1. Raoul of Presles and His Intellectual Context

Eric L. Saak described the Augustinian renaissance with Charlemagne favouring the books of *De civitate Dei*, and the debate on the predestination between Gottschalk of Orbais, Hincmar of Reims and John Scotus Eriugena. They transformed Augustin from an African bishop to the Father of the Church and the Neo-platonic philosopher. Important was also the Augustinian rediscovery of the twelve century, from Anselm of Canterbury to Peter Comestor, Philip of Harvengt, Hugh of St. Victor, the *alter Augustinus*, and Peter Lombard who in his *Sententiae* largely quoted a number of works of Augustine (*De doctrina Christiana, Enchiridion, De diversis quaestionibus* 83, *Retractationes*). While Peter Lombard’s *Sententiae* became the principal text-book of dogmatic theology in the dawning European Universities, the principal text-book of canon law was Gratian’s *Decretum* where the Augustinian quotations absorbed halves all the patristic quotations. In the age of Universities, Augustin was the most important authority for William of Auxerre, Robert Grosseteste, Bonaventure, Thomas

---

*I would like to express here my gratitude to Babette Pragnell and the anonymous referees for checking the English of my paper. However, the responsibility of any mistake and misinterpretation is entirely mine.*

340
Aquinas and John Peckham.  

In the second quarter of the fourteenth century, the absolute predominance of Augustine of Hippo is confirmed by the widespread, comprehensive and profound knowledge of the Augustinian corpus, substantiated by the amount and depth of quotations, often from first-hand sources and quite long. Two features characterize this phenomenon. First, the great blossoming of comments to the works of Augustine, made above all at Oxford outside the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine, as the invaluable studies by William J. Courtenay have shown. Second, the historical and critical treatment of the sources of the Church Fathers, of the theological and philosophical auctoritates, and the coeval scholastic authors, particularly in Paris, by the theologians of the Order of Hermits, as illustrated by Onorato Grassi.

With respect to the second feature, the period 1343-1346 was, as pointed out by Eric L. Saak, particularly emblematic. At least four important events

---

1 See SAAK 2012, 472-473: «Yet the relationship between the intellect and the imagination cannot always be discerned. Robert de Bardis, for example, the mid-fourteenth-century chancellor of the University of Paris, gathered together his Collectorium sermonum sancti Augustini, the five parts of which contain over 300 sermons of Augustine (Parts 1 and 2 extant in the Vatican, Vat. lat. 479 and in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 2030; Parts 3-5 extant in Valencia, Biblioteca de la Universidad, Ms 481; Saak 2007: 140-4), rendering it the most extensive collection of Augustine's sermons before the Amerbach edition. Yet, out of the 41 sermons of Part I, only 13 are authentic, the majority coming from the Pseudo-Augustian Sermones de Veteri et Novo Testamento - though also included as Augustine's are sermons by Rabanus Maurus and John Chrysostom. Whether de Bardis' intellect or his imagination led him to include so many Pseudo-Augustian sermons as genuine lies beyond the realm of historical ascertainability; regardless, he presented an Augustine whom the historical bishop of Hippo would not have recognized».

3 See GRASSI 1996, VOL. III, 610.
date to these years, when the efforts of the Hermits in particular to promote the rediscovery of Augustine as their dux was particularly strong.

First, in 1343, Jordan of Quedlinburg OESA, aiming to establish the continuity of Augustine’s hermit brothers with the Order of the Hermits, edited in Paris his Collectanea S. Augustini, a collection of Augustine’s sermons. It is based on the previous collection by Robert de Bardis, the chancellor of the University of Paris from 1336 to 1349, and includes various works: the first draft of the Sermones ad fratres in Heremo Villae by Augustine and Monica; a chronology of Augustine’s works; several legends about Augustine’s life; and a collections of indirect quotations from Augustine, drawn from a series of different authors, from Possidius to the Victorins5.

Second, in the same year, Gregory of Rimini OESA, who entered into contact with the recent logic of the English Calculatores6, began his commentary on Lombard’s Sententiae in Paris, where he had first access to the Milleloquium7.

Third, in 1345, Bartholomew of Urbin OESA concluded the monumental work Milleloquium veritatis Sancti Augustini, introduced by Petrarch and started by Augustine Triumphus of Ancona OESA. It contains 15,000 quotations from Augustine, grouped under 1000 epitomes, and perfectly indexed8.

5 See the Rudolph Arbesmann’s and William Humpfner’s Introduction in DE SAXONIA 1943, xxiv-xxix; see also SAAK 2002, 221-222.
8 The Milleloquium is an encyclopaedia, used also by Petrarch and available to scholars and masters from the second half of XIVth century to XVIIIth century (the last edition was published in Brescia in 1734). The Milleloquium also referred to Augustin’s De musica, as reported by Alfonsus Vargas Toletanus in his commentary to Sentences, a book researched by Coluccio Salutati. On the relationship between Augustine and the Milleloquium see
Fourth, in 1346, Thomas Bradwardine, canon of St. Augustine at Oxford, achieved his work *De causa Dei contra Pelagium*\(^9\), where he considered the doctrine of Augustine as the correct interpretation of Christian thought, otherwise falling under the way of theological determinism\(^10\).

