Introduction

In this book, I have tried to answer the question 'How did Augustine conceive the just society?', a question which I first addressed in my 1992 doctoral dissertation at the University of Oxford, 'Language and Justice in Augustine's *City of God*'. The question refers not to the communion of saints in the heavenly city, which is the ideal 'just society', but to the city of God in its earthly pilgrimage. I noted that there were sufficient scholarly studies available which treated various aspects of Augustine's social and political thought, as well as a good number of studies concerned with particular aspects of his *City of God*. Robert Markus's *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St Augustine* (Cambridge, 1970, 1989) in many respects represents the best of both sets of studies. However, I thought that there was room and, indeed, need for a study which attempted to bring together various areas of Augustine's thought which are too often studied in isolation from each other. This is a defect that I find generally present in Augustinian studies, and in my view it hinders deeper understanding of his thought. It is clear to me, for example, that studies concerned with Augustine's political thought invariably pay little attention to his thinking about Christ and scriptural interpretation, and make almost no effort to ask what role these and other areas in his thought contribute to his political ethics. Anyone familiar with Augustine's thinking in general knows how alien it is to our modern, compartmentalized approach to issues in philosophy or theology. For example, Augustine cannot think about 'Christ' without simultaneously thinking about 'the church', and vice versa. Thus, for me, the question 'How did Augustine conceive the just society?' involves aspects of his thinking about Christ, human knowledge, the church, and scriptural hermeneutics, as well as political thought and ethics. Doubtless, even I have failed to take the considerable breadth of Augustine's thought sufficiently into account in attempting this synthesis. But I hope that what I have done will provide a map for others who will follow.

The question in Augustine's mind about the 'just society' specifically arises in conjunction with his objection to Cicero's claim in *De re publica* that Rome had ceased to be a commonwealth when it abandoned justice. In Chapter 1, I suggest that Augustine's initial retort to Cicero (in Book 2 of the *City of God*) that Rome had never been a *res publica*, because it always lacked true justice, provides him with a way into the question of the history and true nature of civic virtues, such as justice. In exploring the relationship between true justice and the commonweath, however, Augustine contrasts Cicero's ideal statesman in *De re publica* with Christ, the founder and ruler of the city of God. Augustine consciously alludes to Cicero's description of the ideal statesman, whose function is to promote justice within the community by his example of just conduct and his eloquence. It seemed reasonable to assume that Augustine would demonstrate the superiority of Christ's example and eloquence to those examples of Rome's 'best citizens' (*optimi uiri*) highlighed in *De re publica* and in other Roman literature. At the same time, it became clear that Augustine followed Cicero's lead in focusing the concept of the just society on the role of its leaders in establishing justice.

However, in Augustinian terms, the question concerning how virtue is learned also raises the issue of original sin and its twin consequences in the soul, ignorance and weakness. These become the central topics of Chapter 2, in which I examine the extent to which Augustine attributes the failure of Rome to achieve true justice to the failure of its people, misguided by their leaders, to overcome these permanent defects. In arguing this case, I bear in mind that Augustine wrote the *City of God* during the period of his dispute with the Pelagians over the necessity of grace for virtue. During the controversy, which begins c. AD 411, Augustine deepens his analysis of ignorance and weakness, and this analysis forms the base of his objections to Roman pagan virtues, as discussed in Books 1–10 of the *City of God*.

In view of the pervasive nature of original sin from Augustine's perspective, Christ is able to establish a just society only because, as the God-man, he alone is able to heal human beings of the ignorance and weakness which prevent them both from understanding the obligations of justice and from fulfilling them. In Chapter 3, I examine the connection in Augustine's thought between Christ's role in mediating virtue to the soul and his role in establishing the just society. Only by comparing this discussion of Christ in the *City of God*, in particular in Book 10, with what Augustine says about Christ in other writings does the centrality of his role in establishing a just social order become clear in Augustine's thought.

