



RECOVERING POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

VERITAS

Self and City in the Thought of Saint Augustine

BEN HOLLAND

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Recovering Political Philosophy

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Timothy W. Burns

Baylor University

Waco, TX, USA

Thomas L. Pangle

University of Texas at Austin

Austin, TX, USA

Postmodernism's challenge to the possibility of a rational foundation for and guidance of our political lives has provoked a searching re-examination of the works of past political philosophers. The re-examination seeks to recover the ancient or classical grounding for civic reason and to clarify the strengths and weaknesses of modern philosophic rationalism. This series responds to this ferment by making available outstanding new scholarship in the history of political philosophy, scholarship that is inspired by the rediscovery of the diverse rhetorical strategies employed by political philosophers. The series features interpretive studies attentive to historical context and language, and to the ways in which censorship and didactic concern impelled prudent thinkers, in widely diverse cultural conditions, to employ manifold strategies of writing, strategies that allowed them to aim at different audiences with various degrees of openness to unconventional thinking. Recovering Political Philosophy emphasizes the close reading of ancient, medieval, early modern and late modern works that illuminate the human condition by attempting to answer its deepest, enduring questions, and that have (in the modern periods) laid the foundations for contemporary political, social, and economic life. The editors encourage manuscripts from both established and emerging scholars who focus on the careful study of texts, either through analysis of a single work or through thematic study of a problem or question in a number of works.

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Ben Holland
School of Politics and International Relations
University of Nottingham
Nottingham, UK

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For Gary

SERIES EDITORS' PREFACE

Palgrave's *Recovering Political Philosophy* series was founded with an eye to postmodernism's challenge to the possibility of a rational foundation for and guidance of our political lives. This invigorating challenge has provoked a searching re-examination of classic texts, not only of political philosophers, but of poets, artists, theologians, scientists, and other thinkers who may not be regarded conventionally as political theorists. The series publishes studies that endeavor to take up this re-examination and thereby help to recover the classical grounding for civic reason, as well as studies that clarify the strengths and the weaknesses of modern philosophic rationalism. The interpretative studies in the series are particularly attentive to historical context and language, and to the ways in which both censorial persecution and didactic concerns have impelled prudent thinkers, in widely diverse cultural conditions, to employ manifold strategies of writing—strategies that allowed them to aim at different audiences with various degrees of openness to unconventional thinking. The series offers close readings of ancient, medieval, early modern and late modern works that illuminate the human condition by attempting to answer its deepest, enduring questions, and that have (in the modern periods) laid the foundations for contemporary political, social, and economic life.

Ben Holland's *Self and City in the Thought of Saint Augustine* is the first book in this series to explore the political thought of St. Augustine. Holland argues that Augustine develops not two but three analogies between the human self and the city: the Earthly City, ordered by self-love; the (hitherto neglected) Pilgrim City (or the Church), ordered by divided but improving love; and the City of God, ordered by wholehearted

love of others and of God. Holland first offers an overview of Augustine's Christian ontology—particularly the dependence of all beings on God and their unity, peace, and hierarchy—as a preparation for understanding his anthropological and political theories. These theories are then spelled out, beginning with an elaboration of Augustine's teaching concerning the fall of Adam as a proud failure to depend on God, the punishment for which is more of the same: the self's bent, restless concupiscence and futile desire for earthly dominion and self-possession. The Earthly City, in its pretense of conformity to natural order and control, is the sad result. The Pilgrim City, by contrast, is characterized by human selves who use their free will to lovingly pursue genuine goods—to pursue above all, through divine grace, God. In the account of this city, argues Holland, is found the Augustinian republic, in its truest form. Finally, the self-as-saint comes into view in the social state of the City of God, or heavenly city, where the human mind is entirely caught up in contemplation of God, and all saved souls, together with their resurrected bodies, are finally joined together as the mystical body of Christ, in a return to the original, properly ordered peace of the universe.

