2.9-3.17). Against pagan criticisms Christianity must prove itself viable for the ordering of society—“to establish, extend and guard” (3.17) not only the perfect society of angels and saints or the church on earth, but an earthly society as well. Already at this point Augustine has a clear intention to demonstrate a full-scale apologia in terms of the *civitas dei* and the *civitas terrena*—on the basis of a concept already familiar to us: historical providence.² As he does against the Manichees, the Neoplatonists and the Donatists, he argues against pagan critics that God’s will remains unchanged in his government of changeable things (including wealth and power, customs and regimes); for this is the “way of divine providence” (1.2), by which “different eras” (*diversitas temporum, diversa tempora*) are integrated into the “beauty of the entire world” (*pulchritudo universi saeculi*, 1.4-5). In *De civitate dei* the concept—*providentia* operating in various *tempora*

¹ Cf. Brown (1969), 299-312.

² See above p. 131.

within the *saeculum*—will be developed into an elaborate historiography of the providential “order of eras” (*ordo temporum*). The divine government of human affairs holds the key to the inseparable link between politics and Christianity in terms of “earthly peace” (XIX.17). And, finally at this juncture, *ordo* is incorporated once again with *pax* in a Christian political philosophy of peace.

(1) *Tempora christiana, tempora Romana*³ and *ordo temporum*: a Christian critique

The narrative of human history opens with a memorable introduction of the main theme:

Most glorious is the city of God, both in this passage of eras living by faith as stranger among the impious, and in that stability of eternal throne, for which it now waits with patience “until righteousness returns to judgement”, when it will attain with eminence the final victory and perfect peace. (I.praef.)

In this short passage Augustine clarifies the social entity (*civitas dei*), the ontological condition (dual existence in time and eternity), and the eschatological goal (*victoria ultima, pax perfecta*) of his narrative. From the outset human history is defined as a “passage of eras” (*cursus temporum*) pointing towards salvation in perfect peace. However, this is only one aspect of human history. For there is also “the earthly city” (*civitas terrena*), the life of which consists not in the true virtue of “humility”, but in the “arrogant spirit” and the “lust for domination” (ibid.). Augustine engages in a lengthy critique of the political history of Rome concerning its civic morality (Books I-V) and the theological philosophy at its basis (VI-X), before he actually presents the history of the city of God (XI-XXII). The two-part narrative of human history intends, in the end, to unravel the “*ordo temporum*”⁴ (IV.33) out of the “*cursus temporum*” (above, I.praef.)—that is, to retrace the progression of the two cities through significant eras and demonstrate how they are arranged by providence.

To both Augustine and his opponents there is one era (*tempus* or *tempora*) of special interest: the “Christian era” (*tempora christiana*), the politico-religious institution initiated by

³ The term “*tempora Romana*” is not Augustine’s, but used here to compare with “*tempora christiana*”. Nevertheless, as the following examination shows, “*tempus*” and “*tempora*” are the key terms in his critical appraisal of the “*historia Romana*” glorified by pagan critics.

⁴ Also in XVII.1, XX.4; for a similar concept, cf. X.15, 32.2, XI.18, XII.20, 21.3, XVI.15.1.

Constantine and established by Theodosius. At the height of the Donatist controversy, as we have seen, Augustine proclaimed triumphantly that the Christian era marked a fulfilment of old prophecy: the Christianisation of Roman emperors and their protection of the religion were obvious signs of progress towards salvation. However, after the sack of Rome, which damaged the credibility of the Christian era, Augustine's defence of the Constantinian-Theodosian establishment has become a good deal more sedate—more apologetic and less triumphal.⁵ In the early part of *De civitate dei* he presents the Christian era simply as a morally superior period characterised by tender mercy and disciplined conduct, which pacified even the invading barbarians. The fall of Rome is rather a culmination of the decline of civic morality which started long before the Christian era.⁶ Augustine's defence of the Christian era is not so much a celebration over prophetic fulfilment as a comparative evaluation of one era out of many other. Accordingly, he presents a critical appraisal of what the opponents boast of—namely, “the history of Rome (III.10)—comprehensively, “era” by “era”.⁷

The glorious “history of past eras” (IV.1) of Rome is divided into six periods, each of which is examined in detail, and demythologized to the core.⁸ For instance, the forty-year peace enjoyed in the early kingdom was simply attributed to the reluctance of neighbouring nations to attack Rome (cf. III.9-10); the long peace eventually corrupted the morality of the citizens (cf. III.14.1). Republican Rome did no better: in two eras particularly praised by Sallust the Roman people (*populus*) and commonwealth (*res publica*) embodied an exceptional moral order, not for the sake of “justice”, but, as Sallust himself admits, as a result of “fear”, in one era, of violent revenge and brutal despotism, and in the other, of the formidable foe, Carthage.⁹ Compared with the true glory of

⁵ Cf. Markus (1988), 38-39.

⁶ Cf. e.g. DCD. I.1, III.1, IV.1-2.

⁷ On the Roman's love of *historia*, see II.3. Note Augustine's conscious deployment of the term “*tempus*” (or “*tempora*”) in his critical review of the Roman history and in his exposition of the history of the two cities in later books.

⁸ The periodisation is as follows: <1> the “era” of the early kingdom (753-510 BC); <2> the “era” of the early Republic praised by Sallust as the rule of “the equitable and moderate law” (509-495 BC); <3> the “era” of external “wars” and internal “discords and dissensions” (495-202 BC); <4> the “era” between the last two Punic Wars glorified by Sallust as a testimony to the “highest moral behaviour and the greatest concord” of the Roman people (202-146 BC); <5> another “era” of civil wars (146-27 BC); <6> the “era” of the Roman Empire (27 BC and after). Cf. II.18, III.16-17, 21.

⁹ Cf. e.g. II.18.1-2.

the city of God all these achievements were like the “fragile splendour of a brittle glass” which may shatter suddenly (IV.3), or “a smoke that has no weight”, always drifting with the wind of fate (V.17.2).

Nevertheless, as part of the providential order, Roman history offers rich pedagogical “models” (*exempla*) to an astute observer.¹⁰ Among the political achievements of Rome, Augustine praises the laws of the early Republic, which disenfranchised actors of immoral religious plays and prohibited poets from making political slander: this is “an excellent prudence to be commemorated among the Roman glories”, which exemplifies “the spirit of the city avid of glory and genuinely Roman” (II.13). Among prominent political figures, Regulus, a republican consul, is regarded more highly than Cato the Young, because of his faithfulness and endurance during a captivity, whereas the latter resorted to suicide when defeated by Caesar (cf. I.24); but Cato is preferred to Caesar, because he had respect for “diligence at home, just rule abroad, and free spirit in counsel”, which is “closer to the truth” than the virtue of the latter (V.12.5).

What, then, do these historical models teach? First, they show that a good civic morality is to be distinguished from a bad one within the confines of human justice. In Book V (12-20) Augustine identifies the “moral source” (*virtus*) of good “moral conduct” (*mores*) in Roman history. It is *cupiditas gloriae*, the “desire for glory”. The “desire”, which is usually a symptom of human sinfulness, may be called “*virtus*” in this particular case, since the Romans “suppressed all other desires by the great desire for this one thing” (12.3, 12.1). The virtue of the boundless desire for glory and honour is evident, when contrasted against the worst of all vices, the “lust for domination”. For the lover of good reputation is more likely to turn to others for wise counsel and good judgement, whereas the lover of domination simply despises or ignores anybody but himself (19). Nevertheless, Augustine’s positive evaluation of pagan virtue is a limited and relative one. There is a still higher morality based on “true virtue”—the “love of justice” of the creator (14). Christians are encouraged, after all, by the Roman *exempla* to live virtuously and patiently (cf. 16-17), as they show how much

¹⁰ E.g. V.16, 18. Cf. Brown (1969), 308; Markus (1988), 57.

sacrifice, obedience, faith and endurance were required even for the glory of Rome (18.1-2). Then, “how much love is due to the heavenly fatherland for the sake of eternal life, if the earthly fatherland is loved so much by its citizens for human glory” (16)?

The comparison of civic moralities concludes with a short list of good *exempla* of Christian emperors (cf. V.24-26), which is commonly known as the “mirror for princes”.¹¹ Previously Augustine would have discussed the topic as a testimony to the Christian era, the arrival of a new phase of salvation-history. However, the term “*tempora christiana*” seldom appears in Book V or in the rest of *De civitate dei*, or even in the post-*collatio* polemics against the heretics.¹² The shift of emphasis corresponds with the objective of Augustine’s apologia—to defend the “city of God” as an eschatological reality, not the Christian Rome as an earthly institution.¹³ All historical eras, including the *tempora christiana*, must be compared and evaluated eschatologically. The new perspective is expressed in a question posed throughout the narrative of *tempora Romana*:

What morality of theirs was it that the true God, in whose power all kingdoms are, deigned to assist, and for what reason did he deign to assist in expanding the empire? (I.36; also IV.2, V.12.1)

Augustine’s critical reappraisal of Roman gods and civic virtues ultimately aims to lay the groundwork for explicating the historical operation of divine providence.

Book V is a small but pivotal treatise, summarising Augustine’s enterprise in two sections, the doctrinal basis (1-11) and the actual operation of providence in the history of Rome (12-26). Augustine begins with an announcement of the eudaemonist framework of historical providence: happiness (*felicitas*) is a gift not of a goddess (*fortuna*), but of God (V.praef.). Among pagan

¹¹ The “mirror for princes” is the title of a medieval/Renaissance genre of writing, of which this passage has been seen, rather implausibly, as a forerunner. Brown regards these chapters as “some of the most shoddy passages of *the City of God*”; cf. his “Political Society”, in B. Smalley ed., *Trends in Medieval Political Thought* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 8. O. O’Donovan finds in V.24-26 only “a modest account” of a theory of justice: cf. O. O’Donovan (1987), 101-102. DCD. V.24-26 is an intriguing passage, which requires a sensitive handling for a correct understanding. As will be argued below in relation to the idea of the “use” of earthly peace, Augustine’s argument here is eschatologically oriented: the functions of Christian emperors are limited (because of their earthly existence), necessary (in the post-lapsarian condition of human society), and yet distinctively different from pagan emperors (according to the providential order of eras). See below, pp. 244-245.

¹² The only references being *Contra Julianum* V.16.65, *De cura* 2.3, en.ps. 140, serm. 131. These mainly refer to what pagan critics say about the Christian era. See below, p.196, n.19.

¹³ Cf. Markus (1988), 37-38.

philosophers the most persuasive is Cicero, whose major concern is the apparent contradiction between “foreknowledge” and “freedom of choice” (9.1); it must be either that something is “in our will”, or that “there is foreknowledge of future things” (9.2).¹⁴ According to Augustine, Cicero is mistaken in his understanding of freedom of choice, that a choice is free when there is no prior cause, namely, when the choice itself is the “efficient cause” (*causa efficiens*) of an action (ibid.). However, argues Augustine, providence and the will are perfectly compatible: providence is the ultimate “efficient cause” which determines other causes in the “order of things”, or the “order of causes” (9.4); the will is an integral part of it as “the cause of human actions” (9.3).

The key to Augustine’s thesis lies in what he means by the “order of causes”. Whereas Cicero perceives it as a contingent collection of various causes, Augustine understands it in terms of the two channels of divine government. To Cicero providence is simply a miscellany of “fortuitous causes”, one category among many others like “natural” or “voluntary” causes. To Augustine, however, the *ordo causae* is a coherent system of causality governed through two channels—of “natural causes” and of “voluntary causes”—by divine will, to which also belong other “hidden” (rather than “fortuitous”) causes (9.4). Voluntary causes in particular can be differentiated also ontologically according to the nature of the agent (animal, human, angelic, and divine); but a moral choice of a rational agent requires a special care of providence, by which God rewards what he has created (i.e. good will), and punishes what he has not (i.e. sin). In this way, the dual providence demonstrates simultaneously that all action, and hence all choice, are known to God, and that neither the natural existence of the will nor its natural power to choose freely should be denied. For “our will has as much power as God willed and foresaw as appropriate” (ibid.).

Augustine’s theory of providence culminates in an elaborate creed in Chapter 11. Articulated here is Augustine’s Christian worldview, beginning with a threefold identification of Christian divinity: the Trinitarian God as the creator of the order of nature, the true source of human happiness, and the supreme judge over all human actions, both right and wrong. Then follows an

¹⁴ Cf. Cicero, *De divinatione* (fragment), ch.2, passim, *De natura deorum* III, and *De fato* passim (10-11, 17, 23-26).

ontological description of the order of nature, varying from immaterial “essence” to “seminal life” and “sensible life”, and to “intelligent life”, distinguished according to the limit, measure, form, order and number of each existence. Finally, and most importantly to our purpose, the confession of faith in divine providence concludes with an unambiguous affirmation of political life as part of the providential order, as he declares:

In no way should one believe that [God] wished the kingdoms of men and their domination and servitude to be detached from the laws of his providence”.¹⁵

The second section (V.12-26) is, therefore, not simply a summary of the narrative of *tempora Romana* in the preceding books. By comparing the Roman and Christian morality, Augustine seeks to reformulate his critique of Roman history according to the concept of providence. A definition of the desire for glory as the source of relatively good moral qualities (12-13), two comparative evaluations (between two Roman virtues, and between an earthly and the true virtue, 12-23), a list of *exempla* of Christian emperors (24-26)—these moral arguments all testify that history as the *ordo temporum* is part of providential government of human affairs.¹⁶ On the one hand, history can be periodised variously, into *tempora Romana* and *tempora christiana*, or in other ways suggested by the Bible (e.g. *tempora iudicum*, *tempora regum*, *tempora prophetarum*, *tempora apostolorum*), according to the “signs” or unique socio-cultural characteristics embodied by its moral customs (*mores*). On the other, a seemingly contingent succession of one era after another is, in fact, an intricate “arrangement” (*distributio*) of different and distinctive parts into an “ordered whole”.¹⁷ To Christians in particular, history offers the “right education of the human race, as far as the people of God [are] concerned, [...] like that of an individual; it [progresses] through *divisions of times*, just as [the individual’s does] by attaining each stage of life” (X.14—Italics added).¹⁸

¹⁵ The creed of providence is mentioned repeatedly and in various forms throughout *De civitate dei*: cf. esp. X.32.2, XI.16.

¹⁶ See DCD. XII.21.1-6 for Augustine’s theory of “*ordinatio providentiae*” against the cyclical view of history of pagan philosophers, especially Porphyry’s.

¹⁷ Cf. X.15, 32.2, XII.20.

¹⁸ Cf. also I.1, 7-9, 28-29, V.9-10.

To Augustine the *tempora christiana* has come to mean a significant but provisional phase within the providential *ordo temporum*. The Christian era is no longer a benchmark of salvation; in its infrequent use in the rest of *De civitate dei*,¹⁹ the term is redefined Christologically and eschatologically outside the polemic against pagan critics. Rather than the Christianised Rome, it now signifies an era stretching between the first and the second coming of Christ, synonymous to another term the “sixth age” (*sexta aetas*) of the biblically inspired seven-part periodisation (cf. X.14.3). As a consequence the redefined *tempora christiana* has lost its privileged position in salvation-history, and is overshadowed by other historiographical terms, such as “*haec vita*”, “*mundus*” and “*hoc saeculum*”, which characterise the world of the meantime.²⁰

For a correct understanding of Augustine’s renewed interest in the “interim” world, we must beware of a danger of characterising it simply in terms of “*saeculum*” for some reasons. <1> The term *saeculum* does not necessarily mean the interim, but is frequently qualified by demonstrative pronouns, e.g. “this” world of mankind, or the “future” or “eternal” world of the kingdom of Christ (cf. esp. XV.1.1, XVI.21). <2> The expression, “*hoc saeculum*”, is but one of the several phrases denoting the interim, alongside “*haec vita*” and “*mundus*”, which appear equally frequently, if not more. <3> Scholars’ inadvertent use of the term could have a further misleading implication, if anachronistically associated with another modern term, “secular”, suggesting the irreligiousness of the state, or its separation from religion—a concept which simply does not exist in Augustine’s political theology.²¹ For the core idea of *tempora christiana*—the Christianised Rome as a kind of prophetic fulfilment—survives in Augustine’s other polemical writings against the new foes, the Pelagians, as well as against the surviving Donatists. He is still convinced that religious coercion is an appropriate form of imperial service to God according to the demand of the era of history. As will

¹⁹ XII.21.3, XIII.19. Cf. also ep. 118.20-21, serm. 241.7. Cf. Markus (1988), 38, n.3.

²⁰ The earlier usage of *tempora christiana* has disappeared from his general terminology into the background of his historiography. The point is discussed convincingly by Markus: cf. idem (1988), 36-41. But our position differs slightly from his, especially when, referring to serm. 80.8, he concludes that “[t]he whole idea of *tempora christiana* is here rejected, as an invalid objectification of the attitudes of a multitude of individuals” (p. 41). Its core idea is still there in the background.

²¹ On this last point we differ most sharply from Markus, along with more secularist commentators.

be discussed later, the correction through fear can still be justified, albeit limited as a provisional measure, in terms of providential pedagogy.

(2) *Civitas dei* and *civitas terrena*: a Christian apologia

<exortus: the creation and the fall>

The promised apologia for the city of God begins in Book XI. It follows the course of the two cities in the providential order of history from their “beginning” (*exortus*, XI-XIV) through “progression” (*excursus*, XV-XVIII) to the “appointed ends” (*debiti fines*, XIX-XXII). The itinerary of the two cities, in the end, reaffirms what lies at the core of Augustine’s ethics: the creation-order. The ontological goodness of all nature, now injured by the fall of human beings, is none the less reconfirmed Christologically in the Incarnation as well as in the Resurrection, which points further to the eschatological promise of the full recovery of the creation-order.

In Books XI-XIV Augustine describes the creation-order on the basis of his past exegesis of the Genesis. <1> The creation-order embodies the will of God, who is defined ontologically as the creator of different natures (cf. XII.2, XIII.14), epistemologically as the “wisdom” of all other “ideas” (cf. XI.10.3), and ethically as the “supreme good” (passim; cf. XII.1.2) and the “ordainer” (*ordinator*) of the changeable things, including time and human will (XI.6, 17). <2> The creation-order is the providential government of nature (*natura*) in terms of the limitation and goodness, both on the existential and the cosmological level.²² <3> The creation-order demonstrates the original nature of a human being as a rational, mortal image of God,²³ whose *ordo* lies existentially in the subjection of the body to the soul, and cosmologically in the “middle” position between the angel and the animal (XII.22), especially assigned to “have dominion” over the rest of the earthly creation (cf. XIV.22, XIX.15). <4> The creation-order also dictates that sociality lies at the heart of human

²² On the providential order of nature, cf. e.g. XI.22, XII.4-5. For its existential aspect cf. XI.9-10, 15-16. Augustine defines a creature in terms of corporeality (cf. XI.4), changeability (cf. XII.4-6, XIII.10) and temporality (cf. XI.4.6). These cosmic limitations derive from one fundamental source—the creation *ex nihilo* (cf. e.g. XII.1.3).

²³ Cf. e.g. XI.2, XII.1, XIII.1.

nature, as is demonstrated by the marriage and propagation of the paradisal family.²⁴ For “God ...wished to create men from one man, not only to unite the human race through the likeness of nature, but also to bring it together through a kind of the necessity of kinship into a harmonious unity [bound] by the bond of peace.” (XIV.1)

From the creation-order, however, human beings have fallen as a result of Adam’s original sin, leaving their destiny under the government of dual providence.²⁵ Still, the fall poses an inherent challenge, ontological as well as moral, to the integrity of the creation-order. Ontologically, all evil can be described as a phenomenon “against nature” (*contra naturam*), a perverse movement away from the proper order towards nothingness;²⁶ yet the ontological “disorder” (*perversitas*) or “defect” (*vitium*) is not an annihilation, but a “loss” or “privation” of the created goodness, which remains as long as there is some order left, even in Satan.²⁷ Among all evils, the fall is a profoundly moral problem, since rational creatures have “chosen” to deflect from the “common good for all” (*commune omnibus bonum*) to “their own goods” (*propria bona*, XII.1). An ontological *vitium* thus becomes a moral *peccatum*. The “original” sin was disobedience to God’s command caused by perverse will, particularly by “arrogance” (*superbia*) to be god-like, although the cause of the initial perversity itself can be described only ontologically as “deficient”, not “natural” nor “efficient” (XII.7-9).²⁸ In this way, the fall and its consequences are confined to the realm of human will, which is distinguished from the creation-order (cf. XI.16-18).