The question of the function of the scriptures in instructing believers to live justly becomes the focus of Chapters 4 and 5. Questions concerning the correct interpretation of the Bible's ethical teachings emerge as an issue in Augustine's correspondence with public officials, notably with Rufius Volusianus, the pagan proconsul of Africa c. AD 411/12. Volusianus had objected that the non-violence preached by Christ (for example in the Sermon on the Mount, Mt 5:39–41) diminishes Christianity's capacity to defend the Roman Empire. Volusianus had also objected to the variance in the ethical teachings between the Old and New Testaments. In responding to Volusianus, Augustine touches on a principle which he explains in greater detail in other writings, namely that the scriptures of both testaments represent a single, harmonious divine discourse. In Chapter 4 the implications of this principle for interpreting the ethical content of the scriptures are examined together with other principles employed by Augustine for interpreting the Bible. I argue in this chapter that in the *City of God*, Augustine parallels the scriptures as God's 'oratory' to the role that Cicero assigns to the statesman's oratory in promoting justice in the commonwealth. Christians who seek to know how to live justly discover in the scriptures divine teachings which reveal the nature of true virtue. However, Augustine insists, the true meaning of the scriptural word is often hidden from the surface of the text. In Chapter 4, I examine the reasons Augustine gives for the techniques which he believes God, as the author of the scriptures, uses in communicating the essential truths which they contain in a hidden fashion.

My discussion in Chapter 5 follows directly from this treatment of scriptural interpretation in Chapter 4, but it examines this question in the light of Augustine's explanation in *De trinitate* of the divine transformation of the knowledge about virtue which believers acquire from reading the scriptures. This is perhaps the most demanding chapter in the book, for it uncovers the relationship in Augustine's thought between human knowledge and divine wisdom, on the one hand, and the union of Christ's human and divine natures, on the other. In this chapter I also return to the Pelagian controversy as the backdrop for Augustine's renewed insistence that virtues have an intellectual content, that they first have to be understood in order to be practised, and that human beings are prevented by ignorance and weakness from understanding the deepest meanings of virtues. Chapter 5 should be read in close proximity to Chapter 3, because both chapters discuss from complementary viewpoints Augustine's insistence that Christ alone among human beings achieves perfect virtue and that all 'true virtue' in human beings depends upon his mediation of virtue to the soul.

Finally, in Chapter 6 I return to the contrast which Augustine draws in the *City of God* between Cicero's examples of Rome's 'best citizens' and those examples of Christ and the saints. I argue that Christ's unique status as a fully just human being means that he cannot serve as an example of repentance and dependence upon divine grace, which, Augustine concludes, believers require in order to live justly. The city of God on pilgrimage through the earthly city therefore requires as its 'heroes' saints such as King David and the apostles Peter and Paul, whose public acts of penance make them suitable models for members of the just commonwealth ruled by Christ. This society, in Augustine's view, is largely penitential while it is confined to the earthly city. Augustine concludes that its capacity to achieve true justice depends on the extent to which it follows the example of Christ and the saints in praying, 'Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us' (Mt 6:12).

JUSTICE

The reader of this book should bear in mind that Augustine's use of the term *iustitia* involves the conflation of three general meanings; the first comes from Greek and then Roman philosophy generally and regards justice as 'the habit of the soul or the virtue whereby one gives to each individual his due';[1] the second comes to Augustine from the New Testament and Latin patristic writers and equates the virtue with the love which is due to God and to one's neighbour;[2] the third sense follows logically from the second and is sometimes translated 'righteousness'. It describes the Pauline notion of *dikaiosune*, the condition of the soul whereby it stands in a 'right', because properly ordered, relationship with God, its Creator.

Augustine discusses the shift in usage between the first and second meanings of the term in Book 8 of *De trinitate*, in conjunction with Rom 13:8, 'owe no one anything except to love one another'. As he interprets this verse, the classical philosophical sense of justice as 'giving to each person his due' is translated into giving to God and to one's neighbour the love which is their due by virtue of the double commandment of love (Mt 22:40). Thus,

[1] See *ord.* 1.19, 2.22, *diu. qu.* 31.1, *lib. arb.* 1.27, *en. Ps.* 83.11, *ciu.* 19.4, 19.21. For the philosophical and juridical background of this usage, see, for example, Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1129a, 1130a, *Rhetoric* 1366b9, Cicero, *De inuentione* 2.160, *De finibus* 5.65, *Digesta* 1.1 [Ulpian] = Justinian, *Institutiones* 1.1.

