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THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF TREATISE "THE CITY OF GOD" BY AURELIUS AUGUSTINE

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ABSTRACT:
The purpose of the study is to rediscover the heritage of Augustine. The study of the heritage of Aurelius Augustine today is relevant for such disciplines as theology, political science, sociology, philosophy, etc. The main plots of his works is a model of discourse about the main subjects of Western civilization. Despite the fact that Augustine is a Christian writer, the meanings that he expresses seem to be universal for understanding the various processes taking place in society.

A methodology is the set of methods that made it possible to conduct this study. First of all, the historical-genetic method was used, which allowed to carry out a historical analysis of events that were synchronous with the writing of the work "The City of God" and influenced Augustine as a citizen and thinker. The comparative method made it possible to draw parallels with certain events and to conduct a comparative analysis of the main topics and subjects of study.

Augustine connected historical events to theological and socio-political themes that, based on contemporary issues, made Augustine one of the leading authors of late antiquity in the transition to the Middle Ages. The concept of the City of God made it possible to find the main signs of building a state on those principles that could do without pagan appeals and idolatry. We can say that Augustine was one of the first to understand that the state is based on understandable principles that go back not only to antiquity, but also to modern times.

This study can be used in the research of such subjects as state and law, philosophy, political science, sociology, etc. The study provides a consistent interpretation of the basic concepts of building a state, which can become a methodological basis for further work on this topic. The preparation of special courses and some questions of the basic courses can also be a positive result of this research.

For the first time, this work analyzes the foundations of the concept of the kingdom of God as a city that finds itself on earth in real historical conditions. Its main elements are interpreted as "building blocks" for creating a program of social cohesion and mutual understanding based on

certain principles. The ancient philosophical opposition of soul and body took the form of two cities in the discourse of Augustine – the city of God and the city of the earth. This is the first generalization of this kind, which applies to the whole world and its understanding occurs not only in the context of theology, but also in the context of other disciplines. Since the social world develops in the logic of forecasting and its implementation, Augustine's treatise will remain relevant for a long time. His treatise is universal.

INTRODUCTION

Augustine (354 – 430), bishop of Hippo, was an orator by education. Using certain techniques and methods of the ancient art of persuasion, he tried to teach his readers and listeners, and not harm them, bearing in mind the Roman proverb "littera docet, littera nocet". These rhetorical tropes, like ancient philosophical ideas, can be seen from Augustine's treatise "De civitate Dei", "The City of God". However, the motivation for writing this work lay in a different plane.

Augustine did not accidentally write the treatise "The City of God". The immediate cause for discussion of this issue was the sack of Rome by Alaric I, king of the Visigoths in 410, and the anti-Christian accusations made by the pagans as a result of this historic catastrophe. Augustine intended to show the pagans that their anti-Christian invectives, accusing Christians of the fall of Rome, were unfounded, and that it was in Christianity that they could find a solution to many of them. He described their own moral and religious problems.

On the other hand, the Bishop of Hippo wanted to provide Christians with appropriate arguments to refute the accusations of the pagans and make them rejoice in the plan of salvation for mankind. Augustine also raised a similar theme in some of his other sermons.

Most likely, the general outline of the program laid down in De Civitate Dei was already determined when Augustine began to write.

On August 24, 410, the Visigoths, led by Alaric, entered Rome, remaining there for plunder for several days. This event has modest significance among the military disasters of the late empire, but it was too obvious a symbol for contemporaries to consider it from any balanced point of view. The disproportionate exclamations of sorrow are perhaps better known than they deserve; there are no other immediate reactions. All major historical sources for these events date back to later years, when the events of that week became the subject of controversy. How serious this disaster really was cannot be said with certainty. It is safe to assume that there was death and destruction, fire and robbery, as well as other elements of the invasion.