At this juncture the creator God turns into a divine ordainer, who restores some order in disorder, by condemning and punishing unnatural evils.²⁹ The first punishment (*poena*) is the expulsion of Adam and his family from the paradise, followed by a still graver consequence—the

²⁴ For natural sociality, cf. e.g. XII.22-23, 28; on the marriage and sexuality in the paradise, see XIV.22-24.

²⁵ Augustine finds the very origin of the fall in God’s separation of the light (i.e. good angels) from the darkness (i.e. bad angels) in Gen. 1:4. Cf. e.g. XI.19.

²⁶ Cf. XI.17, XIV.11.1 & 13.1.

²⁷ Passim; cf. esp. XI.7, XII.6, 8. Cf. XIX.13.2 concerning Satan.

²⁸ On the “original” sin, cf. e.g. XIII.3 and XV.1.2; for the phrase “*peccatum originale*”, cf. *Enchiridion*, VIII.26 and *Natura et gratia*, III.3.

²⁹ Cf. XIII.1, 3-4, 13-15.

hereditary sin and death (cf. XIV.1). The whole human race has become one damned mass (cf. XIV.26) :³⁰ human soul is perpetually disturbed by passions and desires, marriage and propagation tainted by sexual libido, and social life maintained by human subjection of fellow beings. The punitive character of human life after the fall is symbolically characterised by mortality, which has hitherto remained dormant, but now is reactivated, making human life “a race towards death” (III.10).

From the world of created goodness to the world of sin and punishment—precisely in this transition lies the origin of the *civitas dei* and the *civitas terrena*:

And thus (*itaque*) two kinds of love made the two cities: the love of self even to the contempt of God [made] the earthly one, and the love of God even to the point of contempt for self [made] the heavenly. In short, the earthly city glories in itself, and the heavenly city in the Lord. For the former seeks glory from men, but for the latter the greatest glory is God, the witness of conscience. (XIV.28)

Here is Augustine the rhetorician at his best. Against the backdrop of the narrative of creation and fall he effectively illustrates the two modes of human existence in a stark contrast: love of God or self, contempt of human glory or God’s, the lust for domination or the spirit of mutual service. However, to appreciate the whole picture of his logic, we must put the passage into a wider perspective. The clue is given in the opening conjunctive, “*itaque*”, which links the passage with the preceding argument (XIV.25-27); the entire section (25-28) forms a conclusion to the narrative of *exortus* (XI-XIV). The premise of the argument is ontological eudaemonism: “our nature seeks” the “happy” and “righteous” life in the enjoyment of God, as was once realised in the paradise (25, 26). Augustine bases his argument, once again, on the duality of providence: the “creator” of all natures is also the “supporter” and “rewarder” of good will, the “disposer” and “condemner” of bad will—and the “ordainer” of both (26). Augustine presses on: under the rule of “that creator and arranger”, the perverse disorder of sinners could not pervert the right order of things” (26); for he “who providentially and omnipotently has bestowed to each his own knows the good use not only of the

³⁰ Cf. XV.1.2, XX.12, for *massa damnata*.

good but also of the evil” (27).³¹ Providential order safeguards the creation-order from human perversity, by ensuring that two kinds of love—“a love which loves that which should not be loved” and “a love which loves that which should be loved”—“can exist in one man” (XI.28),³² or indeed in human society at large after the fall.

<excursus: *sacra historia*>

Between the creation and the eschaton lies the progression (*excursus*) of the two cities, proceeding “in a mysterious manner” through the “entire time or world” governed by the cycle of death and birth (XV.1.1). Augustine describes the progression as “mysterious”, precisely because there lies the “sacred history” (*sacra historia*)—the traces of the city of God “hidden” in the “prophetic images” and other signs recorded in the scriptures.³³

Cain and Abel, the first two sons of Adam and Eve, offer a paradigm case. Inspired by Paul in 1 Cor. 15:46 (“it is not the spiritual which is first but the animal and then the spiritual”) Augustine concludes from the story of fratricide that the murderer is the first earthly citizen, and the victim the first citizen of the city of God (cf. XV.1.2). Ontologically, the brothers represent the archetypes, or “two forms” (*duae formae*), of the historical reality of mankind, one “demonstrating its own presence” and the other “serving by its own presence to point to the heavenly city”; the former derives from “the nature corrupted by sin”, and the latter from “the grace liberating nature from sin” (ibid.). Cain and Abel also show us how the two cities coexist in this world. As the seniority of Cain suggests, the earthly city sets the primal mode of life, out of which the heavenly

³¹ The “*rectus ordo rerum*” (XI.26) represents both the creation and the ordering of human will. We shall see below how Augustine elaborates on the transformed doctrine of order and the concept of dual providence in a political context.

³² Hence his famous anthropological formula: “*parte iustus, parte peccator*” (en.ps. 140.15); cf. also *Natura et gratia*, 37.45, 43.50, and ep. 138.2.11. See above, p. 127, n. 70.

³³ For *sacra historia*, cf. e.g. XV.8.1, 12.2; cf. Markus (1988), 9-21. For the “hidden” “prophetic images”, cf. XV.2, XVIII.1. Augustine’s favourite imagery also includes “shadow” (*umbra*) and “symbol” (*figura*). His favourite examples are Noah’s ark as a prophetic symbol for the church (XV.26.1, XVI.7), Abraham for the justification of the uncircumcised (XVI.23), Isaac for the Christian piety and obedience (XVI.32), the Exodus for the passion of Christ (XVI.43.1), David for the coming reign of Christ (XVII.14-18), and Solomon for the promised peace in heaven (XVII.13).

city is to emerge—not vice versa. For, first, there is the original sin, and then, the work of grace in Christ (cf. *ibid.*).

Until the final separation of the two cities, heavenly citizens endure the life of “pilgrimage” (*peregrinatio*) in the earthly city.³⁴ Eschatologically, therefore, the life of pilgrimage has two important features. On the one hand, though outnumbered by earthly citizens, the “pilgrims” (*peregrini*) are a living testimony to the work of grace revealed by Christ and maintained by divine providence. On the other, their exact identity is hidden from our imperfect knowledge; the pilgrim is bound to live “in a complete mixture” (*permixtio, permixtum*) with the earthly city. Worse still, “having participated in injustice”, the pilgrims are easily corrupted by the lures of the earthly life, to the extent that they can be nearly annihilated, as it happened in the days before the Flood.³⁵

Despite the inherent ambiguities, however, Augustine traces the lineage of the sacred history following a special kind of the “order of eras” (XVII.1), which he calls the biblical “division of times” (XVI.24.2) or “eras of the city of God” (XVI.35). The city of God begins with the “eras” (*tempora*) from Adam and his sons till Noah (XV.15.1), proceeds through various “eras” under Abraham and his sons (XVI.24-25), the judges, the kings (XVI.43.2-3), and Solomon (XVII.13), until it finally reaches the “era (*tempus*) of the bodily presence of Christ and of his disciples” (XVIII.51.2). However, the period after Christ’s resurrection remains “blank” (Markus) as a time suspended until the final judgement after his second coming.³⁶ The narrative of *excursus* concludes in Book XVIII with a detailed comparison of the sacred history with the history of the *civitas terrena*—again era by era.³⁷ Within the framework of the providential order of eras, in this way, the

³⁴ Passim; cf. also XVIII.1, 52.2. Augustine remains agnostic about the precise number of the elect, while emphasising their predetermined number (cf. XIV.26, XX.8.3) and the greater number of the damned (cf. XIII.23.3); also for its possible increase in the end, cf. XXII.1.2. Deane’s handling of Augustine’s theory of predestination is misleading on this point: cf. Deane, 18-21. On the hidden presence of the heavenly citizens even among pagans, cf. I.35, XVIII.47

³⁵ For commingling, see I.35, XI.1, XVII.3. For the moral corruption of the pilgrims of the city of God, see XV.22, both of which refer to the condition before the Flood.

³⁶ Markus (1988), 23. In this connection Augustine warns against confusing the “time of persecutions” under pagan emperors with the “time of the Antichrist” at the end of history (DCD. XVIII.52.1).

³⁷ Cf. esp. XVIII.1; note the remarkable frequency of the term *tempus* or *tempora* in the book.

sacred history of the city of God finally emerges out of its mysterious, shadow-like presence in the history of the earthly city.³⁸

<*debiti fines*: the judgement>

To God the final destiny of the two cities is already known: the ends (*fines*) have been determined (*debiti*). In Books XIX-XXII Augustine expounds on the theme of predestination, covering various topics, such as the first and the second resurrection, the visible and the invisible church, the “millennium”, the last persecution by the Antichrist, eternal punishment, purgatory, restoration of creation-order, and salvation. But for further examination it suffices to point out three features of the narrative of the “appointed ends”.

First, the significance of *pax*. The final part of *De civitate dei* starts with a book wholly dedicated to the theory of peace, which embodies his most consciously construed “political” philosophy.³⁹ The concept is a crucial linchpin between *De civitate dei* and his entire moral and political thinking. Throughout *De civitate dei* Augustine refers to the significance of *pax* in the civic life. While the “perfect peace” is the common goal of the city of God (I.praef., XXII.29.1), the “commonwealth of Rome”, too, was praised for its blessed “peace” (II.20). Indeed, “peace is a great benefit” bestowed by God as a necessary good even to the impious and evil (III.9). However, what the city of God on pilgrimage “long for” is the “peace of the fatherland” (XV.6), not an earthly peace; even the long “peace” of Solomon is not the “great good” of “that peace” itself, but the “shadow of what is to come” (XVII.13). After all, each of the two cities lives “in its own kind of peace” (XIV.1). The argument culminates in Book XIX, which defines *pax* in three ways: <1> ontologically, as a universal object of desire; <2> provisionally (or historically), as a temporal good of human society; <3> eschatologically, as the salvific gift promised to the pilgrims. In this way, the

³⁸ The sacred order of eras is also illustrated by a familiar historiographical device used in parallel—the seven periods (*aetates*) of human race: cf. XVI.24.2 & 43.3. The scheme has changed little since it first appeared (cf. DGCM. I.23.41, II.3.4).

³⁹ Cf. O. O'Donovan (1987), 90.

concept of peace links the foregoing narrative of *historia Romana* and *sacra historia* (concerning the happiness and misery in the interim world) with the forthcoming narrative of the eschaton (concerning the ultimate happiness and misery). If the imperfect peace of the meantime can be “related” (*referri*, XIX.14) to the perfect peace in eternity, then, politics becomes relevant to Christianity, Christianity to politics.

Secondly, the final four books as a whole offer Augustine’s definitive theory of “justice”: God’s judgement is true justice which governs the city of God, and earthly justice its shadow-like trace. However, as a political theory, there is one decisive shortcoming—namely, a failure to develop a sufficiently articulate concept of political or “relative” justice.⁴⁰ For his “political” defence of Christianity is essentially eschatological in its focus, ultimately to illustrate the sociality and morality of the perfect “political community” (*res publica*) by the contrastingly miserable condition of its earthly variations. As in the first five books, Augustine chooses Cicero as the target of a Christian critique. Both agree that political community is a multitude united by a consensus on the “public good”: “*res publica est res populi*” (XIX.21; cf. II.21). But Cicero’s argument proves problematic to Augustine, when it requires a high quality of “justice” as the prerequisite for a political community, because Augustinian eschatology can recognise only one such political society, the city of God. Only after a proper framework of argument—the horizon (XI–XVIII) and the goal (XIX–XXII) of the theory of (true) justice—is established, can Augustine fully discuss the relationship between true justice and the demands of earthly political society. But, in sharp contrast with his theory of peace, the eschatological preoccupation leaves his apologia for the political viability of Christianity somewhat underdeveloped in terms of justice.⁴¹

The third and final aspect is what we have highlighted throughout our examination—the concept of historical providence. In the narrative of the ends Augustine seeks not only to portray the

⁴⁰ Instead, as we shall discuss below in detail, he has an unambiguous concept of “relative” peace, common to both cities. Cf. DCD. IV.3 for an example illustrating Augustine’s depreciation of earthly (relative) peace. See also above, pp. 132–133.

⁴¹ Cf. O. O’Donovan (1987), 93–94.

ultimate order of the world restored at the eschaton, but also to reveal the reality of penultimate orders examined from the eschatological perspective. He repeatedly explains historical reality as an “interim” or “interval”⁴² between God’s judgement and its execution (cf. XX.8-9): the interim world is a “provisional” showcase of divine justice. To the city of God it provides a kind of “divine education” with an ample supply of signs and examples to teach how to endure adversity, to make a “good use of evil”, and to be “renewed daily” by grace (cf. 2 Cor. 4:16).⁴³ To both cities the interim world also offers basic necessities for their earthly life. For God is one who “makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good” (Matt. 5:34); “the anger of God will remain, [but] even in his anger he will not hold back his mercies” (XXI.24.3). The provisional mercies common to all include propagation, child-rearing, bodily beauty, mental and moral abilities, various intellectual, technological and cultural institutions, and the beauty and usefulness of all other creatures (cf. XXII.24.1-5). All these temporal goods are, in the end, merely “comforts of the miserable and the damned”, not “the rewards of the blessed” (ibid. 24.5). Still, they testify to God’s unlimited love for the damned creature—and to the greatness of the final reward, the eternal rest in peace with God. The creation-order is the fountain of morality, inviting sinners to repentance, and to a good and happy life. Earlier, in XI.28, Augustine has urged his readers to “trace his [God’s] certain footprints, as it were, impressed more strongly in one place, and more weakly in another” in the order of things. Similarly, Augustine’s historiography of the two cities is an attempt at retracing those “footprints” of the ordainer God as is recorded in the bible from the creation till the eschaton. In the providential order of history the creation-order is affirmed and reaffirmed by the two comings of Christ. The beginning turns out to be the end (*finis*) of history, and the end a new beginning.⁴⁴

⁴² E.g. DCD. XIX.26, XX.8.1, 9.3-4.

⁴³ Cf. XI.2 for 2 Cor. 4:16; for the good use of evil, cf. e.g. XI.16-18, 22.

⁴⁴ To Augustine salvation consists in the restoration, rather than transformation, of the original order of creation; cf. Duchrow, 308. No more transformative or progressive is his view of history, because the new aeon promised at its end is still essentially the old aeon, though in the untainted condition before the fall; against H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951; paperback, 1975), 206-218. Niebuhr’s presentation of Augustine as a transformative conversionist is also criticised in O. O’Donovan (1987), 103-110.

2. *Pax Aeterna* and *Pax Terrena*: political philosophy of Book XIX

(1) XIX.1-4: eschatological eudaemonism

Introducing the narrative of the end, Book XIX offers a monumental theological complex, which is at same time historical, ethical and political: keeping the distant horizon of the eschaton always in view, Augustine sets the conditions of interim social life, common to the two cities, within a carefully constructed framework, the theory of “peace”. In the following exegesis we shall demonstrate—especially against H. Fuchs and J. Laufs—that Book XIX must be read properly as a treatise in political philosophy based on the doctrine of dual providence.⁴⁵

The main body of argument (XIX.1-20) introduces and refutes Marcus Varro’s moral philosophy (taken from his lost *De philosophia*). According to Varro the goal of moral philosophy is to achieve the supreme good (*summum bonum*) while avoiding the supreme evil (*summum malum*). Practically, there are six essential questiones to be answered: <1> what the moral ends of action are, <2> how those ends are related to virtue, <3> how these ends are related to social existence, <4> how the moral good can be verified as true, <5> what the appropriate manner of life is, <6> how the life of action is related to that of contemplation (cf. 1.2-3). Varro selects three fundamental alternatives out of the 288 combinations of answers to six questions which he calculates to be theoretically possible. Focussing on the second question, he defines them as follows: “either the primary goods of nature are pursued for the sake of virtue, or virtue for the sake of the primary goods, or both, that is, both virtue and the primary goods of nature for their own sake” (2.3). Varro himself supports the third position (cf. 3.1). In the subsequent chapters (4-20) Augustine presents

⁴⁵ On Fuchs and Laufs, see above, pp. 4-7. Like *De civitate dei* itself Book XIX is a polemical discourse, aimed particularly at two major targets, Varro and Cicero: the first takes up more than two thirds of the book (1-20), while the rest refutes Cicero (21-24) and restates the Christian position (25-28). But the two criticisms are coherently linked: the first twenty chapters lay a theoretical groundwork for the promised demonstration of a Christian definition of *res publica* in XIX.24 (cf. II.21.3). For a convincing interpretation of Book XIX as “an essay in social or political philosophy”, see O. O’Donovan (1987), 89-96.

alternative answers to all six questions: having described the premise of his ethics in response to Varro's first two questions (4), he first discusses the problem of sociality at length (5-17); then, he succinctly refutes Academic scepticism and Cynicism with regard to the manner of style (18-19) and defines an active life as subordinate but complementary to a contemplative life (19); the reply to Varro ends with a short summary of a Christian ethics (20).

The crux of Augustine's contention against Varro (and other pagan philosophers) concerns the understanding of the foundation of moral philosophy—eudaemonism. At the beginning of Book XIX Augustine declares his intention: to describe “the appointed ends of both cities”, by contrasting the “arguments of mortal men, by which they tried to achieve happiness for themselves amidst the unhappiness of this life”, against the “true happiness” promised to the righteous (1.1). The key word is “happiness” (*beatitudo*), both in its perfect and imperfect form. Augustine thus deploys a familiar ontological analogy between order and disorder, insisting that even a delusion of happiness can be a pointer to real happiness, since “the boundary of nature did not allow them [pagan philosophers] to diverge so much from the path of truth” (*ibid.*).

Happiness is commonly defined as the “end of all goods” (*finis bonorum*), that is, what is pursued for its own sake.⁴⁶ Compared with other pagan philosophers, Varro argues convincingly particularly in three points—man, virtue and sociality: the pursuit of happiness is a human action which concerns both body and soul; virtue is “the art of living implanted by instruction”; and the happy life of the wise is a “social” one (cf. 3.1-2). The third point particularly interests Augustine. Just as man loves his own good, he loves the goods of his friends “for their own sake”, and wishes them what he wishes for himself “for their own sake”; the world is a network of friendship, extending from household to city, from the empire to the universe (3.2).⁴⁷ But here ends the agreement between Augustine and Varro—and the ontological analogy between perfect and imperfect happiness.

⁴⁶ In Augustine's mind the positivist concept of the moral end is understood as “that by which a good is perfected to its plenitude”, and therefore as identical with a realist one, the “supreme good” (*summum bonum*, 1.1). See above pp. 111-112.

⁴⁷ Augustine also agrees with Varro on the rest of the cardinal questions, that Academic scepticism is to be rejected, that Cynic specification of the type of clothes and life style is irrelevant to the happy life; and that the combination of both the contemplative and the active life is preferred (cf. XIX.18-19).

The “response of the city of God” (XIX.4) is formulated in the horizon of the eschaton. The fundamental mistake in Varro’s moral philosophy results from confusing a natural and moral good of this world with the supreme good given at the end of the world. In contrast, argues Augustine, Christians “live rightly”, but always “*ex fide*”—knowing that we have not seen “our good” yet, and that we do not have the power to live rightly “unless we should be helped by he who has given [us] that faith itself” (4.1). The supreme good is God’s to give freely, not man’s to achieve autonomously. The fundamental difference between the two positions lies in the demarcation of the sphere of ethics. Eudaemonism is ontologically ingrained in human nature, but to be fulfilled eschatologically. Accordingly, on the premise of eschatological eudaemonism, Varro’s moral principles, “the primary goods of nature” and “virtue”, both have to be redefined. Contrary to human expectation basic natural goods rarely deliver the comfort and joy they promise (cf. 4.2). Neither do cardinal virtues offer better guarantee for happiness in this life; rather, they are the “art of living” in the midst of conflict and contrition, a “perpetual war with vices” with the help of God (4.3-4). Within the eschatological horizon, in the end, Christian ethics acknowledges both the importance and the limitation of virtue. Indeed, “nothing better or more useful can be found in man than [our] very virtues”, but the greater [their] support against the power of dangers, toils and sorrows, the more trustworthy testimonies [they are] to miseries”. True happiness and true virtue do exist—but “not yet”, only “in hope” (4.5).