Waco, TX
Austin, TX

Timothy W. Burns
Thomas L. Pangle

PREFACE

This book has a major thematic continuity with my last (and first), *The Moral Person of the State: Pufendorf, Sovereignty and Composite Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2017). There, I took as my theme the parallels between person and state that were developed in a good deal of political theory in early modern Europe—most interestingly and influentially by Thomas Hobbes and then Samuel Pufendorf. Here, I explore much the same analogy but in the earlier period of late antiquity, focusing on the writings of Saint Augustine of Hippo. I chose to write on what I call Augustine’s ‘anthropological analogy’ in part because it became clear to me that it had received scant attention. There was a gap, I decided, and I thought that I might be well-placed to attempt to fill it. So much for why I determined on writing the book: an academic has to write, and this seemed like the right project at the right time. But what really motivated me to come to Augustine, however, wasn’t so much the writing but the *reading* that I wanted to do. I didn’t know much about Augustine, but I knew that he has sometimes been credited (inaccurately, as it turns out) with inventing the concept of the human will, even an entirely new conception of human personhood, and having spent a lot of time working on the intellectual history of will and personhood I resolved that I couldn’t remain quite so ignorant for much longer. Furthermore, the self/city analogy is a favourite topic, but I’m fascinated in a more general way by the metaphors and analogies by which human beings have attempted to make sense of the world for themselves and for others, metaphors and analogies which have histories of their own, but which are so rarely taken up as topics in their own right by historians of ideas. And I knew that one

of the things that Augustine is sometimes said to be at least partly responsible for is an ‘analogical’ conception of being. I wanted to know more. Finally, I have a strong interest in the theological imagination, and the fundamental challenges posed by a theological attitude to both historical and political thinking. Who better to read? And I’m so pleased that I did.

For the very thin reason that Augustine goes much further back than the seventeenth century, the present book is more ‘historical’ than the previous one. But that is a pretty attenuated sense of the historical. For the most part, this is a different kind of book, not really intellectual history at all as I had come to understand and even practise it. It has too little to say about Augustine’s historical context for that. It says hardly anything about his contemporaries and about the pressing questions that they were asking and answering. I don’t have the necessary skills to do that kind of work on Augustine’s context. Nor is it philosophy, as I am not especially interesting in investigating the coherence, truth or falsity of what Augustine had to say. I have simply tried to reconstruct some of Augustine’s arguments, to connect things together, to map out the mind of the man as far as I was able to in order to bring into clearer relief the analogy between self and city than had been done hitherto, and to understand this in terms of the wider context of his own thinking on various of the many issues on which he wrote. I’ve written the book relatively quickly and very much at the outer edges of my own understanding of the material, never feeling completely in control of it or my own words about it. My own intentions have been somewhat overtaken by the product itself, and I have sensed it in a strange way speaking back (normally to tell me that something or other isn’t working). This has, if nothing else, taught me one or two things about authorial intentions. More than that, it has been an enjoyable little book to write—much more gratifying in many ways than co-authoring something with previous incarnations of oneself, as Catharine MacKinnon appositely characterised the process of working on a text over a long gestation period in the preface to her *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State*.

About two-thirds of the book was drafted during a period of research leave granted to me during the first semester of the 2017–18 academic year. My first thanks must go to my friends and colleagues in the School of Politics and International Relations at the University of Nottingham, many of whom certainly shouldered other burdens in order graciously to afford their workmate that precious time to read, think and write—activities which seem increasingly impossible to do properly in the day-to-day hurly-burly of academia. My colleagues also indulged me on two occasions

when I presented to them parts of the text, and I'm grateful for their questions, suggestions and friendly criticisms.

I feel very fortunate for other reasons to have ended up writing this book at this particular university. Owing in large part to John Milbank's continued presence as Emeritus Professor of Religion, Politics and Ethics, Augustine sometimes seems to be in the air that one breathes on campus, and that has often kept me interested and energised. Perhaps my greatest debt of gratitude is to someone whom I have never met. The Hallward Library is exceptionally well-stocked with books on Augustine by virtue of the fact that the late Robert A. Markus purchased and donated new copies of so many of these texts to the University, even long after he retired from his post as Professor of Medieval History. I doubt that I could measure the impact that his generosity, institutional loyalty and commitment to the future of learning and scholarship has had on my writing.