[2] See, for example, *diu. qu.* 61.4. This use of the term *iustitia* is found generally in Latin patristic writers such as Cyprian, *De opere et eleemoysinis*, Lactantius, *Institutiones diuinae* 5, *Epitome* 54–5, and Ambrose, *De officiis ministrorum* 1.20–3, 1.252, 1.130–6, 1.142, 1.188, 2.49, *Expositio Psalmi CXVIII* 35.7, *De Nabuthe historia* 47–8.

living justly (*iuste uiuere*) means loving one's neighbours in a way that aids them in living justly by enabling them to love themselves, their neighbours, and God in the manner prescribed by divine law and by the example of Christ. Justice is thus understood in conjunction with Augustine's concept of order, in particular with the 'order of love' (*ordo amoris*), which imparts a hierarchy of goods established by God as objects of love and desire.[3] Justice conceived according to this proper ordering of love harmonizes the volitional aspect of love with the created order of nature.[4] Viewed in this way, justice expresses a series of right relationships which escalate in value in proportion to the order willed by God. In this context, Augustine defines justice as 'love serving God alone and thus ruling well those things subject to human beings'.[5]

[3] See *diu. qu.* 36.1–3, *lib. arb.* 1.11–15, *c. Faust* 22.27, *cat. rud.* 14.1–2, *ep.* 140.4, *trin.* 9.14, *ciu.* 11.17, 15.22.
[4] See *conf.* 13.10, *s. Lambot* 2.13.
[5] See *mor.* 1.25. Platonic and Neoplatonic influences can be detected behind this link between justice and an ordered concept of the universe. See Plato, *Timaeus* 29E–30B, Plotinus, *Enneads* 3.2.13–14, Porphyry, *De abstinentia* 2.45, *Ad Marcellam* 21.

CHAPTER I

Eloquence and virtue in Cicero's statesman

What is a just society? How is it structured and how does it function? In approaching these questions, Augustine turns to Cicero's writings, principally to *De re publica*, both in his *City of God* and in his correspondence with public officials.[1] His references to Cicero's work and thought in these letters suggest two significant points of divergence between their respective conceptions of a just society: the nature and aim of civic virtues and the crucial role of the statesman in fostering them within society. In these discussions, Augustine uses Cicero's text as a foil to argue the moral superiority of his own, alternative concepts of virtue and political leadership. Attention to these themes helps to explain why Cicero's discussion of justice in *De re publica* is important to the *City of God*, and ultimately how that discussion relates to Augustine's concept of a just society.

When in June 408 a mob stormed the Catholic church at Calama, 65 km. south-west of Hippo Regius, looted it, and set it ablaze, killing a Christian

[1] There is but scant scholarly discussion of the philosophical influence of *De re publica* during the fifth century. However, see C. Becker, 'Cicero', *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, vol. 3, ed. T. Klauser et al. (Stuttgart, 1957), 86–127, at 102–4. Noteworthy is Macrobius' *Commentarii in somnium Scipionis*, especially in terms of its discussion of political virtues and the value of their possession by statesmen (1.8.1–13). See W. H. Stahl, *Macrobius: Commentary on the Dream of Scipio* (New York, 1952), 14, 120–4. Following P. Labriolle, *La Réaction païenne. Etude sur la polémique antichrétienne du Ie au VIe siècle* (Paris, 1948), 355, scholars have also commented upon the extent to which Cicero's text can be detected behind Macrobius' *Saturnalia*. See, for example, H. Bloch, 'The Pagan Revival in the West at the End of the Fourth Century', *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, ed. A. Momigliano (Oxford, 1963), 193–218, at 208–9: 'that the connection of the *Saturnalia* with *De re publica* is a deliberate one can be easily proved'. See also E. Heck, *Die Bezeugung von Ciceros Schrift De re publica* (Hildesheim/New York, 1966), 43–68, for citations of *De re publica* in Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res gestae* 15.5.23, 22.16.16, 30.4.7, Favonius Eulogius, *Disputatio super somnium Scipionis*, and Boethius, *De institutione musicae* 1.27. See Heck, *Die Bezeugung*, 105–53, for a listing of the citations in Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome. However, A. Cameron, 'Paganism and Literature in Late Fourth Century Rome', *Christianisme et formes littéraires de l'antiquité tardive en occident* (Geneva, 1977), 1–30, at 25, suggests that by late antiquity only Christians read the *De re publica* for its content. Following Cameron, E. M. Atkins, 'Old Philosophy and New Power: Cicero in Fifth-Century North Africa', *Philosophy and Power in the Graeco-Roman World: Essays in Honour of Miriam Griffin*, ed. G. Clark and T. Rajak (Oxford, 2002), 251–69, argues that 'by the early fifth century, the *De Republica* has long ceased to be popular as a political text'.