(2) XIX.5-10: social miseries

In the next thirteen chapters (5-17) Augustine deals with Varro’s third question—the “social life” of the wise. The Christian answer is presented in the form of a theory of peace, which comprises four subsections: <1> an eschatological critique of Varro’s view (5-10), <2> an analogy of peace (11-13), <3> various forms of earthly peace (14-16), and <4> earthly peace and the two cities (17).

From the eschatological perspective Augustine continues to criticise Varro, this time for underestimating human misery, the misery of social existence now. All social goods in this life are necessarily tainted by the “defects in love” (*in amore vitia*), as Terence laments over the reality of peace. Peace is a “sweet” good cherished by all; yet it is an “uncertain” good, since “we do not know the hearts of those with whom we wish to be at peace” (XIX.5). Does Cicero not describe how much grief, suspicion and hypocrisy prevail, even in the peace of a household (*domus*), which is the “common refuge of mankind in the midst of these evils”? Then, how much greater are the miseries in a city (*civitas*), which is so much larger than a household (*ibid.*)?

To illustrate evils disturbing political peace of a city (e.g. crimes, bloodshed, sedition, civil wars) Augustine takes up the case of a judge in the court. For “human judgement” is so flawed that they “are unable to discern the conscience of those who they judge” (XIX.6). “Ignorance” of judges acutely symbolises the misery of civic life, as they manage to maintain social order more often than not by unnecessary tortures and punishments. Fallibility and imperfection are the hallmarks of social life. However, the flaws would not excuse “a wise judge” from his responsibility in the court, because “human judgement [...] cannot be absent from civic life however peaceful it may be” (*ibid.*). Being a judge is not an honour or a pleasure; it is simply a “duty” (*officium*), or a “necessity” (*necessitas*) incurred by the miserable condition of human society (*ibid.*)

The sombre portrait reaches its peak at the third level of human society. The misery of the “world” (*orbis terrae*), or, more concretely, of the empire, is described in three (characteristically Roman) aspects—language, war and friendship. Due to the “diversity of languages”, the “natural similitude for uniting men together” is so disturbed that “a man would rather be with his dog than with a foreigner” (XIX.7). Worse still, the magnificent peace of a strong empire like Rome is always achieved by wars, and many are fought on a devastating scale for unjust reasons and through hideous means. Granted that a wise ruler may wage “just wars”, his happiness is compromised, since it is already tainted from the beginning by the initial “injustice of the opposing side” (*ibid.*). Furthermore, friendship is a global and cosmic misery. For, the further it extends, the more anxiety

and sadness it brings, rather than consolation of mutual trust and love (cf. XIX.8). In the universe, while the two groups of angels are separated, human beings seem to befriend the bad ones far more than the good ones (cf. XIX.9). This is the reality of our provisional social life. Augustine concludes:

Here, to be sure, we are called blessed when we have peace, no matter how small that may be which can be possessed in a good life; but this happiness is revealed to be utter misery compared to that happiness which we call final. (XIX.10)

Still, the miserable, earthly peace is what is available to the city of God on pilgrimage: “for when we have this peace—as much as is available here to mortal men in the mortal [condition of] things—[and] if we live well, [our] virtue uses this benefit of peace rightly” (ibid.). But what exactly is the right use of earthly peace? With this question in mind Augustine proceeds to expound the theoretical foundation of his political philosophy.

(3) XIX.11: *pax aeterna* and *pax terrena*

Augustine’s theory of peace is also an analogy based on the doctrine of order: eternal peace and earthly peace are eschatologically different—and yet ontologically similar. From *ordo* to *pax* Augustine has changed the “flagship”-concept of his political philosophy, but intentionally. As we have seen, peace is a key social concept, recently developed in the ecclesiological controversy against Donatists, and consciously referred to from the beginning of *De civitate dei*. Peace is also a soteriological concept, again developed originally in his ecclesiology and now deployed in Book XIX to link the preceding theological discussion of happiness with the subsequent socio-political argument. What *pax* needs is a comprehensive theoretical basis of *ordo*. Here we have reached the final stage in the development of Augustine’s central political concept.

The analogical relationship between earthly and eternal peace concerns three interactive aspects of human sociality, ontological, historical and eschatological: *pax* is a fundamental good innate in human nature, providing a necessary condition for human society during the interim, but ultimately to be perfected at the end of history. In order to prove that earthly peace is the necessary condition for—and the legitimate goal of—socio-political activities, Augustine must now turn from

the negative to the positive aspect of the analogy of peace. “Peace, we might say, is the [true] end of our goods, as we have said eternal life is” (XIX.11). The opening announcement stems from Augustine’s conviction that peace is an eschatological gift of salvation bestowed individually as well as collectively. For the heavenly Jerusalem is “the vision of peace” (*visio pacis*).⁴⁸ Nevertheless, he is somewhat hesitant to call peace the final good, which he prefers to call “eternal life”. The hesitation arises from an ambiguity inherent in the term “peace”, as it “is constantly used in connection with human affairs, where there is no eternal life at all”. To avoid confusion, the supreme good may well be called “the peace in eternal life”, or “the eternal life in peace” (*ibid.*).

Having reconfirmed the theoretical premise of eschatological eudaemonism, Augustine is able to evaluate peace more positively: “so great a good is peace that even in earthly and mortal affairs nothing more pleasing is usually heard, nothing more desirable is aspired for, and finally nothing better can be found” (XIX.11). Here we hear a great rhetorician giving a public speech (*cf. audiri*) on a fundamental good (i.e. *pax*) to be “desired” (*concupisci*) and “found” (*inveniri*)—even in “earthly politics” (*etiam in rebus terrenis atque mortalibus*). Augustine is ready to engage in what he calls “a short digression”, which is not irrelevant to clarifying “the end of the city of God, which is the theme of our discussion”. But the subject of earthly peace is itself worth discussing because of “the sweetness of peace itself, which is cared by all (*pax [...] quae omnibus cara est*)” (*ibid.*).

For generations, scholars have acknowledged the significance of XIX.12-17 to Augustine’s social and political thought. Yet many have failed to appreciate the logic behind Augustine’s argument. Let us closely examine how Augustine theorises the necessity and legitimacy of earthly peace in chapters 12 and 13.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ XIX.11. On the earlier reference to Jerusalem as *visio pacis*, see above, p. 146, n.21.

⁴⁹ Fuchs fails to understand both the logical connection between the two chapters (11-12) and hence the integrity of Augustine’s argument between chapters 11 and 13: *cf.* Fuchs, 18. Laufs, on the other hand, recognises the coherence of Augustine’s argument, although, in the end, misunderstanding its intention.

(4) XIX.12: ontological analogy

<the universal desire for peace>

Chapter 12 begins with a reference to what has just been said: “*pax omnibus cara est*”

(XIX.11). “This”, writes Augustine:

anyone acknowledges with me, who observes *human affairs* and *common nature* in one way or another; for just as there is no one who does not desire happiness, so *there is no one who does not wish to have peace*. (12.1—Italics added)

“*Nemo est qui pacem habere nolit*”—peace is the universal object of desire. In this short statement Augustine demonstrates both the premise and the framework of his political philosophy. First, it is based on *eudaemonism* reformulated in terms of peace: everyone naturally pursues peace to be happy. Secondly, he intends to discuss the topic within the doctrine of *dual providence*, that is, to observe how providential order governs human pursuit of peace in “nature” as well as in “human affairs” (i.e. politics).⁵⁰ And through *ontological analogy* Augustine links the two: even a perverse pursuit of peace partially mirrors the true peace to be achieved, thus testifying to the indestructible goodness of human nature and, ultimately, the righteousness of its creator.

Harald Fuchs, in his close exegesis of the chapter, fails to comprehend the importance of Augustine’s eudaemonist definition of peace, and also misrepresents the ontological framework and analogy as essentially Stoic (hypothetically attributed to Varro).⁵¹ In contrast, Joachim Laufs acknowledges both the eudaemonist premise and the ontological analogy articulated in and outside the quoted passage.⁵² However, in the end, Laufs’ minute exegesis proves inadequate in two respects: it fails to address either the eschatological horizon or the political orientation of Augustine’s theory of peace.

⁵⁰ Laufs is ambiguous about the relationship between nature and human affairs, especially when he interprets the second half of the quoted passage (*sicut enim nemo est qui gaudere nolit, ita nemo est qui pacem habere nolit*), writing that “*enim*” refers to “*natura communis*” in the preceding sentence: cf. idem, 7. However, the conjunctive refers to both “*natura communis*” and “*res humanae*”, and the two issues are clearly distinguished.

⁵¹ On the first point, see Fuchs, 18; on the second, see ibid. 16-17 and 145-154.

⁵² Cf. Laufs, 7, 23-28.

<ontological analogy>

In the rest of chapter 12 Augustine explains how peace is desired and pursued even in the perverse condition of human life, both socially (concerning “human affairs”) and ontologically (concerning “common nature”). In human society, for example, war is not simply an antonym of peace; rather, peace is the “desirable end” of war. The most belligerent people would go into war from the “intention of peace” (*intentio pacis*), that is, from a desire to gain “another peace that they prefer” (12.1). Even in civil wars and among brigands there is a “form of peace (*species pacis*) maintained among the conspirators and adherents”; there is also “a shadowy kind of peace” (*umbra pacis*) in any form of mastery (*dominatio*), however cruel it is, and whether in a “household”, a “city” or a “nation”.⁵³ For a society to exist, there must be peace:

Therefore, *everyone wants to have peace with his own people*, with whom he wishes to live according to his own will. For, when he makes war, he wishes to make his enemies his own, if he can, and to impose the terms of their own peace on his subjects. (12.1—Italics added)

“*Pacem cum suis omnes habere cupiunt*”—for the third time Augustine reiterates the main thesis that peace is the universal object of desire, even in perverse “human affairs”.

Augustine illustrates the point now in terms of “*natura communis*”: the desire for peace is innate in the nature which human beings share with other creatures. The first example is taken from a rather unexpected source: a fictional “half-human” figure, Cacus, in Vergil’s *Aeneid* (12.2). The anti-social and malicious character of Cacus serves Augustine’s intention well—to describe how peace exists in human nature of extreme perversity.⁵⁴ In its completely asocial life Cacus “wants nothing more than peace, in which no one would trouble him, nor any force or terror would disturb his quiet life”. Peace he strives for is threefold: <1> the peace of the body among its parts, <2> the peace of the soul which appeases bodily needs and desires, and, as its result, <3> the peace between

⁵³ Obviously both examples allude to earlier remarks: cf. e.g. III.23 for the misery of civil wars; cf. IV.4 for a band of brigands. Here I disagree with Fuchs, who suggests these examples as Augustine’s ineffective addition to a pagan tract on peace: cf. Fuchs, 20, 22-23. In both IV.4 and XIX.12.1, Augustine associates a brigand in his household with a ruler of a city or a nation in terms of human domination, which is here described as a form of social peace. Cf. Laufs, 13-15.

⁵⁴ Cf. *Aeneid* 8, 195/6. Against Fuchs, who insists that Augustine abruptly breaks the logical flow of argument by introducing the story of Cacus. Laufs suggests Vergil as a medium for the transition from the notion of war as “*subiectis leges pacis inponere*” (at the end of 12.1) and the story of Cacus (at the beginning of 12.2). Cf. Fuchs, 18; Laufs, 14-15.

body and soul, which is also called “the peace of his own life and security”. What it lacks is a desire to “share peace with others”, namely natural sociality, which could be found in the wildest beasts.

Augustine continues:

Man, even more, is induced (as it were) by *the laws of his nature* to engage in society and to maintain peace with all men, so far as in him lies; even the wicked make war for the peace of those who belong to them. (Italics added)

Peace is a created good natural to social creatures. Hence the protection of God the Creator and the ordainer through the natural channel (i.e. “*leges naturae*”) even in human affairs. Human beings never cease to be social—and therefore peace-loving.

At this point Augustine reminds his readers of the eschatological perspective of the ontological analogy.⁵⁵ On the one hand, the “peace of the wicked” (*pax iniquorum*) is ultimately incompatible with “the peace of the righteous” (*pax iustorum*). For it is “a perverted imitation of God” based on “pride”, which prefers “the unequal peace” rather than “the just peace of God”, “domination over fellow associates” rather than “an equal association under God” (12.2). On the other hand, the perverse pursuit of peace affirms the indestructible human nature, as Augustine writes:

Yet it [pride] cannot do without loving peace of some sort. No vice is so contrary to nature as to destroy even the last trace of nature.

Through “what is perverted” (*perversa*) one can learn “what is ordered” (*ordinata*), for:

even what is perverted needs to be at peace, [subsisting] in some aspect, [deriving] from some aspect, and [relating] to some aspect of reality in which or from which it subsists; otherwise it could not exist at all.

The pursuit of peace in “human affairs” is an analogical relationship between nature and perversity: the order of nature dictates that, just as there is order in every disorder, there be a degree of peace in every society.

⁵⁵ See how Augustine’s argument alternates between the eschatological difference and the ontological similarity in XIX.12.2 (lines 87-99 in CCL): “For in this way” (*sic enim*) domination is a perverse form of peace (87-90)—“yet” (*tamen*) the conquerer cannot but love peace (90-93); “Therefore” (*itaque*), the wrong peace must be distinguished from the right one (94-96)—“however” (*autem*), a perverted thing must have some kind of peace to exist. Fuchs is again mistaken in suggesting a logical breach between the “scientific, empirical” examples discussed up to this point and the “religious, moral” examples inserted here (Fuchs, 25-29). In contrast, Laufs correctly follows the dual perspective of Augustine’s analogy (Laufs, 23-25).

<peace and the creation-order>

Augustine ends his ontological analogy with further illustration of three basic forms of peace—of the body, of the (irrational) soul, and between body and soul—in perverse conditions. A body hanged upside down would cause “pain”, which shows that “the peace of the body” is disturbed, and yet “the soul is at peace with its body” while struggling for its preservation. When the body is finally dead, there still remains “some measure of peace among [its] parts” as long as the integrity of the frame remains. Ultimately, these instances all lead to one conclusion: there is a divine force operating in every aspect of the creation-order to maintain the peace of the universe. Between the pull of the rope and the force of gravity, the lifeless and senseless body hangs in equilibrium, conforming to “the order of its own peace” (*suae pacis ordinem*) and adhering to “the peace of order natural to it” (*pax naturali sui ordinis*). When the dead body gradually disintegrates, when grubs appear in the carcass of an animal, and when an animal devours the carrion of another animal—they all seek “peace” natural to its existence, following the command of the eternal law:

at no point in the process does anything diverge from the laws of that supreme creator and ordainer, by which *the peace of the whole* is governed. (Italic added)

This is the bottom-line of Augustine’s ontological analogy of peace: the universal desire for peace is fundamentally a cosmic drive towards “*pax universitatis*”. Every single activity in the universe, from natural putrefaction to human domination, is a testimony to “the same laws diffused throughout [the universe], making peace between matching elements to [effect] the welfare of each mortal species”.⁵⁶

(5) XIX.13: the table of peace

<the table of peace>

⁵⁶ As Laufs criticises, Fuchs is mistaken in suggesting that the reference to the “*leges summi creatoris et ordinis*” is Augustine’s addition to the pagan text he is alleged to use: cf. Fuchs (1926/73), 34-36. Laufs’ defense of the integrity of the argument is sound on the whole, explaining the theoretical bases of the phrase: cf. Laufs (1973), 30-33. Nevertheless, his interpretation is far fetched, when it distinguishes the “spatial” ordering by the “*lex ordinatoris*” from the “ethical” ordering by the “*summus ordinator*” (ibid. 33).

Augustine's ontological analogy culminates in a list of different levels of peace, commonly known as the "table of peace". It begins emphatically—"Therefore" (*itaque*):-

The peace of the body is the ordered functioning of its organs;
The peace of the irrational soul is the ordered satisfaction of its appetites;
The peace of the rational soul is the ordered coherence of thought and action;
The peace of the body-soul union is the ordered life and health of animal existence;
The peace of the mortal man and God is the ordered obedience based on faith under the eternal law;

The [social] peace among men is the *ordered agreement*;
The peace of a household is the ordered agreement concerning command and obedience among its members;
The peace of a city is the ordered agreement concerning command and obedience among the [fellow-]citizens;
The peace of the heavenly city is the supremely ordered, supremely concordant association concerning the enjoyment of God and of one another in God;

The peace of any and every thing is a *tranquillity of order*.
[And] order is the disposition of [all] things, equal and unequal, in their appropriate positions".⁵⁷ (XIX.13.1—Italic added)

From material substance to rational nature, from personal to social life—each level of peace is hierarchically and appropriately "ordered" (*ordinata*) in an intricate network of organism. The plenitude of all peace is the "tranquillity of order" (*tranquillitas ordinis*), a fulfilment of divine justice "distributing to each his own" (*sua cuique loca tribuens*) in the universe.

The table of peace represents Augustine's ethics of order in full maturity. This is the crucial point which Fuchs misses in his interpretation of XIX.13. He maintains: <1> that the conjunctive, "*itaque*", introduces the table of peace awkwardly, failing to connect it with what has been discussed in chapter 12; <2> that, apart from two levels of peace (between man and God, and in the heavenly city), the table of peace must have been copied from a treatise written by a pagan philosopher (probably Varro); <3> that the definition of order as appropriate distribution of things also derives from the pagan philosopher.⁵⁸ However, the key concept of the table—God's hierarchical and distributive ordering of things into *tranquillitas ordinis*—is indisputably Augustine's. Fuchs simply does not know of the development of *ordo*, and its close relation to *pax* in Augustine's theology.

⁵⁷ My translation of the table of peace is indebted to Professor O. O'Donovan's private translation.

⁵⁸ Cf. Fuchs, <1> 37-38; <2> 16-17, 139-145, 150-154; <3> 258 (the note on p. 148).

<*pax est ordinata*: Laufs' interpretation>

Against Fuchs, Laufs persuasively contends: the table of peace results logically from Augustine's ontological thinking that "peace is ordered" (*pax est ordinata*). Comparing four issues discussed in XIX.13 (the peace-table, the peace of the "miserable", the peace of the "devil", and "temporal peace"), Laufs eventually distinguishes three categories of peace: the rightly ordered, the perversely ordered, and the neutrally ordered.⁵⁹

The exegesis begins with an argument that the table of peace is written for the city of God on earthly pilgrimage, or the "*beati*" (XIX.13.1) who are not yet "*beatissimi*" (23). For on earth pilgrims alone have the piety (hence faith and obedience) necessary to achieve "what is ordered" (*ordinata*) in accord with God's will. In other words, all peace, both personal and social, rests on the pivotal peace "between mortal man and God", which stems from the "ordered obedience (*ordinata oboedientia*) based on faith under the eternal law" (13.1).⁶⁰ This is the first category of peace: peace rooted in the right "relation to God's will" or the "right order under God" (Laufs).⁶¹ In contrast, the "*miseri*", who belong to the citizens of the earthly city, cannot achieve the peace with the perfect "tranquillity of order", but only a limited peace which reflects their miserable state (XIX.13.1).⁶² This is the second category of peace without faith, piety and obedience, a peace which is bound to remain "*perversa*", never "*ordinata*" in a proper sense (Laufs).⁶³

Nevertheless, Augustine's ontology dictates that there should be a degree of order in any disorder. Laufs points out two different "spheres" of order presupposed in Augustine's view of perverse peace. Despite misery and suffering earthly citizens are "not exempt from order" in two

⁵⁹ Cf. Laufs, 35-87, and esp. 125-127; cf. also 55, 60-61, 63, 96 (n. 37), 134-135 on Fuchs's misunderstanding of Augustinian ontology.

⁶⁰ Cf. Laufs, 51-55 on the table as instruction for the pilgrims; cf. also 63-64 on "*beati*", and 36-44, 96-98 on "*pax hominis mortalis et dei*". He repeatedly describes pilgrims' peace as consequential on piety, therefore "based on order": cf. 49-51, 92-95, 106, 110, 115.

⁶¹ Ibid. 45-55; cf. also 133 (2-b).

⁶² Cf. Laufs, 55-74. Against Fuchs, who interprets "*miseri*" as the whole mankind and "*beati*" as the perfectly blessed in heaven. Cf. Laufs, 56, 61; Fuchs, 57-58. Laufs is also right in distinguishing two kinds of "*miseria*": one common to all human beings as the damned mass, and the other proper to the citizens of the earthly peace: cf. Laufs, 56-57.

