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ARIADNE DOS SANTOS DAHER

UNDERSTANDING THE UNDERSTOOD
A STUDY ON THE MYTHOLOGIES OF THE CONTEMPORARY CITY

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ARIADNE DOS SANTOS DAHER

UNDERSTANDING THE UNDERSTOOD
A STUDY ON THE MYTHOLOGIES OF THE CONTEMPORARY CITY

Tese apresentada ao programa de pós-graduação em Gestão Urbana da Escola de Arquitetura e Design da Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná, como requisito parcial à obtenção do título de Doutor em Gestão Urbana.

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Orientador: Prof. Dr. Clóvis Ultramari

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"UNDERSTANDING THE UNDERSTOOD. A STUDY ON THE MYTHOLOGIES OF THE CONTEMPORARY CITY"

Por

ARIADNE DOS SANTOS DAHER

Tese aprovada como requisito parcial para obtenção do grau de Doutora no Programa de Pós-Graduação em Gestão Urbana, área de concentração em Gestão Urbana, da Escola de Belas Artes, da Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná.

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Curitiba, 30 de março de 2022.

DEDICATION

To my mom Maria de Lourdes and my sister Manoella,
the best "fan club" one could ever have or hope for

Clovis, so sorry for all the times I reminded you of Chapter 1

Jaime, Mr. Lerner
in memorian

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The proverb *it takes a village to raise a child is well known*. That it takes a village to write a doctoral dissertation, it is perhaps less so. Though the intellectual effort and the writing is a solitary exercise, that does not mean the doctorate is a solitary endeavour. I hold many debts of gratitude to the "village" that was by my side during these four years.

To my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Clovis Ultramari, I can only be thankful for all the guidance, patience and support and for making me laugh despite myself in some particularly gloomy moments. To Prof. Dr. Rodrigo Firmino and Prof. Dr. Jelson Oliveira, who have generously and attentively accompanied and contributed to the work from the beginning, I can also only be forever grateful. To the three of you, my apologies for the many shortcomings you will inevitably find in the following pages, they were all my doing, and my own. To Prof. Dr. Michele Acuto and Dr. Ana Carla Fonseca Reis, you are an inspiration, I am honoured to have you as part of my evaluation panel. I must also thank Prof. Dr. Iderlina Mateo-Babiano for her invaluable help in ensuring I could continue to have access to the invaluable resources of the University of Melbourne online library, and Prof. Francois Schroeter, for making himself available and sharing sources and wisdom. Ana Zorning Jayme, thank you for your graceful and skilful support.

I am fortunate to count among my colleagues, friends and family some of the best people on the planet. For all your love and support, understanding, and for not giving up on me while I ventured on the "dark side of the moon", my love and my thanks. I'd like to particularly thank Prof. Dra. Samantha Manfroni Filipin at Universidade Tuiuti do Paraná and architects Marina Schulman and Ana Luiza Ottersbach, at Jaime Lerner Arquitetos Associados, for doing so much to make things easier for me. Pollyana Mara Schlenker, Polly, I must add you to this list!

To my father Manoel, mother Maria de Lourdes, my superstar sister Manoella (and now Guillaume must be included), my gratitude to you extends way beyond these four years. You are both the solid ground under my feet and the horizon that inspires me to go beyond. Thank you for always being there for me, I love you more than you can ever know.

An though they are not here to read this, I'd like to thank these four amazing voices from the past Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and St. Augustine, the more I got to know you, the more fascinated I became. And to every thinker, writer and scholar since, who made their life's mission to facilitate understandings and inspire new comprehensions, it is humbling to have so many shoulders to try to stand on.

These past two years have not been easy for anyone. More times than not, it was a struggle to find the necessary peace of mind so words could make sense in my head to move on to these pages. There are always many more perils in our path than we realize. I am grateful to the often invisible but always present Divine Providence that saw me safely to these (hopefully) concluding characters.

All in all, Dickens said it best.

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,
it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness,
it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity,
it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness,
it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair,
we had everything before us, we had nothing before us,
we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way —
in short, the period was so far like the present period,
that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil,
in the superlative degree of comparison only.

Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities[1].

In my case, there were four.

[1] Dickens, Charles. *A Tale of Two Cities.* San Diego: Icon Classics, 2005 (1859), p. 5.

Entretanto, aqui misturo duas coisas: uma primeira, que é o alerta ao necessário acúmulo de conhecimento – sempre crítico, claro – que deve se apresentar no momento de se escrever a tese como algo minimamente adulto; uma segunda, que é a respeito do perigo de se embrenhar por novos e desconhecidos temas no momento em que já devemos comprovar um mínimo domínio daquilo que intencionamos pesquisar.

Clovis Ultramari[2], 2016, p. 19.
Como não fazer uma tese

Agora vedes bem que, cometendo
O duvidoso mar num lenho leve,
Por vias nunca usadas, não temendo
de Áfrico e Noto a força, a mais s'atreve:
Que, havendo tanto já que as partes vendo
Onde o dia é comprido e onde breve,
Inclinam seu propósito e perfia
A ver os berços onde nasce o dia.

Luís de Camões[3], p. 8.
Os Lusíadas

[2] Ultramari, Clovis. *Como não fazer uma tese.* Curitiba: Pucpress, 2016.
[3] *Os Lusíadas de Luís de Camões.* Lisboa: Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros. Instituto Camões, 2000.

RESUMO

A ontologia e a epistemologia da "cidade" são o objeto desta pesquisa exploratória, pautada por suas interpretações em obras de filosofia e história. A metodologia adotada foi a de revisão de literatura, desenvolvida em método narrativo, priorizando pensadores canônicos e seus intérpretes. O estudo parte da premissa de que há camadas da cidade contemporânea enraizadas na Antiguidade que persistiram ao longo da história e da geografia e que se fazem presentes em nossa compreensão atual. A hipótese explorada foi que essas ideações chegaram ao presente por meio da reverberação de um conjunto de pensadores que foram consideradas *arautos* em seu próprio tempo (possibilitando uma compreensão sincrônica), mas cujas vozes foram poderosas o suficiente para influenciar o debate por séculos vindouros (permitindo uma leitura diacrônica). A persistência desses conjuntos de ideias/ideais é designada por *mitologias* dentro do quadro analítico perseguido. As vozes arquetípicas estudadas como arautos foram as de Platão, Aristóteles, Cícero e Santo Agostinho, uma vez que cada qual deixou como legado uma "cidade construída pela fala". Esses arautos sintetizam dois *tipos ideais* relacionados à cidade na Antiguidade: a *polis,* uma experiência territorial e política autônoma, coesa e integral; e o Império Romano, "a cidade que se tornou o mundo" ao desacoplar os domínios da *civitas* e *urbs* em um horizonte cada vez mais amplo, cosmopolita e intensivo no consumo de recursos em direção a universalidade. Registros tanto dos "tipos-ideais" quanto das "cidades pela fala" construídas por cada um dos quatro arautos parecem ainda estar presentes nos estudos urbanos contemporâneos, o que pode ser exemplificado pelos debates entre a visão de uma "urbanização planetária", da "era das cidades" (*urban age*), e da cidade como local privilegiado para uma vida mais plena. As conclusões encontradas apontam para a compreensão da "cidade" como um processo cumulativo, metamórfico e de complexidade crescente.

Palavras-chave: Ontologia da cidade. Epistemologia da cidade. História das cidades. Cidade contemporânea. Mito e Mitologia.

ABSTRACT

This is an exploratory research on the ontology and epistemology of “the city”, guided by interpretations of it in philosophy and history works. The methodology is one of literature review, developed in narrative method, prioritizing canonic thinkers and their interpreters. The study departs from the premise that there are layers of the contemporary city rooted in Antiquity that have persisted throughout history and geography and that are still ingrained in our current understanding of it. It hypothesizes that these ideations have reached us through the echoes of a set of canonic voices who were considered heralds in their own time (enabling a synchronic understanding) but that was also powerful enough to influence the debate for centuries to come (allowing for the diachronic reading). The persistence of these ensembles of ideas/ideals are called mythologies within the pursued analytical framework. The archetypical voices studied as heralds are those of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and St. Augustine, for each left as a legacy a “city built in speech”. These heralds epitomize two ideal-types related to the city in Antiquity: the polis, a self-contained, cohesive and integral territorial and political experience; and the Roman empire, “the city that became the world” by decoupling the realms of civitas and urbs in an ever-growing, cosmopolitan and resource-intensive push towards universality. Imprints of both the “ideal-types” and the “cities in speech” built by each of the four heralds seem to be still present, exemplary, in contemporary debate in scholarship debating the “urban age” view, the “planetary urbanization” view, and in the view of the city as a privileged site for a more fulfilling life, pointing towards the conclusion that the understanding of “the city” is a cumulative, metamorphic process of increasing complexity.

Key-words: City ontology. City epistemology. History of cities. Contemporary city. Myth and Mythology.

SUMMARY

1 INTRODUCTION

potissima pars principium est[4]
the most essential part of anything is its beginning

One of the fortunate discoveries of the exploration that was carried out for this research project was the work of Pavel A. Florenskij. Florenskij is considered the "Leonardo da Vinci" of Russia[5]. He was a philosopher, polymath, physicist, theologue, and priest of the Orthodox Church.

Following Aristotle, Humboldt and others, Florenskij[6] argues that language (and words) functions in two levels, forming an antinomy. One part is the *ergon* (the exterior part, its fixed structure, what allows a language to be written and be stable through time; it has the character of "monument", which exists before me and will exist after me), and the other is the *energeia* (the intimate part, the dynamic part, the part that expresses energy, emotions, in the present moment). *Ergon and energeia*, in language, allow for the meeting/intersection of a people (populus) and an individual.

Though using a different vocabulary, Florenskij's theory could be construed as a synthesis of this doctoral dissertation's aspirations and proposed development path. One is searching for a better understanding of "the city", which is, in the end, a word; a word that is pregnant with meanings, meanings that are dynamic and flexible. However, as it remains a word, it is not foreign to the two levels in which language operates. The question could then be, of the word "city", what is the part of it that is *ergon*, that is monumental, that despite the inflexions it experiences by interacting with other words, maintains a level of stability that allows for it to be recognized over time? And what of the *energeia*, the dynamic impulse for change and expansion. What were the meanings that "the city" became imbibed with while travelling through different

[4] Cacciari, Massimo. *Europe and Empire: On the Political Forms of Globalization.* Alessandro Carrera (ed.) New York: Fordham University Press, 2016, p. 109

[5] Milite, Erika. *La percezione mistica dell'infanzia e il valore magico della parola in P. A. Florenskij.* 2014. 104 páginas. Tesi di Laurea magistrale in Filosofia della società, dell'arte e della comunciazione, Università Ca'Foscari Venezia, Venezia, 2014.

[6] Lingua, Graziano. La parole e le cose. La filosofia del nome di P.A. Florenskij. *Dialegesthai. Rivista telematica di filosofia* [in linea], anno 4 (2002) [inserito il 26 luglio 2002], disponibile su World Wide Web: <https://mondodomani.org/dialegesthai/>, [34 KB], ISSN 1128-5478.

zeitgeists until it came to resonate in our contemporary ears? And finally, could there be a way to connect the intersection of a people and an individual in relation to "the city"?

By the accounts that have reached us, mainly through the writings of Plato, Socrates placed great importance in the search for definitions, a concern that is a hallmark of the birth of Philosophy. Philosophy, as it is said, is the daughter of the polis[7].

A tentative path of exploration then is to travel back to the essential part of the beginning, the beginning of a novel political form associated with an also novel type of discourse, one that cares for the construction of concepts: the Greek *polis.* There, two voices embodied a synthesis of their own time and left a legacy of *cities built with words,* cities in speech: Plato and Aristotle.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the Adriatic, a *polis* like so many others in the Italian peninsula had begun its ascent to *caput mundi* and, there and then, voices telling of the rise and the fall of this unprecedented political form, of this growing city, that took over the known Western world, emerged. And there will be two heralds that not only recount the story of their time, but that also bequeath to posterity two other cities built with words, Cicero and Augustine.

Florenskij still attributes a third, fundamental layer to the words in his philosophy of language. Words are charged with spiritual energy, for words *are* the reality[8]. They are not only descriptive; they have the power to create (and destroy). The words themselves have a soul (*semema*), which is the part of the word that can mutate, absorb new meaning; and yet, always connected to its previous content. Such attribute adds to the power of beginnings and the clarity of concepts, the dimension of permanence in time of an idea, and the capacity that the words have to be commuted by us into "reality". That is the thread of myth and mythology, which, combined with the threads of four heralds and the cities they built with words, will endeavour to find its way to an enhanced understanding of the contemporary city.

[7] Pierre Aubenque, « Antiquité - Naissance de la philosophie », *Encyclopædia Universalis* [en ligne], consulté le 17 mars 2019. URL : http://www.universalis-edu.com/encyclopedie/antiquite-naissance-de-la-philosophie/

[8] Le teorie linguistiche del Cratilo platonico sono un riferimento costante in tutti i saggi di Mysl' i jazyk. Cfr in particolare la discussione contenuta in «Dialektika», in U vodorosdelov mysli, Moskva 1990, 144ss, *apud* Lingua (2002, n.p.).

2 THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

XXII[9]
Pensar el mundo es como hacerlo nuevo
de la sombra o la nada, desustanciado y frío.
Bueno es pensar, decolorir el huevo universal,
sorberlo hasta el vacío.
Pensar: borrar primero y dibujar después,
y quien borrar no sabe camina en cuatro pies.
Una neblina opaca confunde toda cosa:
el monte, el mar, el pino, el pájaro, la rosa.
Pitágoras alarga a Cartesius la mano.
Es la extensión sustancia del universo humano.
Y sobre el lienzo blanco o la pizarra escura
se pinta, en blanco o negro, la cifra o la figura.
Yo pienso. (Un hombre arroja una traíña al mar
y la saca vacía; no ha logrado pescar.)

Antonio Machado
Puerto de Santa María, 1915

XXIX[10]
Caminante, son tus huellas
el camino y nada más;
caminante, no hay camino,
se hace camino al andar.
al andar se hace camino,
y al volver la vista atrás
se ve la senda que nunca
se ha de volver a pisar.
Caminante, no hay camino,
sino estelas en la mar.

XLIV
Todo pasa y todo queda,
pero lo nuestro es pasar,
pasar haciendo caminos,
caminos sobre la mar.

Antonio Machado
Proverbios y cantares

[9] Epigram XXII by Antônio Machado (1875 – 1939) in WEIDEMANN, Emilio J. G., Proverbios y cantares de Antonio Machado no incluidos en Poesías completas. *AIH. Actas XII,* 1995. Available at https://cvc.cervantes.es/literatura/aih/pdf/12/aih_12_4_023.pdf

[10] Epigrams XXIX and XLIV in MACHADO, Antonio. *Proverbios y cantares.* 1909, available at https://cvc.cervantes.es/aula/didactired/anteriores/mayo_09/11052009_01.htm

2.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

> *We all have a huge store of beliefs of these and other kinds, including countless beliefs originally formed through testimony. These beliefs form a structure of great complexity, with innumerable changing elements that reflect our continuing experience and thought, our actions and emotions, our learning and forgetting, our inferring and accepting, our revising and rejecting, our speaking and listening. That structure is grounded in us: in our memories, our habits of thought, our mental and perceptual capacities, our rational nature.*
> *Knowledge of the truths of reason arises within the structure itself, once we have the needed concepts. Through our consciousness of what is inside of us, and our perceptual engagement with what is outside of us, with the social world as well as our physical environment, this structure is anchored, both internally and externally, to the world. That vast and various reality is at once the ultimate source and the object of our empirical knowledge.*
>
> Robert Audi[11]

As most of the things in life that are undertaken by "free choice", entering a doctoral program begs two correlated questions.

The first one is "existential". Why am I doing this to myself? Why am I choosing to commit the precious commodity of time to something that is widely acknowledged as a taxing endeavour, to the point of threatening one's mental health[12]?

In the interest of full disclosure, there was a pragmatic reason. A Ph.D. is a credential that would, potentially, enable me to knock on doors which, without it, I would not be allowed to touch. And it is a most valuable one, for it has world-wide credence and, in times of such uncertainty about the future of work, having it in hand may mean professional survival. To use Bourdieu's terminology, it is a requirement to be a player in some *fields*, such as Academia. It does not mean that I will have success in it, but without it, I cannot even try.

Albeit important, this reason would not be enough. There would have to be additional motivation, addressing a different step in Maslow's pyramid[13]: the one of self-actualization, the desire to explore one's potential.

After more than two decades working in planning cities and metropolis, there was a desire to gain some new perspective about the puzzle in which I had been labouring on for so long. Do I really understand the object of my efforts? Am I, despite my best intentions, just replicating thoughts and trends in the projects I'm in charge of, or worse, when teaching my students?

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[11] Audi, Robert. *Epistemology : A Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge.* New York and London: Routledge, 2011, p. 385.

[12] See https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03489-1

[13] See https://www.theschooloflife.com/thebookoflife/the-importance-of-maslows-pyramid-of-needs/

So, the second defining question came into play. Is there something that I'd like to study that would be worth investing four years of my life? What is it that I'm passionate about (or in equal measure, confused by, ignorant of ...) learning? Which contribution could I possibly make to my field?

For the Graduate Program in Urban Management (PPGTU-PUCPR) selection process, the research line proposed was to work with the issue of "metropolitan identity" (or lack thereof), which echoed a very significant personal and professional experience acquired during the revision of the *Plano de Desenvolvimento Integrado da Região Metropolitana de Curitiba* in the years that I worked at the Coordenação da Região Metropolitana de Curitiba - COMEC.

That would also be in tandem with the inquiry that I conducted for my Master's dissertation, which endeavoured to investigate the relationship between capitalism, urbanization and the unevenness of the resulting geography applied to the Metropolitan Region of Curitiba. The *Estatuto da Metrópole*[14] was then a "hot topic", and I felt it would be an issue worth exploring in somewhat familiar territory.

However, after being accepted in the Program, I was invited by my doctoral dissertation supervisor, Prof. Clovis Ultramari, to look at "the wider world", and perhaps navigate outside my comfort zone for this new endeavour. What angle of this *fractal*[15] that is the city could entice my curiosity in an original perspective which is, after all, a requirement of a thesis?

The spark came from what could be considered a somewhat unorthodox source in a stricter academic perspective, for it is a book that became an international bestseller ⋯ *Sapiens, a Brief History of Human Kind* (2011), by historian Yuval Noah Harari[16], professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The argument that I found intriguing was how, in his view, *Homo sapiens* became the "ruler species" of the world: through the capacity of creating and believing in shared "myths", meaning intersubjective constructions that originate in our capacity for abstract thought and imagination, and that are capable of mobilizing coordinated efforts of millions and millions of people around the planet. Money, corporations, human rights, would be examples of these "myths": things that shape our lives but that are essentially shared conventions. Money is a piece of paper. It has value because we, as a society, believe that it is worth an "x" amount that can be exchanged for goods and services. If for some reason, we did not believe anymore in its capacity to be exchanged for goods and services, it would revert to the condition of being just a piece of paper.

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[14] Federal legislation meant to provide legal framework for planning at the metropolitan scale. See http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2015-2018/2015/lei/l13089.htm

[15] Ultramari, C.; Firmino, R.J. 2010. Urban beings or city dwellers? The complementary concepts of 'urban' and 'city'. *City & Time* 4 (3): 3. [online] url: http://www.ct.ceci-br.org.

[16] Harari, Yuval N. *Sapiens, a Brief History of Humankind.* London: London Vintage Books, 2011.

From this understanding of "myth", the embryo of this research project began to take shape. Several questions came to mind. How is a "myth" formed? Is the capacity to believe an evolutionary advantage of our species: are we "hard-wired" to believe? If so, how much margin of manoeuvre do we have *not* to believe? Can we doubt within our own reality? After all, what can we know to be objectively true, and what is a product of our collective imagination? Do we, or should we, doubt everything? Because something is imagined does it mean it is not real?

I did not find definitive answers to any of these questions, nor do I hope to, anymore. But in the process of asking them, and reading about them, and thinking about them, I could not help but come to a whole new level of respect and appreciation for the nature of Philosophy, and its daughters in the Humanities, and their inquiries into the nature of knowledge, of being, of existing, of freedom, of ethics, in studies of metaphysics, ontology, epistemology, axiology, phenomenology, hermeneutics,... Thousands of years and exceptional minds dedicated to understanding questions of this nature are a very humbling reminder of my acute limitations in addressing such subjects.

However, as a set of research questions, it motivated me like no other: ***Are there "myths" that shape our understanding of the contemporary city? If so, what and which are they? Where do they come from? Do they affect our practice as planners? Are we aware of them? Could we/should we break away from them?***

According to Nicolazzi (2010, p. 232), Paul Ricoeur had already cautioned that, **"em se tratando das relações entre memória e história, que se toda origem é mítica, todo começo é histórico[17]."** With these questions in mind begins the campaign of this thesis, which does not stake the claim of finding any definitive answers, but, hopefully, making for an interesting journey.

> Educational researchers pride themselves on implementing the projects that serve practical purposes and solve daily human problems. Yet they also conceive of the value of educational inquiry in posing the questions that enlarge our conception of what is possible and what enriches our intellectual and social imaginations. Imagination is the gateway into the known and the unknown, the mysterious spark that instigates our thinking and desire to pursue daring projects. [···] Like philosophy, research begins in wonder [···] Emanating from wonder are research questions, hypothesis, methods, theoretical frameworks [···] the research process is circular in nature. Its circular nature is explicated in the word itself: re-search, meaning searching all over again. It implies that our knowledge of the world and human phenomena is never complete. The end of any research process, no matter how strongly it may be grounded in foundational knowledge, signifies a new question emerging from the results, and thus the process continues [···]. (Lukenchuk[18], 2013, p. 85-6).

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[17] Nicolazzi, Fernando. A história entre tempos: François Hartog e a conjuntura historiográfica contemporânea. *História: Questões & Debates,* Curitiba, n. 53, p. 229-257, jul./dez. 2010. Editora UFPR.

[18] Lukenchuk, Antonina (Ed.). *Paradigms of Research for the 21st Century.* Perspectives and Examples from Practice. New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2013.

2.2 JUSTIFICATION

2.2.1 WHY "THE CITY"

Everyone knows what a city is, except the experts'
Horace Mitchell Miner[19]

"PowerPoint cities[20]" are selling like "hot cakes" in the global marketplace, a demiurge's dream come true for many architects, planners, developers, think-tanks, consultancies, investors, branding strategists and politicians alike. A study presented by Moser and Côté-Roy (2021)[21] shows that, in the past two decades, over 150 new cities built from scratch have been launched in more than 40 countries (many more if China was included), a trend that has intensified in recent years. Located almost exclusively in emerging economies, their projects have mostly an entrepreneurial focus and tend to involve some measure of partnership between the state and the private sector.

It is necessary to highlight, as did the authors, that there is not a consistent vocabulary for projects that are intended by their builders to become "cities", as there is no unified definition of what constitutes a "new city". Within the article,

> we treat new cities as ideological and discursive constructions and define them based on the aspirations of their builders: urban mega-developments built from scratch on a tabula rasa that are designed to be both geographically and administratively separate from established cities, while projecting a distinct brand, architectural identity, and vision of the future, a sort of "**mirror opposite**" [⋯] of nearby cities (Moser and Côté-Roy, 2021, p. 2, emphasis added).

Following their reasoning, scholarship on the topic examines three important rationales for new city building (op. cit., p. 05-07).

Urbanization as a business model: in economic terms, the importance that states are placing on massive urban projects is meant to spark economic growth by "leapfrogging" economies into new sectors and by supporting extractive economies and advantageous

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[19] Miner, Horace M. The city and modernization: an introduction. In: HM Miner (ed.) The City in Modern Africa. New York-London: F. A. Praeger, 1967, p. 11, *apud* Prato, Giuliana B. European Urban Traditions: An Anthropologist's View on Polis, Urbs, and Civitas. *Diogenes.* February 2018, p. 2. doi: 10.1177/0392192117740023

[20] As referenced by Moser and Côté-Roy (2021), a large portion of new cities exist only in PowerPoint presentations and websites, with a few having barely broken ground.

[21] Moser, S. and Côté-Roy, L. (2021), New cities: Power, profit, and prestige. *Geography Compass,* 15: e 12549. https://doi.org/10.1111/gec3.12549

commodities prices There is the desire to attract investment capital, industries, and business headquarters to enable sustained growth and productivity.

Experimentation in governance: another rationale identified was a motivation to develop and implement new strategies and systems for city management by introducing novel modes of urban governance and norms of city-making, relying on "smart" approaches which, through ubiquitous tech will result in more efficient and streamlined decision-making. A corporatized management structure can sideline elected mayors and city councils.

Political and ideological projects: many of these new cities, particularly the ones aiming at being new federal or provincial-level capitals, despite frequently being designed to look "global", often employ symbols of culture, ethnicity, and religion in the service of nation-building as a way for the state to project a "natural" expression of nationhood, "legitimizing" power, ethnic and/or religious hierarchies.

As pointed by the authors,

> … recent scholarship on new cities reveals new scales and modes of entrepreneurial urbanism in which **the resident is increasingly treated as a customer and consumer, rather than as a citizen,** and many new cities are treated by elites as **spaces of investment, rather than prioritized as places to live.** The study of new cities brings a variety of broader trends into sharp relief such as the financialization and foreignization of real estate and infra-structure in the Global South (Fauveaud, 2019, 2020; Schindler & Kanai, 2019; Shatkin, 2017), the normalization of "bypass urbanism" where new "world class" projects draw focus away from the pressing needs of existing cities (Bhattacharya & Sanyal, 2011), the new scales and speed at which projects are executed (Cugurullo, 2017), and also underscores the continued relevance of frameworks on the right to the city, the just city, and spaces of exception (Caprotti, 2014a). (op. cit., p. 7, emphasis added).

If on one hand, "new cities" appear a seductive "development" strategy, on the other, quite a few alarm bells were ringing that the Covid pandemic would spell the doom of cities[22]. Chief among the concerns were the impact of remote work, online shopping, closures of retail, services, and amenities, loss of revenues and tax base as business close and people move to suburban areas, mass transit perception, and so forth. Though a lot of contention remains[23] in the "pro and against" fields, a curious aspect of the debate seems to be what Hartog[24] calls "presentism", *the sense that only the present exists, a present characterized at once by the tyranny of the instant and by the treadmill of an unending now.*

[22] For instance, James Brasuell (2020) compiled a list of headlines, particularly in the US context. See https://www.planetizen.com/blogs/110403-media-cant-stop-talking-about-end-cities

[23] As illustrated by John Rennie Short and Michael J. Orlando's online article for the 2021 World Economic Forum https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/02/covid19-cities-urbanisation-migration/

[24] Hartog, François. *Regimes of Historicity : Presentism and Experiences of Time.* Columbia University Press, 2015.

> Time is an unthought, not because it is unthinkable, but because it is not thought or, more simply, no one gives it a thought. As a historian who tries to be attentive to his time, I have, like many others, observed how the category of the present has taken hold to such an extent that one can really talk of an **omnipresent present.**[28] This is what I call "presentism" here. (Hartog, 2015, p. 8, emphasis added).

Explaining it further, he highlights a trend that emerged in the 1980s among French historians as "History of the present time", which has as one of its features the request, or even the requirement, to respond to demands for contemporary or very contemporary issues.

In a parallel with what Hartog wrote when commenting on the 2008 crises,

> … it is not hard to see that links exist between the crisis, initially financial, which radiated out from the United States, and **a world so enslaved to the present that no other viewpoint is considered admissible.** What words have we been hearing since 2008? Essentially "crisis," "recession," "depression," but also "(total) transformation" and even "change of era." **Some swear by the idea that "nothing will ever be the same again," while others (or the same) just as noisily declare that "the economy is getting back on track" (that is, just like before),** that "the green shoots" are visible, that the upturn is just around the corner and we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. (op. cit., xiii).

The two situations hereby exemplified aim at highlighting one of the objectives of this research, which is to explore the ontological understanding of "the city". When we are talking about building a "new city", when we're discussing if "the city" will "live or die", what is it that we are talking about?

Nicholls[25] (2016, p. 16), discussing Hans Blumenberg on *Political Myth*, recalls his essay on anthropology and rhetoric, where he stretches the aporia that arises when attempting to answer Kant's question of what is the human being. Blumberg argues that *Man only comprehends himself by the way of what he is not. It is not only his situation that is metaphorical; his constitution itself already is.* Further on, Nicholls calls upon Theodor W. Adorno's argument in *Negative Dialectics*[26] (1966), that to answer the human question once and for all would be to *sabotage its possibility.*

> Human 'nature' is not 'nature' because the human being is characterised by its capacity for culture, and culture is protean and subject to historical change. As Blumenberg suggests in his major *Nachlass* work on anthropology - *Beschreibung des Menschen Menschen (Description of Man, 2006)* - **the human being can be described, but never defined.** Any 'answer' to the human question can therefore only ever be provisional, metaphorical, and in that sense rhetorical. (op. cit., p. 17, emphasis added).

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[25] Nicholls, Angus. "Hans Blumenberg on Political Myth: Recent Publications from the 'Nachlass.'" *Iyyun: The Jerusalem Philosophical Quarterly / עיון: רבעון פילוסופי,* vol. 65, 2016, pp. 3–33. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/24583563. Accessed 9 Mar. 2021.

[26] Adorno, Theodor W. *Negative Dialektik.* Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1966.

It is protean and is also *promethean*, as the old Greek myths recall, and Rousseau comprehended; no pigeon nor cat. Open to perfectibility – and to *hubris.*

And such are our "cities". Perhaps, as human beings, they can only be described, but never defined. And that is a good thing. And that is a great reason for studying it.

In the spirit of brainstorming some facets of this multi-faced, mutant polytope, a few headlights will be brought forward.

2.2.1.1 "The City" in Broad Brushstrokes

Early morning on January 13th, 2020, Chris Michael[27], the Editor of *Guardian Cities*, published his farewell piece, announcing the conclusion of the six-year project, which was developed by The Guardian with the support of The Rockefeller Foundation. From his departing words, a few paragraphs are transcribed below (emphasis added):

> "We started Guardian Cities because we saw that everywhere on Earth, people were flooding into cities. **More concrete was poured in the last couple of years in China than the US used in the entire 20th century.** China now has 100 cities with more than 1 million people, while **some developing megalopolises in Africa and elsewhere may hit 80 million residents;** the 100 million city is no longer a fantastical proposition. Most of this growth has been largely unplanned, with people literally building their own houses and roads – though what some consider slums are really just the roots of new neighbourhoods.
>
> The challenges can seem overwhelming. The new desirability of cities has seen millions of poorer residents kicked out of their homes, sometimes literally bulldozed for expensive apartment towers. Air pollution from cars, particularly diesel engines (sold to us as safer, and only now revealed as the opposite), chokes many streets, hurting children in particular. The climate crisis threatens us with overheating and floods. Poverty remains a scourge. The concretisation of our environment can, if we're not vigilant, cut us off from the natural world, **turning vibrant human societies into bloodless mechanised economies.**
>
> But if cities are places of great inequality and tumultuous change, they are also hives of innovation – to paraphrase Homer Simpson, both the cause of, and solution to, so many of our problems. **Ignore the haters: cities writ large are safer, healthier and more productive than any other form of human habitation. Despite the rise of the internet, it remains in cities where people are best able to gather, exchange ideas and test out solutions.** We are rewilding, cycling, densifying and in some cases even floating. [⋯] Tolerance and difference are at their highest in cities. They certainly aren't for everyone, but more people can live together in cities, with less total impact, than in any other form of habitation."

[27] Michael, Chris. Guardian Cities: farewell from the editor
https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2020/jan/13/guardian-cities-farewell-from-the-editor

While it may be considered by some a rather optimistic stance, even naïve[28] in its expression, it's interesting to note how the author encapsulated, in each paragraph, some of the dimensions commonly used to define "the city", and their underlying tensions: built and populational volume and density; expansion *versus* planning; neighbourhoods (communities); wealth and inequality, inclusion and exclusion; built versus natural environment; economic propellers and soul-crushing machines; innovative "melting pots" and window of squalor…; "problem" and "solution".

2.2.1.2 "The City" and Civilization

On the 8th of May, 2011, the then Pope Benedict XVI[29] payed a pastoral visit to Aquileia and Venice, for a meeting with representatives of the world of culture and of the economics. At the Basilica di Santa Maria della Salute, he made an address that drew from three metaphors that evocate images of Venice: *Acqua*, *Salute* (health/salvation) and *Serenissima*.

In the analogy with *Acqua*, Ratzinger emphasized three associations of a city that is known as a "città d'acqua" – life and death; hardship and fascination; and "liquid", "fluid" (this last one referencing the work of Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman).

> Venice being a "city of water" makes me think of a famous contemporary sociologist who has described our society as "liquid", and thus the European culture: to express its "fluidity", its scant or perhaps lack of stability, its changeableness, the inconsistence which at times seems to characterize it. And here I would like to insert the first proposition: Venice, not as a "liquid" city — in the sense just mentioned — but as a city "of life and of beauty". **Of course, this is a choice but in history it is necessary to choose: men and women are free to interpret, to give a meaning to reality, and it is in this freedom itself that the great dignity of the human being consists.**
>
> In the context of a city, any city, the administrative, cultural and economic decisions depend, basically, on this fundamental orientation**, which we may call "political" in the most noble, the loftiest sense of the term.** It is a question of choosing between a "liquid" city, the homeland of a culture that appears ever more relative and transient, **and a city that is constantly renewing its beauty by drawing on the beneficial sources of art, of knowledge and of the relations between people and peoples**. (Benedict XVI, 2011, p. 2)

[28] Firmino, Rodrigo; Ultramari, Clovis; Daher, Ariadne dos Santos. The Urban Question in The Age of Innocence and Convergence, unpublished.

[29] Benedict XVI. Meeting with Representatives of the World of Culture and of the Economy. Pastoral Visit to Aquileia and Venice. *Address Of His Holiness Benedict XVII.* The Holy See. Basilica of Saint Mary of Health – Venice, 8 May 2011.

And in the bridge of the metaphor of the city and the possibility of salvation, comes the "Serenissima" epithet,

> "Serenissima", the name of the Venetian Republic. This is a truly marvelous title, one might say utopian, in comparison with earthly reality; yet it is able to evoke not only the memories of past glories but also the driving ideals in the planning of today and of the future in this great region. In the full sense only the heavenly city is "most serene" the new Jerusalem, which appears at the end of the Bible, in the Book of Revelation, as a marvelous vision (cf. Rev 21:1-22:5).
>
> Yet Christianity conceives of this holy City, completely transfigured by God's glory, **as a destination that moves human hearts and spurs them onwards, that enlivens their demanding and patient work to improve the earthly city.** What the Second Vatican Council says about this should always be remembered: "it profits man nothing if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself. Far from diminishing our concern to develop this earth, the expectancy of a new earth should spur us on, for it is here that the body of a new human family grows, foreshadowing in some way the age which is to come" (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Gaudium et Spes , n. 39).
>
> **We listen to these words in an epoch when the power of ideological utopias is exhausted and not only is optimism obscured but hope is also in crisis.** We must not, therefore, forget that the Council Fathers who left us this teaching lived in the period of the two World Wars and totalitarianism. Their perspective was certainly not dictated by an easy optimism, but by Christian faith which enlivens hope at the same time great and patient, open to the future and attentive to the historical situations. In this same perspective the name "Most Serene" speaks to us of a civilization of peace founded on mutual respect, on reciprocal knowledge, on friendly relations.

This scene was selected to illustrate the persistence of some millenary associations attached to the ideas of "the city": the site for Humanity to express itself in the high form of Art, Beauty, Knowledge and Comradery; the site for Utopias, for the envisaging and pursuit of a better life on earth: "the City" as the site to exercise the perfectibility of human nature. Gleeson, referencing Sayer[30] (2011), Swyngedouw[31] (2009, 2010) and Eagleton[32] (1996), recalls that Ratzinger is hardly alone in critiquing the "corrosive relativism of postmodernism and a broader crisis in scholarly confidence in a hostile neo-liberal age." (Gleeson[33], 2014, p. 12).

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[30] Sayer, Andrew. *Why Things Matter to People: Social Science, Values and Ethical Life.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

[31] Swyngedouw, Erik. (2009) 'The Antinomies of the Postpolitical City: In Search of a Democratic Politics of Environmental Production', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33(3): 601–20.

Swyngedouw, Erik. (2010) 'Apocalypse Forever? Post-political Populism and the Spectre of Climate Change', *Theory, Culture & Society* 27(2–3): 213–32.

[32] Eagleton, Terry. *The Illusions of Postmodernism.* Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1996.

[33] Gleeson, Brendan. *The Urban Condition.* London and New York: Routledge, 2014.

2.2.1.3 "The City" and "The Time"

In March 1998, French philosopher and sociologist Edgar Morin organized a series of thematic seminars, per request of the then French minister of education, Claude Allègre, aiming at debating possibilities to address the grave challenges of the 21st century. A case in point was that the fragmentation and compartmentalization of ever-expanding knowledge is an inadequate strategy for multidimensional, global, transnational realities.

A panel of scholars was assembled and the conferences were presented in the book *Relier les connaissances. Le défi du XXIe siècle*. One of the speakers was the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur, and a few paragraphs of his strikingly beautiful oration - *Le passé avait un futur*, are transcribed below from the Brazilian edition[34]. It is rather a long quote, but it underscores such poignant issues for considering the role of "the city" as a mediating apparatus for our relationship with history and memory; time and space; and the human condition in its diversity and similitudes, that cutting it short felt just wrong:

> Gostaria de insistir numa segunda mediação entre a memória e a história: a mediação entre gerações sucessivas em favor da coexistência de diversas gerações numa mesma fatia do presente. [···] Uma memória transgeracional assegura assim a transição entre a memória individual e coletiva e a história dos historiadores.
>
> Uma mediação comparável a essa memória trangeracional é assegurada pela arquitetura. **A cidade constitui nesse sentido um espetáculo extraordinário de mediações mais do que trangeracionais.** Ao lado daqui (no Quartier Latin, em Paris), temos a igreja Sainte-Geneviève e o Panteão; e a alguns passos temos o Louvre e ainda por cima uma pirâmide egípcia. Que prodigioso atalho temporal inscrito na pedra: estilos múltiplos, monumentalidades heterogêneas impõem sua coexistência no mesmo espaço urbano! Basta pensar na confrontação entre a Torre Eiffel, com sua arrogância de ferro, e a catedral de Paris, com seu orgulho de pedra**. Diversos estratos da memória coletiva encontram-se assim empilhados e esparramados pela geografia da cidade. Existiria lugar mais eloquente da contemporaneidade do não-contemporâneo do que a cidade?**
>
> A etapa seguinte de um percurso às avessas das etapas da ruptura operada pela história consistirá no recurso à noção de dívida, contrapartida do distanciamento no espaço e no tempo; **entendo por dívida o sentimento de sermos devedores enquanto herdeiros de nossos predecessores.** A dívida atravessa as gerações e estende-se indeterminadamente rumo a um passado insondável; **a dívida é obrigação, no sentido em que requer dos homens do presente a restituição, sob forma de representação, daquilo que os antigos nos confiaram.**
>
> Um passo mais na via aberta pelo sentimento de endividamento vai nos levar a um questionamento sobre o tipo de proximidade que a dívida instaura entre nossos predecessores e nós. **Essa proximidade induz um interesse pela semelhança, que compensa a atenção privilegiada dada pela história à mudança e às diferenças na mudança.** Nesse sentido, gostaria de exprimir minhas reservas em relação à ênfase sobre a diferença no pensamento contemporâneo. Diferença de sexos, diferença de classes, diferença de culturas, diferença de épocas: ótimo! Mas como a semelhança da condição humana é

[34] Ricoeur, Paul. O passado tinha um futuro. In *A Religação dos Saberes – O Desafio do Século XXI.* Edgar Morin (Ed.) São Paulo: Bertrand Brasil, 2011.

> assim paradoxalmente explorada pelo viés da diferença! **A despeito de todo o exotismo da viagem por terras desconhecidas do espaço e do tempo, é precisamente do homem, meu semelhante, que eu me aproximo cada vez mais. Entre o diferente e o idêntico, a dimensão a explorar é a do semelhante. E é exatamente ela que a história explora. As implicações morais e políticas são importantes**: a razão fundamental para recusar a ideia de raça é que o fato de todos os homens pertencerem à mesma história está ligado, no fundo, à similitude humana. Nela reside a resposta forte à tentação do exotismo geográfico e histórico. A esse respeito, a função da exploração das diferenças é a de ampliar a esfera das semelhanças. (Ricoeur, 2011, p. 375).

