

## The Secular – The Political

### *Augustine and Political Augustinianism in Twentieth-Century Political Theology*

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The premise of this essay is that rereadings of Augustine and Augustinianisms are crucial for interpreting twentieth- (and twenty-first-) century Christian political theology. I begin with the debate between Carl Schmitt and Erik Peterson, contextualising it not only in relation to their differing ecclesial responses to modern secularism but also in response to Henri de Lubac's important account of ecclesiology in *Corpus Mysticum*, which also influenced in various ways the political-theological narratives of Ernst Kantorowicz, Sheldon Wolin, John Milbank and Charles Taylor. My constructive proposal – offered over against not only earlier forms of Christian realist Augustinianism such as Reinhold Niebuhr<sup>1</sup> and Robert A. Markus, but also more recent forms of liberal political Augustinianism such as Oliver O'Donovan, Robert Dodaro and Eric Gregory – will be to argue that a more 'apocalyptic' or figural reading of Augustine's two cities and their relation to ecclesiology and politics of the *saeculum* (in conversation with the work of Ivan Illich) facilitates another trajectory of interpretation that I identify as 'messianic' political theology.<sup>2</sup> Such a position is less dualistic with regard to Church and state and more amenable to an expansion of the sphere of 'the political' to include economy, technology and household in ways that illuminate the lived complexity of theological claims in a secular age.

Augustine and Augustinianism is crucial for our topic, and not only because Augustine bequeathed to the West and its entire history of theological politics and political theology the centrality of the *saeculum* (spawning a vast range of interpretations of its meaning).<sup>3</sup> In the twentieth century there has been a veritable explosion of interest in 'political Augustinianism'<sup>4</sup> that often quite directly engages the fraught relations in contemporary politics between the secular pluralism of religions and theologically committed critiques of political regimes, policies and institutions in both theoretical and practical terms. What is often overlooked, however, is the Augustinian debate at the heart of 'political theology' – a discourse made current in the twentieth century by the juridical theorist Carl Schmitt that has also become increasingly contested in recent times around the meaning of secularisation and secularism in liberal modernity. This is a discourse that has far exceeded earlier 'critics of modernity' such as Schmitt and less controversial philosophers such as Hannah Arendt and Eric Voegelin, to include the counter-Enlightenment critiques of a range of thinkers who identify as postmodern and postsecular. Many of those thinkers, from Schmitt, Arendt and Voegelin to Derrida, Foucault and Agamben, have also taken up the problematics of Augustine (and other early Christian thinkers) – not least in relation to languages of worship (not only 'worth-ship' in a religious sense, but also the cultic liturgies of public order), the philosophical-theological dramas of human being and becoming enacted historically, and governmentality or sovereignty in its various

interrelated forms. Of course, an essay such as this cannot engage such a wide range. I begin with Schmitt because of his ongoing importance for political theologies, showing the deeply Augustinian issues present in his and his interlocutors' work. I then turn to the more recent Christian political Augustinians to mount a constructive argument for a more 'messianic' and apocalyptic account of Augustine's political theology that offers underappreciated (and often misunderstood) resources for the current debates on the secular and the political.

## Political Theology: Schmitt, Peterson, de Lubac

The rubric 'political theology' as it came to be known in the twentieth century is bequeathed by the notorious Carl Schmitt, whose first book by that title (1922) provides us with two of its best-known claims. The first is the classic formulation of the political-theological concept that lies at the heart of political theory, including that of modern secular politics: 'Souverän ist, wer über den Ausnahmezustand entscheidet' ('Sovereign is the one who decides on the [state of] exception [or emergency]').<sup>5</sup> For Schmitt, political sovereignty cannot simply be established juridically by the rule of law or even the state; it requires more than a procedure of decision-making or political judgement. It requires a personal agency, which is why he remains fascinated by Thomas Hobbes – who is not only the founder of modern political theory but also a political theologian of great power precisely because of his capacity to employ great mythical and demonical images in his political thinking. Despite the rationalistic technicisation and mechanisation of political economy in the modern age through its secular 'disenchantment' (as Max Weber called it) of the world, Hobbes recognised that the political remains radically related to the chaotic passions that must be rightly ordered in speech through moral-political-judicial conformity to the needs of a security state.<sup>6</sup> It is not surprising perhaps that Hobbes's image of sovereignty, the Leviathan, who will provide in his 'person' the power as of a 'mortal god' to decide upon the interpretation of the law in a manner that neutralises warring religious passions, is taken from the Book of Job – that great contestation regarding the meaning of divine justice, not only between Job and the conventional opinions regarding the 'problem of evil' of his friends, but also between Job and God and, beyond that, God and Satan. In *Political Theology* Schmitt makes reference to a 'Protestant theologian' who demonstrated that 'a philosophy of concrete life must not withdraw from the exception and the extreme case, but must be interested in it to the highest degree'. He goes on: 'In the exception the power of real life breaks through the crust of a mechanism that has become torpid by repetition.'<sup>7</sup> The theologian is Søren Kierkegaard and the demonstration – 'the exception . . . thinks the general [or the universal] with extreme passion' – is taken from *Repetition*, a meditation on the 'ordeal' (*Provelse*) of Job concerning the boundaries of justice, divine power and human suffering in an impassioned *agon* over against the divine sovereign himself. These theological and religious collisions remain at the heart of the political even (and perhaps especially) in secular settings of supposed 'neutrality' that assume such extremes have been contained if not entirely tamed through exclusion or juridical mechanisms.

This brings us to the second famous claim, at the beginning of the third essay:

All significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts not only because of their historical development – in which they were transferred from theology to the theory of the state, whereby, for example, the omnipotent

God became the omnipotent lawgiver – but also because of their systematic structure, the recognition of which is necessary for a sociological consideration of these concepts. The exception in jurisprudence is analogous to the miracle in theology.<sup>8</sup>

Of course, despite the banishment of the miraculous in Enlightenment rationality (and the deism of the modern constitutional state), exceptions and emergencies that require the suspension of the law continue to arise. Schmitt's founding exposition of sovereignty must here be read in conjunction with his founding concept of the political, namely, the distinction between friend (*Freund*) and enemy (*Feind*).<sup>9</sup> For Schmitt the ultimate challenge to this basic political principle is to be found in the words of Jesus: 'Love your enemies' (Matt. 5:44) – which Schmitt, in keeping with both conventional Christendom ethics and most liberal political ethics, regards as a private, spiritual and individual ethic, not a public, political ethic. Here too Schmitt remains in agreement with Hobbes's privatising interpretation of the 'singular mark' of New Testament prophecy, namely, that the teaching that 'Jesus is the Christ, that is, the king of the Jews, promised in the Old Testament' (*Leviathan* 36.20; cf. 48.11ff.) can have no immediate political import, only a chiliastic historicist one. In other words, Christian messianism pertains to individual spiritual salvation whose political significance can only gain purchase with the embodied sovereignty of Christ at the end of time. In the meanwhile it may (and for Schmitt must) inform the virtues of political agency and citizenship that are, however, institutionally tied to the nation state as *katechon*, a spiritual and moral agency that Hobbes and other social contract theorists also emphasised.

Among the most interesting recent interventions in political theology are those that identify the importance of Henri de Lubac's Augustinian *Corpus Mysticum* for critically revisiting significant visions of the Western political tradition, including Schmitt. Jennifer Rust argues that both Carl Schmitt and Ernst Kantorowicz flatten out theoretically (and non-theologically) what de Lubac presents as an originally dynamic and performative, doxological and ethical, relation between *ekklesia* and Eucharist so as to further their own genealogical projects of secular political order.<sup>10</sup> Schmitt in particular seeks to recover a role for the secular power of Christendom as imperial 'restrainer' (*katechon*, 2 Thess. 2:6–7) of antinomian evil through the exercise of state sovereignty modelled on Romans 13. Erik Peterson criticised this on Augustinian grounds, arguing that a Trinitarian theology resists all attempts to ground a human politics.<sup>11</sup> I believe de Lubac's sacramental ecclesiocentrism, rooted in the Pauline and Augustinian vision of the messianic body as fully divine and fully human, both mystically hidden and fully public, offers a more compelling critique of Carl Schmitt's secularised Christendom political theology than that offered by Erik Peterson – not least because it is finally more Augustinian. Jacob Taubes, in keeping with Peterson's position, suggests that Augustinian Christianity rejects the 'problem' of political theology by 'eschatologising' the apocalypse – i.e. 'domesticating' messianic sovereignty by restricting it to the Church.<sup>12</sup> As I hope will become clear below, I do not consider this to be an accurate portrayal of Augustine.

Now it is true that Peterson's critique could be read another way; that is, he wants to subvert any and every compromise of the public witness of the messianic community entailed in shoring up a secular polis that does not liturgically participate in the messianic sovereignty of the heavenly Jerusalem. As neither Jewish nor pagan, at home in no earthly city, the Christian's citizenship is in heaven, the public cult of which on earth is the *ekklesia*. On Peterson's reading of the Book of Revelation, Hebrews and Paul, the liturgical political worship of the Church is a participation in the cosmic sovereignty of its heavenly

imperator, Christ, whose eschatological *imperium* is 'opposed to all *imperia* of this world', and whose *militia* on earth is made up only of martyrs.<sup>13</sup> This mirrors Oliver O'Donovan's Church as 'eschatological society'; it is, by definition, otherworldly or 'afterworldly' and represents in its cultic worship the hidden kingdom of the ascended Christ. O'Donovan's reading of Colossians 2:15, Paul's claim that the principalities and powers that govern the world have been publicly subjected to divine sovereignty through the messianic rule of Jesus, qualifies this Pauline claim. While Paul claims that the messianic 'disarming' (*apekdusamenos*: 'stripping off the clothing') of these authorities has been accomplished by the cross 'in full public openness' (*en parresia*), thus founding a new cosmic sovereignty over against the pretentious judgements of human precepts, doctrines and traditions, O'Donovan claims rather the public hiddenness of this messianic apocalypse.<sup>14</sup> Until the final *parousia* of Christ, Paul's messianic political theology must be content to authorise a 'stripped-down' version of secular authority (Rom. 13) whose judicial task is to protect the social space for Christian mission. In this way does O'Donovan also agree with Schmitt regarding the *katechonic* (2 Thess. 2) role of the state as restraining evil through judicial authority.<sup>15</sup>

Giorgio Agamben provides yet another reading of Peterson that may help bring us back to why de Lubac is so important.<sup>16</sup> In contrast to the political theology of Carl Schmitt that emphasises the transcendent sovereignty of the one God, Peterson's emphasis on the public liturgical participation in the Trinitarian divine economy opens the door for an 'economic' political theology and an exploration of the doxological role of divine glory in the messianic *oikos* that may help break down the classical distinction between the private *oikos* and the public *polis*, between governmentality or pastoral household management and public juridical sovereignty. Such a broadening of the political and economic, Agamben argues, may be traced back to early Christianity – and especially to Paul, who calls himself an 'economist of the mysteries of God' (1 Cor. 4:1; cf. 9:17; Col. 1:25). That is, Paul understands his messianic mission (and that of the body of Christ) as one of servanthood or stewardship of the economy of divine mystery, an ongoing apocalypse of the recapitulation of 'all things' in Christ (Eph. 1:10).

Agamben, like Peterson, suggests that this Pauline language is not really political but rather more accurately an economic theology – Paul is interested in 'building up' (*oikodomei*, 1 Cor. 8:1; 10:23) the messianic body, which is a liturgical community but not a *polis*.<sup>17</sup> Here Agamben radically divides what Paul unites, and it is because he remains unattuned to Paul's *theological* claims. When Agamben claims that the overtly political language of Philippians 1:27, 3:20 and Ephesians 2:19 is 'exceptional' and 'decidedly impolitical', he misses the apocalyptic mood and substance of Paul's messianic political theology. The building Paul refers to in 1 Corinthians 3:10f. has a messianic foundation, the mystery disclosed in the crucified 'Lord of glory' (1 Cor. 2:7) that the 'rulers of the world' failed to see but that is pneumatically disclosed to all who share in the 'mind (*nous*) of Christ' (2:16). The more intimate sphere of *oikos* is also public and political, which is why the 'household relations' addressed in Paul's letters are politically constituted in the same messianic mystery, which is also a 'mind'. When Paul says 'be citizens (*politeuesthe*) worthy of the constitution, the gospel'<sup>18</sup> (Phil. 1:27), he makes references to the *politeuma* founded in heaven (Phil. 3:20) where the messianic power governs. Hence the appropriateness of Paul's conjunction of political and economic language in Ephesians 2:19: 'you are fellow citizens (*sympolitai*) with the saints and members of the household (*oikeioi*) of God' as a building being built for divine dwelling. The point is that for Paul, as for all the New Testament authors, heaven is not a 'place' or 'other world' (as Nietzsche's *Hinterwelt*

implies) but an invisible presence in continuity with the visible world ('on earth as it is in heaven') in a shared messianic political economy. I completely agree with Agamben's thesis that Pauline and early Christian theology is itself 'economic' and did not simply become so later through 'secularisation', but the 'eternal life' by which power is related to 'glory' (and not simply juridical governance) in the mystery of divine economy is for Paul as for Augustine fully political and economic.

The point of continuity, however, is consistently the cross. If one is to speak of an economy of glory, therefore, it must be related to the ignominious death of the Messiah crucified by all forms of worldly authority – religious, political, economic, cultural. The scandal of this claim about messianic sovereignty and glorification by way of the cross is clearly depicted in John 12, and it remains very hard to see even though it is fully public and present in all dimensions of created reality. As Paul states, however, the only access to the *theologia* is the *oikonomia* of its visible human and earthly representative,<sup>19</sup> the messianic *ekklesia* that corporately shares the 'mind (*phroneite*)' (Phil. 2:2,5ff.; cf. the *nous* of Rom. 12:1–2) of Christ characterised by humility and obedience to death on a cross. In the crucial book 10 of *City of God*, Augustine cites Romans 12 to formulate the embodiment of the 'living sacrifice' in the world in conformity with the 'form of a servant' offered in the crucified Messiah.<sup>20</sup> There is no radical division between 'being' and 'acting', between 'theology' and 'ethics' in this messianic enactment of the mysterious divine reconciliation of 'all things' in Christ. For de Lubac this is the sacramental heart of the mystical body of Christ, where 'mystical' means more than 'moral', but may not, because embodied and enacted in the everyday life of the world, 'be in any way taken as synonymous with "invisible"'.<sup>21</sup>

This allows de Lubac, following Augustine,<sup>22</sup> to call all members of the messianic body both 'Christs' and 'priests', and it allows me to dare place Mennonites and the Radical Reformation (which I interpret as a version of 'vernacular mysticism'), with their emphasis on the visible priesthood of all believers, into the Augustinian tradition of political theology understood as *corpus mysticum*. Eucharistic realism and ecclesial realism are united in the sacramental realism of the messianic body,<sup>23</sup> which has implications for political theology. It should be noted that in Augustine's biblical-exegetical formulation of messianic political theology in books 15–18 of *City of God*, which establishes the context for interpreting book 19 (itself placed into Augustine's apocalyptic conclusion, books 19–22),<sup>24</sup> the priest-king of Salem, Melchizedek, plays a more prominent prophetic and figural role than does Israel's king David.<sup>25</sup> This is significant for Augustine's claim that the messianic body must take the form of its priest-king, namely the form of the servant – a form prefigured in Melchizedek's offering of bread and wine to Abraham (Gen. 14:17–18), taken up in the royal messianic Psalm 110:4, and applied to Christ in Hebrews 5–7. The righteousness of this royal figure, also attached to 'Salem', or the city of peace that David renames Jerusalem (the possession of no tribe), is one that rules through the sacrifice of humility displayed above all in Christ and the martyrs. Augustine crucially and consistently relates the political question of peace to the apocalyptic question of worship, a liturgical worship that is also always represented as an incarnational ethic that takes the servant form of diaspora or pilgrimage in the secular world.<sup>26</sup>

The diaspora ethics of political economy that I am here relating to messianic political theology is nicely characterised by Augustine as one of proper use and enjoyment: a secular life in which we 'make use of earthly goods like pilgrims, without grasping after them'.<sup>27</sup> But this use is sacrificially offered up with reference to God so that 'inflamed by the fire of divine love', the form of worldly desire may be messianically reformed to reflect

divine desire.<sup>28</sup> This is what it means to be economists of the divine mystery, and one of the great Christian witnesses to this ethic of political economy in our time is Wendell Berry, who resurrects the term 'usufruct' as the measure of good stewardship.<sup>29</sup> He suggests that the biblical passage most valuable in displaying this relationship is Revelation 4:11, in a suitably archaic translation: 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.'<sup>30</sup> The term *thelema*, here translated 'pleasure', is often translated 'will', but the ambiguity is nicely Augustinian – where will and love, and indeed pleasure, are closely related to represent motive power, and Berry calls it 'affection in action'.<sup>31</sup> The same word is used in Romans 12:2 in terms of proving the *thelema* of God as the measure of the completion of 'all things', and Jesus himself prays: 'thy *thelema* be done on earth as it is in heaven' (Matt. 6:10). The liturgical agency of worship entails attending in our use ('as if not' possessing) of worldly goods to God's pleasure in all things so as to bring about a divinely informed affection in action called 'peace' or 'well-being' or *shalom*. Such messianic passion, far from ruining the world (as Mark Lilla thinks it does),<sup>32</sup> will attend to the exhortation of the seer: 'Awake, and strengthen what remains and is on the point of death' (Rev. 3:2).

Mennonites as a people came into being by the desire, even unto martyrdom, of taking this messianic posture and practice seriously in all aspects of everyday human life, the *oikia*. I have called this stance 'Radical Reformation' in recognition of George Hunston Williams's nice historiographical observation, picked up by Mennonite historians, that this movement may be just as well if not better understood as a worldly or 'secular' vocational continuation of medieval monasticism, a monasticism in the world.<sup>33</sup> This is not simply a matter of a voluntary ecclesial identity or commitment to 'pacifism', but of a coherent and interrelated pattern (a *nomos*) of communal discipleship that includes economic simplicity and the renunciation of possessive desire. This is also in keeping with a Pauline economy (*oikonomia*, sometimes translated 'commission', 1 Cor. 9:17) that inhabits the mysterious freedom of messianic slavery in order to build up (*oikodome*,<sup>34</sup> 1 Cor. 8:1; 10:23) the common world that is nevertheless passing away (1 Cor. 7:31). The *nomos* of economic language here helps break down the sharp distinction between *oikos/oikia* (household) and *polis* (politics) that has long prevented the exploration of a more radical biblical political theology in which so-called 'domestic' (or indeed 'private') relations and institutional orders may not be separated from or opposed to 'public' or 'political' forms of organisation and authority. That is, our everyday, intimate decisions are also very much tied to public, political judgements. This 'love-knowledge' also opens up the entire Bible to a more figural political-ethical interpretation. It would require the Church, as an institutional ordering – the particular embodiment of the 'messianic body' – to relate itself actively and critically to all aspects of the economy of divine government which presides providentially over 'all things'.

My reading here may be compared and contrasted with Eric Gregory's recent influential articulation of a political Augustinianism that emphasises civic virtue consistent with secular liberal democracy without compromising Augustine's theological context of the *ordo amoris* rooted in a Trinitarian theology and the *totus Christus* ecclesiology of the central book 10 of the *City of God*. States Gregory:

To put it bluntly, Book 10 of the *City of God* is the basic text for Augustinian politics: the heart of Augustine's account of the true worship of the crucified God and the charitable service of neighbor in collective *caritas* . . . A thicker vision of politics and citi-

zanship that is Augustinian is necessarily tied to the kind of God and the kind of desire disclosed in Jesus Christ. Christology should be *political* for Augustinians . . .<sup>35</sup>

I am certainly in full agreement with this, and yet Gregory, in keeping with other political Augustinians, hesitates to interpret this in the apocalyptic registers employed by Paul, Augustine and the traditions of ‘vernacular mysticism’ that includes Catholic women such as Julian of Norwich<sup>36</sup> as well as more apocalyptic ‘radical reformation’ critiques of Constantinian Christendom.<sup>37</sup> Such terms are too agonistic to help build up the secular body politic in an ethos of democratic citizenship, too ‘hostile’ to the necessities of imperial power or the modern security state. While he rejects R. A. Markus’s account of the *saeculum* as religiously ‘neutral’, Gregory, like Markus, prefers language of ‘ambivalence’ that ‘delivers Augustine from both apocalyptic hostility to Rome as an apostate demonic order and sacral identification of Rome as a sacramental vehicle of grace’.<sup>38</sup> In what follows, however, I shall argue that the agonistic language of Pauline and Augustinian citizenship is fully attuned to the religious and theological dimensions of sovereignty in a manner that may be called ‘apocalyptic’. An apocalyptic perspective is characterised neither by hostility nor triumphalist opposition. Indeed, in the apocalyptic 2 Thessalonians 2 these are traits of apostasy and anomia in the ‘mystery of lawlessness’ that will be unveiled as ‘satanic’. The messianic mind, by contrast, is ‘not to be quickly shaken in mind or excited’ but rather patiently waiting, not passively but actively working ‘like hesychasts’ (2 Thess. 3:12; 1 Thess. 4:11) in the political-ethical activity of building up the relations of love. While not hostile or triumphalistic, such a life of virtue is certainly ‘agonistic’ – as Augustine insists even in the heart of his apocalyptic account of peace in *City of God*, book 19, 25–8. The referral of the virtues of love and justice to the ‘final peace’ of the ‘most glorious’ city is a matter of ultimate citizenship enacted ‘like a pilgrim’ in the everyday political, economic and social life of this passing age.

## An Apocalyptic Reading of Augustine’s Messianic Political Theology

The thesis of Charles Taylor’s influential tome *A Secular Age*<sup>39</sup> might be summarised as follows: modern secularisation, a sociopolitical creation of the West, has given rise to an anti-religious ‘exclusive humanism’ in reaction to a Latin Christendom obsessed with ‘reform’ – that is, to an externalised juridical-penal institutionalisation of Christianity that has lost the personal and incarnational essence of the original ‘gospel’ of the Messiah Jesus. Taylor identifies the source of this perversion of Latin Christianity as ‘hyper-Augustinianism’, which takes both Catholic and Protestant forms but is particularly reified and hardened in Calvinist Protestantism.<sup>40</sup> Like Augustine, hyper-Augustinians believe that only a small number of the human *massa damnata* will be saved from sin in order to dwell eternally with God; the majoritarian remainder will be condemned to eternal hell.<sup>41</sup> Theologically, this position is rooted in a juridical-penal understanding of the atonement in which divine wrath against human sin must be appeased, and Christ’s sacrifice pays the debt of original sin. There is present here, argues Taylor, a tension between a juridical metaphor (payment of debt) and a redemption metaphor (freeing the captive), a tension between divine anger/wrath and divine love/mercy, between hell and heaven, that gets resolved in a rigid doctrinal logic in which ecclesial authorities display the all-too-human tendency to colonise divine violence in the service of their own. This logic is tied to a pernicious interpretation of suffering and punishment as a part of a providentially governed ‘divine

pedagogy', in a narrative of total human depravity and limited atonement. Politically, this view entails the belief that the godly minority should exercise political control so as to restrain evil and promote civil order.

Hyper-Augustinians emphasise divine punishment, foster a seamless and puritanical connection between piety and social order, and emphasise the transformation of the will in which virtue requires the disciplined, institutional imposition of the ordering of the good. But for hyper-Augustinians there are also real limits to such institutional, sociopolitical (re)ordering and reform due to the pervasive, incorrigible fact of human sinfulness, which must simply be coercively restrained in the earthly city. Think of Nietzsche's harshest articulation of Christian *ressentiment* against the sinful strong that gives birth to the juridical-penal conscience, which creates the 'responsible, sovereign moral self' through the internalisation of the transcendent 'evil eye', institutionally mediated through various disciplines of religio-moral self-surveillance.<sup>42</sup> Here you have a precis of Taylor's 'hyper-Augustinianism', and while he shares elements of the Nietzschean critique, Taylor also seeks to articulate a Christian vision that is able to address the critique from within a more faithful liberal Catholic political theology, one heavily indebted (Taylor claims)<sup>43</sup> to the work of Ivan Illich – particularly on the radical implications of a Christian understanding of incarnation that entails new motivation (divine compassion rather than penal pedagogy) and a new community ('Communion of Saints' rather than institutional Church) based on voluntary neighbour love that goes beyond external religious identitarian markers and institutional codes.

It is hard to know how Taylor himself would distinguish or reconcile his account of hyper-Augustinianism from or with his account of Augustine in *Sources of the Self* and the Augustinian turn to the inner, intimate self in which God is nearer to me than I am to myself.<sup>44</sup> One thing seems clear: neither account is articulated in highly theological or existential terms. In *Sources* the conceptual Augustinian doctrine of the soul is related to Plato on the one hand and Descartes on the other. In *A Secular Age* Taylor conceptually distinguishes hyper-Augustinian reform and political Augustinianism but nowhere clearly spells out the theological terms and existential consequences of the distinction. Hence it is difficult to agree with John Milbank that Taylor speaks in a theological voice. In fact, Milbank goes much further to suggest that Taylor is 'almost a modern equivalent of Augustine' in providing 'a kind of . . . theologized ecclesiastical history'.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, says Milbank, 'Taylor has, with *A Secular Age*, consummated his invention of a new intellectual genre – a kind of historicized existentialism.'<sup>46</sup> That Taylor is an intellectual historian of the highest order no one could contest; that he is theological and existential in an Augustine-like way, however, is questionable. I shall argue that Illich comes much closer to Augustine's existential historically informed political theology, and he does so because he shares Augustine's apocalyptic biblically formed theological perspective. Neither Milbank nor Taylor does so, and this has important political-theological consequences. Missing from Taylor's appropriation of Illich and critique of hyper-Augustinianism is the centrality of apocalyptic messianism in both Illich and Augustine, which mediates the spiritual causality of divine providence within the personal and political terms of created embodied reality, in a manner that resists the abuses of hyper-Augustinianism.

One of the central critiques Milbank makes of Taylor is that Taylor favours the 'disenchantment' of reality by Enlightenment cosmology, a cosmology that calls into question 1) the popular religious experience of natural reality as 'acts of God', 2) the assumption that the political and the religious orders are inseparable and 3) the belief that the world is full of invisible spiritual forces.<sup>47</sup> At stake here, among other things, is the question of



what constitutes Christian ‘sacramental mediation’. Milbank favours a ‘re-enchantment’ of the world to go along with Taylor’s affirmation of Illich’s call for a ‘festive conviviality’, corresponding (for Taylor) to a ‘Communion of Saints’ in which there is no exclusionary hell or ‘double predestination’ but only an inclusive universalism rooted in incarnational love. Milbank’s ‘re-enchantment’ (as a kind of intellectual cultural romanticism) appears to accept Taylor’s worry about Christian apocalypticism as somehow tied to hyper-Augustinianism, and yet Milbank seeks to find a place for the ‘practical bent’ of Latin Christianity<sup>48</sup> in which sacramental mediation also takes procedural and institutional forms. He settles upon ‘medieval corporatism’, and it seems that he considers this form of Christendom culture to model a more promising kind of Augustinianism.

It is not my brief to analyse Milbank’s critical and constructive interpretation of Taylor as variants of a new kind of political Augustinianism, though I will return to this general question below. My point here is that Augustine’s and Illich’s thoroughgoing Christian apocalypticism are neither modes of ‘(re-)enchantment’ nor, as apocalyptic stances are often represented, averse to a disciplined, critical consideration of the institutional and procedural contexts of embodied sociopolitical human existence. Taylor and Milbank, unlike Illich and Augustine, fail to plumb the depths of biblical apocalypticism, preferring instead to develop grand philosophico-historical narratives. Illich, by contrast, performs his messianic apocalyptic critique of modern Western culture with reference to

the old Latin phrase: *Corruptio optimi quae est essimal* – the historical progression in which God’s Incarnation is turned topsy-turvy, inside out. I want to speak of the mysterious darkness that envelops our world, the demonic night paradoxically resulting from the world’s equally mysterious vocation to glory. My subject is a mystery of faith, a mystery whose depth of evil could not have come to be without the greatness of the truth revealed to us.<sup>49</sup>

The demonic perversion of truth is not simply a violation of the laws of reality but a personal turning away from an intimate revelation of divine reality in whose image human beings are created. Its correlative is a turning in worship towards a false substitute, the apostatic *mysterium iniquitatis* Paul speaks about in 2 Thessalonians 2,<sup>50</sup> revealed as anti-Messiah in the apocalypse of Messiah and as characterised by mendacious power and wicked deception. This is the personal, intimate character of sin that also has pervasive social and political consequences – the substitution of other-regarding personal love by self-securing institutional power. It may also be described as a turn away from the divine Spirit of love enfleshed in the person of Jesus towards a trust once again in the juridical, institutional constraints of external rules and codes of behaviour – a shift from a community rooted in *con-spiratio* (personal faith, love, sin, forgiveness inspired by the divine Spirit) to one rooted in *con-juratio* (the juridical state structure).<sup>51</sup> The impersonal, instrumental and juridical character of modern social and political ethics, related to risk assessment and technical requirements of security systems (be they legal, educational or medical), are the shared consequences of this shift in spiritual vision. While I cannot attend here to the rich detail of Illich’s account, it is clearly an apocalyptic account derived from the New Testament, and it bears many political-theological similarities to Augustine’s apocalyptic account of the contrast between the Roman Empire of his day and the biblical revelation of messianic authority, peace and justice that governs citizens of the heavenly city.

For Augustine as for Illich, political justice is a matter of the mimetic objects of love and worship, whether that is the earthly mediation of true justice in the servant form

of the messianic king of the heavenly city, or the perverse mediation of false images of justice by demons led by the 'father of lies', *diabolus*. The spiritual and political tension between the two cities represents an apocalyptic conflict between the heavenly Jerusalem and the earthly Babylon, presided over by conflicting authorities.<sup>52</sup> I shall argue, in keeping with Illich's account and using some of his central topoi, that Augustine shares the (especially Pauline) apocalyptic urgency of the New Testament in which the conflict between the flesh and the spirit, first Adam and second Adam, messianic sovereignty and anti-messianic rebellion, may not be reduced to institutional authorities (such as 'Church and state'). Rather, they belong to very different orientations of life that extend from the inner conscience of each human being (the *con-spiratio* of the messianic *con-scientia*, we might say) to household relations, to cities and peoples, to the cosmic ordering of all things in keeping with the spiritual causality of divine causality apocalypted in Christ – an apocalyptic sovereignty that may not be institutionalised in any authoritative human cultural form but that lives by faith, oriented towards the invisible Sovereign it worships not only in its ritual forms but in all acts of loving service in the world. The political-ethical corruption of the best by the worst is characterised by a reversal in 'use and enjoyment' displayed in the messianic *ordo amoris* in which earthly things are to be used with reference to the peace found in the heavenly city,<sup>53</sup> in which the true nature of things is ultimately revealed:

For this peace is a perfectly ordered and perfectly harmonious fellowship in the enjoyment of God, and of one another in God. When we have reached that peace, our life will no longer be a mortal one; rather, we shall then be fully and certainly alive . . . a spiritual body standing in need of nothing; a body subject in every part to the will. This peace the heavenly city possesses in faith while on its pilgrimage, and by this faith it lives righteously (*iuste*), directing towards the attainment of that peace every good act which it performs either for God, or – since the city's life is inevitably a social one – for neighbour. (*City of God* 19.17)<sup>54</sup>

## Providence/Contingency

One of the most important features of Christian apocalypticism, argues Illich, following Hans Blumenberg, is the idea of contingency.<sup>55</sup> Briefly put, 'Contingency expresses the state of being of a world which has been created from nothing, is destined to disappear and is upheld in its existence by one thing, and one thing only: divine will.'<sup>56</sup> This idea of apocalyptic contingency owes its conceptual existence to Augustine's providential understanding that creation is at every moment the sovereign act of the completely gratuitous will of God, who brings reality into being *ex nihilo*.<sup>57</sup> This places a lot of weight on will, not only in terms of the divine will but also of the human will made in God's image. Gratuity or gift, 'a realm that comes into being in response to a call, rather than a determinative cause', is in fact the primary form of causation in the Bible – the causation of divine Word that constantly speaks the world into being.<sup>58</sup> The willed human response to this call is also highly consequential, both in terms of freely obeying the creative divine will or falling away from it in disobedience, or sin. Sin is on this view less the violation of a law than an intimate and relational infidelity that has natural and political consequences. The apocalyptic claim of the New Testament is, to put it in Pauline terms, that the whole of this creation is pregnant with the Messiah and is now (with the coming of Christ) groaning in labour (Rom. 8). The groaning consists in the messianic revelation of a new possibil-

ity, a neighbour love that crosses all social, political and cultural-religious boundaries as a ‘free creation’ in response to a divine call.<sup>59</sup> This call entails not only a disruption of conventional moral categories (male/female, Jew/Greek, slave/master, friend/enemy), and hence a social disruption of role and behaviour definitions, but also an account of virtue as suffering love that comes always only as a divine gift in response to a divine call that may be refused. And, of course, part of the messianic groaning and suffering of creation is that this call is resisted and refused (sin), resulting in both internal existential conflicts in the human will (Rom. 7) and sociopolitical and religious conflicts. This means that the ‘mood, or ground-tone’ of this new messianic way of being is contrition, ‘a deep sorrow about my capacity to betray . . . relationships . . . and, at the same time, a deep confidence in the forgiveness and mercy of the other’.<sup>60</sup> Needless to say, this raises the stakes for social and political ethics considerably in the messianic community that seeks to live according to this newly revealed form of life, and it will find itself confronting not only internal collisions but also collisions with forms of life that are constituted quite otherwise, in power relations under human juridical and institutional control in the earthly city. Illich’s argument is that the messianic apocalypse requires a radical, contingent faith that is constantly itself in danger of being perverted by sin, that is, ‘the decision to make faith into something that is subject to the power of this world’,<sup>61</sup> namely the ‘anti-messianic’. This is the constant temptation within Christendom, and it has led to significant perversions in the modern West. I will return to this below, but wish now to turn to Augustine’s important formulation of this providential contingency in what I call his vision of spiritual causality.

I begin with Augustine’s discussion of causality in book 5 of *City of God*, which is crucial to Augustine’s case for divine providence rather than fate as the principle of interpretation for political order, peace and justice. Roman historiography and political theory lacks insight into the spiritual causes of human action – the quest for happiness (*felicitas*) and the conditions of peace and justice that make it possible – because it lacks this theological principle. Augustine understands divine providence as the ordering of all reality according to the rational power of divine will – God’s perfect free agency – over against the impersonal, external causality of *fatum* and *fortuna*. Only a providential account will overcome the problematic either–or distinction between the external mechanisms of nature (inanimate causality) and human free agency (moral causality) that seeks to establish a rational relation between them, a relation that cannot be accounted for via various earthly measures. Only a messianic measure will offer insight into the true ground of human liberation (freedom of the will) from bondage to perverse demonic affective and social orderings.

In *City of God* 5.9, Augustine develops his account by denying any contradiction between divine *praescientia* of all things that God has made and *libera hominis voluntas*. But this requires the recognition that the *ordo causarum* in which all motion (and motive) finds its intelligible principles is established by the divine word of creation, rooted in God’s eternal will. The efficient causality of all that happens is tied to will, and ultimately to the divine will that gives life to everything; that is, there are ‘no efficient causes which are not voluntary causes: belonging, that is, to that nature which is the “breath of life” (*spiritus vitae*)’. All bodies, inanimate as well as rational, are subject to God, the uncreated, uncaused breath of life who alone gives the power to move and the power to act freely: ‘Thus the real cause which causes and is not caused, is God.’ God freely establishes the spiritual terms of movement and agency (power), including free human agency (will), and this means that all motion and power must be understood in relation to God and the causal order established by divine Word and Spirit.

Augustine spells this out in *City of God* 5.11, which I shall quote at length:

Thus the supreme and true God, with his Word and the Holy Spirit, which three are one, is the one omnipotent God, creator and maker of every soul and every body; participation in whom brings happiness to all who are happy in the truth and not in illusion (*vanitas*). He has made man a rational animal; and when man sins he does not let him go unpunished, nor does he abandon him without mercy. He has given, to good and bad alike, the existence (*essentia*) they share with the stones, reproductive life (*vita seminalis*) they share with the plants, sentient life they share with the animals, and intellectual life they share only with the angels. From him comes every mode of being, every species, every order, all measure, number, and weight. From him comes all that exists in nature, whatever its kind (*genus*), whatever its value (*aestimatio*), and the seeds of forms (*semina formarum*), and the forms of seeds, and the motions of seeds and forms. He has given to flesh its origin, beauty, health, fertility in propagation, the arrangement and healthful concord of its members. He has also given the irrational soul memory, sense, and appetite; and in addition has given the rational soul mind, intelligence and will. Neither heaven nor earth, neither angel nor man, not even the inner parts of the smallest and lowliest creatures, nor the feather of a bird, nor a tiny flower of a plant, nor the leaf on a tree, has God left without a harmony and, as it were, a peace among their parts. In no manner can it be believed, then, that he should have willed the kingdoms of men, their dominations and their servitudes, to be outside the laws of his providence.<sup>62</sup>

Clearly for Augustine nature is not a closed system, but rather a dynamic, dramatic ordering animated by the living Spirit of the triune God. This principle is fully coherent with the further implication that human rational will images the divine will insofar as it moves freely towards the happiness it desires, and that it understands its motion and the entire order of causality only in relation to the God that created and continues to sustain them. The principles of political order and moral judgement concerning politics are therefore fundamentally tied to divine providence. Access to this moral order is to be found in the internal witness of conscience, says Augustine (5.12), by which he means a fully public and testable witness, not private consent to doctrine. Any conception of political power or measure of political order that does not attend to the love of justice therein attested (5.14) misses the mark, the true path of virtue.

While conscience is an inner spiritual measure, it is not autonomous – it finds its measure, however, not in an earthly city but in the heavenly one, the eternal City of God where true happiness is realised as a divine gift (5.16). This city is not directly present, nor does its sovereign rule in any directly visible way on earth (which is why ‘the just shall live by faith’, one of Augustine’s, and Paul’s, favourite biblical lines). It is accessible only in the worship and imitation of the true God, whose rule is mediated on the earth only in the form of the servant, a form whose authority is revealed not in the ‘power-game’ but in the ‘justice-game’.<sup>63</sup> It is only in the inner spiritual and outer corporeal imitation of this form that one can make proper political judgements. Thus, when Augustine begins his critique of the Roman Empire in earnest in book 4 of *City of God*, he too (like Plato before him and Hobbes after him) will ground the act of political judgement in the ‘human writ large’ (4.3). At issue is the standard of true happiness, a life lived in harmony with the highest eternal good, in which worship of the true, immortal God will overcome the false measure of ‘fear of death’ rooted in excessive love of (or orientation towards) the temporal.

In contrast to those ‘gangs of criminals on a large scale’ who cannot rule themselves except by ‘dividing the plunder’ according to conventions of human justice, and arrogate to themselves political legitimacy by means of mortal power, the community of the just is displayed in another model – the martyrs who follow in the steps of the Apostles, who imitate the crucified Christ. Ultimately Augustine, as the title of his famous work signifies, will develop this political contrast between types of human being with reference to the two cities of the apocalypse: one ruled by the slain Lamb, the other by its lying mortal parodies who imitate the Devil. Is it not precisely here, in Augustine’s apocalyptic interpretation of political judgement, that his account of spiritual causality will run afoul of political theorists who will reject it as too mythological and otherworldly to be of real practical or theoretical value? The burden of my argument will be to show that this is not the case, that it is precisely Augustine’s apocalypticism that offers critical and constructive resources for political theology and ethics in our own *saeculum* no less than in his, and further, that it is crucial to understand his influential language of conscience and ‘will’ (also a central modern political category in the contractarian tradition) in the context of apocalyptic causality and not (as yet another recent interpreter has defined it)<sup>64</sup> as a disembodied inner selfhood.

### The Messianic Mediation of Virtue and Sin

In keeping with this apocalyptic cosmology, for Augustine, the Messiah, as both ‘Son’ and ‘second Adam’, reveals the meaning of the Fall and human sin in both personal and political terms. Augustine contrasts this new form of mediation that reveals God in human form as ‘servant’ and the Trinitarian form of the human made in God’s image, to the deceptive mediations that characterise the imitation and worship of fallen spiritual powers. While some attention has been given to apocalyptic in Augustine’s theology,<sup>65</sup> the overwhelming scholarly consensus – represented above all in the influential studies by Robert A. Markus – is that while eschatology is important for Augustine’s political theology, it is in fact *anti*-apocalyptic.<sup>66</sup> Though political Augustinians such as Oliver O’Donovan and Robert Dodaro (among others) have developed criticisms of Markus’s language of secular political ‘neutrality’ in characterising Augustine’s position, they have generally avoided the characterisation of Augustine’s political theology as apocalyptic, preferring to develop a sharp institutional dualism between Church and state in their differing spheres of authority, mediated above all by the political conscience of the ‘Christian statesman’.<sup>67</sup>

Robert Dodaro has provided a lucid account of what is at issue here by outlining three different neo-Augustinian interpretations of Augustine’s political thought, focusing especially on his understanding of the relationship between *ecclesia* (the role of bishop) and *res publica* (the role of statesman).<sup>68</sup> For Dodaro, the key to a proper understanding of Augustine’s political theology is Christology, since for Augustine Christ is the divine mediator of justice who alone mediates true virtue to the soul (and thus to the statesman). Dodaro points out that Augustine was not preoccupied with the relationship between Church and *res publica* – that is a modern preoccupation, and thus stated it is a theoretical rather than spiritual question. (And yet Dodaro, like most political Augustinians, can’t resist this framing for the sake of political relevance.) Dodaro argues that for Augustine, political justice is most crucially dependent upon freedom from the fear of death, which the humility of Christ and his vulnerability to death most fully mediates, in a manner that liberates human beings from the fallen desire for their own earthly glory. To explain this mediating capacity, Dodaro avers that Augustine brings together two Christological

doctrines: 1) the unity of human and divine natures in one person (9.5–17) – a mystery of faith (not the *scientia* of our own *ratio*) that enables those who imitate Christ to participate in divine love, the true end and form of all virtues; and 2) the *totus Christus* teaching of Paul, whereby Christ as the head of the messianic body offers himself up sacrificially in the form of a servant in such a manner that the entire body participates liturgically in this sacrifice in which love of God and neighbour are realised (10.6, 20; 17.18).

What Dodaro overlooks is the apocalyptic background of Augustine's Christology – the cosmic conflict between the divine and the demonic that structures Augustine's mediation language in *City of God*, so closely connected to the language of worship and sacrifice in political theology. Dodaro pays attention to Christ's mediation, but not so much to the false mediation that Christ combats.<sup>69</sup> Not only does Augustine provide an apocalyptic demythologisation of Roman imperial ideology (see *City of God* 2.25–9, where Augustine identifies the problem as the libidinous imitation and worship of demonic exemplars who foster division, deceit and conflict), he extends this demonic reading to the Platonic mediation of virtue in books 9 and 10, where he articulates the centrality of the above Christological doctrines for a critique of political idolatry in the more spiritual and intellectual registers of Platonic political virtue.

The warrior ethic of glorying in power (5.12–20) is rooted in a lie about divine glory and power, a lie perpetuated in the public media (theatre and civil religion) that focus on the love of power rather than the power of love. The powerful motivational correlative of such love of power is the fear of death.<sup>70</sup> Such a focus cannot bring the happiness of peaceable harmony rooted in the true justice of God that orders the good. To develop good judgement in 'seeing where true happiness (*felicitas*) lies, and where an empty show (*vanitas*) dwells entails 'the worship of the true God by true sacrifices and the service of good lives (*bonis moribus*)' (4.3). This shifts the focus from the earthly stage show of battling libidinous deities (both human and humanly projected) to the cosmic stage of divine providence. It also shifts the focus of attention from the divinity of human *virtus* to God's gift of virtue, which comes by *fides* – represented in the biblical statement that 'the just shall live by faith'.<sup>71</sup> Happiness and virtue are the gifts of God, and to receive them requires a proper spiritual orientation, not towards the moribund glory (the false immortality) of the earthly city but the eternal glory of the heavenly city (5.14; 19). It is in this context that one must interpret Augustine's statement in *City of God* 6.9: 'It is, strictly speaking, for the sake of eternal life alone that we are Christians' – it is here that human happiness is found, the life of the soul rooted in God, not on its own as an individual but in the community of worship, the messianic body of Christ.

Before elaborating his Christian apocalyptic interpretation of political judgement, however, Augustine develops a distinction between Roman civil theology and Platonic natural philosophy. In *City of God* 6.5 he introduces Varro's tripartite division of theology: mythical (based on the fables of the poets, which cater to pleasure), natural (based on philosophy, attuned to the eternal good that orders the world) and civil (the public cult of priests and citizens, focused on the city). While Varro praises the second, it is clear that he considers the third to be politically the most important and, furthermore, that the third and the first are really similar. The eternal order of divine good is abandoned for the human works of cities and theatres – which confirms Augustine's judgement that Varro really advocates the useful public worship of humanly fashioned gods, the gods of pleasure and coercive power, by turns flattering and threatening the citizens to behave. For this reason, the only natural theologian worthy of the name is Plato, who acknowledges the God who transcends the soul and gives blessedness (*beatitudo*, which goes beyond *felici-*

tas) to the rational soul through participation in God's unchanging and incorporeal light of wisdom (8.1). Only such an orientation offers moral insight into the true ordering of reality, in contrast to the deceptive external measures of the extension and duration of imperial power, in the service of which the deceptive rhetoric of Roman civil theology is marshalled. That is, only Plato's theology is truly theological, and therefore also effective in moving the political discussion from the rhetorical play of power to the love of wisdom. Socrates stands at the transition point of political philosophy from the study of external causality to spiritual causality: 'He believed that the first and highest cause exists in nothing but the will of the one supreme God; hence that the causation of the universe could be grasped only by a purified mind (*mundata mente*)' (8.3).

If Plato says that wisdom is found in the imitation, knowledge and love of this God, in the participation in whom is found true happiness, then, says Augustine, 'none come nearer to us than the Platonists' (8.5). Indeed, Plato's trinitarian structure in his philosophical theology – in God is found the *causa subsistendi* (the *principium* of all life and all being, 8.6), *ratio intelligendi* (the *logos*, the light of the mind that enables wise discernment, 8.7) and *ordo vivendi* (the discovery of happiness in the *summum bonum* to which all moral action is referred, 8.8) – suggests to Augustine the purest example of the natural revealed wisdom described by Paul in Romans 1:19–20 (8.10). The reference to Paul, however, signals the beginning of critique. It is a critique paralleled in the *Confessions* (book 7) – Platonic pride in the reputation for wisdom earned in the heroic disciplines of dialectical *paideia* and the intellectual virtues. Lacking here are the penitential tears of confession that purify the vision of the heart in a manner quite unlike anything found in Plato's dialogues. This is due to a very different principle of mediation in Paul – the word made flesh (mortal) in the 'form of a servant', whose death makes possible participation in the divine life itself (insofar as he remains also 'in the form of God').<sup>72</sup> Only this death makes possible the overcoming of the fear of death by faith in Christ as the one who is also raised up to God beyond death.

Equally important here is the model of imitation we are given to follow in Christ. Unlike a stage play, the model is not one of emotional catharsis in which one participates as an intellectually and emotionally engaged but inactive spectator. Unlike Plato's Socrates, the model is not an educative one of intellectual purification through the critical, dialectical expurgation of myths and conventional traditions. The key to spiritual causality is now to be found in an embodied model that nevertheless is claimed to be the very spiritual principle underlying all created reality, and this embodied model takes the form of a lowly servant, not an exalted ruler – political or philosophical or otherwise. It is an enactment in the most audacious terms of the principles of motion now brought into scandalous collision not only with political ideals but also intellectual and spiritual ones. It introduces a divine seriousness into the historical drama that compels recognition of God as not only the builder of the theatre (which is 'all the world') and the author of the script but also the primary actor in all agency as its personal, creative and moving principle. We learn what it means to take part in this divine agency when we follow the path of humble love (which cures our blinding pride) taken by God in the world, the *via caritatis*, and imitate its spiritual motion. For it is the divine Truth itself (*ipsa Veritas* and *ipsa Sapientia*), 'that Word through whom all things were made', that was made flesh so that God may dwell with us. 'Although he is our native country, he made himself also the way to that country.'<sup>73</sup>

As Augustine makes clear (see *Teaching Christianity* 1.12; *Trinity* 2.7) this divinely given spiritual motion by which God comes to dwell in God's own creation is not some form of space and time travel – God comes to where God already is. So also, therefore,

the motion of our return to God is not a spatio-temporal tradition to be studied or preserved any more than it is simply the motions of our psyche, but rather the fulfilment of our created existence designed for eternal communion with God and our neighbours. The cosmic spiritual drama in which we participate has its terms in the very shared life of the divine Trinity. This is not something that can be worked out by human reasoning.<sup>74</sup> It can only be accepted by faith as God's gift. So too the model of political authority, the rule of Christ that reigns not only in the heavenly city but also in the hearts of the citizens of the city of God on pilgrimage in the world. This is why Augustine introduces language of divine agency as the central interpretive *principium* of political judgement in *City of God*: one must understand human agency not in terms of stories of human beings or the gods or other narrative accounts (which must themselves be measured by a larger good), but in relation to God who has created human beings with the power to act (in God's image) and therefore alone can measure it. As Augustine makes clear in *City of God* 8.20–5, the key issue is mediation – the Platonic daemonic mediation (since 'no god mingles with human beings')<sup>75</sup> is contrasted to messianic mediation as Augustine argues that only the God-man can liberate human beings from bondage to the lordship of demonic powers with the chains of their own disordered desires attached to false libidinous images (*simulacra*, 8.24). Similitude to the true God is possible only by conformity in worship to the fully divine yet fully human form of Christ. Only through the humility of Christ, the 'good mediator, who reconciles enemies', can the human will be liberated from the 'evil mediator, who separates loved ones' in the divisions of self-love (9.15). The universal path towards the liberation of the 'whole human' (body, mind and spirit, 10.27) from the diabolical domination of injustice is the royal road (*via regalis*, 10.32) of the servant king. The apocalyptic terms of this spiritual and sociopolitical liberation are clearly spelt out in *City of God* 14: the earthly city lives wholly oriented according to the diabolical lie that the principle of mediation is found in my self, my own soul (the *similis diabolo* is a measure of possession rooted in pride and envy, 14.3), whereas the heavenly city lives on pilgrimage in the *saeculum* wholly oriented by the sacrifice to God that is the messianic body mediated by Christ, a sacrifice that heals the defective will of its deluded desires and enables it to obey the divine will exemplified in the city's sovereign (14.13). Thus is the messianic social body liberated from domination to Babylon, the diabolical/demonic order, to the properly ordered will and *ordo amoris* of the *rex optimus* (17.16).

Insofar as the Church embodies the kenotic servant posture of Christ, and a vision of justice that lives by faith, it adopts a martyrdom stance and not a heroic one. The *agon* (*certamen*) of faith, in which fear of death is conquered, is seen pre-eminently in the holy martyrs (*City of God* 13.4). The justice that defeats sin in the death of Christ and brings with it participation in divine immortality (*Trinity* 13) overcomes the fear of death and enables the martyrs to die rather than to sin.<sup>76</sup> In *City of God* 14 Augustine develops this model of martyrdom further in terms of the will ordered *secundum spiritum* – a good will is good and at rest in its desires when ordered by love of God. Here Augustine makes reference to the Apostle Paul, that *vir optimus et fortissimus* (political terminology)<sup>77</sup> who glories in his weakness. Again, the point is that fear of death is overcome not by the possession of virtue but by the gift of divine love given to the penitent heart. As Augustine puts it in *City of God* 19.27:

Our righteousness (*iustitia*) also, though true righteousness insofar as it is referred to the true ultimate good, is in this life only such as to consist in the forgiveness of sins rather than the perfection of virtues. This is borne out by the prayer of the whole City of God



during its pilgrimage in the world, which cries out to God in the voice of all its members: ‘Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.’

This is a political and not merely private or spiritual vision and practice.<sup>78</sup> It is engaged by the communal body that bears the mind of Christ, but only insofar as it worships the true God in humility. Such worship, as *City of God* 10 makes clear, is both a spiritual and a bodily sacrifice, communally offered and received in penitence.

History thus plays a role in Augustine’s apocalyptic vision of spiritual causality and political order that it does not in Plato, but history is not primarily about human agency. The dramatic text that must be read in order for human beings to have their discernment formed is the text of God’s providential Trinitarian action into the Creation, ultimately by sending the eternal form of divine wisdom itself into the temporal form humanly required to discern it, the humble servant. The story of this providential agency is to be found in Scripture, interpreted according to the rule of *caritas*. The second half of *City of God* develops its alternative account of political order through a figural reading of Scripture that, like the New Testament, ends with an apocalyptic vision of the two cities that structures the whole. This apocalypse represents the city on pilgrimage in the world as a community of penitent martyrs who relate the earthly peace to the heavenly peace – but as pilgrims in Babylonian exile (19.26). This pilgrim, diaspora vision of the Church’s political service, rooted in an apocalyptic understanding of political discernment, represents a different vision of social conscience than that depicted in Dodoro’s statesman, which is, I have argued, still too individually and institutionally defined within a Church–state duality.

I have also argued elsewhere against treating the example of the political conscience of the ‘wise judge’ proffered by Augustine in *City of God* 19.5–6 (cf. 14.28) as ethically or politically ‘normative’ for thinking about Christian political responsibility in a secular order. The context of this example is his debate with ‘the philosophers’ about the virtues of the *sapientes* who are required to make political judgements under social conditions of misery and sinful necessity in the earthly polis. But here it is important to take the whole of book 19 into account, since the agonistic drama of virtue and vice is itself contextualised in the context of apocalyptic messianism – the cosmic liturgical contrast between the *corpus mysticum* of the Eucharistic ‘form of the servant’ and the ‘form of God’ towards which the former is being conformed through humility and obedience. Here *City of God* book 19 may itself provide a helpful structure. Augustine is convinced that the same existential relations of human love and justice hold true from the most intimate levels of self-consciousness and household relations to the civic and international domains, from the most visible bodily level to the cosmic spiritual context concerning the origin and end of all things. No false, humanly imposed boundaries will enable us to sort this out more simply – whether mythical or hypothetical.<sup>79</sup> This does not mean that divine justice or judgement is transparent in the world, but it does mean that those ordered by the liturgical practices of penitence and self-offering may not presume to mediate divine judgement in anything but the servant form enacted therein. To the extent to which any retributive judicial practices are devoted to the possessive and dominating ‘order’ of the security state that claims to mediate a non-penitential justice, such practices are rooted in sinful necessity and contribute to the ‘lie’ of a strictly human sovereignty. What is revealed apocalyptically in the wisdom of the Word made flesh is a *libertas* and a peace tied not to *imperium* – that secular commonwealth that buffers individual freedom of private properties and other *propria*/rights via the accumulation of wealth through political economic domination and the ‘enslavement’ of lesser powers – but to the messianic ‘form of the

servant' whose life is offered up as a sacrifice for the lives of others (both proximate and distant strangers) in the power of love, not the love of power. This too is a politics! And it reveals the terms whereby human beings may attain a just and happy life through the 'regeneration', and not the mere transcendence or humanly defined reconstruction, of the gift of creation offered to us as participation in the divine life itself.

## Notes

1. I offer an Augustinian critique of such political realism in P. Travis Kroeker, *Christian Ethics and Political Economy in North America: A Critical Analysis* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), pp. 133–43.
2. A more complete account of this is found in P. Travis Kroeker, *Messianic Political Theology and Diaspora Ethics: Essay in Exile* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017). This essay especially draws upon chh. 1 and 3 of that volume, and I am grateful for permission to use material from my essay 'Augustine's Messianic Political Theology: An Apocalyptic Critique of Political Augustinianism', in *Augustine and Apocalyptic*, edited by John Doody, Kari Kloos and Kim Paffenroth (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2014), pp. 129–49.
3. See the recent essay by Paul J. Griffiths, 'Secularity and the *Saeculum*', in *Augustine's City of God: A Critical Guide*, edited by James Wetzel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 33–54. The classic twentieth-century work is Robert A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine*, rev. ed. (Cambridge University Press, [1970] 1988).
4. For a fine summary account, see Michael J. S. Bruno, *Political Augustinianism: Modern Interpretations of Augustine's Political Thought* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014).
5. Carl Schmitt, *Politisches Theologie: Vier Kapitel zur Lehre von der Souveränität* (Berlin: Dunker und Humblot, [1922] 1934); published in English as *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, George Schwab (trans.) (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985).
6. Carl Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes: Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol*, George Schwab (trans.) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).
7. Schmitt, *Political Theology*, p. 15.
8. Schmitt, *Political Theology*, p. 36.
9. Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, George Schwab (trans.) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), pp. 26–37. See also Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*, G. L. Ulmen (trans.) (New York: Telos Press, 2003): 'The ability to recognize a *justus hostis* [just enemy] is the beginning of all international law' (pp. 51–2).
10. Jennifer Rust, 'Political Theologies of the *Corpus Mysticum*: Schmitt, Kantorowicz, and de Lubac', in *Political Theology and Early Modernity*, edited by Graham Hammill and Julia Reinhard Lupton (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), pp. 102–23. See also Chad Pecknold, 'Migrations of the Host: Fugitive Democracy and the *Corpus Mysticum*', *Political Theology* 11 (2010): 77–101. Pecknold argues that Sheldon Wolin's 'fugitive democracy' critique of liberal democracy owes much to de Lubac's work because 'de Lubac imagined a 'mystical body politics' that was more inclusive, more humanising and ultimately more social than the isolating politics of the modern, liberal state' (p. 99), but that ultimately this cannot be detached from de Lubac's Augustinian ecclesiology of a visible, public messianic body. Wolin, like Schmitt and Kantorowicz, recognises that 'secular writers [including Rousseau's social contract conception of community] were not slow in perceiving the enormous emotional force that lay behind the idea of the *corpus mysticum*' in Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought*, expanded edition (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 120.
11. Peterson's famous rejection of political theology is found in an essay that begins and ends with appeals to Augustine, 'Monotheism as a Political Problem' [1935], in *Theological Tractates*, Michael Hollerich (trans.) (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), pp. 68–105: 'In this

- way, not only was monotheism as a political problem resolved and the Christian faith liberated from bondage to the Roman Empire, but a fundamental break was made with every “political theology” that misuses the Christian proclamation for the justification of a political situation.’ Peterson, *Theological Tractates*, p. 104. Schmitt’s response is extensively and polemically articulated in *Political Theology II: The Myth of the Closure of any Political Theology*, Michael Hoelzl and Graham Ward (trans.) (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008).
12. Jacob Taubes, *Political Theology of Paul*, Dana Hollander (trans.) (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 109; Jacob Taubes, *Occidental Eschatology*, David Ratmoko (trans.) (Stanford University Press, 2009), pp. 79–80, 86. Another recent version of this story is told by Michael S. Northcott, ‘Revolutionary Messianism and the End of Empire’, in *A Political Theology of Climate Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), esp. pp. 277ff.
  13. Erik Peterson, ‘Christ as *Imperator*’, in *Theological Tractates*, Michael Hollerich (trans.) (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), pp. 143–50: 147.
  14. Oliver O’Donovan, *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the Roots of Political Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 146.
  15. Regarding O’Donovan’s attempt to use Rom 13:1–5 as the Pauline authorisation of a new Christological grounding for the judicial role of the secular state, I find the following counter-reading (originally against Oscar Cullmann) by G. B. Caird useful: ‘The powers of state are to be obeyed not because they have been made subject to Christ but simply because they exist, and because no authority can exist apart from God’s decree . . . Paul achieves the universal centrality of Christ not by making the authority of the powers depend on the Cross but by declaring that Christ is God’s agent in creation’, in G. B. Caird, *Principalities and Powers: A Study in Pauline Theology* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2013), p. 25.
  16. Giorgio Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government*, Lorenzo Chiesa (trans.) (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).
  17. Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory*, pp. 24–5. By contrast, see Bruno Blumenfeld, *The Political Paul: Justice, Democracy and Kingship in a Hellenistic Framework* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001).
  18. Blumenfeld’s translation, *The Political Paul*, p. 138.
  19. This is Hans Urs von Balthasar’s account of Henri de Lubac’s ‘ecclesiocentrism’ in *The Theology of Henri de Lubac: An Overview*, Joseph Fessio and Michael Waldstein (trans.) (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1991), pp. 115–20.
  20. See especially Augustine, *City of God* 10.6 and 10.20. Cf. Augustine, *The Trinity* 14.22, where this same transformative process according to the ‘form of a servant’ is related to Romans 12. All quotations from Dyson’s translation of *City of God*.
  21. Henri de Lubac, *The Splendor of the Church*, Michael Mason (trans.) (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1999), p. 91. Cf. Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages*, Gemma Simmonds (trans.) (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), ch. 3.
  22. Augustine, *City of God* 20.10.
  23. de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, pp. 248–56.
  24. I fully agree with Lee’s argument that *City of God* 19 requires the apocalyptic contextualisation of the earlier books to show that ‘the difference between the two cities on the *summum bonum* is, in fact, the difference between heaven and hell’. Gregory W. Lee, ‘Republics and Their Loves: Rereading *City of God* 19’, *Modern Theology* 27:4 (2011), 553–81, p. 558. This is related to Lee’s point that a better metaphor for interpreting Augustine’s treatment of the relation between the two cities in *City of God* 19.17 than the authority of institutional political offices is Augustine’s repeated comparison of the Christian situation to the Israelites in Babylonian captivity: ‘Augustine’s primary metaphor for the church’s relation to the world is not citizenship but captivity’ (p. 574).
  25. Augustine, *City of God* 16.22; 17.5, 17, 20; 18.35; 20.10, 21.
  26. For a very different reading of the figure of Melchizedek, see John Milbank, ‘Augustine’s Three

- Cities', in *Beyond Secular Order: The Representation of Being and the Representation of the People* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), pp. 228–30.
27. Augustine, *City of God* 1.29; in 1.10 he provides Paul's apocalyptic warrant for this ethic, given in 1 Cor. 7:31: 'make use of the world as if not (*hos me*) using it', for the form of this world is passing away.
  28. Augustine, *City of God* 10.6. Augustine cites Romans 12:2.
  29. Wendell Berry, *What Are People For?* (San Francisco: North Point, 1990), pp. 98ff.
  30. Berry, *What Are People For?*, pp. 100, 136.
  31. Berry, *What Are People For?*, p. 136.
  32. 'We find it incomprehensible that theological ideas still inflame the minds of men, stirring up messianic passions that leave societies in ruins.' Mark Lilla, *The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics and the Modern West* (New York: Knopf, 2007), p. 3.
  33. George Hunston Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 3rd ed. (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 1995).
  34. *Oikodomēin*, an important verb for Paul, is primarily an apocalyptic and messianic concept, the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* tells us, vol. 5, p. 139. It is simultaneously theological as well as political and ethical.
  35. Eric Gregory, *Politics and the Order of Love: An Augustinian Ethic of Democratic Citizenship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 379; cf. pp. 256 and 269–70.
  36. See Frederick C. Bauerschmidt, *Julian of Norwich and the Mystical Body Politic of Christ* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999); David Aers, *Sin and Salvation: Augustine, Langland, and Fourteenth-Century Theology* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009).
  37. See Stanley Hauerwas, 'The End of Sacrifice: An Apocalyptic Politics', in *Apocalyptic and the Future of Theology*, edited by Joshua Davis and Douglas Harink (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012), pp. 354–68; David Aers, *Beyond Reformation? An Essay on William Langland's Piers Plowman and the End of Constantinian Christianity* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015).
  38. Gregory, *Politics and the Order of Love*, p. 91; cf. pp. 59, 138.
  39. Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).
  40. See Taylor's discussion of 'hyper-Augustinianism' in Taylor, *A Secular Age*, pp. 105, 227, 231, 319, 511, 626, 651–4.
  41. See Augustine, *The City of God* 13.23; 14.21; 21.12.
  42. See, for example, Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (trans.) (New York: Vintage, 1967).
  43. See Taylor, *A Secular Age*, pp. 737–43. Taylor also writes a very appreciative foreword to *The Rivers North of the Future: The Testament of Ivan Illich*, as Told to David Cayley (Toronto: Anansi, 2005).
  44. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), ch. 7. Nevertheless, I will take Taylor's position to be compatible with the political Augustinianism developed by Markus in *Christianity and the Secular* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006). Markus himself makes the suggestion in his programmatic third chapter on 'Consensus in Augustine and the Liberal Tradition'.
  45. John Milbank, 'A Closer Walk on the Wild Side', in *Varieties of Secularism*, edited by Michael Warner, Jonathan VanAntwerpen and Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), p. 55.
  46. Milbank, 'A Closer Walk on the Wild Side', p. 78.
  47. Milbank, 'A Closer Walk on the Wild Side', p. 58.
  48. Milbank, 'A Closer Walk on the Wild Side', pp. 80–2.
  49. Illich, *Rivers*, p. 29.
  50. Illich, *Rivers*, chh. 2, 14. Here is one of Illich's pithy formulations of what he means: 'The Anti-Christ, or, let's say, the *mysterium iniquitatis*, the mystery of evil, is the conglomerate of a series

- of perversions by which we try to give security, survival ability, and independence from individual persons to the new possibilities that were opened through the Gospel by institutionalizing them' (p. 169). Compare Augustine's reflection on 2 Thess. 2 and the possible meaning of the *Antichristus* as the 'universal body' of the prince of apostasy, standing over against the messianic body as lie against truth (*City of God* 20.19).
51. Illich, *Rivers*, chh. 5, 15, 16.
  52. See the valuable study by Johannes van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon: A Study into Augustine's 'City of God' and the Sources of His Doctrine of the Two Cities* (Leiden: Brill, 1991). He points up the problems (pp. 151–5) in Markus's anti-apocalyptic depiction of a possible political 'neutrality' between the two cities in the *saeculum*.
  53. The reversal is that citizens of the earthly city, oriented towards their own self-pleasure, use the true peace of the heavenly city to enjoy earthly goods for themselves in the power game. See Augustine, *City of God* 14.1–4; 15.7; 19.17.
  54. Van Oort points out the centrality of ch. 17 in book 19. Citizens of the heavenly city who live by faith 'make use of earthly and temporal things like pilgrims: they are not captivated by them, nor are they deflected by them from their progress towards God'. In this way do both kinds of citizens make *usus communis* of the necessities of life, in a 'cooperation of wills' (*compositionem voluntatum*) that are nevertheless oriented towards different ends (the *finis utendi* is divergent). It should be noted that the use and enjoyment language in *City of God* is introduced in 1.8ff., alongside the language of *peregrinatio* to denote in apocalyptic fashion the diaspora existence of the city of God on earth. In 1.10 Augustine provides a Pauline *hos me* apocalyptic warrant for his language of 'use' taken from 1 Cor. 7:31: make use of the world 'as if not using it', a making use of earthly goods (as Augustine puts it in 1.29) 'like pilgrims, without grasping after them' (*bonisque terrenis tamquam peregrina utitur nec capitur . . .*). In *City of God* 10.6 this kind of 'use' is related to the apocalyptic 'sacrifice' of the messianic body whose service in the world imitates the form of the servant.
  55. Illich, *Rivers*, chh. 3–4.
  56. Illich, *Rivers*, p. 65.
  57. For Augustine's language of creation *ex nihilo* with regard to the logic of defection and 'fall', see *City of God* 12.6ff.; 14.11, 13; see also *Confessions* 12.7.7; 12.28.38; 12.29.40; 13.33.48. Importantly, therefore, for Augustine the human soul is also created *ex nihilo* and thus relies on God alone for its being and life (*City of God* 10.31).
  58. Illich, *Rivers*, p. 49. See Augustine's language of divine causation in *City of God* 11.21–2; 12.26: all movement comes from God's hidden, intimate, yet pervasive power, so that 'if God were to withdraw His creative power, so to speak, from things, they would no more exist than they did before they were created' (22.24). Cf. *City of God* 10.15 and 9.22, where knowledge of the divine will, the most potent causality, is a matter of spiritual participation in the divine Word – i.e. love (*caritas*), not 'knowledge' (*scientia*, which is what the demons worship), in keeping with Paul's account in 1 Corinthians.
  59. Illich, *Rivers*, pp. 51–2.
  60. Illich, *Rivers*, p. 53. No reader of Augustine's *Confessions* and *The City of God* can fail to notice his repeated emphasis on the centrality of *miseriordia* (misery) and *penitentia* (penance and forgiveness) in his account of the pilgrim Christian journey.
  61. Illich, *Rivers*, p. 57.
  62. See also Augustine's account of seminal causality rooted in invisible divine agency in *City of God* 12.26, a measure 'deemed fabulous' by those oriented according to external and technological measures of the real (12.24). Translation altered.
  63. Edmund Hill's free but apt translation of Augustine, *The Trinity* 13.17.
  64. Phillip Cary, *Augustine's Invention of the Inner Self: The Legacy of a Christian Platonist* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). Of course, what Cary (and others) locate in Augustine, others (like Daniel Boyarin) locate in Paul – namely, an otherworldly spiritualised conception of self and identity derived from disembodied Platonism.

65. See Van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon*, and Johannes van Oort, *History, Apocalypse, and the Secular Imagination*, Mark Vessey, Karla Pollmann, and Allen Fitzgerald (eds) (Bowling Green, OH: Philosophy Documentation Center, 1999).
66. Markus's basic claim in *Saeculum* is that like Tyconius, Augustine transposed the apocalyptic two cities language (interpreted in earlier African theology in more empirical sociological categories of Church and pagan society) into an eschatological key locating the tension in the individual human heart rather than public institutional embodiment. This paves the way for a greater recognition of ambiguity in the *saeculum*, an openness towards both cities reconfigured typologically rather than sociologically that ultimately precludes both triumphalist Christendom and apocalyptic sectarian forms of political theology. Markus, *Saeculum*, esp. pp. 55–71, 120–4 and ch. 7.
67. For O'Donovan the Church represents 'mercy' while the state represents 'judgment' – see *Desire of the Nations*, pp. 259–60. On the political virtue and conscience of the Christian statesman, where classical political virtues are transformed by 'true piety', see Robert Dodaro, *Christ and the Just Society in the Thought of Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), and Robert Dodaro, 'Ecclesia and Res Publica: How Augustinian are Neo-Augustinian Politics?', edited by L. Boeve, M. Lamberigts and M. Wisse (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), pp. 237–71.
68. See Dodaro, 'Ecclesia and Res Publica'. The three interpretations are 1) Peter Iver Kaufmann, *Incorrectly Political: Augustine and Thomas More* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), whose Augustine is characterised by a 'minimalist' approach where no real Christian transformation of political institutions is possible, only modest dispositional effects upon politicians (which for Dodaro is too pessimistic about the real effects of Christ's mediation in the conscience and particular ethical judgements of Christian statesmen); 2) Markus's 'secularist' account focusing on a reading of the consensus of wills rooted in common objects of love (*City of God* 19.17) in a neutral secular pluralist state (which ignores the substantive implications of Augustine's *totus Christus* for the mediation of a Christian politics); and 3) Milbank, the triumphalist ecclesiology that challenges modern liberal secularism in an idealist, conversionist Church (which ignores the limits of fallenness in Augustine's *ecclesia permixta* in which the pilgrim Church remains fallen and limited in its transformational powers).
69. Here again, it might be useful to compare the importance of the *totus Christus* of *City of God* 10.6, 20; 17.18 with the 'universal body' of the *Antichristus* in 20.19.
70. Augustine begins his lengthy deconstruction of Roman civil religion (which underlies its warrior domination model of political sovereignty and ethics, and which measures the strength of a regime by the extent of its empire), with the following remark (*City of God* 4.3): 'But I should like to preface the inquiry with a brief examination of the following question: Is it reasonable (*ratio*), is it sensible (*prudentia*), to glory in the extent and magnitude of empire, when you cannot show that men lived in happiness (*felicitas*), as they passed their lives in the midst of war, amid the shedding of men's blood – whether the blood of enemies or fellow-citizens – under the shadow of fear and amid the terror of ruthless passion (*cupiditas*)? The joy (*laetitia*) of such men may be compared to the fragile splendor of glass: they are horribly afraid that it may suddenly be shattered.' For an excellent discussion of Augustine's insight regarding fear of death as the basis of Roman political deception and ideology, see Robert Dodaro, 'Eloquent Lies, Just Wars and the Politics of Persuasion: Reading Augustine's *City of God* in a "Postmodern" World', *Augustinian Studies* 25 (1994): 77–138.
71. Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38.
72. See Augustine, *City of God* 9.15; 10.6, 20. This logic of mediation, taken from the Christological hymn in Phil. 2, is elaborated in extensive detail in *The Trinity* as the basic rule of interpretation, and it is closely linked by Augustine to 1 Cor. 15.
73. Augustine, *Teaching Christianity* 1.12–13, 34.
74. This is Augustine's point in criticising the cyclical process cosmologies in book 12 of *City of God* – the attempt to grasp immortality via human reason (cf. *Trinity* 13.12) leads one in circles (and indeed human attempts to 'close the circle' through human substitutions for the divine

- gift of immortality that cannot be possessed). Such a rational disembodiment of the *logos* robs the *saeculum* of its significance, the beginnings and endings of which are in God's power and the revelation of which can only be accepted by faith, not rational sight.
75. *nullus Deus miscetur homini* (*City of God* 8.18, 20; 9.1, 16): the Platonic principle Augustine fastens upon from *Symposium* 203a, related to the principle of erotic mediation in *Symposium* 201e, where *eros* is described as neither divine nor human but 'between' (*metaxu*).
  76. Indeed, the martyrs, like all Christians, realise that mortal human life itself is a 'race towards death' (*cursus ad mortem*, *City of God* 13.10) and that the death to the fleshly desire to cling to mortal life as if it were immortal is in fact to be liberated from bondage to the body of decay that is fallen human nature. This, however, is not entirely an intellectual or moral matter – it is a gift of faith. For a good discussion of how the various levels of justice are related to the disposition of the will and thus address the fear of death, see Basil Studer, 'Le Christ, notre justice, selon saint Augustin', *Recherches Augustiniennes* 15 (1980): 99–143.
  77. Augustine calls Christ the *rex optimus* in *City of God* 17.16.
  78. See Rowan Williams, 'Politics and the Soul: Reading the *City of God*', *On Augustine* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), ch. 6. Williams offers a good critical rejoinder to Hannah Arendt's claim that Augustine subverts the public realm by focusing on the non-political and otherworldly virtue of *caritas*. What Augustine subverts is a vision of public virtue modelled on the warrior hero, but such a vision is itself based upon violence and disorder – it cannot produce civic peace, and it is not in fact public enough.
  79. Here I'm referring to an often overlooked twentieth-century source for Augustinian political theology, Charles N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture: A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957): especially part 3, 'Regeneration' (and p. 477, where Cochrane calls Augustine's biblical theology of history 'indubitably apocalyptic'). See also the title essay in Charles N. Cochrane, *Augustine and the Problem of Power: The Essays and Lectures of Charles Norris Cochrane*, David Beer (ed.) (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017), ch. 1.

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