Augustine and the Humanists

Reading the City of God *from Petrarch to Poliziano*



GUY CLAESSENS
FABIO DELLA SCHIAVA (ed.)

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Introduction

Guy Claessens & Fabio Della Schiava

> The gardens ravaged, the altars and chalices profaned, the Huns rode their horses into the monastery library and mangled the incomprehensible books and reviled and burned them – fearful perhaps that the letters of the books might harbor blasphemies against their god, which was a scimitar of iron. They burned palimpsests and codices, but in the heart of the bonfire, among the ashes, there lay, virtually untouched by the flames, the twelfth book of the *Civitas Dei*, which says that in Athens Plato once taught that at the end of time all things will return again to where they once were – that he, in Athens, before the same circle of listeners, will one day teach that doctrine once again. That text spared by the flames came to enjoy a special veneration; those who read and reread it in that remote province came to forget that the author put forth the doctrine only in order more roundly to refute it.[1]

So begins *The Theologians*, a short story by Jorge Luis Borges, first published in 1947 and reprinted two years later in the famous collection *The Aleph*. The protagonists are two theologians, Aurelian and John of Pannonia. Their rivalry is based on the problem of refuting the heresy of the *Monotoni*, who believed that history "was a circle, and that all things that exist have existed before and will exist again." The theory of the *Monotoni* reads as an anticipation of Giambattista Vico's notion of historical *corsi e ricorsi* and emerges in Borges' re-fashioning of late Antiquity as a "parallel universe" where fiction and (historical) fact are wonderfully intertwined. In this particular case, the fiction takes its cue from a real text that has influenced the history (or *histories*) of the Western world like few others: Augustine's *De civitate Dei*. In Borges' story, book twelve of *De civitate Dei* is the only one to survive the destructive fury of the barbarian invasions. Over time, however, readers began to forget that Augustine presented the doctrine of the circularity of history only to criticize it, and made it the object of a new belief instead. Yet in Borges' imaginary history *De civitate Dei* is not merely a narrative device. With the skill of a refined scholar and careful reader of Augustine (from whose works he knew extracts by heart, even in

[1] Borges, *Fictions*, 478-79.

Latin), Borges inserts the familiar dynamics of the text's historical reception into his narrative. Moreover, through its literary "reuse", he shows how Augustine's work is still deeply rooted in the cultural identity of the West – even to the extent that, in a parallel universe, it could rise to the dignity of a sacred and foundational text.

In fact, *De civitate Dei* has been among the most "consequential" works of Western literature. Nonetheless, scholars attempting to trace its reception in early modern Europe and beyond are faced with an often superficial bibliography, in which the dawn of the early modern era – the period in intellectual history generally referred to as Humanism or the early Renaissance – is almost completely neglected.

A thorough investigation into the early modern reception of *De civitate Dei* was implicitly part of a *desideratum* expressed by Paul Oskar Kristeller in his classic "Augustine and the Early Renaissance":

> The history of Augustine's "fortune" and influence has not yet been made the subject of an adequate comprehensive study. The basic facts are fairly well known, and a few specific phases and aspects have been studied in greater detail, especially for the earlier Middle Ages, for the Reformation period, and for seventeenth-century France. Augustine's influence on the early Renaissance has so far attracted less attention.[2]

Kristeller tried to – partially – remedy this absence by providing an overview of the figures who, more than others, contributed to Augustine's fortune in the fifteenth century. Inevitably, this outline is general and incomplete: Kristeller mentions Petrarch, Maffeo Vegio and Lorenzo Valla, but his interest is focused on Platonism in the late fifteenth century on the one hand, and on the contribution of Italian humanism to the Reformation on the other.[3]

Kristeller's "diagnosis" certainly helped to encourage subsequent lines of research, e.g. the theorization and study of *Augustinianism*, understood as the synthesis and/or elaboration of teachings and doctrines taken from the works of Augustine, which also includes "unorthodox" interpretations (as in the fictitious case of Borges' *Monotoni*). This research angle has been successfully explored by scholars from Étienne Gilson to Eric Saak, yet always with a main focus on the

[2] Also see the reading of this passage by Saak in this volume, at 20.
[3] Kristeller (1944) 1956, 362.

late Middle Ages, with *Agostino, agostiniani and agostinismi*, published by Carron, Brilli and Bartuschat in 2018, as its most recent result.[4]

In recent years, the topic has also been approached from a more philological perspective, in order to develop and refine the instruments and methodology for further research. Check-lists of manuscripts with Augustinian works in Italian libraries have been published along with essays devoted to specific aspects of their reception.[5] However, even if *De civitate Dei* has always been a part of the puzzle, it has never been the primary focus of any major research enterprise.

In general, research on the reception of *De civitate Dei* during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries has not gone much further than the few preliminary conclusions drawn by Kristeller, and modern companions on Augustine and recent encyclopedic lemmas on his reception certainly prove this statement to be right. In the entry *Augustine in Renaissance Humanism* of the *Oxford Companion to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, very little is said about *De civitate Dei*, and, throughout the companion, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are generally neglected, as the focus lies on the late Middle Ages and the Reformation. In the entry *Medieval Political Philosophy* of the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, John Kilcullen and Jonathan Robinson write the following about *De civitate Dei*: "Although this work was often copied in the Middle Ages (382 manuscripts survived), a reading of the entire work has never been part of the university curriculum." However, a recent update of Oberleitner's catalogue lists more than 730 manuscripts, 96 of which had never been mentioned before,[6] and although our knowledge of medieval university curricula may still be imprecise, we do know that at the end of the fourteenth century in Florence, Augustine's work was the object of public readings in the *Studium*, as the result of the synergy between the Florentine municipality and the Augustinians.[7]

This volume wishes to address the aforementioned lacuna in Augustinian studies and aims to do so through a series of portraits of Italian humanists, beginning with Petrarch and ending with Poliziano. This

[4] Bartuschat & al. 2018.
[5] Buonocore 1996; Coppini & Regoliosi 2001.
[6] Della Schiava & al. 2020.
[7] Brilli & Tanzini 2018, 208-16.

approach is certainly not without its weaknesses. Ultimately, the choice of humanists to be included in this gallery is arbitrary: even if (or perhaps *because*) it is based on a generally shared canon of relevance, it still remains the expression of a specific epoch, taste and set of idiosyncrasies. Prominent humanists whose scholarship is intimately linked to *De civitate Dei*, such as Giannozzo Manetti and other lesser-known figures, such as the Franciscan Lorenzo Traversagni da Savona, who read *De civitate Dei* at Cambridge in 1474, were also part of the work's readership.[8] Nonetheless, the selected case studies are representative of the different "modes" of Italian Humanism in the Trecento and Quattrocento: classical erudition, with particular attention to mythology; Greek philosophy, with a strong accent on Plato and Neoplatonism; Theology of History, with its ecclesiological and geo-political implications.

The aim of this volume is, first of all, to analyze the reception of Augustine by various humanists, examining the different reading strategies they use and the osmosis between Augustine's *magnum opus* and their own works. Although this goal can certainly be achieved through a series of case studies, we believe that such portraits should be placed in a suitable methodological frame as well. The contributions by Eric Saak and Elisa Brilli, which introduce and close the volume, serve (and challenge) this methodological approach.

As a scholar of the late medieval Augustinian tradition, Eric Saak raises some important heuristic problems, as *De civitate Dei* is a large, composite text that lends itself not only to being read through *excerpta*, but also to being epitomized and read through secondary sources, e.g. the *Milleloquium* by Bartholomew of Urbino. Citing Augustine does not always mean citing him *directly*. Saak argues that our knowledge of what humanists really knew about *De civitate Dei* is still partial and based on the prejudice that humanists had completely abandoned certain reading practices typical of the Gothic age.

Elisa Brilli complements our research angle with a typological study of the representations of *De civitate Dei* in illuminated manuscripts during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. At first sight, in the case of *De civitate Dei*, ideological and apologetic motives appear to be prominent (e.g. the representation of Augustine wearing the habit of

[8] Lodone 2019. Also see Saak in this volume, at 21.

the Hermits, or the identification of the *civitas Dei* with Florence or Rome). Brilli, however, shows how the focus lies on both the City of God and the Earthly City, with a predominantly eschatological interest. This is especially clear from the shifting spatial relationship between the two cities, one that is no longer imagined on a horizontal axis (earth-earth), but on a vertical one (earth-sky).

If the essays by Brilli and Saak provide a methodological compass to navigate the troubled waters of the reception of *De civitate Dei* in the Renaissance, the other contributions prove to be sturdy and safe vessels, albeit constructed from different materials and guided by helmsmen coming from different fields of study. These case studies offer new ways to understand the undeniable revival of our text during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The humanists' interest in *De civitate Dei* is in fact multifaceted. At times, the work is approached as an encyclopedia of the ancient world, as in the case of Petrarch, Boccaccio and Biondo. After all, *De civitate Dei* was an indispensable vehicle for the recovery or partial recovery of ancient masterpieces, such as Cicero's *De re publica*, Varro's *Antiquitates* and Seneca's *De superstitione*. But it also became the object of philological study and book collecting. Marco Petoletti examines its place among Petrarch's *libri peculiares*, while Outi Merisalo discusses how Poggio Bracciolini and Niccolò Niccoli contributed to producing new manuscript copies of the work. Antonio Manfredi presents the joint reading of Tommaso Parentucelli and Giovanni Tortelli, the founders of the Vatican Library, and Valerio Sanzotta investigates *excerpta* from *De civitate Dei* that Marsilio Ficino wrote in the margins of a codex containing Calcidius' commentary on Plato's *Timaeus*. Finally, Francesco Caruso follows a lost codex of the Convent of San Marco that might have been used by Poliziano. These are all concrete examples of a first-hand engagement with the Church Father, of a return *ad fontes* that seems to surpass the encyclopedic practices of the Gothic age.