With respect instead to the first feature mentioned above, we can illustrate it by considering the commentaries on *De civitate Dei*. In the 14\(^{th}\) century, four were the commentaries in circulation. The first was written by the English Dominican friar Nicholas Trevet (1258 – 1335 ca.). He was teacher in Oxford from 1297, where he was also Prior. He is known for his commentaries on many books of the Bible, and on some classical and medieval authors (Livy, Seneca, Boethius, Conrad, author of *De disciplina scholarium*). He was also known for his Anglo-Norman chronicles (from 1135 to 1307) and for a lost universal history (*Ab origine mundi ad Christum natum*). He drafted his glosses to *De civitate Dei* XI-XX at the beginning of the 14\(^{th}\) century and widely used by later commentators. They are an explanation of Augustine’s difficult expressions and constructions, ancient technical terms referring to institutions and customs that had since disappeared, allusions and myths\(^11\).

---


Trevet’s activities are close to those of Thomas Waleys. After completing his studies in 1318 in the Order of the Friar Preachers at Oxford, Thomas was sent to Bologna in 1326 and then to the Curia of Avignon in 1331. There, he criticized Pope John XXII in a sermon on beatific vision, pronounced on 3 January 1333; because of this, he was summoned to trial and detained in prison for many months. He died around 1349-1350\textsuperscript{12}. He was author of an \textit{Ars praedicandi} and of commentaries on many books of the Old Testament, but also of a commentary on \textit{De civitate Dei}. Thomas interrupted his \textit{Expositiones in De civitate Dei} at book X because of the obscurity (\textit{obscuritas}) of the work. It is also worth noting that Thomas treated \textit{De civitate} as a work of literature and a guide to ancient history, analysing each historical, geographic and mythological reference. At the beginning, he provides the reader with the aid of a structural analysis of the text, dividing it into chapters and paragraphs, and exposing the essential concepts of each section. In interpreting Augustine, he completed him. In his expositions, in fact, Thomas imports citations from about a hundred works by many authors, like Fulgentius, Eutropius, Macrobius, Valerius Maximus, Paul the Deacon, and referred to many medieval compilations. He quotes the most recently discovered works, such as the \textit{Breviarium} by Rufus Festus, the \textit{Metamorphosis} by Ovidius, and the fourth \textit{Decade} by Titus Livy. With great passion, he deals with philological problems, collationating about thirty handwritten witnesses to establish the text correctly. But the success of the \textit{Expositiones} was due above all to the encyclopaedic nature of this extremely compendious collection, which includes thousands of \textit{exempla} concerning characters of

ancient times that had become famous once more, and innumerable quotations from ancient authors\textsuperscript{13}.

In the tradition, Trevet’s commentary on books XI-XX and Waleys’s commentary on the first ten were gathered and published together, so much so that they were perceived as complementary already by the second edition of \textit{De civitate}, which appeared in Strasbourg in 1468 by Ioannes Mentelin\textsuperscript{14}. In his preface, Louis Vivès reported the rumours of a possible collaboration between Trevet and Waleys\textsuperscript{15}.

Ms. XIV 28 C, which comes from Pisa and dates to 1400 ca., now conserved in the General Archive of the Friar Preachers in Rome, contains a \textit{Tractatus additionum} that refers to Trevet and that some early-printed editions wrongly attributed to John Ridewall OFM, author in turn of a commentary on \textit{De civitate} (1333 ca.)\textsuperscript{16}. Further investigation has however shown that the editions of 1505, 1515 and 1520 contain the \textit{additiones} together with the commentary by Trevet and Waleys, and unequivocally attribute them to the Dominican Jacob Passavanti (1303-1357 ca.), Prior of the Florentine Church of St. Maria Novella\textsuperscript{17}. Ridewall’s commentary on \textit{De civitate} is more comprehensive than Trevet’s and less erudite than Waleys’s, but more concerned with Augustine’s doctrines. It significantly bears witness to a renewed interest in classical studies\textsuperscript{18}.

\textsuperscript{13} See MARTIN 2004, 3-18.
\textsuperscript{14} See BARDY 1959, 137-138.
\textsuperscript{15} See Louis Vivès’s \textit{Praefatio} in RIDEWAL 1563, fol. 17r: «De veteribus interpretibus huius operis: Primum Thomas Valois arbitratus credo ingens esse opus, et unus viribus maius, non omnia solus est obire ausus, sed socium sibi sumpsit, ac velut succedaneum sodalem suum Nicholaum Triveth tam similem sibi, quam ovum ovo; cui ipse lampada, quod aiunt, traderet fessus, nescio quo volumine; nam et si legi, non tamen annotavi».
\textsuperscript{16} See KÄPELI 1959, 200-205.
\textsuperscript{17} See KÄPELI 1962, 155-157.
\textsuperscript{18} See SMALLEY 1960, 109-132.
The English Carmelite John Baconthorpe composes a commentary on the first five books of *De civitate*, whose autograph is conserved in the ms. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 9540, fols. 76r-216v. This commentary was composed later than 10 November 1324, for this is the date of emission of the Papal Bull *Quia quorumdam*, which is quoted in the text. It recollects the main arguments developed by Augustine to criticize the Paganism and to champion the Christian faith. John Baconthorpe and the Franciscan Richard Fitzralph also comments on *De Trinitate*, while Ridewall on the *Confessiones*. In the French area, the Franciscan theologian Francis of Mayronnes writes a commentary on *De Trinitate* and also edits the *Verititates theologiae seu Compendium librorum S. Augustini De civitate Dei*, a collection of florilegia accompanied by observations that are mostly of moral and theological nature.