in the process, Nectarius, a former public official, wrote to Augustine on behalf of the municipal council and pleaded for his intercession with imperial officials to show clemency toward those non-Christians who would inevitably be accused, interrogated, tried, and punished for participation in the violence.[2] In his response, Augustine observed that Nectarius had borrowed his praise of patriotism from Cicero's *De re publica*,[3] and briefly discussed the character of civic virtue as described in that text. In the second exchange of letters, Nectarius and Augustine debated further the respective strengths of Roman and Christian civic virtue, with *De re publica* as their common point of departure.[4]

Between the autumn of AD 411 and the spring of AD 412, just before beginning work on the *City of God*, Augustine corresponded with the proconsul of Africa at Carthage, Rufius Volusianus, and with a Catholic notary and tribune, Flavius Marcellinus, concerning the former's hesitations in converting to Christianity.[5] Marcellinus had reported that Volusianus, along with many others at Carthage, seemed convinced that the non-violence

[2] See *ep.* 90 (Nectarius to Augustine). Nectarius had been an imperial official; it is not known what rank or position he held. H. Huisman, *Augustinus Briefwisseling met Nectarius. Inleiding, tekst, vertalung, commentar* (Amsterdam, 1956), 9–20, believes that he served outside Calama. C. Lepelley, *Les Cités de l'Afrique romaine au Bas-Empire*, vol. 1: *La Permanence d'une civilisation municipale*, vol. 2: *Notices d'histoire municipale* (Paris, 1979, 1981), 1:291, regards him as a member of the municipal council (*curia*) at Calama at the time of the civil disturbance, and maintains that he was a 'païen convaincu' (2:102). J. Martindale, *A Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. 2: *A.D. 395–527* (Cambridge, 1980), 774, s. v. Nectarius 1, suggests that he may have been the 'defensor ciuitatis' for Calama and that he was a pagan. For further discussion, see *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire. 1. Prosopographie de l'Afrique chrétienne (303–533)*, ed. A. Mandouze (Paris, 1982), 776–9, s. v. Nectarius. However, Atkins, 'Old Philosophy', holds that, though he may not have been baptized, he leans toward the Christian faith.

[3] See *ep.* 90 (Nectarius to Augustine). This is a commonplace theme in ancient literature, but see Cicero, *De re publica* 6.1, *De officiis* 1.57, *De partitione oratoriae* 25.8. Augustine certainly believed that Nectarius had *De re publica* in mind. See *ep.* 91.3 (CSEL 34/2.429): 'intuere paululum ipsos de re publica libros, unde illum affectum amantissimi ciuis ebibisti . . .'.

[4] See *ep.* 103–4. For analysis of these arguments, see R. Dodaro, 'Augustine's Secular City', *Augustine and his Critics*, ed. R. Dodaro and G. Lawless (London, 2000), 231–59. See also Atkins, 'Old Philosophy'. I also discuss these arguments below, pp. 9–10, 196–200.

[5] Augustine and Volusianus: *ep.* 132, 135, 137; Augustine and Marcellinus: *ep.* 136, 138. The entire correspondence was composed between September 411 and the end of February 412. For background to the correspondence, see the pertinent observations by M. Moreau, 'Le Dossier Marcellinus dans la correspondance d'Augustin', *Recherches augustiniennes* 9 (1973), 5–181, P. Martain, 'Une conversion au Ve s.: Volusien', *Revue augustinienne* 10 (1907), 145–72, A. Chastagnol, 'Le Sénateur Volusien et la conversion d'une famille de l'aristocratie romaine au Bas-Empire', *Revue des études anciennes* 58 (1956), 241–53, Mandouze (ed.), *Prosopographie*, 671–88, s. v. Marcellinus, E. Rebillard, 'Augustin et le rituel épistolaire de l'élite sociale et culturelle de son temps. Eléments pour une analyse processuelle des relations de l'évèque et de la cité dans l'antiquité tardive', *L'Evèque dans la cité du IV^e^ au V^e^ siècle. Image et autorité*, ed. E. Rebillard and C. Sotinel (Rome, 1998), 127–52, and N. McLynn, 'Augustine's Roman Empire', *History, Apocalypse and the Secular Imagination: New Essays on Augustine's* City of God, ed. M. Vessey et al. (Bowling Green, 1999) = *Augustinian Studies* 30:2 (1999), 29–44, at 40–4. J. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon: A Study into Augustine's* City of God *and the Sources of his Doctrine*

preached by Christ diminishes the capacity of the Christian religion to support the just defence of the Empire,[6] an urgent matter at a time when its security was threatened by migrating tribes of Goths and Vandals.[7] Marcellinus stressed that Volusianus, though careful not to say this openly, was ultimately distressed over the harm to the Empire caused by Christian emperors.[8] Once again, Augustine is conscious that he was addressing men who had received a liberal education,[9] and he frames his response in terms of Cicero's discussion of political themes in *De re publica*. If Christian ethical precepts as outlined in the scriptures were adhered to, he argues, the commonwealth (*res publica*)[10] would fare better than it had under Romulus, Numa, Brutus, and other outstanding Roman statesmen (*uiri praeclari*).[11] Augustine decried the harmful effects of multiple, idolatrous cults on the peace of the city, for only Christianity provides a concept of God which exhibits the fullness of virtue that human beings require as a standard. The advent of true religion, culminating in Christ, alone produced true civic virtue. Volusianus can look to history for proof that the decline of Rome's fortunes was caused by the decline of virtue in its leading citizens, a moral failing which is an inevitable byproduct of traditional, Roman polytheistic

of the Two Cities (Leiden, 1991), 62 n. 273, argues that Augustine began work on the *City of God* in AD 412, and that Books 1–3 were completed by the end of AD 413. Letter 138 was therefore composed close to the time that Augustine was also treating Cicero's *De re publica* at *ciu*. 2.21.

[6] See *ep*. 136.2 (Marcellinus to Augustine) (CSEL 44.95): 'tum deinde quod eius praedicatio atque doctrina, reipublicae moribus nulla ex parte conueniat; utpote, sicut a multis dicitur . . . quae omnia reipublicae moribus asserit esse contraria', citing Rom 12:17, 1 Thes 5:15, Mt 5:39–41. See my discussion of this question below, pp. 135–9.

[7] A thorough, readable account is offered by P. Heather, *Goths and Romans 332–489* (Oxford, 1991).

[8] See *ep*. 136.2: Marcellinus to Augustine (CSEL 44.95): 'haec ergo omnia ipsi posse iungi aestimat quaestioni in tantum, ut per christianos principes christianam religionem maxima ex parte seruantes tanta, etiam si ipse de hac parte taceat, rei publicae mala euenisse manifestum sit'.

[9] See *ep*. 138.9 (CSEL 44.134): '. . . cum uiris liberaliter institutis'.

[10] I translate *res publica* freely as 'commonwealth', a term which, for moderns, unfortunately suggests 'state'. M. Schofield, 'Cicero's Definition of *res publica*', *Cicero the Philosopher*, ed. J. G. F. Powell (Oxford, 1995), 63–83, at 66–9, argues persuasively that despite the expression's 'notoriously elastic range of uses' in Latin authors before and after Cicero, it will not bear that connotation. Nor should it be translated 'republic' because in Cicero's thought it does not necessarily refer to a republican form of government. Schofield suggests as possibilities, depending upon the context, 'public [-spirited] activity', 'public affairs/business', 'the public interest', and 'the country'. See also R. Stark, 'Ciceros Staatsdefinition', *Das Staatsdenken der Römer*, ed. R. Klein (Darmstadt, 1980), and N. Rudd, *Cicero: The Republic and The Laws* (Oxford, 1998), xxxv. With C. N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture. A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine*, rev. edn (London, 1944), 46, we should keep in mind that 'the term *res publica* could hardly be used without an implied reference to its counterpart, the *res priuata*'. Augustine marks the distinction at *ep*. 140.63. He uses the term *res publica* even when speaking about the Roman Empire contemporary with his times. See, for example, *ep*. 138.10 (CSEL 44.135), where he complains that the Christian religion is often criticized as 'inimica reipublicae'.

[11] See *ep*. 138.10.

religion.[12] This argument, constructed against the backdrop of Cicero's discussion in *De re publica* of the best citizens (*uiri optimi*, *optimates*), parallels that found in Augustine's earlier letters to Nectarius.[13]

Circa AD 413, as part of an exchange of letters with the imperial vicar of Africa, Macedonius, concerning the bishop's role in seeking clemency on behalf of condemned criminals, Augustine sent the vicar a copy of the first three books of the *City of God*.[14] Following Macedonius' reply, Augustine wrote to him again and discussed the vicar's strongly positive reaction to the work.[15] Although the only direct reference to *De re publica* in this letter concerns Cicero's definition of the commonwealth,[16] Augustine's discussion focuses once again on the nature of civic virtue, its sources and aims.[17] Christ has shown in his death and resurrection the future happiness for which we ought to strive, and his grace alone, not our effort, assures us of attaining it.[18] Human reason, because of the power of sin, is not capable alone of attaining the wisdom and other virtues necessary for living happily, either in this life or in the life to come. Virtue cannot be possessed unless it is received as grace from God.[19] The reader already sees in this letter hints of Augustine's future debates with Pelagius and his associates over the role of Christ's grace in perfecting virtue.[20]

It is, therefore, a history of civic virtue and a philosophical discussion of its true nature that form the foundation of Augustine's arguments to public officials such as Nectarius, Volusianus, Marcellinus, and Macedonius.[21]

[12] See *ep.* 138.16–18. Augustine discusses polytheism in relation to civic virtue at *ciu.* 3.12–14, 3.18, 4.8, 4.10–11, and 4.13–14. See my discussion below, pp. 48–53.

[13] Note the comparison of Roman and Christian virtues, their sources and effects, that is common to Augustine's correspondence with Marcellinus (*ep.* 138.16–17) and Nectarius (*ep.* 91.2–4, *ep.* 104.6, 11–12, 15–16). For an interpretation of the latter passages, see Dodaro, 'Secular City', 243–8. See also Augustine's discussion at *ciu.* 2.21 of Cicero's perspectives (*De re publica* 5.1) on the decline in the morals of Rome's best citizens.

[14] See *ep.* 153, a reply to a letter from Macedonius (*ep.* 152), which was an answer to the initial letter from Augustine, no longer extant.

[15] See *ep.* 155, written in response to Macedonius (*ep.* 154). See the texts and notes in E. M. Atkins and R. Dodaro, *Augustine: Political Writings* (Cambridge, 2001), 70–99, 267–71. The entire correspondence takes place between AD 413 and AD 414, the dates of Macedonius' tenure as vicar of Africa. See F. Morgenstern, *Die Briefpartner des Augustinus von Hippo. Prosopographische, sozial- und ideologiegeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Bochum, 1993), 107–8.

[16] See *ep.* 155.9, citing Cicero, *De re publica* 1.25.39.