But even if examples of individual approaches to *De civitate Dei* were already known, never before has the great "collective" effort of the humanists towards this text been noted. Besides the cases of Poggio & Niccoli and Parentucelli & Tortelli, it is worth mentioning Bessarion, who mobilized his whole *familia*, including Niccolò Perotti, in an attempt to scour the text in search of material for his *In calumniatorem*

Platonis (see the contributions by Gianmario Cattaneo & Giuseppe Pascale and by Marianne Pade).

The "collective" workshops emerging from these contributions once again refer to the two primary centers of Italian Humanism. On the one hand there is Florence, where the interest in *De civitate Dei* is as high among the direct heirs of Petrarch, e.g. Coluccio Salutati (see the contribution by Sam Urlings), as it is among humanists of the later fifteenth century, e.g. Poliziano and Pico della Mirandola (see the essays by Francesco Caruso and Ovanes Akopyan). On the other hand, Rome, where *De civitate Dei* could become a powerful weapon of propaganda for the Curia, exhibited a sustained interest in the Augustinian treatise during our entire period.

Simultaneously, there is a clear attempt to free *De civitate Dei* from traditional, Thomistic interpretations, as in the cases of Biondo (closely connected to the Curia) and Valla (whose relationship with the Curia was obviously more complicated) and their "unorthodox" challenging of Augustine on subjects such as the *bellum iustum* or the virtues of the ancient Romans. Francesco Filelfo, on the other hand, uses Augustine's Christian reinterpretation of Roman virtue in order to re-define the truly virtuous person (see the contribution by Guy Claessens & Jeroen De Keyser).

It would be useful to write and draw the *Storia e geografia* of the humanistic reception of *De civitate Dei* – to paraphrase Carlo Dionisotti's well-known study and methodological manifesto – yet such an exercise should also include Naples and Venice, which are only briefly touched upon in this volume because of the biographical links that connect these cities to Valla and Bessarion. Evidently, the increase in the production of manuscripts of *De civitate Dei* in Italy during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries affected the entire peninsula. Additionally, Augustine's work is not only among the most transcribed texts in Italy during the early Renaissance, but it is also one of the first works to be printed on the peninsula (at Subiaco, by Conrad Sweynheym & Arnold Pannartz, in 1467). Further research is needed to assess whether Italian institutions and centers of power played a role in developing specific strategies, and whether common patterns can be discovered. In any case, at the end of the fourteenth century the Florentine municipality showed great interest in exploring the work's ideological potential: a vernacular translation was promoted, public readings were

held at the *Studium* and Augustinian echoes can be traced in important documents of republican propaganda, such as Bruni's *Laudatio Florentinae Urbis*. And if it seems that Florence – unlike Rome – abandoned this strategy over the years, an echo can still be perceived in the iconography of the fifteenth-century manuscript that graces the cover of this volume and identifies Florence with the city of God (New York, NYPL, Spencer Collection, ms. 30 [see also PLATE 1]).

Finally, the revival of *De civitate Dei* among humanists can also be explained by their strong aversion (perhaps more theoretical than practical) to medieval scholastic thought. Interestingly, Augustine provided the perfect synthesis between a well-structured theological system and a precise and clear use of the Latin language that could compete with classical authors. Besides, among Augustine's works, *De civitate Dei* offered a "macro-text" comparable to a *summa*. It is not a surprise, then, to read in Vespasiano da Bisticci's *Vite* that Giannozzo Manetti "Usava dire avere tre libri a mente, per lungo abito, l'uno era l'*Epistole* di Sancto Pagolo, l'altro era Agostino *De civitate Dei* e de' gentili l'*Etica* d'Aristotele," to which Manetti's generation, of course, added Plato.[9] Possibly the best-known theological "metamorphosis" of Augustine's *De civitate Dei* in the fifteenth century, Nicholas of Cusa's *De pace fide*, is discussed in our volume by Enrico Peroli.[10]

Before leaving readers to embark on their own journey through the essays printed on these pages, we would like to thank everyone who made this volume possible. First of all, the authors, who worked relentlessly to ensure the swift and efficient publication of this volume; the project "*Magnum opus et arduum*. Towards a History of the Reception of Augustine's *De civitate Dei*", funded by KU Leuven and coordinated by Anthony Dupont, Gert Partoens and Andrea A. Robiglio, who have never failed to provide their loyal support; and, last but not least, Scott Blanchard, who reviewed all contributions in terms of language, and Sam Urlings, who checked the indices. Special thanks are due to Jeroen De Keyser, who not only played an important role in the conception of the project, but also contributed significantly to the editing of the volume, enthusiastically agreeing to publish it in the *Colibri* series.

[9] Vespasiano da Bisticci, *Le vite*, vol. 1, 485-86.

[10] Enrico Peroli's chapter on Nicholas of Cusa is a revised version of Peroli 2018.

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Acknowledgments

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Abbreviations of Augustine's Writings Cited in this Book

Agon.	*De agone Christiano*
Bapt.	*De baptismo*
C. Ep. Man.	*Contra epistulam Manichaei*
C. Faust.	*Contra Faustum Manicheum*
C. Iul.	*Contra Iulianum*
Civ.	*De civitate Dei*
Conf.	*Confessiones*
Cura mort.	*De cura pro mortuis gerenda*
Disc. Chr.	*De disciplina Christiana*
Div. qu.	*De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*
Div. qu. Simpl.	*De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum*
Doct.	*De doctrina Christiana*
En. Ps.	*Enarrationes in Psalmos*
Ench.	*De fide spe et caritate* (*Enchiridion*)
Ep.	*Epistulae*
Exc. urb.	*De excidio urbis Romae*
Gn. litt.	*De Genesi ad litteram*
Io. ev. tr.	*In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* CXXIV
Lib. arb.	*De libero arbitrio*
Mus.	*De musica*
Nat. b.	*De natura boni*
Praed. sanct.	*De praedestinatione sanctorum*
Qu. Hept.	*Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*
Retr.	*Retractationes*
Serm.	*Sermones ad populum*
Sol.	*Soliloquia*
Trin.	*De trinitate*
Vera rel.	*De vera religione*

Essays

I

De civitate Dei in the Renaissance. The Ignoring of Augustine?

Eric Saak

While the influence and impact of Augustine on the origins and emergence of the Reformation has been an issue of major scholarly debate in the historiography since the late nineteenth century,[1] the analogous influence of Augustine on the origins and emergence of Renaissance humanism has paled in comparison. Yet already in 1944, Kristeller published an article on Augustine and the early Renaissance, in which he laid out the centrality of Augustine to Renaissance Humanism and Platonism, giving a central role to Petrarch:[2]

> The return from nature to man, which is so characteristic of Petrarch, and the whole emphasis on man which became so important throughout the Renaissance, is here, in its origin, connected with the name and doctrine of Augustine.[3]

It was the reception of Augustine as a Christian classic in the fields of "philosophy, literature and education" that was of influence:[4]

> Augustine is considered as a part of the rediscovered ancient literature itself; his works are collected in Petrarch's library by the side of those of the Latin poets, historians, orators, and philosophers; he becomes, along with the other Fathers of the Church, a Christian classic; and the study of their works ceases to be only theology in the traditional sense, and becomes the study of sacred literature.

This literary attitude of Petrarch toward Augustine determined that of most other humanists, and it manifested itself in several ways. Above all, the humanists observed that Augustine and the other Fathers were

[1] Saak 2002, 683-708. [2] Kristeller (1944) 1956. [3] *Ibidem*, 362.

[4] Kristeller (*ibidem*, 356) also noted: "Petrarch's personal form of religion had no direct influence upon his followers among the humanists, and his emphasis on man, although accepted and developed by many of them, did not retain its original connection with Augustine."

themselves imbued with classical learning. Hence, when the humanists had to defend their own work against the attacks of contemporary theologians, they liked to quote the Fathers both as examples and supporters of their own intellectual ideal, and they came at last to consider the Fathers as their own precursors.[5] Consequently, Augustine, or rather Petrarch's reception of Augustine and the influence Augustine's works exerted on Petrarch, stand at the very origins of the Renaissance. It is, therefore, all the more unfortunate that Kristeller's comments in 1944 are still by and large valid today:

> The history of Augustine's "fortune" and influence has not yet been made the subject of an adequate comprehensive study. The basic facts are fairly well known, and a few specific phases and aspects have been studied in greater detail, especially for the earlier Middle Ages, for the Reformation period, and for seventeenth-century France. Augustine's influence on the early Renaissance has so far attracted less attention.[6]

Over sixty years later, Kristeller's observations remained valid, when Meredith Gill in her 2005 study *Augustine in the Italian Renaissance*, which is not only an impressive scholarly achievement, but is also perhaps the most comprehensive treatment of Augustine in the Renaissance to date, pointed out that: "Ever since Paul Oskar Kristeller's searching essay on Augustine and the early Renaissance, there has been no single study of the saint in the early modern era."[7] And, with the exception of Gill's work, which is not comprehensive, that has not substantially changed. While this fact may cause one to sit around and ponder why this has been so, it should also serve as a challenge for future research. Yet this is a challenge that is highly problematic, for how can we trace, chart and interpret Augustine's influence when, aside essentially from Petrarch, the humanists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are generally seen as having ignored Augustine? Is doing so not simply chasing a ghost, an ephemeral influence perhaps akin to Douglas Gray's pointing to the "diffused Augustinian tradition" whereby Augustine was everywhere, even when unseen?[8] And if that is valid for Augustine as such, how then can we hope to discern how Augustine was read?

[5] *Ibidem*, 362-63. [6] *Ibidem*, 356. [7] Gill 2005, 8. [8] Gray 1988, 20.

We can, perhaps, begin to seek an answer to this question by focusing on Augustine's *magnum opus et arduum*, his *De civitate Dei*. Though the *Confessiones*, or *De doctrina Christiana* might offer the most obvious avenues for discerning how the humanists read Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, as Augustine's master piece, offers unique insight into the potential influence Augustine had on the Renaissance as such, especially since books one through ten of *De civitate Dei* addressed Roman religion, thereby offering still a valuable source for our knowledge and understanding of a Roman religion, which Cicero claimed was a civic, moral virtue, and civic, moral virtue was of central concern to the Renaissance humanists. Thus, a case study of the reception of Augustine's *De civitate Dei* in the Renaissance has significant importance to our understanding of the reception of Augustine in the Renaissance as such.

First of all, Renaissance humanists lectured on Augustine's *De civitate Dei* only sporadically. We are aware of the readings by Luigi Marsili (1391) and Grazia Castellani (1392) in Firenze,[9] and of the class held in Cambridge by the Franciscan friar Lorenzo Traversagni (1474).[10] But the humanists' engagement with Augustine's *De civitate Dei* appears remarkably 'thin' when compared to other texts such as, for instance, the *Sententiae* of Lombard. At the same time, their academic commitment seems not to have resulted in numerous commentaries either: regrettably, as far as we know, we are left only with the works of Trivet and Waleys until we get into the sixteenth century and the extensive commentary of Vives. Tracing and interpreting the reception of *De civitate Dei* in the Renaissance thus becomes our own great and arduous work, being left for the most part with hints and traces and scant evidence. We know, for example, that *De civitate Dei* was on Petrarch's list of his "favorite books",[11] having been his earliest acquisition of Augustine's works dating to 1325, but there is no evidence that he had read the work until much later. Indeed, we face the problem of the reception of *De civitate Dei* in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as such, when Michael Sloan, in his article on *De civitate Dei* in the *Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine* argued that even given the 394 extant manuscripts of *De civitate Dei*, its "most profound and sustained reception [...] is arguably found not in its books, but rather

[9] Brilli & Tanzini 2018. [10] Lodone 2019.
[11] See Marco Petoletti's chapter in this volume.

on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel."[12] Sloan essentially simply skipped over the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, jumping from Dante to Michelangelo, and argued for the importance of the work to the humanists by discussing Vives, Thomas More and Erasmus, which supports Arnoud Visser's claim in treating "Augustine in Renaissance Humanism" in the same work that John Monfasani had been spot on when he claimed that "Italian humanists after Petrarch generally ignored Augustine."[13]

Seeking to analyze the seemingly non-existent forces us to define our terms perhaps even more precisely than when the evidence is abundant. What, for example, do we mean by "reading" *De civitate Dei* to begin with? Are we looking for scholarly analytical readings of the text? Is there evidence of pleasure reading, perhaps a Renaissance version of Einhard's noting that Charlemagne's favorite book was *De civitate Dei* which he liked to have read to him? Are we seeking reading the text for edification? Or do we mean simply glancing at the text to pick out quotable quotes to use for one's own purpose? Do we mean reading the text itself, or snippets extracted in other sources? What, in other words, does it mean "to read" and how many different types of reading are there, and then which of those types are we meaning when we look for humanist readings of the text? Leonardo Bruni, in his letter to Lady Battista Malatesta of Montefeltro *De studiis et litteris* (1424), recommended she read Augustine and Jerome to find a liberal learning "which joins literary skill with factual knowledge," though advocated most of all for Lactantius, who, in Bruni's eyes, was "the greatest of all those who have written of the Christian religion, the one who excels them all with his brilliance and richness of expression [...] the most eloquent of all Christian authors and the one whose eloquence and technique are best able to nourish and educate the type of ability I am considering."[14] What evidence, though, is there that Lady Battista actually read Augustine at all, much less *De civitate Dei*? Perhaps she picked up Lactantius, but did she then also take up Augustine and Jerome? And what evidence is there that Bruni had read even a word of Augustine? He

[12] Sloan 2013, 257. However, the number of extant manuscripts provided here is an underestimate. 96 new items have recently been listed by Della Schiava & al. 2020. Also see the introduction to this volume by Claessens & Della Schiava.

[13] Visser 2013, 69.

[14] Bruni, *De studiis et litteris*, 240, 242.

certainly gave no clear indication that he had by citation or reference in either his letters or in his *Historia Florentini populi*. Or do we just assume that because Bruni was a humanist and evidently learned in some ways, he had the omnipotent erudition he claimed for himself?

And here we meet directly the problem that one cannot base an argument on silence, which leaves us in the proverbial pickle. Bruni may have read *De civitate Dei*, or he may not have, even as he certainly posed as someone whose knowledge was so thorough he could make such claims as Lactantius exceeding Augustine in terms of "brilliance and richness of expression" from a position of assumed authority without articulating or giving evidence of what that authority was based on aside from his own hubris. Analogously we know that Anselm of Canterbury was deeply influenced by Augustine, but when we go to try to prove that influence it becomes very flimsy indeed as Anselm only extremely rarely cited Augustine, or any of his sources for that matter. Thus David Hogg and Jeremy Thompson noted that "Augustine's influence on Anselm is incontrovertible in general, but in documenting specific sources for Augustine's thought, we must be content with finding plausible ones,"[15] which then becomes based on textual or doctrinal parallels that, especially regarding the latter, are left then to the creative imagination and interpretation of the contemporary scholar to find such wisps and echoes here, there and everywhere, even perhaps in such unexpected places as the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

If we are seeking a humanist reading of *De civitate Dei*, we need to do so comparatively to determine what made the humanists' reading of the text distinctive. Was their relative lack of citation or reference to Augustine and his *magnum opus* simply a matter of style, analogous perhaps to that of Anselm or the noted difference in academic documentation in footnotes between English and German scholars of the nineteenth century? Or was it, as Visser suggested, their antipathy to the intellectual culture of scholasticism?[16] Salutati, in opposition to Bruni, praised Augustine's eloquence, had annotated a copy of the *Confessiones*, and recommended reading *De civitate Dei*, a copy of which he had in his own library, for Augustine, for Salutati, encompassed the eloquence of the poets.[17] Yet Ambrogio Traversari, who, according to Karl Enenkel,

[15] Hogg & Thompson 2013, 532A. [16] Visser 2013, 73A.
[17] Gill 2013; see also Sam Urlings' chapter in this volume.

was known for his "unparalleled patristic learning and his profound knowledge of Greek," seems to offer further proof of Visser's conclusions as Traversari's "interest in Augustine seems relatively insignificant", though he knew the *Confessiones* well, which he read "from a monastic and spiritual perspective."[18] Whereas Traversari "appears neither to have edited nor composed a scholarly analysis of any of Augustine's works,"[19] we can assume that Salutati had at least read *De civitate Dei*, but the question is, *how* had he read it, and how did his reading thereof compare with high and late medieval readings?

In turning to the background and context for seeking a humanist reading of *De civitate Dei*, we must remember that despite humanist claims, the classics as such had not been lost or ignored; they formed the foundation for Sir Richard Southern's portrayal of medieval humanism, and Beryl Smalley's "classicizing friars".[20] Moreover, the term "humanism" itself, much as "Augustinianism", is an ahistorical substantive adjective created in the nineteenth century that can easily introduce connotations that cannot be applied to the scholars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Italy or elsewhere and retain historical accuracy or validity.[21] By asserting such, at least consciously and/or by intent, I am not siding with the "revolt of the medievalists" against the "Burckhardtians", nor suggesting that the term "humanism" be treated in a similar fashion to my arguments for "Augustinianism"; that would necessitate a separate study. I simply want to point out that if we identify "humanism" with a knowledge of, love for and appeal to the classics, we will find humanism as a constant of medieval intellectual culture from at least the twelfth century onward. The distinction to be made between medieval classicism and Renaissance classicism can be found, it seems to me, by recognizing the mode of reception, whereby medieval authors appropriated the classics for themselves, whereas Renaissance authors sought to conform themselves and their world to *their* interpretative models of the classics, which may or may not have coincided with what we know today about Antiquity, much as the humanist script was a copy of Carolingian miniscule rather than Roman half-uncial, even as the humanists thought they were imitating classical models. Thus an understanding of how *De civitate Dei* was read previous

[18] Enenkel 2013, 1818B. [19] *Ibidem.* [20] Smalley 1960.
[21] For a brief overview of the origins of the term, see Trinkaus 1983.

to and contemporaneously with the rise of humanism offers a foundation for then attempting to find a humanist reading of Augustine's text.

To do so, we can turn to the medieval encyclopedists, scholars certainly not categorized as "humanist". Here we find that there can be little question that medieval encyclopedists knew Augustine in general and *De civitate Dei* in specific very well indeed, and did so directly, not simply repeating passages drawn from the standard textbooks which provided a vast store of Augustinian material, namely, Lombard's *Sententiae*, Gratian's *Decretum* and the *Glossa ordinaria*, or taken from the early medieval *florilegia*, such as Prosper of Aquitaine's *Sententiae* and Eugippius' *Excerpta ex operibus s. Augustini*.[22] As I have argued elsewhere, Helinand of Froidmont, for example, in his encyclopedic world chronicle, cut and pasted from *De civitate dei* to create his own textual pastiche for his own emplotment.[23] Helinand, who died c. 1229, had been a *trouvère* and had studied with the pupil of Abelard, Ralph of Beauvais, before joining the Cistercians. Helinand's *Chronicon* was a compilation, but was so as a new creation and Helinand knew *De civitate Dei* backwards and forwards, quite literally, when we find him in book two of his *Chronicon*, chapters 48 to 71, in a long digression on the nature of angels and demons, constructing a new text drawn from *De civitate Dei* books 8-10, but not as presented in the text itself. Helinand cut and pasted at times increasingly earlier sections of Augustine's text before skipping around and returning to the point of departure of his "inverted insert." Similarly, in book 47 of the *Chronicon*, under the year 1083, Helinand was inserting passages from the *Chronica* of Sigibert of Glemboux and Guillaume de Nangis. Helinand had drawn from Sigibert to relate the miraculous testimony of various birds to the sanctity of Anselm of Lucca, and then included the citation of *Civ.* 3.23 as a supporting authority having related a similar event:

> Sigebertus. Anselmus Lucensis episcopus Hildebrandi cooperator indefessus, apud Mantuam exsulans moritur, qui in Jeremiam et in Psalmos tractatus edidit; et doctrinam Hildebrandi libro luculento confirmavit. Cuius sanctitas miraculis declarata est. Domesticae aves, pavones, gallinae et anseres a domibus se extraneantes, omnes fiunt sylvaticae. Augustinus, in lib. III *De civitate Dei,* simile portentum narrat contigisse, dicens: 'Antequam se adversus Romam sociale Latium commoveret, omnia animalia

[22] For Prosper, see Lambert 2013; for Eugippius, see Fürst 2013.

[23] Saak 2015.

> humanis usibus subdita, canes, equi, asini, boves, et quaecunque alia pecora sub hominum dominio erant, subito efferata, et domesticae lenitatis oblita, relictis tectis libera vagabantur; et omnem non solum alienorum, verum etiam dominorum aversabantur accessum; nec sine exitio vel periculo audentis, si quis de proximo urgeret. Quanti mali signum fuit, si hoc signum fuit; quod tantum malum fuit, si etiam signum non fuit.'[24]

Yet the quotation from Augustine was not present in Sigibert; it was a reference Helinand supplied himself.[25] Nor can the citation be traced to any other intermediate source, at least that I have found. Helinand was supplying the additional authority based on his own knowledge of Augustine's text and cited his source accurately, though without giving the chapter number. In short, Helinand had *De civitate Dei* on his desk as he was constructing his *Chronicon*, a work that served as a major source for Vincent of Beauvais's *Speculum maius*, where we find a similar intimate knowledge of Augustine.

In Vincent's *Speculum historiale*, completed in the 1250s, Vincent included a catalog of 126 works of Augustine which Vincent himself claims to have seen, together with an additional twenty-four he claims not to have seen.[26] Vincent questioned the authenticity of the Pseudo-Augustinian *De spiritu et anima* based on stylistic analysis, a work that was often cited at the time as genuine. At times, Vincent simply included long passages from Augustine, such as in book twenty of the *Speculum historiale* chapters 8-10, which consisted for the most part of excerpts from *De civitate Dei* book 13. Yet Vincent also evidences the same cutting and pasting of Augustine as had Helinand, when in book six, chapter 76 of the *Speculum historiale* Vincent quoted from Eusebius and then inserted a single line from *Civ.* 1.30, before drawing from Ovid, and then returned to *Civ.* 7.25-26.[27] In book 4, chapter 51 of the *Speculum historiale*, Vincent was explicitly drawing on Helinand, including Helinand's inclusion of a passage from *Civ.* 4.4, but went back to Augustine's text itself to correct the text of Helinand's quotation.[28]

[24] Helinand, *Chronicon* 47 (*PL* 212, 977C-D).

[25] Sigebertus, *Chronica* (*PL* 160, 223B), under year 1086: "Anselmus Lucensis episcopus, Hildibrandi papae cooperator indefessus, apud Mantuam exulans moritur; qui in Hieremiam et in Psalmos tractatus edidit, et doctrinam Hildibrandi libro luculento confirmavit; cuius sanctitas miraculis declarata est. Domesticae aves, pavones, gallinae et aucae a domibus se extraneantes fiunt silvaticae."

[26] Saak 2013f, 1860B. [27] *Ibidem*, 1861A. [28] *Ibidem*, 1861A.

Vincent evidences an impressive knowledge of Augustine, and one based on a direct, thorough and careful reading of the texts, which Vincent usually, though not always, cited by title and not infrequently gave book references as well. In short, as I have argued, "As present in the *Speculum maius*, Augustine was a primary component of the summation of knowledge in the thirteenth century. One could not be considered learned without a wide knowledge of Augustine. The very nature of the work, however, meant as well that scholars did not need to read the original texts of Augustine themselves. The encyclopedic treatment of Augustine not only made Augustine readily available, but also limited the need for genuine scholarship on Augustine's texts."[29]

The lack of erudition with respect to Augustine's texts themselves, combined with direct citation of Augustine, is evident as well in the work of the Franciscan author John of Wales. John was born most likely between the years 1210 and 1230. The first firm date we have for John is his lectorate to the Franciscans at Oxford as a Bachelor of Theology, which began after 1258, most likely from 1259-62. John was in Paris in 1270, and served as regent master for the Franciscans in Paris during the years 1281-83.[30] Yet by this time John had already composed some of his major works, including his *Breviloquium de virtutibus* and his extensive *Communiloquium*. He was appointed to the commission examining the works of Peter John Olivi, but died before the process was complete, most likely in 1285.[31]

John's *Communiloquium* is an extensive work in which John sought to provide preaching material for his fellow friars.[32] In this light it can be considered a "handbook for preachers" and can in no way be associated with "proto-humanism", at least as such. It thus offers an excellent example of the use of the classics, and of Augustine, in the generation preceding the rise of humanism.

John cited from a wide variety of sources, including many classics. In the *Breviloquium*, Valerius Maximus was the most frequently cited author with sixty-five citations, followed by Augustine with twenty-nine, Seneca with twenty-five, Cicero with twenty-four, Caecilius Balbus with nineteen and Vegetius with thirteen.[33] In the *Communiloquium*, Augustine ranked first in frequency of citations with 237,

[29] *Ibidem*, 1861B. [30] Swanson 1989, 4-5.
[31] *Ibidem*. [32] *Ibidem*, 63-64. [33] *Ibidem*, 18.

followed by Gregory the Great with 210, Seneca with 170, Jerome with 123, Valerius Maximus with 122 and Cicero with 103.[34] Augustine was John's favorite authority with John citing sixty-three works of Augustine, with citations to *De civitate Dei* being the overwhelming favorite.[35] *De civitate Dei* provided John not only with source material itself, but also serves as a conduit of classical authors, though John also cited classical sources directly from manuscripts rather than relying upon intermediary works. In the opening pages of the *Communiloquium*, John asserted the proper Christian attitude toward the pagan, classical authors. Citing from Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana* book two, John asserted that Christian authors can draw the gold from the Egyptians without any lessening of the truth or sufficiency of Scripture. The truths of the classical authors simply testify to God's goodness in revealing his truth to humans:

> Ut enim ait idem [*scil.* Augustinus] 2 de doctrina christiana ante finem quod sicut populus Israhel vasa et ornamenta aurea argentea et vestes abstulit ab Egypto, quae vendicavit ad meliorem usum, sic liberales disciplinas usui veritatis aptas et quaedam morum praecepta continentes, possunt accipere fideles ad veritatis attestationem, sicut exemplificat ibi Augustinus de doctoribus sacris qui fuerunt in sapientia saeculorum philosophorum et protulerunt ex eorum doctrinis multa utilia ecclesiastica et refutaverunt superstitiosa figmenta. Non ergo propter insufficientiam sacrae scripturae, in qua quicquid homo extra didicerit: si noxium est damnatur; sit est utile munitur, ut ait ibidem Augustinus. Sed propter honorem veritatis efficaciorem attestationem ipsis auditoribus et praeconium divine bonitatis, que eis veritatem revelavit, ut ait Apostolus ad Romanos 1.[36]

According to Carol Quillen, this principle formed the basis of Petrarch's own appropriation of Augustine for Petrarch's humanist program: "This humanist vision was certainly not advocated by Augustine, either in *De doctrina Christiana* or anywhere else. Yet Petrarch's creative appropriation of the words and arguments of *Doct.* testify, more than any stricter interpretation ever could, to the complexity and abiding significance of Augustine's work."[37] John, moreover, was often

[34] *Ibidem*. [35] *Ibidem*, 18-19.

[36] John of Wales, *Communiloquium*, Prol. (43). This passage is the edition Cologne, Ulrich Zell, 1470 [USTC 746409], f. 10v-13r. The Augustine reference could have been a later addition, not by John of Wales, which points to the need for a critical edition of this most influential work. [37] Quillen 1995, 167.

very precise in his quotations, usually citing book and chapter. His accuracy, however, was less acute than his concern for precision. Thus in *Communiloquium* 2.6.3 John cited *Civ.* 13.3, but the text is taken from *Trin.* 13.3.[38] In *Communiloquium* 2.6.1 John referenced *Disc. Chr.* 1, but the text is drawn from Augustine's *Quaestiones in Leviticum*.[39] And in *Communiloquium* 1.1.3 John cited *Civ.* 8.6, but the quotation is from John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*.[40] Such examples could easily be multiplied, but these should be sufficient to illustrate the point: John cited Augustine as an authority but was not concerned to check his references, citing most likely from memory, which could account for references such as in *Communiloquium* 1.1.3 where John referenced *Civ.* 19.1 whereas the quotation comes from *Lib. arb.* 1.13.27.[41] At times, however, John was indeed accurate, referencing the text precisely where it was to be found.[42] One receives the impression that Augustine for John was an

[38] Aug. *Trin*. 13.3: "Ut enim ait Augustinus 13 de civitate dei capitulo 3: Omnes volunt utiliter emere et care vendere." John of Wales, *Communiloquium* 2.6.3 (204); "[…] vili velle emere, et caro vendere, omnibus id credidit esse commune."

[39] John of Wales, *Communiloquium* 2.6.1 (202): "Et idem de disciplina christiana c. 1: Proximus omnis homo homini est tam conditione naturae quam confessione religionis." Cf. Aug. *Qu. Hept.* 3 (*Quaest. Levitici*), qu. 73, l. 1738: "Proximus est enim omnis homo homini."

[40] John of Wales, *Communiloquium* 1.1.3 (48): "Et quia omnium legum est inanis censura nisi divine legis imaginem gerat ut ait Aug. 8 de civ. dei ca. 6. Ideo omnes leges emanare debent a lege divina"; John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* 4.6.18: "Omnium legum inanis est censura, si non divinae legis imaginem gerat […]."

[41] John of Wales, *Communiloquium* 1.1.3 (50): "[…] et cum ipsa sit virtus qua sua cuique tribuuntur, ut ait Augustinus 19 de civitate dei capitulo 1." Cf. Aug. *Lib. arb.* 1.13.27: "Iam iustitiam quid dicamus esse nisi virtutem, qua sua cuique tribuuntur?"

[42] For example, in *Communiloquium* 1.1.3 John cited *Civ.* 4.4 ("remota iustitia quid sunt regna nisi latrocinia ubi ponit exemplum de Alexandro magno et pirata"), which is where the quotation is found: "Et ideo Augustinus 4 de civitate dei c. 4 dicit." In 2.6.1 John cited Augustine's *Ep.* 24, but the text is from *Ep.* 155. In *Communiloquium* 1.1.7 John cited *Civ.* 5.12, and did so accurately: "Unde et rectores reipublicae antiquitus dicebantur consules a consulendo, ut dicit Augustinus 5 de civitate dei capitulo 12." John of Wales, *Communiloquium* 1.1.7 (52); "[…] qui consules appellati sunt a consulendo […]." Cf. Aug. *Civ*. 5.12.1. John also cited frequently from Augustine's letters, and did so usually accurately, though John's number of the letter and the modern numbering do not correspond, which is most likely due to the particular collection of letters John was using. Thus in *Communiloquium* 2.6.1 (202), John wrote: "[…] non sanguinis propinquitate sed rationis societate pensandus est, Augustinus 24 epistola." Cf. Aug. *Ep*. 155.3.14: "Proximus sane hoc loco non sanguinis propinquitate sed rationis societate pensandus est […]."

important authority, even the most important authority, yet John did not reference Augustine in all circumstances. In *Communiloquium* 6.2.5, which deals with religious poverty, John cited Gregory the Great, Valerius Maximus and Jerome, but not Augustine.[43] In short, we find with John a use of Augustine that is paralleled in late medieval sermon literature, whereby Augustine's authority is highlighted, but not uniformly so by any means, and where Augustine is cited rather haphazardly.[44]

A similar verdict can be given concerning Jacques Legrand OESA (c. 1365-1415) and his *Sophilogium*. Legrand is one of the many late medieval Augustinians who is under studied and little known, aside perhaps by scholars of French literature. He studied in Paris in the late fourteenth century and composed his *Sophilogium* originally c. 1393-96, and the two vernacular adaptations therefrom, the l'*Archiloge Sophie* dedicated to Louis, Duke of Orléans, before 1400, and the *Livre de bonnes meurs* in 1404, with the presentation copy of the definitive edition thereof dedicated to the duke of Berry in 1410.[45] Standing on the boundaries – and thus blurring them – between the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance, which only modern historians can demarcate either chronologically or qualitatively, Legrand's *Sophilogium*, extant in over 105 manuscripts and twenty editions,[46] is an encyclopedic guide to the virtuous life of wisdom for all segments of society.

Gathered together "from the sayings of the poets," the *Sophilogium*'s intent, as Legrand asserted, was "to lead the spirit of its readers to the love of wisdom."[47] Thus he quotes often from Seneca, Vergil, Cicero, Ovid, Lucan, Quintilian and Valerius Maximus, giving a superficial appearance of classical learning. Yet as Beltran has demonstrated, Legrand took most of his classical sources from Vincent of Beauvais' *Speculum maius* and John of Wales's *Communiloquium*.[48] The Bible, Church Fathers and medieval authors likewise are prominent and here Augustine is cited as one authority among others.

[43] John of Wales, *Communiloquium* 6.2.5 (332-34).

[44] See Saak 2013e. [45] Beltran 1989, 15-21. [46] Beltran 1989, 228.

[47] Legrand, *Sophilogium*, f. Aiiiv: "[…] presentem librum ex dictis poetarum precipue compegi, quem Sophilogium interpretor, eo quod principalis intentio est inducere legentis animum ad amorem sapientiae."

[48] Beltran 1989, 23-41.

Legrand paraphrases and summarizes Augustine's texts while nevertheless giving precise references, though he does not exhibit the source erudition of his earlier fourteenth-century scholastic forebears, to whom I will turn shortly. Thus in *Sophilogium* 1.4 Legrand uses Augustine as an authority, citing *Civ.* 12.15: "An infant, he said, should not exceed his own capacity,"[49] yet Augustine's text reads: "For if an infant is nourished for his own strengths, he will be able as he grows to take more; if, however, he exceeds the strengths of his own capacities, he will be sickly before he grows."[50] Legrand summarizes, abbreviates and uses Augustine for his own purposes, which is also the case when he writes: "Wherefore Augustine in book twenty-two of *De civitate Dei*, chapter nine, tells how sons cursed by their mother incurred a bodily shaking and were buried in the Church of St. Stephen, and Augustine concludes that the curse of parents is to be feared."[51] Here Legrand, based on his own memory, is conflating and creating a new text. In *De Civ.* 22.8.22 Augustine tells of a family of seven brothers and three sisters whose father had recently died and who had been cursed by their mother and thus left destitute, and as a result, they were afflicted with shaking horribly in their bodies ("[…] ut horribiliter quaterentur omnes tremore membrorum"). One brother and sister, Paulus and Palladia, started coming to church approximately fifteen days before Easter and would pray to the memory of the most glorious St. Stephen, with the result being that after Easter, they were healed of their malady. There is no mention of their death whatsoever, and they were exhibiting their devotion to St. Stephen, whose relics were preserved in a devotional chapel adjoining the Basilica Major in Hippo.[52] The moral of the story, according to Legrand, namely "a parent's curse is to be feared" is nowhere in the cited text, but a parallel somewhat is found in Augustine's *Sermo* 323, preached in celebration of St. Stephen, where we find Augustine concluding in Legrand's phrase, that "angry parents are to be

[49] "[…] tradit Augustinus XII de civitate dei capitulo XV: Infans inquit suam capacitatem non excedat." Legrand, *Sophilogium* 1.4.

[50] Aug. *Civ.* 15.12.3: "Si enim pro viribus suis alatur infans, fiet, ut crescendo plus capiat; si autem vires suae capacitatis excedat, deficiet antequam crescat."

[51] Legrand, *Sophilogium* 3.4.13: "Unde Augustinus XXII de civitate dei capitulo IX narrat qualiter filii a matre maledicti membrorum tremorem incurrunt et in ecclesia Sancti Stephani sepulti erant et concludit quod timenda est parentum maledictio."

[52] Van der Meer 1961, 20-21.

feared."[53] On another occasion, in his chapter "On Gluttony" of part two of the *Sophilogium*, Legrand, warning against the dangers of the opportunities for indulging oneself when one is "out and about," states that "for this reason we read that Augustine never wanted to have social gatherings outside his own house."[54] The closest parallel I have found is in a sermon in which Augustine warns that a cleric "should never dare to take a meal outside his own home or that of the bishop."[55] This sermon is actually sermon thirty-six of the *Sermones ad fratres in eremo*, though not part of the original collection of Jordan of Quedlinburg or Robert de Bardis.[56] A classicist, textual scholar, or philologist Legrand certainly was not, but he was an avid reader who used his sources, including Augustine, for his own purpose in the *Sophilogium* to teach its readers the path to wisdom, in itself a most 'Augustinian' endeavor. In doing so, his *Sophilogium* reveals a great deal about how Augustine was actually used by a late medieval Augustinian hermit who lived and wrote during the Great Schism and the rise of the Medici in Florence. In this light, it is perhaps small wonder that the third part of his *Sophilogium* has been called a "Mirror for Princes".[57] Whereas Giles of Rome in his *De regimine principum*, composed by 1280, a text Legrand knew well, cited Augustine only once in the entire work and Scripture not at all,[58] Legrand cites Augustine in his *Speculum principis* even more frequently than in the first two parts of the work. In short, even given the conflation of texts and the lack of erudition regarding precise citation, much as in the case of John of Wales, one of Legrand's major

[53] Aug. *Serm.* 323.1: "[…] timeant parentes irasci."

[54] Legrand, *Sophilogium* 2.12, f. Oiir: "[…] ob hanc enim causam legimus Augustinum extra domum propriam convivere noluisse."

[55] Ps.-Aug. *Sermo ad fratres in eremo* 36.1299.53: "[…] ne extra domum suam vel episcopi prandere audeat vel in eadem etiam audeat saecularibus praeparare."

[56] For the collections of Jordan and de Bardis, see Saak 2007, 118-19 and 142-43. This citation does, however, show that Legrand took these sermons as genuine, and he may very well have had access to the original collection in Jordan's *Collectanea* in either Jordan's autograph or the later copy (Jordan's autograph is found in Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 251, a fifteenth-century copy of which is extant in Paris, BnF, ms. lat. 5338), in the latter of which one finds as well Jordan's *Metrum pro depingenda vita sancti Augustini*, which later circulated under Legrand's name as author and together with Legrand's works, such as in Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 542, which contains Jordan's *Metrum* ascribed to Legrand (f. 79v-80v), as well as Legrand's *Collatio super Sentencias* (f. 28r-36r), *Chronica* (f. 40r-46v) and *Tractatus de arte memorandi* (f. 76v-79r).

[57] Beltran 1989, 38.

[58] See Saak 2013c; Saak 2020b.

sources, Legrand demonstrated a broad and relatively deep knowledge of Augustine, even as he cited Augustine as an authority as any other.

This was not the case, however, for the earlier fourteenth-century Augustinian theologians. In a major article published in 1956 and still of importance and significance today, Damasus Trapp pointed to a new scholarly erudition with respect to the works of Augustine among the Order's theologians in the fourteenth century. Beginning with Gregory of Rimini in the early 1340s we find a notable increase in the knowledge and use of Augustine's texts that went along with, in Trapp's terms, a "historical-critical" attitude toward citing sources in general. This became the foundation for what Trapp termed the *schola Augustiniana moderna*.[59] Twenty years later, Heiko Oberman, based in part on Trapp's work, coined the term "Augustinian Renaissance", a concept Oberman defined as far broader and more extensive than Trapp's focus on textual scholarship.[60] I have critiqued Oberman's position and have argued for the need to interpret the new Augustine scholarship in context of the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine's (OESA) emerging self-identity and ideology as the true sons and heirs of their father, teacher, leader and head, St. Augustine.[61] Yet the point here is not how a late medieval Augustinianism is to be defined, but rather the reception of Augustine's works themselves, and in this light, there can be little doubt that members of the Augustinian Hermits effected a genuine renaissance of Augustine scholarship, one which, moreover, had close connections with Petrarch. The textual scholarship that Trapp identified with the *schola Augustiniana moderna* had been initiated by Gregory of Rimini and extended through the works of John of Basel, before falling victim to the increasingly declining academic standards in the context of the Schism and its aftermath. Gregory cited more widely from Augustine's works, did so based on the texts themselves, and did so more precisely than any scholar previously. In the first two books of his lectures on the *Sententiae*, Gregory cited Augustine 1942 times, from sixty-nine different works. *De trinitate* was the most frequently cited work by Gregory, cited 511 times, followed by *De libero arbitrio* with 128 citations, *De Genesi ad litteram* with 123 and *De civitate Dei* with 108.[62] Moreover, we find with Gregory a heightened endeavor for

[59] Trapp 1956. [60] Oberman 1977, 82-140; Saak 2013d. [61] See Saak 2017.
[62] Saak 2013a, 63.

precision in quotation, where Gregory at times cited *De Genesi ad litteram* not only by book and chapter, but also acknowledged his awareness of two different systems of capitulation in circulation by giving the chapter references to both, cited as *de parvis* and *de magnis*. Gregory's confrères Alfonso Vargas, John Klenkock and John of Basel did so as well, and did so regularly not only for *De Genesi ad litteram*, but also for *De trinitate*, *De libero arbitrio* and *De civitate Dei*.[63] Yet the earliest bi-serial citation of Augustine that I have found is in the *Questiones ordinarie* of the Augustinian Hermit Henry of Friemar, held in Paris as *magister regens* in 1306, in which Henry cited *De trinitate* giving both systems of capitulation.[64] Henry was a central figure in the creation of the emerging Augustinian identity,[65] and his attention to the precision of citing Augustine evidences not only the academic debate at Paris, where the interpretation of Augustine was central, but also the relationship between the emerging new textual scholarship of Augustine and the emerging Augustinian ideology. The point for our present concerns is that the Augustinian Hermits at Paris were dealing intensively with Augustine's texts, evidencing a return *ad fontes*, based on a new erudition with respect to Augustine's texts unparalleled by the previous reception of Augustine, and an erudition that generally surpassed that of the Italian humanists, and one that was present as well in the *Milleloquium Sancti Augustini*, compiled by Bartholomew of Urbino, a work though that may very well have been begun by Augustinus of Ancona (Agostino Trionfo), another Augustinian Hermit who played a central role in the development of the Augustinians' ideology,[66] and for which Petrarch wrote a preface.[67]

Yet Petrarch's erudition with respect to Augustine's works was rudimentary at best until after 1350 when he began annotating Paris, BnF, ms. lat. 2103. In other words, Petrarch's acquaintance with and knowledge of Augustine's works was developing from 1325 through to the 1340s, but only after c. 1350 did he begin his specific and intensive

[63] Saak 2013a, 64B.

[64] Henricus de Frimaria, *Questiones ordinarie*, q. 1: "Hec etiam est sententia Augustini de trinitate capitulo 5 secundum magna vel 15 secundum parva." Toulouse, Bibliothèque Municipale, ms. 739, f. 74v; I am currently working on editing Henry's *Questiones* 1 and 2.

[65] Saak 2012, 57-79, Saak (forthcoming).

[66] For Agostino, see Saak 2002, 41-138; Saak 2013b; Saak (forthcoming).

[67] Sieben 2013.

reading of Augustine's works. He knew the *Confessiones* well,[68] as well as *De vera religione*, and *De civitate Dei* was his first acquisition. This was the same period as the Augustinian ideology was developing and emerging, based on a new scholarly erudition with respect to Augustine's texts. Petrarch had received his copy of Augustine's *Confessiones* that he took with him on his famous ascent of Mont Ventoux from the Augustinian Hermit Dionigi da Borgo San Sepolcro, who had lectured on the *Sententiae* at Paris in 1316-17, promoting to *magister* in 1323.[69] The textual scholarship of the Augustinians was connected with Petrarch's own developing humanist program. Yet that very humanist program of Petrarch was ultimately based on the rejection, or disappropriation, of Augustine,[70] which perhaps was the origins of the rejection or simply ignoring of Augustine by some of the later humanists, such as Salutati's rejection of Augustine's version of Lucretia, as Urlings has detailed.[71] While Bruni recommended Augustine as learned, and a good author to turn to for religious and pious instruction,[72] he preferred Lactantius, and gave no evidence of any scholarly engagement with Augustine. When Bruni in 1424 dismissed the theologians of his time as ignorant,[73] while he may have had a point with respect to the decline of standards in the wake of the Schism, he simply displayed his own ignorance of the textual scholarship of the Augustinian Hermits in the fourteenth century. By 1424, the *schola Augustiniana moderna* had already come to an end. It may very well have been that Bruni had read *De civitate Dei* thoroughly and deeply, and if so, he would have done so most likely together with the commentary of Waleys and Trivet. There is, however, no textual evidence that he had indeed done so.

In this light, adopting the roll of the devil's advocate, I would propose a thesis that may seem directly counter to the very purpose of this volume's stated endeavor, namely, that the Italian humanists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries did *not* read *De civitate Dei* consistently in any scholarly or academic way. I look forward to being proven

[68] See Saak 2020a; Saak (forthcoming), ch. 1: "Augustinian Traditions."
[69] Zumkeller 1964, 174 and 207. [70] Saak 2018, 127-50.
[71] See Sam Urlings' chapter in this volume. [72] Bruni, *De studiis et litteris*.
[73] *Ibidem*, 245: "The moderns, if they are good men, she will honor and revere, but she should pay scant attention to their writings. A woman of literature will find no instruction in them that is not in St. Augustine, and St. Augustine, moreover, unlike them, has the diction of an educated person, and one well worth attending to."

wrong, yet let me explain what I mean by this assertion, which I will attempt to do in four points.

This volume provides us with several examples of Italian humanists who engaged with the text of *De civitate Dei* in various ways. Yet we must be cautious in interpreting these findings. Just because a scholar does not cite Augustine does not mean that that scholar had not read Augustine, with Anselm being a case in point. Likewise, however, just because a scholar does cite Augustine does not mean that he had read Augustine. Citations are tricky things to interpret. Yet, as mentioned above, arguments from silence do not hold much water, so usually citation, quotation and textual borrowings and parallels when no intermediate source can be identified is the only evidence we have for determining what a scholar had read. To my knowledge, there could well be extant manuscripts of *De civitate Dei* with the annotations and marginal notes of Italian humanists, such as Salutati's, which would give us the best and most direct evidence possible for discerning how the text was read, but until more manuscripts of this kind come to light and are thoroughly studied, we lack concrete, identifiable textual evidence, and we cannot claim a given humanist, no matter how brilliant, erudite and well-read we assume them to have been, had "read" *De civitate Dei* in the manner I just described. But of course, given the examples provided in this volume, we might be optimistic.

It is a basic principle of "doing history" that parallels do not prove influence; or perhaps otherwise stated: correlation is not causation. Above I referenced Michael Sloan's article on the reception of *De civitate Dei* in the *Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, in which Sloan essentially skipped from Dante to Michelangelo and his Sistine Chapel. He based his estimation of the importance of *De civitate Dei* for the Sistine Chapel on the two-part article published by Ester Dotson in 1979.[74] Dotson's work is impressive, showing how the emplotment of the ceiling follows Augustine's emplotment in *De civitate Dei*. She may well be right, but while such parallels are persuasive, they are not conclusive, and certainly are not conclusive evidence that Michelangelo had read *De civitate Dei* in any depth at all, and he may well have conceived of his emplotment based on intermediary

[74] Dotson 1979a; Dotson 1979b.

sources, rather than the text of *De civitate Dei* itself. Moreover, as Dotson pointed out, the Augustinian Giles of Viterbo had a hand in the emplotment as well, and Giles was not only the Prior General of the OESA, but also an avid reader of Augustine, and, depending on how one defines the term, a "humanist".[75] Further, even if *De civitate Dei* lay behind, directly or indirectly, Michelangelo's work, it tells us nothing at all about *how De civitate Dei* was read, only that it was. In a recent article, Enrico Fenzi argued for the importance of *De civitate Dei* to Petrarch, and did so based on textual parallels.[76] Yet here we know that Petrarch had a copy of Augustine's text, and we know that Petrarch had been increasingly studying Augustine, with the result that the parallels almost reach the level themselves of evidence. Fenzi's argument is persuasive, but it is so precisely because we know that Petrarch knew the text and had been steeping himself in Augustine's works. Lacking such evidence, parallels are simply parallels and could be based on the "diffused" Augustinian tradition, on reading here and there in the high and later medieval encyclopedists, or any number of other intermediary sources rather than demonstrating any direct influence or reception of Augustine's texts themselves.