⁶³ Ibid. 53; cf. also 20, 88-89, 117-124, 126.

ways—first because they remain miserable “deservedly and justly”, and secondly because they may still possess “a measure of tranquillity of order and peace” (XIX.13.1). Laufs explains the first “sphere” of order as the “proportionate relationship between sin and punishment”.⁶⁴ By this punitive ordering of perverse will God demonstrates his omnipotence as the arranger (*dispositor*) of all things, maintaining the cosmic order (*rectus ordo rerum, ordo universitatis*).⁶⁵ The second “sphere” of order available to the “miserable” is what Laufs calls “spatial” (*räumliche*). When Augustine acknowledges that they can be “without disturbance”, he means something corporeal, such as a degree of “freedom from anxiety” and from “pain” (XIX.13.1). The minimum ontological order proves that they are at least “at peace with the very law that governs the order of nature” (*ibid.*). According to Laufs the natural sphere of order is different from the punitive sphere, precisely in that it is “independent” of the “relation to God’s will”—and, therefore, common to both cities.⁶⁶

Augustine then summarises the ontological principle: “there is a being (*natura*), in which there is no evil, nor even the possibility of evil; but there cannot be a being, in which there is no good” (13.2). The peace of the “devil” illustrates the point. For even the devil can be described as good, since his “being” (*natura*) is not evil as far as it is natural (*ibid.*). Unlike the nature of the miserable, the goodness and nature of the devil is something incorporeal which remains only in his immortal soul, namely his eternal “suffering” (*dolor, dolore*). Still, his “suffering itself is a testimony to the good that has been withdrawn (*bonum adempti*) and the good that has been left (*bonum relictum*)” (*ibid.*). The devil, too, is ordered both punitively and naturally. Hence the conclusion: the suffering of “the lost peace of one’s being” indicates that he still has “some remaining elements of peace”, which makes his “being precious to himself”—so precious that any defect becomes painful to him (*ibid.*).⁶⁷

⁶⁴ “*Ordo als Entsprechung von Schuldmaß und Strafmaß*”. *Ibid.* 62; cf. also 134.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* 61-63. Laufs refers to DCD. XIX.13.1 for “*dispositor*”, XIV.26 for *rectus ordo rerum*, and gen. ad litt. 11.21 for *ordo universitatis*.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* 65-68.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 74-82.

In this residual natural peace Laufs finds the third category, the neutrally ordered peace, allegedly embodied in what Augustine calls “temporal peace” (*pax temporalis*, XIX.13.2).⁶⁸ Laufs first points out that Augustine connects the residual peace with “temporal peace” ontologically from the perspective of “God the supremely wise creator and supremely just ordainer of all natures” (ibid.). They are God’s gifts to all human beings, along with other “goods suitable for this life”:

that is, temporal peace (*pax temporalis*) for the limited benefit of mortal life, which implies health (*salute*), welfare (*incolumitate*), and fellowship (*societate*) of their own kind, and [with it] all the means necessary to safeguard and restore this peace. (Ibid.)

“Temporal peace” is more than the “peace of the body” (Fuchs).⁶⁹ It is certainly supported by material necessities, such as “light, sound, air to breathe, water to drink, bodily nourishment, clothing, medication and adornment” (13.2). But Laufs argues: <1> that “*pax temporalis*” consists in “*salus*”, “*incolumitas*” and “*societas*” based on those goods; <2> the term “*salus*” implicitly refers to the three basic forms of peace—*pax corporis*, *pax irrationalis animae*, and *pax corporis et animae*—discussed in chapter 12 and incorporated in the table of peace.⁷⁰ Succinctly put, “temporal peace” comprises body, sense, life, welfare and human society. These are what Augustine describes as “mortal goods adapted for the peace of mortals” (ibid.), providentially bestowed to both the city of God (on earth) and the earthly city.

(6) Augustine’s political philosophy of peace: against Laufs

<the dual order: ontology and eschatology>

At the heart of Laufs’ exegesis is the concept of order underlying Augustine’s theory of peace in XIX.12-17. To this approach we have no objection. Yet we may point out two crucial mistakes in Laufs’ analysis. One is the way he reconstructs Augustinian theory of order; the other concerns the implication of what he classifies as the third, natural and neutral category of peace.

⁶⁸ Ibid. 83-87.

⁶⁹ Fuchs, 70-71; refuted by Laufs (pp. 83-85).

⁷⁰ Cf. Laufs, 84-85; also 17-18, 25-26.

Let us first summarise Augustine's theory of order according to Laufs:-

<1> The essential principle of *ordo* is the proportional distribution of diverse goods in the universe according to the eternal law (as defined in the table of peace).

<2> Consequently, there are three different "spheres" of *ordo* which Augustine presupposes in his description of peace:-

<i> The "spatial" ordering, a universal drive towards existence, which prompts all nature to seek some kind of order and peace;

<ii> The "grading of things", which is divided into:-

(a) the ordering of non-rational beings;

(b) the ordering of rational-beings based on their "relation to God's will";

<iii> The "proportionate relationship between sin and punishment", which concerns:

(a) mankind in general as the damned mass, or

(b) the *civitas terrena*.

<3> In the end, Augustine presupposes two categories of order, non-ethical and ethical:

<i> an ordered state of being *independent* of its relation to God's will (2-i & ii-a);

<ii> an ordered state of a rational being *dependent* on its relation to God's will (2-ii-b & iii-a, b).

The table of peace articulates the theory of order: the three basic peace-relations (*pax corporis*, *pax animae irrationalis*, *pax corporis et animae*) belong to the first non-ethical category, and the rest, to the second ethical category. ⁷¹

Despite the clarity and coherence Laufs' interpretation still fails to grasp Augustine's theory of order fully, particularly the duality of providential order. As we have repeatedly indicated, the

⁷¹ Cf. *ibid.* 132-135; also 32-33, 125-126, for Laufs' comparison of the two categories of order as "*räumlich*" and "*sittlich*". Cf. above, p. 6.

mature Augustine understands God's cosmic government in terms of two channels—nature and human will. God the creator of nature is at the same time the ordainer of human will, both good and bad; God controls human will, not just by punishing perverse will (as Laufs suggests, above 2-iii), but also by benefiting good will while making good use of wicked deeds.⁷² Laufs' summary is misleading, because it unnecessarily divides:

<1> the providential ordering of nature into the instinctive impetus for existence (above, 2-i) and the grading of things (2-ii-a), which we prefer to define as the existential and the cosmological aspects of the creation-order;

<2> the providential ordering of human will into the grading of rational nature (2-ii-b) and the punishment of perversity (2-iii), the former of which actually belongs to the first channel, while the latter is only one part of the providential government of human affairs.

More significantly, Laufs is mistaken in categorising *ordo* into a non-ethical (ontological) concept and an ethical (volitional) concept. On the contrary, Augustine's ontological thinking is consistently ethical from the beginning. The early Neoplatonic concept of cosmic order and the later doctrine of dual order both intended to explain the system of good and evil in the universe, which ultimately points to the supreme goodness of its creator. What Laufs categorises as “non-ethical” and “ethical” is merely the “non-moral” and the “moral” area of Augustine's ethics. In XIX.13, therefore, Augustine discusses four different topics of peace (the table of peace, the peace of the wicked, the peace of the devil, and temporal peace) from a coherent viewpoint of ontological analogy—to describe how peace is still desired in perversity, not to distinguish the non-ethical from the ethical ordering, or the natural from the religious or the punitive ordering.

These mistakes reveal one fundamental shortcoming: Laufs does not examine the eschatological background of Augustine's doctrine of order—not fully enough. In the latter half of 390s the earlier consistently ontological concept of order was reformulated as a result of Augustine's

⁷² Cf. Gen. ad lit. VIII.9.17; see above, pp. 129-130.

deeper understanding of biblical eschatology and of the imperfection of human society, a process which we have termed the historicising of *ordo*.⁷³ Hence the eudaemonist premise of *De civitate dei* XIX, which is not simply ontological, but eschatological as well: the desire for happiness and peace is ontologically ingrained in human nature, but to be fulfilled eschatologically at the end of history. Augustine's eschatology has two points of reference, judgement and perfection. From the viewpoint of the appointed ends, as Laufs rightly emphasises, God has already decided who will receive the true happiness and who will not. In this sense, the "peace of the righteous" is already separated from the "peace of the wicked" (XIX.12.2). Nevertheless, the perfect state of happiness in eternal peace is *not yet* realised; even the city of God on earthly pilgrimage cannot escape from the historical reality to which they are bound. Laufs tends to blur the difference between the peace promised to earthly pilgrims and the peace available to them, especially when he interprets Augustine's contrast between "what is ordered" (*ordinata*) and "what is perverse" (*perversa*), mainly in relation to the final judgement, that is, in line with the contrast between "piety" and "pride".⁷⁴ The implication is that the citizens of the city of God, whether in heaven or earth, knows the right order—and *can* achieve it in this life!⁷⁵

The table of peace is indeed a guiding principle for the pilgrims of the *civitas dei*—but not because they alone know how to establish a rightly "ordered" peace, as Laufs maintains. Rather, Augustine intends to demonstrate how peace at each and every level is *providentially* "ordered", regardless of human attitude towards it. The pilgrims are encouraged to act in accord with the providential ordering of all natural phenomena and all human deeds, both good and wicked. This is why the most crucial ethical issue for Augustine is not *whether* peace is ordered or not, but rather *how* an ordered peace is *used*. See how he concludes XIX.13:

⁷³ See above, pp. 127-30.

⁷⁴ Laufs, 23-25, 49; cf. also 32-33. Of course, Laufs does not think that the citizens of the city of God on earthly pilgrimage are in the same state as those in heaven: they are still "*beati*", not yet "*beatissimi*" (ibid. 63-64; cf. also 59, 133). Yet he emphasises the unity, more than the difference, between the heavenly citizens and the earthly pilgrims of the city of God: cf. ibid. 44-45.

⁷⁵ Except for the "*pax civitatis*" (in the peace-table), which remains, as Laufs understands, as an "Idealbild" during the pilgrimage on earth: cf. Laufs, 115-116.

The condition was very fair: one who *has used rightly* such mortal goods adapted for the peace of mortals should receive larger and higher goods—that is, of course, the immortal peace, together with the glory and honour appropriate for it, in the eternal life devoted to the enjoyment of God and of the neighbour in God; on the other hand, one who *has used* them *wrongly* would not receive those future blessings and lose the present ones. (Italics added)

Temporal, mortal peace is a legitimate, provisional good common to both cities. But, for pilgrims, it is a special instrument to be “used” rightly for achieving eternal peace. The table of peace shows how. There Augustine articulates all three moral criteria for evaluating the use of temporal goods: <1> an *ontological* assessment according to nature, <2> a *historical* assessment of the relative usefulness for human society, and <3> an *eschatological* assessment of the ultimate usefulness for achieving eternal peace.⁷⁶ The table of peace thus restates Augustine’s ethics of dual order—but with a far more eschatological emphasis than before.

<*pax propria nostra: ecclesiology and politics*>

The second point of our contention against Laufs concerns his interpretation of “temporal peace” and its relation to “earthly peace”. To him “temporal peace” represents something neutral, which can be “ordered” (*ordinata*) independently of faith and piety for the sake of life in the *civitas terrena*.⁷⁷ In the end, Laufs comes to an intriguing conclusion: the neutral *pax temporalis* is to be distinguished from the perverse *pax terrena*.⁷⁸ But actually they are simply different terms given to the same phenomenon: a peace available in “earthly mortal affairs” (XIX.11; cf. also 10, 12). For he defines “temporal peace” not as morally neutral, but merely as “common” (XIX.17) to the two cities for different purposes. What is common is its utility.

For instance, in this key political text (XIX.17), Augustine compares the two cities in relation to “earthly peace”, and asserts that the city of God on pilgrimage will “safeguard” (*tueri*)

⁷⁶ See also above, pp. 131-132. For instance, three basic forms of peace are existential goods “ordered” by providence for the sake of individual nature, and basic social peace (*pax hominum*, *pax domus*) are “ordered” in accordance with social nature. However, as we will closely examine below, *pax civitatis* is an unnatural institution “ordered” for the benefit of earthly peace. Lastly, the pivotal peace between man and God and the peace of the heavenly city are eschatological gifts promised to the pilgrims, who now hold them by faith.

⁷⁷ Cf. Laufs, 86-87.

⁷⁸ Cf. *ibid.* 117-124, 127.

and “pursue” (*appetere*) it so far as piety allows. According to Laufs, what is desired here in relation to “heavenly peace” is not the “earthly peace” itself—but the temporal peace preserved within the earthly peace. But this is not what Augustine writes:

Therefore, the heavenly city, too, makes use of the earthly peace on its pilgrimage; as far as true religion and piety allow, it safeguards and pursues *the arrangement of human wills* about things relevant to human mortal existence. (Italics added)

There is no word which implies what Laufs understands as “*pax temporalis*”. On the contrary, as we shall discuss below in full, the “*compositio humanarum voluntatum*” refers to a community of interest established in the earthly city. It is “*pax terrena*” itself which Augustine assigns as a legitimate object of pursuit by the city of God on earth. So he concludes:

This [earthly] peace⁷⁹ it experiences on its pilgrimage in faith; and it lives justly by its faith when it relates to the attainment of *that* peace whatever good works it performs towards God and neighbour. (Italics added)

Similarly, Laufs goes too far in his exegesis of another key text in XIX.26. Augustine reiterates that the “peace of Babylon” is “something not to be despised”, but to be “used” by the city of God, referring to Jeremiah’s words: “because in its peace is your peace (*pax vestra*)” (Jer. 29:7). This is, as Augustine understands, “of course, *the temporal peace of the meantime* ([*pax*] *interim temporalis*) which is shared by the good and the wicked alike” (Italics added). To Laufs the text appears to offer strong evidence for his interpretation that Augustine here distinguishes temporal peace (“*pax vestra*”) from earthly peace (“*pax eius*”, namely “*pax Babylonis*”).⁸⁰ However, “[*pax*] *interim temporalis*” which Augustine identifies with “*pax vestra*” corresponds to what he writes a few lines above: “that it [the *civitas terrena*] should have this peace in this life in the meantime” (*hanc [pacem] ut interim in hac vita*). Temporal peace is an earthly peace of the earthly city—and this is what the city of God is told to pursue “in the meantime” for the sake of something higher.

⁷⁹ It is a common mistake to understand “*hanc pacem*” as a reference to what precedes immediately—the heavenly peace—and mistranslate the first sentence: “this *heavenly* peace the heavenly city during its pilgrimage enjoys by faith [...]”. However, by the demonstrative pronoun “*hanc*” Augustine makes a sharp contrast between “this peace” available on earth and “that peace” promised in heaven. Against Laufs, 124; W. Ch. Greene trans., *The City of God*, VI, Loeb (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960; reprinted, 1969), 199.

⁸⁰ Cf. Laufs, 122-123.

The city of God on pilgrimage is a historical entity, living in an acute tension between an earthly peace and the eternal peace. The peace which the pilgrims actually have is uniquely different from either earthly or heavenly peace. For it results from the right use of the former, while still aiming at the enjoyment of the latter. The peace of the pilgrims is imperfect but not earthly; it is genuine but not yet heavenly. This is precisely what Augustine tries to describe—and what Laufs misunderstands—in XIX.26. The chapter, together with chapters 27-28, concludes Book XIX; chapters 26-27 discuss two kinds of peace available to pilgrims, while chapter 28 briefly describes the ultimate end of the earthly city, namely the perpetual loss of peace. See how Augustine proceeds from chapter 26 to chapter 27:

(26) [...] “Because in its peace is *your peace*”; [he means], of course, *the temporal peace of the meantime* which is shared by the good and the wicked alike. (27) *However, our proper peace is the peace with God, here [experienced] here by faith, too, not only by sight in eternity.* Yet here there is no peace, neither that *shared peace*, nor *our own proper peace*, which is more than a solace to unhappiness; there is yet no delight in happiness. (Italics added)

Augustine does indeed distinguish three kinds of peace, though not the three that Laufs supposes him to. What is merely available on earth (“*vestra pax*”, “[*pax*] *interim temporalis*”, “*illa communis [pax]*”) is different from what is proper to the pilgrims (“*nostra propria pax*”). What is provisionally proper to them (“*nostra propria [...] cum Deo per fidem*”) is also different from what is truly proper to them (“*nostra propria pax [...] cum Deo per speciem*”). The peace of the pilgrims is merely “a solace to unhappiness rather than a delight in happiness”, or “the forgiveness of sins rather than a perfection of virtue” (XIX.27). Yet it is a solace and a forgiveness which the pilgrims alone can experience, because in this peace “all use of temporal goods [...] is related to the enjoyment of eternal peace” (14; cf. also 13, 16, 17).

Without sufficient understanding of the eschatological perspective—particularly the historical horizon—of Augustine’s theory of peace Laufs ultimately fails to discern its essentially political orientation. In the first place, he does not know of the *ecclesiological* origin of Augustine’s theory of peace. Against the Donatists Augustine conceived a flag-ship concept, “the peace of the church” (*pax ecclesiae*). It is a historically conditioned, imperfect peace; yet it is a genuine

representation of what is eschatologically promised at the end of history. Amidst the tension between the perfect, heavenly peace and the imperfect, earthly peace, this special kind of peace is maintained in the church through faith, love, forgiveness, tolerance, and discipline (including religious coercion by political authority). In *De civitate dei* XIX Augustine paraphrases “the peace of the church” as “our own proper peace” maintained through faith.

However, “*pax nostra propria*” appears in a far more historical and political context, and only implicitly ecclesiastical. Through the theory of peace in Book XIX Augustine consistently questions the condition and purpose of earthly social life, which he refers to as the “peace available here to mortal men” (10), the “peace [...] in earthly and mortal affairs” (11), and “human affairs” (12.1). Having based the peace theory on the doctrine of dual order, he is ready to answer important political questions, such as the nature of political community, the legitimacy and functions of political authority, and their relevance to the city of God on pilgrimage. Let us finally turn to what we would like to call a theory of *peacemaking*, as is developed both within and outside *De civitate dei* XIX.

3. Peace and Political Community: Augustine on the common good

(1) XIX.14-17: *concordia* and *compositio voluntatum*

In a further elaboration on the “table of peace” (in chs. 14-17) and the subsequent socio-political commentaries (in chs. 18-24) Augustine deals with the actual process of making peace in the earthly city. For the pilgrims of the city of God, peacemaking consists not in a simple “use” of an earthly, temporal peace, but fundamentally in the “right use” of it, or the “relating” of it to a higher goal: “in the earthly city, then, every use (*usus*) of temporal things is related (*refertur*) to the enjoyment (*fructum*) of earthly peace in the earthly city; in the heavenly city, however, it is related to

the enjoyment of eternal peace” (14). From this eschatological perspective Augustine examines the formation and maintenance of political community.

The political theory of peacemaking is constructed (as we have observed) on the twin foundation of eschatological eudaemonism and ontological analogy, supported (as we shall see) by two pillars of civic concord and political authority. All forms of social peace, whether domestic or political or heavenly, is essentially *a concordant order*: “*pax hominum est ordinata concordia*” (XIX.13.1). It embodies an “agreement” (*concordia*) of differing wills and interests among constituents of a social unit; at the same time, it must be “ordered” (*ordinata*), or governed, by basic principles which effect the concord. On a political level the concordant order is described as follows: “*pax civitatis est ordinata imperandi atque oboediendi concordia civium*” (ibid.). Political peace (*pax civitatis [terrena]*)⁸¹ is <1> based on a concord among fellow “citizens” (*cives*) of a community, and <2> concerned with political “authority” (*imperandum*) and civic “obedience” (*oboediendum*). Our analysis begins with the first area of civic co-operation, an issue which reveals Augustine’s attitude, at times ambiguous, but consistent overall, towards the classical question of the common good.

Ultimately, Christian peacemaking is an affirmation of the providential order of peace, consisting of interrelated layers of means and (intermediate) ends as is described in the table of peace. On the social level domestic peace (*pax domus, pax domestica*) offers a pivotal stage, which mediates the lower inter-personal peace (*pax hominum*) to the higher political peace (*pax civitatis*), and further to the perfect social peace in heaven (*pax civitatis caelestis*). Domestic peace offers a paradigm case for Christian peacemaking. In XIX.14-16 Augustine expounds its basic principles in terms of *pax domestica* before, in Chapter 17, he transposes the discussion onto the political level, concluding the prolonged engagement with Varro’s third cardinal question, the sociality of the wise. However, in the scholarship of Augustinian politics, this paramount chapter has puzzled and misled

⁸¹ Laufs interprets “*pax civitatis*” in the table of peace as the “ordered” peace of the city of God on pilgrimage (cf. 113-117). But Augustine here refers to an earthly peace based on “unnatural” human domination among citizens. *Pax civitatis* is political peace, a *pax terrena* established in a political community. See above, p. 221, n. 75.

many casual readers, particularly with regard to a subtle distinction between the common utility of peace and the common good of political community.