Professor Brendan Gleeson (2014, p. 12), could be quoted at this point to add Ulrich Beck's emphatic contribution to this debate in *Risk Society*[35]: "Beck sees recourse to methodological infatuation as a pathological marker of weakened science: 'An overspecialized [incorrigibly?], highly abstract sociology, infatuated with its methods and techniques, has lost its sense of the historical dimension of society' (Beck 2009[36], p. 192, apud Gleeson, op. cit.).

If Ratzinger's argument professes a critique of relativism, here the focus seems to be on fragmentation, on a self-serving "science", and on the lack of empathy. There is way more that should unite us as humans than to set us apart. It is still possible to look for universals in our similitude. "The city" is a privileged site for transgenerational mediation, for getting acquainted with an inheritance that can remind us of our communality.

> This is a great and urgent work of human emancipation [⋯] This necessitates leaving the walled city of the 'post-political' age of neo-liberal consensualism. It means the tearing down of its ridiculous standards, especially the ends proclaimed for ideology and for history. Judgement and realisation are denied by such foolish declamations. As Hegel, after Schiller, enjoined, 'The history of the world is the tribunal of the world' (quoted in Kristeva 2001: 75). The courts of human awareness must be defended from the prelates who would close them and give us over to the servitude of raw power. This is species work, not merely a scientific project. How can social science contribute to the labour of human survival? How to comprehend, let alone answer, the 'urban question' in its many forms? A revived political imagination is needed to stir a new course. Social science, and urban studies, can help to free this work by resisting and overturning the new forces that seek to simplify and thus stultify human knowledge. (Gleeson, 2014, p. 11 – 12).

[35] Beck, Ulrich. *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity.* London: Sage, 1992.

[36] Beck, Ulrich. *World at Risk.* Cambridge: Polity, 2009.

2.2.1.4 The Elusive City

In researching topics related to the epistemology of "cities", there seems to be a resurgent interest in exploring its definition and potential role in a globalized society. There is even substantial scholarship challenging[37] the validity of "the city" as a suitable unit of analyses and action within a stance of "planetary urbanization". On the other hand, global/multilateral approaches[38] expressed, for instance, in the *New Urban Agenda* and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals[39], and by think-tanks and networks such as The World Resources Institute, Cities Alliance and C40 Cities[40], place the agency of "the city" front and centre. These indications are by no means a comprehensive list and are meant to indicate some of the polarities that can be found in contemporary debate. It is impressive the sheer volume and related terminology that comes associated with the epistemological searches, which could indicate the concern in dealing with a phenomenon that affects the lives of billions of people and how puzzling it is.

Some authors have already expressed the impossibility of coming to a "definite definition" of "city"[41]. It could, perhaps, be the same difficulty in defining "human": there are tangible aspects that are more easily characterized and understood, but the "essence" remains open for debate (including if such thing even exists). Parts of it can be more unanimously described, but not the "whole". At times "human" is used as a positive attribute, connected to our resilience, generosity and creative capacity; at others it relates to our cruelty, greed, violence and indifference. "Human nature" cuts both ways.

Cities are a human creation. As such, they mirror our strengths and frailties. One could argue that to give up on the possibilities of "the city" is to give up on the positive aspects of our

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[37] For a perspective that challenges "the city" as an adequate unit of analyses in contemporary urban studies, see, for instance, Neil Brenner & Christian Schmid (2015) Towards a new epistemology of the urban?, *City,* 19:2-3, 151-182, DOI: 10.1080/13604813.2015.1014712; Brenner, Neil. (2014). Introduction: Urban theory without an outside. In Neil Brenner (Ed.), *Implosions/explosions: Towards a study of planetary urbanization* (pp. 14–30). Jovis; Brenner, Neil, & Schmid, Christian. (2014). *The "urban age" in question.* In Neil Brenner (Ed.), *Implosions/explosions: Towards a study of planetary urbanization* (pp. 310–337). Jovis; Brenner, Neil, & Schmid, Christian. (2018). Elements for a new epistemology of the urban. In Suzanne Hall & Ricky Burdett (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of the 21st century city* (pp. 47–67). Sage; Angelo, Hillary, & Wachsmuth, David. (2014). Urbanizing urban political ecology: A critique of methodological cityism. In Neil Brenner (Ed.), *Implosions/explosions: Towards a study of planetary urbanization* (pp. 372–385). Jovis. Angelo, Hillary, & Wachsmuth, David. (2020). Why does everyone think cities can save the planet? *Urban Studies*, 57(11), 2201–2221. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098020919081

[38] An in-depth analysis of this relationship can be found in Michele Acuto & Benjamin Leffel. Understanding the global ecosystem of city networks. *Urban Studies,* vol. 58, no. 9, July 2021, pp. 1758–1774, doi: 10.1177/0042098020929261 and in Anna Kosovac, Michele Acuto & Terry Louise Jones. Acknowledging Urbanization: A Survey of the Role of Cities in UN Frameworks. *Global Policy*, vol 11, no. 3, May 2020, pp. 293-304, doi: 10.1111/1758-5899.12783

[39] See https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/ ; https://sdgs.un.org/goals

[40] See https://www.wri.org/ ; https://www.citiesalliance.org/ ; https://www.c40.org/

[41] See, for instance, Crestani, Andrei; Ultramari, Clovis; Oliveira, Jelson. *Diálogo sobre a cidade. Entre filosofia e urbanismo.* Curitiba: Pucpress, 2017.

nature, and on our ability to curb the negative ones. As recalled by Sennett (2018[42], p. 2), Immanuel Kant[43] observed, in his 1784 essay on cosmopolitan life, 'out of the crooked timber of humanity, no straight thing was ever made.' **Therefore, to think the city is to think ourselves; the place, the stance and the possibilities of humankind in the world.** This is a reasoning that is embedded in the very nature of the idea of "the city" ever since the writings of Plato and Aristotle, who reasoned associating ethics, happiness and "the city".

> The Greeks thought of the *polis* as an active, formative thing, training the minds and characters of the citizens; we think of it as a piece of machinery for the production of safety and convenience. The training in virtue, which the medieval state left to the Church, and the *polis* made its own concern, the modern state leaves to God knows what. (Kitto[44], 2011, p. 44).

Authors like Ash Amin[45] and Hans Jonas[46] have kept the debate alive.

> The human condition has become the urban condition. [..] Thus, no discussion of the good life can ignore the particularities of the urban way of life, ranging from the trials of supply, congestion, pollution and commuting, to the swells of change, scale, inequality, distribution and sensory experience in urban life. (Amin, 2006, p. 1012).

Jelson Oliveira, in *Heterotopia ou sobre a utilidade do dissenso*, beautifully writes that

> Não é pela sucessão do tempo nem pela alternância dos lugares que conhecemos as cidades. Falamos da cidade como quem toca um objeto impalpável, afinal, as cidades são todas inefáveis e só ocorrem como gesto, conforme a sugestão de Wittgenstein: dizer já é apenas perturbar o ser daquilo que não se deixa aprisionar na palavra. (Crestani et. al, 2017, p. 209).

In this sense, one studies the city for the same justification one paints the fog: its intangibility needs to be expressed.

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[42] Sennett, Richard. *Building and Dwelling. Ethics for the City.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018.
[43] Kant, Immanuel. *Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View*. 1784.
[44] Kitto, Humphrey Davey Findley. The Polis. *The City Reader, 5th Edition.* Urban Reader Series. Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout (ed.). London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2011. ProQuest Ebook Central, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/unimelb/detail.action?docID=668293
[45] Amin, Ash. *The Good City.* Urban Studies, Vol. 43, Nos 5/6, 1009–1023, 2006. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43197514
[46] Jonas, Hans. *The imperative of responsibility : in search of an ethics for the technological age.* Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1984.

2.2.2 WHY "UNDERSTANDING THE UNDERSTOOD"?

> *The theme of this book is that our imaginative visions are central to our understanding of the world. They are not a distraction from our serious thinking but a necessary part of it. And – what is perhaps more surprising – many of the visions that now dominate our controversies are ones which look as if they were based on science, but are really fed by fantasy.*
>
> Mary Midgley[47]

The Myths We Live By is the title of a book by Prof. Mary Midgley[48] (1999-2018), a British philosopher interested, among other things, in human behaviour, ethics, and science. It is an intriguing title (as is the book), for it does not really pose a question but makes the assertion that *we live by myths*. Therefore, what would remain to be seen is which myths they are.

Such statement directly relates to the research questions that prompted the *leitmotif* of this dissertation, which are related to an ontological/epistemological inquiry into the *understanding* of "the city". Taking the cue from Harari's and Midgley's perspective, the *understood* would be the *myths* or, in their collective sense, *mythology.*

However, such claims cannot be taken for granted without carefully examining the premises. Myth and mythology are terms charged with a vast and conflicting array of meanings. Hence, a structured justification for why these terms can be proxies for long-term understandings of "the city" needs to be developed. The first step in this direction was a rather prosaic look *within:* what were the association that came to mind when thinking about myth/mythology? Was I convinced that Harari's and Midgley's outlook was defensible? Which would be some of the myths *I* lived by?

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[47] Midgley, Mary. *The Myths We Live By.* New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011, p. xii.

[48] See https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/oct/12/mary-midgley-obituary

2.2.2.1 What's in a name[49]?

Nouns (substantives) are words we use to define things; therefore, they are intrinsic to somethings' identity. Proper nouns, particularly proper names, are powerful entities[50], which some thinkers believe can even leave an impression upon "reality".

My name is Ariadne. For someone born in Curitiba in the 1970s, not a very familiar name. It took me a few years to meet another one. I cannot remember anymore how old I was, eleven maybe, but one day, possibly very annoyed of finding my name misspelt in the class roll call yet again, I asked my mom *why, oh why* had she chosen that name for me! The answer was she had read it in a story once and thought it was beautiful and that if she ever had a daughter, it would be her name. She showed me a book that belonged to my dad called *Deuses e Heróis*, and the passage with the myth of the Minotaur, Theseus, and Ariadne. The tale of a beautiful princess enamoured of a valiant hero who helped him on his quest with a golden thread was enough to erase any annoyance I could have with my name for years to come (till one day I found out that Theseus had abandoned Ariadne while she was sleeping in some island after they fled Crete, and I didn't think he was such a hero any longer).

The discovery of the myth behind my name was my formal introduction to the realm of Greek Mythology, which charmed my imagination. I was rather a bookworm, and fiction, in books and movies, was my thing. While having Art History in high school, I could learn something about the powerful influence of ancient mythologies in the many facets of artistic expression. Some years later, in my first visit to the Vatican Museum, I came across the exquisite *Sleeping Ariadne* sculpture, and that beautiful feeling of my first discovery came rushing back.

My next meeting with the mythological Ariadne happened during my Master's in London in 2003. In browsing the Evening Standard Weekend Guide, I saw the announcement of a Giorgio de Chirico's (1888-1978) exhibit that featured his Ariadne series[51] (there are eight of them) at the Estokic Collection, so I went to visit. Those eerie images of isolation and melancholy in a deserted urban setting spoke powerfully to the "me" adapting to a new environment.

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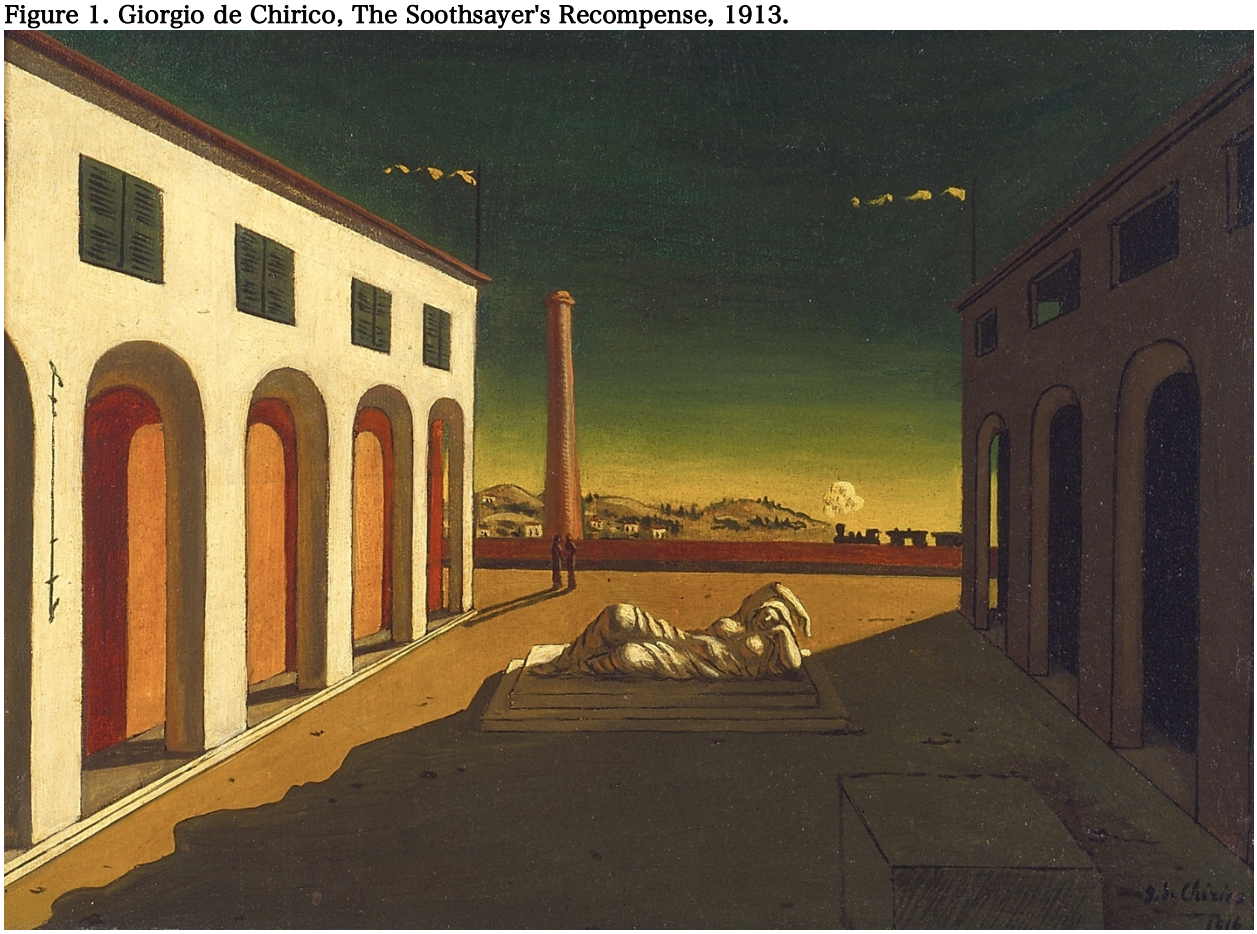
[49] "What's in a name? That which we call a rose By any other word would smell as sweet;" Romeo and Juliet, Act 2, Scene 2. In William Shakespeare. *Romeo and Juliet.* Edited by G. Blakemore Evans. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 107.

[50] Ferrari-Bravo, Donatella, "Il nome" nella concezione linguistica di Pavel Aleksandrovič Florenskij. in Il Nome nel testo. *Rivista internazionale di onomastica letteraria* VIII (2006), pp. 37-46; a versão digital pode ser encontrada em https://tinyurl.com/y68kwztv (17.07.2020).

[51] For additional information on the paintings, see https://philamuseum.org/exhibitions/2003/57.html ; https://www.estorickcollection.com/exhibitions/giorgio-de-chirico-and-the-myth-of-ariadne

I also found out that the island where Ariadne was abandoned had a name, Naxos, and that was also the theme of an opera by Strauss, *Ariadne Auf Naxos*. Thanks to the now abundant internet resources, I could also discover much happier endings to my princess's tale, including the one in which, in her abandonment sadness, she touched the heart of the god Dionysius, who loved her dearly throughout her mortal life, and upon her death set her in the heavens as the Corona Borealis constellation. Not bad.

Figure 1. Giorgio de Chirico, The Soothsayer's Recompense, 1913.



Source: Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection, 1950.

The early years of the new millennium were also the years of blockbusters such as the Lord of the Rings movies, Harry Potter books, the new Star Wars trilogy, and so many other epic and fantastic stories. Thinking about them and other timeless narratives that have captured the imagination of so many people worldwide (C.S. Lewis, Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift, Herman Melville, Alexandre Dumas, Jules Verne, etc., etc.) I wondered about common elements they may share, which led me to the work of literature professor and myth historian Joseph Campbell (1904-1987), his documentary interviews *The Power of Myth*[52] (1988), and the book *The Hero*

[52] Clips available at https://billmoyers.com/series/joseph-campbell-and-the-power-of-myth-1988/ ; full episodes on-demand at https://www.amazon.com/The-Heros-Adventure/dp/B07BC2VHHJ/?tag=stillpointdigital-20

with a Thousand Faces[53] (1949). Influenced by Freud and, most notably, Jung and his theories on the structure of the human psyche, Campbell's understanding of myth relied strongly upon its phycological aspects. In comparing several myths, he advanced the idea that world mythology shared the journey of an archetypical hero/heroine, which he called *monomyth* (a term he borrowed from Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*[54], (1939). Without getting into much detail, Campbell's theory sees all mythic narratives as variations of a single great story, based on the observation that a prevailing pattern exists beneath the narrative elements of most great myths, regardless of their origin or time of creation. Myths metaphorically narrate humanity's efforts/desires towards liberation and Transcendence through a journey of the individual's suffering. As the monomyth spread through time and space, it assumed various "masks" moulded by each culture's social structures and environmental pressures.

Therefore, until 2017, these were overwhelmingly the undertones of *myth* and *mythology* in my mind. In addition to the frequent connotation the words carry as a false belief, misconception, or fallacy, they mainly inhabited the realms of the visual arts, literature, "pop culture" references of psychology, druids and dragons, unicorns, and fairies.

2.2.2.2 "What the Hell is Water?"

In 2005, American writer and Pulitzer Prize finalist for fiction David Foster Wallace (1962-2008) gave the commencement speech to the graduating class at Kenyon College. It was entitled *This is Water*[55] and resonated so much that it made it into a thin book[56], having been quoted in multiple contexts since. He started like this:

> *There are these two young fish swimming along and they happen to meet an older fish swimming the other way, who nods at them and says "Morning, boys. How's the water?"*
>
> *And the two young fish swim on for a bit, and then eventually one of them looks over at the other and goes "What the hell is water?"*

[53] Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces.* Bollingen series XVII. Novato, California : New York Library, 2008.

[54] Joyce, James. *Finnegans Wake.* London: Penguin, 2000.

[55] See https://fs.blog/2012/04/david-foster-wallace-this-is-water/

[56] Wallace, David F. *This Is Water: Some Thoughts, Delivered on a Significant Occasion, about Living a Compassionate Life.* Little Brown and Company: New York, 2009.

Harari's book has already been referenced at the *Research Questions* topic as to the starting point for a new understanding of "mythology" that became a tentative undercurrent of the dissertation's development. Some may consider[57] it to be not too far removed from *The Twilight Saga*[58], but those who praise it consider it to bring some original insights that address our moment in history[59]. The book's key idea is to unveil how a relatively feeble species, *Homo sapiens*, capable of sublime works of art, genial scientific discoveries, and horrendous wars, came to colonize every ecosystem of the planet. He argues that the differencing factor is our capacity for abstract thought and imagination.

Despite the shortcomings the book may have, the reason why it was brought to the discussion was how he described this capacity with a vocabulary of myth and mythology, using examples that had never before, in my mind, been thought of in these terms. Hence, it was my very own *"morning Ariadne, how is the water?"* moment.

At the heart of his argument to elucidate our species' dominance is the uniquely human characteristic of abstract thinking, of imaginative capacity; of transcending within our mental processes an objective reality to turn it into abstract scenarios, **and to believe them,** combined with the development of language (oral and then written, as well as symbolic systems such as numbers). The genesis of this ability emerged sometime between 70.000 and 30.000 years ago, in the historic moment known as the **Cognitive Revolution**. At this evolutionary step, we *sapiens* developed unprecedented ways of thinking and communicating, using a totally new, extremely versatile type of language, capable of conveying and sharing an extraordinary amount of information not only about the world but particularly about other humans, for social cooperation was essential for survival and reproduction. However, Harari points out that the truly unique feature of our language is the ability to convey information about things that "do not exist". Legends, myths, gods, and religions emerge with the Cognitive Revolution; this ability to talk about **fiction** is a unique feature of the *Sapiens*' language. Moreover,

> But fiction has enabled us not merely to imagine things, but to do so collectively. We can weave common myths such as the biblical creation story, the Dreamtime myths of Aboriginal Australians, and the nationalist myths of modern states. Such myths give *Sapiens* the unprecedented ability to cooperate flexibly in large numbers. Ants and bees can also work together in huge numbers, but they do so in a very rigid manner and only with close relatives. Wolves and chimpanzees cooperate far more flexibly than ants, but they can do so only with small numbers of other individuals that they know intimately. Sapiens can cooperate in extremely flexible ways with countless numbers of strangers. That's why Sapiens rule the world [⋯]" (Harari, 2011, p. 27-28).

[57] See https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/sep/11/sapiens-brief-history-humankind-yuval-noah-harari-review
[58] Meyer, Stephanie. *The Twilight Saga.* Little Brown and Company: New York, 2005.
[59] See https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/jul/29/why-brainy-book-became-publishing-phenonmenon

And still,

> The immense diversity of imagined realities that *Sapiens* invented, and the resulting diversity of behaviour patterns, are the main components of what we call 'cultures'. Once cultures appeared, they never ceased to change and develop, and these unstoppable alterations are what we call 'history'. The Cognitive Revolution is accordingly the point when history declared its independence from biology. [⋯] From the Cognitive Revolution onwards, historical narratives replace biological theories as our primary means of explaining the development of *Homo sapiens*. (ibid. p. 41-42).

In developing his line of thought, Harari emphasizes that the main challenge is **not really to tell these stories but to make others believe them.** "Others" that are not one's family and friends, but "others" that one has never met. One believes in myths not because they are objectively true but because to believe them is the only way large numbers of humans can cooperate effectively and, hopefully, improve society. However, it is important to notice that the author does not attach an implicit positive connotation to the verb "cooperate", which is often compulsory and rarely egalitarian.

The natural order is stable. Regardless of what we believe, gravity will function. However, imaginary orders are always under threat, for they rely upon myths for their endurance, and myths will disappear once they are no longer believed. Therefore, their maintenance requires arduous and continuous efforts anchored on education, art, music, politics, architecture, police, prisons, and so forth. And not to leave room for doubt, "[⋯] Yet it is an iron rule of history that every imagined hierarchy disavows its fictional origins and claims to be natural and inevitable [...]" (ibid., p. 150). Still, he says, unlike the laws of physics, which are free from inconsistencies, every order created by man is full of internal contradictions. Cultures are constantly trying to reconcile these contradictions, and this process fuels change.

Humanities and social sciences dedicate most of their efforts to explain how the imaginary order becomes ingrained in our web of life. In an effort of synthesis, Harari highlights **three main factors** that prevent people to realize that the orders that organize our lives only exist in our imagination: **the imagined order is embedded in the material world; the imagined order sets our desires and; the imagined order is intersubjective.** (ibid., p. 127-131).

People are willing to embark upon these feats of imagination when they **trust** the product of this intersubjective order. *Trust is the raw material of our mythologies*. Using money as an example,

> What created this trust was a very complex and long-term network of political, social and economic relations. Why do I believe in the cowry shell or gold coin or dollar bill? Because my neighbours believe in them. And my neighbours believe in them because I believe in them. And we all believe in them because our king believes in them and demands them in taxes, and because our priest believes in them and demands them in tithes. Take a dollar bill and look at it carefully. You will see that it is simply a colourful piece of paper with the signature of the US secretary of the treasury on one side, and the slogan 'In God We Trust' on the other. We accept the dollar in payment, because we trust in God and the US secretary of the treasury. The crucial role of trust explains why our financial systems are so tightly bound up with our political, social and ideological systems, why financial crises are often triggered by political developments, and why the stock market can rise or fall depending on the way traders feel on a particular morning (ibid., p. 201)

Finally, rather ominously, he states, "There is no way out of the imagined order. When we break down our prison walls and run towards freedom, we are in fact running into the more spacious exercise yard of a bigger prison". (ibid, p. 133). Going back to the initial fish metaphor, that may very well be true. One cannot survive outside the water or extensively observe it from afar. However, some insights about its nature are possible once there is the realization that the water exists.

2.2.2.3 The Ghost of Innocence

> *Siempre existe el riesgo de que la construcción de una imagen retrospectiva desde una perspectiva personal responda más a la propia ideología que a la realidad multifacética que se analiza.*
>
> Ultramari[60] et al

In the article, *The Urban Question in The Age of Innocence and Convergence*, Firmino[61] et al. (unpublished), among other ideas, advance a discussion about the emergence of the "urban question" in the public consciousness through a bibliometric analysis of newspaper headlines in the US in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. One of the key issues raised for debate is a remarkable degree of naïveté, of "innocence" that enveloped its inception and that, despite the complexity of the "object" (the city and the urban phenomenon), remains remarkably so. As the manuscript states on p. 14,

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[60] Ultramari, Clovis; Firkowski, Olga Lucia C. de Freitas; Cantarim, Fernanda. La urbanización en el Brasil, un proceso consolidado y paradójicamente mutable. CEPAL. *Notas de Población* N° 102. Santiago, enero-junio de 2016, Año XLIII, págs. 179-202, p. 181.

[61] Firmino, Rodrigo; Ultramari, Clovis; Daher, Ariadne dos Santos. *The Urban Question in The Age of Innocence and Convergence*, unpublished.

> At present, we can assure a distinction between the understanding of the contemporary city and its 19th-century counterpart. There is perhaps some reluctance to abandon – or an unavoidable ability to cope with – perennial innocence. Our final remarks tend to consider that we have perhaps also been subject to our own innocence. Literature emphasizing the crisis we are living through, and the lack of emergency policies to cope with it, would display a certain degree of generalized ignorance and feeling of blamelessness.

These two quotations are meant as cautionary flags "from me to myself", when the justifications for this research are considered. First, to the fact that if I was ignorant to the dimension of the "myths we live by" as proposed by the authors, it does not follow that it is a "we" problem, but possibly an "I" problem. As illustrated by Wallace's metaphor, there are fish aware of the water. Secondly, my enthusiasm with the size of the new pond may very well have been misled by the bias of the referred authors (or of my interpretation of them), which I am incapable of perceiving due to my lack of references concerning the epistemic vantage points they are writing from. In other words, my wonderment may be a specular image of the depths of my naïveté.

Being as it may, such shortcomings are not acceptable at this level of research. Therefore, better exploring the different epistemic meanings of "myth" and "mythology", particularly within the context that caught my attention as described above, is a must. Not doing so imperils the credibility of the research, particularly one that relies so much on more exploratory and abstract analyses. Moreover, even if my curiosity was challenged by this new (to me) perspective on myths and mythology, the arguments presented by the authors left, in my judgment, many unanswered on insufficiently explained statements. There were quite a few leaps that I could not critically follow.

Before one moves forward, though, I would like to express that if the consciousness of the water was lacking, I did have some sense that *I am a fish.* For academic and professional reasons, I was aware, up to a level, that there are powers at play that shape one's worldview and possibilities for action, from Marx and Smith to Lefebvre, Harvey, and Castells; Wallerstein and Sassen, Habermas, Foucault and Bourdieu, Sennett and Mumford, *inter alia*. The claim is not one of proficiency on their thoughts or on the schools they represent, just that there was some sense to the trails that their exploration would lead.

However, having money, human rights, and corporations presented as fiction, as myths, was a personal epistemological break. And if one of the goals of this research is to investigate if there are "myths we live by" as urban planners, this felt like a path worth exploring.

Additionally, one cannot help but wonder about the power of *myths* within the perspective of tragic historical events connected with totalitarian regimes and devastating wars; of the imperviousness to rationality and disregard for facts.

For example, sometime between 1530-1563, French classist and magistrate, Étienne de La Boétie, who was a dear friend of the philosopher Michel de Montaigne, framed in some interesting terms in his manuscript *Le Discours de la servitude volontaire:* how it happens that men who are free by nature everywhere subject themselves to a single man who has no power except that they give him? How can it have happened that unnatural mass servitude has become universal? Why do the many not just simply stop obeying the one and instantly become what they are by nature, free?[62]

Another quote of a few centuries later, now of Karl Marx[63], points out that "One man is king only because other men stand in the relation of subjects to him. They, on the other hand, imagine that they are subjects because he is king."

Hannah Arendt, reporting the trial of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*[64] in the aftermath of the holocaust, wonders how is it that "following orders" in such a case could, to someone's mind, be a justifiable line of defence?

These thinkers seem to highlight the intellectual provocation that perhaps humankind has a bias towards "believing/complying" that supersedes, if left unchallenged, the exercise whatever (small) amount of free will or rational capacity for critical thought that one may have.

One does not, evidently, expect to arrive at certainties in this regard. What one hoped to achieve, however, was gather sufficient support to justify the choices of *myth* and *mythology* to underscore the persistence of some ideations about "the city" and how they remain influential. In upcoming chapters, the concepts of myth/mythology will be incorporated in this exploratory research in a threefold manner: two of them connected with its "structural attributes", following aspects on the philosophy of the mind and evolutionary biology; and one "content-related", revisiting the antediluvian relationship of *mythos* and *logos.* And it will be mainly through this last angle that the link with distinct voices of the past will be established, and the recounting of the mythologies on the contemporary city will begin.

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[62] Keohane, Nannerl O. The Radical Humanism of Étienne De La Boétie. *Journal of the History of Ideas,* Vol. 38, No. 1 (Jan. - Mar., 1977), pp. 119-130.

[63] Marx, K., *Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production,* London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1904, vol. 1, 26n. *apud* Searle, 2010, p. 88.

[64] See https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1963/02/16/eichmann-in-jerusalem-i

2.3 HYPOTHESIS AND OBJECTIVES

There is a self-published book from the 1970s by architect, history and theory of architecture professor Fernando Antônio Carneiro[65] (1928-1994) called *Persistência das Formas em Arquitetura*. Carneiro lectured for decades in the main architecture and design courses in Curitiba, and a key element of his life-long research was, as suggested by the title of his book, that architectural shapes have travelled through time and space from Antiquity until our days and are ingrained in our technical and symbolic repertoires as designers of places and buildings.

Based on the previously stated research questions, **this dissertation will explore a similar hypothesis: that there are understandings of "the city" that have persisted throughout history and geography and influence our thinking as planners today. The persistence of these conceptions will be called "mythologies" within the proposed analytical framework. The founding "myths" that convey the understanding or aspiration about "the city" at different times would have been set to canon through the voices of philosophers/scholars/authors that heralded or manifested said comprehension. The echoes of their voices, the reverberations of their writings, one will argue, still resonate in the kernel of our contemporary understanding.** The research will seek to explore if these germinal ideas have branched out or metamorphosed into other conceptual manifestations or if they have been rendered obsolete due to changes in paradigms. In Oscar Wilde[66]'s words, in the voice of Vivian, discussing the London Fog, is it our acknowledgement that manifests a phenomenon into existence? Or, on the other end of the spectrum, is the phenomenon always there and what changes is our perception of it?

The hypothesis will be tested by exploring the cities built in speech bequeathed by four luminaries in the history of Western thought in Ancient Greece and Rome. It will have as backdrop changes in the political form of the city from the Greek polis, particularly the Athenian experience after its defeat in the Peloponnesian War, to Rome, in the moment of its transition from Republic to Empire and, in the period of its fall in the West. The dissertation surmises that aspects of these four *cities built in speech* (conceptualized forms of "the city") have persisted through time and that they still reverberate in contemporary urban studies.

These *cities in speech* were heralded in the voices of **Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Saint Augustine.** Each left an imprint in the history of thought by reflecting upon how the city can be the *locus* of the most fulfilling life for its citizens. Among their extant corpus, each left written

[65] Carneiro, Fernando A. *Persistência das Formas em Arquitetura.* Edição do autor. Anos 70.
[66] Wilde, Oscar. *The Decay of Living and Other Essays.* London: Penguin Classics, 2010 (1889).

works that preserved for posterity their understanding of the best city. The works selected for examination were, respectively, the ***Republic (Politeia), Politics (Ta Politika) De Re Publica (On the Republic)*** and the ***City of God (De Civitate Dei).***

The research will endeavor to identify if archetypical concepts they expressed have been translated into contemporary notions of the city in discussions such as the public and the private realms, justice and law, and the nature of citizenship. The focus will be on cities of the Western world, connected to global capitalist economic and information flows, hubs for people and for the circulation of ideas. Such line of inquiry seems to be in tune with recent concerns in contemporary scholarship, as exemplified below.

> What these contemporary problems bring into view are questions—essentially philosophical questions—about the public realm, the nature of democracy, the nature and limits of speech, the character of identity and belonging, many of which have tended to remain dormant or that have, at least until the last couple of decades, often been ignored or their answers taken for granted. They also bring to the fore anxieties and fears, as well as hopes and desires, that are seldom made the object of direct critical interrogation or whose foundations are often left unexamined. (Jacobs and Malpas[67], 2019, p. 140, Kindle Edition).

Hence, the main **objective** of this research is **to examine the *cities in speech* construed by each of the four heralds** aiming at highlighting their understanding of essential features of "the city" and point towards **continuities or ruptures** of their understanding concerning the contemporary city. The expectation is to ascertain some recurring themes in the historical lineages that derive from their voices, materials with which the "mythologies" of the contemporary city are built.

In the process of exploring the research questions and testing the hypothesis some **specific objectives** will be pursued:

- Examine the understanding of myth/mythology through different analytical lenses so to acquire a better grasp on how *understandings* are formed and reproduced;
- Explore, through the examination of the four heralds, if the understanding they voiced about their "city" has resonated chiefly along the lines of paradigm changes as in Bachelard and Kuhn, in more incremental steps as in Pierce, or in combination of both.

[67] Jacobs, Keith; Malpas, Jeff (eds.). *Philosophy and the City: Interdisciplinary and Transcultural Perspectives.* London; New York: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2019. Kindle Edition.

2.4 METHODOLOGICAL STEPS

POLONIUS:
Though this be madness, yet there is a method in't.—
Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

HAMLET:
Into my grave?

William Shakespeare
Hamlet Act 2, scene 2, 193–206[68]

“Tell me one last thing," said Harry. "Is this real? Or has this been happening inside my head?" Dumbledore beamed at him and his voice sounded loud and strong in Harry’s ears even though the bright mist was descending again, obscuring his figure. "Of course it is happening inside your head, Harry, but why on earth should that mean that it is not real?”

J. K. Rowling[69]
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, p. 723

[68] See https://www.enotes.com/topics/hamlet/text/act-ii-scene-ii#root-71609-68/80962

[69] Rowling, J. K. Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. New York. Scholastic Inc., 2007.

2.4.1 ENDOXA AND THE IMPORTANCE OF UNCERTAINTIES

> *The known always triggers the search for the unknown, creating an unending cycle of epistemological quest, at the core of which lies the assumption that knowledge is not final but evolutionary. Philosophers and scholars alike have conceptualized this epistemological cycle as the pursuit of wisdom, a pursuit that has continued to fascinate philosophers and scholars from all parts of the world.* ***Hence, the pursuit of wisdom epitomizes research.***
>
> *By research is meant the inquisitive process that seeks to* ***uncover*** *and discover new* ***phenomena*** *as well as explain and expand existing ones.*
>
> Antonina Lukenchuk[70]

What is there to know, what can we know, how can we know, what is knowledge, *inter alia*, are fundamental questions that animate debates in Philosophy and Sciences for millennia. Since this thesis is concerned with the *understanding* of cities throughout time, how this understanding *might influence* our practice as contemporary planners, and if there are still elements to associate an *ethical dimension* to cities as instrumental to human happiness, the methodological premises adopted should assume an ontological, epistemological and axiological coloring.

In a cautious approach to such issues, it is inevitable to look for illumination in the field that carries its very name the love for wisdom – Philosophy.

In the entry about Aristotle in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy[71], author Christopher Shields (2016, online source) recalls from Metaphysics that "**Human beings began to do philosophy, even as they do now, because of wonder,** at first because they wondered about the strange things right in front of them, and then later, advancing little by little, because they came to find greater things puzzling" (*Met.* 982b12, apud Shields, 2016). Therefore, still quoting Shields, "Human beings philosophize, according to Aristotle, because they find aspects of their experience puzzling. **The sorts of puzzles we encounter in thinking about the universe and our place within it - *aporiai*, in Aristotle's terminology - tax our understanding and induce us to philosophize"** (emphasis added).

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[70] Lukenchuk, 2013, p. 6, emphasis added.

[71] Shields, Christopher. "Aristotle". *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2016 Edition),* Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/aristotle/

Following the strands woven by Shields (op. cit.) in the presentation of Aristotle, the Stagirite sets in *Nicomachean Ethics* that one begins philosophizing by outlining the *phainomena* ("*the things appearing to be the case*") and juxtaposing the related *endoxa*, the gathering of "the credible opinions handed down regarding matters we find puzzling". Further on, Shields highlights Aristotle's foresight[72] that since the *endoxa* may be contradictory, for oftentimes, due to their very nature, the *phainomena* beget *aporiai*, "it is not always possible to respect them in their entirety. So, as a group they must be re-interpreted and systematized, and, where that does not suffice, some must be rejected outright."

In the context of this dissertation, it is particularly remarkable, as pointed by Shields (2016), the distinctive role *endoxa* play in Aristotelian philosophy, partially for they constitute a significant sub-class of *phainomena* (*EN* 1154b3–8, op. cit.): **"because they are the privileged opinions we find ourselves unreflectively endorsing and reaffirming after some reflection, they themselves come to qualify as appearances to be preserved where possible"** (emphasis added). In other words, could *endoxa* be a key component of our "myths and mythologies", and an instrument to verify continuities and ruptures in the understanding of a *phainomena*? And, if so, could investigating them be a methodological path towards a less unreflective endorsement?

Shields highlights that Aristotle's reliance on *endoxa* assumes a still greater significance given the role such opinions play in dialectic, defined by him as a "method by which we will be able to reason deductively about any matter proposed to us on the basis of *endoxa*, and to give an account of ourselves [when we are under examination by an interlocutor] without lapsing into contradiction" (*Topics*, 100a18–20, apud Shields 2016, online source).

Aristotle gave systematic treatment to logic, science and dialectic, and while some of it remains valid to this day, it is not within the scope of this chapter to go into deep in his teachings. It is worth noting that he believed strongly in the powers of human reason and investigation, a faith that has been put in check since the crisis of Modernity.

> The world as we live it is not the world as science explains it, any more than the smile of the Mona Lisa is a smear of pigments on a canvas. But this lived world is as real as the Mona Lisa's smile. And the same overreaching intentionality that informs our responses to the human face informs our responses to the human habitat, which comes to us as a place haunted by those who have made their home in it. (Scruton, 2014, p. 134[73])

[72] As in *Metaphisics* 1073b36, 1074b6; *Parts of Animals* 644b5; *Nicomachean Ethics* 1145b2–30 in the editions used by the author for the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entry.

[73] Scruton, Roger. *The Soul of the World.* Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014.

Nevertheless, acknowledging its limitations, reason and investigation remain valid tools in research. And, due to the nature of the questions that lead this dissertation, perhaps it is possible, to set the grounds of its methodological premises, to recall Aristotle's understanding, as reminded by Shields, that dialectic has a role to play in 'science conducted in a philosophical manner' (*pros tas kata philosphian epistêmas*; *Topics* 101a27–28, 101a34, apud Shields, 2016). In these contexts, writes Shields, "dialectic helps to sort the *endoxa*, relegating some to a disputed status while elevating others; it submits *endoxa* to cross-examination in order to test their staying power".

It must be stressed that this thesis does not lay claim of being produced in a *philosophical manner*, and sinning by hubris is a pitfall one is determined to avoid. Such a beautiful approach is beyond the skillset of its author. However, as the verification of the hypothesis will not rely on quantitative empirical data, but rather on an attempt to explore and connect threads of thought through time through writings, it seems valid to consider that critically examining a body of knowledge – *a dialectic of endoxa* – can constitute a worthy enterprise.

Reason and investigation have already been called upon as part of this epistemic endeavor. However, another dimension hopes to be included in the epistemological framework of this thesis. To Bachelard, *imagination*, more than reason, is a unifying force in the human soul.

> Gaston Bachelard (1884-1962), once said that when imagination works, everything works. We first imagine things before we know them. Bachelard's poetic turn let him to reconsider his epistemology as a project of a scientific mind, thus giving primacy to imagination in the process of inquiry. Scientific knowledge "emerges only after we use some imagination, both in formulating questions and in framing hypotheses to answer them" (Audi, 2003, p. 260, apud Lukenchuk, 2013, p. xxii).

