The Christological Unity
of Saint Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*

The fundamental unity of Saint Augustine's book *De Civitate Dei* is Christological, and this unity is revealed by the use of number which the Saint employs in the structure of the work. In reading Saint Augustine it is at our peril that we overlook or disregard the profound importance that number possessed in the Saint's thought. It is fundamental in his thinking. He is completely convinced that comprehension of the numbers which are found in Sacred Scripture is essential for understanding it — had not God " ordered all things in measure and number and weight ? " [Wisdom, XI, 21] The Saint finds that it is by no means without reason that on a famous occasion when Christ appeared to His Apostles and ordered them to take a draught of fishes, the number of the fishes is 153 [John XXI, 1-14] " ... the number 153 is certain and a reason for it must, with God's help, be given :" again, " It is not for nothing that these fishes are so many and very large, that is, 153 and big ones[1] ". In the cure of the man who had for thirty-eight years lain by the pool of Bethsaida with its five porticoes [John v, 1-9], the numbers are important, for " Things are signified [by number] and by some significations things themselves are come to first. By significations we are nourished, that we may come to the enduring things themselves "[2]. Nevertheless, we can

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1. *Tract. In Ioan.* CXXII, 7, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* XXXVI, Brepols 672, 674. (Hereafter reference to this publication will be by the name of the work and ,, Brepols ").

2. *Ibid.*, XVII, 5, Brepols 172.
His own words are further evidence : Numerorum etiam imperitia multa facit non intellegi translate ac mystice posita in scripturis... Ita multis aliis atque aliis numerorum formis quaedam similitudinum in sanctis libris secreta ponuntur, quae propter numerorum imperitiam legentibus clausa sunt. *(De Doctrina Christiana* II, XVI, 25, Brepols XXXII, 50, 51). *Vide* also his exegesis of Wisdom XI, 21, " Thou hast ordered all things in measure and number and weight ", *De Trinitate* IV, 6, 10, *PL* 42, 895 ; *dCD* XI, 20 ; *De Libero Arbitrio* II, 8, 20-24 ; 11, 30-32, *PL* 32,

easily understand how an Augustinian scholar who well merits the mediaeval appellation *clarissimus* would privately declare, " the numbers baffle me ". Although number is recognized now these many centuries as the " language of things " and the role of mathematics in thought and life is destined to grow with the days, the bafflement arises from the quite different use which Saint Augustine and the Fathers of the Church made of number : numbers they used to discover spiritual meanings. This habit of mind is quite foreign to modern exegesis and hence awkward for us when we encounter it. Despite the difficulties [*pace clarissimi*, really much exaggerated, to be sure] I propose to find that the use which Saint Augustine makes of number reveals the deepest understanding of the work as a whole. In the use of numbers is discoverable in the *De Civitate Dei* the concept of the City of God itself in symbolic and artistic unity. For that unity, profound, even magnificent in its artistry and symbolism, lies in the very form and figure of the Crucified Christ and the Apocalyptic Temple, made to shine forth by the use of number in the construction of the book itself.

To those who are generally read in Saint Augustine's works, nothing can be thought more likely than that the book enshrining his theology of history should contain and discover the " One Mediator between God and man, the God-man, Christ Jesus : " [I Tim. II, 5] — the phrase is constantly in the Saint's mouth. Students of the *Enarrationes in Psalmos* and of the sermons preached over the whole of the Saint's sacerdotal life know how, inspired by Saint Paul [Col. I] and the Prologue of Saint John's Gospel [I, I-22], he was preoccupied to discover the presence of Christ in the whole of creation. The Saint's mind was captivated by the truth which Saint Paul teaches of the " Fullness " which the Greeks call the Pleroma of Christ :

> " For in him were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible ... all things were created by him and in him. And he is before all, and by him all things consist ... Because in him, it hath well pleased the Father that all fullness [plêroma] should dwell ; And through him to reconcile all things unto himself, making peace through the blood of his cross, both as to things that are on earth and the things that are in heaven ". [Col. I, 16-20].

1253, 1257-1258. The most comprehensive discussion of St. Augustine's numerology is Alois Schmitt, " Mathematik und Zahlenmystik " in *Aurelius Augustinus*, ed. Martin Grabmann and Joseph Mausbach, Köln, 1930, 353-357. In recent times, competent scholars are rehabilitating current opinion regarding St. Augustine's positions in his use of numerology. It is clear that he derived it not so much from Pythagorean influences as from Scripture itself and the use of the Church. Father W.G. Most expresses in summary the Saint's attitude : "... [F]or he says, no one would be so foolish and inept as to say there is no reason for these numbers in Scripture — he claims the backing of the authority of the Church as handed down by the Fathers, the example of the Scriptures, and the science of mathematics. No one in his right mind will attack scientific reason, no Christian will attack Scripture, no peaceful man will fail *sentire cum Ecclesia* ". (" The Scriptural Basis of Saint Augustine's Arithmology ", *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 13, 284-295, at 288).

From the Prologue of Saint John's Gospel, Saint Augustine learned the doctrine of the word, the Logos :

> " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him : and without him was made nothing that was made ". [John I, 1-3].

The Saint reveals in the sermons on the Canticle Psalms among the *Enarrationes* his conviction that Christ is present in the whole of creation : in creation and with creation, Christ sings praise to God. Christ is *Cantator* in the Canticle Psalms, the Singer of the Song of Creation. Here, the universe of men and nature is made to praise God, so that " *Chorus Christi iam totus mundus est* ", the song of Christ is now the whole world[3]. Particularly pertinent to the *De Civitate Dei* is the Saint's conviction that good men and evil, all orders of human kind, " sing Christ ", for

> ,, no man of our day can defend his infidelity in that [final] judgment, because [each] sings Christ (*cantet Christum*) — the just man for fairness, the perjured for fraud, the king for rule and the soldier for battle and the husband for maintaining authority and the wife to show her submission, the father for command and the son for obedience, the master for his right to rule and the servant for his subjection, the humble man for loyalty, the rich man that he may give and the poor man that he may take, the drunkard for the bottle and the beggar at the gate, the good man that he may take care and the evil that he may trip, the Christian worshipper and the pagan sycophant : they all sing Christ (*omnes Christum cantant*) and with what will and mouth they sing, to Him Whom they sing they will, without doubt, render accounting "[4].

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3. *Serm.* v in Ps. CXVIII, Brepols XL, 1766. The same concept of Christ the *Cantator* is perfectly expressed in the sermon on Ps. CXXII, 2, Brepols XL, 1815 : " Adscendat ergo iste cantator [Christus] ; sed de unoquoque corde vestrum cantet hic homo, et unusquisque sit iste homo. Cum enim dicitis illud singuli, quia omnes unum estis in Christo, unus homo illud dicit ; et non : Ad te, Domine, leuauimus oculos nostros ; sed : *Ad te, Domine, leuaui oculos meos* ".

4. Ep. CCXXXII, 4, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (hereafter *CSEL*) 57, 514, translated with aid from Sister Wilfrid Parsons, S.N.D., *Fathers of the Church* 13, 171, who, however, (mis ?-) translates *cantet* by " call upon : " ,,... nec quisquam erit homo nostrorum temporum, qui se in illo iudicio de sua possit infidelitate defendere, cum Christum cantet et iustus ad aequitatem et periurus ad fraudem et rex ad imperium et miles ad pugnam et maritus propter regimen et uxor propter obsequium et pater propter praeceptum et filius propter oboedientiam et dominus propter dominationem et seruus propter famulatum et humilis ad pietatem et superbus ad aemulationem et diues, ut porrigat, et pauper, ut sumat, et ebriosus ad phialam et mendicus ad ianuam et bonus, ut praestet, et malus, ut fallat, et Christianus uenerator et paganus adulator ; omnes Christum cantant et, qua uoluntate atque ore cantent, eidem ipsi, quem cantant, rationem sine dubio reddituri sunt ". For current theological thought, *vide* F. Prat, *La Théologie de saint Paul*, Paris, 1930, I, 352-358 ; the latest summation, with pertinent bibliography, is M. Bogdasavich, " The Idea of *Pleroma* in the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians, " *Downside Review*, 83, (April, 1965), 118-130.

If psychological necessity could press a Saint, we might say that the *De Civitate Dei* must inevitably contain Christ, His presence must be throughout the work, not alone in its thought but symbolically constructed into the book itself. As natural as it would be for Saint Augustine to construct into the *De Civitate Dei* the symbolic figure of the Crucified Christ since that figure and the book is a compendium of God's creation, to do so was almost demanded of him who saw in Christ the " living sacrifice " and " living temple " which is the Mystical Body the Church which is God's City,

> " ... the whole redeemed city, that is to say, the congregation or community of the saints ... offered to God as our sacrifice through the Great High Priest, who offered Himself to God in His passion for us, that we might be members of this glorious head, according to the form of a servant "[5].

More than the rhetorical and logical unities presently being discovered in the work, the theological unity found in the symbolism of the figure of the Crucified Christ is relevant to the theology of history which the Saint labored to vindicate. If the ancient symbolism of number and Cross in the *De Civitate Dei* may be rather obscure to us, it can hardly have been so to the Saint's contemporaries, trained as their minds were to see the deeper significance hidden in the " sacraments of things ". An especial symbolism of the Cross, we will see, was detected by ancient Christians throughout the entire universe. The presence of number and Cross in the *De Civitate Dei* could be expected, and probably the theological unity revealed by it was obvious rather than the rhetorical and logical unities which greatly concern current students of the book. These thinkers must be congratulated for having put an end to the style, too long fashionable, of trying Saint Augustine and convicting him of carelessness and confusion in the writing of the *De Civitate Dei*[6]. Now it

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5. *De Civitate Dei* (hereafter *dCD*) X, 6 ; *cf. Ibid.* X, 22.
It may not be without significance that it was St. Ambrose who first said " Civitas Dei Ecclesia est : Ecclesia corpus est Christi ", *Expositio in Ps. CXVIII*, 35, *PL* 15, 1422. Complete and profound treatment of the theology of Saint Augustine regarding the Church, especially pertinent to the City of God, is the first part, chapter one, " The Church, the Mystical Body of Christ ", pp. 1-93, in Stanislaus J. Grabowski's *The Church, An Introduction to the Theology of saint Augustine*, Saint Louis, 1957 ; for Father Grabowski's critical synopsis of expert thought on the concept of the City of God, *vide* pp. 532 ss.

6. The composition of the *De Civitate Dei* presents a problem to scholars ; this is clear from the strictures leveled against its literary unity by Henri-Irénée Marrou, the critic most capable of summing up the feelings, if not the thought, of many generations of thinkers. See *Saint Augustin et la Fin de la Culture Antique*, Paris, 1938, 63 ss. M. Marrou is to be admired for the frankness with which he expressed himself, but even more for the *amende honorable* made in his own *Retractatio*, published in 1949, but paginated with and bound with *op. cit.*, 665 ss. This is a problem quite apart from the function of the chapter headings in the books which is thoroughly explored by G. Bardy, " La Cité de Dieu, I - V ", 47-52, in *Bibliothèque*

is opportune to propose the existence of a Christocentric unity, discoverable because it is contained in the symbol of Christ Crucified, embedded in the very construction of the book itself.

Before entering upon the venture of discovering the Christiform unity, some preliminary remarks are necessary for the sake of orientation and perspective. The *De Civitate Dei* is a work of polemic and apology. The polemic is against " The Gods ". It is aimed at the cancer, now long forgotten, which in the practices of the civic ceremonies, the games, the theater and the temples — as well as the temples the others were all formal cult manifestations — ate at the bowels of Classical society and finally destroyed it[7]. Intermingled with the polemic, but distinct from it, is the apologia which Saint Augustine offers not only for Christianity but also for the supreme achievements of Antiquity, Roman imperial power and Greek philosophy[8]. Consideration of the apologia will lead to comprehending the symbolic unity of the *De Civitate Dei*.

I

Preliminary Considerations

The polemical character and purpose of the *De Civitate Dei* is the work's most obvious literary quality. In the polemic against the ancient gods and myths we see the Saint as the brilliant *rhetor* he never ceased

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Augustinienne, 33, Paris, 1959. M. Marrou did, however, state that the book, as an entity, not the chapters, is the determining unit in the literary composition. With this we must agree ; the position has been adopted by Bardy, and by Jean-Claude Guy in " Unité et structure logique de la ' Cité de Dieu ' de saint Augustin ", *(Études Augustiniennes)* Paris, 1961, 12 ss, 74 ss, 133, 134. These analyses are based upon the polemic of the *dCD*, and find no place for Bk. I, where " The Gods " are not attacked. As will be seen, I find that in the apology, Bk. I is integrated into the other nine of the first part of the *dCD*. But saint Augustine's passion for unity cannot be neglected even in the polemic, and I think that, in the way Bk. I contrasts with Bk. X, it is not outside even the unity of the polemic. In Bk. I, Christ is the Savior of the physical city and men's mortal lives, which " The Gods " were unable to protect ; in Bk. X, he is the only true mediator between God and man, the source of man's purification and sanctity as the " living temple " and " living sacrifice ".

7. The most fruitful way of thinking about the polemic of the *De Civitate Dei* is to consider it as a fulsome detailing and complementing of the items listed by saint Paul in the description which he gives of the course Paganism took in the Roman Empire, in his *locus classicus*, Romans, I, 17-32. Saint Augustine describes the practices which saint Paul has generalized in his itemizing.

8. Professor Charles Norris Cochrane has made the most profound and pertinent analysis of the apologia vis-à-vis Roman imperial achievements and Greek philosophical thought in his *Christianity and Classical Culture* (New-York, 1940, 1947).

to be. In strenuous, though not original fashion, he undertakes by every logical and literary device, with all the resources of superb rhetoric as well as argument, to destroy " The Gods " whose cults embodied the blasphemies, the universal sexualism and the all pervasive superstition of the ancient paganism[9]. The very extent of his effort, its thoroughness, the constant repetition of it, is evidence of how firm a hold the ancient gods still had on men, after four centuries in the world and a hundred years of imperial favor enjoyed by Christianity. No other single work of Antiquity affords us the view we see here of the deep, dark, destructive perversions of men which demons and heathens together perpetrated. In the polemic of the *De Civitate Dei*, in a serious vein completely different from Erasmus', we may think we have Saint Augustine's own *Encomium Moriae*. Even if we abstract from moral and theological considerations — the Saint would never allow us — the polemic is a penetrating, pungent commentary on the fatuousness and futility of the works of human kind in a particular historical condition. With this realization in mind, we are prepared to seek out the apologia.

In the making of the apologia, Saint Augustine distilled the doctrinal and exegetical learning created by four centuries of Patristic literary theology ; he gives us the essence of a mere dozen generations of Catholic life. To begin with, a general view of the apologia is necessary.

In the first ten books, the Saint examines the Earthly City, contrasting the Earthly City, always, with the leit-motif which is, to use his terms, the pilgrim city of King Christ, the assembly of the celestial republic, the holy fellowship, the Church of Christ, the city of the Great King. Here, the theme is the Earthly City, the leit-motif is the Heavenly City[10]. Then, beginning with book eleven, the Heavenly City is the

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9. Bardy mentions that the greatest part of the old aristocracy of Rome had remained pagan, a new pagan reaction had occured, great pagan names were in powerful positions ; with the fall of the City, the entire world attended to its origins and its empire ; Bardy concludes, " Si étonnants que nous paraissent, dans leur amplitude, les livres II - X de *La Cité de Dieu*, ils ont été voulus et prévus par l'auteur ; ils appartiennent à son plan primitif. Ce n'est pas à nous de les déclarer superflus ". *Ibid.*, 44 ss. *Cf.* G. Boissier, *La Fin de Paganisme, passim* ; esp. for the affair of the Statue of the goddess Victory, II, 55-225, Paris, 1907. I hope in another article to show how the polemic arises from saint Augustine's theology of the devil and demons, and how congruent it is to Scriptural and patristic teaching. In the polemic as in much else, the Romanitas of saint Augustine reveals itself ; in the method of his polemic, his most illustrious predecessor was Cicero, especially in the *De Natura Deorum*.

10. *Vide dCD*, XVI, 1 ; XVII, 16 ; XVIII, 41, 51 ; the Saint is most clear in *De Genesi ad litteram*, XI, 15, CSEL 28, 347, 348 : Hi duo amores — quorum alter sanctus est, alter immundus, alter socialis, alter priuatus, alter communi utilitati consulens propter supernam societatem, alter etiam rem communem in potestatem propriam redigens propter adrogantem dominationem, alter subditus, alter aemulus deo, alter tranquillus, alter turbulentus, alter pacificus, alter seditiosus, alter ueritatem laudibus errantium praeferens, alter quoquo modo laudis auidus, alter amicalis, alter inuidus, alter hoc uolens proximo quod sibi, alter subicere proximum sibi, alter

theme, the leit-motif is the Earthly City. Here it may be noted that just as, in the Saint's thinking, the Heavenly City is the Pleroma, the Fullness of Christ, so the Earthly City is an anti-city, with its members, evil men and bad angels, with its king, the devil. But there is nothing Manichaean in the relation, contrary but not contradictory, between Christ and the devil. Christ and the devil stand opposed to one another but are never represented as warring ; Christ is always and everywhere supreme, in command, both of men and of demons. The Two Cities are not mere conceptual or literary constructs, not " ideas " in any Platonic, or non-Platonic sense, such as Cardinal Newman's, but actual physical bodies, of men and angels in Heaven, this world, and hell[11].

The Saint's mind was not given to abstractions ; in the *De Civitate Dei* the Earthly City takes on concrete historical actuality : the Roman Empire, and Greek philosophy. First the Saint turns himself to the examination of the Roman Empire. It is the archetype of material and political power in the world. To use a congeries of the Saint's own terms : God had used the Empire to conquer the entire world and bring it into one fellowship of government and law. The Romans had striven for glory, had despised great things, endured great things, subdued lusts, even, in this way, as it were, had merited the glory they enjoyed, their fame

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propter proximi utilitatem regens proximum, alter propter suam — praecesserunt in angelis, alter in bonis, alter in malis, et distinxerunt conditas in genere humano ciuitates duas sub admirabili et ineffabili prouidentia dei cuncta, quae creat, adminis-trantis et ordinantis, alteram iustorum, alteram iniquorum, quarum etiam quadam temporali conmixtione peragitur saeculum, donec ultimo iudicio separentur, et altera coniuncta angelis bonis in rege suo uitam consequatur aeternam, altera coniuncta, angelis malis in ignem cum rege suo mittatur aeternum, de quibus duabus ciuita-tibus latius fortasse alio loco, si dominus uoluerit, disseremus.

11. The term " mystical body " has been long used to designate the doctrine found in Saint Paul, consecrated in the phrase, " *corpus Christi quod est Ecclesia* ", the body of Christ which is the Church (Col. 1, 24). Father Tromp describes the Mystical Body of Christ in the words of St. Gregory Nazianzen as " a composite, heterogeneous living being ", and goes on to say that the Church " ...constitutes in fact (as all the Fathers teach, following St. Paul) a kind of person signalized by this very name, Christ ". (Sebastian Tromp, *Corpus Christi Quod Est Ecclesia*, tran. by Ann Condit, New York, 1960. 13.) Saint Augustine is forthright in speaking of the " body of the devil ", *Corpus diaboli* : " *Sicut corpus Christi quod est Ecclesia, dicitur Christus... eodem modo etiam corpus diaboli, cui caput est diabolus, id est ipsa impiorum multitudo, maximeque eorum qui a Christo vel de Ecclesia sicut de caelo decidunt, dicitur diabolus...* " : As the body of Christ which is the Church is called Christ... in the same way the body of the devil, of which the devil is the head, that is the very horde of the impious, especially of those who have fallen from Christ or the Church as it were from heaven, is called the devil ". (*De Genesi ad Litt.*, XI, 23, 50, *PL* 34, 442) Saint Paul is especially vivid in II Thes. II, 3, 4 : " ...for unless there come a revolt first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth... " Certainly Saint Augustine's Two Cities are not "ideas" as Cardinal Newman uses the term in his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* where he describes Christianity as an idea, almost a personified idea, and the ways whereby Christianity develops. *Cf.* title cited, especially chapter II, " On the Antecedent Argument in Behalf of Developments in Christian Doctrine ".

amongst almost all nations, upon whom they imposed their laws. Rome is the daughter of Babylon, which like a first Rome ran its course with the City of God[12]. (Echoes of St. John's revelation in the Apocalypse !) The grandeur of man's greatest political triumph in history was not lost on Saint Augustine : Roma Aeterna indeed deserved to be what it has remained, *caput et centrum mundi*. The Earthly City in Rome, its historical manifestation, is the instrument of God for His own purposes. True it is now Rome has fallen on bad times ; these are providential. Rome has been great and glorious : now it is a Rome which God is chastising, but not destroying[13]. Under five aspects, in books one to five, Saint Augustine enables us to view the Earthly City manifesting itself in the Roman Empire. We see it :

(I) distressed, saved by Christ ;

(II) in its luxury and immorality induced by pride and demons ;

(III) in its history glorious, yet infamous in celebrated victories ;

(IV) in the Vergilian Myth, both true and false ;

(V) with its imperium, " right to rule ", a gift of God, not the object of Fate.

    Rome, in its catastrophe, in its sin, in its history, in its theory of empire, in its doctrine of Fate and Glory is brought, finally, to face Christ, the Heavenly City. Earthly political and material power are, the Saint tells us, the gifts of God Who gives them to the Romans because of their virtues — resolution, ambition, austerity, love of glory.

The good of earthly power is undoubted : its origin is clearly from God, who achieved His purpose in giving it.

The Saint now turns to Greek philosophy. Above the temporal human aspirations of imperial power, great minds had risen to contemplate man's spiritual condition. But first to be attended to are the obvious and popular corruptions of religious power. He calls to his aid the learned Varro[14], whose orderly mind had classified the welter of pagan super-

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12. *dCD* XVIII, 22 ; V, 7, 15 ; II, 29 ; V, 18 ; VIII, 10 ss. ; XXII, 26, 27.

13. *dCD*, IV, 7 : " [Rome is]... afflicted rather than changed, — a thing which has befallen it in other times also, before the name of Christ was heard, and it has been restored after much affliction, — a thing which even in these times is not to be despaired of. For who knows the will of God concerning this matter " ? *Cf.* the Saint's sermon *De Excidio Urbis Romae* : " ...just as a servant, knowing the will of his lord and yet doing things worthy of blows, will be beat with many stripes ". (Ed. and trans. by Sister Marie Vianney O'Reilly, Washington, D.C., 1955, 77 ; for its presently regarded authenticity, *vide* 4-6). *Cf.* J. Straub, " Augustins Sorge um die regeneratio imperii ", *Historisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft*, 73, 1954, 36 ss.

14. Marcus Terentius Varro, 116-27 A.D., " most learned of the Romans, but also the most voluminous of the Roman writers ", whose work [now mostly lost to us] is described by Cicero (Acad. post., I, 3) : " You have revealed to us the age of our fatherland, its chronology, the laws of its religion and priesthoods, the plan of our home and foreign administration, the position of our territories and districts, the

stitions and gross practices described by the Saint as subsisting in what he and Varro call the three " theologies "[15]. These are a three-fold perversion of human artistic, civil, and intellectual power. The theology of the theatre, as Saint Augustine calls it, is the product of myth, poetry and fable and revolved around the lives and amours of the gods ; theatrical performance and circus spectacle was part of the cult of " The Gods " in antiquity. The theology of the forum was conducted by the civil authorities for political purposes in an official public capacity ; by it Caesar was worshipped and the populace was manipulated through the use of superstition in omens and auspices. Finally the essential religious problems were dealt with in ancient times by the schools where nature, physics and philosophy, as we today would call these activities, all efforts of reason to explain the universe, were carried on. Thus it is that the Saint can refer to three theologies, mythical-poetical-fabulous, civil-political-forensic, natural-physical-philosophical. In contrast to them all, Plato, nevertheless, had discovered, Saint Augustine thought, what true philosophy is. But Plato's successors, Hermes, Apuleius, and Porphyry[16], fallen from Plato's high estate, had taught the use of the

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titles and descriptions of all things Divine and human, with the duties and principles attaching to them, and you have shed a vast amount of light on our poets and on Latin literature in general and on the Latin vocabulary, while you have yourself composed picturesque and choice poems in almost every metre, and in many passages have touched upon philosophy, so far as to arouse interest, but not sufficiently for full treatment ". (Quoted by A. W. Mair, *Encyclopaedia Brittanica,* 14 th edit., 22, 996). *Cf.* Jean Pépin, " La 'théologie tripartite' de Varron, Essai de reconstitution et recherche des sources ", in Mémorial Bardy, *(Revue des Études Augustiniennes,* II, 1956, 265-294). Saint Augustine always seeks the most excellent of his adversaries, those whom Christians as well as pagans could have reason to respect, if at all. His method recalls that of Cardinal Newman, who even supplied his adversaries with further arguments for their positions.

15. Saint Augustine always applies the term " theology " at least in the *dCD,* to pagan cult manifestations, never to the Christian religion. As he makes clear in the *dCD,* besides the temple cults, both the theatre, in which must be included the games gladiatorial and otherwise, and the civic ceremonies performed in the Forum in each Roman city, were a formal worship of the gods. To understand the inclusion among the " theologies " of the activities of the schools which today we would call philosophy, it must be remembered that in antiquity philosophy meant more a way of life than an activity ; at least in ancient Greece, the philosophers were under the protection of the gods, if not in their direct service ; and Plato referred to himself as a " theologos ". Here, in Books VI-VII, the Saint is using terms, and making use of the classification by the encyclopaedist Varro, not of terms or classification created by himself.

16. Though only scholars even recognize these names today, " The name of Hermes Trismegistus stands, like that of Homer, for a whole literature. But this literature is philosophical and religious, not poetical. It presents a curious phase of human thought emanating from Egypt, and might roughly be described as 'Plato, according to the Egyptians'. Only roughly, indeed, for the matter is far more complex than this. Take Plato, the Stoics, Philo, Catholic Christianity, Gnosticism, neo-Platonism, and Neo-Pythagoreanism, mix them well up together, throwing in a strong flavour of ancient Egypt, and the result of the brew will be something

Mysteries and theurgy, trying in diabolically warped fashion to elevate and purify man[17]. To Saint Augustine, marvelous amalgam it all was of humbug and humility, pride and spiritual perspicacity, prophecy even and perdition.

Under the Saint's analysis, in the second five books, we see :

(VI) the " theologies " of Varro reduced to atheism ;

(VII) pantheistic sociological sublimations of paganism likewise dissolve into atheism and agnosticism ;

(VIII) the Saint has high praise for the *bonus Plato*, his *religiosa prudentia*, who " ... was able to approach so nearly to Christian knowledge ", his *religiosissima lex*, his *gravitas philosophica*, nor does the Saint ever say any word against him though he is not to be compared to any Christian man ;

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like Hermes Trismegistus as we have him ". (St. George Stock, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. by James Hastings, N.Y., 1913, VI, 626). We forget the prestige surrounding the name of Egypt in ancient times. Apuleius of Madaura, A.D. 125 — ? : *liberaliter educatus*, St. Augustine calls him (Epist. 138, 19), much traveled throughout the Empire and the East ; he had studied philosophy, rhetoric, geometry, music and poetry. At Carthage he became *sacerdos provinciae*, of the imperial cult. We do not know when he died. Bardy remarks, " we are not a little surprised to see that such a polygraph as the rhetorician of Madaura is elevated to the dignity of philosopher. What is the meaning of it ? St. Augustine admired him as a compatriot, whose works had encountered an imposing number of readers : that sufficied for his choice ". *Op. cit.* (Note 6), 34, 19. Previously, Bardy had said, " Since, however, below men existed demons, among them a great number who are evil, it is necessary to ask if the demons can be worshipped together with the gods. If the question is posed, it is not the invention of St. Augustine : it had been raised by Apuleius, who is used as most representative of most characteristics of Platonism, a person who would interest more of the Latins, since he wrote in both Greek and Latin ". *Ibid.*, 18. I expect in another article to develop the position of St. Augustine's thinking about the devil and demons in their activities on human beings. Porphyry, c. A.D. 233-300, was a disciple of Plotinus who owes to him the preservation of his works for posterity. " He was a devout and highly moral man, of a somewhat somber and fanatical temperment ; on one occasion, Plotinus persuaded him from taking his own life ". (W. R. Inge, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* IX, 317) He was mainly an expositor and commentator whose works were much used for educational purposes.

17. The best of the current thought may be found in a selection from the *Eranos Yearbooks* appearing in the Bollingen Series, XXX, 2, New York, 1955, entitled simply " The Mysteries ". A detailed literary description of theurgy is found in Apuleius' " Golden Ass ", XI. The word itself means the direct working of God, on the human soul. Theurgists think that God uses " good spirits " — " white magic " — as opposed to diabolical spirits, " black magic ". The later Neo-Platonists, especially Porphyry and Iamblichus were much involved in it, as were Proclus and the Gnostics. In early modern times theurgy experienced a revival, especially in Pico della Mirandola ; it descends through Cornelius Agrippa and Paracelsus into Jacob Boehme. Modern spiritualistic and theosophic activities are phenomena of theurgy. St. Augustine's observations and argumentation remain relevant in what may seem an obscure feature of his polemic. *Cf. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, sub. v.,* Theurgy.

(IX) nevertheless, Plato's disciples abandoned Plato's religion, became involved in demonic relationships and Plato remains alone. Apuleius was the most refined of the theurgists but all Platonistic aberrations fail to solve the problem of how man is to be purified ;

(X) Porphyry, to Saint Augustine the most Christianlike of the ancients, who may once have been close to becoming a Christian, erred because of human pride which prevented him from worshipping a God enfleshed and crucified, but he contains elements which make him a vestibule of Christian truth. The Saint will finally say that Plato and Porphyry together held doctrines which would have conducted them to the truth if they could have yielded to each other[18].

The fivefold spiritual pride of the Earthly City : its atheistic theology, its human theology, Plato, his truths betrayed by his followers ; its Platonistic aberrations of popular theurgy and sophisticated Mysteries stands in stark contrast to Christ, the one true Mediator between God and man. Demons and human pride had corrupted the goods, temporal and spiritual, of the Earthly City, empire and philosophy alike had been depraved and made fatuous by demonic action and human frailty. " Who that was weak and unlearned could escape the deceits of both the princes of the state and the demons ? " Theology, theurgy, Mysteries find their true purpose and fulfillment in the " living sacrifice " and " living temple " which is Christ. As we shall see, more than surface resemblance exists between the *De Civitate Dei* and the " living sacrifice " and " living temple " which is Christ.

The Saint's polemic is negative and obvious ; his apology is theological and profound. He has afforded us, at the end of Antiquity, a negative and positive criticism of the " glory that was Greece/And the grandeur that was Rome ". Clearly, the Saint thinks that despite diabolic depravity the Earthly City in Roman Empire and Greek philosophy had accomplished a divine purpose : the creation of humane unity by Roman government and law, and the discovery for man of the possibility of spiritual purification and approach to God[19]. Note that Saint Augustine has chosen to examine two kinds of earthly perfection treating of each in five books.

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18. *dCD*, XXII, 27, Dods' tran. : " For, according to Plato, even holy souls shall return to the body ; according to Porphyry, holy souls shall not return to the ills of this world. Let Porphyry then say with Plato, they shall return to the body ; let Plato say with Porphyry, they shall not return to their old misery ; and they will agree that they return to bodies in which they shall suffer no more. And this is nothing else than what God has promised, — that He will give eternal felicity to souls joined to their own bodies. For this I presume both of them would readily concede, that if the souls of the saints are to be reunited to their bodies, it shall be to their own bodies, in which they have endured the miseries of this life, and in which, to escape these miseries, they served God with piety and fidelity ".

19. " In the excellent and most prosperous empire of the Romans, God thus also showed forth how great are civil virtues, even without true religion so that with true religion added it could be understood that men become citizens of that other city, whose king is truth, whose law is charity, whose way is eternal ". Ep. 138, 17, *CSEL* 44, 144, 145.

In these first ten books, the Saint has not only given us his own *Encomium Moriae* : he has left to us the most comprehensive and critical view of Antiquity produced by one of its own great minds at the end of its own times. He was forced to this criticism to compare its achievements and failures with " the redeemed family of the Lord Christ... the pilgrim city of King Christ ". The principles and methods with which the Saint proceeds are valid for all time. Now with the first ten books completed, the Saint is prepared to discourse on " ...the origin, history and deserved ends of the two cities which... are in this world commingled and implicated with one another ".

In a well-known rhapsodic sentence Saint Augustine sums up the entire thought of these two cities : " ...two cities have been formed by two loves, the earthly by love of self, even to the contempt of God ; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self "[20]. In this second part of the *De Civitate Dei*, men and angels are " writ large " in creation, history, and final condition. Every man is born into the Earthly City, to progress in his own history, to an everlasting condition of happiness or loss[21].

In the first four books (XI-XIV) of the second part of the work, we see the Two Cities begin with the creation of the angels and their immediate separation into the Good and the Bad by the Fall ; their beginnings in the world are to be found in the sons of Adam : Cain, and Abel and Seth ; in the next four books (XV-XVIII), we see them continue in the world through Abraham and the Patriarchs, and exemplified in Rome and the Hebrew people ; their present and future condition occupies the last four books (XIX-XXII). Note that the task is finished in three parts of four books each. Here all is factual, either historical or revealed ; however, the Saint is aware of the mystical aspects of his thought, as well as the philosophical, humane and historical implications of it[22]. The symbolic artistry of the concept and of the book itself remain to be revealed...

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20. *dCD*, XIV, 28.

21. For the application of the concept to each person, in his own individual life, *vide dCD*, XV, 1, esp., 5, 8 ; XVII, 3, 16 ; XIX, 17 ; XX, 9 ; elsewhere he has said, " [Homo] qui nascitur sub principe peccatorum, donec renascatur in Christo ", (*Operis Imperfecti contra Iulianum* I, LXII, *PL* 45, 1081) ; " Homines esse opus Dei, in quantum homines sunt ; sed sub diabolo esse, in quantum peccatores sunt... ", (*Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum*, I, XVIII, *PL* 44, 567) ; the human race is one, both in Christ and in Adam : " Nec attenditis, primum hominem Adam sic olim fuisse defunctum, ut tamen post illum secundus homo sit Christus ; cum tot hominum millia inter illum et hunc orta sint ; et ideo manifestum est, ad illum pertinere omnem qui ex illo successione propaginis nascitur, sicut ad istum pertinet omnis qui in illo gratiae largitate renascitur. *Unde fit ut totum genus humanum quodam modo sint homines duo, primus et secundus. Op. Imp. contra Iul.*, II, CLXIII, 1211. Italics added.

22. He rises to great mystical heights in the exegesis of Psalm 45 in XVII, 16 ; for the others, *vide* the entire nineteenth book, and XIV, 28.

In the description just given of the *De Civitate Dei* attention has been purposefully drawn to the presence of the numbers two, five, three and four, in that order[23]. The first part is ten books in two quintuplets. In the first of the quintuplets, man is revealed to us in his political, material achievements. It deals with the Roman Empire, firmly rooted in the Earth, close to it, mired by it, nevertheless in God's Providence rising up from it. (Prince von Bismark was not the first to remark the blood and iron associated with empire). The second quintuplet concerns the spiritual achievements of the Earthly City ; it is Greek philosophy, always human even in Plato, soiled as was the Roman Empire with the dirt of human sin, the object, as was the Empire, of demonic corruption. That the two perfections of the Earthly City should be dealt with in five books each accords with Saint Augustine's numerology, in which the number five pertains to earthly perfection since five signifies the flesh, which is earthly[24]. Through both quintuplets, the theme has been the Earthly City, the Heavenly City has been the leit-motif[25]. Just as the

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23. Saint Augustine wished the *dCD*, when published in parts, to be divided either into two parts, the first containing books one to ten, the second, books eleven to twenty-two ; or if in more than two parts, books one to five, six to ten, eleven to fourteen, fifteen to eighteen, nineteen to twenty-two. (*Vide* Letter 231A in *Fathers of the Church*, 32, New York, 1956, 165-167, which is a translation by Sister Wilfrid Parsons, S.N.D., of the letter discovered and published by C. Lamlot in *Revue Bénédictine*, 51, 109-121, also in the Brepols XLVII edition of the *dCD*, III, IV). The numbers in his mind, we may say, are two, four, five, ten and twelve when he thinks of the divisions of the work. He does not, however, give any reason for prescribing these divisions which, of course, are clear enough from the content of the work, apart from any other reason. I think I shall show that the Saint had reason for the division of five, five, and four, four, four.

24. He is particularly clear about this in his *In Ioann. Tract.* XV, 21, Brepols, XXXVI, 158, 159, in his treatment of the incident of the Gospel, where Christ meets the Samaritan woman who had had five husbands.

25. The profound rhetorical interrelationship of the first and second parts of the *dCD* is best put in the words of Jean-Claude Guy, S.J., *op. cit.* (note 6) 13 :

Nous voudrions montrer que Réfutation et Démonstration ne s'opposent pas comme le négatif au positif, que la Réfutation ne constitue pas une sorte de « table rase » à partir de laquelle il est possible *ensuite* de bâtir une Démonstration. Mais il y a entre ces deux parties un lien beaucoup plus intime. Le long chemin de la Réfutation, qui commence au livre II par la peinture de la débauche romaine que favorisent les dieux, et qui, se développant à travers tous les modes du paganisme, aboutit à une critique de Porphyre et contraint l'incroyant à reconnaître, en X. 32, que la religion du Christ est la voie unique et universelle de libération, ce long chemin fait déboucher l'incroyant au cœur même du mystère de l'Église, il l'introduit à ce qui constituera l'essentiel de la deuxième partie, le rôle central du Christ Médiateur dans l'histoire de la cité de Dieu.

Ainsi, il apparaîtra qu'entre Réfutation et Démonstration, il n'y a nulle hétérogénéité, la première constituant essentiellement une voie d'accès à la seconde. La Réfutation, à son terme, aura déjà posé tous les éléments cardinaux de la Démonstration : qu'il y a l'Église, que l'Église est le sacrifice total de l'humanité, parce qu'elle est l'Église de Jésus-Christ, homme et Dieu, médiateur parfait. C'est la même réalité qui, dans un cas comme dans l'autre, est saisie ; mais elle l'est à deux points de vue différents. Dans la Démonstration, le christianisme est présenté tel qu'il

theme of the Earthly City is signified by the number ten in two quintu-
plets of five, the number ten taken for itself signifies the leit-motif,
the Heavenly City.   Saint Augustine tells us more than once that he
thought of it as the number of justice and eternal beatitude : " ...the
number ten has the perfection of justice and beatitude, when the crea-
ture [which is sevenfold] clings to the Trinity ; hence it is that the deca-
logue of the Law is consecrated in ten commandments "[26].   In the first
quintuplet, the Saint constantly contrasts the justice of God with the

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apparaît à l'intérieur de la foi et de la révélation, tel qu'il est en soi et pour soi ;
dans la Réfutation, au contraire, il est présenté tel qu'il apparaît au païen, c'est-à-
dire tel qu'il se pose en face des fausses religions, en tant que seul capable de résoudre
les problèmes que posent ces religions sans pouvoir y apporter de réponse.

Qu'il faille lire dans ces perspectives les livres I-X, c'est ce qui pouvait déjà
se déduire de ce que nous avons dit en commençant de la raison pour laquelle saint
Augustin a entrepris d'écrire la *Cité de Dieu*. Il y prétend, en effet, régler défini-
tivement le vieux litige qui subsistait entre christianisme et paganisme. Son propos
n'est pas d'occuper des loisirs abstraits d'intellectuel : il est essentiellement apos-
tolique. Son œuvre n'est même pas apologétique, au sens que le XIXᵉ siècle finissant
a donné à ce terme. Nulle part il ne cherche à détruire simplement la position de
l'adversaire. Il écrit *pour* les païens qui, tel Volusien, regardent vers l'Église, afin
de les faire participer à sa vie ; il écrit aussi pour les chrétiens qui ont toujours besoin
d'être introduits plus avant dans l'intériorité du mystère de l'Église.

Aussi ne lui suffit-il pas de définir ce qui constitue l'essentiel de la cité de Dieu,
son développement tel qu'il est en soi et pour soi. Saint Augustin ne cherche à dire
la vie de l'Église (c'est-à-dire son fondement, son développement et son épanouis-
sement — livres XI-XXII) que pour permettre à l'homme — à l'incroyant comme
au chrétien — de participer plus abondamment à cette vie.

26. Serm. LII, 23, 33, *PL* 36, 352 ; *cf.* Serm. CCLII, *Ibid.*, 1177 :
" Quod enim venit in carne, temporaliter nobis sapientiam ipse ministravit :
temporaliter per Legem, temporaliter per Prophetas, temporaliter per Scripturas
Evangelii. Cum transierint enim tempora, videbimus ipsam sapientiam sicut est,
quae retribuit denarium numerum. Septenarius enim numerus indicat creaturam :
quia sex diebus Deus operatus est, et septimo ab operibus quievit. Ternarius vero
numerus conditorem Patrem et Filium et Spiritum sanctum insinuat.   Perfecta
est sapientia, creaturam creatori pie subdere ; discernere conditorem a conditione,
artificem ab operibus. Qui commiscet artifici opera, nec artem intelligit, nec arti-
ficem : qui autem discernit, impletur sapientia. Iste est ergo denarius, plenitudo
sapientiae. Sed quando temporaliter distribuitur ; quia in quaternario numero est
insigne temporalium, quater ductus denarius, quadragenarium numerum facit.   Et
annus quadrifarie variatur, verno, aestate, autumno et hieme : et maxime apparet
in tempore quaternaria quaedam vicissitudo. Quatuor etiam ventos Scriptura com-
memorat.   Per quatuor enim cardines perrexit Evangelium, quod in tempore
dispensatur : et ipsa est catholica Ecclesia, quae quatuor partes orbis obtinuit. Ergo
denarius hoc modo quadragenarium numerum facit ».

Serm. CCLXIV, 5, *Ibid.* 1216 : Denarius enim numerus totam sapientiam signifi-
cat ; Serm. CCLXX, 3, *Ibid.* 1210 : Unde et Decalogus primitus commendatur. In
decem enim praeceptis lex constituta est : propterea quia videtur in isto denario
numero quaedam perfectio. Usque ad eum quippe numerum progressus est nume-
rantis, et inde redit ab uno usque ad decem, rursus ad unum. Sic centena, sic
millena ; sic supra, denarius quibusdam complicantibus, infinite crescit silva nume-
rorum. Perfecta itaque lex in denario...

justice of the Empire, in the second quintuplet the beatitude men seek by human means with the beatitude afforded by the Mediator, the God-Man.

Then the Heavenly City becomes the theme, the leit-motif the Earthly City. This second part is tripartite, and consists of three sections, each of four books. But twelve is also the multiple of six by two ; and six, in its multiple by two, is thus present in this second part, in less obvious fashion, but fittingly since six is also a number of fleshly perfection[27]. The numbers which are obvious are three and four. The importance of the numbers three and four in the Saint's mind cannot be overestimated. Nowhere is this importance better brought out than in the third sermon he preached on Psalm 103 :

> " Then [Saint Peter : Acts x, 9-16] saw a kind of container like a linen cloth let down from heaven by four lines, where were all the animals and every kind of beast, and a voice sounded to him, ' Peter, kill and eat '. But he, who had grown up with Jewish habits taught in Law, observed the command given by the servant of God Moses which all his life he had faithfully kept, answered, ' Far be it from me, Lord. Never did anything common enter into my mouth '. ' Common ' is used by the Jews and the Law for unclean as they well know who have learned ecclesiastical letters. But the voice said to him, 'What the Lord has cleansed, do you not call unclean '. And this happened three times ; three times the dish lowered from heaven was taken away. The dish contained in the four lines was the orb of the earth in four parts. Scripture often mentions these four parts, east and west, north and south. So it was because the whole earth was called by the Gospel, that the four gospels were written. The container thrice let down from heaven signifies that it was said to the Apostles, ' Go and baptize all nations in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit '. [Matt. XXVIII, 19]. Hence were gathered together, as you know, disciples to the number of twelve. It is not for nothing that He choose to have twelve ; thus the number was so sacred that in the place of the one who fell, one more had to be added. Why twelve Apostles ? Because the parts of the earth are four, and the entire earth is called in the Gospel wherefore four Gospels were written ; and the whole earth is called in the name of the Trinity to the gathering of the Chruch, four times three is twelve "[28].

We will see that the theme of the second part of the *De Civitate Dei* is the City of God, Trinitarian, evangelistic : three times four is twelve books; the leit motif is the Earthly City : a fleshly number, six times two twelve books.

27. For the fleshy perfection of the number six, *vide dCD* XI, 30. *Cf. De Trinitate*, IV, 4, 7 : Hunc senarium numerum quamdam temporis gerere figuram etiam in illa ratione tripartitae distributionis agnoscimus, qua unum tempus computamus ante Legem ; alterum, sub Lege ; tertium, sub gratia. In quo tempore sacramentum renovationis accepimus : ut in fine temporis etiam resurrectione carnis omni ex parte renovati, ab universa, non solum animae, verum etiam corporis infirmitate sanemur.

28. *Enarr. in Ps.* CIII, s. III, 2 Brepols XL, 1499, 1500.

In the four books of the first member of the tripertitio which is the second part of the work, the Saint tells us of the origin of the Two Cities : Before the Law (*Ante Legem*), God's creating, paternal activity — these books are theological ; in the second four books, Under the Law (*Sub Lege*), God the Son who became incarnate and redeemed in human history is prefigured and signified in the history of the Hebrew people — these books are historical ; in the last four, Under Grace (*Sub Gratia*), eschatological books, God the Sanctifying Holy Spirit is made known to us in the present state of the world and the eternal future condition of the Two Cities[29].

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29. The Trinitarian nature of the tripartite which is the second part of the *dCD* can be seen in Saint Augustine's own words when he speaks of the " ...tria tempora ante legem, sub lege, sub gratia, vel propter nomen patris et filii et spiritus sancti adiuncta eminentius ipsa trinitate... " (*De Doctrina Christiana*, II, xvi, 25, Brepols XXXII, 5). Even in the City which is ,, *Extra Legem* " the Trinity is not absent, for the Saint insinuates the reflection of the Trinity in Plato's thought when in the eighth book he uses nine triplets to describe it : (numbers and letters here used correspond to chapters and sections as found in older editions of the *dCD*, and reproduced in the erudite edition of Bishop Welldon, London, 1924) :

4 C)	causa omnium naturarum cause of all natures	lumen omnium rationum light of all reasons	finem omnium actionum end of all actions
4 F)	causa subsistentiae cause of subsistence	ratio intelligendi reason of understanding	ordo vivendi order of living
5 A)	imitator [man] the imitator	cognitor [man] the knower	amator [man] the lover
5 D)	rerum auctor author of things	veritatis inlustrator enlightener of truth	beatitudinis largitor giver of happiness
6 B)	vivere to live	intelligere to understand	beatum esse to be happy
9 A)	rerum creatarum effector maker of created things	lumen cognoscendarum light of things to be known	bonum agendarum good of things to be done
10 D)	principium nostrum our beginning	lumen nostrum our light	bonum nostrum our good
10 E)	natura nature	doctrina teaching	gratia grace
10 F)	causa constitutae universitatis cause of all things holding together	lux percipiendae veritatis light of truth to be perceived	fons bibendae felicitatis fount of felicity to be drunk

We see, in the first member of the tripertitio, the Person of God, the Father :

(XI) the creative paternal action of God the Father, positive in angelic creation and

(XII) in human creation ;

(XIII) negative in the condition of sin and

(XIV) the fact of concupiscence.

The Son of God, the Second Person of the Divine Trinity, who is to assume human nature and redeem it, we see as Christ and His Body the Church prefigured in archetype in the history of the Hebrew people in the four books that make up the second member of the tripertitio :

(XV) from Abel to Noah,

(XVI) from the Post-diluvian to the Prophetic Age,

(XVII) the Prophetic Age to the Captivity,

(XVIII) the Post-Captivity to the birth of Christ.

The Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, we see :

(XIX) in His Working, when the Saint treats of the peace of the Heavenly City on Earth ;

(XX) the response of the Two Cities to grace shall be evinced in the final judgment of them ;

(XXI) the catastrophic failure to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit, the negative result of His workings found in eternal damnation

(XXII) the Saint concludes with the Eternal Sabbath to be enjoyed by the redeemed saved human soul with God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In stark contrast to the City of God which is the Whole Christ is the City of the Devil. But it must be repeated nothing is less Manichaean than this contrast.

God has created the Earthly no less than the Heavenly City ; the Earthly City has fallen captive to the Devil and his angels ; nevertheless they are strictly subject to Christ, Who rescues souls from demonic captivity. The eternity of the final condition of the Two Cities depends entirely upon God.

The intermingling of the Earthly City and the Heavenly City throughout the book, the play of theme and leit-motif in the two main parts of the work so well signified by the numbers employed, reflects the Mystery of Christ in His life on earth as men knew Him, and as He continues since His Ascension His earthly life in the Church which is His Body. Christ is God and manifested Himself as God to man in word and work. He is man, and owned without sin all the qualities we know as human. In " ...His own self bore our sins in His Body upon the tree... " [I Pet. 2, 24] the universal image, without being the actuality, of rebellious man. Thus culminated His temporal life in the perfect sacrifice of the " One Mediator between God and man, the God-man, Christ Jesus ". Thus

was finished His temporal life of pilgrimage and sacrifice in which the man of Christ was obvious to all men, wherein, nevertheless, He made known His Godhead. Then on the third day He arose, for forty days the God of Christ shone forth to His Apostles, wherein He proved to them that He was still man. Never in Christ are God and man separated, always distinct, God and man are brought together in the Person who is the Son of God. Now, by way of summation, to look at Saint Augustine's book.

In the *De Civitate Dei*, Heavenly and Earthly City are mingled together in earthly pilgrimage as the Saint has announced and as is shown forth in both parts of the book by comparison and contrast. Heavenly and Earthly Cities are intermingled though distinct in love and life, only finally to be separated. The Earthly City is obvious in the first part ; there the Heavenly City is suggested, only momentarily to be revealed when in a kind of transfiguration its beauty is allowed to shine forth. The Heavenly City is obvious and explicit in the second part, wherein the divine action of the Trinity is explicated with regard to the human race, and the Earthly City is shown running its course with the Heavenly City from Creation to Final Condition. So does the composition of the *De Civitate Dei* in a kind of hypostatic manner reflect the Son of God Incarnate, the Christ who is God-man.

II

The Cruciform Structure of the « De Civitate Dei »

The use of the numbers three and four brings home the Trinitarian and evangelical nature of the second part of the *De Civitate Dei*. The use of the numbers five, six, ten, and twelve to signify the cruciform Body of Christ in the thought and structure of the *De Civitate Dei* itself is derivable from Saint Augustine's own words. He thought of them as numbers containing the proper portions of the human body when he points out that the ark of Noe was built on these proportions :

> " For the length of the human body ... is six times its breadth from side to side, and ten times its depth or thickness, measuring from back to front ; that is to say, if you measure a man as he lies on his back or on his face, he is six times as long from head to foot as he is broad from side to side, and ten times as long as he is high from the ground ".

In the preceding sentence he has called the ark of Noe

> " certainly a figure of the City of God sojourning in this world ; that is to say, of the Church which is rescued by the wood on which hung the Mediator of God and man, the man Christ Jesus "[30].

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30. *dCD*, XV, 26.

In another place the Saint says,

> " Christ is figured in Noe and the orb of the world in the ark ".

All this,

> " ... so that in figure, the orb of the world would be freed by the wood, for the life of the world was to be fixed to the tree " [31].

Again the Saint relates the Body of Christ to the ark of Noe :

> " Noah, with his family, is saved by water and wood, as the family of Christ is saved by baptism, as representing the suffering of the cross ... [T]his ark is made of beams formed in a square, ... [T]he length is six times the breadth and ten times the height, like a human body [prostrate], to show that Christ appeared in a human body, ... [The] breadth rises to 50 cubits ; ... [I]t is 300 cubits long, to make up 6 times 50 ... [I]t is 30 cubits high, a tenth part of the length ; because Christ is one height, who in his 30th year gave his sanction to the doctrine of the gospel " [32].

It is inevitable that the Christian reader, once made familiar with the meaning of number symbolism, shall see the form of the Body of Christ in the very structure of the *De Civitate Dei*, that the unity of the *De Civitate Dei* reflects the unity in the person of Christ of God and man, the divine and the human in the City of God which is Christ who in His Mystical Body is the Church. Further, the structure of the *De Civitate Dei* is cruciform. The very form of the human body contains in itself the form of the Cross. Considering the second part of the work in its multiple of four by three to make twelve as twice the breadth of a man's outstretched arms, the first part in its multiple of five by two to make ten as twice the height of a man's body, the form of the work becomes both that of a man's body and of a cross. The form of the entire work, the form of the City of God itself is the form of the Crucified Christ.

The importance of the cruciform symbolism of the *De Civitate Dei* is nowhere better stated than in a sermon variously attributed to Saint Augustine and Alcuin ; though it is no longer part of the Augustinian canon, it perfectly contains the thought we have been working with :

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31. " Christus etiam figuratus est in Noe, et in illa arca orbis terrarum... ut per lignum liberaretur figura orbis terrarum, quia in ligno figenda erat vita orbis terrarum ". *In Ioann. Tract.* IX, 11, Brepols XXXVI, 97.

32. *Contra Faustum*, XII, 14, (quoted here from the Dods' translation in Vincent Foster Harper, *Medievel Number Symbolism*, New York, 1938, 80, 81). The Saint's thought is congruent to that of his spiritual father and intellectual mentor, Saint Ambrose : " Sed jam de ipsa Noe arca dicendum arbitror, quam si quis velit impensius considerare, inveniet in eius exaedificatione discriptam humani figuram corporis... " *De Noe*, 32, 1, *CSEL*, 421, 422. This recalls the words of Saint Ambrose previously cited : (note 5) " Civitas Dei Ecclesia est ; Ecclesia corpus est Christi ",

" That very cross contains in itself a great mystery ; its position is such
that it reaches to the heavens, its lower part adheres to the Earth. Fixed
in the depths it touches hell ; its latitude seeks out the sides of the world,
for by the suffering of the cross Christ profited the angels in heaven
whose number had been diminished by the apostate angel but is daily
filled up by the souls of the faithful ; He profited us who are on Earth,
as well as those who because of original sin are held in hell. But he
profited those, too, who live in different parts of the world ; the cross,
laid down, reaches out to the four sides of the world, the East and the
West, the North and the South. Thus Christ by His suffering draws
to Himself all peoples and subjects everything to Himself, as He said
when rising from the dead, ' All power is given to Me in Heaven and
on Earth ' "[33].

Saint Augustine himself was capable of such mystical flights as this,
and we may rightly attribute to him as to his contemporaries the concept
of the central importance of the Cross which Father Hugo Rahner beauti-
fully describes,

" The vision of the Christian mystic, illumined by faith, mounts upward
from the Cross on which the Creator and Logos died to the starry fir-
mament of Helios and Selene, penetrates the profoundest structure of
the cosmos, the structure of the human body, and even forms of the
everyday things that serve him ; and wherever he looks he sees the
form of the Cross imprinted on all things. It is as though the Cross
of his Lord had enchanted the whole world. For him the form of the
Cross is, first of all, the fundamental schema imprinted on the cosmos
by God (who from the very beginning looked secretly toward the coming
Cross of his Son) ; it is the structural law of the universe ; in Christian
eyes the two great celestial circles, the equator and ecliptic, which inter-
sect one another in the form of a horizontal X, and around which the
whole vault of the starry firmament moves in miraculous rhythm, are
the celestial crosses. Adapting an old Pythagorean notion, Plato had
written in the *Timaeus* of the world soul revealed in the celestial X ;
to the early Christians this was a pagan intimation of the world-build-

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33. *De Tempore Sermo CLXXXI*, 4, in vigilia Pentecostes de expositione symbol.,
Sermo I.

" Nam et ipsa crux magnum in se mysterium continet, cuius positio talis est,
ut superior pars caelos petat, inferior terras inhaereat. Fixa in infernorum ima
contingat, latitudo autem eius partes mundi appetat ; quia et Christus per passionem
crucis angelis profuit in caelo, quorum numerus quia per apostatam angelum immi-
nutus fuerat, ex animabus fidelium quotidie adimpletur, et nobis qui sumus in terra,
et illis qui propter originale peccatum detinebantur apud inferos, et ipsis qui in diver-
sis mundi partibus habitabant, jacens vero crux quatuor mundi partes appetit,
Orientem viz. et Occidentem, Aquilonem et Meridiem : quia Christus per passionem
suam omnes gentes ad se trahit. Et omnia sibi subiugavit, juxta quod ipse surgens
a mortuis dicit, Data est mihi omnis potestas in caelo et in terra ". Ed. Merlin
Nivellius, Parisiis, 1571, [X, 215, M ; 216 A.] The original of the sermon is here
given since it is not to be found in the Maurist edition (reprinted in *PL*) of the Saint's
works. Subsequent editors have apparently not been satisfied of its authenticity.

ing crucified Logos who encompasses the cosmos and causes it to revolve around the mystery of the Cross "[34].

Beautiful and profound as is Saint Augustine's thought, he does not leave off with the vision of the Cross and the Crucified Christ. The Sign of the Cross leads us immediately to the Sign of the Temple of the Apocalypse, the book of the final revelation made by God to man. In that temple are found four sides with three gates each (Apoc. XXI, 12, 13) which makes twelve its number, the number of the second half of the *De Civitate Dei* where the theme is the City of God, the Heavenly City, and the leit-motif is the Earthly City. The temple of the Apocalypse is the Risen, Glorified Body of Christ. The Cross is the way to that glory, the Crucified Christ rises into the Glorified Christ, and in the final vision of the Temple in the Apocalypse we find the Risen, Glorious City of God. Saint John in his Gospel prepares us for the Temple of the Apocalypse[35]. The Body of Christ, His flesh, is the Dwelling Place of God's Glory,

> (John, I, 14 : And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the Only-begotten of the Father) ;

upon Him ascend and descend the angels of God,

> (John, I, 51 : Amen, amen, I say to you, you shall see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man),

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34. *The Mysteries*, Bollingen Series XXX. 2, New York, 1955, p. 372. Father Rahner quotes Justin Martyr (*Apologia* I, 55, tr. E. R. Hardy) " 'Reflect on all things in the universe [and consider] whether they could be governed or held together in fellowship without this figure [the cross]. For the sea cannot be traversed unless the sign of victory, which is called a sail, remain fast in the ship ; the land is not plowed without it ; similarly diggers and mechanics do not do their work except with tools of this form. The human figure differs from the irrational animals precisely in this, that man stands erect and can stretch out his hands... Even your own symbols display the power of this figure — on the standards and trophies, with which you [heathen] make all your solemn professions' ". *Ibid.*, 377.

35. *Vide* Xavier Léon-Dufour, " Le Signe du Temple selon saint Jean ", *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, 39 (1951), 154-175, especially at 170, 171. The Joannine inspiration in the *dCD* has yet to be worked out.

The Mystical Temple in Jewish and Christian thought, is the theme of Yves M.-J. Congar, O.P., in *Le Mystère du Temple, ou l'Economie de la Présence de Dieu à la Créature de la Genèse a l'Apocalypse*, 22, Lectio Divina, Paris, 1958. Throughout the work, Father Congar's massive learning enables us to enter into understanding the ancient Christian thought, profound and today largely forgotten, of the relation of Christ and the Temple. The position suggested here is vindicated in P. I, c. IV, V ; P. II, c.I. How vividly aware of this St. Augustine was is brought out constantly in the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*. But the analogy between body and building was deep in antique thought : Vitruvius, *De Architectura*, III, 1, remarks : " For without symmetry and proportion no temple can have a regular plan ; that is, it must have an exact proportion worked out after the fashion of the members of a finely shaped human body ". [tr. by Frank Granger, New York, 1931, 1959] Christ's reference to destroying the temple must have been meaningful in this way to His hearers.

as they did upon Jacob's ladder ; in Him resides the Spirit

> (John I, 33 : He upon whom thou shalt see the spirit descending and remaining upon him, he it is that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit ; cf. III, 34 ; VII, 38 ; XIX, 30) ;

in Him the Father has manifested His name

> (John XVII, 26 : And I have made known thy name to them, and will make it known, that the love wherewith thou has loved me, may be in them, and I in them ; cf. 6) ;

in this temple all worshippers shall gather together

> (John XI, 51, 52 : And this he spoke not of himself, but being the high priest of that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation. And not only for the nation, but to gather together in one the children of God, that were dispersed) ;

in Him they shall be made one ;

> (John XVII, 23 : I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one) ;

in the sanctity of this temple all shall take part

> (John XVII, 19 : And for them I do sanctify myself, that they may also be sanctified in truth) ;

with Him shall the Father come, and in them Father and Son shall make their dwelling-place

> (John XIV, 23 : If any one love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, ond we will come to him, and will make our abode with him).

Saint Augustine becomes almost rhapsodic as he expresses this sacrificial unity :

> " This sacrament, this sacrifice, this priest, this God before that He was sent to come made of a woman ; all those sacred and mystical things which by angelic wonders appeared to our Fathers or that were done by [the Fathers] themselves, were images of Him, that every creature would in its works in some way speak of the One to come, in Whom would be the salvation of those who were to be restored from death. [Books I-X ;] For we had fallen away from the one and sovereign true God, rebounding and cacaphonous in the iniquity of impiety. It needed the will and command of a merciful God that the many would clamor for the One Who was to come.   Cried for by the many, the One was to come and the many were to bear witness that the One had come.   Lightened of the many, we were to come to the One.   [Books XI-XVIII ;] Our souls, dead in many sins, for sin to die in the flesh, we are to love the One Who without sin died in the flesh for us. [Books XIX-XXII ;] Believing in Him risen, with Him rising in spirit by faith, we are to be

> " justified being made one by the Just One. We are not to despair of
> rising in our very flesh, since we the many members were preceded by
> One Head. In Him, reconciled by the Mediator to God, now cleansed by
> faith, then by sight [to be] made whole, we will be gathered to the One,
> we will have our joy in the One, we will ever remain one "³⁶.

The Heavenly and Earthly Cities both continue in the world in the Cross
of Christ ; the Earthly City in the " man of sin ", the " son of perdition ",
who

> " opposeth and is lifted up above all that is God, so that he sitteth in
> the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God ... For the mystery of
> iniquity already worketh in him whose coming is according to the work-
> ing of Satan, in all power, and signs, and wonders, and in all seduction of
> iniquity to them that perish, because they receive not the love of the
> truth, that they might be saved ". [2 Thess. II, 3-7].

In the Heavenly City, for

> " we ought to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, beloved
> of God, for that God hath chosen you first fruits unto salvation, in
> sanctification of the spirit, and fruit of the truth : " [Ibid., 12].

in

> " the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from
> God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband ",

the

> " holy city of Jerusalem ... having twelve gates and in the gates twelve
> angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve
> tribes of the children of Israel ". [Apoc. XXI ; 2, 10, 12].

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36. *De Trinitate* IV, 7, 11 :

Hoc sacramentum, hoc sacrificium, hic sacerdos, hic Deus, antequam missus
veniret, factus ex femina, omnia quae sacrate atque mystice patribus nostris per
angelica miracula apparuerunt, sive quae per ipsos facta sunt, similitudines huius
fuerunt, ut omnis creatura factis quodam modo loqueretur unum futurum in quo
esset salus universorum a morte reparandorum. Quia enim ab uno vero Deo et
summo per impietatis iniquitatem resilientes et dissonantes defluxeramus, et evanue-
ramus in multa, discissi per multa et inhaerentes in multis ; oportebat nutu et imperio
Dei miserantis, ut ipsa multa venturum conclamarent unum ; et a multis conclama-
tus veniret unus, et multa contestarentur venisse unum ; et a multis exonerati
veniremus ad unum, et multis peccatis in anima mortui, et propter peccatum in
carne morituri, amaremus sine peccato mortuum in carne pro nobis unum ; et in
resuscitatum credentes, et cum illo per fidem spiritu resurgentes, iustificaremur
in uno iusto facti unum : nec in ipsa carne nos resurrecturos desperaremus, cum
multa membra intueremur praecessisse nos caput unum ; in quo nunc per fidem
mundati, et tunc per speciem redintegrati, et per Mediatorem Deo reconciliati
haereamus uni, fruamur uno, permaneamus unum. *Cf. dCD*, X, 6 ; XIX, 23.

Here is the Cross of Christ,

> " in the midst of the street thereof ... the tree of life, yielding its fruits
> every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.
> And there shall be no curse any more, but the throne of God and of
> the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him ". [Ibid. xxII ;
> 2, 3].

With David and Lactantius, Saint Augustine in the *De Civitate Dei* sang,
" The Lord hath reigned from the tree ", *Dominus regnavit a ligno*[37].

In the mystery of the Crucified Christ is to be understood historical
humanity. The contradiction of Sin and Love, is resolved in Him who,
as Lactantius sang, " *Regnavit a ligno* ", reigned from the tree. In Christ
on the Cross meet the Heavenly and the Earthly Cities, the Earthly
City led captive by Him who " *Ascendens in altum, captivam duxit capti-
vitatem* ", " rising on high, led captivity captive ". [Eph. IV, 8] The
Crucified Christ by whom " was made everything that was made, and
without whom was made nothing that was made ", [John I, 3] contains
within Himself and in His human form on the tree signifies the unity
of the *quadripartitus mundus*, the four parts of the world, angels and
men, in this life and in eternity.

Thus the logical and rhetorical unity of the *De Civitate Dei*, long not
admitted in modern times, is not its only unity. We may now under-
stand better the power the work has possessed over some of the finest
minds the world has ever known. Charlemagne's biographer Einhard
tells us of the " delight " he took " ... in the books of Saint Augustine,
and especially those which are entitled the City of God ". The powerful
old warrior against Saxon and Moslem heathen must have appreciated
the polemic against the Gods, perhaps even drew strenght from it. What
thoughts passed in his mind when the Saint discoursed on Alexander,
Theodosius and Constantine ? Many centuries after both Saint and
Emperor, a mind much more kindred to Saint Augustine's — Saint
Thomas More — after he was " ... made and accompted a worthy utter

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37. Saint Augustine would have appreciated the words which his contemporary,
Saint Paulinus of Nola, wished to be affixed to the walls of his " little basilica ",
basilicula ; he built it as a shrine to Saint Felix, who later was forgotten ; and Saint
Paulinus after burial there himself came to be its center of veneration :
  Sanctorum labor et merces sibi rite cohaerent
  Ardua crux pretiumque crucis sublime corona
  Ipsa Deus nobis princeps crucis atque coronae
  Inter floriferi coeleste nemus paradisi
  Sub cruce sanguinea niveo stat Christus in agno
  Agnus ut innocua iniusto datus hostia letho.
  Epist. XXXII, 17, *PL* 61, 339 ; *vide* the discussion by H. Leclercq in *Dictionnaire
d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, I, 2697, Paris, 1907. Here is evidence of the
spiritual and intellectual context into which in the minds of his contemporaries
Saint Augustine insinuated the cruciform structure of the *dCD*.

barrister... [T]o his great commendation, he read for a good space a public lecture of Saint Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, in the Church of Saint Lawrence in the old Jewry, whereunto there resorted Doctor Grocyn, an excellent cunning man, and all the chief learned of the City of London "[38]. Unfortunately for us, Renaissance Englishmen did not leave us their notes.

Even the pagan rationalist of the Englightenment Edward Gibbon pays his tribute in words which recognize in the Saint's work the quality which makes his own *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* one of the world's greatest historical ventures. He grudges, but admits,

> " [Saint Augustine's] ... learning was too often borrowed, and his arguments are too often his own ; but the whole work claims the merit of a magnificent design, vigorously and not unskillfully executed "[39].

Gibbon may have had in mind the theological design that Father Portalié wrote of when he related the *De Civitate Dei* to the *Confessions* :

> " The *Confessions* are theology as experienced in one soul and the history of God's action in individuals ; the *De Civitate Dei* is theology as living in the historical framework of humanity and explains the action of God in the world [40].

If so, it seems that the *De Trinitate*, wherein the Saint treats of the life of God in Himself, must be added to the " magnificent design ". Then the Saint may be credited with having given the world the most extensive and humane theology it has yet seen ; Saint Thomas was to subsume much of it into his scientific theology. Thus some account may be given for the perennial lure of the *De Civitate Dei*.

<div align="right">Joseph A. McCALLIN.</div>

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38. *Vide* any standard edition of the *Vita Caroli Magni*, 24 ; for St. Thomas More, the *Life of Sir Thomas More* by his son-in-law, William Roper, edited by R.S. Sylvester and D.P. Harding, New Haven, 1962, 198.

39. *Vide* Vol. III, chapter XXVII, n. 79, of any standard edition. Gibbon pays his tribute in a footnote. Perhaps no other instance is known to us of an historian who wrote, unconscious apparently, that his positions had been refuted before he made them ; certainly St. Augustine had shown the true causes of Rome's misfortunes and thus exonerated Christianity. Gibbon is incomprehending of St. Augustine's attitude to the Empire.

40. Eugène Portalié, S.J., *A Guide to the Thought of St Augustine*, trans. by Ralph J. Bastian, S.J., Chicago, 1960, 46. This is a translation of the article in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, I ; *vide* cols. 2290, 2291. Martin Versfeld advances a profound, original view of the relationship of the three works in his article " St. Augustine as Psychotherapist ", *Blackfriars*, XLV, March, 1964, 98-111.