In the first place, one must note, the central principle of peacemaking is that there is “common use” of earthly peace between the city of God and the earthly city: “concerning the things necessary for this mortal life, the use [of earthly peace] is common (*communis est usus*) between both [kinds of] men and households”; similarly, on the level of *civitas*, earthly peace is the object of a “common use” between the two cities (XIX.17).⁸² Unlike the earthly city, however, the heavenly city will never treat political peace as the end itself, as the object of enjoyment; at the same time, it does not matter, either, what difference there may be in “customs, laws and institutions” of the earthly city as long as “they serve one and the same end of earthly peace”. On this premise Augustine declares that “an agreement (*concordia*) may be preserved between the two cities with regard to the things relevant to it [mortal life]”. In fact, the pilgrims would even “safeguard” and “pursue” the “arrangement of human wills” for political peace (*ibid.*). However, what Augustine perceives as common or concordant between the two cities is the *instrumentality* of political peace—not its ultimate objective. Political peace is, in short, a *pluralistic perimeter*, within which various activities can be pursued for differing interests and allegiance, even as radically polarised as those of *civitas terrena* and *civitas dei*.⁸³

In the second place, we must also note that the plurality is the hallmark of “earthly peace”, but not of “the earthly city”. This subtle distinction is often misunderstood to prove Augustine’s political theory as (anachronistically) modern.⁸⁴ The problem is twofold: contextual and terminological. Let us retrace his logic carefully.

⁸² Obviously, it is artificial to understand this to mean, as Laufs does, that what Augustine regards as common is “temporal peace” preserved in “earthly peace”, rather than earthly peace itself. Cf. *idem*, 121-122.

⁸³ Still, as we have discussed, political peace is not a morally and religiously neutral sphere, like the state understood in modern liberalism. For one thing, it is still a peace of the *civitas terrena*, a perversion of true peace. The *civitas dei* on pilgrimage may support it, not because it is religiously neutral in an ontological sense, but simply because it happens not to prohibit the worship of true God.

⁸⁴ On this point, see the careful exegesis of Chapter 17 in O. O’Donovan (1987), 98. The liberal-pluralist misinterpretation of the “statehood” will be treated below, pp. 231-232.

The first sentence of Chapter 17 transposes the argument from the right use of domestic peace onto the right use of political peace—*via* a reminder of the fundamental gulf between the two cities in the way they use earthly peace. So the argument runs as follows, beginning with an emphatic “*Sed*”:

But a household (*domus*) of people who do not live by faith pursues an earthly peace by means of things and conveniences of this temporal life; however, a household (*domus*) of people who live by faith longs for that which is promised in the future [...], and uses earthly and temporal things as pilgrims. Concerning the things necessary for this mortal life *the use is common* between both [kinds of] men and households; but the end of use is proper and very different to each.

Similarly (*Ita etiam*), the earthly city (*civitas terrena*) which does not live by faith also seeks earthly peace and, in it, aims at an agreement of citizens⁸⁵ concerning command and obedience so that there is *a certain arrangement of human wills* about things relevant to this mortal life” [...]. However, the heavenly city (*civitas caelestis*) [...] needs to use that peace [...]; and throughout this period [of the earthly pilgrimage] it does not hesitate to obey the laws of the earthly city, [...] so that, since the mortal life itself is common [to both], an *agreement* may be preserved between both cities with regard to the things relevant to it. (XIX.17—Italics and paragraphing mine)

Presented here are two sets of comparison, one on the domestic and the other on the political level of *pax terrena*; within each set the earthly example is compared with the heavenly counterpart to demonstrate that “*communis est usus*”.

The first, contextual problem concerns the interpretation of the first sentence of the second paragraph. The conjunctive phrase, “*ita etiam*”, at the beginning is often misinterpreted as reference to the sentence that precedes immediately before, opening a pluralist horizon to the earthly city: “similarly” to the earthly household, it would follow, the earthly city offers a common means to private ends. But this is a false conclusion. As O’Donovan correctly reads, the phrase “*ita etiam*” refers us back to the beginning of the chapter in order to introduce another contrast between the two cities—this time in relation to political peace. The object of a common use for differing ends is “*pax terrena*”, not “*civitas terrena*”.

The contextual confusion is related closely to a terminological confusion concerning the meaning of “*concordia*”. For example, in the problematic sentence just examined (and again in the

⁸⁵ As Laufs points out, Augustine does not describe this *concordia civium* as “*ordinata*”, unlike the peace-table. Whereas Laufs distinguishes this “inordinate” *pax civitas (terrena)* from the “ordered” *pax civitas* (of earthly pilgrims), we must object that in both cases Augustine simply refers to earthly political peace. Cf. Laufs, 117-119.

concluding passages of the chapter) Augustine refers to “*concordia*” and “*compositio voluntatum*” in a single sequence. Here is another incentive for commentators to misinterpret the *civitas terrena* as a concordant—and pluralistic—arrangement of diverse interests. But, with a closer look, we can discern how he differentiates two kinds of political “agreement”: one is the “*concordia*” between the two cities over “*pax terrena*”, and the other, the “*compositio voluntatum*” of the “*civitas terrena*”. The confusion may be attributed partly to Augustine’s general usage of the term “*concordia*”, which usually denotes civic morality at the basis of a political community (e.g. XIX.24).⁸⁶ Yet for all the ambiguities Augustine consistently distinguishes a pluralistic concordant order in the instrumental use of political peace (sc. between the two cities) and a unified concordant order in pursuit of earthly peace as an end (sc. among members of the earthly city). The distinction is illustrated most vividly in his resumed critique of the Ciceronian definition of political community (XIX.21-24).

(2) XIX.21-24: justice and love

In *De re publica* (I.25.42), through the character of Scipio Africanus, Cicero defines “political community” in terms of two main criteria, “right” and “utility”: “*res publica*” is “*res populi*”, the common estate (*res*) of a “large gathering joined together by a consensus on right (*ius*) and a sharing of utility (*utilitas*)”. The definition is problematic to Augustine, because of what “*ius*” implies: “right” (*ius*) must “flow from the fountain of righteousness (*iustitia*)”, and therefore “*res publica* cannot be established nor endure at all without great justice (*magna iustitia*)” (*De rep.* II.44; DCD. II.21.1). However, to Augustine, the true *ius* and *iustitia* must derive from one source—God, who alone can truly “distribute each his due” (DCD. XIX.21.1). For this uncompromisingly eschatological position there is only one community which fulfils the Scipionian-Ciceronian criterion of justice, namely the city of God in heaven.⁸⁷ The definition must be reformulated, if one is to acknowledge the historical existence of other earthly communities, “the unequal institutions of men”

⁸⁶ Cf. also ep.138.2.10-11, 14-15; in DCD, passim in I-V, and also XII.22, XVII.14, 16.2.

⁸⁷ Of course, Cicero does not identify the legal concept of “*ius*” with the moral concept of “*iustitia*” in such a way as Augustine does from a biblical (and eschatological) perspective. Cf. Markus (1988), 64-65.

which have no (true) *iustitia*, and hence no (true) *ius* (ibid. 1). Similarly, the other criterion of utility is flatly denied as inadequate: there is no true “utility common” to all, where “man does not serve God” (ibid. 2). Despite the critical tone Augustine is none the less sympathetic to Cicero for his criticism of a Thrasymachean *Realpolitik*: facing those who assert that the business of government cannot be run “without injustice”, Cicero “most assuredly and most sharply argues ...against injustice for justice” (ibid.).

In this way, Augustine has assigned himself two tasks in his alternative definition: to legitimise the imperfect existence of earthly *res publicae*, and to distinguish a good one from a bad one. After spending two more chapters reconfirming the eschatological horizon of true justice, Augustine finally unveils a Christian definition of political community:

A people (*populus*) is a large gathering of rational beings joined together by a concordant sharing (*concordi communione*) of the things which they love. (XIX.24)

To the Ciceronian definition Augustine adds rationality in order to re-emphasise the ontological foundation of human sociality. More importantly, the two criteria (right/justice and utility) are absorbed into a single category of the common objects of love. For as in the true *res publica* the truly common right and utility naturally result from the love of God, so in any *res publica* defective of love is the cause of a community defective in right and utility. Augustine confidently presents a new moral criterion: “the better the objects of its concordant (*concors*) [love], the better the people”. In short, “concord” (*concordia*) is “the health (*salus*) of a people”—a common good of the community, although it is not *the* common good of mankind (ibid.). Fourteen books and approximately ten years after he first posed the question Augustine has finally reached the point where he can justify, albeit critically, the ontological grounding of Rome. Eschatologically, of course, the exemplary earthly city has never been comparable to its reputation, and its success and decline rooted in the imperfect *concordia* of its own people. Yet it did enjoy certain commendable *concordia* in some “eras”, depending on what the citizens loved as their common good (ibid.).

The characterisation of political community in terms of love and concord has a certain resonance with modern political thought. One of the two features most commonly associated with

Augustine is “political realism”,⁸⁸ which severs politics from the moral basis of justice. To Augustine, indeed, justice ceases to be the *sine qua non* of a political community. In this sense only, it may be regarded as “the first standard of modern political thought against ancient, casting the political community off from its moorings in justice to drift on the tide of popular consensus”.⁸⁹ Closely related to this is another question about whether Augustine can still conceive of provisional or “relative” justice within the limit of eschatological justice. There is certainly a potential thrust for it, particularly in the moral criterion of the concordant love. But the potential seems to be impeded constantly by his preoccupation with the theoretical cohesion of justice as absolute and eschatological.⁹⁰

The other “modern” feature concerns the problem which we have left unresolved: “liberal pluralism”. The specific issue at stake here is the “third space” (*tertium quid*) between the *civitas dei* and the *civitas terrena*, a political arena which remains pluralistic—as well as neutral—with regard to religious allegiance and moral values. The alleged third, neutral arena is often identified with “the state”, though in varied ways. For instance, H.-I. Marrou has not only coined the term “*tertium quid*”, but also tried to substantiate it in the direction similar to S. Cotta’s more radical hypothesis: Augustine was the first modern to conceptualise an autonomous statehood under the rule of amoral laws.⁹¹ The anachronistic understanding of Augustine’s political thought has been persuasively criticised by Markus, who offers an alternative interpretation that the neutral sphere is a historical one—the *saeculum*, which cannot be “hypostatized”, but remains “radically ambiguous” within the eschatological confines.⁹² Nevertheless, Markus seems to imply something similar to his opponents,

⁸⁸ E.g. R. Niebuhr, 59; Deane goes as far as to compare Augustine to Machiavelli and Hobbes, cf. Deane, 117-118, 221-243.

⁸⁹ O. O’Donovan (1987), 96.

⁹⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 102.

⁹¹ H.-I. Marrou, 342-350, and S. Cotta, *La città*, 58-60. See above, p. 2, n. 4. Deane’s realist interpretation also strongly implies a liberal, pluralistic and minimalistic idea of “the state”: cf. esp., 117, 221, 235-6. Cf. also Meilander, 140. For a more recent pluralist interpretation, see W. E. Connolly, *The Augustinian Imperative: A Reflection on the Politics of Morality* (Newbury Park, CA, and London: Sage Publications, 1993), xxiv (n.3), 74-85.

⁹² Markus (1988), 62-63, 102, *contra* Marrou; cf. also J. C. Guy, *L’unité structure logique de la ‘Cité de Dieu’ de saint Augustin* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1961), 121-2. For a critical treatment of Cotta, cf. Duchrow, 288-290.

when he describes the *saeculum* as the “‘secularisation’ of the realm of politics, [which] implies a pluralistic, religiously neutral civil community”; not eschatologically, but in this secular arena, “membership” of either the city of God or the earthly city “is compatible with belonging to the Roman—or some other—state and with belonging to the Church”.⁹³ But, as O’Donovan points out, Augustine is convinced that a true Christian can never be a true Roman, nor a false Christian a true member of the church. In the end, Markus tries to substantiate what Augustine does not have—a concept of the state.⁹⁴

To clarify our position on these scholarly debates we must turn once again to the concordant concept of peace. For, in his subtle distinction between two kinds of concordant order, between the common use of peace and a common good of political community Augustine clarifies the Christian position against classical political thought on the question of the “common good”.

(3) A “common good” and the “duty of love”

Let us first summarise our findings.

Political peace (*pax civitatis*) is <1> an ordered agreement in an earthly city among citizens concerning command and obedience; <2> there is also an agreement between the earthly city and the city of God concerning its use; <3> however, it is the object of enjoyment for the former, but of use only for the latter; <4> it is a provisional good accommodated for the condition of the interim, to be sought, maintained and related to heavenly peace by the city of God on pilgrimage. In short, *pax* is an ontological condition of political community, a *pluralistic* sphere of action in so far as it can be used even by the most polarised political communities for the pursuit of incompatible ends.

Nevertheless, Augustine does not conceive (like modern liberals) of a *neutral* peace in which the two

⁹³ Markus (1988), 173; 60-61.

⁹⁴ Cf. O. O’Donovan (1987), 98-99. He succinctly describes the difference between the premodern concept of political community and the modern concept of the state in *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the roots of political theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 231-232.

cities shares as equal partners. For political peace is still a perverse, earthly establishment no matter how good it is.

Political community (*civitas, res publica, populus*) is <1> the common welfare of a people; <2> but it can exist without (true) justice which belongs solely to the city of God; <3> rather, it is based on a concordant sharing of the objects of love; <4> its civic morality is characterised by the most prominent object of love (e.g. self-love or love of God; lust for domination, desire for glory, or justice). A political community consists in a unified *concordia* with a singular focal point of allegiance: it is the “common concern” (*res communis*) of a people, a common good which binds them. Therefore, between the city of God and the earthly city there is no overlapping of membership, because they share no absolute common good (against Markus).⁹⁵ Augustine is aware, of course, that political community is a collective body of various interests and values (e.g. XVII.14). What he sees in each community, however, is a distinct moral order (*concordia*), in which diverse demands are preferentially arranged towards the good most treasured by its citizens. To use his definition of virtue, *res publica*, too, is an “order of love”.⁹⁶ Like political peace, therefore, political community offers no neutral area, which bridges the fundamental gulf between the two cities in terms of their ultimate ends. Yet, unlike pluralistic political peace, political community is a unified concordant order based on civic consensus.

Augustine was essentially a premodern political thinker, who belonged to the classical tradition of the common good—but in a unique way.⁹⁷ From the eschatological perspective he differentiated *the* common good (i.e. God) from *a* common good, and focused on the ontological defects in the latter; at the same time, he sought to justify the legitimacy of the defective political

⁹⁵ DCD. V.15, 18.2; XI.22; cf. also epp. 137.5.17, 138.2.10, 211.12. So communitarian commentators, such as J. Stout and D. Hollenback, can be justified partially for emphasising Augustine’s interest in “the common good” of political community: cf. Stout, 235, Hollenback, 85 (see above, p. 3, n. 7). Nevertheless, for Augustine the true common good must be distinguished from a common concern for the objects of love in earthly political community. Perhaps, he might, in view of his *commune bonum*, deliberately refrain from using the phrase, and instead use *res communis*. For the contrast between the truly common or “public” good (i.e. God) and a “private” (*privatum*) good, cf. DCD. XII.1.2, XVII.3; also earlier in DLA. I.6.14.

⁹⁶ For the order of love, cf. XV.22; its political analogy is inferred from Augustine’s injunction on the domestic order based on the Christian love-command in XIX.14.

⁹⁷ For the combination of ancient and modern political thinking, cf. O. O’Donovan (1987), 103.

order through a pluralist concept of peace. The world of politics he envisaged consisted of a multitude of communities—great and small, belligerent and peace-loving, but each with a distinct moral identity—coexisting within the perimeter of provisional peace. Mysteriously scattered among them were the pilgrims, who made use of the political peace, while remaining loyal only to the city of God.

In this connection, furthermore, Augustine the political theologian reinforces Christians' limited, instrumental commitment not only to political peace, but also to a common good of earthly politics—on the moral ground of the “duties of love”. In this aspect, too, Augustine inherits the classical tradition of civic virtue or relative justice, only to transform it from a Christian perspective.

Earlier we have noted two instances in which Augustine has discussed “civic virtue”, once in relation to the Republican Rome (cf. V.12-13), and again in his definition of *populus* (cf. XIX.24).⁹⁸ We have also pointed out that the acknowledgement of relatively good morality is constantly restrained by an uncompromisingly eschatological concept of justice, which denies any possibility for the two cities to share in the same common good. However, Augustine has a means to express, though indirectly, what he cannot in terms of *iustitia*. It is the concept of order, which implies justice (for *ordo* is providential distribution of goods)—both in its perfect and imperfect forms (based on ontological analogy).⁹⁹ By combining *pax* with *ordo*, Augustine can complement the limitation of *iustitia* at the socio-political level. Since political peace is a provisional good ontologically analogous to the eschatological good, the city of God on pilgrimage can support both the peace and a common good (*concordia, compositio voluntatum*) regarding its maintenance. Augustinian theory of peace thus enables Christians to relate to the world of politics in terms of the instrumentality (*usus*) of earthly peace, while bypassing the question of loyalty to any earthly institution.

⁹⁸ For “*virtus civilis*”, cf. ep. 138.3.17, *Contra Iulianum* IV.3.26. Like the term *theologia civilis*, Augustine means “pagan” or “earthly” by “civil”; for *theologia civilis*, cf. *passim* in DCD. VI-VII (e.g. VI.5-7, 10-12).

⁹⁹ Cf. XIX.13.1-2. O. O'Donovan correctly observes the subtle but inseparable relationship between justice and order in Augustine's political thought; cf. *idem* (1987), 102.

Augustine expounds the Christian use of earthly peace with three interrelated notions—“necessity”, “duty”, and “love”. Political peacemaking is not the goal of Christian life, but a “necessity” (*necessitas*) in the temporal, imperfect state of political affairs. From necessity springs a Christian “duty” (*officium*) to fulfil public requirements in terms of giving commands (as householder, magistrate, or king) and/or receiving them as an obedient member of the society.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, true Christians are not true citizens of an earthly community; at best, they should remain indifferent to high offices and honours treasured in politics. What motivates true Christians to participate in political peacemaking is neighbour-love: the making of peace on earth is partial fulfilment of the great commandment.¹⁰¹ Elaborating on the table of peace, Augustine describes in XIX.14 the inter-personal peace (*pax hominum*) in terms of the twofold precept of love and its three objects, with a special focus on the principle of “care” (*cura, consulere*). In loving God, self and neighbour, man “would care (*consulat*)” for his household members and other fellow human beings as much as he can, while he “would wish to be cared for (*consuli*) by the neighbour, if he happens to need it.” Augustine finds in this reciprocal care an “ordered agreement between men, the principle of which is, first, to do harm to no one, and secondly, to help every man that he can” (XIX.14).¹⁰² In practice, neighbour-love begins with “the care (*cura*) for his family”, in which the householder “gives command” (*imperare*) out of the “duty of caring” (*officium consulendi*) and the “mercy of providing [for others]” (*ibid.*).

In a word, political peacemaking is part of Christian “duties of love” (*officia caritatis*, XIX.19; also I.9). The phrase appears in Augustine’s answer to the final question posed by Varro on three kinds of life, the contemplative, the active, and the combined. With Varro, Augustine argues

¹⁰⁰ Cf. e.g. DCD. I.9, XIX.6, 16.

¹⁰¹ As will prove important in the theory of punishment, the principle of neighbour-love extends further to an enemy on the basis <1> that hatred for him should be restrained by love (cf. VIII.17); <2> that a possibility of ultimate salvation cannot be denied to an evil man (cf. I.9); <3> that heavenly citizens live unidentified among enemies and pagans (cf. I.35, XVII.7, XVIII.47, XXI.24.1-2).