Petrarch offers clear evidence of his engagement with Augustine's texts. Yet later humanists, such as Bruni and Traversari, recommended Augustine as an author who should be read, but they give very little evidence that they themselves had actually read him. Maffeo Vegio, however, had read Augustine, though his attraction to Augustine was to the religious importance of his work, with the *Confessiones* being the most important.[77] Vegio cited *De civitate Dei* in his *De liberorum educatione*, which has been considered "the most complete of the Christian humanist pedagogical treatises,"[78] yet did so as a source for education, rather than as an interpretation of the text itself. A contemporary, however, Pier Paolo Vergerio, preferred Jerome to Augustine and only cited Augustine rarely.[79] While recommending Augustine is important, it does not tell us how *De civitate Dei* was read. Even though Vegio gives evidence of how *De civitate Dei* was *used*, he does not, as such, provide

[75] See Saak 2017, 72-86. [76] Fenzi 2018.

[77] Buckley 2013; Della Schiava 2014; Della Schiava 2020.

[78] Buckley 2013, 1846B; for an apologetic reuse of *De civitate Dei* see Della Schiava 2014, 42-45, and his chapter in this volume.

[79] Gill 2013b.

evidence for how it was *read*, aside from the fact that it was. And while we know that Salutati and Vegio had indeed read *De civitate Dei* themselves, at least in part, there is no hard evidence that Bruni, Vergerio or Traversari had done so, even given their praise of Augustine and recommending him as an acceptable author. We should be wary of the self-presentation of the humanists and their omnipotent erudition, and not accept, without evidence, the historical reality of their conceit, to the same extent that we cannot accept Luther's evaluation of late medieval theology as historically accurate.[80] As I have argued elsewhere, Luther knew relatively little of late medieval theology, even as he made grandiose proclamations of how the entire scholastic tradition was in error. Likewise we need to be skeptical of the humanists' judgments on their contemporaries and predecessors, when, for example Bruni argued to Lady Battista that she should perhaps honor the theologians of her day, if they were good men, but essentially pay them no attention as there is nothing in their writings that cannot be found in Augustine.[81] In making such an assertion, Bruni demonstrated his ignorance not only of the theologians of his time and those of the recent past, but also of Augustine himself. The same principle applies to the humanists' evaluation of the Middle Ages in general, which far too often historians, beginning perhaps with Burckhardt, have accepted as historical reality. Humanists' recommending Augustine, or Jerome over Augustine, or Lactantius over Augustine, does not mean that they had read a single word of Augustine or had any basis whatsoever to make their determinations. The hubris of the academic of a feigned erudition cannot be accepted as the historical reality without proving our own hubris and gullibility, and brings us no closer at all to an understanding of how *De civitate Dei* was actually read in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Above I mentioned various types of reading. The humanists advocated a close reading of classical texts, what we might even call a "thick reading", but they did so for purposes of style, literary quality and moral and religious instruction. The humanist call *ad fontes* was to read the classical texts themselves, and to do so based on their understanding of a liberal learning. Yet there is, at the moment, little evidence that the humanists of the fourteenth and fifteen centuries read *De civitate Dei* in that fashion, or Augustine himself, for that matter, with the exceptions

[80] For Luther, see Saak 2017.

[81] Bruni, *De studiis et litteris*, 245.

of Petrarch and perhaps Salutati and Vegio. However, the humanists' dedication to textual scholarship led to the edition of Augustine's works of Erasmus, and closely associated therewith the commentary on *De civitate Dei* of Vives. Yet even if Erasmus and Vives applied their ideals of textual scholarship to their editorial endeavors, there is no evidence that the humanists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries applied those same ideals to their own reading of Augustine's *magnum opus et arduum*. Even if the early humanists had indeed read *De civitate Dei* in such a fashion, that is in keeping with their own principles and ideals of reading classical texts, there is no evidence that they had done so aside from the hubris of their own literary conceit.

Based on these four points, then, I would conclude that the Italian humanists of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries did not consistently and vastly read *De civitate Dei* in an academic, erudite or scholarly sense, if they had even read the text at all. Yet this points to a major distinction that is fundamental in dealing with the topic at hand: are we trying to understand how the humanists read Augustine, or are we looking for a humanist reading of Augustine? In other words, if we trace the origins of modern textual scholarship to the humanists, did they then read Augustine, when they did read Augustine, in the same way as they read classical texts? Or did they read Augustine rather in a traditional fashion akin to medieval readings thereof? What, then, are we to make of all this? Elsewhere I have argued that it was not the appropriation of Augustine or the influence of Augustine that led to Petrarch's humanism, but rather Petrarch's own rejection, or disappropriation, of Augustine that had made his humanist program possible.[82] And yet as this was going on, the Augustinian Hermits were effecting a true re-birth of Augustine and Augustine scholarship. If we can conceive of the "Italian Renaissance" not as a distinct period in European history with a distinct "before" and "after", but rather as an identifiable movement within the chronological period of c. 1300 to c. 1603, it then becomes a development within the later Middle Ages, or what I have elsewhere termed the "Reformation of the Later Middle Ages." As such, we can then recognize not only with Petrarch, but also with the Italian Renaissance in general, a rejection or an ignoring of Augustine.

[82] Saak 2018.

Yet as Damasus Trapp argued, rejection indicates influence as much as does acceptance, just of a different kind.

The problem here though is that the humanists made their assertions without providing evidence as to why they either rejected or ignored Augustine, which leaves us to wonder what might have been behind it, if we cannot simply accept their blanket dismissals based on an assumed erudition. Perhaps Visser was right in suggesting that the humanist rejection or ignoring of Augustine was based on their disdain for "scholasticism", but if that was indeed the case, the humanists did not argue their point. They simply dismissed Augustine by association, transforming his *magnum opus et arduum* into a work that perhaps had value for religious and pious edification, but not much else. In doing so, they were not replying to Augustine, nor to how Augustine was being read and used by their contemporaries in the universities, transforming Augustine thereby into a ghost whom they then rejected, or chose to ignore. It is difficult to identify what possible reading of *De civitate Dei* led to their positions, since the evidence thereof is lacking and, as asserted above, an argument from silence has about as much validity as an argument from non-sense, whereby a valid inference was acknowledged that from non-sense, non-sense logically follows.

And yet, accepted, transformed, rejected or ignored, the influence of Augustine remained and had some role, even if one we still have not discerned, in the origins of the Renaissance and, as the humanists were beginning to edit Augustine's texts, in the origins of what has traditionally been called the Reformation. In other words, Augustine's texts, with *De civitate Dei* being one of central significance and Augustine's life and the recreations thereof had a formidable impact on the origins of early modern Europe. We though are left with trying to come to an understanding of how this came about, and we have to do so with evidence scanty at best. The importance of the endeavor remains. And thus, we continue to seek the significance and historical impact of the humanists' reading of *De civitate Dei* in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, even when that impact was that not of Augustine, but that of the humanists' – at least partially – rejecting and ignoring of Augustine.

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II

Petrarch

Marco Petoletti

1. Rivers of ink have been spilled on the complex relationship between Petrarch and Augustine.[1] Well known is the famous letter to Dionigi da Borgo San Sepolcro (*Fam.* 4.1) where Petrarch's ascent of Mont Ventoux is described, and where next to the poet himself the central subject is a small volume, a *pugillaris*, containing a copy of the *Confessiones* that had been given to him by an Augustinian friend and that Petrarch, in his turn, would bequeath to the Florentine Augustinian Luigi Marsili, in a sort of transfer of spiritual testimony. Casually opening the book to draw lots (*sortes*) from it, as if it were the sacred text of the Bible, Petrarch was led to reflect on his own conduct of life. This letter, beyond the dazzling surface of literary fiction, is significant as evidence of a privileged connection.[2] Despite the abundance of bibliographical references – where, next to some excellent contributions, there are works that are anchored to outdated ideas less generous in recalling the merits of the scholars of the past – further investigation is needed in order to understand this fascinating relationship. First of all, it is necessary to attempt to reconstruct the Augustinian library of Petrarch, which was quite substantial, by analyzing not only the books left in his collection, but also the many quotations that he relied upon in his Latin works as well as in his manuscripts. While some volumes have been the object of scholarly study, such as Paris, BnF, ms. lat. 2201 (*De vera religione*), BnF, ms. lat. 1994 (*Enarrationes in Psalmos*, Ps. 101-50) and the manuscript in two volumes BnF, ms. lat. 1989 (*Enarrationes in Psalmos*, complete) – the latter work, enormous and beautiful, was given to him by his friend Boccaccio, who was honored in the owner's note for his gift and thanked with a letter – other Augustinian manuscripts belonging to Petrarch have still not yet been adequately

[1] I cite only a limited number of contributions: Gerosa 1966; Luciani 1982; Cardini & Coppini 2004; Lee 2012; Saak 2018.

[2] Billanovich (1966) 1996.

analyzed.[3] I refer here in particular to Vatican City, BAV, ms. Vat. lat. 458, dated to the thirteenth century: an exceptional collection of Augustinian texts including works that were attributed to him in the Middle Ages. The annotations Petrarch composed in reading these *opuscula* largely preserve their undisclosed secrets.[4]

In ms. Vat. lat. 458 Petrarch was acting as a scholar, as he had done from his youth in the 1330s in BnF, ms. lat. 2201, where Cassiodorus' *De anima* and Augustine's *De vera religione* were originally copied together as part of a diptych entitled *De vita beata* attributed to Augustine. Petrarch worked on the rubrics to attribute each work to its true author. In the Vatican manuscript, which Petrarch studied in later years – on paleographical grounds, the *marginalia* should be assigned to a time when he was a "guest of Ambrose" ("hospes Ambrosii") in Milan between 1353 and 1361 – soon after *De ecclesiasticis dogmatibus*, at f. 121r-v, have been transcribed, in parts, the *Dialogi quaestionum XLV*, a Pseudo-Augustinian work introduced by the rubric *Incipit liber Augustini de anima et spiritu*, joined with Cassiodorus' *De anima*, beginning with chapter two. ("Dixi propositiones has non praeceptis regum"). Petrarch erased two and a half columns of text; then, in the space freed up, he copied the first chapter of Cassiodorus' *De anima*.[5] In this case, he did not intervene on the rubrics and his eventual doubts are left in a note (to use the words of Billanovich, who first studied this case) that has been scraped away "così profondamente che anche con i raggi ultravioletti se ne legge a stento qualche lettera."[6]

Petrarch gave an impassioned portrait of Augustine in *Vit. sol.* 2.4.10, after (not by chance) a chapter in which he wanted to glorify St. Ambrose, who acted as a great patron for Augustine's conversion. Following the ninth book of the *Confessiones*, Petrarch discussed how the saint's religious rebirth would ripen and be strengthened not among the city's crowd, but in the refuge of the *rus Cassiciacum*, or, as

[3] Rico 1974; Billanovich (1960) 1996; Coppini 2004; Bertolani 2005, 229-72. Still largely unfulfilled is the proposed edition (Borelli 2018) of Petrarch's annotations to the collection of Augustine's works in BnF, ms. lat. 2103.

[4] Billanovich (1975) 1996. See also Petoletti 2019, 353-55.

[5] Billanovich (1975) 1996, 66-67; Bellieni 2010, 8-9, n. 15, where it is disclosed that Petrarch had not used for this work of restoration his other manuscript, to wit, BnF, ms. lat. 2201, where the first chapter of Cassiodorus' *De anima* is copied on f. 3r-v.

[6] Billanovich (1975) 1996, 66.

Petrarch called it, the *rus caseatum*. Perhaps he read this form of the name in the manuscript at his disposal: to settle the question it might be important to verify the evidence in the *Confessiones*, which – relying on the modern apparatuses of critical editions – presents *ad locum*, 9.3.5, a variety of readings).[7] Augustine is not only a master and a spiritual guide, but he is also a great model on the road of solitude. Evidence for this comes from his commentary on the Gospel of John (*Io. ev. tr.* 17.11), the only words drawn from the vast sea of the saint's extensive production (as Petrarch observes: "infinita hominis illius scripta") to be mentioned in the Augustinian portrait of *De vita solitaria*: "Difficile est in turba videre Cristum." As a scholar, Petrarch does not miss a chance to reflect on problems of attribution. He recalls, without providing the title, a work that Augustine would have composed for the hermits of Monte Pisano in Tuscany, but he uses a formulation that allows for some doubt:

> Denique per omnem vitam solitariis et quietis locis atque inter cetera Pisani Montis otio delectatus est, et illic heremitico habitu traxisse moras creditur, et ad loci illius heremitas liber suo quidem prescriptus est nomine.
>
> Finally, for all of his life [Augustine] took delight in solitary and quiet places, and among others in the *otium* of Monte Pisano; it is rumored that he spent time there in the garb of a hermit, and his name appears in the title of a book [written] for the hermits of that place.[8]

As Petrarch writes to Laelius on the problem of false attributions (*Sen.* 2.4.24), some works were wrongly ascribed to Augustine (although the problem was not so evident as in the case of Origen, with harm to the reputation of the latter): "Multa Origeni tribui fama est, fame usque ad discrimen, quedam Augustino." This should not be taken as a reference

[7] The form *Caseatum* might otherwise have been introduced from a passage of the Psalms in the *vetus* version (67.16), quoted by Augustine himself in *Conf.* 9.3.5: "Tui sumus. Indicant hortationes et consolationes tuae: fidelis promissor reddis Verecundo pro rure illo eius Cassiciaco, ubi ab aestu saeculi requievimus in te, amoenitatem sempiterne virentis paradisi tui, quoniam dimisisti ei peccata super terram in *monte incaseato*, *monte* tuo, *monte uberi*" ("We are yours. Your exhortations and your consolations have shown it. You, faithful sponsor, are paying back Verecundus for his country estate at Cassiciacum, where we found rest in you from the restlessness of the world, with the amenities of your paradise in perpetual flower, for on your mountain, your mountain rich in fat and abundant, you have forgiven his earthly sins").

[8] All translations are mine, unless stated otherwise.

to the *Sermones ad fratres in eremo* – the first collection of which was put together in the 1340s and 1350s,[9] to then be augmented in successive years – but to *De cognitione verae vitae*, a dialogue composed by Honorius Augustodunensis that circulated widely under the name of Augustine.[10]

I would like to focus my attention on *De civitate Dei*. Until twenty years ago, it was thought that Padua, Biblioteca Universitaria, ms. 1490, from the fourteenth century, was the manuscript of *De civitate Dei* owned and annotated by the young Petrarch. He supposedly bought it in 1325 from the cantor Cinzio Arlotti at Avignon, as we can read in a note on f. 1r ("Anno Domini M IIIC XXV° mense februarii in Avinione emi istum librum De civitate Dei ab exequutoribus domini Cinthii cantoris Turonensis pro pretio florenorum XII").[11] But Maria Chiara Billanovich has made this hypothesis go up in smoke: it was Ildebrandino Conti, bishop of Padua, who purchased this book and annotated it, not Petrarch. What is more, it is possible to identify marginal notes by Ildebrandino in another volume belonging to Petrarch's library, a copy of Isidore's *Etymologiae* now in BnF, ms. lat. 7595.[12] The consequences of this new identification are important also from a biographical perspective: it is now no longer possible to maintain that Petrarch in 1325 would have re-entered France from Italy, where he was studying law in Bologna. Additionally, there are also repercussions on the problem of Petrarch's interventions in the organization of the famous Livy manuscript, London, BL, ms. Harl. 2483.[13] However, the pair of rhyming hexameters with which he wished to embellish the manuscript of his friend Ildebrandino is certainly an autograph, as will be discussed below.

The study of Petrarch and *De civitate Dei* must proceed along other paths: it is necessary to begin with the quotations, which are numerous, present in his extensive literary production,[14] and with those that we

[9] See Saak 2018, 133-34. On this collection of sermons: Saak 2012, 81-137, and in this volume at 32.

[10] See Petoletti 2021.

[11] Billanovich 1981, 57-84.

[12] Billanovich 1994. All the notes on the Paduan manuscript containing *De civitate Dei* have been published by Zuccollo 2006. The annotations in BnF, ms. lat. 7595, distinguishing between the hands of Ildebrandino and Petrarch, have been edited in Petoletti 2003.

[13] Petoletti 2013, 262; Petoletti 2018, 278-87.

[14] It is not possible to discuss all of them at length, nor even to present them in a synthetic form: an entire volume would be necessary.

are able to trace back through the margins of the manuscripts annotated by him.[15] We know that Petrarch's *marginalia* are connected by a dense network of cross-references. It is therefore possible that the passages of *De civitate Dei* quoted in the margin of his own books would also be pointed out in his copy (or copies) of the immense Augustinian treatise. If this turns out to be lost, it is not impossible that, as for other Petrarchan manuscripts, an apograph might have survived in which the notes of the famous reader have been reproduced.

On 27 April 1374, Petrarch replied to the renowned jurist Luca da Penne (*Sen.* 16.1), who had been appointed by the pope to expand the Ciceronian collection of the papal library at Avignon. To this end he had turned to Petrarch, the master of that generation, to borrow some texts to be copied. To justify his remarkable refusal, Petrarch retraced the fundamental stages of his cultural formation and his passion for Cicero, which drove him to search deeply into his works: but the circumstances of his life had turned out so that his collection could not compete with the pope's. In this letter, combining autobiographical confession with studied reticence, Petrarch says that in his infancy, while his peers were devoting themselves to the booklets of Prosper of Aquitaine and Aesop (respectively, the *Liber epigrammatum* inspired by sentences that Prosper himself had excerpted from Augustine's texts and the famous collection of fables), he was attending to the works of Cicero, encouraged by his father and by his own genius, without even understanding the words, but only drawn to the harmonious and sweet sound of the sophisticated prose. At that time he had not yet laid hands on the texts of the Church Fathers, and we see him "et errore cecus et typo tumidus etatis" (*Sen.* 16.1.43), an echo – precious and suggestive – of Augustine, who in *Conf.* 7.9.13 wrote that he acquired from a person inflated with insane arrogance ("typho turgidus") some Platonic books translated from Greek into Latin, which helped him in the path of his conversion.[16] Certainly from the very beginning he was not unfamiliar with Scripture, his daily bread. However, Petrarch's mastery of the great patrimony of patristic writings was progressive and unstoppable, as all

[15] In this instance I have sought instead to be as complete as possible, above all as concerns the classics.

[16] See Luciani 1982, 181-82. For the interest developed in the substantive *typhus*, see Petoletti 2003, 38, with reference to other Petrarchan passages.