At Palgrave Macmillan, I would like to thank Michelle Chen and John Stegner for their enthusiasm and efficiency. Two anonymous reviewers went far beyond the call of duty in providing comprehensive, challenging and constructive criticism of an earlier draft of the text. They enabled me to produce a better book than I could ever have written on my own—although of course its present disorders, deficiencies and perversions are all my own fault, as Augustine would have insisted. I am obliged to Timothy W. Burns and Thomas L. Pangle for admitting this book into their series. Philippa Jevons prepared the index, for which I am most appreciative.

I would like to thank Cecilia Lawrence and David Richards for allowing me to include in this book reproductions of their original artworks. My best friend Matthew Richards organised the latter. For that, for helping to get me interested in Iris Murdoch and for much else besides, it is appropriate to record a message of thanks to him here.

It is a pleasure to dedicate this book, which is more about love than I imagined it would be when I began it, with love, to my husband, Gary Smith.

Nottingham, UK

Ben Holland

CONVENTIONS

TRANSLATIONS

I have greatly benefitted from the many English translations of a variety of Augustine's texts. These have been made by several hands in a range of contexts, each translator having his or her own policies and peculiarities. Please note that I have sometimes silently altered quoted passages in the text to ensure consistency. My procedure has been:

- a. To capitalise all pronouns referring to God;
- b. To capitalise the initial letters of the English translations of the names of the eschatological cities (i.e. the Earthly City, the City of Man, the Heavenly City, the City of God);
- c. Consistently to capitalise 'Trinity';
- d. To anglicise any American-English spellings;
- e. To modify punctuation so that it accords with the conventions adopted for the text as a whole (e.g. using single quotation marks, placing full stops outside quotation marks, generally avoiding the use of the serial comma);
- f. To use '-ise' rather than '-ize' spellings;
- g. To use 'judgment' rather than 'judgement'.

BIBLICAL QUOTATIONS

My own biblical quotations are from the New International Version. When quoting Augustine's own frequent biblical references, however, I have left the scriptural part of the quotation as I have found it.

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ABBREVIATIONS

In order to ease referencing, citations to Augustine's own works appear parenthetically in the text itself. The following abbreviations are used. In each case I also list the English translation of which I have made use. Dates in square brackets indicate the year(s) of composition. Where occasionally I made use of or reference to an alternative translation, these are mentioned in the footnotes and full bibliographical information for that edition is provided in the Bibliography. The texts listed below are not inventoried there for a second time.

- Bapt. c. Don.* *De baptismo contra Donatistas* [400–401]
 On Baptism against the Donatists, trans. J. R. King (London: Aeterna Press, 2014)
- C. Duas. Pel.* *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum* [ca. 420]
 ‘Answer to the Two Letters of the Pelagians’, in *Answer to the Pelagians*, vol. 2, trans. Roland J. Teske (New York: New City Press, 1998)
- C. Iul* *Contra Iulianum* [ca. 421]
 Against Julian, trans. Matthew A. Schumacher (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1957)
- C. Sec. Man.* *Contra Secundinum Mancichaeum* [ca. 404]
 ‘Answer to Secundinus, a Manichean’, in *The Manichean Debate*, trans. Roland Teske (New York: New City Press, 2006)
- Civ. Dei* *De civitate Dei contra paganos* [413–427]
 Concerning the City of God against the Pagans, trans. Henry Bettenson (London: Penguin, 1972)