How imagination percolates the development of this project is twofold. One, in the very conceptions of myth to be explored: as an intersubjective fictional "reality" that mobilizes collective action, as a shared narrative, as ways of explaining and understanding the world. These comprehensions rely, for their very existence, on abstract thought – *imagination.* The other, rather circularly, in that the attempt to unveil these mythologies, to identify the threads that compose the tapestry of beliefs about the contemporary city, will also be an exercise of imagination.

And it is through the intangibility of imagination that the last epistemological stance is brought into play: doubt. Doubt because myths are also defined as false, illusory, numbing beliefs. Doubt, for as Ygritte[74] repeatedly said, "You know nothing, Jon Snow…". Or, much more elegantly, as Gustavo Bernardo wrote in the foreword of philosopher Vilém[75] Flusser's book "A dúvida":

> A investigação flusseriana descobre, primeiro, que o pensamento é um processo em busca de se completar em uma forma, ou seja: o pensamento é um processo estético […] Um pensamento individual e singular, embora completo esteticamente quando significativo, é, "não obstante, carregado de um dinamismo interno que o impede de repousar sobre si mesmo". Esse dinamismo interno obriga o pensamento a superar a si mesmo, quer dizer, obriga-o a abandonar-se. Esse autoabandono do pensamento, por sua fez, é o que entendemos por filosofia, porque agora precisamos entender o intelecto como o campo, por excelência, da dúvida. (Flusser, 2011, p. 17).

The work of facing down the mythologies that shape our understanding as planners may, therefore, turn out to be a painful one. To voluntarily abandon "certainties" is to open up to the unknown, which can be dark, lonely, unpredictable, scary; sentiments that tend to be avoided almost at all costs. At this point, one would do well to remember Aristotle's wonderment, and Bernardo's (op. cit., p. 18) paraphrase, that "Sem dúvida, não há poesia. Sem poesia, não há filosofia. Sem filosofia, não há o espanto. Sem o espanto, nada presta".

Hence, in this ontological journey about "the city", one will wonder and wander, remembering the words of J.R.R. Tolkin[76] (2004, p. 222), that,

All that is gold does not glitter,
Not all those who wander are lost;
The old that is strong does not wither,
Deep roots are not reached by the frost.

[74] Martin, George R. R. *A Storm of Swords.* Book Three of A Song of Ice and Fire. New York: Bantam Books, 2011, first appears on p. 213.
[75] Flusser, Vilém. *A dúvida.* São Paulo: Annablume, 2011.
[76] Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Fellowship of the Ring.* Harper Collins e-book, 2004.

2.4.2 THE INVESTIGATIVE PATH

In delineating the investigative path for a thesis, there are some key interrelated building blocks that must be explored. Daniel and Harland[77] (2018, p. 23, after Grix[78], 2002) summarize them as Ontology (what is there to be known); Epistemology (what and how can we know about it); Methodology (how can we go about acquiring that knowledge); Methods (which precise procedures can we use to acquire it?); and Sources (which data can we collect). Axiology, as the study of what can be regarded as value, should also be added within the layers of the research framework (White[79], 2011, p. 9).

Debating the linearity and progressiveness of Grix's model, Daniel and Heartland (2018) defend that ontology and epistemology (and maybe axiology could also be added) are logically interdependent concepts, and that there is a feedback component that loops through the building blocks that should allow for adjustments at each stage, forming new understanding that would feed back into the whole process. Therefore, there is an analytical framework at the departure of the project, but it may need to be reassessed as the research evolves.

Ontological questioning will play an important part in the development of this thesis, for it in embedded in the nature of the hypothesis. As Ultramari and Firmino[80] (2010, p. 29) state,

> The theoretical construction of a concept is considered one of the most difficult tasks in social sciences and, perhaps because of that, **scientists largely take for granted the ontological discussions of their specific subjects.** In fact, the construction of a common vocabulary – which is absolutely necessary to any scientific discussion – is behind the importance we must give to the construction of a concept itself (emphasis added).

And Flusser (2011, p. 50-51), on concepts, would add,

> Consideremos o pensamento como organização de conceitos. A nossa investigação nos conduz à próxima pergunta: "o que é conceito?" Embora se trate do elemento do pensamento, não dispomos de uma definição clara e unívoca do conceito "conceito". [···] Todos os esforços de definir "conceito" são tentativas de parafrasear o **seguinte artigo de fé:** "conceito é o fundamento inarticulado **do qual surge uma palavra legítima".** Por outro lado, o conceito não é algo, mas de algo; para falarmos em termos simples, **conceito é o traço que uma coisa deixa no intelecto"**. (emphasis added)

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[77] Daniel, Ben Kei; Harland, Tony. *Higher education research methodology. A Step-by-Step Guide to the Research Process.* London and New York: Routledge, 2018.

[78] Grix, Jonathan. "Introducing students to the generic terminology of social research." Politics, vol. 22, no. 3, 2002, pp. 175–186, doi:10.1111/1467-9256.00173.

[79] White, Barry. *Mapping your THESIS. The comprehensive manual of theory and techniques for masters and doctoral research.* Victoria: ACER Press, 2011.

[80] Ultramari, Clovis; Firmino, Rodrigo J. Urban beings or city dwellers? The complementary concepts of 'urban' and 'city'. *City & Time* 4 (3): 3, 2010. [online] url: http://www.ct.ceci-br.org.

The underlying thread of this research is an expression of these assertions. The search for the archetypical "myths" of the city and their resonances (the traces they have left on the intellect, the mythologies) is a quest that seeks to *not* take for granted the ontological discussions and wishes to deconstruct this common vocabulary/concepts in order to re-examine its constituting "syllables" before attempting to reassemble the words. **The possibility of doing this is, unabashedly, at this point, an article of faith.**

Keeping the previously exposed Premises in mind, some more detailing is necessary in order to subsidize the framework to be followed.

Back to Daniel and Harland (2018, p. 25, emphasis added), the authors highlight five research paradigms with foundational knowledge values. Within their systematization, the best-fitted paradigm for this project would be the one related to *critical realism*, which understands Ontology as an **objective reality that may not be tested**, and connects to an Epistemology focused on **individual understanding**.

Another classification is offered in Lukenchuk (2013, p. 65, following Polkinghorne[81], 1983). She identifies three major systems of inquiry, connected to overarching historical and philosophical traditions, for discussing the main possibilities for human science research, namely: deductive-hypothetical, paradigmatic, and existential-phenomenological and hermeneutic systems. Following this definition, a set of research paradigms are highlighted: empirical-analytic, pragmatic, interpretive, critical, post-structuralist, and transcendental.

Lukenchuk (2013, p. 70-71), after Creswell (2003[82], 2012[83]), pinpoints important features that are shared by the first four (and an assumption of this thesis): in epistemological terms, all four paradigms designate **knowledge claims as provisional, contextual and contingent**. The other two would be their epistemological opposites: the poststructuralist adopts a discursive way of knowing due to its complete rejection of foundational knowledge; and the transcendental embraces a metaphysical alternative that posits the existence of the ultimate reality and Truth (emphasis added).

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[81] Polkinghorne, Donald E. *Methodology for the human sciences: Systems of inquiry.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983.

[82] Creswell, John. W. *Research designs: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003.

[83] Creswell, John. W. *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research.* (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson, 2012.

A few aspects from the characterization the author offers of the first four research paradigms will be highlighted here, for their interconnections with the provisional conceptual and methodological framework of this thesis (Lukenchuk, 2013, p. 68-71, emphasis added):

- The *interpretive paradigm* (or constructivist), following Polkinghorne (1983) and Creswell (2003), would have emerged from the existential-phenomenological and hermeneutic systems of inquiry that germinated from several nineteenth-century European movements in a vehement response against positivism. Habermas[84] (1972) and Creswell (2003) distinguish this approach as the one that aims at **knowledge as understanding** (emphasis added). Interpretive paradigm is most strongly linked to the *critical paradigm* and, contemporarily, represents a flourishing field for qualitative studies.

- The *critical paradigm* grounds its conceptual repertoire in the political perspectives of knowledge and research, and especially in critical theory perspectives. Critical epistemology takes hermeneutics to the next level: knowledge understood as power. After Habermas (1972), critical social science would be grounded in **knowledge as emancipation**.

The project's framework will, therefore, be a "hybrid", and will strive to respect and integrate key elements of the highlighted paradigms. It will be grounded on the possibility of foundational knowledge, but, as the task of research is to question justifiable beliefs, all that can be reached is the "best" explanation available at a certain point in time within a delimited context. As Charles S. Pierce claimed, science does not represent a "systematized knowledge but the pursuit itself in which scientists are engaged (Polkinghorne, 1983, p. 119 *in* Lukenchuk, p. 17). "The city" in conceived as an objective reality that cannot be tested as a chemical reaction in a petri dish, but that could be reflected upon in an individual, exploratory, interpretive and critical research effort, aiming at improving the understanding of the phenomena and, hopefully, and collectively, raising awareness about the undercurrents that frame such understanding.

Considering the multifaceted constellation of existing beliefs, epistemological pluralism is the position from which one ought to approach the question on methods in both natural and human sciences. Contemporary inquiry often represents syncretic research that "proposes something more than the use of multiple systems of inquiry: it proposes the additional step of syncretizing the results of the multiple inquiries into a unified and integral result" (Polkinghorne, 1983, p. 254, apud Lukenchuk, p. 41).

[84] Habermas, Jürgen. *Knowledge and human interests.* Boston: Beacon, 1972.

Hence, having tentatively delineated the framing paradigms of research, and not losing sight of the Premises already explored, the **epistemological stance chosen to address the questions proposed in this dissertation was one of conceptual/theoretical research through an exploratory and interpretive (qualitative) methodology,** which pursues understanding and meaning-making. Qualitative methodologies are the predominant mode for the above-mentioned set of bearings, and **text studies** are part of the utilized methods (Lukenchuk, 2013). As pointed out by Daniel and Harland (2018, p. 24, emphasis added), in comparing this approach to empiricism and the perceived certainty of pure science,

> [⋯] **qualitative ideas need constant renewal and clarification each time a new study is conducted, partly because subjectivity and natural bias are yet to be fully accepted in research, but also to contribute to the quality of thought and ideas. This contribution comes from a creative and critical process that interrogates subjectivity.**

Methodology is "the examination of the possible plans to be carried out – the journey to be undertaken – so that an understanding of phenomena can be obtained" (Polkinghorne, 1983, p. 5 *in* Lukenchuk, 2013, p. 73). The exploratory and interpretive methodology that guides the overarching plan for this thesis will require a deep engagement with literature (as the body of knowledge, the *endoxa*), seeking, as highlighted by Daniel and Harland (2018, p. 100),

- a clear understanding of the phenomenon under study;
- synthesizing data to expose different aspects of the phenomenon under investigation;
- distilling links and relationships between concepts and theory;
- theorizing about how such relationships appear; and
- contextualizing findings within a broader literature.

It is important to clarify the delimitation of this study to Western capitalist cities within a philosophical framework rooted in a Greek-Roman-Judeo-Christian foundation.

That is are necessary filters while attempting to trace possible connections between ideas of the cities past and contemporary understandings. As Prato[85] (2018, p. 8) argued in her analysis of European urban traditions, the conclusions she reaches "may well be valid only in contexts where secular and democratic values prevail", which means, will all its caveats, Western capitalist cities. The same cautionary remark stands here, similarly narrowing down (at least a

[85] Prato, Giuliana B. European Urban Traditions: An Anthropologist's View on Polis, Urbs, and Civitas. *Diogenes.* February 2018. doi: 10.1177/0392192117740023

bit) some territorial as well as epistemic boundaries. As for the Greek-Roman-Judeo-Christian foundation,

> A civilization is a social entity that manifests religious, political, legal, and customary uniformity over an extended period, and which confers on its members the benefits of **socially accumulated knowledge.** Thus, we can speak of Ancient Egyptian civilization, Roman civilization, Chinese civilization, and Western civilization. Civilizations can include each other, whether as contemporaneous or as successive parts. For example, Roman civilization includes that of Roman Gaul, and Islamic civilization that of the Abbasids.
>
> **The culture of a civilization is the art and literature through which it rises to consciousness of itself and defines its vision of the world** (…) For the moment it is enough to recognize that cultures are the means through which civilizations become conscious of themselves, and are permeated by the strengths and weaknesses of their inherited form of life. (Scruton[86], 2007, p. 14-15)

As Lukenchuk (2013) points out, knowledge of any type is somehow predicated upon previously known facts or proposed theories. Therefore, if an academic work should be considered credible, that work must reflect familiarity with or be interconnected to previous works. Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Saint Augustine are widely acknowledged as canonic voices in the annals of Western thought, and they all bequeathed future generations works that have "the city" as the protagonist. They all follow a momentous change in the history of cities. As Mumford[87] (1961, p. 124) clarified, it is with the Greeks that cities got closer to the human scale, breaking free from "the paranoid claims of quasi-divine monarchs, with all the attending compulsions and regimentations of militarism and bureaucracy", in reference to Mesopotamian and Egyptian cities.

Nevertheless, the initial choice of heralds follows the exploratory character of this research, and it is by no means exhaustive of what was produced at any given epoch, but illustrative of the author's best attempt to illustrate the main ideas about "the city" at different moments in history as embodied by sources (thinkers/authors) that have endured the test of time. Further explanation for their selection will be provided in an upcoming topic.

In a nutshell, in **ontological** terms, this dissertation defines "the city" as the subject to be better understood. **Epistemologically**, it embraces the path of exploratory research, having as guides interpretations of it in philosophy and history. The **methodology** is one of literature review, structured in narrative **method**. They rely on bibliographic **sources** prioritizing canonic thinkers (and/or their interpreters) who heralded or embodied particular comprehensions throughout history. Its **axiology** is an exploration of how/if these conceptions are still ingrained in contemporary understandings of the city.

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[86] Scruton, Roger. *Culture Counts : Faith and Feeling in a World Besieged.* New York: Encounter Books, 2007.

[87] Lewis Mumford. *The City in History. Its Origins, Its Transformations and Its Prospects.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1961.

2.4.3 On History and Paradigms

> *Critical thought must reject the historicism of the claim that the contemporary moment is a revolutionary rupture of human possibility. [···] As both Arendt and Lefebvre recalled, urbanisation has long gone hand-in-glove with species improvement, as much as it has been stage to the worst of human depredations. The urban age of contemporary commentary is a new stage of possibility upon which these countervailing possibilities must be decided, this in a time when all places are linked, as never before, in the space of globalised crisis.*
>
> Brendan Gleeson[88]

> *To demand from the history of thought a solution to our own immediate problems is thus to commit not merely a methodological fallacy, but something like a moral error. But to learn from the past- and we cannot otherwise learn it at all - the distinction between what is necessary and what is the product merely of our own contingent arrangements, is to learn the key to self-awareness itself.*
>
> Quentin Skinner[89]

One of the proposed objectives of this thesis is an attempt to explore, in the unveiling of the mythologies that have reached the contemporary understanding of cities, if they have "evolved" in a conception of paradigm closer to Pierce's (of continuity/incrementalism) or to Baudelaire/Kuhn's (rupture), or a combination of both.

The goal of this chapter is to outline these key conceptions of paradigm to strengthen the dissertation's epistemological and methodological frame of reference.

History will play an important role in the development and verification of the hypothesis; thus, it will be embedded in upcoming chapters. The link one wishes to highlight here is that for either understanding of paradigm the temporal dimension is unescapable.

Northurp[90] (2005, p. 249) underscores the difficulty of this proposition: "World historians confront two huge conceptual tasks. One is horizontal integration: how to interconnect in each era the broad range of human experiences around the world. The other is vertical integration: how to identify patterns in the long sweep of past time."

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[88] Gleeson, 2014, p. 7.

[89] Skinner, Quentin. Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas. *History and Theory*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1969, pp. 3–53, p. 53. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/2504188.

[90] Northrup, David. Globalization and the Great Convergence: Rethinking World History in the Long Term. *Journal of World History*, Vol. 16, No. 3, 2005.

As “the past is a foreign country”, as famously stated by David Lowenthal, try as one may, one will never be a “native”. Nevertheless, a visit to its shores remains an enriching, worthwhile endeavour. In *The Past is a Foreign Country – Revisited*[91], he writes

> The past renders the present recognizable. Its traces on the ground and in our minds let us make sense of current scenes. Without past experience, no sight or sound would mean anything; we perceive only what we are accustomed to. Features and patterns become such because we share their history. Every object, every grouping, every view is made intelligible by previous encounters, tales heard, texts read, pictures seen [⋯] In Hannah[92] Arendt’s words, ‘the reality and reliability of the human world rest primarily on the fact that we are surrounded by things more permanent than the activity by which they were produced”. (Lowenthal, 2015, p. 86)

Therefore, in the investigation of “understanding the understood” through time about “the city”, and of the features that make it recognizable in the present (or not?), the passport to these foreign countries will primarily be used for a vertical integration journey, though the horizontal one cannot be ignored. As put by Varzi[93] (2019, p. 4), “But what are the identity conditions of the cities themselves, synchronically and diachronically?”.

Within this context, Lukenchuk (2013) recalls Hans-Georg Gadamer’s seminal work *Truth and Method* (1960[94]), who extended and applied the main concepts developed by Martin Heidegger regarding the historical and interactive conditions of human understanding. Using the translation from one language to another as a model for his method, Gadamer suggests that interpretation is not just reconstruction of meaning: it also involves **a fusion of horizons**, an interaction between the interpreter and the meaning of the text.

> The horizon is “something into which we move and that moves with us. Horizons change for a person who is moving. Thus, the horizon of the past, out of which all human lives and which exists in the form of tradition, is always in motion” (Gadamer, 1992[95], p. 271). The process of movement from the first pre-judgmental notion of the meaning of the whole is called the hermeneutic circle. Hence, interpretation in never final, and the process of understanding does not result in finite and objective truth (Lukenchuk, 2013, p. 26).

Adding the analysis of Yu Chong Ho[96] (1994, p. 7), “for modern philosophers, inter-subjectivity is more suitable to epistemology. Knowledge is a result of inter-subjectivity - I am a part of reality, and reality is a part of me; truths carry perspectives, and perspectives contain

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[91] Lowenthal, David. *The Past is a Foreign Country – Revisited.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

[92] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*. The University of Chicago Press. 1998 (1958), p. 95–96.

[93] Varzi, Achille C. What is a City? Topoi. An International Review of Philosophy, April 2019. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11245-019-09647-4

[94] Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and method.* New York: Continuum, 1960 (2004).

[95] Gadamer, Hans-Georg. The historicity of understanding. In K. Mueller-Vollmer (Ed.), *The hermeneutics reader: Texts of the German tradition from the Enlightenment to the present* (pp. 256-292). New York: Continuum, 1992.

[96] Chong Ho, Y. Abduction? Deduction? Induction? Is there a logic of exploratory data analysis? *Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association*, New Orleans, USA, 1994.

truths. The world I know is partly shaped by my input, and being who I am is partially caused by the input from the world."

Having said that, it is instrumental, for the purpose of paradigms' investigation, the past's characteristic of *termination*, as described by Lowenthal (and upheaved by contemporary politics…):

> The past is cherished in no small measure because it is over; what happened has happened. Termination gives it an aura of completion, of stability, of permanence lacking in the ongoing present […] Being completed also makes the past comprehensible; we see things more clearly after their consequences emerge. To be sure, the past has new consequences for each successive generation and so must be endlessly reinterpreted. But these interpretations all benefit from hindsight available only for the past […] Because it is over, the past can be arranged and domesticated, given a coherence foreign to the chaotic, ever-shifting present. (Lowenthal, 2015, p. 127).

Therefore, with the privilege of historical hindsight, one can explore the idea of *paradigms.*

In the delimitation of this term, as pointed by Lukenchuk (2013, p. xxii), it is necessary to recall Gaston Bachelard's (1938/2002[97]) contribution, for he conceived a theory of epistemological breaks in the philosophy of science that antecedes in many years the similar theory of paradigm shifts presented by Thomas Kuhn (1962/2000). As further explained by Lukenchuk (op. cit., p. 39),

> Bachelard's poetics is linked essentially to his epistemology and more general views on the history of arts and sciences. His widely acclaimed notion of epistemological obstacle (also known as epistemological break or, interchangeably, epistemological rupture) provides, on the one hand, a sharp criticism of positivism, and, on the other, a solid justification for an integrated approach to knowledge and intuition, rational and irrational, and scientific and poetic.

Lukenchuk (op. cit., p. 40) highlights that Bachelard's contribution inspired Kuhn to developed a theory of paradigm shifts that illuminated a new conception of science and scientific knowledge. His comprehensive and in-depth study of the history of science resulted in the famous *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962[98])*,* where Kuhn concluded that the development of science is not a linear and cumulative process, and that some theories can be contradictory. The kernel of his definition of a paradigm, which has entered most etymological and philosophical dictionaries, is that of a "constellation of beliefs, values, and techniques shared by the members of a given scientific community" (Runes[99], 1983, p. 240, apud Lukenchuk, 2013,

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[97] Bachelard, Gaston. *The formation of the scientific mind: A contribution to a psychoanalysis of objective knowledge.* Manchester, UK: Clinamen, 2002 (1938).

[98] Kuhn, Thomas. The structure of scientific revolutions. In Stanley Rosen (Ed.), *The philosopher's handbook: Essential readings from Plato to Kant* (pp. 503-519). New York: Random House, 2000.

[99] Runes, Dagobert D. (Ed.). *Dictionary of philosophy.* Savage, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1983.

p. 40). Kuhn advocates that some paradigms are of a broad, encompassing nature, while others are references within specific fields. Be there as it may,

> Paradigms provide scientists not only with a map but also with some of the directions essential for map-making. In learning a paradigm, the scientist acquires theory, methods, and standards together, usually in an inextricable mixture. Therefore, when paradigms change, there are usually significant shifts in the criteria determining the legitimacy of problems and of proposed solutions. (Kuhn, 2000, p. 519, apud Lukenchuk, ibid.).

As already stressed by Lukenchuk in the previous chapter, when referencing Creswell's work, she reinforces that Kuhn's theory of paradigm shifts subscribes to the overarching tenet held by twentieth-century philosophers of science: "that our knowledge of the world is essentially fallible and, if acquired, it can only represent the best explanation available." (Luchenchuk, 2013, p. 40).

In analyzing *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Hedersan and Tendler[100] (2017, p. 10) additionally highlight some key arguments which are very briefly summarized here: (i) science is cyclical, that is, progress occurs in repeating phases; (ii) a period of "normal science" would end when scientists overturned the prevailing paradigm, creating a period of "revolutionary science", in which the breakthroughs would change the way scientists understand the world; (iii) scientists overturning a prevailing paradigm are required to replace it by offering a different and sometimes opposing account of reality; (iv) such situation will be "incommensurable" (that is, the two paradigms have no common or shared means of explaining reality), and the selection of a "consensus paradigm" at the end of a scientific revolution is as much a matter of choice by scientists as it is based on the power of the paradigm to explain reality.

Very importantly, and somewhat counterintuitively,

> If scientists in any given era see the world in the same way, Kuhn claims, it is because they use the same paradigm. But that does not mean the world is exactly as they observe it. **The world's reality exists independently of the observer. When the paradigm changes, it is not the world that changes but the scientist, who now observes the world from a different perspective.** This is a point some readers of Kuhn have failed to grasp, believing instead that he meant "paradigm shift" to refer to a world-altering event. (ibid., p. 11, emphasis added).

The definition that a paradigm shift is construed by a change in the observer's perspective about a phenomenon seems convergent with the *endoxic* dialectical exercise that will be established between the four heralds in their understanding of the city.

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[100] Hedersan, Jo; Tendler, Joseph. *An Analysis of Thomas Kuhn's The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.* London: Macat International Ltd, 2017.

To contrast Bachelard/Kuhn understanding of paradigm the analysis presented by Yu Chong Ho (1994) in the paper *Abduction? Deduction? Induction? Is There a Logic of Exploratory Data Analysis?* will be brought forward.

Ho (1994) focuses his paper in the philosophical notions introduced by Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) about the nature of knowledge and reality. Though it chronologically predates the work of Kuhn, being therefore reasonable to assume that Kuhn's position refutes Peirce's understanding, one wishes to keep both paths open for exploration while attempting to map the paradigmatic changes in the understanding of "the city". Ho also clarifies the characteristics of exploratory analysis according to Peirce, and as that is the methodological choice of this thesis, it is necessary to further elaborate on it.

As highlighted by Ho (1994, p. 4), Peirce emphasized the continuity of knowledge, in opposition to Kuhn's assertion of paradigm shift. Some of Peirce's standpoints are: a disregard for the Cartesian attitude of doubting everything – to some extent, our beliefs have to be fixed on positions that are widely accepted by the intellectual community (one could argue, echoing Aristotle's position on *endoxa*); and, as a historical and social product, knowledge does not emerge out of pure logic.

Another difference pointed by Ho (ibid) between the two authors is that, while Peirce considered knowledge to be continuous and cumulative, Kuhn advocated that the pattern of inquiry is a process where new frameworks overthrow outdated ones.

> Rescher (1978[101]) used the geographical-exploration model as a metaphor to illustrate Peirce's idea: The replacement of a flat-world view with a globe-world view is a change in qualitative understanding, or a paradigm shift. After we have discovered all the continents and oceans, measuring the height of Mount Everest and the depth of the Nile river is adding quantitative details to the qualitative understanding. Although Kuhn's theory looks glamorous, as a matter of fact, paradigm shifts might occur only once in a century or a few centuries. The majority of scholars are just adding details to existing frameworks. Knowledge is self-corrective in so far as we inherit the findings from previous scholars and refine them. (Ho, 1994, p. 4).

While there may be heated arguments among scholars that subscribe to Pierce's or Kuhn's positions, arbitrating a "right" definition of paradigm is out of the scope of this thesis. What one wishes to investigate, following the example offered by Rescher in the citation above, is if it is possible to identify changes in qualitative understanding of cities, and the inheritances and refinements that add to the original body of knowledge, forming longstanding incremental

[101] Rescher, Nicholas. *Peirce's philosophy of science: Critical studies in his theory of induction and scientific method.* Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978.

narratives; and/or if there are points of rupture, which overthrow previous understanding and subvert existing narratives, creating new "foundational myths".

Returning to Ho's paper on the Peircean logical system (1994, p. 19), there would be three types of logic – abduction, deduction and induction, each with its own merits and shortcomings -, that should be altogether applied by the reasoner in order to achieve a comprehensive enquiry.

> Abduction and deduction are the conceptual understanding of a phenomena, and induction is the quantitative verification. At the stage of abduction, the goal is to explore the data, find out a pattern, and suggest a plausible hypothesis with the use of proper categories; deduction is to build a logical and testable hypothesis based upon other plausible premises; and induction is the approximation towards the truth in order to fix our beliefs for further inquiry. In short, abduction creates, deduction explicates, and induction verifies (Ho, 1994, p. 27).

As defined by Peirce, abduction is a logic of exploratory data analyses, which can contribute to the conceptual or qualitative understanding of a phenomenon, bearing in mind its connotation of neither exhausting all possibilities nor making hasty decisions (Ho, 1994, p. 10; 13).

The present dissertation, due to its scope, will navigate mostly within the confines of the logic of abduction, using the path of exploratory research to endeavour to contribute to the conceptual and qualitative understanding of the phenomenon that is "the city".

To define the initial "data set" for the analyses, one will a leaf from Aristotle's "*endoxic method*" and start from "our superiors":

> For this reason, Aristotle's method of beginning with the *endoxa* is more than a pious platitude to the effect that it behooves us to mind our superiors. He does think this, as far as it goes, but he also maintains, more instructively, that we can be led astray by the terms within which philosophical problems are bequeathed to us. Very often, the puzzles confronting us were given crisp formulations by earlier thinkers and we find them puzzling precisely for that reason. Equally often, however, if we reflect upon the terms within which the puzzles are cast, we find a way forward; when a formulation of a puzzle betrays an untenable structuring assumption, a solution naturally commends itself. This is why in more abstract domains of inquiry we are likely to find ourselves seeking guidance from our predecessors even as we call into question their ways of articulating the problems we are confronting. (Shields, 2016, online source).

Hence, it is high time to pinpoint how this will be done; how the observer's perspective will be mapped so one can attempt to understand the manner in which the perspective of different men – the heralds, shaped the understanding of the object – the city.

2.4.4 THE CHALLENGE OF *INCOMMENSURABILITY* AND THE "IDEAL TYPES"

> *It is worth stressing that here the word city does not refer simply to geography or physical space. It refers to qualities characterizing urban dwellers; most importantly, citizenship, in the sense of 'individual' civil, economic, and political rights. Thus the city should be understood at once as urbs, civitas, and polis; that is, as a built-up area, as a social association of citizens, and as a political community. Focusing only on one of these aspects would be inexcusably reductive.*
>
> Giuliana Prato[102]

Prato (2018) elaborates on the difficulty of defining "the city" drawing on Kuhn's concept of *incommensurability*.

Recalling her experience in academia and as an urban anthropologist, she highlights different understandings related not only to the epistemological stance of researchers in other fields, but also to semantic differences related to different languages, culturally bound influences, and ethnographic experiences. She, therefore, highlights the communication and "translation" aspects in finding common ground for understanding.

> In order to be fully understood, incommensurability should be defined taxonomically; we should consider that: (1) competing paradigms group concepts in different ways; (2) it is this different grouping (categorization) that causes fundamental problems in the communication between the proponents of different paradigms; (3) these groups, or categories, cannot be learned through 'simple' definitions, but are learned through scientific training and prior research experience. Thus, according to Kuhn, because conceptual differences precede the application of language, it would be analytically misleading to equate translation and interpretation. Translation per se is an almost mechanical activity. Instead, interpretation is a process that implies the development of translating hypotheses. It is like learning a new language; that is, assimilating a new vocabulary, keeping in mind that groups of concepts cannot be learned in isolation. Interpretation is therefore a learning process that involves the generation of expectations. (Prato, 2018, p. 3).

A whole other dissertation could be written on the possibilities or impossibilities of translation, but let us leave that to the side and follow Prato in the interpretation argument. She uses the example of the English language as one of the most *incommensurable* regarding definitions and classifications of urban settlements, for it mixes up different attributes regarding history, legal status, size*, inter alia*, to characterize them. She calls attention to the linguistic aspect of a definition to ask whether incommensurability of language means that a comparative analysis, eventually leading to theoretical generalization, is at all possible.

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[102] Prato, 2018, p. 5.

> If we follow Michael Polanyi's approach to incommensurability – which was at the basis of his criticism of positivism and of the attendant attempts at formulating universal social laws – we risk falling into the kind of relativism that makes comparison futile. It seems to me that Kuhn is trying to deal precisely with this problem when he argues that **incommensurable paradigms are not disjointed rivals but complement each other**, which may help to assess how the anthropological methodology can deal with apparently incommensurable urban realities. (ibid., p. 4, emphasis added).

This is an important point, for one will be attempting textual analyses of treatises written in languages that are no longer in use as they were in the time they were produced; treatises have been copied and translated multiple times throughout history, subject to the bias of their interpreters; some with pieces that were lost; and all addressing the "reality" of a "city" that, as such, no longer exists. It is the understanding of incommensurability as complementary in the context of paradigms that renders the research feasible.

As a possible investigative path, Prato suggests that some characteristics of ancient urban **ideal types** (like *polis, urbs* and *civitas*), taken together, may provide a "neutral" language of communication for contemporary comparative analyses, helping to ease down some entrenched positions regarding the "urban" versus the "city" which are so present in today's debate.

This is an approach that seems useful for two main reasons. First, the realms of the *polis, urbs* and *civitas* were the concrete experience of the selected heralds, so a more accurate baseline can be established. Second, it highlights the communicative/linguistic aspects in constructing the understanding of the city. There appears to be a fruitful path open for exploration by combining the notions of **ideal types** and **incommensurability**. Hence, the voices of the selected heralds could be modulated through these filters in search of what could be construed as part of their "foundational myths" of "the city".

The notion of "ideal type" (*Idealtypus*) is a Weberian construction. As Kim (2020)[103] explains, it is necessary to recall Max Weber's concern with the subjective nature of the researcher's perspective, and his understanding that the kind of objective knowledge that historical and cultural sciences may achieve is precariously limited: "Objectivity in historical and social sciences is, then, not a goal that can be reached with the aid of a correct method, **but an ideal that must be striven for without a promise of ultimate fulfillment**." (ibid., emphasis added).

In his explanation of Weber's concepts, Kim highlights the following aspects: "an ideal type is formed by the one-sided *accentuation* of one or more points of view" according to which "concrete individual phenomena [⋯] are arranged into a unified analytical construct"

[103] Kim, Sung Ho. "Max Weber", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2020/entries/weber/

(*Gedankenbild*). In its purely fictional nature, it is a methodological "utopia [that] cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality" (Weber[104] 1904/1949, p. 90, *apud* Kim 2020, n.p.).

So, very much aware of its "fictional nature", the ideal type does not stake to claim its validity in terms of *a strict reproduction of or correspondence with the reality*, but only in terms of **adequacy,** which is often ignored by the proponents of positivism (Kim, 2020, n.p.).

> According to Weber, a clear value commitment, no matter how subjective, is both unavoidable *and* necessary. It is *unavoidable*, for otherwise no meaningful knowledge can be attained. Further, it is *necessary*, for otherwise the value position of a researcher would not be foregrounded clearly and admitted as such — not only to the readers of the research outcome but also to the very researcher him/herself. In other words, Weber's emphasis on "one-sidedness" (*Einseitigkeit*) not only affirms the subjective nature of scientific knowledge but also demands that the researcher be *self-consciously* subjective. [Weber, 1904/1949, p. 107, *apud* Kim, op. cit., emphasis on the original].

In synthesis, as argued by Coser[105] on Weber, "Ideal types enable one to construct hypotheses linking them with the conditions that brought the phenomenon or event into prominence, or with consequences that follow from its emergence" (Coser, 1977, p. 223-224).

Hence, in the effort of verifying the proposed hypothesis, *that there are understandings of "the city" that have persisted throughout history and geography and that shape and influence our thinking and practice as planners today,* the "ideal types" of *polis, urbs,* and *civitas* (and imbedded correlations such as *polites, politea, res publica, civitates* ⋯) can help us identify the perseverance or not of **ideations** attached to the understanding of "the city". As illustrated by Machado[106] (1995, p. 8),

> Trabalhar o significado do conceito de República é, nesse sentido, inscrevê-lo no tempo longo da história, **buscando as permanências** entre uma cultura e outra, **entre momentos cronologicamente distintos**. É entendê-lo como um elemento simbólico que, tornado objeto de análise, nos conduz a uma compreensão melhor não só do grupo particular que o construiu (...) mas de todos aqueles que o elegeram como modelo político. As heranças culturais clássicas não devem ser consideradas meras "sobrevivências" de uma sociedade remota e amorfa, condenada ao desaparecimento; ao contrário, elas constituem vivências vigorosas, sempre renovadas no decorrer da dinâmica histórica, cuja atualização vai refletir as especificidades de contextos sociais diferenciados, que obedecem a racionalidades distintas. Não podemos comparar stricto sensu sociedades pré-industriais, como o mundo greco-romano, e a sociedade brasileira, inserida nos quadros do capitalismo internacional (....) Por outro lado, não podemos subestimar as evidências de que **"existe um encontro secreto, marcado entre as gerações precedentes e a nossa",** como diria Benjamin (1986, p. 223, apud Machado, *op. cit.*, emphasis added).

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[104] Weber, Max. "Objectivity in Social Science and Social Policy". In *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, E. A. Shils and H. A. Finch (ed. and trans.), New York: Free Press, 1949 (1904).

[105] Coser, Lewis A. *Masters of sociological thought: ideas in historical and social context.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977.

[106] Machado, Heloisa G. De res publica e de república: o significado histórico de um conceito. *Cad. de hist.,* Belo Horizonte, v. 1, n. 1, p. 7-15, out. 1995. Available at http://periodicos.pucminas.br/index.php/cadernoshistoria/article/view/1641

2.4.5 The Four Heralds: Masters of *Mythopoeia*

> *Masterpieces are not single and solitary births; they are the outcome of many years of thinking in common, of thinking by the body of the people, so that the experience of the mass is behind the single voice.*
>
> Virginia Woolf, A Room of One's Own[107]

On the Shoulder of Giants is the title of a book by Umberto Eco, which compiles a series of *lectio magistralis* he delivered for twelve years at the La Milanesiana cultural festival. The first of the lectures, delivered in 2001, lends its title to the book, in reference to a sentence attributed to 12th-century French philosopher Bernard of Chartres, as accounted for by English philosopher John of Salisbury: "Bernard of Chartres used to say that we are like dwarfs standing on the shoulders of giants, and so we can see farther than they, not because of our sharper sight or greater stature but because we have been raised higher by their great size" (Eco, 2019[108], p. 11). With his habitual mastery, Eco will set the context for the quote, looking both back and forward, to develop a dialectic narrative of how past, present (and maybe future) intertwine, sometimes in a subservient manner, at others in rebellious outburst, sometimes with anthropophagic appetite, at others as unstoppable polytheism. Be it as it may,

> Duchamp stuck a moustache on the Mona Lisa, but first needed a *Mona Lisa* to stick the moustache on. Magritte, to deny that he was painting a pipe, had to go to the effort of meticulously painting a realistic pipe. Finally, the great parricide of the novel's historic body was committed by James Joyce—who took the Homeric narrative form as his model. Even the ultramodern *Ulysses* sailed farther thanks to the shoulders, or in this case the mainmast, of an ancient tradition. (ibid, p. 17)

Virginia Woolf's and Bernard of Chartre's quotes are reminders of how what we create today carries a dialogue with the past. The diachronic dimension of this dissertation acknowledges this relationship, and the matter at hand now is to clarify which voices will be heard and why.

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[107] Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own*, apud Cartledge, Paul. *Ancient Greece : A History in Eleven Cities.* Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 89.

[108] Umberto Eco. *On the Shoulders of Giants.* Cambridge (MA): The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019.

Virginia highlights the synthetic element expressed in great works of art/thought. These single voices are what, here, have been nominated **heralds**, towering figures who were able to communicate the multitude of an age through the powers of their creativity and skill and, in doing so, establishing seminal positions in their fields.

Not every branch of science relates to the past in the same way. The Earth is not flat, and the sun does not revolve around it, as was once was thought. However, Philosophy and Art inhabit the history of thought in a unique away, one that allows for an ongoing relationship with the past through *canon* – the *masterpieces produced by giants.*

> A culture is supplied with its monuments and its durable styles by unceasing comparisons and choices, from which a canon of masterpieces emerges not as the object of a single collective choice, not even a choice that must be made anew by each generation, but as the byproduct of myriad choices over centuries (Scrutton, 2007, p. 16).

As Scrutton highlights, the elevation to canon is the product of distilled collective choice over time and, in thinking about "the city", some authors have spurred debate over millennia. "[…] the tradition of political thought is not so much a tradition of discovery as one of meanings extended over time" (Wolin, 2004, p. 23). Though not exclusively, such works will address the universal question of how to best organize life in its collective dimension while allowing for one's flourishing. For that, they will talk about justice, virtue, friendship and love. The attempted answers were embraced within what became known as the realms of ethics and politics. **It is in these domains that our heralds will be searched.** As Wolin explains (2013[109], p. 10-11)

> From its very beginnings in Greece, the Western political tradition has looked upon the political order as a common order created to deal with those concerns in which all of the members of society have some interest. The concept of an order that was at once political and common was stated most eloquently in Plato's dialogue *Protagoras*. There it was related that the gods gave men the arts and talents necessary for their physical survival, yet when men formed cities, conflict and violence continually erupted and threatened to return mankind to a brutal and savage condition. Protagoras then described how the gods, fearful that men would destroy each other, decided to provide justice and virtue:
>
> > *Zeus feared that the entire race would be exterminated, and so he sent Hermes to them, bearing reverence and justice to be the ordering principles of cities and the bonds of friendship and conciliation. Hermes asked Zeus how he should impart justice and reverence among men: — Should he distribute them as the arts are distributed; that is to say, to a favored few only [or] . . . to all? "To all," said Zeus; "I should like them all to have a share; for cities cannot exist, if a few share only in the virtues, as in the arts … "*[110]

[109] Wolin, Sheldon S. *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought - Expanded Edition*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004 (1960).

[110] As detailed by Wolin on note #5, p. 608, "*Protagoras* 321-325 (Jowett translation).The question concerning whether the myth of Protagoras represents Plato's own thoughts is treated by Ronald B. Levinson, *In Defense of Plato* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), pp. 293–294; W.K.C. Guthrie, *In the Beginning* (London: Methuen, 1957), pp. 84 ff.

Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Augustine are seminal voices that explicitly approached the issue of "the city" in a political-ethical framework. The four of them belong to the same overall historical period (Classical Antiquity[111]), which provides some common hues to the background of their thought, such as "the belief in cosmic harmony" (Akkerman, 2000[112], p. 269). It can be argued that all of them entered "the tradition of political philosophy in a triple capacity: as a set of models to be followed, as a challenge to be met by counter-projects, and as a problematic to be rethought" (Arnason, 2013[113], p. 37). Interestingly, except for Plato (in the context of the four, he is the "inaugural herald"), all the others engage with their predecessors, citing them directly (within the limits of the works that were circulating at the time).

The standing of **Plato** (428/427 – 348/347 BC) and **Aristotle** (384–322 BC) in the history of Western thought can hardly be overstated. Vasari[114] symbolically describes, "There are Plato and Aristotle, and around them is a great school of philosophers." As Herman (2013, p. 188)[115] wrote in his *The Cave and the Light: Plato vs Aristotle and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization,* "The English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge[116] once said every person is born either a Platonist or an Aristotelian. In fact, Platonists and Aristotelians are not born but made. We are

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[111] The periodization of history, as many other aspects in this research, is a topic that harbours scholarly divergences and, depending on the main organizing criteria followed, will result in different segmentations. What has been used here is the broadest overall categorization of Western history, which has its roots in the Renaissance, that defines three main moments: **Antiquity, Medieval** and **Modern**. As explained in Bispham et al (2006), within Antiquity, the **Classical period** would comprise **Classical Greece** (480/479 BC (the Persian Wars) till the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC); **the Hellenistic World** (the reign (or death) of Alexander (336-323 BC) till the final Roman conquest of the Greek world, marked by the defeat (31 BC - battle of Actium) and death (30 BC) of Mark Antony and Cleopatra VII of Egypt); the **Roman Republic** (a period of approximately four and a half centuries from about 500 BC that ended with the victory of Octavian Augustus over Antony and Cleopatra); and the **Roman Empire** (usually dated from the battle of Actium till the deposition of the last emperor in the West, Romulus Augustulus, in 476 AD). As the reforms conduced by Diocletian (284-305 AD) transformed the empire beyond recognition, and there were also at play influences of Byzantium, Latin Christendom and even Islam, depending on the chronological parameters adopted, there would be a blurrier "**Late Antiquity**" category, within a timeframe of anywhere between 250-800 AD. In terms of the history of Philosophy, there would be divergences as well, but there is a fair amount of scholarship that structures its analyses from the "beginning" (i.e., Pythagoras) to **Plato**, and then from **Aristotle to Augustine**, with Augustine, "a hinge between the ancient and the medieval world" (Kenny, 2010, p. 7), sometimes featuring both in the Antiquity and Medieval periods. An illustration of these debates can be found in Green, William A. "Periodizing World History." *History and Theory,* vol. 34, no. 2, 1995, pp. 99–111, https://doi.org/10.2307/2505437 and Green, William A. "Periodization in European and World History." *Journal of World History*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1992, pp. 13–53, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20078511. Comprehensive outlooks are presented in Bispham, Edward; Harrison, Thomas; Sparkes, Brian A. (eds.). *The Edinburgh Companion to Ancient Greece and Rome.* Edinburg: Edinburgh University Press, 2006 and in Kallendorf, Craig W. (ed.). *A Companion to the Classical Tradition.* Malden, Oxford & Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2007. Examples of the organization in terms of the history of philosophy can be found in Taylor, Christopher (ed.). *Routledge History of Philosophy, Volume I - From the Beginning to Plato.* London & New York, Routledge, 1997; Furley, David (ed.). *Routledge History of Philosophy, Volume II - From Aristotle to Augustine.* London & New York, Routledge, 1999; and in Kenny, Anthony. *A New History of Western Philosophy*. Oxford & New York, Oxford University Press, 2010.

[112] Akkerman, Abraham. (2000) Harmonies of Urban Design and Discords of City-form: Urban Aesthetics in the Rise of Western Civilization, *Journal of Urban Design,* 5:3, 267-290, DOI: 10.1080/713683970

[113] Arnason, Johann P. Exploring the Greek Needle's Eye: Civilizational and Political Transformations. Chapter. *In The Greek Polis and the Invention of Democracy : A Politico-Cultural Transformation and Its Interpretations*, Edited by Johann P. Arnason, Kurt A. Raaflaub, and Peter Wagner. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2013.

[114] Vasari, Giorgio. Life of Raphael of Urbino. Giorgio Vasari first published his *Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, ed architettori* in 1550. Vasari (1987) *apud* Herman, 2013, p. 98 (kindle edition).

[115] Herman, Arthur. *The Cave and the Light.* New York: Random House Publishing Group, 2103, Kindle Edition.

[116] Coleridge quoted in John Stuart Mill, "Coleridge" (1840), *in* The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 10:118, *apud* Herman, 2013, p. 98 (kindle edition).

all part of Raphael's School of Athens, standing on one side or the other." Both left an extensive *corpus* and, though it will be necessary to prioritize a modest portion of it in this study, it is vital to keep in mind that what they wrote about "the city" is contingent of their comprehensive philosophical outlook. The priority in the analyses will be given to **Plato's *Republic*** and **Aristotle's *Politics*.**

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BCE) may inhabit our imagination as a Roman senator who left some outstanding pieces of rhetoric for posterity. Nevertheless, as Richard Tuck (1990: 43 *apud* Lane[117], 2018, n.p.) has remarked, "For fifteen hundred years, from the fourth century to the nineteenth, schoolchildren in Europe were exposed daily to two books. One was the Bible, and the other was the works of Cicero." During the Enlightenment, his influence in European and North American political thought was also substantial. Though he was subject to some harsh criticism earlier in the 20th century, more recent scholarship has brought significant revaluation of his contribution to the history of thought (see, i. e. Wood[118] (1988); Michel et Nicolet[119] (s.d)). His work puts in relief the relationship between Greek philosophy, Stoicism, and the political life of the Roman Republic on the verge of becoming an Empire. The priority in the analyses will be given to ***De re publica (Republic).***

Finally, **Aurelius Augustinus – Saint Augustine** (354-430 AD), who was perhaps "…the greatest Christian philosopher of Antiquity and certainly the one who exerted the deepest and most lasting influence … and his authority in theological matters was universally accepted in the Latin Middle Ages and remained, in the Western Christian tradition, virtually uncontested till the nineteenth century. The impact of his views on sin, grace, freedom, and sexuality on Western culture can hardly be overrated" (Torneau, 2020[120], n.p). His ideas on topics such as language, scepticism, knowledge, freedom, and the structure of the human mind remain of interest to students of the field, and his writing style echoes with postmodern philosophers (Caputo and Scanlon, 2005[121]). The priority in the analyses will be given to ***De Civitate Dei (The City of God).***

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[117] Lane, Melissa, "Ancient Political Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/ancient-political/

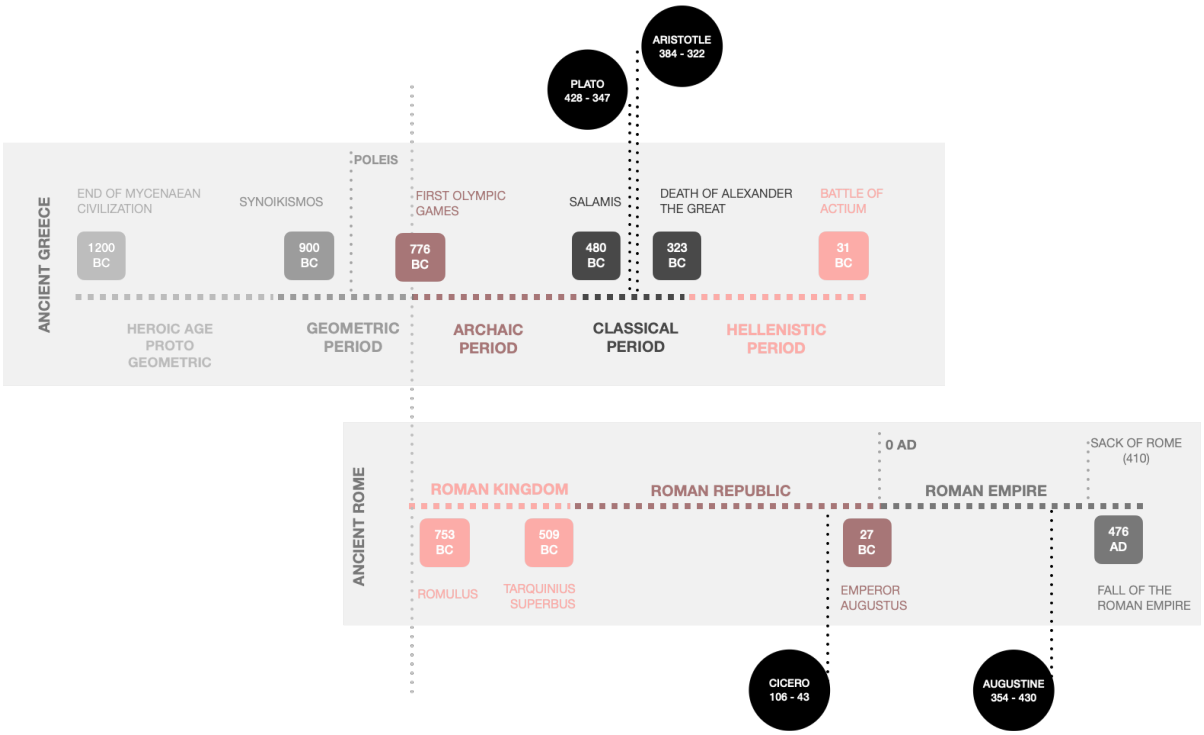
[118] Wood, Neal. *Cicero's Social and Political Thought.* Berkley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1988.

[119] Michel, Alain; Nicolet, Claude. «Cicéron (106-43 av. J.-C.)». *Encyclopædia Universalis* [en ligne], URL : http://www.universalis-edu.com/encyclopedie/ciceron/

[120] Tornau, Christian, "Saint Augustine", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2020/entries/augustine/

[121] Caputo, John D., & Scanlon, Michael J., (eds). *Augustine and Postmodernism: Confessions and Circumfession.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.

Figure 3. The basic timeline of the studied period.



Source: Author's elaboration.

Despite their indisputable credentials in the history of thought, there is still some amount of discretion in enlisting these four voices as the chosen foundational heralds for the discussion of "the city". Other voices will tell different stories[122], not less valid than the ones that will be pursued here; there is no claim of these four being the "definite anthology". And though, as already highlighted by Weber, a degree of subjectivity is *unavoidable and necessary,* there are two more reasons to elect these four as "masters of the *mythopoesis* of 'the city'"

Firstly, **these individuals are embedded in the *ideal types* of the "ancient city"**, having lived the reality of the *polis* and of Rome's evolving form (which agglutinates the dimensions of *urbs* and *civitas)* from *polis* to Republic, to Empire, to crumble. Moreover, in being men of their own time, they reflected upon their reality, **bearing in the construction of their epoch's paradigms.**

[122] Within the same timeframe, there are several other important thinkers. Calling attention to a few, Socrates is an enormous figure in the history of philosophy and chose to die rather than disobey the laws of the city. However, he left no written works. Thucydides (c. 460 – c. 400 BC) wrote the highly influential History of the Peloponnesian War. He is considered by many the "father of history" and the study international relations. Similar things could be said of Polybius (c. 200 – c 118 BC), whose Histories provide penetrating analyses of the world of the Greek polis and the ascendance to domination of the Roman Republic. Though incredibly insightful observers, their writings are not prescriptive of how to achieve the good life in the city. Zeno of Citium (c. 334 – c. 262 BC), the founder of the Stoic school, wrote an ethical-political treatise that, just as Plato's, was called Politeia. Unfortunately, it did not survive. Seneca (c. 4 BC – 65 AD) chose to write about the ideal *princeps* instead of a *res publica.*

Secondly, and admittedly, they pursued the construction of coherent **cities in speech** in works dedicated to this end. Though interpretations may vary as to whether they actually thought what they were proposing was feasible, in this sense, it is of no consequence. They all used the power of words to provoke others to reflect on what it meant to live well collectively and pursue happiness, and what would be necessary for that. By doing so, they added to the construction of the "mythology" of the city in two ways: by welding into the adamant use of reason to understand the world the flexibility of imagination (and faith, in Augustine); and by leaving **a written legacy** that became enmeshed in our understanding of the "ideal-types" (*polis, empire*), hence allowing subsequent thinkers to build upon their ideations – even if to dispute them.

Arnason (2013, p. 37) stresses this point while analysing political philosophy in the Platonic and Aristotelian mode (and, one argues, could be expanded to Cicero and Augustine),

> This was the most ambitious project of political reflection (although the emphases of the two founding figures were very different), but neither its internal logic nor the changing geopolitical environment were conducive to practical impact on the political sphere. On the other hand, the innovation that could neither reform nor transform the really existing *polis* **became a crucial part of the latter's cultural legacy, and of the framework in which the whole Greek experience was seen by later civilizations** (emphasis added).

The fact that their thoughts were committed to paper allowed them to last, not only in themselves but also by creating "a vocabulary still at work in the analyses and aspirations of many of those concerned with politics across the globe today" (Lane, 2014, p. 3). And, to finalize the arguments in support of the choice of the selected heralds, one brings Velásquez's[123] comments in analysing the ensemble of Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle's *Politics*, Cicero's *Republic* and Augustine's *City of God*,

> Cuatro *politeiai*, cuatro mundos en situaciones análogas aunque diferentes y críticas cada cual, con maneras distintas de enfrentar los problemas y plantear las soluciones; pero, al fin, cuatro modos curiosamente conectados como en forma ineluctable con temáticas genialmente iniciadas en la *Politeia* de Platón. [⋯]
>
> **Esta temática común, a la luz de la autonomía evidente de cada autor, y de las circunstancias disímiles que a cada cual le toca enfrentar, hacen de este conjunto de cuatro *politeiai* uno de los testimonios más fascinantes de la perduración y maduración de una idea** (Velásquez, 2011, p. 212; 223, emphasis added).

One concurs. To reflect upon the persistence and maturation of these seminal ideas (cities in speech) and try to identify their bearings in the ideations of the city today has proven to be, albeit daunting, a fascinating exploration.

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[123] Velásquez, Óscar. La ciudad de dios desde la perspectiva de la razón: la cuarta politeia de la antigüedad. *Teología y Vida,* Vol. LII (2011), 211-228. Available at https://scielo.conicyt.cl/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0049-34492011000100010&lng=en&nrm=iso&tlng=en

2.4.5.1 Selection of Sources

One could argue that the influence of past ideas in our contemporary lives is like our genes. We do not really know which combination of them will make a certain shape of a nose or eyebrow emerge in the present generation. It may come from an ancestor we never heard of, whose portrait was never painted. Nevertheless, it can show. Likewise, consciously or not, the past is kept alive inside of us, in our practices and institutions.

Keeping in mind the exploratory nature of the research, the original "gene pool" was determined by a qualitative perception of the influence of four thinkers – Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Augustine - to conceptualize the foundational concepts of "the city" as an exercise that tries to connect Man (singularly and collectively) to its place in the world as an expression of a life that is worth to be lived.

Perhaps in more appealing imagery, one could think of an initial "*tetrahedron of endoxas*", a beautiful platonic solid with each facet ingrained with one of the original heralds engaged in a synchronic or diachronic dialectic. And since one is in a poetic mode, imagine, like on Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon* album cover, light is shining through this prism and being dispersed in many directions and colours. These travelling rays will carry with them the frequency of that encounter and will continue to travel, until they meet another substance, from where they can proceed in their voyage or be absorbed and disappear… These photons are the substance of our potential myths, and from their departure from the original *tetrahedron* some 2,000 years ago, they engaged with other *endoxas* along the way, being therefore subject to change of direction, of interpretation, but always carrying fragments of the exchanged energy of each encounter in their wake.

Very well, quite charming. Nevertheless, floating cosmic rays aside, how does one propose to go about this crucial phase of the research concretely? Objectively, the analytical framework to guide the exploratory literature review is conceived as follows:

1) Cities of the Western world, with Judeo-Christian-Greek-Roman cultural roots, and that are connected to the capitalist system, provide the backdrop of the "contemporary city";
2) The "ideal-types" of the *polis, urbs* and *civitas* (subsumed under the Roman republic/empire) provide the observable phenomena against which the "cities in speech" of each herald will be understood in terms of continuities, inflexions or ruptures;

3) The identification of a foundational set of ideas as expressed in the voices of each of the four heralds. These would be, potentially, the "mythical origins" of some understandings about the contemporary city.

Its application will develop through an **exploratory and comparative reading of thinkers who are widely acknowledged in their fields against the set framework,** whose selection is openly vulnerable to a subjective bias, as remarked by Weber (see Item 2.4.4), and non-exhaustive, to be manageable within the time constraints of the research.

A set of sources is required to get in touch with these voices. They were organized as follows:

1) *Direct Sources:* The extant *corpus* of the selected heralds as defined in the research. The referenced works, editions and translations (such as *Delphi Classics*, *Penguin Classics*, *Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought* and other specific volumes) will be noted in each respective chapter.

2) *Interpreter Sources:* Thinkers or scholars who have the works of the specified heralds as their fields of study. Important sources for the research for they provide the necessary support for a proper understanding of the direct sources. In order to narrow down the countless possibilities, one departed from dedicated publications from the Classics Departments of major Universities and specialized publishing houses. Among the first are various volumes of *Cambridge Companions to Philosophy*, *Cambridge Companions to Religion*, and *Cambridge History* and *Oxford Handbook* series. Among the second, *Companions* (various) edited by Routledge, Blackwell, Brill, Gius. Laterza & Figli, Vita e Pensiero, Mondadori, Éditions du Seuil, among others. Dedicated series such as Oxford's *Founders of Modern Political and Social Thought* were also identified. A comparative look among the invited editors and contributors of such publications allowed for identifying some authoritative names, which led to expert works dedicated to the heralds and specific aspects of their corpus.

3) *Intertextual Sources:* a particular set of thinkers/scholars that, in their production, in addition to being interpreters of the works of the heralds, are able to not only establish a dialogue among their positions but also create parallels with the contemporary world. These illuminating sources enable both the synchronic and the diachronic perspectives.

Methodologically, the *Interpreter* and *Intertextual* sources identification also comprehended a bibliographic analysis (selection of terms, filtering and detailed review) in the domains under study involving a keyword-based search in the main online catalogue as well as the journals' database of the University of Melbourne. A similar keyword-based search in the online catalogue of the Université Lumière Lyon 2, particularly the portals Cairns and Universalis Encyclopaedia, was also conducted. Before the outbreak of Covid 19, an online catalogue and physical consultations were carried out at the Biblioteca Central at PUC-PR, at the British Library, and at the several on-campus libraries at Unimelb. The specialized online *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* was also a recurring source per scholarly recommendation.

3 BETTER UNDERSTANDING MYTHOLOGY

3.1 NOTES ON LANGUAGE AS BIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL

> *We live in a sea of human institutional facts. Much of this is invisible to us. Just as it is hard for the fish to see the water in which they swim, so it is hard for us to see the institutionality in which we swim. Institutional facts are without exception constituted by language, but the functioning of language is especially hard to see. This might seem an odd thing to say because we are often conscious of language when we engage in a conversation, receive a telephone call, pay our bills, answer our e-mail, and so on. What I mean is that we are not conscious of the role of language in constituting social reality.*
>
> John Searle[124]

The "uniqueness" of human beings and the amount of free will and agency we are able to exercise are millenary discussions in the fields of religion, philosophy, and science.

Modernity hugely deconstructed pillars of our self-belief, with paradigmatic changes that could be exemplified by the works of Darwin, and of Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud, the three *Masters of Suspicion*[125], as pointed out by Ricœur. Whatever survived, according to some, was dismantled by studies in areas such as the neurosciences, with discoveries about how our emotions and thoughts are shaped by the chemistry of our brain; and evolutionary biology and psychology, with experiments that indicate that many traits that we believed to be "ours" are, in fact, shared with other species.

It is outside the scope of this research to explore all avenues of this debate, left alone propose any "conclusions".

However, if it is assumed that the "default mode" of the *Sapiens* is one of belief and that critical thinking would go against our "natural" grain, one could speculate that evolution has played a part in this process by developing these traits as advantageous to our survival.

One author that has explored this path is Prof. John Searle[126] (1932 -), an American philosopher dedicated to the fields of Philosophy of Mind and Language and Social Philosophy, influenced by John Langshaw Austin and Ludwig Wittgenstein and the concept of *speech acts*.

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[124] Searle, John. *Making the Social World : The Structure of Human Civilization.* New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2010, p. 76.

[125] Ricoeur, Paul. *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation.* New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2008 [1970], p. 33; 35.

[126] See https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Searle

In his book *Making the Social World : The Structure of Human Civilization* (2010), he explores the interplay between language and distinctive features of human society in a way that fills some of the gaps left on the approach of myth/mythology as presented by Harari and Midgley. More precisely, what are some attributes of language that have such power in shaping the institutions that, to a large extent, dominate our lives.

Searle argues that the enormous complexities of human society are different surface manifestations of an underlying commonality, an underlying principle of social ontology that we apply repeatedly with different contents. Arguing along the lines developed by Harari and Midget,

> The distinctive feature of human social reality, the way in which it differs from other forms of animal reality··· is that humans have the capacity to impose functions on objects and people where the objects and the people cannot perform the functions solely in virtue of their physical structure. The performance of the function requires that there be a collectively recognized status that the person or object has, and it is only in virtue of that status that the person or object can perform the function in question. Examples are pretty much everywhere: a piece of private property, the president of the United States, a twenty-dollar bill, and a professor in a university are all people or objects that are able to perform certain functions in virtue of the fact that they have a collectively recognized status that enables them to perform those **functions in a way they could not do without the collective recognition of the status.** (Searle, 2010, p. 15, emphasis added).

For this **system of status functions** to work, there must be **collective recognition** (which does not imply approval) of the object or person as having that status. Status functions also depend on **collective intentionality**, which reflects a remarkable trait of human beings that is the capacity to cooperate, not only in shared actions, but also attitudes, desires, and beliefs.

Status functions carry **deontic powers**[127] (positive or negative, conditional or disjunctive) as expressed within rights, duties, obligations, requirements, and so on. "It is because status functions carry deontic powers that they **provide the glue that holds human civilization together**" (op. cit., p. 16), for they have the unique trait that, once recognized as such, they provide us with reasons for acting that are independent of our inclinations and desires.

The next question, therefore, is **how such incredible human feature is created and maintained in existence?** Searle's answer is given within the realm of the philosophy of language, and how language evolved within pre-historical times.

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[127] Deontic powers are typically cases in which the power consists of reasons for action. If I have a negative deontic power such as an obligation to pay you the money I owe you, then I have a reason for doing something and you have a reason to expect me to do it. And if I have a positive deontic power, such as that I am authorized to go fishing on your property, then I have a power over you in that I can go fishing on your property and you have a reason for not interfering whether you want me to fish there or not. So deontic power is legitimately described as power even though typically it is not a case of the use or threat of force. (Searle, 2010, p. 119).

3.1.1 THE POWER OF DECLARATIONS

Attempting a very brief synthesis of Searle's explanation, language has a set of attributes: phonology, syntax, and semantics. Syntax's crucial role in organizing semantics, and semantics has the utmost importance of creating reality that goes beyond meaning. Language performs four functions: meaning, communication, representation,[128] and expression. In the uses of languages, Searle emphasizes the need to concentrate on the representative cases, for those are genuinely semantic and semantically evaluable (they can, for example, be literally true or false).

The sentence is the minimal unit for performing a complete speech act and thus for expressing an entire intentional state. The principle that guides the selection of the syntactical devices within the sentence is that they perform a semantic function. The speaker can then intentionally construct many different representations of actual, possible, and even impossible states of affairs in the world. Through these mechanisms, the connection between the representation and the perceptual stimulus is broken.

At this point, it is necessary to highlight that

> …is essential to see that in the account I have given so far it is implicit that the speaker employing the conventional device in a social setting for the purpose, for example, of conveying some truth about the world to the hearer, is thereby committed to that truth. **That is, we will not understand an essential feature of language if we do not see that it necessarily involves social commitments,** and that the necessity of these social commitments derives from the social character of the communication situation, the conventional character of the devices used, and the intentionality of speaker meaning. It is this feature that enables language to form the foundation of human society in general. **If a speaker intentionally conveys information to a hearer using socially accepted conventions for the purpose of producing a belief in the hearer about a state of affairs in the world, then the speaker is committed to the truth of his utterance.** (ibid. p. 69-70).

This is a point of interest to be kept in mind when we later discuss the selected heralds. All four of them were knowledgeable in the arts of rhetoric and oratory. Cicero is considered one of the greatest rhetoricians of all times. Augustine taught it. Aristotle wrote about it. Plato

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[128] Searle uses the following example to show how it works: "Suppose I am standing in the shower practicing French pronunciation. I say over and over "*Il pleut*." The conditions of satisfaction of my intention in action are that I should correctly produce the French sounds. If somebody shouts at me "It's not raining, you idiot. You are simply standing in the shower," he will have misunderstood what I was trying to do. I did not mean that it's raining. But now suppose that later we go outside and I discover that it's raining. This time I say "*Il pleut*," and I mean it. What is the difference between the two cases? In both cases I intend to produce the French sounds, and the correct production of the sounds is a condition of satisfaction of both utterances. But in the second case I intend that the production of the sounds should itself have further conditions of satisfaction, namely, that it is raining. Speaker meaning, to repeat, is the imposition of conditions of satisfaction on conditions of satisfaction. The capacity to do this is a crucial element of human cognitive capacities. It requires the ability to think on two levels at once, in a way that is essential for the use of language. At one level the speaker intentionally produces a physical utterance, but at another level the utterance represents something. And the same duality infects the symbol itself. At one level it is a physical object like any other. At another level it has a meaning; it represents a type of a state of affairs. (ibid., p. 64).

took serious issue with it. Living in political societies in which words mattered enormously – so much so that, for instance, "The democratic polis depends on the public exchange of language[129]"-, they were deeply aware of its power and, communing in paradigm that tied politics and ethics, placed high value in truth.

Back to Searle's analysis, commitment in defined by having two components to it: the notion of an undertaking that is hard to reverse and the notion of an obligation. These typically combine, for example, in the notion of promising, which implies an undertaking that is not easily reversible and at the same time creates an obligation. Speech acts are above all a public performance (again, something that our heralds were very aware of).

A special class of speech acts was baptized by Searle as **Declarations**, which combine the *word-to-world* fit (stating how things are in the world, for example, the snow is white, and are assessed in their veracity by how truly they describe how things are in the world) and the *world-to-word* fit (which tries to change the world to match the content of the speech act, such as when I promise to deliver my thesis at a certain date, or if I ask you to please give me an extension, to leave the room, to lend me a book).

At this point, Searle will state that "**One of the primary theoretical points [⋯] is to make a very strong claim. With the important exception of language itself, all of institutional reality, and therefore, in a sense, all of human civilization, is created by speech acts that have the same logical form as Declarations.** (ibid., p. 18).

To appreciate this point is necessary to open a parenthesis to say a word about **constitutive rules** and **institutional facts**. There are rules to regulate antecedently existing forms of behavior (such as the normative of driving on the right of the road; it regulates driving but driving can exist independently of this rule), and rules that not only regulate but also create the possibility of the behavior they regulate ("the rules of a game"). There are facts that exist independently of any human institution (the moon orbits the earth), and there are others that require human institutions in order to exist at all (Ariadne is a Ph.D. candidate). An institution is a system of constitutive rules, and such a system automatically creates the possibility of institutional facts. Constitutive rules fit in the creation and maintenance of all institutional reality following the same logical forms as Declarations. Rules of games and constitutions of nations are typical examples where the constitutive rules function as standing Declarations[130].

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[129] Goldhill, Simon. Greek Drama and Political Theory. Chapter. In *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, edited by Christopher Rowe and Malcolm Schofield, by Simon Harrison and Melissa Lane, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000, pp. 60–88.

[130] In Searle "for example, the Constitution of the United States makes it the case by Declaration that any presidential candidate who receives the majority of votes in the electoral college counts as the president-elect. Because the constitutional provision functions as a standing Declaration, no further act of acceptance or recognition is necessary to

Furthermore, Searle argues (2010 p. 20-22) that the mind has a beautiful and symmetrical formal structure. By formal he means that the structural features of beliefs, desires, perceptions, intentions can be specified independently of any particular contents. In the foundation of that formal structure is the distinction between the "cognitive faculties" — perception, memory, and belief — and the "conative and volitional faculties"—desire, prior intention, and intention-in-action. These two sets of faculties relate to reality in very different ways in terms of their fits as mind (or word)-to-world direction, or world-to-mind (or word).

In addition to these two faculties, there is a third, imagination, where the propositional content is not supposed to fit reality in the way that the propositional contents in cognition and volition are supposed to fit, but which nonetheless functions crucially in creating social and institutional reality. Imagination, like fiction, has propositional content. Hence, the human mind has the capacity to create systems of symbolic representations, which can be used to perform meaningful speech acts. Due to the nature of meaning itself, there are strictly five[131] possible types of illocutionary speech acts in which Declaration is peculiar in that **it creates the very reality it represents.**

3.1.2 How Do We Get Away With It?

Let's assume for a moment that we are in agreement with Searle's theory. We understood constitutive elements of language and how speech acts have deontic powers that shape our reality through the workings of our mind to form institutional facts. Still, as he says himself, it doesn't sufficiently explain *how do we get away with it?*

> One of the strangest and most striking features of institutional facts is that there is nothing institutional there to the institutional fact prior to its creation. And since its creation is really just words, words, words, we have to ask, How does it get to be so successful? How do we manage to get away with it? ⋯ **The short answer to the question is that we get away with it to the extent that we can get other people to accept it. As long as there is collective recognition or acceptance of the institutional facts, they will work**. They work because they consist of deontic powers, and the deontic powers will function if they are accepted. Sometimes, of course, they have to be backed by police and military force. But police forces and armies are themselves systems of status functions. (Searle, 2010, p. 88).

accept that such and such a candidate is now the elected president. The acceptance of the constitutive rule, which is part of the Constitution itself, is sufficient to commit the participants in the institution to accepting that anybody who satisfies such and such a condition is the president-elect." (ibid., p. 19).

[131] Searle labels them Assertives (which we use to tell how things are, for example, statements and assertions), Directives (which we use to tell people to do things, for example, orders and commands), Commissives (which we use to commit ourselves to doing things, for example, promises and vows), Expressives (which we use to express our feelings and attitudes, for example, apologies and thanks), and Declarations (which we use to make something the case by declaring it to be the case, for example, declaring war and adjourning a meeting. (ibid., p. 21).

If we were to stop here, it would be a circular argument, like the "chicken and the egg debate". We believe because what we believe is believed··· That is not explanative enough.

As he points out, the question then becomes **why do we accept institutions and institutional facts?**

Searle then argues that the broad answer would be that most institutions one can think of work for our benefit by augmenting our powers[132], which he himself admits is quite vague. In fact, there would be no general answer to why people accept institutions considering that, additionally, there are many of them "where people cheerfully accept what would appear to be unjust arrangements". (ibid, p. 89).

Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that

> ··· one feature that runs through a large number of cases is that in accepting the institutional facts, people do not typically understand what is going on. They do not think of private property, and the institutions for allocating private property, or human rights, or governments as human creations. They tend to think of them as part of the natural order of things, to be taken for granted in the same way they take for granted the weather or the force of gravity. (ibid., p. 89)

Another reason would be that even when people are aware of the arbitrariness or the injustice of the institutional phenomena, they lose faith in ever being able to change it. In the face of the institutional phenomena, the individual tends to feel powerless, helpless.

Finally, a related and powerful motive for **acceptance is the human urge to conform, to be like other people, and to be accepted by them as a member of the group, a sharer of collective intentionality.**

The author also acknowledges that beyond the broader reasons of self-interest, increased power, ignorance, apathy, despair, and conformism, there does not seem to be any general answer to the question of what motivates acceptance, and there could be specific motivations for specific institutions. There is a caveat, though: "When the institutions involve power relations that can be threatening, as in the case of governments and political power generally, the question of legitimation becomes crucial." (ibid. p. 89).

[132] Many institutions like language and money are in pretty much everybody's interest, and it is hard to know how one would go about rationally rejecting them. (ibid., p. 88).

3.1.3 Power and Reason, Institutions and Free Will

> **Human institutional reality locks into human rationality. This is what gives it its constitutive power.** This is how it creates human society, and this is how it distinguishes humans from many, perhaps all, other animals. [···] But the extent and scope and power of human rationality vastly exceeds that of other animals because we have a special capacity for language, which is unlike the linguistic capacities of any other animal known to me.
>
> John Searle[133]

Institutional facts and deontic powers provide us **desire-independent reasons** for action[134]. In both theoretical and practical reason, the elements that operated in the reasoning process have an entire propositional content[135], which can be intentional phenomena (i.e. desires, beliefs, and perceptions); facts in the world (raining, winding); and phenomena such as obligations, rights, duties, and responsibilities. To be **rationally binding on an agent**, desire-independent reasons for action contained in institutional facts must be, explicitly or implicitly, created by that agent. Such reasons are explicitly created when an agent overtly commits himself or herself to a course of action (i.e., by buying and selling, getting married, or making a promise); and implicitly created when an agent recognizes the binding force of some situation in which she finds herself (i.e., being a member of a family, a citizen of a country, or a good friend).

His explorations to raise possible answers to this question revolve around what he calls a **causal gap**, which is the difference perceived by a special kind of *consciousness between the reasons for our decisions and actions and our actual decisions and actions*[136]. **This gap would be the freedom of the will.** And then, very importantly,

> The thesis I will present and explore is this. The possibilities of life are increased enormously if you have the sorts of institutional structures I have described; but more important, given our conscious experience of the gap, other sorts of structures that one can imagine will not do the job**. I will argue that without the gap — that is, without the consciousness of freedom—institutional structures are meaningless; but with the gap, they are essential. It is quite**

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[133] Searle, 2010, p. 104.

[134] In Searle··· "I must give a lecture tomorrow morning at 8 a.m. because I am under a firm and binding obligation both to my students and to the university to give a lecture at that time." (ibid., p. 101).

[135] In Searle··· "For example, I see that it is raining; I desire to stay dry; I believe that in this situation the only way I can stay dry is to carry an umbrella; and so on. All of these elements of the reasoning process—visual experiences, desires, beliefs, and so on—contain whole propositional contents. And this is a general feature of rationality. Rationality and reasoning always have to deal with entities that have entire propositional contents." (ibid., p. 101).

[136] In Searle··· "For example, though I voted for a particular candidate in the last presidential election, I could equally well have voted for the other candidate. The reasons I had inclined me to vote one way rather than another, but they did not force me." (ibid., p. 108.)

> **possible that the gap is an illusion, but that doesn't matter for this argument. We have to presuppose the gap when we make decisions, so even if the gap is an illusion it is one we cannot shake off.** (ibid., p. 109).

So, a system of deontic powers makes sense only for beings who have a sense of the gap, who have, in traditional terminology, a sense of "free will."

And this is why, where institutional reality is concerned, the acceptance of the institution — what Max Weber called the problem of "legitimation[137]" (as pointed by Searle) — is paramount. Institutions work only to the extent that they are recognized or accepted and, particularly in the case of political institutions, this often requires some justification; people have to think that there is some ground for the acceptance of the institution.

Moreover,

> For beings such as us, who act under the presupposition of freedom and the constraints of rationality, our sorts of institutional structures can both facilitate behavior that could not exist without the institutional structures and do that in a way that is systematically related to freedom and rationality. The human engaged in the institutional structure does indeed act under the presupposition of freedom. The institution as such does not force the behavior. It simply creates possibilities, but the possibilities are constrained by the way the system of constitutive rules enables the agent to create reasons for action that are independent of the inclinations that the agent may otherwise have. This is true in general of institutions. (ibid., 113-114).

Finally, this does not mean that deontic powers exclude coercive powers. One can always violate the rules when using the institution, and many people will do so. What is special about our institutional structures, Searle argues, is that they give the rational agent a reason for not cheating, and for not doing something he wants to do (as well for doing something even when he does not feel like doing it). "So there is a double aspect to the relation between freedom and constitutive rules. Only to the free agent do such systems make any sense, but precisely for free agents such systems are necessary. A system that did not have this capacity to create desire-independent reasons for action would collapse." (ibid., p. 115).

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[137] According to Weber, that a political regime is legitimate means that its participants have certain beliefs or faith ("Legitimitätsglaube") concerning it: "the basis of every system of authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness to obey, is a belief, a belief by which persons exercising authority are lent prestige" (Weber 1964: 382). Weber distinguishes among three main sources of legitimacy—understood as the acceptance both of authority and of the need to obey its commands. People may have faith in a particular political or social order because it has been there for a long time (tradition), because they have faith in the rulers (charisma), or because they trust its legality—specifically the rationality of the rule of law (Weber 1990 [1918]; 1964). Weber identifies legitimacy as an important explanatory category for social science because faith in a particular social order produces social regularities that are more stable than those that result from the pursuit of self-interest or habitual rule-following (Weber 1964: 124). *In* PETER, Fabienne, "Political Legitimacy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2017 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2017/entries/legitimacy/

3.2 NOTES ON MYTH AND EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY

Searle's approach to the *making of the social world* added significantly to a better understanding of how the definition of myths as imaginary intersubjective constructs, as proposed in *Sapiens*', might work. However, one was still at odds as to why it is so seductive to believe.

A possible contribution to illuminate this issue was offered by Emeritus professor Michael Tomasello[138] in the form of his **shared intentionality hypothesis**. Prof. Tomasello is a reference in the field of cognitive psychology and neuroscience[139]. The arguments hereby summarized were taken from his book *A Natural History of Human Thinking* (2014[140]), which connects to a previous book of his, *The Cultural Origins of Human Cognition* (1999[141]).

The 1999 book asked what makes **human cognition unique**, and the answer was **culture.**

> Individual human beings develop uniquely powerful cognitive skills because they grow to maturity in the midst of all kinds of cultural artifacts and practices, including a conventional language, and of course they have the cultural learning skills necessary to master them. Individuals internalize the artifacts and practices they encounter, and these then serve to mediate all of their cognitive interactions with the world. (Tomasello, 2014, p. ix).

The 2014 book looks into what **makes human thinking unique**, and the answer is that **it is fundamentally cooperative.**

A premise in 1999 was *that only humans understand others as intentional agents, and this enables human culture*. Nevertheless, findings of research conducted with great apes since then paint a more complex picture, for it appears that they have a much better understanding of others as intentional agents than previously believed. Still, they did not develop human-like culture or cognition.

The research presented on *A Natural History* hypothesizes that the critical difference seems to be that humans not only understand others as intentional agents but **also combine**

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[138] See https://www.pnas.org/content/115/34/8466

[139] I am particularly grateful to Prof. Francois Schroeter, School of Historical And Philosophical Studies Philosophy Department at the University of Melbourne, for taking the time to meet me to discuss my research and point me towards Tomasello's work back in 2018. https://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/profile/22308-francois-schroeter

[140] Tomasello, Michael. *A Natural History of Human Thinking.* Cambridge, Massachusetts : Harvard University Press, 2014.

[141] Tomasello, Michael. *The Cultural Origins of Human Cognition.* Cambridge (MA), London: Harvard University Press, 1999.

efforts with others in acts of shared intentionality, including everything from concrete acts of collaborative problem solving to complex cultural institutions. The focus of the book is hence on culture as a process of social coordination and argues a hypothesis that **"modern human cultures were made possible by an earlier evolutionary step in which individuals made a living by coordinating with others in relatively simple acts of collaborative foraging"** (Tomasello, 2014, p. x).

An examination of the underlying thinking processes involved in this differentiation led to the proposal of the *shared intentionality hypothesis.* The author argues that all three components of the thinking process (representation, inference, and self-monitoring) were transformed into two key steps during human evolution. In both situations, the transformation was integral to a larger change of social interaction and organization in which humans had to adopt more cooperative ways of life to survive and thrive.

> **Thinking would seem to be a completely solitary activity. And so it is for other animal species.** But for humans, thinking is like a jazz musician improvising a novel riff in the privacy of his own room. It is a solitary activity all right, but on an instrument made by others for that general purpose, after years of playing with and learning from other practitioners, in a musical genre with a rich history of legendary riffs, for an imagined audience of jazz aficionados. **Human thinking is individual improvisation enmeshed in a sociocultural matrix.** (ibid., p. 1, emphasis added).

To elaborate on this point, the author recalls two sets of classical theorists: one that has *emphasized the role of culture and its artifacts in making possible certain types of individual thinking* (Hegel, Collingwood, Peirce, Vygotsky, Bakhtin); other that has focused on the *fundamental processes of social coordination that make human culture and language possible in the first place* (Mead, Piaget, Wittgenstein).

New findings, both empirical and theoretical, emerged in recent years, allowing novel insights to add to classical interpretations, such as the discovery of surprisingly sophisticated (and humbling…) cognitive abilities of Great apes (the closest living relatives of humans). It has been remarked that they already understand in human-like ways many aspects of their physical and social worlds, *including the causal and intentional relations that structure them*. This means that **"many important aspects of human thinking derive not from humans' unique forms of sociality, culture, and language but, rather, from something like the individual problem-solving abilities of great apes in general."** (ibid, p. 2).

Notwithstanding, new discoveries regarding prelinguistic (or just linguistic) human infants, who still have to fully engage with the culture and language around them, point out that

these toddlers can engage with others socially in ways that great apes cannot, such as via **joint attention and cooperative communication**[142].

> The fact that these precultural and prelinguistic creatures are already cognitively unique provides empirical support for the social infrastructure theorists' claim **that important aspects of human thinking emanate not from culture and language *per se* but, rather, from some deeper and more primitive forms of uniquely human social engagement.** (ibid, p. 2, emphasis added).

Theoretical advances in the philosophy of action have unveiled powerful new ways of thinking about these deeper and more primitive forms of uniquely human social engagement. Philosophers as Searle[143] (that we covered in the previous section) have investigated the so-called **shared intentionality**. Moreover,

> [⋯] there is a deep continuity between such concrete manifestations of joint action and attention and more abstract cultural practices and products such as cultural institutions, which are structured —indeed, created — by agreed-upon social conventions and norms (Tomasello, 2009). In general, humans are able to coordinate with others, in a way that other primates seemingly are not, **to form a "we"** that acts as a kind of plural agent to create everything from a collaborative hunting party to a cultural institution. (ibid, p. 3, emphasis added).

"To form a we" is, then, a distinctively human attribute. A conscientious, structured reflection about it is the prime material of political philosophy and a key concern for the four heralds. The domain of the "we" is, per se, the domain of "the city". What are the businesses of the "we" as opposed to those of the "I"? Who should rule the "we"? How? Who are the "we"? Inquires into such themes are at the heart of definitions of justice, ethics, constitutions, and regimes. One would argue that conceptualizing *Polis* and *civitas, politeia* and *res publica, polites* and *civis* is the embodiment of the intellectual effort regarding the dialectic relationship between the "we" and the "I".

But this is fast-forwarding millennia into the future. Returning to Tomasello's arguments, it has also been investigated that human cooperative communication involves a set of special intentional and inferential processes[144]. Human communicators

> [⋯] conceptualize situations and entities via external communicative vehicles for other persons; these other persons then attempt to determine why the communicator thinks that these situations and entities will be relevant for them. **This dialogic process involves not only skills and motivations for shared intentionality but also a number of complex and recursive inferences about others' intentions toward my intentional states.** This unique form of communication⋯ **presupposes both a shared conceptual framework between communicative partners (a.k.a. common conceptual ground) and an**

[142] Tomasello et al., 2005 *apud* Tomasello 2014, p. 2.

[143] Also Bratman, 1992; Gilbert, 1989; Tuomela, 2007, *apud* Tomasello, 2014, p. 3.

[144] First identified by Grice (1957, 1975) and since elaborated and amended by Sperber and Wilson (1996), Clark (1996), Levinson (2000), and Tomasello (2008) *apud* Tomasello, 2014, p. 3.

> **appreciation of those partners' individual intentions and perspectives within it.** (ibid, p. 3, emphasis added).

In searching the social dimensions that distinguish human thinking, Tomasello focuses on some key aspects that are actually evolutionary achievements:

> … only humans can conceptualize one and the same situation or entity under differing, even conflicting, social perspectives (leading ultimately to a sense of "objectivity") … only humans make socially recursive and self-reflective inferences about others' or their own intentional states … **only humans self-monitor and evaluate their own thinking with respect to the normative perspectives and standards ("reasons") of others or the group.** These fundamentally social differences lead to an identifiably different type of thinking, what **we may call, for the sake of brevity, objective-reflective-normative thinking.** (ibid, p. 4, emphasis added).

Processes of representation, inference, and self-monitoring were adaptations for tackling, more than anything, problems presented by individuals' attempts to **co-operate** with others. Our great ape ancestors, although were social beings, lived mostly individualistic and competitive lives, thus their thinking was geared toward achieving individual goals. Early humans, however, were at some point forced by changes in their environment into more cooperative ways of living, so that their thinking became more geared "toward finding ways to coordinate with others to achieve joint goals or even collective group goals. **And this changed everything.**" (ibid., p. 5).

It would be wonderful to reconstruct here Tomasello's brilliant and intriguing hypothesis. Truthfully, no synthesis will ever convey the richness of the whole argument that, in addition to everything, makes for a fascinating read. For those who feel so inclined, this is his invitation,

> And so let us tell a story, a natural history, of how human thinking came to be, beginning with our great ape ancestors, proceeding through some early humans who collaborated and communicated in species-unique ways, and ending with modern humans and their fundamentally cultural and linguistic ways of being. (ibid., p. 6).

However, in an attempt to further strengthen the analyses of the umbilical relationship between myth and belief in the context of evolutionary biology, some compelling insights of Tomasello's shared intentionality hypothesis still need to be highlighted.

Science has not yet been able to find the missing evolutionary link between the great apes and our known human ancestors. That's one of the reasons why Tomasello works in hypothetical terms. But perhaps about some 400.000 years ago, when the *Homo heidelbergensis* walked the earth, changes in the ecosystem demanded from these early humans to adopt more cooperative practices to ensure their survival, involving the development of a novel type of small-scale collaboration in human foraging. This led to the creation of socially shared joint goals and

joint attention (common ground), which created the possibility of individual roles and perspectives within that way of living.

To coordinate these new roles and perspectives, first, individuals (basically pairs) evolved a novel type of cooperative communication based on the natural gestures of pointing and pantomiming (which required the skills of attention, **imagination,** and **symbolic** extrapolation) about something "relevant" to their joint activity. For that to work, the partner had to make cooperative inferences about what was intended and, to self-monitor this process, the communicator had to simulate the recipient's likely inferences ahead of time.

> [⋯] **the first surprising effect of iconic gestures is that their emergence in human evolution led to skills of acting out pretend scenarios with and for others, which may be the basis for humans' creation of all of the "imaginary" situations and institutions within which they reside.** In addition, to anticipate our story a bit, it is also reasonable to suppose that the creation of what Searle (1995) calls cultural "status functions" such as being a president or a husband—and pieces of paper standing for (indeed, constituting) money—has its phylogenetic and ontogenetic roots in pretend play in which children together anoint a stick as a horse, which gives the stick special powers, in a manner very similar to anointing a person as a president (Rakoczy and Tomasello, 2007). **If thinking is at base a form of imagining, then one can hardly overestimate the importance of imagining things for other people,** as embodied in iconic gestures, for the evolution and development of uniquely human thinking (Donald, 1991). (Tomasello, 2014, p. 64, emphasis added).

The second step came as human populations began growing in size and competing with one another. This meant that group life as a whole became one big collaborative activity, creating a much larger and more permanent shared world, meaning, a culture.

> The resulting group-mindedness among all members of the cultural group (including in-group strangers) was based on a new ability to construct common cultural ground via collectively known cultural conventions, norms, and institutions. As part of this process, cooperative communication became conventionalized linguistic communication. ⋯ Because the collaboration and communication at this point were conventional, institutional, and normative, we may refer to all of this as collective intentionality. When put to use in thinking, collective intentionality comprises not just symbolic and perspectival representations but conventional and "objective" representations; not just recursive inferences but self-reflective and reasoned inferences; and not just second-personal self-monitoring but normative self-governance based on the culture's norms of rationality. (ibid, p. 5-6).

One of the questions that prompted this incursion into human ontogeny was if, as a species, we are hard-wired to create and believe in myths. Is as much as the above-described thinking processes are concerned, Tomasello has something to say:

> **Importantly, this evolutionary scenario does not mean that humans today are hardwired to think in these new ways.** A modern child raised on a desert island would not automatically construct fully human processes of thinking on its own. Quite the contrary. Children are born with adaptations for collaborating and communicating and learning from others in particular ways— **evolution selects**

> **for adaptive *actions.*** But it is only in actually exercising these skills in social interaction with others during ontogeny that children create new representational formats and new inferential reasoning possibilities as they internalize, in Vygotskian fashion, their coordinative interactions with others into thinking for the self. The result is a kind of cooperative cognition and thinking, not so much creating new skills as cooperativizing and collectivizing those of great apes in general. p. 6

So, there are some evolutionary adaptations in place, but there is room for maneuver. And would there be anything else latent in these "fully human thinking processes"? One would say yes, a feature that has not been pointed to yet in this summary, but that is present in many passages of the book and that has already been highlighted in previous moments.

In the process of constructing these intersubjective skills, the evolutionary tools to enable survival through cooperation, the aspects of imagination and inference, symbolic expression, and second-personal self-monitoring (structural elements in the construction of "myth") were already mentioned.

But there is still trust and truth.

As in examples given by the author, while communication skills and techniques were evolving, **trust and truth were essential elements for a communication targeting cooperation.** If a partner or a member of the group signaled the presence of water, or food, or danger, believing was of the essence. As Tomasello (2014, p. 51-52) beautifully (and rather heartwarmingly…) puts,

> **[…] if we want to explain the origins of humans' commitment to characterize the world accurately independent of any selfish purpose, then being committed to informing others of things honestly, for their not our benefit, is the starting point. The notion of truth thus entered the human psyche not with the advent of individual intentionality and its focus on accuracy in information acquisition but, rather, with the advent of joint intentionality and its focus on communicating cooperatively with others.**

Truth and trust are, then, from an evolutionary standpoint, welded into the realm of the "we" for it to work well. Per consequence, to the realm of the common. Per consequence, the realm of "the city". And, perhaps, that is why the breakage of the bonds of truth and trust are so destructive to the life in common. Perhaps that is why all four heralds understood politics and ethics as interdependent.

Tomasello does elaborate further on the notions of truth and trust, and the chapter about Collective Intentionality (pp. 80-123) richly explores facets of this evolutionary tale from a cognitive perspective, which opens the door to other reflections within the domain of ethics, and

politics, and sociology…. Without giving away too much, one will highlight two passages for further reflection[145]:

> That humans do indeed think of their group as a "we" of interdependent individuals — that humans identify with their group — is a well-established psychological fact. Most fundamentally, humans have a marked in-group/out-group psychology that is, in all likelihood, unique to the species. (ibid. p. 84).

> … with modern human collaboration taking place on the level of the entire cultural collectivity, my behavior in various contexts might be known to some degree in the cultural common ground of the group as a whole (e.g., because of the pervasiveness of gossip…). This means that early humans' concern with being judged is transformed by modern humans into a concern for one's public reputation and social status. And, critically, reputational status is more than just a sum of many social evaluations; it is nothing less than a Searlian status function […] in which my public persona is a reified cultural product created by the collectivity, who can take it away in a second, as any scandalized modern politician can attest. (ibid., p. 90)

Identification with our group, personal reputation, and social status may, therefore, add to the powerful forces that sustain our mythological structures. In Ancient Greek and Roman world, such public persona was of the greatest consequence (just think of the Roman military triumphs), and virtues associated with them that were a function of the public (political) life.

Though there is much more in the book that has not been included in this summary, the intention was, by bringing Harari, Midgley, Searle, and Tomasello together, to explore the original assumption about myth announced earlier on in the dissertation to assess if it can hold water, which seems to be the case. However, these authors by no means represent all the pieces of a definition of myth, not even in terms of possible outlooks about it. From the wealth and variety of the related scholarship, it may be argued that "myth" may have a structure that is as fractal as the one of "the city". This leaves this author in some dire straits … One has a better understanding of how myths "intrinsically" work and sustain themselves. But now we need to take a closer look at the properties of the "stories".

> Concepts are embodied in myths and fantasies, in images, ideologies and half-beliefs, in hopes and fears in shame, pride and vanity. Like the great philosophers of the past who helped to shape our tradition, we need to start by taking notice of these things. **There is nothing wrong with the fact that our imagination plays a part in shaping our world view. We need it to do so. But we also need to notice how it is doing it.**

Hence, the final step of this partial journey is to look at how concepts become embodied in myths and fantasies.

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[145] Canadian psychologists Jordan B. Peterson explores some of these ideas in great depth in his book *Maps of Meaning: The Architecture of Belief.* New York: Routledge, 1999.

3.3 ON MYTHOS AND LOGOS

Now that I am leading a more alone and solitary existence I have become more philomuthos[146]

Aristotle

A rather commonsensical understanding equates *logos* with reason, therefore a truth-seeking mechanism, and *mythos* with false beliefs and fictional accounts. If only it were that simple. Defining *mythos* and *logos* is a controversial, long-lasting, convoluted debate that spans millennia. Scholarship is varied and endless, and there is a multitude of possible entry points. From the many viable paths, the chosen one will attempt to bridge what has been seen so far (the structuring role of language and imagination in building shared conventions that become our reality and the necessity of the domain of the "we" for these mechanisms to express themselves), with what will come after: the city as the arena of the common life which will also be built through language and imagination in the four *politeiai* created by Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Augustine. In this process, the momentous change in the history of thought represented by the invention of the Greek alphabet and its consequences in the means of knowledge transmission (from oral to written) will find in Plato one emblematic figure. In the words of the Belgian historian Marcel Detienne (1986, p. xi), "An archaeology of "myth" led to the conclusion that, indubitably, mythology exists, at least since Plato devised it in his own way [⋯]". Not by chance, he is our first herald.

In this context, one wishes to avoid theories (which emerged particularly in the nineteenth-century) that adopt Darwinian/Durkheimian postulates in "explaining" social development "from the primitive and religious towards the complex and secular" (Murray, 1987[147], p. 328-9). Similarly, to avoid narratives that the "birth" of Western Philosophy would be a linear development[148] from *mythos* to *logos*. That is not to say that there are no differences

[146] This reference to Aristotle was first found in Marcel Detienne's *The Creation of Mythology* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1986, p. xii), as "The more solitary I become," said Aristotle, "the more I like stories, myths." The source attributed by Detienne is found on note #4, p. 135 (Aristotle frag. 668 Ross in Michel de Certeau, *L'invention du quotidian*, vol. 1, Arts de faire, Paris, 1980, p. 167). Further investigation of it let to the article by A.P. Bos as cited above. The article presents an interesting discussion on the rapport of myth and philosophy in Aristotle and, specifically in terms of the referred citation, using the Greek words to builds a parallel between *philomuthos* and *philosophos* (lover of muthos and lover of wisdom), as in *Metaphisics* A.1 982bl8. See Bos, Abraham P. "Aristotle On Myth And Philosophy." *Philosophia Reformata,* vol. 48, no. 1, Brill, 1983, pp. 1–18, http://www.jstor.org/stable/24707272.

[147] Murray, Oswyn. "Cities of Reason." *European Journal of Sociology,* vol. 28, no. 2, 1987, pp. 325–346., doi:10.1017/S000397560000552X.

[148] Bottici, 2008, p. 2, referencing Geoffrey S. Kirk, *The Nature of Greek Myth*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974, p. 277.

between them, nor that there was no emergence of a novel and extraordinary type of inquiry into the world inaugurated by Philosophy. However, on this, Hauskeller (2016[149], p. 4) writes

> What we commonly see as the progression from mythos to logos, story to argument, emotion and intuition to reason and rational thinking, and subjectivity to objectivity is not, and can never be, complete. Logos always remains firmly rooted in mythos, which gives logos its direction and purpose. In this sense, logos always points back at mythos.

Mindful of the perspective developed by Searle and Midgley, *mythos* and *logos* are different types of discourse, cultural products that are part of a system of communication acts (Brisson[150], 2004). Hence, the understanding will acknowledge the power of *logos* in philosophical thought – and an attribute that all the heralds share -, but that does not automatically equate mythos with fantasies or lies, but with the realms of subjectivity and imagination. At this point, it is necessary to leave a note that in Judaeo-Christian tradition *Logos* will have the connotation or revelation and of the creative power of God (Berti, 2013[151], p. 6).

In the briefest of panoramas, in the Ancient Greek context, mythos carries an association with the epic poems of Homer and Hesiod and the transmission of knowledge in the oral form. It must not be overlooked that, though not wearing the mantle of Divine revelation as the Old Testament, they were substantive elements of cultural unity and identity in the Greek world. Bottici (2008[152], p. 1-2) highlights that the original semantic meaning of *mythos* is simply "word, speech, account", and synonym of *logos.* In the whole of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (possibly composed around the eighth century BC), the term *logos* appears only twice. However, progressively, *logos* came to occupy the semantic place of *mythos* and, by Plato's time, it had acquired the additional meaning of fanciful tales.

In the analysis of Bettini (2006[153], p. 196-97), *mythos* in epics is an assertive, authoritative voice that may or may not be agreed with, but not on the grounds that it is defined as "myth". The ambiguity between the opposition of *mythos* and *logos* will continue to be expressed in the voices of that time, such as in Xenophanes, Empedocles, even Parmenides. However, Heraclitus and some of his successors will use logos to elevate human individuals' reasoning powers or refer

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[149] Hauskeller, Michael. *Mythologies of Transhumanism.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

[150] Brisson, Luc. *How Philosophers Saved Myths : Allegorical Interpretation and Classical Mythology*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004.

[151] Berti, Enrico. *In principio era la meraviglia: Le grandi questioni della filosofia antica.* Roma & Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 2013, Edizione digitale

[152] Bottici, Chiara. Mythos and Logos: A Genealogical Approach. *Epoché,* Volume 13, Issue 1 (Fall 2008). ISSN 1085-1968. pp. 1-24

[153] Bettini, Maurizio. Mythos/Fabula: Authoritative and Discredited Speech. *History of Religions ,* Vol. 45, No. 3 (February 2006), pp. 195-212.

to cosmic principles of order and beauty (Kenny[154], 2010, p. 18). Franco Trabattoni (2009[155], Chapter 1) resorts to the testimony of Aristotle to highlight the difference between the mythic and philosophical discourse. Aristotle reputes to Thales such innovation, for Thales arrived at his conclusions by developing a novel genre of argumentation: the institution of a relationship between the universal and the particular. Socrates would be the next one of note. "Lo stesso Aristotele, sempre nel libro I della *Metafisica* [987bl-4], ci fa anche capire che il primo filosofo greco che ebbe chiara consapevolezza della centralità teorica di questo metodo fu Socrate. Socrate, spiega Aristotele, concentrò per primo la sua attenzione sui termini o concetti generali." (op. cit.). Following Socrates, according to Trabattoni, will be Plato. "[...] il testo platonico è uno dei luoghi privilegiati in cui, attraverso il modo socratico di indagare, si fa consapevole la posizione secondo cui l'argomentare filosofico consiste nel porre in rapporto dialettico particolare e universale". It is this beautiful way of reasoning that allows us to build concepts.

And, at this point, one would like add another layer to the meaning of truth, as understood by Plato and Aristotle. As Bottici (2008, p. 15-16) elegantly explains, the ancient Greek word that comes closest to our word "truth" is *aletheia*, which, according to its etymology, "is what is not hidden", "what is not forgotten". Many interpreters, including Martin Heidegger, noticed that the world of *mythos*, linked as it was to the archaic culture of orality, defined *aletheia* "as the opposite of forgetfulness: truth is what is worth preserving from oblivion." Nevertheless, that is no longer the world of Plato and Aristotle. As their texts indicate, they conceived of *aletheia* as correspondence to reality. Hence, the next question is how they defined reality.

> The Greeks did not even have a word that corresponds to our term "reality." **We, children of the Cartesian revolution, conceive of what is "real" as fundamentally opposed to what is "ideal."** In contrast, for a Greek, there were only "*ta onta,*" the things that are, or "*to on*," the being as expressed by the nominalized participle of the verb to be (*einai*). [···] **The Greek *ta onta* are only things in as far as they are already conceptually clear, whereas the individual things that are just given in experience are rather *ta pragmata*.** The things that fall under the umbrella of *ta onta* include the things that reveal themselves for what they are: in this sense, "to be" (*einai*) does not simply mean to exist, but designates a certain mode of existence**. In other words, the things that can be described as *ta onta* are only those entities that have already revealed themselves to the understanding,** whereas *ta pragmata* refers to things that shall remain to be determined. In this sense, *ta onta* are more true and more real than *ta pragmata*. (ibid., p. 16, emphasis added)

[154] Kenny, Anthony. *A New History of Western Philosophy*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

[155] Trabattoni, Franco. *Attualità di Platone : Studi sui Rapporti fra Platone e Rorty, Heidegger, Gadamer, Derrida, Cassirer, Strauss, Nussbaum e Paci.* Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 2009, online edition.

As the cities presented by our heralds are all *cities in speech*, Bottici reminds us of a necessary clarification. They are neither real nor ideal in the Cartesian sense, which is our default mode of conceiving the world. One argues that, by being conceptually clear, by having revealed themselves to understanding *(logos)*, these cities in speech may be truer (ontologically speaking) than the "real" ones. In a way, in them, *mythos* and *logos* end up merging: by being an expression of truth, they were not forgotten.

> The fundamental parameters of Greek (and, to a large extent, of medieval and early modern) attempts to think the ideal city – the city Plato's Glaukon describes as not existing anywhere on earth – thus consist of both an ontological and political investment in absolute unity and unchanging stability and a coming to terms with the impossibility of realizing this desire. But this tension between the city conceived in terms of Being and the city conceived in terms of Becoming provides the only available form of an imaginary (and imaginative) resolution of the contradiction: in the ideal city, the ontological-political ideal of unity can be deployed as the foundation of a discourse that presupposes the necessary failure of actual cities to achieve that ideal. The ideal city is therefore a virtuous antitype, a city whose imaginative foundation presupposes an operation whereby the empirical features of an existing city are negated, inverted, or recombined in new forms (Balaspoulos 2014[156], p. 18).

[156] Balasopoulos, Antonis. "Celestial Cities and Rationalist Utopias." Chapter. In *The Cambridge Companion to the City in Literature,* edited by Kevin R. McNamara, 17–30. Cambridge Companions to Literature. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

3.3.1 Oral and Written Communication

More than any other single invention, writing has transformed human consciousness.

Walter Ong[157]

The change from an oral system of knowledge and memory to one that uses the written word was a momentous change. An important part of this story unfolded in Ancient Greece, during Plato's lifetime. The way he appropriated such changes turned him into a pivotal figure in the relationship between *mythos and logos*. Let us step back for a moment to see how that happened.

Following Poletti[158] (2002, p. 108), there is a certain consensus that writing was invented around 3100 BC in ancient Sumer, as a way to record business transactions. The Egyptians followed the cuneiform Sumerian invention with their hieroglyphs, and the Chinese with their ideographs. The next major breakthrough in the history of written communication was the creation of the alphabet by the Semitic tribes of the Sinai Peninsula *circa* 1500 BC. It was a substantive change for, instead of connecting the world and its representation as captured through our eyes, this invention related symbols to the sounds emanating from our mouths. As Poletti highlights, the alphabet played a major role in streamlining communication in one hand but, in the other, "it increased the degree of abstraction necessary to understand written language, because the alphabet had little or no pictorial connection to the world we see with our eyes" (op. cit.). It is necessary to highlight that the Hebrew alphabet had no written vowels whatsoever. As recalled by Poletti, the vowel sounds were sacred, and came into being only when breath was given to them in an oral reading by a highly trained scribe, the only ones capable of "filling the blanks" when a document was read out loud. Consequently, a sense of mystery remained attached to them, connected to the belief that animate life only emerges when air or breath are present.

It is mostly agreed that the Phoenician traders were the ones who carried this freshly-minted invention across the eastern Mediterranean and introduced it to the Greeks, though precise dates of this introduction are still subject to much debate. Possibilities range from 1400

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[157] Ong, Walter. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. Meuthen: New York, 1982, p. 78.

[158] Poletti, Frank. (2002) Plato's Vowels: How the Alphabet Influenced the Evolution of Consciousness, *World Futures: The Journal of General Evolution,* 58:1, 101-116, DOI: 10.1080/02604020210401

BC up to 554 BC, though the 10th century BC seems like the most likely date. "Unencumbered" by the religious symbolism attached to vowel sounds by the Hebrews, the Greeks expanded the alphabet to incorporate them, gaining much precision and flexibility in their written communication. Poletti, quoting Havelock, still highlights that

> Between Homer and Plato, the method of storage began to alter, as the information became alphabetised, and correspondingly the eye supplanted the ear as the chief organ employed for this purpose. The complete results of literacy did not supervene in Greece until the ushering in of the Hellenistic age, when conceptual thought achieved as it were fluency and its vocabulary became more or less standardised. **Plato, living in the midst of this revolution, announced it and became its prophet. —** (Eric Havelock, 1963[159] apud Poletti, p. 112)

Brisson (2004, p. 5) also recalls the work of Havelock, pointing out that the author sought to confirm the pertinence of the hypothesis that "a change in the means of communication must lead to a change in content of the communicated message". In the case of ancient Greece,

> **Havelock showed how, from the seventh century B.C. onward, the adoption of a radically new system of writing that virtually put reading within everyone's grasp led to the emergence of two new types of discourse: that of "history" and that of "philosophy." These discourses were set in opposition to poetry, which until then had maintained a monopoly in the transmission of the memorable.**

Plato grew up with the first generation of Greek boys to be taught to read and write. It was an unparalleled historical context, and Plato was a "watershed figure who lived at the critical juncture between the oral, tribal, and Homeric world of ancient Greece and the newly emerging world of the mental-egoic and literate intellect." Important philosophical figures such as Pythagoras and Socrates, Plato's seniors, left nothing written. "Plato, in contrast, lived right on the cusp of a whole new epoch, and he made the fateful choice to write down his philosophy". The flexibility of this new tool opened space for new modes of thinking and new levels of abstraction. "The often-discussed legacy that Plato bequeathed to the Western world, then, is in large part, the legacy of the Greek version of the alphabet" (Poletti, 2010, 114-115).

Plato, in a way, kept one foot in each world. There is a whole field of Platonic studies dedicated to his "unwritten doctrines", contents that he believed could only be communicated through the rigours of the intense dialectic exercises that would have taken place in the Academy. Some areas that are central to his Philosophical thought but insufficiently explained, such as the Theory of Forms, and the understanding of the Good and the Beautiful, are believed by these scholars to have been transmitted this way. Most of Plato's works were written in a rich, engaging dialogical form. It does well to remember that these were exoteric texts, meant for the

[159] Havelock, Eric. *Preface to Plato.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963, p. vii. (p. 116)

"general public", Nevertheless, in a rather contradictory way considering, for instance, with his stance on poetry, he extensively recurred to the use of myths in his texts.

Considering the form in which he chose to write, and that in none of his dialogues does Plato ever say anything "himself", it is not really possible to know what he actually thought (Strauss, 1964, p. 50). In terms of his relationship with myth, inferring from his dialogues, his attitude towards it changes. As Partenie's (2018[160],p. 4) analysis, one should live according to what reason can deduce from reliable evidence, which is the philosopher's job. However, that is not for everyone, and for those that were not inclined to ground their lives in logic and argument, myth would be the means to inculcate beliefs. The Noble Lie in the *Republic* is supposed to make the citizens of Callipolis care more for their city. In the *Timaeus*, however, there seems to be a different understanding, and imagination can be the tool to fill in the gaps. As it is not unusual in Plato's writings, different dialogues may present distinct arguments. Summarizing some of the scholarly debate of the manner, Partenie writes,

> On the less radical version, **the idea will be that the telling of stories is a necessary adjunct to, or extension of, philosophical argument, one which recognizes our human limitations, and—perhaps—the fact that our natures combine irrational elements with the rational"** (Rowe 1999, 265). On a more radical interpretation, "the distinction between 'the philosophical' and 'the mythical' will—at one level— virtually disappear" (265). If we take into account that Plato chose to express his thoughts through a narrative form, namely that of the dialogue [⋯] we may say that the "use of a fictional narrative form (the dialogue) will mean that any conclusions reached, by whatever method (including 'rational argument'), may themselves be treated as having the status of a kind of 'myth'" (265). [ ] if so, it is not only "that 'myth' will fill in the gaps that reason leaves (though it might do that too, as well as serving special purposes for particular audiences), but that human reason itself ineradicably displays some of the features we characteristically associate with story-telling" (265–6) (cf. also Fowler (2011, 64): **"Just as the immortal, purely rational soul is tainted by the irrational body, so logos is tainted by mythos".**

Wolin will add to this analysis by arguing that the imaginative element in political thought is more than merely a methodological convenience and that it has involved far more than the construction of models. It has been the medium for expressing the fundamental values of the theorist as a mechanism to transcend history. "The imaginative vision to which I am referring here was displayed at its artistic best by Plato. [ ] Plato exhibited a form of vision essentially architectonic [ ] wherein the political imagination attempts to mould the totality of political phenomena to accord with some vision of the Good that lies outside the political order. (Wolin, 2004, p. 19).

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[160] Partenie, Catalin, "Plato's Myths", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/plato-myths/

4 EXERCISING THE DIALECTICS OF ENDOXA AND IMAGINATION OR, IN SEARCH ON THE MYTHS

> Se a ordem, em si, proposta por Platão não vale mais aos nossos dias, vale ainda a esperança que ela autoriza. A cidade continua sendo aquele espaço da proteção, o lugar ideal da justiça, que é o empenho de cada cidadão em realizar o que lhe compete, segundo as suas aptidões... A cidade molda o homem. O homem molda a cidade. Da harmoniosa relação dessas três partes (as virtudes cidadãs da sabedoria, coragem e temperança), dependeria a felicidade de todos
>
> Jelson Oliveira, *in* Crestani et al., (2017, p. 58)

4.1 THE POLITICAL FORM OF THE CITY AND THE 'OUROBOROS'[161]

Behold, we know what you teach: that all things recur eternally and we ourselves along with them, and that we have already been here times eternal and all things along with us.

Friedrich Nietzsche[162]

*The fundamentalism that arises today around the world out of the mistrust of modernity can never offer more than makeshift constructs for the helpless; it produces only semblances of security without deeper knowledge; in the long term, it destroys the infected societies with the drug of false certainty. A good antidote to the fundamentalist temptation is to open once again the book of European philosophical knowledge and retrace the lines and paths of ancient thinking—**to the extent that the brevity of life allows us to venture upon such elaborate recapitulations.***

Peter Sloterdijk[163]

Pierre Manent[164], in his *Metamorphoses of the City on the Western Dynamic*, begins with the following provocation:

> We have been modern now for several centuries. We are modern and we want to be modern. This is the orientation of the entire life of our societies in the West. (…) But the fact that the will to be modern has been at work for centuries means that we have not yet arrived at being truly modern. The goal of the march that at several turns we thought we had reached showed itself to be misleading, a sort of mirage; 1789, 1917, 1968, 1989 were only deceptive stages on a road that leads we know not where. The Hebrews were lucky—they only wandered forty years in the wilderness." (Manent, 2013, p. 1).

Curiously, Eco (2019, p. 3) observes that the term *modernus* made its entry into the Latin lexicon right at the end of Antiquity — that is to say, around the fifth century AD, accompanying

[161] Literally meaning "tail devourer" in Greek, it often evokes the idea of the loop, of infinity. It is an archetypical symbol which the oldest known representation appeared in the tomb of Tutankhamen, in the 13th Century BC, but that has different representations and meanings in several ancient cultures. See a https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20171204-the-ancient-symbol-that-spanned-millennia

[162] Friedrich Nietzsche. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra : A Book for All and None.* Adrian Del Caro; Robert B. Pippin (Eds.) Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy. Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 178.

[163] Sloterdijk, Peter. *Philosophical Temperaments : From Plato to Foucault.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2013.

[164] Manent, Pierre. *Metamorphoses of the City On the Western Dynamic.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013.

the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, an epoch "that strikes us as the least modern times of all."

In the introduction of his book, Manent sets the stage for his argument, which endeavours to correlate the West, its historical roots in Antiquity and the Middle Ages, to "Modernity" and onwards, through the exploration of the metamorphoses of the city. As highlighted by the book's reviewer James F. Keating[165], **"The city (⋯) is not a static entity but one that has carried Western history forward and been transformed along with it."** (Keating, 2014, p. 680, emphasis added). Manent is a political thinker, so one must qualify that "the city" that the author explores is not so much its physical dimension but mostly its political expression in the articulation of the rule of the one (a unitarian ruler, such as in monarchies and empires), the few (the rule of groups, such as in aristocracies and oligarchies), and the many (the rule of "the people").

If we have been modern for hundreds of years, Manent argues, "We are faced with a fact that resists explanation." Different facets present themselves in architecture, art, science, political organization, and others. However, it is still unclear what unites these traits and justifies them to be designated by the same term (Manent, 2013, p. 1). Also, after so many modern centuries, the author acknowledges there is certain fatigue in questioning what modernity is (and one could argue, also, in questioning what "the city" is). As he points out, some are willing to abandon such task and propose that we have left the modern to enter the postmodern era, in which "we have given up the 'great narrative of Western progress'" (and, maybe, have also given up "the city" towards a narrative of boundless urbanization?). Be it as it may, he argues, the question about the threads that connect modernity remain intact, "and its urgency is not dependent on the dispositions of the one who asks it. **The question needs to be asked anew again and again, if at least we care to understand ourselves.** And if we do not presume to provide a truly new answer, let us at least be ambitious in giving the question new life." (ibid., p. 2, emphasis added).

Having established the importance of questioning, Manent delineates the path he will follow and, in a beautiful turn of phrase, states that **"When it is not clear just what something is, one asks when and how it began."** A strategy, however, that is much easier said than done, for **"Beginnings are by definition obscure.** The first shoots are difficult to discern. **It is easy to be mistaken. Thus we seek clarity in beginnings that are necessarily obscure or uncertain.**" (ibid, emphasis added).

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[165] Keating, James F. (2014) "Pierre Manent: Metamorphoses of the City: On the Western Dynamic. Trans. Marc LePain. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013. Pp. 384.)," *The Review of Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 76(4), pp. 679–684. http://doi.org/10.1017/S0034670514000667

These first paragraphs will hopefully strike a chord with the readers, in the sense of the similarities between Manent's objectives and line of thought and the one that is tentatively being pursued in this research. Having on the background the contemporary political situation, he casts his eyes back, looking to identify the historical moment where there would have been a true paradigm shift (the elusive horizon of Modernity), and what would have happened in regards to the studied phenomenon (in his case, the political forms) so to characterize this imaginary line. His goal, then, is to identify the metamorphoses experienced by the political forms in terms of continuities and ruptures. And the way to do it is to begin by the beginning, however risky such an enterprise is. Jumping to the end, his conclusions will highlight four evolving political forms – the city, the empire, the Church and the (nation) state, the last one being the threshold of Modernity. In his analysis, the most important political forms of Antiquity were the Greek city and the Roman Empire and, serendipitously, to characterize these moments, he heard the voices of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Saint Augustine. However, one is being too hasty.

In constructing the frame of reference to develop his reflections, Manent (2013, p. 3) argues that Modernity is, first and foremost, a great collective project formulated and implemented initially in Europe but intended for all humanity. Such ambition required a great sense of confidence in one's strength and capacity – particularly in the beginnings of modern science, such as with Bacon and Descartes – to revolutionize the conditions of human life.

Therefore, as the author highlights (2013, p. 3-4), a project entails the capacity to act, and that such action can transform our situation. He suggests that many analysts of Modernity have focused on the constructivist ambition of the Modern Project, i.e., the transformation of nature, the organization of production, the Plan ···. However, rather than focusing on the important results/aims of such action, Manent wishes to emphasize **our capacity for action.** He argues that though humans have always acted in some fashion, they have not always known that they had the capacity for it. He exemplifies that, in the beginning, people gather, fish, hunt, even make war, but they acted as little as possible, leaving the greatest room for the gods. That is why properly human action first appears as a crime, a transgression, which is precisely what, as he recalls Hegel, Greek tragedy illuminates: innocent criminal action.

> Tragedy tells what cannot be told, the passage from what precedes action to properly human action. It tells of the passage to the city, the coming to be of the city. **For the city enables one to act. The city is that ordering of the human world that makes action possible and meaningful.**
>
> If we want to understand the modern project, we must understand it beginning with the first complete implementation of human action, which was the city. **The Greek city is not the outcome of a project, to be sure, but it is in the city that people can deliberate and form projects of action. It is in the city that people discover that they can govern themselves and that they learn to do so.** They discover and learn politics, which is the great domain of action. (Manent, 2013, p. 4, emphasis added).

Manent's thesis, in a nutshell, is: if Modernity is primarily characterized as a project of collective action, and if politics is the implementation and ordering of action, the Modern Project must in the first place be understood as a political project. His ambition is to propose elements for an interpretation of the political development of the West embracing Modernity's character as movement, a movement that never arrives at its resting place. And if the principle of Western movement is politics, and therefore the city, the movement of the West begins with the movement of the city.

> **The Western movement begins with the movement of the Greek city, the internal and external movement of [⋯] of class struggle within and foreign war without. The city is the shaping of human life that made the common thing appear, the government of the common thing, and the execution of the common thing in a plurality of cities hostile to each other and divided within.** The Greek city was the first form of human life to produce political energy. It was a deployment of human energy of unprecedented intensity and quality. It was finally consumed by its own energy in the catastrophe of the Peloponnesian War. **Later history appears, in sum, as the ever-renewed quest for the political form that would permit the gathering of the energies of the city while escaping the fate of the city, of the city that is free but subject to internal and external enmity.** (Manent, 2013, p. 5, emphasis added).

Two of the highlighted heralds of this research belong to this historical moment and can each stake a claim of being the inaugural voices of political philosophy (as well as many other "philosophies"): **Plato and Aristotle.** Their rich understanding of the complex world of the Greek *polis;* of how it shapes (and can shape) human life is a significant part of the upcoming chapters.

What of the two others?

In continuing his argumentation, Manent states that the form that succeeded the city was the empire:

> **The Western empire**, by contrast with the Eastern empire, **is a type of continuation of the city. The city of Rome deployed such powerful energies that it broke all the limits that circumscribed cities, as it joined to itself ever more numerous and distant populations to the point of seeming on the verge of assembling the whole human race. The Western empire surrendered the freedom of the city but promised unity and peace.** It is a promise that was not kept or not entirely kept, but, **as in the case of the city, the political and spiritual energies partially survived the fall of the form, and the imperial idea marked the West not only by the enduring prestige of the Roman Empire but also under an absolutely unprecedented form that is also proper to Europe, which is the Church, the catholic, that is, the universal Church, that seeks to gather all men in a new communion, more intimate than the closest-knit city, more extended than the vastest empire.** Of all the political forms of the West, the Church is the one most fraught with promises since it proposes, as I have just said, **a community that is once city and empire, but it is also the most disappointing because it never succeeds**, and falls far short, in bringing about this universal association for which it has awakened the desire. (Manent, 2013, p. 5, emphasis added).

So here the two other heralds of the present research come in: Cicero, the voice that witnessed the turn of the Roman Republic to the Roman Empire, of the city that became the world; and Saint Augustine, a Father of the Church, who witnessed the unimaginable collapse of the Roman order in the West and gave voice to the *City of God.*

Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Augustine articulated authoritative words at their own epochs, words that were powerful then and influential beyond. They can be heard, albeit their differences, as substantive contributors to the understanding of the political form of "the city" in antiquity, an understanding that will be challenged with the emergence of Modernity.

In the next three hundred and eighty pages or so of his *Metamorphoses*, Manent explores the fascinating journey of how the conflict and disorder that resulted from the divided loyalties and authorities of these three modes of association - the city, the empire and the Church - gave birth to the Modern Project and metamorphosed into the Modern State: "It is out of this confusion that the modern project seeks to take us and will effectively take us. **The quarrel has to do with institutions, to be sure, but also, more profoundly, with the human type that must inspire human life.**" (Manent, 2013, p. 6, emphasis added).

It is beautiful and fortuitous, in the context of this research, that Manent associates the perplexity that assailed the peoples of that historical moment, the conflicting and competing authorities, to **words**, "the words of the Bible, the words of the Greek philosophers, the words of Roman orators and historians — and they did not know which to retain and which to discard." The contradictory messages made it challenging to know how to act. "Words and actions were disjointed or badly linked. The modern moment crystallized when the effort was engaged to join word to action and action to word more vigorously and more rigorously." (ibid, p. 6),

If we were to follow the voices that continue the narrative of the mutations of "the city" in its political dimension, who were the catalysts of this paradigmatic shift, the proverbial baton would be passed to Machiavelli, as the herald of modern politics, and Martin Luther, as the herald of Reformation. Manent credits to Machiavelli the formulation of the principle for the political "solution" to the conflicting voices of that historical moment by quoting a few lines of Chapter XV of *The Prince*.

> But since my intent is to write something useful to whoever understands it, it has appeared to me more fitting to go directly to the effectual truth of the thing than to the imagination of it. **And many have imagined republics and principalities that have never been seen or known to exist in truth;** for it is so far from how one lives to how one should that he who lets go of what is done for what should be done learns his ruin rather than his preservation." (Machiavelli[166], *apud* Manent, 2013, p. 7, emphasis added).

One would consider this as an inflexion point in relation to the perspective of our heralds. Not a breakage, for "cities in speech" will continue to be imagined aplenty, as it will be attested to by More, Campanella and others. Nevertheless, there is a more structural impact, one that separates imagination from the truth in the ontological sense. As seen in the discussion of *mythos* and *logos*, the measuring rod of truth was not "reality" per se, but conceptual clarity. Machiavelli will give voice to a change in this understanding, as he will also understand the relationship between politics and ethics differently. Both of these new outlooks will have long-lasting effects on the history of Western thought. As Manent states, "It is difficult to say what new political order Machiavelli envisaged concretely. Let us say that by delivering humans from all respect for any opinion, for any word, [⋯] that he opened the way for every possible action, including the most daring and the most ambitious, and even the most terrible." And that, "Of all the daring and ambitious actions that Europe witnessed, the one engaged in by the modern State is without doubt the most decisive". (Manent, 2013, p. 8)

Moving on, Manent argues that the modern State emerges to placate the conflicting words within the city (as a political body):

> [⋯] the modern State — and this is how it becomes sovereign — resolves or overcomes this conflict by monopolizing the word that commands, more precisely and more boldly, by producing a command that is independent of every opinion, including and above all religious opinion, a command that authorizes and prohibits opinions according to its sovereign decision. The modern State, still uncertain of its strength, at first joined to itself a religious opinion or word, which was the State religion. Once it had attained its full strength, it raised itself above every word; it was truly without a word of its own. It became the "neutral," "agnostic," "secular" State that we know. (Manent, 2013, p. 9).

That is, however, only half of the "solution". Manent argues that human life cannot be without an authoritative word and the State, to be effective, has no word of his own. Its word will be found in society by becoming representative of it. "The invention and the problem of modern politics, as is well known, is representation. Representation articulates the word of society to the action of the State that is without a word, or that has no word of its own." (Manent, 2013, p. 9-10).

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[166] Machiavelli, Niccolò. *The Prince*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998, p. 61.

In this perspective, do the *cities in speech* that Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Augustine spoke of; do the political forms of the Greek city and the Roman Empire remain consequential at all? For Manent (and for this dissertation), very much so, for the Modern secular State, which we know and live in, is a dialectic response (also) to the need to organize "the things held in common" that emerged from the Greek *polis*.

> The history of the West unfolds in the tension between the civic operation, such as the Greek city gave birth to and that the republican or "Roman" tradition endeavored to preserve and to spread, and the Christian Word that, in proposing a new city where actions and words would attain an unprecedented unity and where one would live in conformity with the Word, opened a disparity between actions and words in political society that was impossible to master. In promising a perfect equation between action and word in the city of God, the Christian proposition opened an insurmountable disparity between actions and words in human cities. As I have stated, the practical solution of a confessional stamp was found in the nation, administered by a secular State, and governed by a representative government. (Manent, 2013, p. 10).

Adding to this perspective are the words of Peter Sloterdijk,

> In terms of its self-conception, the modern world is carrying out a comprehensive anti-Platonic experiment. This appears to have become possible only because the grounding of knowledge and action in the "ancient European" idea of a supreme Good could be abandoned. The dominant technological pragmatism of the modern era was given free rein only after the metaphysical inhibitions standing in the way of unlimited moral and physical experimentation had been removed, or at least enfeebled. From this perspective it becomes understandable why modernity is dominated by a postmetaphysical disinhibition. Within that disinhibition, liberation and destabilization are ambivalently interwoven. **The consequences of the uncoupling from the metaphysical foundation — deconstructivists would say: from the foundation-illusion — are twofold: the empowerment to engage in unrestrained projecting is paid for by the discovery of an internal abyss.** The fact that a deep-seated discomfort with modernity exists today among so many contemporaries has to do undoubtedly with the ambivalent experience of a steady increase in power and an unstoppable erosion of security. When ambivalence prevails, positive balance sheets are difficult to come by. A growing number of people are doubtful—with ever more compelling justifications—that the world experiment of the modern age still amounts to a global sweepstakes: too obvious by now is the rising tide of risks and losses. **If one wanted to name the principle that rules the ecology of the modern mind, one would have to lay bare why modernization brings with it ineluctably progress in the awareness of being adrift** (Sloterdijk, 2013, p. 12, emphasis added).

There is no lack of voices to express the sense of loss and disillusion with the modern/postmodern condition, in cities and elsewhere. Louis Wirth, for one, would come to mind. Though undoubtly fascinating, it will not be possible, within the scope of this dissertation, to follow the construction (and deconstruction…) of the Nation-State and its ramifications concerning to the political and material forms of "the city", from the Machiavellian moment that marks the shift in the political horizon, as described by Manent, to this day. It is simply too big of a task. Nevertheless, one remains true to the objective of investigating four of the "original

myths" of the city, as expressed in the voices of the selected heralds, which constitute one axis of the contemporary dialectic spiral.

However, having said that, it is possible, still following Manent's analyses, to draw the briefest of sketches regarding the political form of the contemporary city, considering the departure point of the investigated heralds, for it relates to the issues of citizenship, political voice and participation, which nowadays are covered under the umbrella of representative democracy.

Having briefly touched upon the emergence of representation in politics in a previous paragraph, it is also necessary to mention a feature of our contemporary regimes, "which is the articulation of the word on action by majority decision." (Manent, 2013, p. 10). In analyzing the critiques to representative democracy or parliamentary regime, election campaigns, and the role of the majority and of the minority, he states that

> In recent times political speech has been progressively severed from any essential connection to a possible action. The notion of a program, reduced to "promises," has been discredited. The conviction has spread, whether explicit or tacit, that in any event one has no choice. What will be done will be dictated by circumstances over which one has no control. From then on political speech has no longer had the purpose of preparing a possible action but simply has conscientiously covered the field of political speech. (Manent, 2013, p. 11).

The progression towards the Nation-State and representative democracy was the metamorphosis of the political form that emerged to mediate the bloody religious wars that drained Europe for decades on end. It did work to pacify a new stage for political action at the end of the Middle Ages. On the other hand, it carried in itself a progressive detachment of the individual "citizen" from the political life due to the distancing of the political form; a detachment and a distancing that only seem to have grown since. Coupling that with the advancements in science and technology, and the movements of capitalism,

> **It seems that we are on the way to returning to a situation of political indetermination comparable in one sense to the one that preceded the construction of modern politics. But with a great difference** [⋯]. During the premodern period, there were too many competing political forms that hampered one another [⋯] and so the new political form of the nation had to be invented. Today, it is in short the reverse. **We observe not the excess but the dearth of political forms.** [⋯] **Not only that, but the authoritative, if not unique, opinion has been hammering at us for twenty years that the future belongs to a delocalized or global process of civilization and that we have no need of a political form. Thus the necessity to articulate words and actions politically has been lost from view. The technological norm and juridical rule are supposed to be enough for organizing common life.** (Manent, 2013, p. 12-13, emphasis added).

These last two points – the emptiness and inoperancy of the political discourse, the feeling of political disengagement – seem to find an echo in contemporary urban debate, both among those who advocate a more substantial political role and agency of "the city", but that struggles to mobilize the citizenry in meaningful participatory processes; as among those who have relegated "the city" to obsolescence in a world of flux and unbounded urbanization.

So, one evokes the image of the mythical *Ouroboros*, a symbol of infinity, to tie the end to the beginning, the city now and the city's birth, before plunging into our voyage millennia into the past, into the realm of obscure beginnings. The present scenario seems to invite us to report back to antiquity, to the emergence of the first production of the common in the Greek polis, to reassess, in today's context, the political form of the city. And, as to the Roman Empire, not without a sense of irony, one repeats here the analysis of Russian-born French philosopher Alexandre Kojève (1902-1968), in his commentary on Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, as quoted by Manent at the end of his section entitled *What is Proper to Rome*[167] (2013, p. 142)

> What appears to our understanding to be immediately determined — namely, [⋯] the separation of the universal moral agent and the particular individual — **our political reason discovers to be produced by the scission of a now-lost concrete universal, which is the citizen.** In this sense, abstract evidence of the moral agent as well as the individual flows directly from their meager reality, a deficiency that in its turn derives from the distension of the political form.
>
> If these considerations hold any validity, it means that something like a **"passage from the Ancients to the Moderns" already took place at Rome at the end of the republic.** A republican order grounded in the political government of the common thing gave way to an order that soon became imperial, grounded in the legal protection of particular properties and rights. As Alexandre Kojève says in his commentary on *The Phenomenology of the Spirit:* **"The Greek Warrior becomes the Roman Bourgeois, who ceases to be Citizen in the pagan sense of the word. The State then has the 'right' (= the understandable possibility) of ignoring him. The non-warrior pseudo-citizens, who are interested only in their private property (Particularity) and ignore the Universal, are at the mercy of the professional soldiers and their leader (the Emperor). This leader, the Despot, will also himself consider the State as his private property (and that of his family).[168]"**

[167] As will be seen in the chapter on Cicero, his analysis placed great importance on protecting property rights. As Manent indicates (p. 139-40), Cicero also gave birth to the conception of the "individual" with two kinds of persona: a *persona communis* (our rational nature common to all human beings); and a *persona singulis* tribute (a particular persona that is our individual character). That is in a marked difference from Aristotle, which looked at the individual in terms of an interplay of nature and virtuous or vicious dispositions.

[168] In Manent, note #108, p. 339: "Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947), 116. Quote trans. Marc LePain."

4.2 THE GREEK POLIS, WHERE MYTHOS AND LOGOS MEET

[P]olis andra didaskei
'a polis teaches a man' [to be a citizen][169]

Classical scholar Oswyn Murray, in his essay *Cities of Reason*[170], in bringing forth the discussion about the *polis,* begins by recalling a fascinating study about the mentality of the apes described by Bertrand Russel[171] (1987, p. 325-26). It was part of a series of experiments designed to test the apes' abilities to think rationally and involved logical tasks they would have to perform in order to access food. Such experiments were conducted by scientists of different nationalities (Americans and Germans), and what was odd about it is that the monkeys' behaviour was reported differently according to who observed them.

Russell's analyses went beyond the mere conclusion that the observer affects the interpretation of the results. More acutely, he noted that the design of the experiment itself was predetermined by the mental attitudes of the conducting scientist. For instance, as noted by him, Germans had the reasoning abilities of apes in very low regard and held the belief that rule-oriented tasks were a fundamental ingredient of rationality. Therefore, they conceived the simplest experiments that even the "dumbest" of apes could sort out, but only by following the rules, which is how the test was designed. They concluded that, as the ape was quietly confident in performing the experiment, it demonstrated true "insight" on its part, which was actually wrong. On the other hand, Americans held the cognitive capacities of the apes in much higher regard and highlighted free expression as a component of rationality. Hence, they designed experiments that would push to the limit the abilities of the "smartest" of monkeys. Consequently, the average ape felt emotional distress during experiment days and rapidly learned that the way to obtain results was to create havoc. For the observing researcher, that proved that it was all a matter of chance, which was also wrong. As Murray highlights, following Russell, the two groups tended to accept the outcomes of their experiments precisely because they emphasized their expectations while, in fact, the results had been determined by the expectations embedded in the experiment's design. Such provocative conclusion, Murray argues, could also be applied to the attempts of defining "the city"; more specifically, the *polis:*

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[169] As referenced by Cartledge (2002, p. 11) it is in Simonides, quoted by Plutarch, Mor. 784b [Should Old Men Govern i] = eleg. 15, David Campbell 1991: 517)

[170] Murray, Oswyn. "Cities of Reason." *European Journal of Sociology* 28, no. 2 (1987): 325–46. doi:10.1017/S000397560000552X.

[171] The description is quoted by Owen as referenced in his Note #1, p. 325, *An Outline of Philosophy* (1927), ch. III.)

> This form of national response to the phenomena is familiar to anyone who has studied attempts to characterise the Greek *polis.* The German *polis* can only be described in a handbook of constitutional law; the French *polis* is a form of Holy Communion; the English *polis* is a historical accident; while the American *polis* combines the practices of a Mafia convention with the principles of justice and individual freedom. Traditional assumptions and expectations predetermine the results, even when they appear to conflict with established views; when predictions are falsified, we are all the more ready to accept the conclusions uncritically. This predetermination of results operates both through theory and through method: the empiricist is revealed merely as someone who does not bother to investigate his own bias[172]. (Murray, 1987, p. 326).

Such insight is very opportune considering the experimental character of this investigation and the *endoxic* method. It led to a purposeful attempt to get in touch with different schools of thought in exploring some of the ideas enveloped in understanding the roots of some "mythologies of the city". The chosen approach, though much more labyrinthine and time-consuming - and possibly less objective and "conclusive" than following a more targeted viewpoint would entail -, hoped to stay faithful to that Aristotelian dialectic method of confronting authoritative voices in the hopes of diminishing one's own bias in search of a better understanding of whatever it is that is being studied. For, as Russell's narrative shows, pre-conceived beliefs tend to be as powerful as they are surreptitious.

Scholarship on the *polis* is virtually inexhaustible, and, try as one may, in the limited time available, the result barely scratches the surface. Nevertheless, a few faces of this rhombicosidodecahedron need to be highlighted, mainly to set some bearings to the contributions of our heralds[173] and the composition of the kaleidoscopic idea of "the city." One begs the reader to keep in mind that, for each argument brought within, there will be countless others left without.

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[172] At this point, the following elucidating comment is presented as an appendix in the original article (comment *a*, p. 341): "The comparison between the German, French, British and American *polis* invites also to further speculation: the fact that we have (at least) four different views of the Greek *polis* marks off ancient history as something very special and interesting. British history, for example, is studied principally by British historians; thus, history tends to become introspective. [···] and (b) that the four different traditions with four different biases enable the historian to detect and describe the bias of each tradition (including his own) by comparing it with the three others (your page 326). Next, the national response can be supplemented with two other responses: (a) the ideological response (which you take up on page 328ff.,distinguishing between the views of Weber and Durkheim). In this particular case the national and the ideological response correspond, since Weber stresses the German and Durkheim the French view, but sometimes the two traditions clash, e.g. in the case of M.I. Finley and J. de Romilly. (b) The chronological response, i.e. the Renaissance, eighteenth-century, the Victorian and the contemporary view of the polis, each with its bias. The three different aspects overlap, of course."

[173] Plato and Aristotle are situated in the Ancient Greek *polis*, more specifically the Athenian experience, though Plato will establish parallels with the other "power-polis" on the time, Sparta, and Aristotle will keep close to his heart the more compact dimension of his native Stagira, and at the twilight of the Greek polis with the emergence of Alexander's Empire. Cicero will write at the transition of the Roman Republic to the Empire, but his writings on the "ideal city" will be set in dialogue with Plato's/Aristotle's readings. Augustine will write at the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West and, though, from a different perspective, will also be debating "the city" in a dialogue with these predecessors. The exploration of each of their contributions will be pursued in following chapters.

4.2.1 THE GREEK *POLIS*, SOME PARTICULARITIES

One of the first steps in trying to understand something is to name it. The name is connected to its "essence", to its identity, to its *being* – to its *ontology*. One of the many challenges in approaching the Greek *polis* is to find its corresponding meaning in other languages. To cut the matter short, and making a provision to the inherent incommensurability in any translation, *polis,* if one is looking for a single word, is actually untranslatable.

The second aspect is to keep in mind is that there is no monolithic understanding that neatly encapsulates a phenomenon of such longevity and dispersion. One of the world's leading scholars in the study of the *polis,* classic Danish philologist and classic demographer Mogens Herman Hansen (2006[174], p. 146), highlights that its Greek version, which added up to more than 1,000 poleis, it constituted "the largest city-state culture in world history, both geographically and demographically." Ancient historian Paul Cartledge points out that *polis* ranks among the most frequently attested nouns in ancient Greek (39th in a list of 2,000, and ahead, for instance, of *theos* (god)). In setting the frame for his analyses,

> **If called to specify 'Ancient Greece' further, I would analyse it as a civilization of cities.** The English word 'civilization' is derived ultimately from Latin *civitas,* community, from which comes also our 'city'. But the Romans were not the first to develop a civilization of cities, a 'citification' of culture. There the Greeks, along with the Etruscans in Italy and the Phoenicians of modern Lebanon, preceded them. Indeed, on a looser definition of 'city' it is possible to trace the origins of civilization in the sense of citification as far back as the third or fourth millennium BCE, to the 'inter-riverine' civilizations of lower and upper Mesopotamia (modern Iraq). But here I wish to give 'city' a qualitative as well as quantitative connotation, implying a type of self-governing geopolitical space combining town and country in a dynamic symbiosis. Cartledge (2009 , p. 2),

There is insufficient historical evidence to determine when the Greek *polis* culture began. There are divergent alternatives to consider, as Hansen highlights (op. cit., p. 45-46). Assuming that it may have begun in different portions of what was the Greek territory, which could take the date as far back as the early Iron Age (c. 1200 BC), a more consensual suggestion is that the *polis* arose c. 850–750 BC, contemporary to the moment when the Greeks began to utilize written language, with much influence from the Phoenician alphabet.

Though the most usual "translation" of *polis* is "city-state", the complexity of this phenomenon merits more detailed analysis. Hansen adopted the approach to investigate what the *polis* was not by looking through the eyes of the modern historian but through a close

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[174] Hansen, Mogens Herman. *Polis : An Introduction to the Ancient Greek City-State.* Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

examination of the surviving historical written sources of the Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods to determine what the Greeks themselves understood by it.

Hansen's study of circa 11,000 occurrences reveals that the Greeks knew very well they were using a word with more than one meaning. The two primary senses refer (1) to a settlement of a certain size (the concrete physical sense of the built environment) and (2) to an institutionalized political community. Further study revealed that these two main senses had different sub-meanings, which varied in usage intensity.

> (1) In the meaning of 'settlement' *polis* is used (a) synonymously with *akropolis*, a small, usually fortified settlement on an eminence; and (b) synonymously with *asty,* just meaning a town; or (c) synonymously with *ge* or *chora*, meaning a territory (*polis* plus hinterland). (2) In the meaning of 'community' *polis* is used (a) synonymously with *politai*, the adult male citizens; (b) synonymously with *ekklesia* or demos, as the city's assembly or some other of its political institutions; or (c) synonymously with *koinonia*, the political community in a more abstract sense. (Hansen, 2006, p. 57).

Another observation is that the ancient Greek city and its hinterland are inextricably linked. In the study of the occurrences, *chora* and *polis* will often be in association, though, depending on the involved sub-meanings, they can be placed in a complex relationship that contemporary linguists call *participatory opposition*. Applying this technique to study the Greek use of polis and chora as antonyms reveals a fascinating correlation. Such linguistic analysis between the ancient Greek *polis* and the modern European state demonstrates that "In ancient Greek it was the word for 'city' (*polis*) that came to mean 'state', whereas in modern European languages it is the word for 'country' that is used to mean 'state'." (ibid, p. 58).

One final specificity is to be highlighted in the study of the combined meanings of city and state in the *polis*, which has to do with their names. "The Greek perception of a *polis* as a community of citizens inhabiting a city has its reflection also in the names they gave their city-states. Nowadays, we use place-names to serve as the names of states: the Greeks preferred to name their poleis with an *ethnikon*, an adjective used as a noun derived from the place-name, indicating the people rather than the land." (ibid., p. 59).

Such an emphasis upon the people of the state, so much so that it designates the very name of the state, is a hallmark of the Ancient Greek experience of the *polis* and must be kept on the back of our minds while investigating the contributions of Plato and Aristotle, for then their emphasis on the education of the citizens *(paideia),* on the constitution/regime that organizes the political life (politeia), and on "the city" as a metonym for the exercise of virtue, for the flourishing of the human life become much more comprehensible and interesting.

> In the Platonic *Laws,* for example, the Athenian Stranger insists that the city should be devoted to cultivating virtue in citizens throughout their lives. Not even honoring or saving the city should take precedence over this project. **The city exists in order to make people good and virtuous, and not the other way around;** the Athenian's fictive Magnesians should abandon the city, he says, if the city turns out to make human beings worse (*Laws* 770c–e). **Platonic and Aristotelian political thought always held that politics should take human flourishing as its cardinal task – or else politics is nothing.** (Balot, 2013[175], p. 197, emphasis added)

Such is a fruitful and long-lived line of study, which will be further explored in each of the four heralds. Nevertheless, the territorial (land) dimension must not be overlooked, for it is ingrained in the concepts of *autarkeia* (for the moment, an approximation to self-sufficiency), which show in Plato and Aristotle, and in the subjacent ideas of Justice and its relation to the Cosmos.

Let us consider Homer's *Odyssey* and Hesiod's *Theogony* as a framework. *Theogony* tells the tale of the Creation, from a state of *Chaos* to one of the *Cosmos*. In this process, each element of Creation would be assigned to its rightful place, which should be respected so the balance of the whole could be sustained. The journey of Ulysses (Odysseus) in the *Odyssey* is another illustration of this. Ulysses, king of Ithaca, married to the beautiful and intelligent Penelope, father to a worthy son, Telemachus, had to leave his rightful place to fight in the brutal war against Troy, which lasted ten years. After helping the Greeks beat the Trojans through the famous artifice of the horse, he could finally return home. However, some of his actions angered the Gods, and, as punishment, he was prevented from reaching Ithaca for another ten years. Oblivion was the instrument most used to implement this punishment, but there was a final and more significant hurdle, one that was offered him by the nymph Calypso, who reigned in an idyllic island and fell desperately in love with him. To convince him to stay, she offered him the gifts of eternal life and eternal youth, predicates of the Gods. Ulysses refused it, for he knew he belonged in Ithaca, and these gifts were not his to have, so the Gods finally allowed him to go back home.

These two poems also set the tone for the conception in Greek Philosophy that the Universe is ordained, is a *Cosmos* – as first used by Pythagoras, a complex intertwined order which the opposite is *chaos*. The epics also emphasize the primary definition of justice in Ancient Greek thought: what justly fits, what is at its rightful place. As highlighted by Reale and Antiseri

[175] Balot. Ryan K. Democracy and Political Philosophy: Influences, Tensions, Rapprochement. Chapter. Arnason, Johann P., Raaflaub, Kurt A., and Wagner, Peter, eds. *The Greek Polis and the Invention of Democracy : A Politico-Cultural Transformation and Its Interpretations.* Somerset: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2013.

(2003[176], p. 7), Homer, Hesiod and other poets left a strong imprint in Greek mentality that would be very influential for the constitution of philosophical thought and ethics throughout Antiquity.

In Greek cosmology, nature is strictly hierarchical, where each category of being moves from sublime to mediocre. Every natural gift is subject to uneven distribution. In the Greek moral vocabulary, virtue is, above all, the excellency of a well-endowed nature. The Greek (and Roman) world is aristocratic, for it is founded on the conviction that there is a natural hierarchy among beings (Ferry, 2006[177]). By the same token, they talk about capital sins. The sin of exceeding one's place, of trying to usurp prerogatives from the Gods – *hubris* – was most severely punished by them (think of Dedalus, Icarus, Midas, amidst others), for it was detrimental not only for the individual but for the equilibrium of the whole of Creation. The other was *pleonexia*, the immoderate, overreaching desire for more than one's share, was considered a threat to civic order (Lane, 2011[178], p. 32). Conflicts in the civic order were addressed by the idea of justice, which was fundamental to the polis as it emerged from the archaic age into the classical period.

> Justice was conceived by poets, lawgivers, and philosophers alike as the structure of civic bonds which were beneficial to all (rich and poor, powerful and weak alike) rather than an exploitation of some by others. [⋯] So understood, justice defined the basis of equal citizenship and was said to be the requirement for human regimes to be acceptable to the gods. The ideal was that, with justice as a foundation, political life would enable its participants to flourish and to achieve the overarching human end of happiness (eudaimonia), expressing a civic form of virtue and pursuing happiness and success through the competitive forums of the city. (Lane, 2018[179], p. 3)

As it will be seen, the primacy of **unity**, of the collective over the "individual" (a word that must be read with great care, for it does not care the same connotation then as it does today), is a recurring theme in Plato's political writings, which has been subject to much criticism, as well as praise, from Aristotle onwards. As Risse (2020[180], p. 42) stresses, "Plato thought that political salvation lay in unifying power and wisdom in the same individuals."

A point about the economic life of the polis must also be made. The dedication to the political life did not mean that the pursuit of individual wealth was disregarded by the Ancient Greek and Romans. The restraints on *pleonexia* were very much established by the delimitation between the private and the public. However, instead of thinking in terms of fixed lines, these spheres were defined according to the situation, having the choice to act either as a private

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[176] Reale, Giovani; Antiseri, Dario. *História da filosofia : filosofia pagã antiga, v. 1.* São Paulo: Paulus, 2003 (1997).

[177] Ferry, Luc. *Aprender a Viver.* Filosofia para os novos tempos. Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2006.

[178] Lane, Melissa. *Eco-Republic: Ancient Thinking for a Green Age.* Oxford: Peter Lang, 2011.

[179] Lane, Melissa, "Ancient Political Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/ancient-political/

[180] Risse, Mathias. *On Justice : Philosophy, History, Foundations.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

individual (*idiōtēs*), busy with private concerns, or as a citizen (*politēs*), focusing at collective ones. As Lane (2011, p. 38) highlights,

> *Idiōtēs* is the origin of our word 'idiot'. {…} And this is no accident. For while one did rightly sometimes pursue one's interests as an *idiōtēs*, one was truly an idiot if one did so in matters or moments when a more public-spirited engagement was required, **or if one did so forgetting that one was also and always a citizen.** We do inevitably have and pursue private concerns, but we can't indulge ourselves in the fantasy that there is a safe fixed line behind which we can retreat in doing so, indifferent to the effects of our actions on the public. On the contrary, it is incumbent upon us to reconsider where and how that line is to be drawn as circumstances change, and what is required of us even in respect of our private pursuits if we are to refrain from causing public harm – lest we qualify, truly, as idiots. (Eco-Republic p. 38).

The polis in, thus, the unity of these aspects and more. It is in this context that Plato's and Aristotle's thought will develop. Nevertheless, before moving on to each of their *cities in speech* understanding, Reali and Antiseri (2003, p. 10) beautiful summarize this idea of the unit of the polis. In a free translation,

> **[…] with the constitution and the consolidation of the *polis*, the Greek men discovered themselves essentially as citizens, meaning that the *polis* became their ethical horizon and remained as such up to the Hellenistic age.**
>
> **The ends of the polis were their own ends, the good of the polis as their own good, the greatness of the polis as their own greatness, and the freedom of the polis as their own freedom.**
>
> **Without considering this, one cannot comprehend a great part of Greek philosophy, particularly ethics and the whole politics of the Classical age, as well as the complex unfolding of the Hellenistic era.**

4.3 THE ROMAN EMPIRE, WHEN THE POLIS MEETS THE WORLD

In the previous section, one aimed at setting up the stage for the contributions of Plato and Aristotle in relation to the ideal-type of the *polis,* as part of the exploratory strategy conceived to understand "the city" in their own moment and how aspects of it may have persisted through time. Therefore, although succinct, an effort was made to highlight a few of its defining and common features. Notwithstanding their particular views and ties with the uniqueness of the Athenian experience, the *polis*, per se, was a replicable phenomenon.

Methodologically, one is obliged to do the same for Cicero and Augustine, in relation to the ideal type they will be connected with, namely the Roman Empire, which here will combine the spheres of urbs and civitas. And here there is a challenge, for although each *polis* could be in themselves the embodiment of the cosmic order, they were primarily self-contained, and the status of citizenship was territorially bound. Though founded in 753 BC like any other polis, Rome evolved to become a whole different, irreproducible animal.

From a political point of view, Manent (2013, p. 105-06) argues that the two political *mother forms* of the ancient world are the city and the empire (political self-determination *versus* the rule of a master), which are irreconcilable by nature. In that, to this day, Rome remains an enigma.

> The Greek historical experience [⋯] establishes that the political forms are truly forms; that is, if they each indeed have their genesis, they are not moments or aspects of a process; they exist by themselves and from one to the other there is not continuity but rupture. Now, there is one exception to this rule or law, a unique example of a political form transforming itself directly into another political form, of **a city transforming itself directly into an empire. At Rome, or starting from Rome and under the name of Rome,** a properly unique political phenomenon developed, a phenomenon contrary to the ontology itself of politics — I dare say — namely, the effective and direct continuity and communication between the two mother and opposed forms, the city and the empire.

Perhaps, in part, this enigma can be explained by the fact that what was once enfolded in the *polis* in Rome was split into three: *urbs, civitas* and *res publica.* None of these terms is of easy definition, particularly if the linguistic twists and turns incorporated through time are considered. Let us depart from Mumford's characterization in the hope of unpacking these layers.

> **The Roman Empire, the product of a single expanding urban power center, was itself a vast city-building enterprise:** it left the imprint of Rome on every part of Europe, Northern Africa, and Asia Minor, altering the way of life in old cities and establishing its special kind of order, from the ground up, in hundreds of new foundations, 'colonial' towns, 'free' towns, towns under Roman municipal law, 'tributary' towns: each with a different status if not a different form. In a general account of the Roman state just before it fell into ruin, the writer treated it as made up of separate civic bodies, to the number of 5,627. Even after the city of Rome had been sacked in the fifth century, the poet Rutilius Namatianus could say, with undiminished admiration: "**A city of the far-flung earth you made**" (Mumford, 1961, p. 205, emphasis added).

Pier Vittorio Aureli[181] (2008, p. 93) writes a most illuminating essay on these ancient political forms and their territorial repercussions, drawing on a vast array of references, among which Cacciari[182] resonates quite loudly. As he underscores, the Roman city reflects the ambivalence between *urbs* and *civitas.* The territory of the *polis* envelops the domain of the *oikos* (the "house", *stricto sensu*), concerned with all that pertains to the "private" (including economic activities) and the political space of the *agora,* where public decisions are made. The *Latin* term *urbs* indicates "city" differently than the Greek *polis*, for it lacks further political qualification. The *urbs* can be replicated *ex novo* in a tabula rasa condition. The Roman *urbs* was intended to expand in the form of a territorial organization (the vast city-building enterprise as characterized by Mumford), where roads (80,000[183] kilometres of them) played a crucial role. As Manent qualifies (2013, p. 58), it pertains to the domain of the *urbs*, in relation to the one of the *res publica* (here, what is held in common) "how we measure the exploit the city accomplishes every day without our noticing it, which is to ensure a continuous distribution, an unending flow of goods. We become aware that the flow of private goods requires in one way or another the presence and the resources of a common good."

Another significant difference will be defined by a different understanding of justice and law. Both historical moments will conceive the Universe as an ordered totality with its own internal logic and hierarchy; that the rule of law distinguishes civilization from barbarism; and that, according to what is established in law, each one should get their due. As seen, it was a vital constituent of the Ancient Greek mentality the need to curb the impulses towards greed, immoderation and insatiability (*hubris* and *pleonexia*, as seen) that emerge from the infinite nature of relationships that originate from the political life of a *polis.* In the analyses of Hannah

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[181] Aureli, Pier Vittorio. "Toward the Archipelago. Defining the Political and the Formal in Architecture" *Log,* no. 11, Anyone Corporation, 2008, pp. 91–120, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41765186.

[182] See Cacciari, Massimo. *Europe and Empire: On the Political Forms of Globalization.* Alessandro Carrera (ed.) New York: Fordham University Press, 2016 and Cacciari, Massimo. *The Unpolitical : On the Radical Critique of Political Reason.* Alessandro Carrera (ed.). New York: Fordham University Press, 2009.

[183] See https://www.britannica.com/technology/Roman-road-system

Arendt, apud Aureli (2008, p. 93-94), it was the *nomos*, the Greek understanding of the law, the normative element to keep these appetites in check.

Rome will operate under different assumptions. It will develop mechanisms to transform law into a political instrument at the service of Rome's expansionist logic (ibid, p. 94). By establishing natural law and differentiating between *ius gentium* and *ius civile*, citizenship becomes a political tool. A defining element of the *polis*, which was the manifestation of its body of *polites* (citizens) who partook in an *ethnos*, mutates into an understanding that the *cives* (citizens) are those who coexist under the same law, forming the *civitas.* The dimension of *civitas* was decoupled from the "fatherland" and, at will, could be extended to the borders of the Republic/Empire, wherever they may be. Though the dimension of *civitas* was detached from its original territorial links, it remained connected, as it was in the *polis*, with the concern for the things that belong to the life in common (as the Aristotelian "ta politika"), which is the domain of the Greek *politeia*, and that in Latin will be the *res publica*. It is at these intersections that the voice of Cicero will be most heard, and can echo today.

Rome is not the Greek "union of hearts" *(homonoia)* of the *polis*; but it is the *concordia* of the diverse multitude expressed in the strength of the law.

> "A dispersed multitude of different habits" [···] gave life to the Roman *civitas.* It's incredible remembering [···] how people with diverse lineages, languages, habits, and traditions were able to come together within the same walls [···] and build a city. **What is responsible for this miracle? The *civitas* is built on the strength of a unity of intentions, common interest, and common purpose** (concordia civitas factaerat). **The civitas is also the product of political action sustained by the idea of harmony** (Sallust, *De coniuratione Catilinae* 6.1–2). Only through laws, by dictating *iura*, was Romulus able to unify one people out of that dispersed multitude [···]. **The obedience to the law makes the citizen, not land, nor blood, nor religion.** A citizen is whoever accepts the artifice of the law and takes refuge in it, even "a promiscuous crowd of freemen and slaves" This was precisely the first sign of the incipient power of the Roman civitas (Livy, *Ab Urbe condita* 1.8). (apud Cacciare, 2016, p. 11-16, emphasis added).

The enigma that Manent enquires into in political terms can also be expressed as to how such "fragmentation" - *urbs, civitas* and *res publica* – turned into integration under the insignia, under the idea of "Rome", from generation to generation. From Polybius onward, the question of how Rome subjected the *oikoumene*[184] (the ancient Greek word for the inhabited part of the world) to their rule was recurrent. For the Roman Stoic and consul P. Rutilius Rufus (c. 158–78 BC), the *imperium romanum* was the *orbis terrarum* (the Latin equivalent of *oikoumene*). For Vergil (Aen. 1.279), *imperium sine fine*. In Nero's time, *caput mundi* (Luc. Phars. 2.655). Rome became the mistress of the known world. It can be argued that what can be seen as

[184] For the references in this paragraph, see https://oxfordre.com/classics/classics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199381135.001.0001/acrefore-9780199381135-e-8008

"fragmentation" in relation to the cohesive unit of the polis is what gave it the necessary flexibility for such an expansion. As Cacciari (p. 106) writes,

> As the *urbs* is undone in its universal becoming — in its becoming *orbis* and in the unfolding of its will to grow — the terms, the laws and customs (*nomoi*) of all those cities that it encounters are assimilated to its law. They are integrated to the fate of the *urbs* so that in the end, because of an inevitable logic, Rome will have to pull up its own roots.

However, for something rootless to sustain itself (at least for some time), the symbolic dimension – that one that is in closer association with *mythos* – must play its part. As emphasized by Ashcroft (2018[185], p. 135),

> The Romans, Arendt writes, 'invented' tradition, in the sense that they were the first to incorporate the principle of the sacredness of their city's foundation, and the necessity of its continued integrity in the *res publica*, into their political self-understanding. The centrality of the Roman foundation resulted in an understanding of political action as the preservation of that foundation. But Roman tradition is not merely a static preservation of the past, but enacted through 'augmentation.' Tradition kept the foundations alive in the continual re-creation of the past in the present through, for example, the retelling of histories. Hammer writes that for Arendt, 'this notion of a coincidence of foundation and preservation by virtue of augmentation ... was deeply rooted in the Roman spirit and could be read from almost every page of Roman history.[186]'

The Roman Empire was built and maintained (also) through the movement of its expansion. The insatiable appetite of the metropolis was sustained by the resources captured by such expansion. From the moment its borders stabilized, ruin was spelt from within and without. As Manent analyses (2013, p. 209), growth is the race that prevents mixed regimes (the ones that are marked by class struggle) from collapsing. Growth sustains the permanent imbalance of these relations, so they do not deteriorate into open violence. Such was the historical moment of Augustine, who saw the mistress of the world fall to its knees. The violence of war laid to ashes the sacred fire of Vesta.

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[185] Ashcroft, Caroline. (2018) The polis and the res publica: two Arendtian models of violence, *History of European Ideas*, 44:1, 128-142, DOI: 10.1080/01916599.2016.1234968

[186] Hammer, Dean. Hannah Arendt and Roman Political Thought: The Practice of Theory, *Political Theory* 30, no. 1 (2002): 138.

The *civitas augences* – the movement of Rome as the growing city – will metamorphose in the civitas peregrina (the pilgrim city). In the journey towards universality, the city will have to forego its core. "To become universal, such a city must leave the centre behind and become a pilgrim. The growing city reveals its own truth precisely by abandoning itself. This is what the preaching of the Fathers had after all repeated: "Such is the law of God: that everything that begins must also end." (Cacciari, p. 108). Or, in the words of Augustine (*Sermons* 81.9[187]) himself,

> **What is Rome, after all, but Romans? I mean, we are not concerned with bricks and mortar, with high apartment blocks and extensive city walls.**
>
> **All this was put up in such a way that it would one day fall into ruin. When men built, they put stone upon stone; when they destroyed, they took the stones apart.**
>
> **Men put it up, men pulled it down.**

[187] Saint Augustine. *Sermons III (51-94) on the New Testament.* The Works of Saint Augustine. A Translation for the 21st Century. John E. Rotelle, O.S.A. (ed.). New York: New City Press, 1991. Available at https://wesleyscholar.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Augustine-Sermons-51-94.pdf

4.4 PLATO

Of whom Western Philosophy tradition is but is a sequence of footnotes[188]

"Coming to the famed plain of Cecropia
He [scil., Aristotle] piously set up an altar of sacred friendship
For the man [sdl., Plato] whom to praise is not lawful for bad men,
Who alone or first of all mortals clearly revealed
By his own life and by the methods of his teachings
That a man becomes good and happy at the same time.
Now no one can ever attain to these things again."

Aristotle[189]

[188] A paraphrase of the citation of the famous English logistician and mathematician Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947) when referring to Plato quoted, among others, in Vegetti et al, 2008, p. 112,; and in Korab-Karpowicz, 2011, p. 17: "the safest characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato."

[189] A fragment of the Eulogy dedicated by Aristotle to Plato, as preserved by Olympiodorus, *apud* Chroust, Anton Hermann (1965). Aristotle's " Self-Portrayal ". *Laval théologique et philosophique*, 21(2), 161–174. https://doi.org/10.7202/1020075ar p. 171-72. For additional interpretation of the eulogy and the relationship between Aristotle and Plato, see Jaeger, Werner. "Aristotle's Verses in Praise of Plato." *The Classical Quarterly,* vol. 21, no. 1, 1927, pp. 13–17, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3556271.

4.4.1 THE LIFE

As Schlegel said, " [T]he historian is a prophet looking backward," meaning that the past is no easier to understand than the future is to predict.

Giovanni Reale[190]

If one is to believe Diogenes Laërtius[191], the first of our herald's names was Aristocles, after his grandfather, and was "nicknamed" Plato[192] by his gymnastics professor due to his physical prowess. Born in 427/428 BC[193], Plato was an aristocrat, and tradition and social status placed him at the heart of Athenian social and political life. Both on his father and on his mother's side, he descended from Athenian "royalty": his father Aristone claimed to descend of Codrus, the last king of Athens; his mother, Perictione, was related to Solon. (Reale and Antiseri, 2014[194]; Reale, 1988[195]; Reale, 1997; Vegetti, 2018). As Vegetti, in his *Filosofia e sapere della città antica* (2018[196], p. 154, emphasis added) indicates, "Un re e un saggio legislatore delfico, dunque, nella lontana ascendenza di Platone, **quasi a segnarne la vocazione al potere, ma ad un potere accompagnato dalla legge e dalla ragione.**" Reale (1988, p. 7) also comments that more than biographical, such context is also existential, and will profoundly influence the very essence of his thought.

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[190] Reale, Giovanni. *Toward a new interpretation of Plato*. (Translated from the tenth edition and edited by John R. Catan and Richard Davies). Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1997, p. xiv.

[191] Diogenes Laërtius lived in the 3rd Century AD and was a biographer of Greek Philosophers. His work *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* survived the passing of time and provides, though not without questioning, biographical information as well as textual information that would have been lost for lack of other sources. Quoted by Reale, Giovanni. *Storia della Filosofia Antica : II Platone e Aristotele.* Sesta Edizione. Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 1988, p. 7.

[192] πλατοζ in Greek means amplitude, wideness, extension

[193] "As far as the details of Plato's life are concerned, we only have frustrating snippets of biographical information in his own writings, and it takes over twelve generations for us to get any coherent standalone accounts." (Kershaw, 2018, p. 50, referencing Alican, Necip P., *Rethinking Plato: A Cartesian Quest for the Real Plato.* Leiden: Brill, 2012, p. 13.

[194] Giovanni Reale, Dario Antiseri. *Storia della Filosofia dalle origini a oggi : Volume 1 Dai Presocratici ad Aristotele*. Milano: Bompiani, 2014.

[195] Giovanni Reale. *Storia Della Filosofia Antica : II. Platone e Aristotele*. Sesta edizione. Milano: Vita e Pensiero, 1988.

[196] Vegetti, Mario. *Filosofia e sapere della città antica.* Milano: Ulrico Hoepli Editore S.p.A., 2018.

Another key event of Plato's biographical context was the Peloponnesian War[197] (431–404 BC) that Athens and Sparta (the last with the support of the Persians) fought against each other. At the time of Plato's birth, the War had been raging for three/four years, and the city was still mourning those who had died in the terrible plague epidemic[198] that had carried off perhaps one-third of its population in 430–429 BC. The outcome of the conflict was the ignominious surrender to Sparta on the harshest terms. Athens' devastating defeat spelt the end of its Golden Age, though such a powerful flame kept some of its shine for a few decades yet. It is likely that Plato, for his age and social position, would have fought in it. However, in the aftermath of the War, a much closer influence in his youthful years was exercised by his sophist uncle Critias. (Cartledge, 2009[199]; Kenny, 2010[200]; Kershaw, 2018[201]; Pradeau[202], 2002; Reale, 1988; Vegetti, 2018).

With the ignominious end for Athens of the Peloponnesian War and a winter of bleak starvation, the Athenian democratic regime was superseded by the restoration of oligarchic rule by the vicious regime of the *Thirty Tyrants*, a junta of thirty extreme philospartan oligarchs, of which Critias was the leader. Though short-lived (404-403 BC), it was power accompanied not by reason but by violence, by the rejection of the law and political mediation (Vegetti, 2018, p. 158), and resulted in a murderous civil war. Democracy was restored in 403 BC, but "Athens's democratic copybook, many feel, was indelibly blotted by the trial and condemnation of Socrates in 399." (Cartledge, 2009, p. 111). It was certainly so for Plato, who was by then in his late twenties and had been a student of his for about eight years. The sanguinary government of the Thirty Tyrants exposed the arrogance and ferocity of the oligarchy. The trial launched by the democratic regime against Socrates also highlighted the limits of this political arc, leaving an indelible mark in his philosophical project. (Kenny, 2010; Vegetti et al., 2008[203]).

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[197] The most eloquent record of this ghastly conflict was registered by Thucydides, a general who fought of the Athenian side and was sent to exile for his "failures". Original thinker and historian, he is considered the "father" of realism in international relations. His most notable contribution is the *History of the Peloponnesian War*, which comprises *The Melian Dialogue* and *Pericles's Funeral Oration.* (Kershaw, 2018; Korab-Karpowicz, 2011).

[198] As described by Kershaw, following Thucydides (2.70.1., *apud* Kershaw, 2018, p. 46), its possible transmission path was from Ethiopia into Egypt and Libya, on into Persian territory, and then, via Piraeus, to Athens. Lasted several years and was exacerbated by the crowded conditions caused by country-dwellers sheltering in the city from the Spartans, the plague may have killed thirty per cent of Athens' population. Thucydides caught it and survived. Pericles also caught it, and perished. To this day, scholars and physicians disagree about the disease that afflicted the population, ranging from ebola to influenza, with many other alternatives in between.

[199] Cartledge, Paul. *Ancient Greece : A History in Eleven Cities*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

[200] Kenny, Anthony. *A New History of Western Philosophy*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

[201] Kershaw, Steve P. *The Search for Atlantis : A History of Plato's Ideal State.* New York: Pegassus Books Ltd., 2018. Epub.

[202] Pradeau, Jean-François. *Plato and the City : A New Introduction to Plato's Political Thought*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2002.

[203] Vegetti. Mario; Fonnesu, Luca; Ferrari, Franco; Perfetti, Stefano; Spinelli, Emidio. *Le Ragioni Della Filosofia 1 : Filosofia Antica e Medieval.* Milano: Mondadori Education S.p.A, 2008.

> L'Atene della fine del V secolo si presentava agli occhi di Platone come una città drammaticamente scissa, lacerata da profondi conflitti sociali ed economici, culturalmente e moralmente degenerata, malata. Solo una radicale rifondazione delle ragioni del vivere insieme, dei valori e dei fini dell'agire, in una parola dell'etica e della politica, poteva consentire di rigenerarla. (Vegetti et all, 2008, p. 114)

After Socrates' death, by drinking a cup of hemlock handed to him by his executioner, Plato withdrew from active political life and travelled extensively to other Greek cities, Italy and Egypt (again, if Diogenes Laërtius is to be believed), meeting many of the sages of the time. At this opportunity (389-388 BC), Plato visited Syracuse and built a strong friendship with Dione, a relative of the tyrant-ruler at the time (Dionigi). He returned to Syracuse in 367-365 BC, upon the death of Dionigi and his succession by Dionigi II, and in 361-360 BC, once more by Dionigi II's invitation. Each of these visits, in which it is believed Plato hoped to foment a model political rule, were very frustrating and unsuccessful experiments, which almost cost him his freedom and life. (Reale and Antiseri, 2014, p. 297-98; Korab-Karpowicz, 2011[204], p. 16).

Between 388-387 BC, when he was about 40 years old, Plato founded his Accademia, which, along with his writings (the Platonic dialogues), is part and parcel of his philosophical project.

Now, the Accademia, as Vegetti et al. (2008, p. 115) highlight, was an institution that, from the outside, presented itself as a religious foundation dedicated to the cult of the Muses. On the inside, however, Plato held actual seminars in which the philosophical and scientific themes contained in the dialogues were developed and deepened. Furthermore, the educational program, set up according to the indications formulated in the *Republic*, would have aimed at forming *philosophers-rulers*. In this sense, the Academy was something similar to a modern "scuola di partito", in which those who were supposed to manage power in the refounded city were trained. (ibid). The Ancient Greek had a beautiful word to designate education as the forming of the human being – *Paideia*[205] - magisterially explained and explored by Werner Jaeger. As a faithful disciple of Socrates, for whom one only errs for lack of Knowledge, for Plato, education, in this sense, will be paramount:

[204] Korab-Karpowicz, W. Julian. *On the history of political philosophy : Great political thinkers from Thucydides to Locke.* London: Taylor & Francis Group. 2011.

[205] Jaeger, Werner. *Paideia : A Formação do Homem Grego.* São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1995.

> The tandem of Socrates and Plato marks the breakthrough of the new educational idea: they speak out against the conventionalism and opportunism of the teachers of rhetoric and the sophists with a plea for a comprehensive reshaping of the human being. *Paideia* (…) not only is a foundational word of ancient philosophizing, but also identifies the program of philosophy as a political practice. It reveals that the birth of philosophy was conditioned by the emergence of a new, risky, and power-charged world system — today we call it that of urban cultures and empires. This system compelled a retraining of the human being in the direction of being fit for the city and the empire. (Sloterdijk, 2013, p. 5).

After the failed third voyage to Syracuse, Plato dedicated the last decades of his life to his Academy and to writing meaningful dialogues in which the theoretical and scientific problems were dominant (i.e. *Parmenides,* the *Timaeus,* the *Sophist, Philebus*). However, the question of rational government and the ordering of the city was never abandoned and are approached in the *Stateman* and in the twelve books of the *Laws*, which constitute his last work and the only one from which Socrates is entirely absent (Vegetti et al. l, 2008, p. 115).

Plato's Academy, which provided a base for succeeding generations of Platonic philosophers until its final closure in 529 AD, became the most renowned teaching institution of the Hellenistic world and set an example for later European universities. Mathematics, rhetoric, astronomy, dialectics, and other subjects, all seen as necessary for the education of philosophers and statesmen, were studied there. Later, some of Plato's pupils became leaders, mentors, and constitutional advisers in various Greek city-states. His most renowned pupil was, of course, Aristotle (Korab-Karpowicz, 2011, p. 17).

During Plato's lifetime, Athens became the intellectual centre of Greece and host to the four major Greek philosophical schools founded in the course of the fourth century BC: The Academy, Aristotle's Lyceum, and the Epicurean and Stoic schools. (Korab-Karpowicz, 2011).

Ancient Platonist tradition says that Plato died peacefully, surrounded by his students, in a wedding feast in Athens (he himself unmarried) on November 7th, 347 BC, which would have been on the same day and month of his birth. (Kenny, 2010; Korab-Karpowicz, 2011; Vegetti et al., 2008). In this same year, "when the Athenian empire was no more than a distant memory, King Philip of Macedon was officially admitted to the group of Greek powers of which he would soon be the master" (Pradeau, 2002, p. 1), more so with Alexander the Great, his son.

4.4.2 The Platonic Corpus

Following compendiums such as the *Oxford Classical Texts*[206], one will find that Plato's thirty-six works are organized in nine 'tetralogies', plus the *Definitions* and six works under 'Spurious'[207]. In each work there will be marginal numbers and letters (beginning with the *Euthyphro*, at 2a), which refer to the "Stephanus pages."[208] The Platonic corpus is a rarity in the sense that it is, to the best knowledge of the available sources, complete.

The majority of the works in the corpus is dialogues. The most notable exceptions are the *Apology*, which presents Socrates' defence at his trial, and the *Menexenus,* which is a (pastiche[209]) funeral speech. In the dialogues, Socrates is often the main or the sole interlocutor, and Plato never speaks under his own name. The ninth tetralogy ends with thirteen letters supposedly signed by Plato. The *Definitions* is a list of philosophical terms, possibly originated in the Academy.

As highlighted by Irwin (2019, p. 70), further studies have also questioned the authorship of *Hippias Major, Hippias Minor, Menexenus, Alcibiades I–II, Hipparchus, Amatores, Theages, Clitopho, Minos,* and *Epinomis.* There is no consensus and the first three are, in his opinion, authentic[210]. As of the letters, many consider them to be spurious, though there are defenders of their authenticity, particularly the *Seventh Letter*.

If there is no unanimity regarding authorship, there is also no consensus regarding the order of the works, for none was dated by the author. All the chronological hypotheses should be viewed with caution[211], but, overall, historians of Platonism agree in dating the production of the dialogues to four periods: between 399 and 390 BC, those which are known as the 'early' dialogues, the *Hippias 1* and *Hippias 2*, the *Alcibiades*, the *Ion*, the *Laches*, the *Charmides*, the *Euthyphro*, the *Protagoras* and the *Lysis*; between 390 and 385, the *Apology*, the *Crito*, the *Cratylus*, the *Menexenus*, the *Meno*, the *Euthydemus* and the *Gorgias*; between 385 and 370, approximately, the *Republic*, the *Phaedo*, the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*; and finally, between

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[206] The *Platonis Opera*, ed. J. Burnet (5 vols., Oxford: OUP, 1900–07), cited in Irwin, Terence H. The Platonic Corpus, in *The Oxford Handbook of Plato* (ed. Gail Fine), New York: Oxford University Press, 2019, p. 69.

[207] The six works listed as spurious are *De Iusto*, *De Virtute, Demodocus, Sisyphus, Eryxias,* and *Axiochus.*

[208] In 1578, Stephanus, (the Latin name of Henri Estienne) edited and printed the *Corpus Platonicus* dividing its pages into sections marked by letters. Since then, subsequent editions kept these references, as a way of keeping track among so many editions and translations.

[209] For more on this view see Chapter 1 *'I'm no politician' (Socrates)* in Pradeau, 2002, pp. 9-42.

[210] As are for Pradeau, as argued in Pradeau, J.-F., *Platon, Alcibiades,* translation by C. Marbœuf and J.-F. Pradeau, introduction and notes by J.-F. Pradeau, Paris, Flammarion, GF, 2002, cited in Pradeau, 2002, p. 7.

[211] For studies that question some familiar assumptions about Platonic chronology, Pradeau (2002, p. 7) cites Kahn, C.H., *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue: the Philosophical Use of a Literary Form*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996 and Cooper, J. M., (ed.), *Plato: Complete Works with Introduction and Notes*, Indianapolis/Cambridge, Hackett, 1997.

370 and Plato's death, the *Theatetus*, the *Parmenides*, the *Sophist*, the *Statesman*, the *Philebus*, the *Timaeus*, the *Critias* (unfinished) and the *Laws*, on which it is believed he was working at the time of his death. (Pradeau, 2002, p. 7).

For better and for worse, the 'standard view' rely on different sources to establish their chronology: (i) *style and language*, using stylometric and other linguistic tools; (ii) *character*, which considers their length, tone, style (dramatic, expositive, cross-examination, i.e.); (iii) *philosophical content*; and (iv) *the testimony of Aristotle*, particularly in differentiating the "historical Socrates" from the "Platonical character." (Irwin, 2019, p. 72). As already mentioned, the interpretation of these sources results in different orderings and justifications for their acceptance or rejection as authentic. For the purposes of this introduction, it suffices to stablish that such issues are subject to much debate and that, depending of the scholars' outlook on them, their interpretation of Plato will vary.

To finalize this brief presentation of the Platonic corpus, one will once again quote from Irwin (2019, p. 73-74) in order to present one of the possible sequences in studying the dialogues, relating chronology and content[212].

> 1. The *Apology* defends Socrates' life and work, providing a background to approach the reading of the shorter dialogues on ethical topics (*Laches, Charmides, Lysis, Euthyphro, Hippias Minor, Ion, Crito*).
>
> 2. The *Protagoras*, *Gorgias*, and *Euthydemus* are more elaborate works and express confrontations between Socrates and professional intellectuals (sophists, orators, and eristics) who discuss philosophical topics.
>
> 3. The *Meno* approaches some of the previous themes and introduces epistemological and metaphysical claims that will be further explored in the *Cratylus, Hippias Major, Phaedo,* and *Symposium.*
>
> 4. The *Republic* embraces the themes of many of the earlier dialogues, being Plato's most elaborate effort to create an encompassing philosophical theory. The *Phaedrus* develops questions about rhetoric (raised in the *Gorgias*), love (raised in the *Symposium*), and moral psychology (raised in the *Republic*).
>
> 5. *Parmenides* examines metaphysics and epistemology stances of the previous dialogues (Groups 3–4), particularly the Theory of Forms. *Theaetetus* offers the beginning of Plato's more systematic reflexions on epistemology and metaphysics.
>
> 6. Such ponderings are carried further in the *Sophist* and *Politicus* (*Statesman*), and the *Timaeus* frames them in a vision of cosmology and natural philosophy.
>
> 7. The *Philebus, Politicus (Statesman)*, and *Laws* are major works in moral and political philosophy.

[212] A simplified and introductory synthesis of the topics/contents of each dialogue is offered by Prof. Constance C. Meinward, in the respective entrance at the *Encyclopedia Britannica Online* https://www.britannica.com/biography/Plato A much more detailed and comprehensive presentation can be found at the canonic *The Dialogues of Plato translated into English with Analyses and Introductions by B. Jowett, M.A. in Five Volumes.* 3rd edition revised and corrected (Oxford University Press, 1892), available at https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/plato-the-dialogues-of-plato-in-5-vols-jowett-ed

Though each dialogue emphasizes different themes, there is a consistent ambition, a guiding thread that connects the whole of the corpus. As Vegetti (2018, p. 162-63) underscores, Plato aspired to bind into a unifying design power and knowledge, philosophy, science and politics. Thus, he tirelessly carried out the work of founding a new philosophical project that aimed at firmly intertwining scientific problems and ethical-political problems; a philosophy that would present itself as the synthesis and at the same time the overcoming of the whole Greek philosophical-cultural tradition.

The Platonic masterworks travelled far and wide throughout the centuries that followed, laying roots in foreign languages and lands. Such wealth has "functioned as a kind of seed bank of ideas from which countless later minds could be fertilized, often across great temporal and cultural distances." (Sloterdijk, 2013, p. 3). The theoretical path which he trailed, leaving indelible footprints, is one of the possibilities of knowledge, of truth, of beauty, of good. As Vegetti (2018, p. 166-67) indicates, "(…) the absolute guarantee of stability and truth of superior knowledge; the rediscovery of the possibility of building a rigorous science also of the ethical and political world, on which to base a non-questionable project for the reform of society and the management of power."

> With its noble optimism about the knowability of the world and its ethic of the conscious life, **Platonism was in a sense the superego of European rationalism which was becoming a world- moving force.** Even if Plato's high-minded search for the good life in a good polity seemed from the outset to suffer from the defect that it was merely a utopia, **it did set the measure and direction for the highest aspirations of the philosophical desire: friendship with the truth saw itself as being concerned about peace for the polis and the world, and committed to its continuous re-creation from the spirit of self-understanding.** (Sloterdijk, 2013, p. 3, emphasis added).

The "mereness" and "defectiveness" of "utopia" are issues that could spark another dissertation. Notwithstanding the valid criticism, a key aspiration of Plato's work took some of the greatest minds and seismic cultural changes of the nineteenth/twentieth centuries to be properly challenged.

> The *Corpus Platonicum* (…) is the foundational document of the entire genre of European idealistic philosophy as a way of writing, a doctrine, and a way of life. It represents a new alliance between intellectuals and the inhabitants of the city and the realm; it launches the Good News that this dismal world can be penetrated by logic. As the gospel positing that all things are grounded in something good, Platonism anchors the striving for truth in a pious rationalism—and it took nothing less than the civilizational revolutions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to tear out this anchor. Stages in that uprooting were Schopenhauer's metaphysics of the blind world-will, Nietzsche's perspectivism and fictionalism, the materialist evolutionism of the natural and social sciences, and most recently chaos theory. In its classic pedagogical form, Plato's teaching sought to convey instructions for a blessed life in theory; it was in the truest sense of the word a religion of thinking, which believed in its capacity to unite investigation and edification under one roof. (Sloterdijk, 2013, p. 2-3).

4.4.3 PLATO AND THE REASONS FOR PHILOSOPHY

> *You always hear people say that philosophy makes no progress and that the same philosophical problems which were already preoccupying the Greeks are still troubling us today. But people who say that do not understand the reason why it has to be so. The reason is that our language has remained the same and always introduces us to the same questions··· I read 'philosophers are no nearer to the meaning of "reality" than Plato got'. What an extraordinary thing! How remarkable that Plato could get so far! Or that we have not been able to get any further! Was it because Plato was so clever? (MS 213/424)*
>
> Ludwig Wittgenstein[213]

Plato's biographical context provide the canvas for the development of his thought, but a lot of the colouring will be provided as a response to the "existential" issues of his time, and how they were intertwined with the life of the *polis.*

But what is it that differentiates him from his predecessors (and from his successors, for that matter ···), that grant him such a special place in the history of Western thought?

Answering such question somewhat adequately would require a thesis on its own, for it has been a topic of philosophical debate for almost 2,500 years. In terms of his predecessors, nevertheless, Vegetti et al. (2008, p. 112) introduce the issue.

> Sostenere che con Platone ha inizio la speculazione filosofica occidentale significa affermare che nei suoi scritti la filosofia entra per la prima volta nel proprio terreno. Questo è vero per due ordini di ragioni: 1) perché Platone sembra formulare e tentare di risolvere tutti i problemi che siamo abituati a considerare filosofici (che cosa e come esiste? che cosa posso conoscere? perché devo comportarmi bene? quali principi devono regolare il mio rapporto con gli altri uomini?); 2) perché nei suoi dialoghi viene per la prima volta costruita l'immagine del «fare» filosofico, inteso come un'attività peculiare che possiede un linguaggio, un metodo, uno stile di pensiero propri, differenti da quelli di altre forme di sapere e conoscenza come la scienza, l'arte, la poesia.
>
> **I grandi protagonisti teorici della filosofia platonica sono anche i grandi protagonisti del pensiero filosofico in quanto tale: l'essere, la verità, la giustizia, l'anima, l'uomo, la città e il cosmo.** I dialoghi di Platone contengono il primo grandioso tentativo di organizzare in un complesso unitario e coerente (ma non per questo sistematico) i rapporti tra questi protagonisti: il che significa che in essi trovano posto, spesso strettamente connesse le une alle altre, l'ontologia (···), l'epistemologia (···), l'antropologia, la psicologia, l'etica, la teoria politica e la cosmologia, prima ancora di diventare discipline autonome.

[213] *Apud* Kenny, 2010, p. ix

Before submerging into some of his texts, some elements of the background palette need to be clarified. Going in depth into them is an extensive task that cannot be accomplished at this time, the aim being to situate some of the essential aspects of the context.

> Sul piano teorico, Platone si pone come l'erede naturale della grande filosofia aristocratico-sacerdotale, da Pitagora a Eraclito e Parmenide. Da questa tradizione, egli deriva l'idea centrale di una fondamentale scissione gerarchica della realtà e del sapere: l'essere contro l'apparire, la verità contro l'opinione, la ragione contro i sensi; e, al livello antropologico e sociale, l'anima contro il corpo, l'acropoli contro l'agorà, l'aristocrazia contro il *demos*. Da questa tradizione, ancora, Platone riprende l'identificazione del piano della verità con la «pura teoria» a contenuti prevalentemente logico-matematici e astronomici, con il relativo rifiuto del sapere empirico proprio del pensiero ionico da Talete ad Anassagora." (Vegetti, 2018, p. 163).

Getting the grips with Plato's work is no simple task. Interpretations diverge in every step of the way: the authenticity of the corpus, the order of the writings, written *versus* unwritten doctrines, Socrates' teachings *versus* Plato's own voice; the list goes on. The very form he chose to write in (to which the incommensurability of translation must be added), that of the dialogue (as opposed to essays or treatises), which present an exchange of conflicting claims, are open-ended; an invitation for the readers to compare and contrast the presented arguments with their own, therefore allowing one to "join" the conversation and challenge views that could otherwise be taken for granted is an exercise that is truthful to the Socratic spirit and that, for the same reason, can be as welcome as a swarm of horseflies[214]

> Like Socrates, who, by challenging the beliefs of his interlocutors tries to awaken them to philosophy, Plato does not make things easy for his readers. Often his words perform their function of guiding us to philosophical understanding only if we go beyond them. Otherwise, they present a collection of unsatisfactory assertions. Therefore, Platonic dialogues cannot be read merely as if they were essays or treatises, giving the author's meaning directly and presenting answers as final answers. Such readings are against the spirit of Plato and can lead to grave misinterpretations, such as that of Karl Popper, who in his book *The Open Society and Its Enemies* linked Plato's philosophy with totalitarian views. (Korab-Karpowicz, 2011, p. 19).

[214] In standard translation of the *Apology* 30e, after the 1800's would have Socrates comparing his acting to that of a horsefly (also gadfly) "pestering" a well-bred but sluggish horse (an analogy for Athens). Not even this interpretation, however, is pacified. For further discussion see Marshall, Laura A. "Gadfly or Spur? The Meaning of ΜΥΩΨ in Plato's Apology of Socrates" *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, vol. 137, [The Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, Cambridge University Press], 2017, pp. 163–74, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26575753.

It is hardly unexpected that a corpus of such nature would have been subject to different interpretations in the course of millenary scrutiny, including severe criticism from other philosophers and schools of thought, among which Nietzsche and Heidegger are particularly acrimonious. Just focusing on the last couple of centuries or so there are conflicting views between "continentals" and "analytics"; "desenvolvimentists" and "unitarians"[215]; British, American, French[216], Italian, German (etc.) scholars and university departments that pursue different understandings.

There are scholars who argue that Plato was the utmost political theorist. Others will say that he was no political theorist at all, and his writings are geared towards (inward) ethics. There will be those who interpret that he meant his project (particularly the *Republic*) to be implemented as such, therefore being like a "manifesto"; others will say he knew that it was unachievable[217], therefore meant as "utopian", or even as "ironic". Depending on the perspective, he is the "worst thing" that has happened in the history of Western civilization; to others, the most admirable thinker. He is asserted to be a totalitarian, a libertarian, a communist, a reactionary, a feminist, a rationalist, an idealist, a fundamentalist, even an ecologist.

One feels that there is not enough thread in the world for an uninitiated to navigate such maze, and oftentimes such complexity has led to desperation…. At this point, one is happy to be lost, accepting that the puzzlement is part of the journey, and enjoying the view. Part of the enjoyment remains as the ambition of exploring facets of Plato's thought, particularly to what is related to "the city".

Most scholarship would agree that the *Republic*, *Stateman* and *Laws* are the fundamental dialogues of the platonic corpus in addressing the political life, among which the *Republic* is paramount. The *Timaeus-Critias* are also required to be included in the mix. The study in depth of each one of them in enough to last a lifetime. But then, another head of the "Hydra of Plato" raises itself; another level of the maze emerges like an architectural scene from *Inception*[218].

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[215] This book offers a valuable point of access to the unified and systematic reading of Plato that is characteristic of much contemporary French scholarship. See Gill, Christopher. Foreword. Chapter, in Pradeau, 2002, p. xi.

[216] For example, the University of Paris-X Nanterre. See Gill, ibid.

[217] Although large parts of the Republic are devoted to the description of an ideal state ruled by philosophers and its subsequent decline, the chief theme of the dialogue is justice. It is fairly clear that Plato does not introduce his fantastical political innovation—which Socrates describes as a city in speech, a model in heaven—for the purpose of practical implementation (592a-b). The vision of the ideal state is used rather to illustrate the main dialogue's thesis that justice, understood traditionally as virtue, is the foundation of a good political order, and as such is in everyone's interest.

[218] See https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1375666/

Gail Fine, with the mastery that only those who dedicated their life to the study of these thinkers, summarizes the interlacing of what it takes to approach the *Republic*, which is developed in the almost eight hundred pages of the second edition to *The Oxford Handbook of Plato* (2019).

> The main ostensible topic of the Republic is the question "What is justice (dikaiosunê)?," but the dialogue also discusses many other topics, including the soul, politics, art, education, knowledge and belief, and forms. These issues are intimately connected. For example, the dialogue argues that the best polis —city or state—should be governed by the best people. The best people are those who are virtuous. Virtue requires knowledge, and one can have moral knowledge only if one knows forms. Only philosophers have this knowledge; hence only they should rule. **Plato's political views therefore rely on his views about ethics, which, in turn, rely on his epistemological and metaphysical views. Or again, he argues that justice is the dominant component of happiness (eudaimonia):** that is, though it isn't sufficient for happiness, it makes the single greatest contribution to our happiness, outweighing every other combination of goods.[219] **What happiness for humans consists in depends on what we are like: on the nature of our souls. So Plato also discusses the nature of the soul.** Further, he thinks we can come closer to happiness by improving ourselves in various ways: by acquiring more true beliefs and by training our desires. **Here education and the arts play important roles; hence Plato discusses them as well.** (Fine, 2019, p. 18)

Vegetti et al. (2008, p. 112) would like to remind us that Plato's philosophical project represents a formidable response to the challenge that the Sophists raised to traditional culture during the fifth century BC. In order to be able to speak again of *being, truth, good, justice*, it was necessary to deflect the powerful attack that sophistic had made on these notions. Two names come to the forefront on the sophists "all-star team": Gorgias and Protagoras.

Gorgias had denied not only the very existence of an objective reality external to the subject, but also the possibility of an individual to know it and to communicate it to one another. If reality does not exist, there can be no absolute truth referring to it. And if things are in these terms, even language will be detached from reality and will be able to constitute itself as an independent universe in its own right. **In a nutshell: the elimination of the reference of speech to truth opens the way to its effective use, as a tool available to anyone to persuade others to act as they wish, that is, to rhetorical persuasion.** (ibid).

Protagoras too had shaken from its foundations the idea of an absolute truth, valid for everyone. In his eyes, man (understood both as an individual and as a political community) was the true measure of things. For him, the goal of the sophist's discourse is not to affirm the truth

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[219] For this view, see Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977], ch. 7; and *Plato's Ethics* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995], e.g. sects. 140 and 176. On this view, Plato rejects the view, often thought to be maintained in the early dialogues, that virtue is sufficient for happiness. By contrast, in chapter 22 of this volume, Annas [Annas, Julia. Plato's Ethics] argues that the dominant component view and the sufficiency view sit side by side throughout the Republic, and indeed throughout Plato's work. Footnote #50 in Fine, 2019, p. 18.

of things, but to persuade the listeners, nudging them to choose what is good: not absolutely, but for them, that is, **to choose what is more useful.** On the limit, when the criterion of utility acquires such relevance, the rationale for one's action can become that of the indiscriminate satisfaction of one's desires and impulses, regardless of the consequences to others. As Vegetti et al. (2008, p. 112-13) continue to explain, some representatives of sophistry, such as Antiphon, Callicles and Thrasymachus, came to vigorously affirm the reasons for power and strength, to the point of identifying justice with the benefit of the strongest. Moreover, such a position largely reflected the situation of perennial conflict that agitated the political life of Athens in the 5th century, dominated by the clash between rich and poor, oligarchs and democrats.

> Venuta meno una realtà oggettiva da conoscere**, sfumati i valori pubblici da condividere e ai quali conformarsi, l'individuo rischia di smarrire anche la propria identità. L'anima – che da qualche decennio era diventata il protagonista di questa identità – diviene preda del discorso più seducente, dell'oratore più abile,** e finisce così con l'adeguarsi in modo acritico ai valori che di volta in volta le vengono presentati (Vegetti et al., 2008, p. 113, emphasis added).

"Malata è, dunque, la verità; ma malate sono anche la città (in preda a conflitti non mediabili) e l'anima (ormai vittima di un conformismo irrazionale)" is Plato's diagnosis of this moment of Athens' life. The meaning of his philosophical project can only be understood by keeping this in mind: an overarching "therapy" **that heals truth, city and soul.** His "remedy" is to replace the subjective, fragmented outlook of the sophists with a unified, stable and cohesive world. But not only that: it is also necessary to prepare a discourse that is capable of persuading the souls that are going to be addressed, for "la filosofia non è assimilabile né all'atto di dare la vista a un cieco né al riempimento di un vaso vuoto, ma richiede necessariamente il concorso di chi apprende, perché prevede un vero e proprio rivolgimento dell'anima." **In other words, Plato's answer to the great sophistic challenge is in the construction of a discourse that is able to persuade, directing souls towards knowledge (finally endowed with stable objects), towards virtue (founded on absolute values, non-subjective evaluation criteria) and towards politics (definitely reborn).** (ibid).

At this point of the conversation one cannot help to get a bit side-tracked, and make a 2,500 years pole vault, which is hardly original, and that has certainly been explored at length by a multitude of intellectuals. At Plato's time, political decisions were made at the Agora, very much based on the rhetoric prowess of the presenter; arguments were debated, and those more capable of moving the audience would come out as the winner. The yardstick in measuring the validity of an argument was not how fair it was, but how fair it was made out to be. In such a context, it could be argued, the role of the sophists (which can be considered the first "professional teachers" of history) was part of a "supply and demand" equation; there was a

demand for well-presented/debated arguments, and therefore the sophist-teacher would supply the necessary training. Within this outlook, education was not prioritizing "the elevation of the soul", but the more mundane acquisition of a set of skills. It is fascinating to see that such outlooks can still be debated today[220]. Another source of admiration is to think of today's political debate, which happens in a "public space" that is at the same time expanded and dissolved by technology, the weight that the "post-truth" seems to carry, in an environment in which followers (also voters…) adhere to narratives more with their guts than with their minds. If one thinks of the tri-partite nature of the soul, there are times when it seems its higher part has taken a collective leave of absence… Regardless of one's adherence to the validity of Plato's prescriptions for these maladies of the *polis*, the essence of the diagnosis remains, in this writer's perspective, provocatively valuable to the debate.

There is a wealth of splendid scholars who have made their life's work to interpret the thought of these giants of the past. Throughout the development of this research, one was fortunate enough to get familiar with some of them. As mentioned, they promote a lively debate among themselves, and for that, may present different views and emphasis. Giovanni Reale, Mário Vegetti, Melissa Lane, Malcom Schofield, Christopher Gill, Gail Fine, Jean-François Pradeau, Pierre Pellegrin, Jean-Pierre Vernant, just to mention a few of the more contemporary ones. It is not possible to extensively quote from all of them, though, again, in the spirit on the *endoxic* method, a sincere attempt was made to get familiar with their different perspectives. The desired outcome is to highlight aspects that connect more closely to the issue of "the city", without ignoring/disrespecting the philosopher's (in this case, our heralds) thought framework. Such task is particularly difficult in Plato, for he connected in much of his corpus the *polis* to the individual, and all of it to his ideas of knowledge and metaphysics.

[220] Not exactly today, but, for instance, Rousseau considered the *Republic* to be the most formidable educational treatise ever written.

4.4.4 Plato's Politeia: The City and the Soul

The *Republic*, and the title is very misleading for contemporary readers, is, in Greek, *Politeia*. In naming the dialogue "Politeia", Plato adds no "adjective" or subtitle to it. It suffices in itself; it is all the qualification the presented regimen needs.

Politeia is one of those words that elude a clear-cut definition. As the scholarly debates on the topic evolved, its meaning as "constitution", not so much in the contemporary understanding as the main body of law of a nation, but that of a "regimen", the overall form in which a government is organized, came to the forefront. At this point, it is important to recall that what was understood as pertaining to the public/private life, economic and social realms at Plato's time, and the role of "government" in its "ordinance" is very different from today's. Most translations will use *Republic* instead of *Politeia;* hence that will be the followed denomination.

"Arguably the greatest of Plato's works, and nowadays the best known, the *Republic* is certainly among his most complex." (Scott[221], 2019, p. 207). The *Republic*[222] is organized in ten books[223], though, as Irwin (2019, p. 69) points out, such divisions are probably not derived from Plato. It is the second longest written work of the Platonic Corpus (the longest one being the *Laws*). Main characters are Socrates, Glaucon, Adeimantus and Thrasymachus. The setting is the port city of Piraeus, where they stay at Polemarchus' house. Its contents allow for its interpretation as a dialogue about political theory, psychology, ethics, and everything in between, departing from the question of what is Justice and if being just adds to someone's happiness. Some of Plato's most famous allegories, such as the one of the Cave, the Ring of Gyges and the myth of Er are comprised in this work, as are the City-Soul analogy, the Noble Lie, and many others.

As Lane (2018, p. 8) emphasizes, Plato offers an account of justice linking the political to the psychological and justice to a higher understanding of true goodness. Readers today are likely to think of the Republic as the home *par excellence* of political philosophy. But other scholars, such as Julia Annas[224] (1999) see it as primarily an ethical dialogue, driven by the question of why the individual should be just. The reading here, as in Lane, is that the ethical

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[221] Scott, Dominic. The *Republic,* in *The Oxford Handbook of Plato*, 2019, pp. 207-229.

[222] Quotations in this section are taken from G. R. F. Ferrari and Tom Griffith, *Plato: The Republic*, Cambridge University Press, 2013 (15th printing), Epub, unless otherwise specified.

[223] It has been traditional since antiquity to divide the Republic into ten 'books'. Each book corresponds to a single roll of papyrus, the format in which Plato's writings were archived, distributed, and read in the ancient world. We do not know whether the division into ten books was made by Plato himself or by a later editor. The numbers and letters in the margin follow the pagination of the sixteenth-century edition of Plato by Stephanus. It is the pagination normally used to circumvent differences of format among subsequent editions and translations.

[224] Annas, Julia. *Platonic Ethics, Old and New.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999.

and political concerns, and purposes, of the dialogue are inextricably intertwined. Moreover, they are intertwined in the idea of "the city". Such interconnection is a common trace of the four heralds, who, in their "cities in speech" will endeavour to build links between politics, ethics and the good life (*eudaimonia*).

It is also the dialogue in which Plato addresses three representations of the city: the healthy city, the luxurious city, and Callipolis/Kallipolis, the fine, beautiful city. The following passages aim at calling attention and illustrating a few of the key topics explored, being by no means exhaustive.

Book I probes the topic of justice, what it is, and the merit of the just life over the unjust one, following a challenge launched by Thrasymachus, which Glaucon and Adeimantus will reformulate, and that Socrates will seek to explore. A key point in question is the advantage for the individual in being just, if one can get away with not being so. Political and ethical ramifications will be debated in the following books, as the "conclusion" that Socrates reaches at the end of this first instalment is that "the result of our discussion is that I'm none the wiser. After all, if I don't know what justice is, I'm hardly going to know whether or not it is in fact some kind of excellence or virtue, or whether the person who possesses it is unhappy or happy." (354b).

Such inquiries will continue in **Book II,** leading to the exploration of the idea of "the city" (368b). From here onwards the link between the "individual" and the city is doubly locked: the city is presented as a "magnifying glass"; as a scale that would allow "to read the large letters first, and then turn our attention to the small ones, to see if they really did say the same thing." (368d) **This same thing, one argues, ontologically connects the city and its citizens; justice within and without – and, consequentially, a city only being a true city if just:** "[…] the work weaves in and out of the two perspectives, individual and political, right through to its conclusion." (Scott, 2019, p. 207). The reasoning will develop within the following logic (368e – 369a, emphasis added):

> SOCRATES: In that case, maybe justice will be on a larger scale in what is larger, and easier to find out about [369]. So if you approve, why don't we start by finding out what sort of thing it is in cities? After that we can make a similar inquiry into the individual, trying to find the likeness of the larger version in the form the smaller takes.'
>
> ADEIMANTUS: 'I think that's a good idea,' he said.
>
> SOCRATES: 'Suppose then,' I said, '**we were to study the theoretical origin of a city, would we also see the origin in it of justice and injustice?'**
>
> ADEIMANTUS: 'We might,' he said."

Further on in the dialogue, exploring what Socrates himself qualifies as a fairly major undertaking which requires sharp eyesight (368c), the origin of the city is defined by the fact that none of us are self-sufficient and the city would be the mode of association so different wants and needs can be met. So the discussion advances as to how such necessities would be met, the division of labour, the economy, and people's habits and leisure activities. (369c – 372c) "(…) Drinking wine after their meals, wearing garlands on their heads, and singing the praises of the gods, they will live quite happily with one another [c]. They will have no more children than they can afford, and they will avoid poverty and war." Each one does its own work, as suitable to each one's disposition. This modest city, as Lane (2018, p. 9) analyses, "favours the virtues of moderation and justice and so enables them to enjoy a unified rather than a divided soul."

Such "simple" city, that Socrates qualifies as quite possibly leading to a healthy life, is categorized by Glaucon as a "city of pigs". In Glaucon's "usual" city, people would "[…] eat in comfort, they should lie on couches, eat off tables, and have the cooked dishes and desserts which people today have." (372c).

Socrates will not outright dismiss such understanding, but will seek to explore it, highlighting a more straight-forward connection to justice/injustice as in the "city of pigs" (372d – 373e).

> SOCRATES: "I see,' I replied. **'So we are not just looking at the origin of a city, apparently. We are looking at the origin of a luxurious city.** Maybe that's not such a bad idea**. If we look at that sort of city too, we may perhaps see the point where justice and injustice come into existence in cities. I think the true city – the healthy version, as it were – is the one we have just described. But let's look also at the swollen and inflamed city, if that is what you prefer.** We can easily do that. What's to stop us? (372e, emphasis added)

In order to accommodate this engorged array of wants, needs, activities, peoples, the territory of the city will have to be enlarged; the one of the "healthy" city no longer suffices. Such expansion will derive from the appropriation of a portion of a neighbouring territory. As the neighbours themselves will also need to increase their respective territories in pursue of their own "unlimited wealth", **the following outcome will be war**.

> SOCRATES: Let us say nothing for the moment,' I said, 'about whether the effect of war is harmful or beneficial. Let us merely note that we have discovered, in its turn, the origin of war. War arises out of those things which are the commonest causes of evil in cities, when evil does arise, both in private life and public life (373d – 373e).

Book III will consider storytelling of Gods, heroes and men, the natural dispositions and the fulfilment of the roles in the city. It examines what should be taught, what stories should be told, prose and poesy, imitation and narrative, music and arts, in order to stimulate the virtues.

> There's not the remotest chance of becoming properly educated – either for ourselves or for the people we say we must educate to be our guardians – until we recognise the sort of thing self-discipline is. Likewise courage, liberality and generosity of spirit, which keep recurring all over the place, plus all the qualities which are closely related to them, and their opposites. We must see the presence both of them and of their likenesses in all the things they are present in, and we must learn never to dismiss them, be the context trivial or important, but to regard them as part of the same skill and expertise. (402c)

It goes into deep into the ruler's character, motivation (emphasis on love), formation (hardship, pain, trials) and their living conditions (no private property, no riches, no privacy, communal living and so forth).

> SOCRATES: 'So in this context, since we are looking for the best of the guardians, must they not be the ones who most possess the attributes of a guardian of the city?
>
> GLAUCON: 'Yes.'
>
> SOCRATES: 'And for this purpose, do they have to be wise, powerful and above all devoted to the city?'
>
> GLAUCON: 'They do [d].'
>
> SOCRATES: **'And people are most devoted to whatever it is they love.'**
>
> GLAUCON: 'Bound to be.'
>
> SOCRATES: 'And they love most what they believe to have the same interests as themselves, the thing whose success or failure they think results in their own success or failure.'
>
> GLAUCON: 'True,' he said.
>
> SOCRATES: 'Then we must select from the guardians the kind of men who on examination strike us most strongly, their whole lives through, as **being utterly determined to do what is in the city's interests, and as refusing to act in any way against its interests**.' (412c – 412d, emphasis added).

It is also in Book III that an immensely controversial topic will be advanced, that of the "noble lie/necessary falsehood" (413-414), a belief that ingrained in the fabric of society, that helps one to love what is best to be loved, that help people to conform to each one's role in the ship that is the metaphor for the life in common (the "actual" story here is one that organizes people into the ones that have a soul of gold (rulers), of silver (auxiliaries) and iron and bronze (farmers and skilled workers). Given the importance given in the overall Platonic corpus on truth and justice, and his positions against the Sophists and the poets, such stance in hard to reconcile.

Book IV begins with Adeimantus inquiring if the arrangements proposed by Socrates for the Guardians would actually make them happy, to what Socrates will answer that "in any case our aim in founding the city is not to make one group outstandingly happy, but to make the

whole city as happy as possible", and that in a city of this kind justice would be more likely found (419 – 421). It will explore the identification of self-discipline and justice (430d), which will lead to the exploration of the tri-partite elements of the soul (Desiring/appetitive, Spirited, Rational), how they relate to each other, and how they relate to the city.

> SOCRATES: "There we are, then,' I said. 'We have made it to dry land – not without difficulty – and we are pretty well agreed that the soul of each individual contains the same sorts of thing, and the same number of them, as a city contains.'
>
> GLAUCON: 'True.'
>
> SOCRATES: 'The immediate and inescapable conclusion is that the individual is wise in the same way, and using the same part of himself, as the city when it was wise.'
>
> GLAUCON: 'Of course.'
>
> SOCRATES: 'Also that the thing which makes the individual brave, and the way in which he is brave, is the same as the thing which makes the city brave, and the way in which it is brave [d]. That in everything to do with virtue the two of them are the same.'
>
> GLAUCON: 'Yes, that is inescapable.'
>
> SOCRATES: **'So a just man is just, I think we shall say, Glaucon, in the same way a city was just.'**
>
> GLAUCON: 'That too follows with complete certainty.'
>
> SOCRATES: **'We haven't at any point forgotten, I hope, that the city was just when each of the three elements in it was performing its own function."** (441c – 441d, emphasis added)
>
> [⋯]
>
> SOCRATES: What about "self-disciplined"? Isn't that the result of the friendship and harmony of these three? The ruling element and the two elements which are ruled agree that what is rational should rule, and do not rebel against it.'
>
> GLAUCON: 'Yes. That's exactly what self-discipline is,' he said, 'both for a city and for an individual.' (442c – 442d)

Bobonich[225] (2019, p. 590) recalls that also in Book IV Plato explains the four virtues – courage, justice, moderation, and wisdom -. also correlating them to the parts of the soul, and how they connect to beliefs, desires and emotions. What the author would like to emphasize is that there is no wisdom (*sophia*) without knowledge (*episteme*), and that ends up being a task for few (philosophers)[226]. Finally, it is worth noting that

> Plato does not offer a complete account of happiness. Nevertheless, the Republic's understanding of human nature places at its center the ability to know the truth and the love of the truth, and both genuine virtue and genuine

[225] Bobonich, Christopher. Plato's Politics, in *The Oxford Handbook of Plato*, 2019, pp. 575-604.

[226] As Luc Brisson recalls, quoting Terence Irwin, (Plato's Ethics (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1995), § 164, p. 236) "( )When Plato formulates the Socratic demand more sharply, he also comes to believe that it is difficult for most people to meet it. He therefore maintains that knowledge is necessary for virtue, and that most people are incapable of virtue. (⋯)" in Plato's Political Writings: a Utopia? In *Polis, The Journal for Ancient Greek and Roman Political Thought* 37 (2020) 399-420, p. 403

> happiness require the realization of these most fundamental aspects of human nature. Thus genuine virtue requires the possession of knowledge, and philosophic contemplation is a major component of human happiness.

Book V will deal, among others, with the contentious feature of the things held in common[227] in the good city (from 449c), and **Book VI** will deepen the understanding of the philosophers "Given that those who are capable of grasping what is always the same and unchanging are philosophers, while those who are not capable of it, who drift among things which are many and widely varying, are not philosophers, which of the two groups ought to be leaders in a city?" (484b).

Book VII will begin thinking about the effect of education on our nature, and will present and debate the Allegory of the Cave (514a), and the fitness of philosophers to rule.

> SOCRATES: "[…] You must get used to seeing in the dark. When you do get used to it, you will see a thousand times better than the people there do**. You will be able to identify all the images there, and know what they are images of, since you have seen the truth of what is beautiful and just and good. In this way the government of the city, for us and for you, will be a waking reality rather than the kind of dream in which most cities exist nowadays, governed by people fighting one another over shadows and quarrelling with one another about ruling, as if ruling were some great good [d].** The truth is, I imagine, that the city in which those who are to rule are most reluctant to do so will inevitably be the city which has the best and most stable government, whereas the city with rulers of the opposite kind will have a government of the opposite kind." (520c – 520d).
>
> […]
>
> SOCRATES: "… It's like this. If you can find a better life than ruling for the people who are going to be your rulers, then your well-governed city becomes a possibility. It will be the only city ruled by those who are truly rich. Not rich in money, but in a good and wise life, the riches needed for good fortune. **If you get beggars – people who are starved of good things in their own lives – going into public life because they believe that the good is something to be taken from there as plunder, then your city is not a possibility. Ruling becomes something to be fought over, and a war of this kind, domestic and internal, destroys both those involved in it and the rest of the city with them." (521a)**

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[227] The beginning of Book VIII presents a synthesis of the main ones, as transcribed below (534a – 543b):

SOCRATES: 'Very well, Glaucon [543]. The agreed characteristics of the city which is to reach the peak of political organisation are community of women, community of children and the whole system of education, community likewise of everyday life, both in wartime and peacetime, and the kingship of those among them who have developed into the best philosophers, and the best when it comes to war.'

GLAUCON: 'Yes,' he said, 'those are the agreed characteristics.'

SOCRATES: 'What is more, we also agreed that when the rulers assume power, they will take the soldiers and move them to housing of the kind we described earlier – common to all of them, and offering no private property to anyone [b].1 And in addition to the nature of their housing, we even reached agreement, if you recall, on the kind of possessions they will have.'

GLAUCON: 'I do recall. We thought that none of them should have any of the possessions which most people nowadays have [c]. They should be guardians and warrior-athletes of some sort, receiving from the rest of the citizens, as annual pay for their guardianship, just as much maintenance as they need for this purpose. Their duty would be to protect themselves and the rest of the city.'

Book VII carries on by explaining the knowledge that would be essential for the philosopher, and how to achieve it, and then, while discussing that "Geometrical knowledge is knowledge of what always is", the mention to Callipolis, Socrates' "ideal city", the city of beauty, is finally made. (527b) It will continue to develop the educational requirements of those who will be fit to lead (men and women[228] (540c)) and approaches its end with the following comment,

> SOCRATES: Very well [d]. Do you agree that our ideas about the city and its regime have not just been wishful thinking? What we want is difficult, but not impossible. However, it is possible only in the way we have described, when true philosophers – it might be a number of them, or it might be just one – become rulers in our city. They will show their contempt for what are now regarded as honours, believing them to be worthless and demeaning [e]. They will set the highest possible value on what is right, and the honours resulting from it. Their most important and demanding guide will be justice. They will serve justice, watch over their growth, and in this way keep their city on the right lines.

Book VIII begins with a synthesis of some key aspects of the discussion so far (534a-c), and that has sparked centuries of debates, before moving on to another contentious subject, which are the virtues and faults of different regimens.

> SOCRATES: "Very well, Glaucon [543]. The agreed characteristics of the city which is to reach the peak of political organisation are community of women, community of children and the whole system of education, community likewise of everyday life, both in wartime and peacetime, and the kingship of those among them who have developed into the best philosophers, and the best when it comes to war.'
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> GLAUCON: 'Yes,' he said, 'those are the agreed characteristics.'
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>
> GLAUCON: 'I do recall. We thought that none of them should have any of the possessions which most people nowadays have [c]. They should be guardians and warrior-athletes of some sort, receiving from the rest of the citizens, as annual pay for their guardianship, just as much maintenance as they need for this purpose. Their duty would be to protect themselves and the rest of the city.

Having finished the description of Callipolis, Glaucon recalls that Socrates had mentioned that there would be other four kinds of regimen worthy of discussion (544a). Socrates states that it there are five types of city, for individuals there will be five dispositions of the soul (544e).

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[228] In this regard, Brisson (2020, p. 404-405) highlights that Plato's proposition for women and children is circumscribed to a very specific philosophical context. In the Athens where Plato lived, the social role of women is determined by their bodies, carrying out tasks related to the oikos, to the confines of the private sphere. "Plato, in contrast, intends to define persons by their soul. For him, human beings, whatever their gender, are living beings made up of a body and a soul which has come to inhabit that body for a specific period of time, a body which it will survive."

Aristocracy would be the one closest to what is good and just. Then there would be "timocracy/timarchy", the honour-loving regime. Next it would be oligarchy, followed by democracy, and the final, most retched regime, tyranny. (544-545).

Book IX leads with the exploration of the tyrannical man himself (571a), of how he comes to be, what is in his nature, and continues into a discussion of pain and pleasure, knowledge and ignorance, justice and injustice, ruler and ruled, freedom and obedience, law and punishment (580-592), that will lead to the end of the book and to a synthesis of some of the key arguments for a life that is opposition of that of the tyrant. "Isn't this, then, what anyone with any sense will concentrate all his lifetime's efforts on [591c]? In the first place, won't he value the learning which will bring his soul into this condition, and reject other kinds of learning?"

The beautiful last paragraphs will recap the priorities of such ordered body and soul, and Socrates will enquire if such person would be fit to go into politics. The ensuing exchange will provide much food for thought for those who debate if such city in within or without, ethical or political, accomplishable or not. This is the passage where Glaucon and Plato will debate if such good city can exist of earth or not (592a–b, emphasis added[229]).

> GLAUCON: 'Then,' he said, 'if it's that he cares about, he won't be willing to mind the political things.'
>
> SOCRATES: 'Yes, by the dog,' I said, 'he will in his own city, very much so. However, perhaps he won't in his fatherland unless some divine chance coincidentally comes to pass.'
>
> GLAUCON: **'I understand,' he said. 'You mean he will in the city whose foundation we have now gone through, the one that has its place in speeches, since I don't suppose it exists anywhere on earth.' b**
>
> SOCRATES: **'But in heaven,' I said, 'perhaps, a pattern is laid up for the man who wants to see and found a city within himself on the basis of what he sees. It doesn't make any difference whether it is or will be somewhere. For he would mind the things of this city alone, and of no other.'**
>
> GLAUCON: "That's likely," he said."

Book X begins with a discussion about poets and artists, imitation and truth, which will arrive at a conversation about good and bad (609a) for the body and for the soul, rewards and punishments for the just/unjust life, at which point the immortality of the soul (611a) will be discussed, and the story of Er will be narrated that, among others, illustrates knowledge as a recollection of the soul (621a), and that is the point in which the dialogue ends.

> SOCRATES: In this way, Glaucon, his story was saved and not lost. And so it can be our salvation, since if we believe it we shall pass the river of Forgetting

[229] A translation that used the expression that the city was built in speech was the one of Allan Bloom, therefore, in this specific section, it was the version used. Ferrari will use "hypothetical" and Cooper's complete works will use theory. See *The Republic of Plato.* Translated and with an interpretive essay by Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books, 2016 (1968).

> in the right way, without polluting our souls [c]. And if we take my advice, we shall believe that the soul is immortal and capable of coping with all evils and all goods, and we shall keep always to the upper way, doing whatever we can to practise justice with wisdom. That way we shall be friends to ourselves and to the gods, both while we remain here and when we carry off our prizes afterwards, like winning athletes on their victory tour [d]. And so, here and on the thousand-year journey we have described, let us fare well."

The richness of topics for discussion deriving from these ten books is inexhaustible. The passages that have been sampled illustrate but a few of them. In endeavouring to highlight some essential aspects, perhaps the cardinal one is the ontological bond that Plato builds between the one human being and the city. Justice, virtue, happiness are the work of the polis (hence its political aspect) as they are the work of a single soul (hence the ethical aspect, and the city being its magnifying glass). It takes a lot of effort (the education of the guardians would take some fifty years), it is not achievable by everyone and, as so, the good, beautiful city can perhaps only be found within oneself or in the heavens.

The work of a lifetime is the right ordering of tripartite nature of the soul, that expresses and is expressed by the ordering of the city. "In the soul and city respectively, the rational part or class should rule; the spirited part or class should act to support the rule of that rational part; and the appetitive part of the soul and producing class in the city should accept being governed by it." Such result will require the exercise of virtue, particularly four of them – wisdom, courage, moderation and justice (427e–444a). "Two of these pertain to individual parts: the rational part being capable of wisdom, the spirited part of courage. Two however are defined by relations between the parts: moderation as the agreement of all three parts that reason should rule, justice as each part doing its own" (Lane, 2018, p. 9). And, for emphasis, for Plato, the sensible world was conceived "as orderly whole under the direction of "reason" (Brisson, 2014, p. 3).

This will lead to the primacy of unity as a recurring theme in Plato's political writings, which has been subject to much criticism, as well as praise, from Aristotle onwards. As Risse (2020[230], p. 42) stresses, "Plato thought that political salvation lay in unifying power and wisdom in the same individuals." If justice is the primarily defined as the condition of a well-ordered soul or city as a whole, there will be no cause to reach for more than one's fair share (the cardinal vice of *pleonexia*). With that, it will then refrain from theft, murder, and sacrilege. But it goes much beyond. "To be a truly effective, because wholly unified, agent, one must be just, moderate, courageous and wise. The just person enjoys psychic health, which is advantageous no matter how he is treated (fairly or unfairly) by gods and men; correspondingly, the just society enjoys civic unity, which is advantageous in being the fundamental way to avoid the assumed

[230] Risse, Mathias. *On Justice : Philosophy, History, Foundations.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

supreme evil of civil war." Let us here remember Plato's personal experience with the aftermath of Athens defeat in the Peloponnesian War and all that ensued. It was a city that was sick in its soul, for distancing itself from Truth. As Risse (2020, p. 41-42) summarizes,

> the Platonic view of political philosophy has four features. First of all, independently of human activities, there are eternal truths about fundamental moral and political issues, including justice. Secondly, by virtue of their unassailable foundations, philosophical doctrines have universal reach, and philosophy thus provides techniques to grasp such eternal truths. A third feature is an "administrative conception of justice." Justice consists in proper arrangements (regardless of whether individuals endorse them). This could mean that certain laws and rights apply to a given situation, goods are distributed in certain ways, or individuals stand in certain relationships. The fourth feature is that political justification is an instance of philosophical justification.

For the sake of unit, of harmony, of the good life, Callipolis will have to advance an unprecedented ethical and political regime. To conceptualize this regime, the *Republic* will interrogate not only the meaning of virtue and citizenship but also, through an examination of how and why regimes fail, it will propose a new template that strives for unit as an all-encompassing goal. "Extreme measures" such as the communal life of the guardian class (with the abolition of private property and private families) and the recourse to the creation of a narrative that will make it more palatable for each one to conform with its "rightful place" are advanced having this end in sight.

It is easy to see why the *Republic* has sparked such enduring debate. Leaving aside the question if Plato himself though his Callipolis was feasible or even desirable, it goes to show the extraordinary lengths that would have to be pursued to promote the right ordering of the soul, the one that would curb *pleonexia* and *hubris*, and keep society away from *stasis* and war. As Lane (2018, p. 9-10) highlights, the template of the Republic will be followed, contradicted, revisited, and criticized in decades and centuries to come, in Aristotle's *Politics*, *in* Cicero's *De re publica*, in Augustine's *City of God*, in Thomas More's *Utopia*, among other successors.

> A prática da virtude é justamente a medida dos prazeres e das dores, e a hýbris é, por conseguinte, o seu contrário. Quando o homem-cidade não contém os excessos, arrisca-se a perder o controle de si próprio, tornando-se inimigo de si mesmo. A união sopesada de todas as partes constituintes de si é a comprovação de uma harmonia, quer no homem, quer na cidade. E um homem justo é ou deve ser o espelho de uma cidade justa. A razão pela qual a cidade mítica se insurge contra a grande potência reside na sua grandeza de ânimo e no engenho no que diz respeito à guerra. Esses dois aspectos [...] revelam-se fundamentais na caracterização da cidade justa e dos cidadãos que nela habitam. *In primis,* porque a grandeza de ânimo nada mais é do que o contínuo exercício da virtude, e *in secundis*, porque a técnica em matéria de guerra é pôr em prática a virtude em momento de necessidade, ou seja, contra a arrogância ou a supremacia do pior sobre o melhor (Pina, 2012[231], p. 155).

[231] Pina, Maria da Graça Gomes de. Os fantasmas da cidade justa uma análise do mito da Atlântida. Centro de Estudos Clássicos e Humanísticos. In Cornelli, Gabriele (Org.) *Representações da Cidade Antiga : categorias históricas e discursos filosóficos.* Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra. Coimbra University Press, Annablume, 2012. http://dx.doi.org/10.14195/978-989-8281-20-3_11 6-Mar-2021 20:41:45. pp. 147-160.

4.4.5 Plato and The City in Speech

It is as much desirable as it is impossible to explore all the facets of Plato's corpus as it relates to the *polis*, as highlighted by Fine (2019). In an analysis that seeks to be coherent with the objectives of this research and the hypothesis under development, a few paths will be explored. It is worthy highlighting that this admirable herald wrote about not one, but six "ideal types" of cities: the city of pigs, the city of luxury, the city of beauty (Callipolis/Kallipolis) are in the Republic; Magnesia (the "second best" city), featured in *Laws*; and Athens (of old) and Atlantis, in the *Timaeus* and in the unfinished *Critias*.

As Padeau will emphasize, (2002, p. 5), **the unified city, the elaboration of which is the purpose of these Platonic dialogues, only really exists in those dialogues: it is a mode of reflection, of thought, and of discourse too (logos). Plato wants to entrust the foundation and government of the city solely to thought.**

Though it can be argued that Homer was the first to create "a city in speech" (Manent, 2113, p. 42), it is to Plato that the long lineage of idealized cities is connected to. The term "Utopia" was made famous by Thomas More some eighteen centuries after the writing of the *Republic*, therefore anachronic in relation to it, but the essence of it - a city in speech conceived as a means to achieve (or to provoke thinking about) an ideal social-political organization – will find recurring examples within and beyond such timeframes. So, one of the myths of the contemporary city that could be traced back to Plato is the idealized city in speech.

Another is that this ideal city will be conceived by reason. One of the most perfect expressions or reason are presented by the numbers that in Plato, taking after the mystical understanding of Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans, are not abstractions but concrete entities. Though the mystic dimension of numbers may have lost some of its appeal as time went by, the connection of numbers (math, geometry) and reason remains. The Renaissance architecture, the Baroque city design, the Cartesian thought are alive and well (maybe not so well…) in contemporary cities, even considering the Modernist movement, that reappraised the universality of numbers. This is presented in Atlantis. Also featured in this line is the presence of the Demiurge, "the celestial architect" that gives form to the abstract numbers.

A third thread has to do with the understanding of justice, in the sense of not only giving each one its due, but of each being having a rightful place in the cosmic order, and that sins of *hubris* and *pleonexia*; taking more than what is proper, greed and excessive ambition, causes one to live beyond one's means and upset the overall balance, leading to *stasis.* The key here is

self-sufficiency as much as possible, of not extrapolating what the territory of the polis has to offer by curtailing one's appetites. That is a facet of the underlying logic of the ecological movement, for he does not consider the idea of negligibility, that is, "it is the assumption that each agent is so small a player that what he or she individually does in such pursuit doesn't materially affect the social outcome", negligible; that is, individual attitude's matter (See Lane, 2011, p. 51).

As Plato places high stakes for the city in its unity, the individual's relationship to it is often a contentious point. Lane argues that Plato (2011, p. 95) actually believes in the individual more than many modern thinkers, in as much as, to him, what one individual chooses matters a great deal. "If people care about the wrong things, or are not habituated to virtuous action, the structure of society will disintegrate. 'By maintaining a sound system of education and upbringing you produce citizens of good character; and citizens of sound character, with the advantage of a good education, produce in turn children better than themselves ...', as Socrates says (424a)."

Another aspect of justice has to do with the laws: the elaboration of just laws, so citizens can follow them. The laws of the city are what distinguish civilization from barbarism. Following Gill (Pradeau, 2002, p. x), it is necessary to highlight how this reading differs from the overall approach to much of Plato's scholarship in English, particularly since the WWII, which focused on two superseding concerns: Plato's attitude towards democracy and the "development" of his thought specially after the *Republic*.

In a context of reaction to the rise of totalitarianism, Karl Popper[232] enrolled Plato as an "enemy of the Open Society". Leo Strauss[233], on the other hand, claimed that Plato's message in the *Republic* was that, since philosophers could not have effective influence on the political life of the polis, they should focus solely on the search for the truth. Regarding the supposed development[234] in Plato's political thought. As Gill (2002, p. xiii) highlights, "The *Republic* has

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[232] Popper, 1945 [Popper, Karl. *The Open Society and its Enemies,* vol. 1, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1945] ; Bambrough, 1967 [Bambrough, Renford (ed.), *Plato, Popper and Politics,* Cambridge: Heffer, 1967]. For a new treatment of this theme, see Samaras, 2002 [Samaras, Thanassis. *Plato on Democracy*, Bern: Peter Lang, 2002], all as referenced by Gill, 2002, p. xii.

[233] Strauss, 1964 [Strauss, Leo. *The City and Man,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964]; for discussions see Burnyeat, 1985 [Burnyeat, Myles F., 'Sphinx Without a Secret', in *New York Review of Books*, 30 May and 10 October 1985], and Ferrari, 1997 [Ferrari, Giovanni R.F., 'Strauss's Plato', in *Arion,* 5.2 (1997), pp. 36–65], all as referenced by Gill, 2002, p. xii.

[234] Scepticism about the standard picture of Plato's chronology and of development in English-language scholarship is expressed by, for instance, Cooper, 1997, pp. xii–xvii [Cooper, John M., (ed.), *Plato: Complete Works with Introduction and Notes,* Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett, 1997]; Kahn, 1996, ch. 2 [Kahn, Charles, 'Drama and Dialectic in Plato's Gorgias', in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy,* 1, 1983, pp. 75–121]. The standard picture of Platonic political development has been questioned especially by Rowe, 2000, pp. 233–57, esp. 244–51 [Rowe, Christopher, 'Socrates' and 'The Politicus and Other Dialogues' in Christopher Rowe and Michael Schofield (eds), *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 164–89, 233–57]. See, more generally, Annas and Rowe, forthcoming. [Annas, Julia and Christopher Rowe (eds), *New Perspectives on Plato, Modern and Ancient,* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003] all as referenced by Gill, 2002, p. xv.

been seen as the classic text of Platonic Utopian Idealism. The political structure outlined there (centred on the idea of philosophers as rulers) has been taken as a constitutional blueprint that Plato would like to see realized in real life." However, his later works (*Statesman, Timaeus-Critias* and the *Laws*) seem to indicate a shift towards a more constitutional regimen (law-bounded), in spite of considering it "second best".

The perspective offered by Pradeau sets a contrast to these interpretations, arguing that Plato's political philosophy is not centred on constitutional[235] thought at all (including democracy), but on the definition of a set of fundamental ideas, ideas which

> (…) apply to political life in all types of constitution, and which are significant for non-political life as well. The chief of these is the idea that politics is — or should be — an art or craft, a form of knowledge, grounded in objective principles. A central role of this art is that of creating a community that is genuinely unified; and, without this art, no community can achieve real unity.
>
> As Pradeau brings out, this means that Plato is neither anti- nor pro-democratic, any more than he is (as he has often been thought to be) pro-Spartan, pro-aristocratic or pro-monarchical. This is not to deny that Plato's dialogues imply certain views or responses to Athenian democracy. (…) Plato's response to (Athenian-style) democracy is dictated by his larger conceptual approach, which is not fundamentally linked with constitutional forms at all. (Gill, xiii).

In contrast to most developmental readings, Pradeau sees a unified line of thought that focuses "**on the role of knowledge as an art which unifies the city,** running throughout Plato's works from the early, supposedly "Socratic", dialogues to the *Laws*. (ibid., xiv, emphasis added). For him, the changes among the dialogues do not mean divergences in the core ideas, but facets of different conceptual projects which examine aspects of these ideas in different dialogues.

> Pradeau shows how, in a series of dialogues (…) Plato works out the idea of **knowledge of the good** as both a determinate kind of expertise and one that can guide the management of other functions. In the *Republic*, **the central theme for exploration is that such knowledge can operate both at the psychological and socio-political level and that this is the only force that can bring real unity to the functions of both personality and state. Without the direction of such knowledge, all political constitutions and psychological conditions are more or less incoherent.** (xiv, emphasis added).

So, still following Gill and Pradeau, the *Republic,* rather than the widespread notion that it is Plato's central political work, his argument is that it transversally approaches the frontiers of the psychological and the political. A definition of the political art would, actually, be presented in the *Statesman*, which targets the specifics of political art, "characterized by the combination of objective knowledge of the good and the ability to unify the different elements

[235] It's worth remembering the difficulty of "translating" politeia, the word used in Greek at the time of Plato/Aristotle, to address the life of the polis, which has translated as constitution/regimen

in the community by a process of 'weaving' through education." The statesman also focuses on key political concerns such as "the relationship between government and law and between government through executive action and through constitutional forms." (ibid.)

Pradeau challenges the understanding that the *Statesman* marks the beginning of Plato's renouncement of the "philosopher-king" idea and the acceptance of a government by constitutional laws as "second-best". He argues for an interpretation that throughout his works Plato maintains his "conviction that knowledge of the good should govern the direction of politics". Later dialogues would explore the notion that "such knowledge can be embodied in constitutional structures and codes of laws as well as direct executive government." (ibid., p. xv)

In the *Timaeus-Critias*, Plato explores the connections between "the study of political expertise and order with that of the physical universe." Quite interestingly for us, architects/planners, the depiction of Atlantis "serves as a vehicle for exploring the physical aspects of political life and for depicting the contrast between the rationally based, unified state and its opposite in terms of the use of land and of material culture." (ibid).

Plato's final work, *Laws*, is highlighted by Pradeau as his "political masterpiece, the culmination of his vision of a community unified by political art." In more detail, it is in this work that

> Plato works out in the fullest and most systematic way the thought that political art or knowledge could pervade and unify the life of an entire community. Political art in this case is seen as expressed by a combination of direct government, constitutional forms, laws accompanied by public explanation, education and custom, and is conceived as operative in the entire material, social and cultural life of a community. (Gill, 2002, p. xv.)

Plato's extant corpus does not engage in examining the conditions in which power was exercised in the polis, nor the functioning of its institutions with a view to reforming or looking for alternatives to them. This nature of work was likely undertaken in the Academy[236], as a part of the student's training in order to participate in the affairs of the polis. Aristotle, who was part of the Academy for 20 years, was the one to actually leave work "examining different kinds of existing political constitutions with a view to reforming or diluting them". Plato launched an unprecedented critique, way more radical in its goal, which was to "replace all known forms of political organization by theoretical perfection stemming from thought about the city." (Pradeau, 2002, p. 1-2).

[236] Baltes, in an essential study [Baltes, Matthias, 'Plato's School, the Academy', in *Hermathena,* University of Dublin, 155, 1993, pp. 5–26], assembles and examines all the information that we possess on the Platonic Academy, as referenced by Pradeau, 2002, p. 2.

> **The Platonic hypothesis upon which this 'political philosophy' is founded[237] is that theoretical research is relevant to politics: politics needs speculation, the subject of which is not the present situation or a history of political powers, but rather the nature of life lived in common, the way to live a communal life. Politics that is not based on such research and analysis will be vain indeed. If one does not know what communal life is, if one understands nothing of its origins, its conditions and its objectives, city life simply means a life of conflict and power struggles; and politics is just a name for the means that serve this, just a technique of domination.** When the dialogues speak of Athens and the Greek world, that is what they are attacking. On the basis of the project of defining the nature of the city and what is best for it, **Plato's philosophical critique calls into question the very existence of cities, whether Greek or otherwise.** It calls into question the very basis of Plato's co-citizens' belief that they all belong to the same community, a single city united by the bonds of law and language. Plato claims that the Athenian democracy is no more a city than its neighbours with oligarchic or monarchic regimes, and that all these regimes are merely gatherings which, although they may in some cases be founded upon good customs and reasonable laws, nevertheless **remain corrupt gatherings, incapable of bringing about what is, after all, their common goal: a communal life.** Not a good, happy, or fine communal life, simply a mode of life shared in common by all the citizens, who are linked together within the unity of one and the same city. (ibid., p. 2-3).

Corruption, in the sense of "the process of the destruction of a living being, is the state in which Plato's contemporaries find themselves". (ibid, p. 3). In his analysis, men do not live well in cities with bad constitutions or that are badly governed. The source of the problem was not the result of a historical process of moral decay afflicting Athens since the beginning of the Persian Wars[238], as the reactionary oligarchy would have it. The real menace to every gathering of human beings are conflict and dissention, of which Athenian democracy would provide examples aplenty. The diagnosis of this democratic experience is caustic, for it

> (…) continues to repeat the same old lie: namely, that all its citizens are capable of everything and that each one has a hand in governing the city. Democratic propaganda (which, as Plato clearly shows, serves only a handful of masters) and its sophistic variant can produce and diffuse only simulacra that bestow upon the factions, the citizens' conflicts, and the prevailing confusion of opinions no more than the appearance of a city, a real state, and the search for the truth. (Pradeau, 2002, p. 3-4)

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[237] The expression 'political philosophy' perhaps calls for inverted commas, as the idea of a 'political' genre of philosophy does not fit at all well with the way in which Plato associates philosophical thought and political thought. Badiou, a contemporary and acute Platonist, judiciously underlines the ambiguities implicit in a 'political philosophy'; see in particular Badiou, 1992 [Badiou, Alain. 'L'Outrepassement politique du philosophe de la communauté', in *Politique et modernité,* Paris: Osiris, 1992, pp. 55–67], as remarked by Pradeau, 2002, on footnote 2, p. 2.

[238] Series of conflicts between Greece and Persia that lasted from 499 BC until 449 BC. Three battles are particularly emblematic: the Battle of Marathon (490), near Athens, with a devastating defeat for Darius I; the Battle of Thermopylae (480), in which a band of Spartans under the command of Leonidas was overcome by the army of Xerxes I and, as a result, Athens was sacked; and the Battle of Salamis, a naval battle in the same year which resulted in an overwhelming victory by the Athenian general Themistocles and resulting in Xerxes withdraw. See https://www.britannica.com/summary/Greco-Persian-Wars The ancient historian Christian Meier described the sea battle in the Strait of Salamis as "the eye of a needle through which world history had to pass". (Christian Meier, 1999 [Meier, Christian. *Athens: A Portrait of the City in Its Golden Age*. London: Pimlico, 1999] in Osbourne, Roger. *Civilization : A New History of the Western World.* London: Vintage Books, 2007, p. 8)

Plato will address such critique in an ensemble of dialogues. The *Republic,* which associates the quest for the truth with a quest for political perfection, will seeks to define what a city is; the requisites for its unity; a form of life in common that may deter conflict and corruption; and the knowledge of the truth. According to Pradeau, this will also be the program adopted by the *Stateman*, the *Critias* and the *Laws*.

Pradeau argues that all the Platonic dialogues maintain the hypothesis that **"politics stems from thought"** (2002, p. 4, emphasis on the original), and that from such hypothesis four key characteristics of Plato's political doctrine can be surmised: **1) the corrupting conditions of the Athenian context for the individual; 2) such conditions prompt Plato's decision to make the government of the city dependent upon knowledge of the truth (considering that knowledge (an understanding mind) is the best thing in human beings); 3) in support of this decision is the Greek conviction that knowledge and communal life are intertwined, and that there can be no form of good politics without genuine thought, which will lead to 4) the understanding of the nature of the city and the very meaning of politics.**

It should be noted that Pradeau uses inverted commas to express 'politics' in the text, for

> this is not a term much favoured by the dialogues. They are deliberately vague about this activity, referring to it sometimes as a 'royal technique', sometimes as a 'political technique', sometimes as 'political science'; sometimes again they describe it as active, sometimes as productive, sometimes as theoretical. The reader can never get anywhere by enquiring into the status of politics in Plato. That politics exists is true: there is a political technique or science which, like any technique, is a kind of knowledge. But all that should really matter are the object and nature of that knowledge. **The object of politics is the unity of the city; and the knowledge that is suited to that object is philosophy**. (p. 4-5).

And here one seems to get at the crucible of Plato's thought about to the city. The unified city, free of corruption, of decay. And that will be an important point of dispute with the next herald. Aristotle will certainly agree with Plato about the importance of knowledge, though he will be more septic regarding its redeeming powers. And, as he will conceptualize the nature of the city differently, his is not a city of unity. It will be one of stability within diversity.

4.5 ARISTOTLE

The Master of those who Know[239]

4.5.1 THE LIFE

Aristotle was born is Stagira (hence the moniker "the Stagirite"), a small Ionian colony along the eastern coast of the Chalcidice peninsula (Khalkidíki, now part of northern Greece), in 384 BC, of Greek parents, which was at the time under rule of the Macedonian Empire. There will be diverging accounts on pretty much everything in his biography, but it is generally believed that his father, Nicomachus, was the physician to King Amynthas III of Macedonia, the grandfather of Alexander the Great. Phaestis was his mother, who descended from one of the leaders of the expedition from Chalsis that colonized Stagira. He became an orphan in his early teens and was raised by Proxenus of Atarneus, who was friends with Plato, to whom he entrusted the continuation of his studies. Aristotle moved to Athens in 367 BC where, at the age of 17, he joined Plato's Academy, remaining for twenty years as his pupil and then colleague. In Kenny's words, "it can safely be said that on no other occasion in history was such intellectual power concentrated in a single institution" (Kenny, 2010, p. 57).

After Plato's death and presumably unable to assume the leadership of the Academy for his condition of metic[240] (*metoikos* – a resident alien) and for issues of seniority, he left Athens in 347/348 BC, which is also the period when King Philip of Macedon was on the verge of marching on Greece, putting an end to the independence of the Greek poleis. Historical sources[241] point out to a sojourn in Atarneus/Assos, in Asia Minor (now Turkey), along with some colleagues, at the court of the controversial tyrant Hermias, who himself had ties with the Academy, and who was an ally of King Phillip of Macedon. There he met his future wife, Pythia,

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[239] Such accolade is given by Dante Alighieri in his *Inferno* (Inferno IV, 132), part of (La Divina) Commedia (1320). Aristotle is accorded a place of honour in the highest state to which an unbaptized could aspire. For more, see Haren M. (1992) Masters of Those Who Know — Plato, Aristotle and the Neoplatonists. In: *Medieval Thought: The Western Intellectual Tradition from Antiquity to the Thirteenth Century.* Hampshire & London: Macmillan, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-22403-6_2 ; Refini, E. (2020). The Master of Those Who Know (and Those Who Don't). In *The Vernacular Aristotle: Translation as Reception in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (pp. 51–85). chapter, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. http://doi.org/10.1017/9781108693684.003 and Dante Alighieri. *The Inferno.* Translated by Robert Hollander and Jean Hollander; introduction & notes by Robert Hollander. New York: Anchor Books, 2002 (epub).

[240] As Mary G. Dietz points out, "*metics* in Athens were banned from taking an active part in the religious, civic, and political affairs of the city; barred from owning property or building a house (they could lease land with special dispensation); and potentially subject to enslavement for particular offenses, including false claims to citizenship. Unlike slaves, they were liable to taxation and military service, but also had access to courts and to the agora as merchants, educators, and purveyors of crafts (see Miller 1995; Nussbaum 1986; Whitehead 1975)." In Dietz, Mary G. "Between Polis and Empire: Aristotle's Politics." *The American Political Science Review* 106, no. 2 (2012): 275–93. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41495079.

[241] For a more extensive summary and references to historical sources, see Reale, Giovanne. *A History of Ancient Philosophy. II. Plato and Aristotle.* Edited and Translated from the Fifth Italian Edition by John R. Catan. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990. p. 419-421. For an extensive and updated presentation of Aristotle's biography and related sources, see Natali, Carlo. *Aristotle : his life and school.* D.S. Hutchinson (ed.) Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013.

a relative of Hermias. It is interesting to note that Hermias was born a slave. Between 345-344 BC Aristotle stayed in Mytilene, in the island of Lesbos, where he met Theophrastus of Assos (ca. 370-286 BC), who became his most brilliant collaborator. It is believed that between 343-335 BC he lived in Macedonia, and that during this time he served at the Macedonian royal court in Pella as tutor of Alexander, up to the point when he was appointed regent (340 BC). Alexander ascended the throne in 336 BC, with the assassination of Phillip II.

In the geopolitical context of the time, it is important to recall that in 338 BC one of the most important battles of Antiquity was fought and lost by the forces led by Athens and Thebes against Filip II and his allies: Chaeronea. The decisive victory cemented a *de facto* Macedonian rule over Greece, which continued under the reign of Alexander, who razed Thebes to the ground after a rebellion in 335, and left his general Antipater in charge of Athens.

In 335 BC Aristotle returned to Athens. Now, fifty years old, he founded his own school, perhaps with some financial help from Alexander, renting some buildings in the area of the popular gymnasium called the Lyceum (located in the vicinity of a sacred grove dedicated to Apollo Lyceus), just outside the city's walls. It also became known as the *Peripatetic School* (from *peripatos*[242]), where he and his *Peripatetics* walked and had their discussions. Unlike the Academy, many of the lectures given at the Lyceum were open to the general public without fee. Along with his school, Aristotle also founded the first known research library in History.

In 323 BC, upon the sudden death of Alexander the Great and the strong anti-Macedon political climate in Athens, he abandoned the city and his school and sought refuge in the island of Euboea, in Chalcis, where he died in 322 BC in his ancestral maternal estates. Theophrastus assumed the leadership of the Lyceum upon Aristotle's departure. In his will, of which Antipater was the executioner, Aristotle named Theophrastus as his successor, and under his guidance the Lyceum continued to flourish for many decades. He also bequeathed him his personal library and the original of his works, and left him as guardian of his children, including Nicomachus[243]. (Korab-Karpowicz, 2015; Natali, 2013; Dietz, 2012; Vegetti et al., 2012[244]; Kenny, 2010; Vegetti et al., 2008; Schofield, 2000[245]; Reale, 1990).

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[242] The consulted sources vary the translation as an "avenue"; a "passeggiata", and a "colonnade courtyard" which formed part of the school's buildings. Regardless, the main idea was the analogy with their "method" of teaching/studying while "walking up and down".

[243] Aristotle also had a daughter, Pythia, who was younger than fourteen when he died. It is not known for certain if Nicomachus (younger than Pythia) was the son of Aristotle with his wife (also Phytia) or with Herphyllis, who may have been a free woman, a slave, a servant, a housekeeper, a concubine, a lover or a second wife. It is improbable that he was the editor of Nicomachean Ethics, for it is believed that he died rather young. See Natali, 2013, p. 14-16.

[244] Vegetti, Mario; Fonnesu, Luca; Ferrari, Franco; Perfetti, Stefano; Spinelli, Emidio. *Filosofia: Autori, Testi, Temi – 1 L'Età Antica e Medievale.* Milano, Mondadori Education S.p.A, 2012.

[245] Schofield, Malcolm. "Aristotle: an Introduction." *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought,* edited by Christopher Rowe and Malcolm Schofield, in association with Simon Harrison and Melissa Lane, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000, pp. 310–320.

4.5.2 Plato and Aristotle – Understanding Some Points of Contact

> *Astonishing for the wealth of his interests, the scope of his writings, and the perspicuity of his conceptual distinctions, Aristotle stands like a portal figure of near-mythic force at the entrance to the high European schools of knowledge. