Augustine’s CITY OF GOD

Augustine’s City of God has profoundly influenced the course of Western political philosophy, but there are few guides to its labyrinthine argumentation that hold together the delicate interplay of religion and philosophy in Augustine’s thought. The essays in this volume offer a careful examination of those themes, using the central, contested distinction between a heavenly city on earthly pilgrimage and an earthly city bound for perdition to elaborate aspects of Augustine’s political and moral vision. Topics discussed include Augustine’s notion of the secular, his critique of pagan virtue, his departure from classical eudaimonism, his mythology of sin, his dystopian politics, his surprising attention to female bodies, his moral psychology, his valorization of love, his critique of empire, and his conception of a Christian philosophy. Together the essays advance our understanding of Augustine’s most influential work and provide a rich overview of Augustinian political theology and its philosophical implications.

James Wetzel is Professor of Philosophy at Villanova University and the first permanent holder of the Augustinian Endowed Chair in the Thought of Saint Augustine. He is the author of Augustine and the Limits of Virtue (Cambridge, 1992) and Augustine: A Guide for the Perplexed (2010).
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Augustine’s *City of God*  
*Edited by James Wetzel*
AUGUSTINE’S
City of God
A Critical Guide

EDITED BY
JAMES WETZEL
Villanova University
In memoriam

Robert A. Markus (1924–2010),
theorist of the saeculum

Gareth B. Matthews (1929–2011),
lover of Socratic perplexity

*quid est ergo tempus? si nemo ex me quaerat, scio; si quaerenti explicare velim, nescio.*

– *conf. 11.14.17*
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Finally, I cannot let it pass without offering a word of explicit gratitude to R. W. Dyson, whose edition and translation of “the great and arduous work” (Cambridge, 1998) served as this volume’s standard.
Abbreviations

**Works of Augustine**

- **b. conj.** De bono conjugali (On the Good of Marriage)
- **b. vita** De beata vita (On the Happy or Estimable Life)
- **c. Acad.** Contra Academicos (Against the Skeptics)
- **c. ep. Man.** Contra epistulam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti (Against the “Foundation Letter” of the Manichees)
- **c. Faust.** Contra Faustum Manicheum (Against Faustus, a Manichee)
- **c. Jul.** Contra Julianum (Against Julian)
- **conf.** Confessiones (Confessions)
- **div. qu.** De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus (On 83 Different Questions)
- **doc. Chr.** De doctrina Christiana (On Christian Instruction)
- **ench.** Enchiridion ad Laurentium de fide spe et caritate (Handbook on Faith, Hope, and Love)
- **en. Ps.** Enarrationes in Psalmos (Explications of the Psalms)
- **ep.** Epistulae (Letters)
- **ep. Jo.** In epistulam Ioannis ad Parthos tractatus (Tractates on the First Letter of John)
- **f. et symb.** De fide et symbolo (On Faith and the Creed)
- **Gn. adv. Man.** De Genesi adversus Manicheos (On Genesis: Against the Manichees)
- **Gn. litt.** De Genesi ad litteram (On Genesis: The Literal Commentary)
- **Jo. ev. tr.** In Johannis evangelium tractatus (Tractates on the Gospel of John)
## List of abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lib. arb.</td>
<td>De libero arbitrio</td>
<td>(On Free Choice; Free Will)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mag.</td>
<td>De magistro</td>
<td>(On the Teacher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mor.</td>
<td>De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum</td>
<td>(On the Catholic and the Manichean Ways of Life)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nat. et gr.</td>
<td>De natura et gratia</td>
<td>(On Nature and Grace)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ord.</td>
<td>De ordine</td>
<td>(On Order)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perf. just.</td>
<td>De perfectione justitiae hominis</td>
<td>(On the Perfection of Human Righteousness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>praed. sanc.</td>
<td>De praedestinatione sanctorum</td>
<td>(On the Predestination of the Saints)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>retr.</td>
<td>Retractiones</td>
<td>(Retractations; Reconsiderations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s.</td>
<td>Sermones</td>
<td>(Sermons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simpl.</td>
<td>De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum</td>
<td>(To Simplician, Various Questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sol.</td>
<td>Soliloquia</td>
<td>(Soliloquies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spr. et litt.</td>
<td>De spiritu et littera</td>
<td>(On the Spirit and the Letter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trin.</td>
<td>De trinitate</td>
<td>(On the Trinity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>util. cred.</td>
<td>De utilitate credendi</td>
<td>(On the Advantage of Believing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vera rel.</td>
<td>De vera religione</td>
<td>(On True Religion)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** For the most part, abbreviations and title translations of Augustine’s works conform to the listing in Fitzgerald 1999: xxxv–xlii.

### Other Authors

**Apuleius**

- deo Soc.  
  **De deo Socratis**  
  (The God of Socrates)

**Aquinas**

- Disp. qu. de virtutibus  
  **Disputatae quaestionibus: de virtutibus in communi**  
  (Disputed Questions: On the Virtues, in General)

- ST  
  **Summa theologiae**  
  (The Sum of Theology)
List of abbreviations

Aristotle
eth. Nic. (Nicomachean Ethics)

Aulus Gellius
NA Noctes Atticae (Attic Nights)

Cicero
leg. De legibus (On the Laws)
rep. De re publica (On the Republic)
Tusc. Tusculanae disputationes (Tusculan Disputations)

Diogenes Laertius
DL (Lives of the Eminent Philosophers)

Epictetus
ench. Enchiridion (Handbook)
disc. Discourses

Peter Lombard
sent. Sententiae (Sentences)

Origen
c. Cels. Contra Celsum (Against Celsus)

Plotinus
enn. Enneads
List of abbreviations

Possidius

v. Aug. Vita Sancta Augustini (The Saintly Life of Augustine)

Seneca

clem. De clementia (On Clemency)
ira De ira (On Anger)
otio De otio (On the Private Life)
prov. De providentia (On Providence)

Virgil

Aen. Aeneid

Biblical sources

1 Cor. Paul’s First Letter to the Church at Corinth
Ecclus. Ecclesiasticus
Eph. Ephesians
Exod. Exodus
Gen. Genesis
Is. Isaiah
Jer. Jeremiah
Matt. Matthew
1 Pet. 1 Peter
Phil. Philippians
Ps. Psalms
Rom. Paul’s Letter to the Church at Rome
1 Tim. Paul’s First Letter to Timothy

Latin source collections

PL Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina (Migne’s Latin Church Fathers)
CCSL Corpus Christianorum Series Latina (Latin Patristics, Brepols)
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List of abbreviations

*CSEL* Corpus Christianorum
Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Latin Patristics, Austrian Academy of Sciences)

*BA* Bibliothèque Augustinienne,
Oeuvres de Saint Augustin (Augustine’s Works, Études Augustiniennes)

Reference works

*AL* Augustinus Lexicon (Augustine Encyclopedia, C. Mayer *et al.*, eds., Schwabe AG)