The commentaries of Meyronnes, Trevet and Waleys are the sources of Raoul of Presles’s translation of *De civitate Dei* into French. Raoul is born in 1314-1315 and he is the natural son of a homonym lawyer (1270-1329) under Philippe le Beau. After becoming himself lawyer for the King, Raoul composes two works in Latin between 1363 and 1366: the *Compendium morale de re publica*, dedicated to Jean d’Angerant, bishop of Chartres, and the *Musa*, dedicated to Charles V the Wise, the king of France. Raoul is also known for his translations from Latin into French. His first translations are those of John of Paris’s *Rex pacificus* and of the anonymous *Quaestio in utramque partem*, dedicated to Charles V. Raoul’s translating activity culminates in the translation of two works that are of paramount importance for the Western

---

19 See SMALLEY 1958, 112-113.
21 See FIORENTINO 2003, 13-17.
culture, namely the Bible and Augustine’s *De civitate Dei*, that made closer the intellectual and political proximity to Charles V\(^22\).

In fact, the project of translating Augustine’s work arises under the reign of John II the Good (1350-1364), and becomes concrete under the reign of his son, Charles V (1364-1380), in whose library no less than one third consisted of theological works, among which translations played an important role\(^23\). As is known, however, the *De civitate Dei* is not a politically neutral work, because in the first books Augustine makes a detailed analysis of the political vicissitudes of the Roman Republic and Empire. The purpose is to demonstrate the progressive moral decadence of the Empire and thereby avoid tracing the fall of the Roman Empire to the abandon of the pagan gods and the conversion to Christianity. Rather, Augustine conceives this process as a providential tool to save humanity. Human beings are corrupted and too cowardly for practicing the ancient Roman virtues, so Augustine proposes to erect a divine society, aware of the universal decline of moral and civic virtues, and confident in a divine authority that can impose sobriety, friendship, justice and concord among citizens. In Augustine’s plan, good Christians must be good citizens, without any integralism and worldly inclinations\(^24\).

Prompted by this inspiring principle and maybe occasioned by the French counterattack to reconquer Brittany after the treaty of Bretigny, Charles V commissioned to Raoul the translation of *De civitate Dei*. Raoul begins the translation in 1371 and achieves it on 1 September 1375, basing it on the commentaries of Meyronnes, Trevet, Waleys, and on a handwritten


\(^{23}\) Ibid., 27-28.

\(^{24}\) See DODARO 2012, 386-397.
witness of *De civitate*, the ms. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fr. 2700, which has unfortunately been lost. This translation had great success until the middle of the sixteenth century, when the new commentaries edited by Vivès (1522) appeared. This fortune is documented by the widespread circulation of the translation, conserved in about 58 manuscripts, in some highly luxury editions (some of which end at the tenth book) and two early-printed editions (Abbeville 1486 and Paris 1531). Over the last years, Olivier Bertrand and his research group has investigated this tradition and collationed the manuscripts, planning a complete critical edition of Raoul’s translation, in five volumes. To the current date, they published the first two volumes, containing Raoul’s translation of books I-III and books IV-V.

2. Raoul’s Translation

Raoul’s translation is divided into books and chapters, and accompanied by erudite excursus that aim to explain each concept and topic of the work, as well as by long marginal notes that Raoul draws from the commentaries of Trevet and Waleys, although he never refers to his sources. Raoul’s reference to ancient and medieval authors, thus, are not first-hand citations. Raoul could derive them from Trevet’s and Waleys’s commentaries present in the Bibliothèque du Louvre as well in his own library. The existence of Raoul’s library is attested by a letter that Raoul received from Charles V and that dates to March 1375, which mentions a volume (the n. 505

---

26 See DE LABORDE 1909; PANTIN 1955, 141-149; SMALLEY 1956, 140-142.
30 See BERTRAND 2009, 45-63.
of the catalogue of the Louvre’s Library) donated to Raoul by Charles V\(^{31}\).
Many of the works of the ancient authors quoted by Raoul, such as Flavius Josephus, Pope Gregory the Great, Lucan, Ovid, Titus Livy, could also be present in Charles V’s library\(^{32}\).

After Raoul concludes the translation of Waleys’s commentary, he begins with that of Augustine’s work. At the beginning of the translation of book XI, Raoul says that since the reader is now sufficiently acquainted with the subject that she/he is able to study alone, he will proceed more rapidly, without commenting on each detail of the work. Raoul thus concentrates on the translation. Raoul’s rendering Augustinian Latin into Middle French is difficult. He had at disposal many correspondent French words, but he also needed to introduce some neologisms like *corrution*, *usuerper*, *obiedience*, *militant* etc. In this way, Raoul much enriched the French political lexicon and contributed to that scientific transformation of politics that completely achieved in the fifteenth century\(^{33}\).

In Bertrand’s critical edition, Raoul’s work is prefaced by the dedication to Charles V. From the very beginning, the importance of Augustine of Hippo is justified though the metaphor of the sun:

> le soleil plainement sans flechir, elle les gette hors de son ny et renye. Et quant j’ai bien considéré et ymaginé ces hautes proprietéz, y me semble que je ne les puis miex comparagier ne plus proprement à nul de touz les docteurs de sainte Eglise, especialment de l’Eglise primitive, que à monseigneur saint Augustin\(^{34}\).

\(^{31}\) See DELISLE 1907, 110.
Raoul equates Augustine’s fame as the shining light among the Fathers of the Church to the sun that never sets and reigns over all things. Augustine’s fame is witnessed, in Raoul’s opinion, by Possidius, bishop of Calabria, contemporary of Augustine’s, who edited his biography and bibliography, and who enumerated more than one thousand titles, a number that Raoul says he wants to reduce to one thousand precisely for greater convenience. According to Raoul, many reasons can explain the fame of Augustine and in particular of his *De civitate*: the teaching of the Catholic faith, the confutation of heresies, also condemned in other books such as the *Contra Faustum*, *Contra Manicheos* and *De heresibus*, and yet the explanation of the Trinity, in which Augustine remains unsurpassed. The profound knowledge of the divinity that Augustine shares with John the Evangelist confers to the Bishop of Hippo a special role: that of an eagle among turkeys or of the king of the early Church Fathers:

Et par ces causes, tout aussi comme monseigneur saint Jehan l’Evangeliste, pour ce que il comprist et senti plus hautement de la divinité que nulz des autres evangelistes, est comparé à l’aigle, pareillement monseigneur saint Augustin entre les docteurs de l’Eglise primitive y puet et doit estre comparé et clamé roy, aussi comme l’aigle est reputé roy et souverain des oisiaux.

The metaphor of the eagle gives Raoul the occasion to associate Augustine with Charles V:

Et aprés ce, quand j’ay bien tout ce consideré, et avec ce avisé et regardé vostre haute nativité, la noblesce et grandeur de vostre personne, et en aprés vostre estude et continuele occupacion, et sus toutes ces choses la haute pensee qui est cheue en vostre cuer et qui vouz a pleu à moy declarer, tout
If Augustine may be compared to an eagle because of his profound knowledge of the divinity, Charles V resembles an eagle rather because of some features related to his royalty. Especially, Raoul mentions the nobility of his descent and of the Kingdom of France, and the greatness, magnificence and power of the king of France among the Catholic kings and the Roman Emperors lineage, the only ones who had adopted the symbol of the eagle.

Raoul is of the opinion that Charles V’s Catholic bent is witnessed by his descent, whose roots trace back to Clovis, the first king of the Franks and the first Catholic king among the barbarian peoples. Raoul notes that he was crowned by the bishop of Rheims, who conferred him the signs of the Trinity to fight the Muslim king Caudat. When Caudat was defeated, Clovis laid lily flowers, the symbol of the French monarchy, in the ancient Church of Saint Denys in Paris. This consecration gave to the kings of France, including Charles V, special powers:

Et ne tieingne vous ne autre que celle consecration soit sans tres grant, digne, et noble mistere, car par icelle, vos devanciers et vouz avéz tele vertuz et puissance qui vous est donnee et attribuee de Dieu que vous faites miracles en vostre vie, teles si grans et si apertes que vous garisséz d’une tres horrible maladie qui se appelle les escroelles, de laquele nul autre prince crestien ne puet gairir fors vous.

Thus, the consecration of the kings of France carried with it a so great, worthy and noble aura of mystery as to attribute to these kings the power to wreak miracles, and in particular a thaumaturgic power to cure some

---

38 Ibid., 165.
39 Ibid., 166-167.
40 Ibid., 166.
diseases, like scrofula, according to a well-established popular belief\textsuperscript{41}. In addition, Charles V borrows the name of the famous Charlemagne, the Germanic Emperor’s ally against the Muslims\textsuperscript{42}:

> Et ces choses, mon tres redoubté seigneur, denottent et demonstrent par vraye raison que par ce vous estez et devés estre le seul principal protecteur, champion et defenseur de l’Esglise comme ont esté vos devanciers. Et ce tient le Saint Siege de Romme qui a acostumé à escripre à vos devanciers et à vouz singulierement en l’intitulation des lettres: “Au tres crestien des princes”\textsuperscript{43}.

In other words, for Raoul Charles stands out as the most Christian prince and the main political interlocutor of the Catholic Church. All these characteristics explain why Charles V commissioned the translation of \textit{De civitate Dei} for his kingdom, his people and the whole Christian world:

> Et par especial en ce que la haultesse de vostre engin et entendement a si hault volé et esté si hautement esleue que la plus grant œuvre d’un livre — part hors celui que il fist de la benoite Trinité, et qui plus traitte de matieres grandes, hautes, subtiles et diverses, et qui à paines peuent cheoir en entendement humain pour la haultesse et profondité des matieres — vous avéz voulu estre translaté de latin en francois pour le proufit et utilité de vostre roiaume, de vostre pueple et de toute crestienté, c’est assavoir le livre de monseigneur saint Augustin de la \textit{Cité de Dieu}\textsuperscript{44}.

Raoul underscores that the king’s great intelligence reflects the depth of contents of the translated work. These contents are theological, focused in particular on the Trinity, but also include a variety of issues that go beyond Trinitarian theology. In this way, Raoul seems to take Charles V follow the footsteps of Charlemagne, who envisaged the plan of copying the entire Augustinian \textit{corpus}, awarding therein the \textit{De civitate} a special place:

\textsuperscript{41} See BERTELLI 1990 and CONTAMINE 1994, 49-60.
\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Ibid.}, 169.
\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Ibid.}, 170.
Et tieng que en ceste partie, vous avéz voulu ensuivre monseigneur saint Charles, qui entre touz les livres que il estudioit et veoit volentiers, il lisoit les livres de monseigneur saint Augustin et sur tous les autres le livre de la Cité de Dieu, si comme il est trouvé en sa vie et es croniques.

For this reason, Raoul declares that he was willing to accept that the translation be done according to the method suggested by the king:

Et se je ne ensuy en ceste translation les propres moz du texte et que je y voi se aucunes fois par une maniere de circonlocution ou autrement, il me sera pardonné pour ce que vous m’avéz commandé, pour la matiere esclarsir, que je ensuive la vraie, simple et clere sentence et le vrai entendement sans ensuivre proprement les mos du texte. Et si y a pluseurs mos qui ne se peuuent pas bonne-ment translater en francois sans adition ou declaration.

Raoul makes a doctrinal (*ad sensum*) and not a literal (*ad litteram*) translation, a translation that owes more to the humanities than to the medieval translating tradition. Raoul is not interested in following the text slavishly, *verbum ad verbum*, but opts for the paraphrase in order to bring to light the *sententia* or the true intention of Augustine. Raoul holds that the discovery of the real meaning of sentences has to be accomplished by integrating the text with continuous illustrations and definitions of the concepts, themes and characters that populated the cultural context of late-ancient Latin, and that would appear insignificant to the vulgar French reader of the end of the fourteenth century:

---

46 *Ibid.*, 172
Toutesvoies est mon entention d’y mettre aucunes declarations et expositions pour donner declaration au texte es parties et pas ou il aura doubté ou obscurté\(^{48}\).

Applying this principle, Raoul clarifies with appropriate glosses all the obscure parts of the text. For example, Raoul’s translation begins with the sententia of the general preface to the work. Augustine there refers to the sack of Rome by Alaric and the Goths, and establishes the aim of De civitate: to combat the errors of the non-believers. Raoul divides the work into two main parts, linked by book XI, the book devoted to the city of God and to the city of the world\(^{49}\). Raoul then makes a digression where he refers to some works by Isidore of Seville, Orosius and Paul the Deacon to illustrate the origins of the people of the Goths and the political vicissitudes that ended with Alaric’s entry in Rome\(^{50}\). At this point, Raoul dwells on Augustine’s dedication to Marcellinus, whom he identifies, following Orosius, with the Roman tribune who acknowledged Volusian’s objection to the relation of the Christianization of the Roman Empire with its moral decadence and its political demise in the West\(^{51}\). The subsequent chapter, on how to mount a defence against the enemies of the City of God – Raoul explains –, does not require any commentary\(^{52}\).

From the very first words, Raoul acknowledges his debt to Trevet and Waleys, for his glosses and digressions. This feature of Raoul’s translation has been accurately studied by Olivier Bertrand, so it will not need to dwell on it here\(^{53}\). We may nonetheless observe that Raoul does not follow passively his

\(^{49}\) Ibid., 181-182.
\(^{50}\) Ibid., 183-185.
\(^{51}\) Ibid., 188-189.
\(^{52}\) Ibid., 191-192.
sources, but at times, he adopts a more independent and original register, introducing some glosses that put Raoul’s thought in between Augustine and the Kingdom of France. These glosses are the object of our investigation in the following paragraphs. They concern five subjects: the concepts of ‘just war’, proletarian, justice, providence and necessity.

2.1. The Just War

In chapter 21 of book I, Raoul comments on the commandment “Thou shalt do no murder” and hence on the famous and controversial Augustinian theory of the just war. He explains that four conditions must be given to make a war just: first, a competent authority; second, a righteous intention; third, a just cause (such as the retaliation for a wrong suffering, the recovery of loot subtracted by the enemy, the compensation for the damages inflicted by the enemy, the restoration of peace and the like); fourth, a fair balance between the offence suffered and the armed response:

As is clear, it is not the commandment “Thou shalt do no murder” in itself that interests to Raoul, but rather a particular situation where men kill

---

54 On which, see DE LA BRIÈRE 1938 and HAGGENMACHER 1983.
other men. Especially, when a minister of God or a Christian believer decides
to wage war, Raoul thinks that we are obliged to explain the reasons and
conditions that make it a just war. In order to clarify this point, Raoul refers
to Thomas Aquinas and Isidorus of Seville. Raoul is of the opinion that war
is, in general, an act of aggression and not of defence, and that the retaliation
proportional to the attack by the enemy is unjustifiable and contrary to
Christian faith, even if inspired by greatness, courage, desire of justice or
compassion\textsuperscript{56}. God cannot command believers to wage a war of aggression,
so everyone who invokes such a war in the name of God does not actually
believe in God:

\begin{quote}
Et se il ne commanda ne amonnesta aus siens que en tele maniere il se
partissent de ceste vie, ausquiex il promist à appareiller maisons perdurables,
quelconques exemples que opposent ceulx qui n’ont point de congnoissance
de Dieu, il est chose manifeste que il ne le loist point à faire à ceulx qui
aouroient un vray Dieu\textsuperscript{57}.
\end{quote}

This condemnation also obtains in other cases. For example, Raoul
thinks that the act of suicide is not an act of courage or strength, but rather an
act of weakness and inability to face adversity\textsuperscript{58}. Raoul reaffirms this opinion
at the beginning of his commentary on chapter 24:

\begin{quote}
En ce -xxiii-\textsuperscript{e} chapitre, monseigneur saint Augustin conferme plus largement ce
que il avoit prouvé cy dessus ou -xxii-\textsuperscript{e} chapitre, c’est assavoir que il ne loist à
aucun à soy occire pour eschever les choses averses\textsuperscript{59}.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 283-285.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 284.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., 285.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 298.
When commenting on chapter 22 of book II, on the corruption of Rome that followed the civil wars after the third Punic War, Raoul introduces an important digression on the various types of war, which he borrows from the chapter *De bellis* of Isidore of Seville’s *Ethimologiae*:

Raoul identifies two general types of war: (1) first, what we could call “boundaries” wars, namely classic wars to conquer territory, waged by people or nation against their neighbours; (2) second, social wars, waged by some classes, factions or cities governed by the same sovereign against other classes, factions or cities. Raoul subdivides this second type of war into three sub-types according to the specific factions involved, namely (2.1) civil wars, waged between factions of the same city, (2.2) “internal” wars, caused by family struggles for power in the same factions, and (2.3) servile wars, provoked by the rebellion of slave masses against their owners in the same family. To these three fundamental types of wars, he adds other kinds such as

---

Ibid., 500-502.
“acephalic” or leaderless wars, undertaken by soldiers of fortune without a political leader:

Après il y a batailles qui s’appellent accephales, c’est à dire qui n’ont point de chief, si comme sont les compagnes […]61.

Finally, there are “external” wars, waged to conquer far distant territories:

Après il y a batailles qui s’appellent bella externa, si comme quant aucun va conquerir terre et seignorie en loingtain pays62.

Raoul proposes again this classification of wars in his commentary on chapter 13 of book III63. While commenting on chapter 10 of book III, on the civil wars during the reign of Numa Pompilius, Raoul introduces another digression, devoted this time to the supernatural forces that drive men to wage armed war:

Et pour ce que ceste matiere est un peu soutillette, quant à l’entendement de ces choses, il est assavoir que les deables peuent, se il leur est permis de Dieu, causer passions et mouvemens de l’appetit sensitif ou sen [s]ible. Lesquiex mouvemens et passions monseigneur saint Augustin appelle yci mouvemens de courages; et la communauté des hommes, especialment des mauvais, ensuit ces mouvemens. Et par consequant, se il leur est souffert, ilz pueent causer et paiz et bataille64.

War can be conducted by wicked men, whose soul, in the sensitive part, is influenced by demons, with the tacit approval of God, in that He does not

---

61 Ibid., 503.
62 Ibid., 504.
63 Ibid., 680-681.
64 Ibid., 642-643.
intervene to stop them. However, demons can affect the thoughts of men only if they are already evil, while they cannot oblige human will to do what it does not wish to do. For this reason, following Waleys, Raoul holds that war cannot be ascribed to the will of God, for He does not wish for war, but rather to the will of men, who can win wars against – not thanks to – the will of God:

Et veult prouver monseigneur saint Augustin que les paiz et les vittoires des batailles aviennent souvent contre la volenté des diex. Et premierement, il le preuve par l’expresse verité de leurs histoires; secondement, par la verité couverte par maniere de fables.

This complex classification, borrowed from Isidore of Seville and implemented by a reference to Waleys’s commentary, is a clear example of how Raoul proceeds in integrating and explaining Augustine’s text.

2.2. Proletarian

The second subject mentioned above is the concept of proletariat. Commenting on chapter 17 of book III, Raoul defines the proletarian as follows:

Le -xiii-e example est des prolaittaires, desquiex monseigneur saint Augustin dit que c’estoyent ceulz qui estoient ordonnéz et lessiéz en la cité de Romme pour engendrer enfans, pour ce qu’il estoient si povres qu’il n’avoyent de quoy eulz armer pour aler es chevauchiees et es batailles avec les autres Rommains. Et sont dis proprement prolectarii a prole, pour la ligne qu’il faisoient. Et dit monseigneur saint Augustin que en ce temps les guerres et les batailles estoient si efforciees, et en ycelles avoit eu tant de Rommains mors et desconfiz, que par defaute de gens, il escouvint que il esleussent ces prolaitaires, les armassent et

---

65 Ibid., 643.
66 Ibid.
feissent chevaliers et les meissent et escripsissent en cel ordre, ce que oncques mais n’avoit esté veu. Et pour ce que les Rommains faisoient et souffroyent tant de batailles, esqueles il avoient tant des gens mors prins et occis, afin que le pueple rommain ne fausist, estoyent ces povres prolaittaires ordenéz afin qu’il eust touzjours nouvelle ligniee en la cité67.

It is short digression, but particularly important. In it, Raoul coins the French term for ‘proletariat’, an introduction that will have great fortune in the history of political thought. Following Augustine, Raoul characterizes the proletarian as a man whose only resource is his sons, a man who is as poor as to be unable to afford arms or a horse, what impedes him entering in an equestrian order. In the Republican era of ancient Rome, the proletarians were only destined to replace the human losses in a battle.

2.3. Justice

The third subject mentioned above is justice. In his commentary on chapter 4 of book IV, on justice as a peculiar trait of royalty, Raoul counters the traditional concept based on cruelty and truth at all costs with a merciful concept of justice:

Et ja soit ce que justice compraingne en soy toutes les autres vertus, toutevoyes selon ce que dit Lactence en son livre De falsa et vera religione, en y a il -ii- principaux qui ne pueent estre dividees ne separees d’elle, c’est assavoir pitié et equité; car innocence, atremrance, prodomie et autres vertus semblables peuent estre es personnes qui ne scevent que c’est de justice et qui tiennent ces choses ou de nature ou par l’introducion et ordenance de leurs parens, si comme il a tousjours esté. Et de ces vertus se glorifient ceulz qui se souloient glorifier de justice lesqueles, combien que elles puissent venir de justice, aussi en peuent elles estre separees et devisees68.

67 Ibid., 752-753.
Echoing Lactantius, justice combines and harmonizes two ethical virtues: equity and compassion. These two virtues encompass many others, like purity of spirit, temperance and generosity, which can be acquired through parental education, even from those who ignore justice. Justice is not only an act of judgment but also an act of sharing out goods and tasks in a fair manner.69

As noted by Étienne Gilson, although only marginally, this passage touches on one of the fundamental issues in De civitate Dei, which proposes a dismissal of the Ciceronian concept of justice as the concord of social factions that live in peace and harmony.70 Even acknowledging a common respect for the ius, Raoul holds that people incline toward a new concept of justice as the mutual charity of the community of predestined sons of God in Christ as the head of the social body. Considering their physical, social, political and ethnic differences, they are called to preserve the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. This type of community is the people, understood at the same time as a political and religious aggregation:

Ne nulz n’est povres que celi qui a deffaute de justice. Nulz n’est riches que celi qui est plain de justice. Nulz n’est notable personne, fors celi qui est bon et innocent. Nul n’est tres cler, fors celi qui fait largement les euvres de misericorde. Nul n’est tres perfait, fors celi qui acomplist tous les poins et degrés de justice.71

This passage relates the exercise of justice to the economic and moral state of people, since it is justice itself, its presence or absence, that makes men rich or poor, and allows them to achieve a fully moral stature. In the

69 Ibid., 62-63.
70 See GILSON 2005, 76-83.
same way, who exercises the works of charity, is illustrious, and who practices the goodness and purity of spirit, is renowned.

2.4. Providence

The fourth subject on which we want to focus is the notion of providence. Referring to the first chapter of book V, on the reasons for the incredible expansion of the Roman Empire, Raoul defines the concepts of fate and providence as follows:

Car providence est celle meismes raison divine constitué ou souverain prince de tous, laquele ordonne toutes choses; mais fat est une disposition adherent aus choses mobiles ou mouvans, par laquele providence joint et lye -i- chascun par ses ordres et par ses droits et ruylles. Car providence embrace et lye ensamble toutes choses, ja soit ce que elles soient diverses ou infinies; mais fat adresse et ordonne toutes choses distribuees ou divisees es liex, en formes et en temps à ce que celle explication de l’ordre temporel aùnee en la presence ou au regart de la pensee divine soit ditte providence. Et celle meismes agregation, divise et expliquee en ces temps, soit appellee fat\textsuperscript{72}.

The concepts of providence and fate overlap in Raoul, because both appeal to the order of universal things that God disposed and administered from and for the eternity. The concept of fate, however, recalls the Stoic concept of \textit{logos} and the concept of \textit{ananké}, which imply a universal determinism, contrary to human freedom, to which the concept of providence is related\textsuperscript{73}.

The illustration of the notion of determinism gives the occasion to Raoul to present, in his commentary on chapter 8, a speculative option that stemming from the Ciceronian and Stoic fatalism reaffirms Augustinian

\textsuperscript{72} *Ibid.*, 240.
\textsuperscript{73} *Ibid.*, 241-242.
position: God infallibly knows all future events, both those necessary, produced by natural causes, and the contingent ones, produced by free and voluntary causes. However, God’s infallible knowledge does not impinge on men’s free will and hence on their liability for the choice of good or evil, because men’s free will is included in the order of causes known to God. For this reason, it is the very fact that God has an infallible knowledge of future contingents that safeguards the power of human will, in the best interpretation of Augustinian thought 74.

2.5. Necessity

The last subject on which we would concentrate is the notion of necessity. The subsequent commentary focuses on the concept of necessity:

Et pour cause de ce, monseigneur saint Augustin fait une distinction de treble nécessité. L’une qui vient contrainte et est soumise à nécessité, et celle est contre franchise et liberté, soit que ceste liberté ou franchise soit de contrainte, soit que franchise amaine celle nécessité; et celle touche il où il dit: « Car se l’en dit que celle nécessité soit nostre , etc. ». La seconde nécessité est de immutabilité, laquelle est de Dieu, ja soit qu’il ne soit soumis à elle, et celle n’empesche pas franchise de volenté; et celle touche il où il dit: « Mais se l’en diffinit celle estre nécessité ». La tierce nécessité si est et vient par supposition, laquelle est plus nécessité de consequent que de consequent, si comme se l’en disoit ainsi: « se je veul une chose ncessairement, je le veul par franc arbitrage ». Et ceste nécessité ne repugne point à franc arbitrage qui vient de contrainte ne à franche volenté 75.

Raoul distinguishes three types of necessity in Augustine and holds that only the last one is compatible with men’s free will. The first type belongs to the human sphere and is nothing other than an external

74 Ibid., 273-276.
75 Ibid., 285.
compulsion that annuls the subject’s free will, while the second type belongs to God and is equivalent to the immutability according to which God, freely and voluntarily, always has determined and forever will determine the order of the world. The third type, or necessity of a consequence, instead ensures free will; this condition concerns the antecedent of the consequence or entimema that states free action. Thus, given a consequence of the type ‘if A, then B’, the condition must be presupposed in A, not in B. An example is the consequence ‘if God knows that X will occur tomorrow, X will occur tomorrow’. In this consequence, the antecedent, i.e. that ‘God knows that X will occur tomorrow’, is certain and infallible, but it does not determine necessarily the consequent, i.e. that X will occur tomorrow. Divine knowledge in fact occurs in an eternal present: God sees and knows in a single infinite instant everything that occurs in the extended time, at the very moment when it is occurring. For this reason, if the occurrence of X tomorrow is due to the voluntary action of a free subject, the fact that God knows what will occur tomorrow only means that He knows that this cause has freely chosen that X will occur tomorrow. While it is occurring, God certainly and infallibly sees it and His knowledge simply documents the free choice of the subject who carries out X.

As is known, conditional necessity was formulated by Boethius in antithesis to simple necessity, and paraphrased by Anselm of Canterbury as consequent necessity as opposed to antecedent necessity. This distinction was widely adopted during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, albeit expressed in different terms, for instance as the opposition between simple and ex suppositione necessity, in Bonaventure, or as that between necessity for
a consequence and that of a consequent, in Peter of Tarantasie\textsuperscript{76}. Conditional necessity has been often associated with the Augustinian theory of the eternal present, in which God sees, as a spectator and from the perspective of the only instant of eternity, everything that occurs in the world at the very instant when it occurs, without conditioning or determining the course of events that remains subject to its own proper causes\textsuperscript{77}.

3. Conclusion

As Olivier Bertrand has proven, the dependence of Raoul of Presles’s work on the English, Dominican environment of Trebet and Waleys is very close. The translation of \textit{De civitate Dei} was not, for Raoul, an incident in his intellectual activities, but rather his culmination, achieved by employing innovative translation techniques and adopting a humanist standpoint. This explains the metaphor comparing Augustine to the sun that never sets and to the eagle, as well as the association of Charles V with Charlemagne in rediscovering the Augustinian corpus, and above all the \textit{De civitate}.

In Raoul’s translation, this work of Augustine’s is endowed with two thematic values. At a superficial glance, Raoul especially exalts the theological value of \textit{De civitate}, for it promises to clarify the Christian dogmas, above all the Trinity. Augustine and Charles V are associated by the metaphor of the eagle, for their common struggle against the heresies and non-believers, especially the Muslims. Indeed, Raoul presents Charles V as

\textsuperscript{76} For further discussion, see Fiorentino 2006, 78-84.
\textsuperscript{77} For the Augustinian theory of present eternity, see Fiorentino 2004, 62-65, and Fiorentino 2007, 287-323.
the best interlocutor of the Christian Church and the Papal curia, which will continue to reside in Avignon still for a few years.

However, after closer analysis, we may appreciate the second value of *De civitate*, its political value. In his translation, Raoul makes a historical analysis that departs from the decadent Roman Empire at the mercy of the barbarians and arrives to the France of Charles V, a nation in war had accepted the treaty of Bretigny and attempted a counterattack in Brittany. This value can justify Charles V’s interest in commissioning the translation of *De civitate*, an ideological interest that counters the moral and political decadence of France, invaded by Edward III’s troops, and impels toward a divine society in the faith and charity of Christ.

Charles V’s interest does not seem to be entirely unknown to Raoul. As has been seen, his original digressions are often focused on the theme of war, as when he theorizes the just war, by distinguishing the different kinds of war (boundaries and social wars, acephalic and external wars), or by discussing the link between war and supernatural forces. Or even on the theme of the proletariat, originally defined by Raoul and understood as the armed knights of the community and therefore as the help for the lost French chivalrous nobility.

The consequence is not an incitement to an anti-Islamic war, but rather a reaffirming the need for a revision of national identity, in the context of Christian justice that acknowledges mercy, charity, but not suicide, and human freedom, which in turns accepts providence, but not the Ciceronian and Stoic fate. The rejection of fate is accompanied in Raoul by a new reappraisal of the Augustinian theory of the eternal present and conditional necessity.
In conclusion, Augustine’s greatest political work lives again in Raoul’s translation and begins to speak to the late-medieval France about the war and the structure of the State. That devised by Raoul is a Christian State, where the exercise of the justice must be benevolent and merciful, and the appeal to God should not serve to determine the destiny of the people with absolute necessity, but to safeguard the liberty of the man in the history of the salvation. This idea of State is not proper to Augustine; it is however able to push the French army against the English.


FIORENTINO 2004 = FRANCESCO FIORENTINO, Gregorio da Rimini. Il futuro, la contingenza e la scienza nel pensiero tardo-medievale, Roma, Antonianum.


HAGGENMACHER 1983 = PETER HAGGENMACHER, Grotius et la doctrine de la guerre juste, Paris, PUF.

KÄPPELI 1959 = THOMAS KÄPPELI, «Une éclectique du commentaire de Nicholas Treveth sur le De civitate Dei», Archivium Fratrum Praedicatorum 29 (1959), 200-205.


MARTIN 2004 = MARCELLO MARTIN, Uno sguardo sui commenti al De civitate Dei agostiniano, in CORTESI MARIA ROSA (ed.), Padri greci e latini a confronto secoli XII-XV, Atti del Convegno Firenze Certosa del Galluzzo 19-20 ottobre 2001, Firenze, SISMEL.


RIDEWAL 1563 = IOANNES RIDEWALL & NICHOLAS TREVET, Commentaria in De civitate Dei, Lyon, Ioannes Frellonius.

SAAK 1997 = ERIC L. SAAK, Augustine in the Later Middle Ages, in BACKUS IRENE DOROTEA (ed.), The Reception of Church Fathers in the West. From the Carolingians to the Maurists, Leiden, Brill.