[17] Note the four virtues listed at *ep.* 155.10 (CSEL 44.440), which Augustine says Macedonius must exercise in the public sphere: good sense (*prudentia*), courage (*fortitudo*), moderation (*temperantia*), justice (*iustitia*).

[18] See *ep.* 155.4–5, 16.

[19] See *ep.* 155.6 (CSEL 44.437): 'quia nec uirtus nobis erit, nisi adsit ipse, quo iuuemur'.

[20] See, for example, *ep.* 155.13.

[21] Civic virtues are also known as 'political' or 'cardinal' virtues: prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice. Their treatment is commonplace in ancient philosophical ethics. See, for example, Plato,

Augustine's decision to dedicate his *City of God* to Marcellinus, his ally in the conversion of Volusianus,[22] attests to the importance which the discussion of these matters receives in his *opus magnum et arduum*.[23] His correspondence with these officials also explains his choice of *De re publica* as the organizing framework for much of the *City of God*: by providing a widely esteemed account of civic virtue, one grounded in a conventionally accepted political vocabulary, along with a critical, historical perspective on Rome's failure to live up to its social ethical ideals,[24] Cicero's work offered a secure philosophical foundation for a debate between Christians and non-Christians over the sources and goals of rival Roman and Christian theories of civic virtue. Augustine's discussion of these virtues as exemplified by Rome's 'best citizens' enables him to construct an effective contrast between Roman statesmen and Christ, the 'founder and ruler of the city of God'.[25]

JUSTICE AND TRUE JUSTICE

De re publica first appears in Book 2 of the *City of God*, where Augustine takes up Cicero's argument that no commonwealth could exist without 'common agreement about what is right' (*consensus iuris*), and therefore without justice (*iustitia*).[26] Even Cicero had concluded that Rome had ceased to exist as

Republic 427E. See also *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*, ed. H. von Arnim (Stuttgart, 1968), 1:49–50 (nn. 200–1), 3:63–72 (nn. 262–94), Cicero, *De inuentione* 2.159–67, *De officiis*, Book 1, Macrobius, *Commentarii in somnium Scipionis* 1.8.3. Scholarly discussion of these virtues constitutes a vast literature. Still useful as a guide is H. North, 'Canons and Hierarchies of the Cardinal Virtues in Greek and Latin Literature', *The Classical Tradition: Literary and Historical Studies in Honor of Harry Caplan*, ed. L. Wallach (Ithaca, 1966), 165–83.

[22] See *ciu.* 1, praef. See also *ciu.* 2.1. On the strategy behind Augustine's dedication, see McLynn, 'Augustine's', 41–2.

[23] See *ciu.* 1, praef.

[24] On Augustine's use in the correspondence with Nectarius of Cicero's historical perspective in *De re publica*, see G. P. O'Daly, 'Thinking through History: Augustine's Method in the *City of God* and its Ciceronian Dimension', *History, Apocalypse and the Secular Imagination: New Essays on Augustine's* City of God, ed. M. Vessey et al. (Bowling Green, 1999) = *Augustinian Studies* 30:2 (1999), 45–57.

[25] See *ciu.* 2.21, below, n. 28.

[26] See *ciu.* 2.21. In constructing his argument, Augustine draws from two different passages of *De re publica*: 1.25.39, where Cicero gives the definition of *res publica*, and 2.44.70, where he states that no *res publica* can exist without justice. See also *ciu.* 19.21, where Augustine repeats his argument. I discuss the fragmentary nature of the extant text of *De re publica* below, p. 21 n. 73. For studies of *De re publica* published in the twentieth century see P. Schmidt, 'Cicero *De re publica*: Die Forschung der letzten fünf Dezennien', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, vol. 1:4, ed. H. Temporini (Berlin, 1973), 262–333, W. Suerbaum, 'Studienbibliographie zu Ciceros De re publica: *Gymnasium* 85 (1978), 59–88, along with the studies cited by P. MacKendrick, *The Philosophical Books of Cicero* (London, 1989), 45–65, and J. E. G. Zetzel, *Cicero. De re publica: Selections* (Cambridge, 1995), 254–61.