- Conf.* *Confessiones* [397–401]
Confessions, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992)
- Cons. ev.* *De consensu evangeliorum* [405]
The Harmony of the Gospels, trans. S. D. F. Salmond (New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1888)
- Cor. Don.* *De correctione Donatistarum* [ca. 417]
‘A Treatise concerning the Correction of the Donatists’, trans. J. R. King, in *The Writings Against the Manicheans and Against the Donatists*, ed. Philip Schaff (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996)
- Div. qu.* *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus* [388–395]
‘Miscellany of Eighty-Three Questions’, in *Responses to Miscellaneous Questions*, trans. Boniface Ramsey (New York: New City Press, 2008)
- Doc. Chr.* *De doctrina Christiana* [ca. 395 and 426]
Teaching Christianity, trans. Edmund Hill (New York: New City Press, 1996)
- En. Ps.* *Enarrationes in Psalmos* [392–ca. 418]
Expositions of the Psalms, trans. Maria Boulding, 6 vols. (New York: New City Press, 2000–04)
- Ench.* *Enchiridion* [ca. 419–422]
Manual to Laurentius concerning Faith, Hope and Charity, trans. Ernest Evans (London: SPCK, 1953)
- Ep.* *Epistulae* [386–430]
Letters, trans. Wilfrid Parsons, 5 vols. (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1951–56)
- Ep.** *Epistulae* [ca. 415–430]
Letters, trans. Robert B. Eno (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1989) [These are translations of letters discovered by Johannes Divjak in 1969]
- Ex. ep. Rom.* *Expositio quarundam propositionum ex Epistula Apostoli ad Romanos* [394–395]
Augustine on Romans: Propositions from the Epistle to the Romans and Unfinished Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, trans. Paula Frederiksen Landes (New York: Society of Biblical Literature, 1982)
- Fid. rer.* *De fide rerum quae non videntur* [ca. 420–425]
‘Faith in the Unseen’, trans. Michael G. Campbell, in *On Christian Belief*, ed. Michael Fiedrowicz (New York: New City Press, 2005)
- Gn. adv. Man.* *De Genesi adversus Manichaeos* [ca. 388–90]
‘On Genesis: A Refutation of the Manichees’, in *On Genesis*, trans. Edmund Hill (New York: New City Press, 2002)

- Gn. litt.* *De Genesi ad litteram* [ca. 400–414]
 ‘The Literal Meaning of Genesis’, in *On Genesis*, trans. Edmund Hill (New York: New City Press, 2002)
- Gr. Chr.* *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali* [418]
The Grace of Christ and Original Sin, in *Answer to the Pelagians*, vol 1, trans. Roland J. Teske (New York: New City Press, 1997)
- Jo. ep. tr.* *Tractatus in epistulam Iohannis ad Parthos* [407]
Homilies on the First Epistle of John, trans. Daniel E. Doyle and Thomas Martin (New York: New City Press, 2008)
- Jo. ev. tr.* *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* [ca. 408–420]
Tractates on the Gospel of John, trans. John W. Rettig, 5 vols. (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1988–95)
- Lib. arb.* *De libero arbitrio* [387–396]
 ‘On the Free Choice of the Will’, in *On the Free Choice of the Will, On Grace and Free Choice, and Other Writings*, trans. Peter King (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)
- Mag.* *De magistro* [389]
 ‘The Teacher’ in *The Teacher; The Free Choice of the Will; Grace and Free Will*, trans. Robert P. Russell (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1968)
- Mor.* *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum* [388]
The Catholic and Manichean Ways of Life, trans. Donald A. Gallagher and Idella J. Gallagher (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1966)
- Mus.* *De musica* [ca. 387]
On Music, trans. Ludwig Schopp (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1947)
- Nat. bon.* *De natura boni contra Manichaeos* [399]
 ‘The Nature of the Good’, in *The Manichean Debate*, ed. Roland Teske (New York: New City Press, 2006)
- Nat. grac.* *De natura et gratia, contra Pelagium* [415]
 ‘Nature and Grace’, in *Answer to the Pelagians* vol. 1, trans. Roland J. Teske (New York: New City Press, 1997)
- Pecc. mer.* *De peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo parvulorum* [411–412]
 ‘On the Punishment and Forgiveness of Sins and the Baptism of Little Ones’, in *Answer to the Pelagians*, vol. 1, trans. Roland J. Teske (New York: New City Press, 1997)

- S. Dom. mon.* *De sermone Domini in monte* [393]
Commentary on the Lord's Sermon on the Mount, trans. Denis J. Kavanagh (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2010)
- Serm.* *Sermones*
Sermons, trans. Edmund Hill, 11 vols. (New York: New City Press, 1990–97)
- Simpl.* *Ad Simplicianum* [396]
'Miscellany of Questions in Response to Simplician', in *Responses to Miscellaneous Questions*, trans. Boniface Ramsey (New York: New City Press, 2008)
- Trin.* *De Trinitate* [399-ca.420]
The Trinity, trans. Edmund Hill (New York: New City Press, 1991)
- Ver. rel.* *De vera religione* [390]
'True Religion', trans. Edmund Hill, in *On Christian Belief*, ed. Michael Fiedrowicz (New York: New City Press, 2005)

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