Augustine's first known reaction to these events was when he was preaching at Hippo in 410. This text gives few details about the looting (Bonner G., 1986). Augustine himself seems to be undecided and preaches on the assumption that the damage to the city could be significant. He makes no mention of what would later become the centerpiece of his defense – that refugees were granted asylum in basilicas outside the city. Refugees were already arriving in Africa at that time, But Augustine's answer is this. He outlined a theme of citizenship and pilgrimage. Some of his rhetorical devices, characterizing the pagan gods of Rome, reproach the Romans for not being able to save their first homeland, Troy, and Sallust and Virgil are quoted to bring the matter to an end. In other words, anxiety is in the

air, and Augustine is moving quickly to offer Christians a line to take; here he shows no sign of sharing an extreme emotional reaction. These events entail for Augustine, as always, a threat to Christianity in the field of ideas and ideology; the material threat to the stability of the Roman regime is a secondary concern. The answer is given in an appropriately exalted tone, backed by secular and sacred knowledge and calm reflection.

The second sermon (Augustine Aurelius, 2000) dates differently to the end of 410 and the summer of 411. It is in many ways reminiscent of the first, although, apparently, it was preached at the time when the true dimensions of the catastrophe became known. Until now, there is no mention of victims taking refuge in the basilicas, although there are other special facts of this kind that appear in conversations. It is not true, he argues, that once the old gods were abandoned, Rome was taken: Radagais was a pagan and a sacrifice, but he was rejected (in 402), while the Visigoths of Alaric, although not Catholics, were Christians. Christians suffered in isolation, but they knew how to endure their suffering.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Thus, a year after this event, Augustine was still not sufficiently aware of the events that had taken place and, although he was concerned about defending Christianity from accusatory murmur, he did not touch his pen on this topic. The fourth sermon (Garnsey P., 1996) concludes the list with its public reaction. This is Augustine's most concentrated homiletic appeal to an environment marked by a growing concern to explain the suffering of Christians. The text of the sermon is a dispute between Abraham and God about the fate of Sodom and the subsequent deal, according to which God would have spared the city if there were at least ten righteous people in it. Were not there ten righteous men in Rome among so many Christians? This is the question people have asked. After all, Rome was not consumed by fire like Sodom. This sermon is marked by stronger expressions of grief and sympathy than previous ones; but these expressions bear the imprint of rhetorical calculation, as if Augustine now feels that in order to express his point of view, he must insist on the depth of his own feelings, and earlier this did not correspond to his point of view. At the same time, this sermon does not have any apparatus of scholarly classical quotation of the earlier ones and is directed against a special kind of malcontents who at least know the Sacred Writings, even if their attitude towards it is not what Augustine would have liked.

There is no sign of panic here either in Augustine or in his flock. The energy expended by Augustine to refute the criticism of the church increases over time (although the threat of the Visigoths noticeably weakened with the death of Alaric and the movement of his troops to Gaul and Spain – they were in Gaul by the beginning of 412). His audience is always his own flock, and his concern seems to grow as criticism comes from closer people – from those who read Writings, and not just from polite pagans who mocked Christianity from afar. Thus, there is little reason to believe that it would have been written if everything had remained, as it was a year after the sack of Rome: the rhetorical opportunity that disaster presented could be neglected. But then Augustine was approached privately, which caused his pen to move with great ambition.

In the spring of 411, the imperial commissioner Marcellinus (330 – 395) arrived in Carthage to preside over the Council of Catholic and Donatist bishops held in

June 411 (Klein E., 2019). Donatist controversy occupied the main place in Augustine's consciousness during these months. The successful outcome of the Council was the only goal towards which its efforts were directed. The results of the conference were quite satisfactory for him: Marcellinus gained everything he could hope for as an imperial representative, for he was not only a skillful government official, but also a devout Christian and adherent of Orthodoxy, both by conviction and habit. In September 411, Augustine returned to Hippon from Carthage, having stayed there for about a year; from this period, an indicative correspondence between the bishop and the commissioner begins.

While A. was in the country in the winter of 410-411, recovering from an illness, one refugee from Rome passed through Hippon, with whom it was useful for Augustine to meet: Pelagius. His journey through Africa on his way to the Holy Land caused a lively debate that reached Augustine through Marcellinus. He set about refuting the main claims of Pelagius, which later became known as the Pelagian heresy.

Rufius Antonius Agrypius Volusianus (lived in the 5th century), once the proconsul of Africa, later the prefect of Rome and the praetorian prefect of Italy, the scion of a venerable family, and he was not completely Christian, joined in this conversation. His mother was Christian, as was Volusiana's niece, the wonderful Melania the youngest. It is customary to say directly that Volusian was a pagan; however, he was baptized only on his deathbed in 437 in Constantinople, and even then at the urgent demand of Melania. On a purely pagan side, Rutilius Namatianus was his friend and spoke of him with love. However, in his time there were many people of such a position as Volusianus, whose devotion did not fit into one of two categories. Nothing prevents us from considering Volusianus a mildly interested, politely evasive figure not unlike Augustine in 385, who used his catechumen status to advance his career and attended Ambrose's sermons out of curiosity and prudence.

Augustine wrote to Volusianus in late 411 or early 412 (Brown P., 1967) at the request of Volusianus' mother, inviting him to discuss his difficulties in matters of religion. Volusianus answered (Maiorov G.G., 1979) with exquisite politeness, referring to Augustine. He recounted a recent conversation between friends about rhetoric, poetry, philosophy, and theology (Volusianus cautiously flatters Augustine's supposed interest in each of these subjects). The group broke up when one unnamed person raised shocking questions about the life of Christ: the virgin birth, the weakness of the man Jesus, and the insignificance of the miracles performed by Jesus. All of these objections are presented delicately. The other participants are too humble to offer answers, and Volusianus decides to address the puzzles to Augustine.

Marcellinus must have taken part in this conversation. He wrote at the same time (Brown P., 1967), justifying the shyness of Volusianus, who is afraid to write whatever he wants to ask. (The questions that Volusianus attributed to someone in the group were most likely his own, whether he voiced them or not). Marcellinus describes Volusianus as a person who is in danger of being lost to Christianity: these are the people who rely in the struggle against Christianity on the works of Apollonius of Tyana (1 BC – 98 AD), whose life was translated into Latin twenty years earlier by the pagan prefect Flavian). Hence the criticism expressed (Gadzhikurbanov G.A., 1979) of the miracles of Jesus: worthy pagans performed

greater deeds than these few healings. It is Marcellinus who now draws Augustine's attention to the objection that worries Volusianus most of all: the teaching of Christianity about turning the other cheek is incompatible with the government of the republic.

During the discussion of these questions, one of Augustine's wealthy neighbors was also present, who ironically praised him, saying that he could not answer the questions posed. It is in such people – polite, self-righteous – that Christianity can only be in name, but such objections have had the greatest influence on the laity. It was for them that Marcellinus turned to Augustine for help.

Augustine responded in kind to Volusianus and Marcellinus. Particularly important topics are beginning to appear with him. The answer to Marcellinus (Brown P., 1967) more clearly echoes the doctrines and rhetorical tricks already used in the sermons about the sack of Rome.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Augustine began writing "De Civitate Dei" between August 410 and September 413 AD and completed it between 426 and 427. Therefore, it took him 13-14 years to complete the treatise (Harrison C., 2000). Structurally De Civitate Dei can be divided into two parts:

I. controversy refuting anti-Christian accusations made by pagans: books 1-10;
II. presentation and defense of Christian doctrine: (books 11-22), five sections (I. Social failure of paganism: books 1-5; II. spiritual failure of paganism: books 6-10; III. origin of two states: books 11-14; IV. history of two states: books 16-18; appointment of two states: books 19-22) and 22 books.

In De civitate dei, Augustine uses the theological method by which he wanted to openly and conclusively demonstrate the originality of Christian teaching. Christian teaching stems from the authority of the Bible, which Augustine applies to the Church in accordance with the regula fidei – the Christian has unshakable faith and trust in the Church.