¹⁰² See Deane, 85-86, n.36 for an understanding that Augustine interprets neighbour love and the Golden Rule (Matt. 7:12) negatively, even with some resemblance of Hobbes’s interpretation. But see e.g. DCD. XIV.8 for Augustine’s “positive” treatment of the Golden Rule; cf. also Augustine’s famous dictum, “Love and what you will”, in *In Iohannis epistula ad Parthos tractatus* 7.8. Cf. Fortin (1972), 26, and E. TeSelle, “Toward an Augustinian Politics”, in W. S. Babcock ed., *The Ethics of St. Augustine* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1991; the article first published in 1988), 151.

that any of them can lead to eternal life in peace, for: “the important thing is what one possesses in the love of truth (*amore veritatis*), [and] what he devotes to in the duties of love (*officia caritatis*).” The duties he has in mind here are mainly ecclesiastical, as he refers to Paul’s remark on the office of episcopate. But the logic can easily be extended to political offices: whether a king or a magistrate or a soldier, one would live righteously if he serves the office as a necessary duty out of neighbour-love. Ultimately, of course, the pursuit of truth is preferred to the performance of duties. So the principle is:

the love of truth (*caritas veritatis*) seeks holy leisure; the necessity of love (*necessitas caritatis*) undertakes just business. If no one imposes this burden, we should devote our time to the understanding and contemplating of truth; if imposed, however, we should accept it for the sake of the necessity of love; but in no way should the delight in truth be abandoned, [...]. (XIX.19)

Christian peacemaking in the spirit of love remains an obligatory, rather than desirable, activity.¹⁰³

Political peace is after all a provisional good, limited but appropriate for the conditions of human society. Still, it is a token of God’s mercy, provided as an instrument which, rightly used, will lead the users to another provisional peace which is called “a solace of unhappiness” or “a forgiveness of sins”, and eventually to that eschatological peace which is called “the perfection of virtues” (XIX.27). Between the bad use and the right use emerges a horizon for the morality of peacemaking. As Augustine argued against the Donatists, the pilgrims of the city of God are peacemakers, who do not merely use peace, but to use it well within the limitation of earthly life as forgiven sin. The Christian principle of peacemaking is “to relate” (*referre*) earthly peace to heavenly peace—that is, to affirm the ontological foundation (however perverse) of politics, and to engage in its maintenance dutifully but critically from the viewpoint of what is promised at the end.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ The concept of *officia caritatis* also appears earlier in I.9 in a slightly different (though related) context, as will be discussed in the next section.

¹⁰⁴ For the ethic of the forgiveness of sins, cf. especially XV.6, in which he relates the principle to the longing for eternal peace.

4. Peace and the Judge: Augustine on political authority

(1) The origin and function of political authority: a juridical model ¹⁰⁵

Social peace (*pax hominum*) is not simply an agreement (*concordia*)—it is ordered (*ordinata*). Political peace (*pax civitatis*) is distinct from other forms of social peace, in that it is a “civic” concordant order concerning “command and obedience” among fellow citizens. On the whole, Augustine commends civic obedience to the authorities in line with Paul in Rom. 13. ¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, as a political theologian of the Constantinian establishment, Augustine must also explain the responsibility of political authority, who alone possesses the necessary power for peacemaking: force and the law.

The nature and function of political authority is examined, again, in the paradigm case of domestic peace in XIX.14-16, focusing on the authority of the *paterfamilias*. A Christian householder has a threefold task in domestic peacemaking. First, he is the guardian of faith, who “care[s] for everyone in his family, like his children, that they may worship and serve God, wishing and praying that they may reach the heavenly home”; religious care extends even to family slaves (XIX.16). Secondly, he is the judge of a household, who is obliged “to restrain from sin or to punish it, so that either the man himself who is punished will be corrected by the experience, or others will be deterred by the example” (ibid.). Lastly, as a component of the higher, political peace, this domestic peacemaker must comply with “the law of the city”, so that the domestic peace is “accommodated to the peace of the city” (ibid.). The Christian *paterfamilias* is a proto-political authority, who promotes Christianity, punishes wrong-doing and corrects wrong-doers—all out of

¹⁰⁵ The term is taken from Joan L. O’Donovan, “Subsidiarity and Political Authority in Theological Perspective”, in *Studies in Christian Ethics* (1992), 18, 30-31. On the judicial function of Christian political authority in general, see O. O’Donovan (1996), 147-51, 233-34, 259.

¹⁰⁶ The Pauline passage, which is quoted frequently elsewhere, is not actually referred to in *De civitate dei*. However, we shall see how discreetly Augustine absorbs Paul’s idea into his theory of peacemaking.

the duty of love and the spirit of care.¹⁰⁷ However, the *paterfamilias* differs from political authority in one important aspect.

As Markus' careful exegesis shows, there are two kinds of ordering—natural and unnatural—subtly distinguished in domestic peace. Whereas the authority of men over women, of husbands over wives, and of parents over children, all originate in the order of nature, the authority of masters over servants does not, because the law of creation dictates that “man have dominion, not over man but over the beasts” (XIX.15).¹⁰⁸ It is Augustine's fundamental conviction that “as God first made man, no one is servant either to man or to sin” (ibid.) Rather, an unnatural subjection among human beings, or the “state of slavery” (*condicio servitutis*), is a symbolic feature of the fallen condition of earthly political community (ibid.). The perverse institution is none the less remedial: the “punitive servitude (*poenalis servitus*) is ordained by that law which commands the natural order to be preserved” (ibid.).

In other words, slavery is a prime example of providential ordering of human affairs: a provisional institution accommodated to the post-lapsarian world and provided for the righteous to test their faith, patience and love. What differentiates a Christian household from others is the inner attitude of both the master and the slave. For their concordant order consists in a mutual service based on Christian love: the master actually “serves” the slave by his “care” and “compassion” (XIX.14), treating him equally like “his sons” for the spiritual well-being (16); the slave, too, serves “with loyalty and love”, for he knows that one day “all human principality and power should be brought to nothing” and that, in a sense, he “can make [his] servitude a form of freedom” by such service (15).¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ The same logic applies to Augustine's view of political authority represented by the “mirror for princes” in V.24. See below, pp. 244-245.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Markus (1988), 197-210.

¹⁰⁹ Augustine inherits the patristic tradition: <1> the notion of slavery as a providential provision for a fallen world and no part of the creation-order; <2> the fundamental belief in the primal equality of human beings; <3> the resigned acceptance of slavery as a necessary social establishment. Cf. O. O'Donovan (1987), 103-105; idem (1996), 184-186, 263-266.

The unnatural punitive servitude in the household analogically explains human obedience to the authorities in political community. Political authority is an unnatural provision for the remedy of human sinfulness on a larger social scale. Characteristically, fear (rather than love) and force (rather than persuasion) become the *modi operandi* of political peacemaking, since earthly rulers tend to imitate God unjustly, driven by pride and hatred (cf. e.g. 12.2). Political peace may be used rightly by Christian magistrates who perform the duties of love for the necessities of life (cf. e.g. V.24, XIX.6, 19). Still, it is only a shadowy approximation of the unnatural to the natural. Political peace remains an unnatural, punitive and corrective ordering of the community.¹¹⁰

According to Augustine, political authority has an unambiguous function, which is essentially *judicial*: he is like a judge in the court, who discerns between the true and the false, and enforces the law to protect the right and to punish and correct the wrong—all within the limitation of the provisional order. Political peacemaking is, therefore, a moral, legal and coercive operation. Political peace, as we have seen, is a moral order based on the civic consensus on a common good. The moral order becomes legitimately political when it is substantiated and sanctioned by the law; in this sense, a legal order is an expression of the underlying civic morality.¹¹¹ At the same time, the legal order must still be endorsed by force to effect the judgment and command of the authorities; in return, force must be restrained by the law, without which political community would easily degenerate into a dominion of violence, brutality and lust.¹¹² Augustine describes political peace in terms of “*imperare*” and “*oboedire*”, precisely because the terms express a fundamental concern for the moral, legal and physically coercive foundation of political authority for giving a “command” (*imperium*) to be received by citizens. Political authority is the guardian of the law—a judicial authority enforcing what the law commands.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Deane, 116-117; however, his generally sound analysis does not justify his conclusion about Augustine’s “political and social quietism” (ibid. 151-152), which stems from his underestimation of the significance of the church (and its peace) in the interim world.

¹¹¹ For the connection between *lex* and *mores*, cf. passim in I-V, but esp. II.4, 14, 16-19.

¹¹² For the earthly rule based on lust for domination and power, passim in DCD. I-V, XVIII, but see, esp. IV.4-7, XVI.3-4, 11.3; XVIII.2.

Theologically, the juridical model of political authority is based on the analogy of divine and human judgement. On the one hand, Augustine has a clear picture of the coming Christ as the supreme ruler *cum* judge of the kingdom of God: separating the just from the unjust, the divine judgement restores the world of creation, puts an end to the historical world of sustained punishment and provisional forgiveness, and inaugurates the perfect society governed by the eternal law.¹¹³ On the other hand, human judgement is an ambiguous mirror image of Christ's judgement: a judge in the court is a witness to social misery, injustice, and his own ignorance; yet he cannot abandon the divinely conferred authority to "rule and execute judgement and righteousness in the midst of the earth" (1 Sam 2:10; DCD. XVII.4.1, 8-9).

The biblical text central to the juridical authority is Psalm 2:10-11 ("be instructed, all you who judge the earth"), often quoted in and outside the Donatist controversy.¹¹⁴ In a remarkable sermon, *Sermo XIII* (c.418), the passage is elaborated in conjunction with two other passages (Jn. 8:1-11 and Rom. 13:1-3) to illustrate the analogy of judgement on three levels: Christ, conscience, and earthly justice. First, those who "judge the earth" ("kings, military commanders, princes, and judges") must be aware that there is only one supreme judge that can bring about justice over earthly justice (4). The woman taken in adultery (Jn. 8) offers a paradigm case: Christ, who once "judged the judges" for the woman, still judges and will be judging the judges; so human judges must judge in fear of Christ, to whom "conscience" of both the judge and the judged is totally revealed (4-5). Paul's dictum in Rom. 13 is another testimony to Christ's superior authority over human authority, commanding Christians to "act justly" and "hold on to justice" for the sake of that higher authority (6). On this premise a human judge is instructed by the second psalm "how not to judge crookedly"—first, to judge his own conscience (7) and, then, to judge the "sins" of the sinner in "a spirit of love" and "a spirit of correction" (8). For the goal of judgement, divine or human, is "*disciplina*"—Christian pedagogy (9).

¹¹³ Cf. DCD. XX.1-2, 7-9, 24.2, 25, 27.

¹¹⁴ See above, pp. 185-186.

(2) Punishment

For Augustine the issue of judgment is inseparably linked with that of punishment. For, by the fear of punishment, sinners may be led to repentance and acceptance of truth; even within the limitation of political peace it may contain human perversity to the minimum. In *De civitate dei* the most substantial discussion of punishment appears in relation to eschatological judgement (XXI.11-14). However, the passage does not tell us much about Augustine's more political view of punishment, first developed in the anti-Donatist campaign. In the ecclesiological context the doctrine of punishment retains markedly theological presuppositions concerning its origin in human sinfulness, imperfectibility, proportionate sentencing, corrective love, the underlying spirit of love and mercy, and the rejection of the death-penalty.¹¹⁵ Yet, transposed onto a political level, the doctrine shows a more careful demarcation of the ecclesiastical and the political spheres of action, as is best represented by two letters (epp. 153, 155) written in 414 to Macedonius, the Vicar of Africa, who was in charge of enforcing imperial decrees against the Donatists.

Particularly, *Epistula CLIII* is by itself a small treatise on punishment, prompted by Macedonius's doubt on the legitimacy of the "priestly office to intercede for condemned persons" as a public duty (cf. ep. 152). What appears to be a simple question comprises a complex web of intricate issues, which requires a delicate distinction between divine and human punishment, between clemency and leniency, between religious forgiveness and legal remission, between true repentance and a mere pretence. Augustine acknowledges that the twin task of judgment and punishment is a crucial part of "public duties" and "public welfare" (153.1). The community cannot remain "peaceful" (153.16, 155.10) without the "avengers of crime" (153.8) equipped with the power of "the sword" (ibid. 10) to enforce the law (ibid. 9), because "those who have done an injury to human society by theft, rapine, calumny, oppression, burglary ought to pay what they owe" (ibid. 24).

¹¹⁵ In *De civitate dei*, too, Augustine discusses the theological basis of punishment, though in dispersed contexts: for the perverse origin, cf. XIX.15; for imperfectibility, cf. XIX.6; for proportion, XXI.11; for correction, cf. I.8-9, XIX.16, XXI.13; for love and mercy, cf. XIX.14-16; for the death-penalty, cf. I.21.

Punishment, therefore, consists in deployment of fear and force (compulsion) for the triple objective: to recover what is injured (restitution), to discourage others from committing similar crimes (prevention), and to amend the future conduct of the wrong-doer (correction).

Compulsion is the prime property of political authority, as Augustine describes: “the power of kings, the death-penalty of the judge, the barbed hooks of the executioner, the weapons of the soldier, the right of punishment of the overlord, even the severity of the good father”—these human institutions have “their methods, their causes, their reasons, their practical benefits”, but all towards the ultimate goal of maintaining public order and peace (153.16). Nevertheless, fear and force alone are not sufficient to legitimatise punishment as a political act.

The most rudimentary objective of punishment is *restitution*: the criminal “should restore what he has taken” (153.22; cf. 20-26). Indeed, recovery of the *status quo* is so vital to public order that even forceful restitution is regarded as legitimate, so long as it is proportionate to the injury done (23). Nevertheless, restitutive punishment is not concerned with whether the lost property itself has been “lawfully” (therefore, “justly” and “rightly”) acquired and used in the first place. For “civil laws”, Augustine contends, are instituted not to “bring men to make a good use of their wealth”, but so that “those who make a bad use of it become thereby less injurious” (26). It is not the law itself, but the intention of its use, that makes one virtuous. Another objective of punishment is *prevention* of further crimes by the fear of just and severe retribution; for “while these are feared, the wicked are kept within bounds and the good live more peacefully among the wicked” (ibid. 16). However, the most important objective of all is *correction*—to bring the punished to repentance and amendment in this life (cf. ibid. 2, 19). Corrective punishment is especially relevant to Christians, since, in pursuit of this goal, earthly justice can approximate to true justice if repentance leads on to embracing truth. Earthly punishment is an instrument of Christian pedagogy, not only because “there is no other place but this life for correcting morals”, but, more importantly, because it teaches that “punishment does not end with this life” (ibid. 3; cf. 4).

But this pedagogical punishment is not an inherent part of political authority; it belongs to a higher, “moral” authority of the church (cf. 153.26). Episcopal intercession is, contrary to Macedonius’s suspicion, an important “public” duty of the church, checking political authority from the excessive use of fear and force (for instance, tortures to gain confessions, cf. *ibid.* 17), and encouraging true repentance of sins and willing acceptance of grace (cf. *ibid.* 6). Above all else, therefore, the “death-penalty” must be discouraged, since, as the patristic tradition goes,¹¹⁶ it would contradict what Christ has taught to human judges: punishment is not an act of “vengeance”, but of “mercy” which seeks to correct the sinner (*ibid.* 9, 17).

In other words, the intercessor is related to the judge, like love restraining fear (cf. *ibid.* 19). By intercession punishment may be executed in the spirit of neighbour-love, as part of the “duties of love”. In *De civitate dei* (I.9.2) Augustine elaborates. The good and the bad both “love the temporal life, though not in the same degree”, for:

the good ought to have despised it, so that those reproached and corrected might pursue eternal life; or, if they refused to pursue it together, so that the enemies would still be tolerated and loved, because, as long as [they] live, it is always uncertain whether [their] will may be changed for the better. With this regard [the good] have a responsibility, [which is] by no means equal to, but much heavier, [than the bad], for whom the prophets says. [...] For watchmen, that is, leaders of the people, have been appointed in the churches for this purpose. (9.3)

In *Epistula CLIII* corrective love is discussed in an ecclesiastical context—as the core principle of episcopal intercession. Biblical support is taken, again, from the paradigm case of the adulterous woman (cf. *ibid.* 9, 11, 15). Through Christ’s intercession human judges learn “the thoughts of mercy” (9), while the adulteress, now left alone with Christ, repents when “he pardoned the person, but did not condone the person’s guilt” (15). Similarly, episcopal intercession is based on an awareness of human weakness (cf. *ibid.* 8, 10, 11), motivated by a hope for repentance and salvation (*ibid.* 18, 26) and the love of enemy for his humanity (*ibid.* 3, 5).

Political authority (judge) and the bishop (intercessor) play distinct but complementary roles in the process of punishment: distinct, because each represents a different principle of judgment (fear

¹¹⁶ Cf. e.g. O’Donovan (1996), 201-203.

or love); complementary, in that the two principles, when combined, can lead sinners effectively to the true end of political peacemaking, as Paul envisages in Rom. 13 (ibid. 16; cf. also 10, 22). This is the crucial watershed between Augustine and other Latin Fathers.

For instance, his mentor Ambrose insisted that the story of the adulterous woman indicated the inherent limitation of human judgement.¹¹⁷ For Christ and human authorities represented “different aeons living by different principles” (O’Donovan). The bishop was an earthly representation of the coming kingdom of God and the higher authority of Christ. Therefore, Ambrose was convinced, “it is necessary for judgment to yield to religion” (Ambrose, ep. 40(74)); for the traditional understanding of justice as retaliation for the wrong received “has been set aside by the authority of the Gospel” (idem, *De officiis*, I.28.131). Christ had suspended, as it were, the course of judgment. But Augustine understood it differently. As long as the two aeons (i.e. *civitates*) commingled in the historical reality, judgment and religion could not be separated as clearly as Ambrose supposed. Religion, too, must exercise judgment in the midst of the earth, as Christ himself did. Yet it was like judgment of a higher court over the inadequate proceedings of the lower court. To Augustine, as O’Donovan puts it, “justice will not yield to mercy, but be elevated by it”.¹¹⁸

In the end, intercession is a reminder of higher moral principles (mercy and love), through which human judgment and punishment are related to the eschatological pursuit of “true happiness”—as much as possible to the limited act of “forgiveness”.¹¹⁹ When Augustine presents the so-called “mirror for princes” (DCD. V.24-26), he does not write simply as a historiographer recording the good *exempla* of Christian emperors, but more fundamentally as a bishop *cum* intercessor reminding them of both the purpose and limitation of human judgment. The Christian prince is indeed “happy”, though not yet truly so, when he “rules justly” out of faith (e.g. humility, love of God, propagation of Christianity) and out of mercy (e.g. corrective punishment, clemency

¹¹⁷ For what follows, see ibid. 200-203.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. 202. Cf. serm. 13.4, 16A.4, en.ps. 50.8, Ioh.ev. 33.5.

¹¹⁹ For instance, clemency is commended as a “higher” moral act (ep. 153.11). On the pursuit of true happiness, see ep. 155.7, 10; on the theme of forgiveness, passim but see esp. ep. 153.13, 15.

and good will, cf. V.24). He is praised not because of his earthly success as a ruler, but because of his readiness to act, like Theodosius, as “a member of the church”—with restraint in the face of wrongdoing, and with humility to repent his own wrongdoing (cf. V.26). For ruling the empire is like ruling a household: a responsibility born out of “necessity” as part of “duties of love”.

This is the basic line of argument Augustine deploys to justify religious coercion against the Donatists as well as the Pelagians. However, by the time he dealt with the latter, he came to understand the relationship between political and episcopal jurisdiction more clearly than in the Donatist controversy. Each authority is assigned a distinct role in the close collaboration against heresy—first, the judge has to be called into a religious sphere to assist the bishop; but the religious matter turns into a political (legal) matter as soon as the judge, the prosecutor and the defender begin their examination of the accused; once it reaches the court, therefore, the bishop can not be part of the legal procedure, but remains as an extra-juridical intercessor to check excess or injustice in the judgment from outside.¹²⁰

(3) Peace and war

Our examination of Augustine’s political theory of peacemaking concludes with the most obvious topic of all—war. In *De civitate dei* it is featured frequently, alongside punishment, as a symptom of the post-lapsarian perversity.¹²¹ To Augustine, however, war was not an abstract theological problem, but the reality of the dying empire; he himself died in his diocese just before it fell to the Vandals (430). Under the hopeless circumstances Augustine would still insist that peace was the legitimate end of war, although it was not the true peace that transcended the fragility of all earthly peace. Describing how peace was desired and pursued amidst social perversity, Augustine reflected on the justifiability of wars as part of the punitive function of political authority. In what is

¹²⁰ See esp. his portrait of the courtroom in ep. 153.8, 10. In the end, the episcopal authority of intercession was a purely moral one: bishops could only plead for merciful treatment of the convict, and they often failed, as Augustine painfully experienced, for example, in his failure to save Marcellinus from political entrapment and public execution: cf. ep.151.5-6; cf. also Brown (1969), 337.

¹²¹ Cf. DCD. XII.23, 28; XIX.7.

commonly known as the “just-war” criteria Augustine sought to present a legal limitation of war, rather than its theoretical endorsement.¹²²

Main sources of Augustine’s just-war doctrine are *Contra Faustum* (22.73-76), *Epistulae CXXXVIII* and *CLXXXIX*, and scattered remarks in *De civitate dei*. Like other aspects of his political theology the discussion of war is formulated within his foundational worldview based on the doctrine of dual providence, dealing with four fundamental issues: right authorisation, right intention, right cause, and right conduct.

In the first place, the providential order dictates that God is the ultimate author of war. He uses evils, even war, to good effect, sometimes to protect the order of nature from any human perversity, and at other times for pedagogical reasons: “[divine providence] usually corrects and destroys the corrupt moral conduct of men through wars; he also disciplines the life of mortals [to become] just and praiseworthy through similar afflictions, and transfers a life, once approved, to a better world, or keeps it still in this world for other use” (DCD. I.1; cf. also Faust. 22.75).¹²³

Authorisation of war belongs to providential order, as Augustine describes:

According to the eternal law, which requires the preservation of natural order, and forbids the transgression of it, some actions have an indifferent character, so that men are blamed for presumption if they do them without being called upon, while they are deservedly praised for doing them when required. The act, the agent and the authority for the action are all of great importance in the order of nature. (c. Faust. 22.73)

The duality of providential order thus enables Augustine to conceive a “public sphere” of action, in which the human agent is held responsible for his choice of action—but within the reach of the foreknowledge and will of divine authority.

Justifiability of war as political act depends, therefore, on the legitimacy of the authority and the agent. On the cosmic level the ultimate authority lies with God, and political authority is his provisional agent. Analogically, on the political level, the ruler (or the commander) alone can decide

¹²² For the best summary of Augustine’s just-war thinking, see J. Langan, “The Elements of St. Augustine’s Just War Theory”, in Babcock (1991a; the article first published in 1984), 169-189. Cf. also Deane, 154-171; S. Hartigan, “Saint Augustine on War and Killing: the Problem of the Innocent”, in *The Journal of the History of Ideas* 27 (1966), 195-204.

¹²³ Cf. also DCD. XVIII.2.

whether to wage a war or not, while soldiers are engaged in it merely as his agents (cf. Faust. 22.75).¹²⁴ The agent on either level goes into war essentially in obedience to higher authorities: war, like any other political act, is a “necessity” of human social life, to be dealt with in a dispassionate but responsible attitude (cf. epp. 138.2.14, 189.6). Consequently, “civil wars” can never be justified, since they fail to meet the criterion of right authority.¹²⁵

Locating warfare in the clearly defined public realm of action, Augustine has made a decisive theoretical break from the pacifist tradition of the apostolic and early patristic church. Under severe persecution the pacifist church was not concerned with right authority (which was pagan anyway), but, quite simply, with the problem of Christian participation in military service. For violence, particularly killing at the battlefield, seemed totally incompatible with Christ’s teachings of love and endurance. Upon the proclamation of the new law of the Gospel, writes Tertullian, “the Lord unbelted every soldier when he disarmed Peter”, and, accordingly, it is “more lawful” for Christians “to be slain than to slay” (De Idol. 19; Apol. 37). Against the pacifist stance Augustine appeals to selective biblical passages, such as Matt. 8:9-10 (Christ praising the faith of a centurion) and Lk. 3:14 (John the Baptist advising humble service to the baptised soldiers) (cf. Faust. 22.74). His argument focuses on two issues, authority and attitude. On the one hand, a soldier in action may kill his enemy without being accused of murder, as long as it was a necessary act in obedience to the authorities.¹²⁶ On the other hand, the soldier’s action is judged not by the service he renders, but, more importantly, by the inner disposition in which he serves: for “the real evils in war are love of violence, revengeful cruelty, fierce and implacable enmity, wild resistance, and the lust of power” (ibid.). One can engage in war justifiably as an agent performing a public duty with the right attitude—as an *officium caritatis*, even if one serves under a wicked king (cf. ibid. 75). In this way, the political act of war becomes a moral act on the level of the agent’s psychology.

¹²⁴ Cf. also DCD. I.21, 26, XIX.12.

¹²⁵ Cf. DCD. III.23, 26, 31.

¹²⁶ Cf. also DCD. I.26.

For a war to be justified, proper authorisation is not enough. It must be supported by right intention and right cause(s), which today are currently classified as the criteria of “*ius ad bellum*”:

A great deal depends on the causes for which men undertake wars, and on the authority they have for doing so; for the natural order which seeks the peace of mankind, ordains that the monarch should have the power of undertaking war if he thinks it advisable, and that the soldiers should perform their military duties on behalf of the peace and safety of the community. (Faust. 22.75)

Warfare as a public duty must be motivated by the intention of peacemaking (cf. epp. 138.2.14, 189.4) and supported by well-evidenced causes. War is a pursuit of a better peace: “when those who fought for the more just cause (*causa iustiore*) win, who can doubt that the victory should be celebrated and a desirable peace has resulted” (DCD. XV.4)? A concordant coexistence of neighbouring countries is most desirable; but, should there be a conflict, a peaceful resolution through negotiation is preferred to “justified” war; still, the just war is better than an “unlawful” war of aggression.¹²⁷

Augustine’s view of justifiable causes—the “law of war” (*ius belli*)¹²⁸—is by and large conventional. The just causes fall into two categories: defensive and punitive. Against the aggression of a neighbouring nation political authority has an unambiguous duty to counterattack for the sake of “liberty and security” of his nation (DCD. III.10; cf. IV.15). Interestingly to some moderns, Augustine here does not justify the political right of defensive war on the basis of the private right of self-defence to protect life or chastity. He categorically denies that killing is permissible in the case of private self-defence. Some scholars suggest a rationale for this restrictive view of private self-defence: one should not go so far to protect his life as killing the assailant, because the loss of bodily goods (life and chastity) must be overcome by more valuable goods of the spirit (endurance and forgiveness).¹²⁹ There is also a politically more plausible reason, which corresponds to his general political theory: the injury inflicted on a citizen must not be retaliated by personal vengeance, but

¹²⁷ Cf. esp. DCD. IV.15. On coexistence, see also V.17.1, XVIII.2.1; on negotiated peace, see III.14, 20, IV.29; on just war, see also II.17, XIX.15; on unlawful war, see also IV.6, 14-15.

¹²⁸ Cf. I.1, 24, II.2, 17.

¹²⁹ Cf. esp. DLA. I.5.12, ep. 47.5, DCD. I.28.2; cf. also DCD. I.17-18, 20, 26, for the distinction in terms of suicide. Cf. Langan (1991), 176-177, Deane, 312, n.22.

redressed by public punishment, for which political authority exists. Defensive warfare is a form of punishment against the unprovoked aggression:

it is generally to punish these things [the real evils in war], when force is required to inflict the punishment, that, in obedience to God or some lawful authority, good men undertake wars, when they find themselves in such a position as regards the conduct of human affairs, that right conduct requires them to act, or to make others act in this way. (Faust. 22.74; cf. ep. 138.2.14)

Meanwhile, offensive warfare can be justified to punish a nation which refuses to make reparation for the crimes of its citizens, or to return property unlawfully appropriated.¹³⁰ The just cause of war is punitive, that is, primarily to restore the equilibrium disturbed by the wrong, to prevent further disorder as much as possible, and to correct the wrong committed—all in accordance with the existing legal system.

The least developed aspect of Augustine's just-war thinking is the legal constraints on the actual conduct of war, another criterion currently classified as "*ius in bello*" concerning proportion and discrimination. He certainly criticises conventional "customs of wars" (*consuetudo/mores bellorum*) for being too lenient towards violence in war, such as destruction, slaughter, plundering, burning, rape.¹³¹ But the critique is rooted in primarily moralistic, rather than legal, concerns for the inner attitude of soldiers in action: for Augustine the fundamental issue in war is not whether one's action is violent or not, but whether he engages in war (and even in killing) simply as a public duty necessitated by the fallen condition of human society.¹³² Thus preoccupied with the preservation of a moral order of the soldier, Augustine may have felt little need for developing elaborate rules to regulate his outward conduct *in bello*.

In this connection there is one issue on which Augustine is sometimes heavily criticised: non-combatant immunity. R. Hartigan argues that an absence of the concept in Augustine's just-war thinking is an "inherent inconsistency" with its overall emphasis on the inner attitude of the moral agent. For both soldiers and non-combatants are equally innocent in terms of "no volitional

¹³⁰ Cf. Quaest. in hept., VI.10; cf. Deane, 160.

¹³¹ Cf. DCD. I.7; cf. also I.1, 6, 24; II.2, 17.

¹³² Cf. *ibid.* I.21, 26; c. Faust. 22.75. Cf. Deane, 163-166; Langan, 174-177.

commitment to an injustice which alone would qualify them as guilty and as such proper objects of retribution". Naturally, it would follow that, since unarmed civilians are far more vulnerable, they should be protected from all belligerent sides. Hartigan suggests two possible explanations: <1> the intimate relationship "between individual and social morality", which might have led Augustine to presuppose that an unjust community would not consist of just citizens worth protecting; <2> the conviction that "death is merely a physical evil", hence it is far more preferable to suffer death without fighting than to commit a sin actively in the war.¹³³ Rebutting Hartigan convincingly, J. Langan presents two alternative reasons for Augustine's neglect of non-combatant immunity: <1> divine authorisation of war, in which God does not necessarily require political authority (e.g. Moses and Joshua) to protect enemy non-combatants; <2> "an ethic of virtues", which must be distinguished from "an ethic of rules or principles" advocated by Augustine's sixteenth- and seventeenth-century heirs.¹³⁴

Of these rationales, Hartigan's first one, though unconvincing, should not be discarded completely. For Augustine's moralistic approach (which is the premise of Hartigan's first rationale) does not leave, in the end, much room for a legal theory of just conduct (as Langan observes). At least in part, therefore, Hartigan's explanation is compatible with Langan's second rationale. To Langan's position we may add that a crucial reason for Augustine's neglect of non-combatant immunity is his eschatological realism. He was too aware of the frailty (e.g. ignorance) of human judgement to include civilian innocence within the scope of the jurisdiction of political authority.

The strength and limitation of Augustine's just-war thinking come from its theoretical framework, the judicial (and largely punitive) function of political authority in peacemaking. The juridical peacemaker is not expected to nurture political community in such a way as to direct and administer the creative ordering of public demands into the normative common good (as Aristotle and Cicero, as well as their twentieth-century followers, understand it). Rather, he is to maintain,

¹³³ Hartigan, 202-203.

¹³⁴ Langan, 182-184.

restore and reinforce a civic consensus on a common good by punishing offensive acts and correcting offensive persons within the bounds of the legal system in operation. Augustine's political theory indeed may have brought the "end of creative politics" (Cochrane). Yet his eschatological perspective opens a new horizon to politics, which is introspective, reflecting on its own shortcomings, and yet constructive, making the maximum use of earthly peace.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ C. N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture: A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957; published in 1940), v, 249, 510. Cf. J. L. O'Donovan (1992), 18-19, 30-31.

CONCLUSION

To Augustine peace (*pax*) was essentially a social and political concept, which originated in his ecclesiology and came to denote the general condition of human sociality in relation to God's justice. It developed in three distinct stages, with a close connection to the doctrine of order (*ordo*) mediated by a key concept of providence (*providentia*). <1> Originally (c. 386-391) peace was a minor derivative notion of order: it signified the tranquillity of the creation-order, that is, a perfect state of the ontological relationship between God, the creation, and man. <2> For the next twenty years (c. 391-411) peace was developed separately from order, though they were correlated through a theory of providence. On the one hand, order was transformed eschatologically in terms of dual providence, which opened a historical horizon in Augustine's understanding of human sociality. On the other hand, peace gained importance as a biblical and social notion, and eventually crystallised into a "flagship"-concept of his anti-Donatist campaign—the "peace of the church" (*pax ecclesiae*)—which justified the authority of the catholic church, Christian participation in socio-political activities, and religious coercion, all within the framework of providential pedagogy. <3> Finally, in *De civitate dei* (413-427) peace incorporated order as the theoretical basis and providence as the historiographical framework of a political philosophy. Though ontologically rooted, political peace (*pax civitatis terrena*) was an unnatural but necessary good commonly used by the city of God and the earthly city for different ends; it was established in an earthly political community (*res publica*) united by civic consensus on the common objects of love; and it was maintained by political authority (*imperandum*) endowed with judicial power to enforce the law and to punish and correct wrong-doers. In the end, political authority was a provisional and residual function: provisional, because it was necessary only within the bounds of human history; residual, because the more it was based on love, the less it would become like domination.

To summarise Augustinian political thought, the main features are:

- the eschatological premise*, which acknowledges politics as a limited but necessary accommodation to the historical reality of human society;
- utilitarian pluralism* concerning earthly peace, which provides a pluralist (though not neutral) parameter to be used for different ends;
- a pre-modern concept of the political unit*, which presupposes a “community” united by a common good, instead of an apparatus of government (“the state”), which embodies political functions as distinct from social;
- consensus politics*, seeking civic agreement and co-operation in the pursuit of common goods, which are, therefore, neither neutral nor pluralist, nor even normative;
- a juridical model of political authority*, which is a limited reflection of divine authority, consisting of judgment and punishment, to maintain the existing social and moral order, rather than direction and administration, to create the normative common good (like on the Aristotelian-Thomist model);
- dual jurisdiction* in the Christian community, in which ecclesiastical authority is related to political authority as a moral advisor, constantly reminding that the law be enforced in the spirit of love.

Against the background of our findings, let us review the scholarly approaches which we introduced at the beginning of our examination.

First of all, against those who try to present Augustine as a proto-Thomist or a proto-Lutheran, we must challenge their underlying assumption, which identifies the city of God with the church and the earthly city with the state. In Augustine’s mind the eschatological entities are represented by—but not identical with—the two historical spheres of jurisdiction. Still, in so far as ecclesiastical and political authority belong to two distinct eras of salvation-history, they do not signify “two governments” of a homogeneous society, as is supposed in a Thomist analogy between the supernatural and the natural, or in a Lutheran separation between the spiritual and the secular.

The Thomist (and later political-Augustinian) interpretation slackens Augustine's eschatological differentiation of the two realms, while the Lutheran interpretation radicalises the Augustinian distinction further into that between the inner, personal realm and the outer, social realm.¹

Secondly, in the debate over how Augustine relates the state and relative justice, we have distinguished three positions: some define the state as morally and religiously neutral to the two cities; others suggest a notion of relative natural law or justice as the foundation of the state; still others emphasise Augustine's political realism which seeks to minimise the moral function of the state. Against all of them we must first recall the danger of characterising his political thought in terms of "the state"; it is misleading, because the implied assumption about the separation between the political and the private and social is distinctively modern, hence alien to ancient and medieval thinkers. Contrary to the first and the third positions, moreover, Augustine conceives of a political community as a morally unified order about a common good, although it is separable from a normative idea of justice. The second position is justified in so far as Augustine describes earthly politics ontologically as "traces" or "shadows" of true virtue and justice; nevertheless, "relative" justice was never conceptualised fully due to his overriding eschatological preoccupation.

In the more recent debate between liberalism and communitarianism, Augustine has been presented either as a liberal pluralist, who restricted the function of political authority to maintaining a pluralist parameter for pursuing various interests and values, or as a communitarian who inherited the classical republican interest in the common good, though within the limits of temporal and incomplete human existence. Liberals are partially correct in highlighting the consensual, or preferential, but non-normative orientation of Augustinian politics; but, contrary to their claim, pluralism was not not a feature of the earthly political community as Augustine understood it. Communitarians are also partially correct in detecting a continuity in Augustine with the traditional interest in the common good, although they find it difficult to accommodate his essentially voluntary

¹ Cf. O. O'Donovan (1996), 193-211.

concept of the common good, its difference from the normative concept, and his negative view of the origin of political authority.

In the final analysis Augustine's political philosophy of peace must be understood as a political theology, a reflection on the condition and meaning of human sociality *in relation to* divine justice.² Augustine materialised it in his theory of the two cities and the analogy of peace. The former gave earthly politics a functional purpose as a provisional testimony to God's kingdom, to which it could never be assimilated; the latter articulated the relationship in terms of the relating (*referre*) or use (*uti, usus*) of earthly peace towards heavenly peace. It did not mean, of course, that earthly peace could benefit heavenly peace, or that heavenly peace needed earthly peace in any way. Rather, earthly peace was related to heavenly peace as a contingent good which derived from the supreme good. It was earthly peace which would need and benefit from heavenly peace by being used for it, since its real worth could be revealed only in the light of the latter. The contribution of the true religion to earthly politics lay in *bene uti et maxime*—the maximising of its utility potential. However, the principle of *bene uti* had its limits: it could not improve earthly politics as such. For politics belonged to the earthly city which was by definition not redeemable, although the individual living in it was. This may explain why Augustine discussed politics in terms of its ontological condition and agents, but hardly in terms of its structures. He was primarily interested in political affairs as a moral order rather than a polity, namely as an earthly expression of the collective will for happiness, rather than a process of delivering the will. Augustine did not offer a structured entity (a *tertium quid*), which was neutral to the two cities and accountable for programmatic mobilisation—or reform—of civic consensus. There is no reformist thrust in Augustinian political theology.

² My understanding of "political theology" owes much to O'Donovan: cf. esp. *ibid.* 1-21, and also *idem, Resurrection and Moral Order: An Outline for Evangelical Ethics* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1986), 71-73.

As we conclude this study, we hope we have made a small contribution to a rehabilitation of Augustine's historical importance as a political philosopher of peace.³ Indisputably, he was one of the earliest thinkers in the West who reflected on the significance of the concept so comprehensively. His influence can be traced throughout the Middle Ages until the beginning of the modern era. Since then, however, the Augustinian legacy has been eclipsed by a more positive view of human nature (especially of rationality) and by a more secular view of politics. For instance, Hobbes described peace, like Augustine, as a goal of politics; unlike Augustine, however, he postulated it as an essentially political good: peace simply meant self-preservation of the sovereign state which was created by social contract based on rational calculation.⁴ Politics no longer needed to be legitimatised *vis-à-vis* theology (or the church); instead, it came to determine the content of the latter.

Another example which sharply illustrates Augustine's distance from modern political thought is Immanuel Kant, who also deserves the title of a political philosopher of peace.⁵ Kantian theory consists of three pillars: human rationality, legal contract, and historical progress. <1> Kant conceives of the "autonomous" individual endowed with "reason" to determine whether or not to follow what nature dictates, and his critical philosophy leaves no room for Augustinian scepticism about the abilities of fallen mankind.⁶ <2> On the social level Kant severs the connection between law and morality, which underpinned Augustine's political thought despite his depreciation of the role of justice. "Legality" is distinguished from "morality": through the "original contract" the state is established as external, formal constraints on human actions to safeguard internal, personal freedom and autonomy.⁷ A culmination of the legal theory is his project of "eternal peace". It is a

³ Cf. my a small article on Christian ideas of peace: "Paix", in J-Y Lacoste et al. eds, *Dictionnaire de théologie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, forthcoming).

⁴ Cf. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. R. Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 92; cf. also pp. 120-121, 124-126. Cf. Deane (1963), 234-237 for the comparison between Hobbes and Augustine.

⁵ Perpetual peace becomes the highest political value in Kant's philosophy. Apart from his famous tract, *Zum ewigen Frieden*, cf. esp. *Metaphysik der Sitten* (MS), AA. VI. 354-355.

⁶ *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, AA. V. 33; 42-44.

⁷ *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, AA. IV. 397-8, 416; MS, AA. VI. 225, 315.

legal programme, consisting of six “preliminary” and three “definitive” articles, designed to achieve the “end of all hostilities” by transforming international community into a “federation” of republican states based on the principle of universal human rights.⁸ <3> However, what differentiates Kant from Augustine most is his progressive view of history. Whereas Augustine perceives history eschatologically as a provisional passage towards the goal that lies beyond it, Kant gives it a substantive purpose of its own, namely the progress of civilisation on the basis of “historical dialectic” between reason and nature. Augustine and Kant envisage peace as the “end” of war—but in a fundamentally different horizon.⁹

To a modern mind Kantian peace is far more familiar and accessible than Augustinian peace. Along with democracy and human rights, peace has become perhaps one of the political values most frequently mentioned and most ardently pursued in international community. Yet Augustinian peace is not an obsolete concept which can interest philologists and antiquarians only. Augustine’s multi-dimensional and organic concept challenges our politically-oriented understanding of peace, whether the principally ethical approach of pacifists, or the programmatic and often highly technical approach in international politics and law. From his eschatological perspective we may also learn to engage in peacemaking soberly and patiently in every corner of society. And lastly, the theological orientation of Augustinian peace may provide an important insight for those who wish to re-evaluate and revive the social and political relevance of Christian teachings in our age.

⁸ *Zum ewigen Frieden*, AA. VIII 343, 354-357.

⁹ *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*, AA. VIII. 17-31 (esp. 24-26). Cf. O’Donovan, *Peace and Certainty: A Theological Essay on Deterrence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 31-32.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

<Abbreviations>

<i>CCL</i>	<i>Corpus Christianorum Series Latina</i> . Turnhout, 1953-.
<i>CSEL</i>	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i> . Vienna, 1866-.
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i> .
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> .
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus Series Latina</i> . Edited by J.-P Migne. Paris, 1857-.
<i>REAug</i>	<i>Révue des Etudes Augustiniennes</i> 1- (1955-). Paris.

A. Primary Sources

<By Augustine>

(For dates, throughout this study, I follow Brown (1969) in general, and Verbraken and Rotelle for sermons in particular, unless indicated otherwise.)

Ad Simplicianum de diversis quaestionibus (395-6). *PL*. 40; *CCL*.. 44.

Breviculus collationis cum Donatistis (411/2). *PL*. 43; *CCL*.. 149A.

Confessiones (386). *PL*.32; *CSEL*. 33; *CCL*.. 27; O'Donnell (1992).

Contra Academicos (386). *PL*. 32; *CSEL*. 63; *CCL*.. 29.

Contra Cresconium grammaticum (405/6). *PL*. 43; *CSEL*. 52.

Contra epistulam Parmeniani (400). *PL*. 43; *CSEL*. 51.

Contra epistulam quam vocant fundamenti (396). *PL*. 42; *CSEL*. 25.

Contra Faustum Manichaeum (397-398/9). *PL*. 42; *CSEL*. 25.

Contra Felicem Manichaeum (404/6). *PL*. 42; *CSEL*. 25.

Contra Fortunatum (392). *PL*. 42; *CSEL*. 25.

Contra Gaudentium Donatistarum episcopum (421). *PL*. 43; *CSEL*. 53.

Contra Iulianum (421-2). *PL*. 44.

Contra litteras Petiliani (401/5). *PL*. 43; *CSEL*. 52.

De agone christiano (396). *PL*. 40; *CSEL*. 28.

De Baptismo contra Donatistas (400/01). *PL*. 42; *CSEL*. 51.

De beata vita (386). *PL*.32; *CCL*.. 29.

De bono conjugali (401). *PL*. 40; *CSEL*. 41.

De catechizandis rudibus (399). *PL*. 40; *CCL*.. 46.

De civitate dei (c. 413-426/7). *PL*. 41; *CSEL*. 40; *CCL*.. 47-48.

De consensu evangelistarum (399/400-?). PL. 34; CSEL. 43.
De cura pro mortuis gerenda (422?). PL. 40; CSEL. 41.
De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus (388-395/6). PL. 40; CCL.. 44A.
De doctrina christiana (397-426/7). PL. 34; CSEL. 80; CCL.. 32.
De duabus animabus (391/2). PL. 42; CSEL. 25.
De fide et symbolo (393). PL. 40; CSEL. 41.
De Genesi ad litteram (401-414). PL. 34; CSEL. 28.
De Genesi contra Manichaeos (388/90). PL. 34.
De immortalitate animae (387). PL. 32; CSEL. 89.
De libero arbitrio (388-394/5). PL. 32; CSEL. 74; CCL.. 29.
De magistro (388/90). PL. 32; CSEL. 77; CCL.. 29.
De moribus ecclesiae catholicae (388). PL. 32. CSEL. 25.
De musica (387/90-408/9?). PL. 32.
De natura boni contra Manichaeos (399 or 404/5). PL. 42; CSEL. 25.
De natura et gratia (413/5). PL.44; CSEL. 60.
De ordine (386). PL. 32; CSEL. 63; CCL.. 29.
De quantitate animae (387/8). PL. 32; CSEL. 89.
De sermone domini in monte (393/4). PL. 34.
De trinitate (399-422/6). PL. 42; CCL.. 50-50A.
De unitate ecclesiae (or *Ad catholicos epistula contra Donatistas*, 400/2?). PL. 43; CSEL. 52.
De utilitate credendi (391/2). PL. 42; CSEL. 25.
De vera religione (390). PL. 34; CSEL. 77; CCL.. 32.
Enarrationes in Psalmos (c. 392-420). PL. 36-37; CCL.. 38-40.
Enchiridion ad Laurentium de fide et spe et caritate (422?). PL. 40; CCL. 46.
Epistulae (from 386/7). PL. 33; CSEL. 34, 44, 57-58.
Epistulae ad Romanos incohata expositio (394/5). PL. 35; CSEL. 84; Landes (1982).
Expositio epistulae ad Galatas (394/5). PL. 35; CSEL. 84.
Expositio quarundam propositionum ex epistula ad Romanos (394/5). PL. 35; CSEL. 84; Landes (1982).
In Iohannis epistulam ad Parthos tractatus (407/8-415/6). PL. 35.
In Iohannis evangelium tractatus CXXIV (406-407). PL. 35; CCL.. 36.
Post collationem ad Donatistas (412). PL. 43. CSEL. 53.
Psalmus contra parte Donati (394). PL. 43.
Quaestiones in heptateuchum (419-?). PL. 34; CSEL. 28,2; CCL.. 33.
Retractationes (426/7). PL. 32; CSEL. 36; CCL.. 57.
Sermones (from 391). PL. 38-39; CCL.. 41; Rotelle (1990), III/1-10.
Soliloquia (386-387). PL. 32; CSEL. 89.

<By Others>

Ambrose of Milan. *Epistulae*.

_____. *De officiis ministrorum*.

Cicero, *Academica*.

_____. *De divinatione* (fragment).

_____. *De natura deorum*.

_____. *De fato*.

_____. *De officiis*.

_____. *De re publica*.

Cyprianus, *Epistulae*. CCL.. 3c.

Emeritus of Caesaria, *Sententia Consilii Bagaiensis*. PL. xi, 1189-1191.

Hobbes, T. *Leviathan*. Edited by R. Tuck. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Kant, I. *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*. In *Kant's Gesammelte Schriften*. Berlin: Druck und Verlag von Georg Reiner, 1913 (AA), iv.

_____. *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*, AA. viii

_____. *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, AA. v.

_____. *Metaphysik der Sitten* (MS), AA. vi.

_____. *Zum ewigen Frieden*, AA. viii.

Optatus of Milevis, *De Schismata*. PL. xi. 883-1104; Vassall-Phillips (1917). Edwards (1997).

Plotinus. *The Enneads*. Armstrong (1966).

Possidius, *Vita Augustini*. PL. 32.

Seneca, *Tranquillitas Animae*.

Tertullianus. *Apologeticus*. CCL.. 1.

_____. *De idolatria*. CCL.. 2.

B. Secondary Sources

Adams, J. 1971. *The Populus of Augustine and Jerome*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Armstrong, A. H, trans.. 1966. *The Enneads*. The Loeb Classical Library. 6 vols. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

_____, ed.. 1967a. *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

_____. 1967b. "Plotinus". In idem (1967a), *The Cambridge History*, pp. 195-268.

_____. 1967c. *St. Augustine and Christian Platonism*. Villanova: Villanova University Press.

Babcock, W. S, ed.. 1991a. *The Ethics of St. Augustine*. JRE Studies in Religious Ethics 3. Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press.

- _____. 1991b. "Augustine on Sin and Moral Agency". In Babcock (1991a; first published in 1988), pp. 87-114
- Barker, E. 1923. "Introduction". In Hearnshaw (1923), pp. 9-33.
- _____. 1934. "Introduction". In Everyman's Library edition of *The City of God*, pp. vii-lx. Translated by H. Healey. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd (reprint; first published in 1931).
- Bathory, P. D. 1981. *Political Theory as Public Confession: The Social and Political Thought of St. Augustine of Hippo*. New Brunswick: Transaction.
- Baynes, N. H. 1955. "The Political Ideas of St. Augustine's '*De Civitate Dei*'". In idem *Byzantine Studies and Other Essays*. London: University of London, The Athlone Press (first published in 1936).
- Bourke, V. J. 1970. "Voluntarism in Augustine's Ethico-Legal Thought". *Augustinian Studies* 1: 3-17.
- Brown, P. 1961. "Religious Dissent in the Later Roman Empire: the Case of North Africa". *History* 46: 83-101.
- _____. 1963. "Religious Coercion in the Later Roman Empire: the Case of North Africa". *History* 48: 283-305.
- _____. 1964. "St. Augustine's Attitude to Religious Coercion". *JRS* 54: 107-116.
- _____. 1969. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA.: University of California Press (paperback edition; first published in 1967).
- _____. 1972. "Political Society". In Smalley (1965), pp. 1-21.
- Budzík, S. 1988. *Doctor Pacis: Theologie des Friedens bei Augustinus*. Innsbruck and Wien: Tyrolia-Verlag.
- Burnaby, J. 1991. *Amor Dei: A Study of the Religion of St. Augustine*. Norwich: The Canterbury Press, 1991 (reprint in paperback; first published in 1938).
- Burt, D. X. 1986. "Augustine on the Morality of Violence: Theoretical Issues and Applications". In *Congresso Internazionale su S. Agostino Nel XVI Centenario della Conversione* (Rome), vol.3: 24-54.
- Carlyle, A. J. 1923. "St. Augustine and *The City of God*". In Hearnshaw (1923), pp. 34-52.
- Chadwick, H. 1986. *Augustine*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Clark, M. T. 1972. *Augustinian Personalism*. Villanova: Villanova University Press.
- Cochrane, C. N. 1957. *Christianity and Classical Culture: A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (first published in 1940).
- Connolly, W. E. 1993. *The Augustinian Imperative: A Reflection on the Politics of Morality*. Newbury Park, CA and London: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Courcelle, P. 1950. *Recherches sur les Confessions de Saint Augustin*. Paris: E. de Boccard.
- Cranz, F. E. 1954. "The Development of Augustine's Ideas on Society before the Donatist Controversy". *HTR* 47: 255-316.
- Deane, H. A. 1963. *The Political and Social Ideas of St. Augustine*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Dougherty, R. 1990. "Christian and Citizen: The Tension in St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*". In J. C. Schnaubelt and F. v. Fleteren eds, *Collectanea Augustiniana*, pp. 205-224. New York: Peter Lang.

- Duchrow, U. 1983. *Christenheit und Weltverantwortung: Traditions-geschichte und Systematische Struktur der Zweireichelehre*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta (reprint; first published in 1970).
- Dudden, F. H. 1935. *The Life and Times of St. Ambrose*. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Edwards, M., trans. and ed.. 1997. *Optatus: Against the Donatists*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- Elshtain, J. B. *Augustine and the Limits of Politics*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995.
- Evans, G. R. 1993. *Augustine on Evil*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (reprinted paperback edition; first published in 1982).
- Figgis, J. N. 1921. *The Political Aspects of S. Augustine's 'City of God'*. London: Longmans, Green, and Co.
- Fortin, E. 1972. *Political Idealism and Christianity in the Thought of St. Augustine*. Villanova, P.A.: Villanova University Press.
- _____. 1978. "Augustine, Aquinas and the Problem of Natural Law". *Mediaevalia: A Journal of Medieval Studies* 4: 179-208.
- _____. 1981. "St. Augustine". In L. Strauss and J. Cropsey eds, *History of Political Philosophy*, pp. 151-181. 2nd edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Freud, W. H. C. 1952. *The Donatist Church*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Fuchs, H. 1973. *Augustin und der Antike Friedensgedanke. Neue philologische Untersuchungen*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc. (the Garland Edition with a new introduction by W.F. Bense; first published in Berlin in 1926).
- Gilson, E. 1961. *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*. Trans. by L. E. M. Lynch. London, Victor Gollancz Ltd..
- Griffin, M.T. 1976. *Seneca: A Philosopher in Politics*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Guy, J. C. 1961. *L'unité structure logique de la 'Cité de Dieu' de saint Augustin*. Paris: Études augustiniennes.
- Hagendahl, H. 1967. *Augustine and the Latin Classics*. Stockholm, Goteborg, and Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell.
- Hartigan, S. 1966. "Saint Augustine on War and Killing: the Problem of the Innocent". In *The Journal of the History of Ideas* 27: 195-204.
- Hearnshaw, F. J. C., ed.. 1923. *The Social and Political Ideas of Some Great Mediaeval Thinkers*. London: George G. Harap & Co., Ltd.
- Hollenback, D. 1989. "The Common Good Revisited". *Theological Studies* 50: 70-94.
- Holte, K. R. 1962. *Béatitude et Sagesse: Saint Augustin et le problème de la fin de l'homme dans la philosophie ancienne*. Paris: Études Augustiniennes.
- Jackson, B. D. 1969. "The Theory of Signs in *De Doctrina Christiana*" *REAug.* 15: 9-49.
- Kayama, S. (Forthcoming.) "Paix". In J-Y Lacoste et al. eds, *Dictionnaire de théologie*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- Landes, P. F., trans.. 1982. *Augustine on Romans*. Chico, CA.: Scholars Press.
- Langan, J. 1991. "The Elements of St. Augustine's Just War Theory". In W.S. Babcocke (1991a), pp. 169-189 (first published in 1984).
- Laufs, J. 1973. *Der Friedensgedanke bei Augustinus. Untersuchungen zum XIX. Buch des Werkes De Civitate Dei*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH.

- Lavere, G. J. 1980. "The Political Realism of Saint Augustine". *Augustinian Studies* 11: 135-144.
- _____. 1983. "The Problem of the Common Good in Saint Augustine's 'Civitas Terrena'". *Augustinian Studies* 14: 1-10.
- Leisegang, H. 1927. Review of *Augustin und der Antike Friedensgedanke* by H. Fuchs. *Philologische Wochenschrift* 47: 1177-1180.
- Markus, R. A. 1957. "St. Augustine on signs". *Phronesis* 2: 60-83.
- _____. 1967. "Marius Victorinus and Augustine". In Armstrong (1967b), *The Cambridge History*, pp. 331-419.
- _____, ed. 1972. *Augustine: A Collection of Critical Essays*. New York: Anchor Books.
- _____. 1983. "Saint Augustine's View on the Just War". *Studies in Church History* 20: 1-13.
- _____. 1985. *Conversion and Disenchantment in Augustine's Spiritual Career*. Villanova: Villanova University Press (The Saint Augustine Lecture 1984).
- _____. 1988. *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (the revised paperback edition; first published in 1970).
- _____. 1990. "De civitate Dei: Pride and the Common Good". Schnaubelt, I. and van Fleteren, F., eds., *Augustine: Second Founder of the Faith*. Collectanea Augustiniana I. New York: Peter Lang.
- Marrou, H. -I. 1957. "Civitas Dei, civitas terrena: num tertium quid?". *Studia Patristica* 2 (T. & U. 64): 387-392.
- Martin, R. 1972. "The Two Cities in Augustine's Philosophy". *Journal of the History of Ideas* 33: 195-216.
- Matthews, A. W. 1980. *The Development of St. Augustine from Neoplatonism to Christianity, 386-391 A.D.*. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, Inc.
- Meilaender, G. 1987. *The Limits of Love: Some Theological Explorations*. University Park, PA.: Pennsylvania State University.
- Merlan, P. 1967. "Aristotle" and "The Stoa". In Armstrong (1967b), pp. 39-52 and 124-132.
- Mommsen, T. E. 1951. "St. Augustine and the Christian Idea of Progress". *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12: 346-374.
- Monceaux, P. 1923. *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne depuis les origines jusqu'à l'invasion arabe*. 7 vols. Paris: Leroux (1901-1923).
- Niebuhr, R. 1954. *Christian Realism and Political Problems*. London: Farber & Farber.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard. 1975. *Christ and Culture*. New York: Harper Torchbooks (first published in 1953).
- Nygren, A. 1982. *Eros and Agape*. Translated by P. S. Watson. London: SPCK (first published in 1932).
- O'Connell, R. J. 1968. *St. Augustine's Early Theory of Man, A.D. 386-391*. Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press.
- _____. 1978. *Art and the Christian Intelligence in St. Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- O'Daly, G. 1987. *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind*. London: Duckworth.
- O'Donnell, J. J. 1992. *Augustine: Confessions*. 3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- O'Donovan, J. L. 1992. "Subsidiarity and Political Authority in Theological Perspective". *Studies in Christian Ethics* 6, pt.1: 16-33.

- O'Donovan, O. 1980. *The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- _____. 1982. "Usus and Fruitio". *JTS* 33: 361-397.
- _____. 1986. *Resurrection and Moral Order: An Outline for Evangelical Ethics*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press.
- _____. 1987. "Augustine's *City of God* XIX and Western Political Thought". *Dionysius*, XI: 89-110.
- _____. 1989. *Peace and Certainty: A Theological Essay on Deterrence*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- _____. 1996. *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the Roots of Political Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ohlmann, D. 1987. *De S. Augustini dialogis in Cassiciaco scriptis*. Dissertatio inauguralis. Strassbourg: Argentorati.
- O'Meara, J. J. 1954. *The Young Augustine: The Growth of St. Augustine's Mind up to his Conversion*. London, New York, Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co.
- Pope, H. 1937. *Saint Augustine of Hippo*. London: Sands & Co. Ltd..
- Portalié, E. 1960. *A Guide to the Thought of St. Augustine*. Translated by R. J. Bastian. Chicago: Henry Regnery Co.
- Press, G. A. 1980. "The Subject and Structure of Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*". *Augustinian Studies* 11: 99-124.
- Renna, T. 1979. "The Idea of Peace in Augustinian Tradition 400-1200". *Augustinian Studies* 10: 105-111.
- Rist, J. 1969. *Stoic Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 1982. *Human Value: A Study in Ancient Philosophical Ethics*. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- _____. 1996. *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Rotelle, J. E, ed. 1990. *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century*. New York: New City Press.
- Sieben, H. J. 1975. "Die 'res' der Bibel: Eine Analyse von Augustinus, 'De doctrina christiana', I-III". *REAug*. 21: 72-90.
- Smalley, B. 1965. *Trends in Medieval Political Thought*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Stout, J. 1988. *Ethics after Babel: The Languages of Morals and Their Discontents*. Boston: Breacon.
- Swift, L. J. 1973. "Augustine on War and Killing: Another View". *HTR* 66: 369-383.
- Szura, J. P. and Dodara, R. J. 1986. "Augustine's Understanding of *Io*. I, 3-11: Application to the Just War Thinking and Non-Violence". In *Congresso Internazionale* (Rome), vol.3: 19-24.
- TeSelle, E. 1991. "Toward an Augustinian Politics". In Babcock (1991a), pp. 147-168 (first published in 1988).
- Troeltsch, E. 1963. *Augustin, die christliche Antike und das Mittelalter: Im Anschluß an die Schrift „De Civitate Dei“*. Aalen: Scientia Verlag (first published in 1915).
- Vassall-Phillips, tras.. 1917. *The Work of Saint Optatus against the Donatists*. London: Longmans.
- Verbraken, P.-P. 1976. *Etudes critiques sur les sermons authentiques de saint Augustin* (Instrumenta Patristica 12). The Hague: Streenbrugge.

- Verheijen, L. M. J. 1974. "Le De Doctrina Christiana de saint Augustin". *Augustiniana* 24: 10-20.
- Wetzel, J. 1992. *Augustine and the Limits of Virtue*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Willis, G. G. 1950. *Saint Augustine and the Donatist Controversy*. London: SPCK.