At the same time, Augustine tried to carefully and thoroughly use these aspects of earlier ancient teachings, which were true and significant from a Christian point of view (praising heroes who embody Roman moral virtues, such as the commander Marcus Atilius Regulus, the consul Publius Cornelius Scipio Nazica, the commander Marcus Furius Camillus, commander Publius Cornelius Scipio. This contributed to the fact that in these texts there was a glorification of the laws of the Roman Empire, as well as the praise of works of art, writers and scientists.

At the same time, the Bishop of Hippo tried very hard to prove that Christian teachings do not contradict, but, on the contrary, improve the true and significant ancient teachings and became a new synthesis of ancient freedom in the spirit of Christian love. According to Augustine, we can talk about the threefold synthesis of knowledge, virtue and peace. The synthesis of knowledge consists in explaining the beginning of the world and its ultimate goal; explanation of creation, the problem of cognition / enlightenment; the problem of love / blessing and an explanation for the problem of evil. The synthesis of virtues consists in explaining the meaning of Christian virtue and its integrity through the divine gift of grace, which is the opposite of Roman virtue, entangled in vices, and the

absence of reference to God and the eternal values of the latter. The synthesis of the world explains the concept of a perfect world. Its conditioning consists in the inner change of a person by grace, which transforms him and leads to final victory and immortality, which is equivalent to a blissful state. Thanks to these syntheses, Christian teaching presents to the world a divine vision of the history of mankind, thus solving many problems previously proposed by the ancient philosophers, but which either remained unresolved or erroneous explanations were given. According to Augustine, a new culture was born with Christianity, with new wisdom and a new interpretation of life and history, therefore, neither Manichaeism (Mayorov G.G., 1979) nor Platonism are a suitable key to the interpretation of Augustine's City of God.

The interpretation of the "City of God" is of particular importance. The language used by the Manichaeans to designate the two cities resembles Augustine's at a nominal level. However, it is worth remembering, that although Mani and Augustine refer to the same Bible passage, their interpretation is different. First of all, the Manicheans believed in metaphysical dualism, which Augustine categorically rejected, for example, in his doctrine of the creation of the world, on the concept of evil, through an emphasis on the innate goodness of all creation. For Augustine, in his assessment of the true value of philosophical principles, it was essential not to renounce the authority of Christ (Augustine Aurelius, 2000). Following this fundamental principle, Augustine rejected the neoplatonic practices of pagan worship, pagan contemplation of lesser gods, and the theory of emanation.

He reflected on the world, on the necessity of creation, on the eternity of creation in the human race and on the soul in the human race, on the eternity of the soul and its metempsychosis, on the relationship between soul and body as a punishment for the fall. Augustine borrowed the following concepts from the Platonic and Neoplatonic doctrines: the idea of philosophy is defined as "love of wisdom", a double object of philosophy: God, as well as souls and their spirituality, the idea of God as the cause of creation, the light of knowledge and the order of good (Reversov I.P., 2002). The idea of philosophy as love for wisdom brings it closer to religion, where God is wisdom, and therefore, generally speaking, here philosophy becomes love for God.

The vision of the city of God stems from Augustine's interpretation of the Bible. In his opinion, the Bible depicts the story of the revelation of God's salvation for humanity. For this reason, in De civitate Dei, the controversy between Augustine and the Manichaeans or Donatists should only be read in the context of his other writings. This is because in De civitate Dei, Augustine paints an excess spiritual vision.

The Bishop of Hippo read the Holy Scriptures from a Christological point of view. According to Augustine, Christ is the principle of enlightenment and the principle of unification. He ushers in the beginning and end of history. In the context of world history, Christ is presented in De civitate Dei as a reference point for all goods and as a source of value for the things of this world (an argument against the pagans who argued the opposite, De civitate Dei Bk. 1-5). Christ is also portrayed as a mediator and means of universal salvation (contrary to pagan theology and pagan references to theurgy, De civitate Dei, v. 6-10). Christ is also the founder of the City of God, and Christ is the fulfillment of Old Testament

prophecies. Finally, Christ is the resurrection, the judge and source of happiness for the redeemed/blessed.

RESULTS

In his picture of a perfect city that wanders the earth and has its true dominion in heaven, Augustine in his own way refers to an ancient idea known from the letter of Seneca (Chadwick H., 1986). Seneca divided humanity into two groups; however, the opposition of these two human communities is essentially a Stoic idea and is not an integral part of the history of salvation (Chadwick H., 1986).

The motive of the two communities, believers and unbelievers, which are approaching the end of their days, the former heading towards God, and the latter towards punishment, of course, can be found in the Bible (Vereshchatsky P., 2001). Augustine himself has already mentioned these biblical themes around 390 AD when he wrote his treatise on true religion. Later, around 400, the two peoples became two cities. The literal meaning of Genesis, compiled by Augustine between 401 and 415, contained similar ideas about the two cities. He discussed this topic in even more detail in the presentation of the book of Psalms. In his biblical reflections, Augustine discussed the founding or origin of two cities – the concept of two opposite kinds of love that drive human action. He turned to the topic of persecution and comfort, to the manifestation of works of love and selfishness, and finally to what was said above, to the final destination of the pilgrimage of two neighboring cities.

In creating the antithesis of the two cities, Augustine referred to the Sacred Writings. He referred to biblical motives, arguing that in the New Testament humanity is divided into two antagonistic communities, cities, striving for their "happiness." Those who choose the City of God do so out of love for God driven to self-denial. It is very good, organized love, consistent with the eternal law, and the result is peace. These two loves are mutually opposite. Love for God, which is social Love, and love for justice, which is the complete opposite of self-love. On the other hand, those who choose another city do so out of self-love, which can be brought to contempt for God (Coper J. 2019) and is selfish, biased and rebellious love (Dodaro R., 2000). First love follows God and follows Christ. She will attain eternal salvation (civitas dei), while the last one who adheres to Satan is heading towards eternal damnation (civitas terrena). Both cities are based on the principle of developing opposite types of love.

The City of God is proud of God, the spirit of service pervades it, it trusts in God, it has wisdom, it loves God and worships Him. The earthly city is proud only of itself: it is permeated with a spirit of self-righteousness; it relies on its own strength and considers itself wise, and does not love God and does not worship him. Citizens of the country of the City of God are guided by humility, while residents of the city of the world are driven by pride (Grigorieva N.I., 1992). Citizens of the city of God strive to live in accordance with the spirit, that is, in accordance with God, while the citizens of the earthly city strive to watch over the body, that is, they know only human truth (Mayorov G.G., 1979).

The essence of world history is the relentless struggle between two cities. This division is actually earlier and elementary. This is the division of intelligent beings into two groups: those who are for God and those who are against him. The origin of this opposition goes back to the first person and, according to

Augustine, manifests itself in every person through the legacy of original sin (Mayorov G.G., 1979).

Augustine took the idea of the City of God from the Psalms: Ps. 45,5; Ps. 47,2-3. 9; Psalm 86,3, where it was used to refer to the light, Heavenly Jerusalem as the opposite of the dark satanic Babylon. The citizens of the city of God are the children of God of all times (communio sanctorum), the community of the pious and redeemed, from the patriarchs and Old Testament prophets, to the Saints of the Parusian era. The love of God is the foundation of the city of God. It is built on Divine grace. Its citizens do deeds of mercy. The earthly city is the opposite. It is made up of evil people of all times and peoples, based on selfishness, and built on human nature corrupted by sin. Its citizens are vessels of wrath. Both cities have existed since the beginning of human history. Just as the City of Heaven (civitas coelestis) is equivalent not only to the Church, but also to all the good and just people of the human community, the Earthly City (civitas terrena) is not equivalent to a historical secular city, but denotes any unethical human community, including pagan communities or paganism in general.

Augustine divided world history into seven eras: (1.) from the very Creation before the flood; (2.) from the flood period to Abraham; (3.) from Abraham to David; (4.) from David to the end of the Babylonian captivity; (5.) from the end of the Babylonian captivity to the coming of Christ; (6.) from the first coming of Jesus Christ to Parusia; (7.) from Parusia to eternity. The first six are the periods of the earthly world, and the seventh should mark the entrance to eternity (Augustine Aurelius, 2000).

Cain and Abel are antipodes, representatives of the opposite poles of the city. Cain, because of his fratricide, is the prototype of the citizen of the civitas terrena. Abel, his innocent victim, is the prototype of the citizen civitas Dei. Abel is a synonym for a righteous person who trusts in God. The descendants of Cain represent the unjust and just of their time, creating opposing communities up to the time of Abraham.

Most of God's promises have been fulfilled since the time of Abraham, especially after Israel was appointed as the chosen people, a tool for fulfilling these vows (Kleman G., 2019). The story of salvation and God's promises was transmitted by the prophets by the time of Jesus Christ (Kleman G., 2019). The story of salvation in the Bible-based writings of Augustine also had an apologetic meaning. By choosing this theme, Augustine wanted to show the Gentiles that the history of salvation, the prophecies about Jesus, the mission of the Church, and the laws governing the city of God were not invented by Christians.

Jesus is presented by Augustine as the perfect mediator between God and humanity: as God He is just and immortal, as a man he is subject to death and weakness. Through the perfect union of the divine and human natures in one person. He is the only mediator of salvation. Only through the mediation and revelation of the incarnate God humanity can join the Heavenly Jerusalem (Augustine, 1998). Christ is the perfect priest and the perfect sacrifice that he makes exclusively to God.

With the first coming of Christ to Earth and the establishment of His Church, the city of God manifests itself in the history of mankind.

After the coming of Christ, humanity became not only spiritual, but also institutional. The Church in the concept of the City of God denotes an institutional formation (Mayorov G.G., 1979), which is generated by the Holy communions, but is not yet an eschatological communion of saints. The Church of Christ is also a community of believers who make a pilgrimage to God during their earthly life. This pilgrimage leads to the eschatological Church, the Church of the predetermined, only saints. The earthly city exists simultaneously with the city of God, but its role is more and more twofold. At times, he supports the City of God, providing earthly goods as his own blessings, especially striving for peace. At other times, he is at war with the city of God, provoking persecution, schisms or heresies, but paradoxically, at the same time, he allows the appearance of heroic martyrs, righteous saints and wise scientists.

The Augustinian division of world history into seven eras hints that the biblical history of the creation of the world lasts seven days, and also, according to Augustine, the psychology of the spiritual development of a person goes through seven stages. In the first period, the earthly city dominates. In the second century, the City of God is limited to the family of Abraham. In the third era, the monarchies of the Ancient East rise and fall, in the fourth era Greece plays a key role. This is the fifth century; the world is witnessing the rise of Rome. In the sixth century, Christianity spreads and the human soul comes into direct contact with God through Christ. All mankind has been granted a return to the Kingdom of God, the Church contributes to the development of all that belongs to the Kingdom of God. Holiness is the greatest blessing of all mankind, it leads to eternal happiness and to the communion of the saints with God (civitas beata, communio sanctorum). Finally, in the seventh century, saved believers will receive eternal bliss, while the unfaithful, damned, will be condemned to eternal damnation (Lancel S., 2002).

Until the time of Parusia, the consecrated life will be imperfect, transitory and will be constantly questioned by moral corruption.

Through the synthesis of the Christian doctrine of the resurrection (Blessed Augustine, 1998) Augustine teaches that this is the truth, obtained from the Bible (Augustine Aurelius, 2000). He also advocates the resurrection of the human body (Augustine Aurelius, 2000) against Plato (Mayorov G.G., 1979). Only in the seventh century, after the Day of Judgment, the City of God will become a community of intelligent beings who are perfect and finally united with God. Citizens of the City of God of all times and peoples should not worry about worldly power in the earthly city, because their true goal is to develop the Kingdom of God in the worldly community in which they happened to live. In the seventh century, the inhabitants of the earthly city will suffer eternal punishment for rejecting God's commandment to love and corrupting themselves. Their punishment will correspond to the severity of their atrocity (Yuan G., 2018). On the contrary, the inhabitants of the City of God will enjoy heavenly bliss, rest and peace in God without the presence of any evil or fatigue.

DISCUSSION

We first hear of the two cities in faith in a book written in Tagasta in 389/91. This theme, which is fundamentally biblical, comes in frequently in the writings of Augustine even before Rome was threatened. That he conceived a work of two

cities on purely theological and exegetical grounds is clear from the important text "The City of God".
Nothing in the original topic required the discussion to be located in a modern polemic matrix. It was providence that gave Augustine a pretext for writing a work in such a way that it would find its purpose and, possibly, its audience ready-made. Augustine's own desire to write a work on the two cities may have contributed to the zeal with which he picked up the murmurs of the laity after 410 and made them the target of such violent polemical attacks.

The main pastoral comment made by Augustine when he writes about these two cities is that Christians live in this world, but they are not of this world. They are present here as strangers in a foreign land, enjoying the benefits that the world has to offer, but always ready to move on. Heaven is the true home of the Christian, and it is to them that his affection and faithfulness should be turned. Perhaps it was the chance observation of the analogy obtained between this metaphor of Christian life and the facts of the situation in Africa after 410 that inspired Augustine to join the planned work on the two cities in response to the skeptics of those years. Skeptics could be found among the rich and disaffected refugees from Rome, who lived in Africa as outsiders, disaffected and disillusioned, enjoying theaters and shows, but always eager to return to the great city. The neat, even witty, polemical point of view of the introductory book is that the refugees have a completely correct attitude to the problem. They must rebuild their loyalty and their aspirations for the big city, more distant, and only then they will see the fate of the temporary kingdoms in true perspective.

This comparison of metaphor and reality gave rise to the first ten books "The City of God." But the polemic against the pagans and their gods is never more than accidental in relation to the main goal of the entire work. Destruction work can be necessary and instructive, but it is the subsequent argumentation that matters more. The first books are thus curiously divided between what we tend to regard as purely rhetorical, such as the derisive descriptions of the gods of the Roman marriage lodge and their various functions in Books 6.9. And in sharper arguments, such as the serious and generally sympathetic discussion of the merits and demerits of Platonism in books 8-10. The analysis of the greatness and decline of Rome in the introductory books suggests a similar mixture: Augustine's attitude towards Rome was certainly ambivalent and complex and sheds sufficient light on his relationship with the imperial government and its functionaries. Nevertheless, it should be recognized that the book is mainly religious in nature. It is much less useful to us as a source of these opinions if this topic was more central to the author's intention.

It is with book XI that the central, constructive stage, its opening, begins. It soon becomes clear that the discussion in books 1-10 is virtually over: either the reader was convinced, or he left the battle and walked away. Biblical passages have been quoted throughout the first ten books, but here they find their full authority for the first time.

The organization of books 11 - 22 is chronological, within the framework of Sacred Writings. The method of books 11-22 is the exegetical, characteristic method of Augustine. On some pages he repeats some of what he said in several other places (in particular books 11-13) about the creation and fall of humans and angels in Genesis; his account of world history (books 15-18). This would have

seemed strangely selective and inconsistent to a reader of his time, accustomed to reading classical historians or even Christian chroniclers. But this is progress on the most important parts of the biblical data. Recent books will finally put exegesis at the service of eschatology, culminating in the last pages of the work with an anticipation of heavenly peace and order to match the peace and lack of division that is invoked in the opening pages of book 11.

It was to these books that later eras first came with their own pressing questions in search of answers from Augustine. Philosophy of history and political theory embody the vital interests of contemporaries when they turn to Augustine. It is on these pages that they find the closest match to their goals. Nevertheless, it should be argued and constantly kept in mind that Augustine did not write to answer questions from other eras. Any Augustinian philosophy of history or theory of politics drawn from these pages will suffer from serious flaws from the outset. His ideas will not only bear the imprint of the time in which they were conceived, but they will only with the greatest difficulty and with the most glaring gaps approach the very concept of the philosophy of history or politics.

Taken on his own and read in the context of his time, Augustine has little to offer other than theology and exegesis: the fruits of his reading of history are the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. He would not attach any importance to the patterns he sees in history if they were separated from his expectation of the last things.

At the center of all work is one biblical theme, illuminated and became the basis for a long meditation on the entire message of the revelation itself. The fall of angels and men, which itself is the result of a disorder of love, has split the human soul. In a natural state, a person is now alien to himself, incapable of self-knowledge. He considers himself to be kind and virtuous, but in fact is full of pride and chaotic love. How this can happen, in a sense, remains a mystery (Aksenov G.P., 1992), but it is a fact. Left to itself, human society would be nothing more than a city of this world, cut off from God, doomed to die in body and soul.

But the fact of Divine mercy and mediation (already mentioned in the first ten books, culminating in the striking contrast between Christ and demons in Book 10) has nurtured some of the primordial superiority of humanity. This spark exists in some part of the human race and has always existed. Abel found favor with God; in all three ages of divine dispensation, God has seen those who carry the banners of the Heavenly City. In the devastation of a sinful world, these figures gave the hope that returning home is possible, that people do not need to come to terms with citizenship in a corrupted city, but they can already participate in the citizenship of heaven with faith and hope for its full restoration.

Thus, the human story between Adam and the second coming is completely inconsistent. There is one easily visible pattern for an earthly city, marked by disasters and wars, public and private, of all kinds; but there is another pattern, dimly visible, but obscured by sin, according to which the heavenly city lives. The task of revelation is to remove the veil from the eyes of those who seek this pattern; the role of exegesis is to convey this message to us.

The purpose of Augustine's exposition is not to satisfy intellectual curiosity: none of his mature works have ever been written for this purpose. The goal was completely pastoral: to disassemble first (in books 1-10) the dominant, all too natural interpretation of the meaning of human affairs, and then find a hidden, only under the surface, a second interpretation, divine in origin, full of hope for the future. The mistake of those who bitterly mourns the fall of the only earthly city of bricks and lime is the mistake of those who are unable to distinguish shadow from reality: the supreme remedy is the intervention of the Divine Word of redemption and enlightenment. Therefore, it is not surprising that by the end of the work, the discussion platform has completely shifted from the place where it began.

CONCLUSION

Succeeded in making a theological theme out of a real historical event, which still worries mankind. Until then, the division used by ancient metaphysics concerned the soul and the body. This theme was continued in the work of Augustine, only at a higher level of generalization, turning into a dichotomy of two cities – earth and heaven. This fact even today suggests that theological discourse can be continued in a political or social perspective, since the questions posed Augustine, today resonate in the minds of theorists. Utopian literature about ideal countries and cities is less of concern for mankind than "The City of God" by Augustine. The book reflects the intellectual atmosphere of the late antique culture of those years.

The Augustine`s concept of the history of salvation, introduced in De civitate Dei, did not have much influence on later Christian theological concepts. Paradoxically, Peter Lombard and later Thomas Aquinas called the Augustinian idea of history "uti et frui" or the development of evil in the human community, much more often, but these topics were already discussed by Augustine in De doctrina Christiana. Most likely, Augustine was unable to dispel anti-Christian grievances with his theses, nor to inspire Christians with great faith and joy.

Thomas Aquinas also used apologetic theses that referred to the need for divine authority to familiarize the individual with the knowledge of truth. He also understood the idea of God's intervention in the history of mankind through miracles and prophecies. Theological questions De civitate Dei found an even greater response in the later theological thought: God as Creator and giver of grace; origin of evil or abuse of freedom; struggle between good and evil; the triumph of good over evil and Christ as the exclusive mediator. Augustine's antithesis of two cities and two opposing loves dominating human history is still valid because it is based on earthly observation and everyday experience.

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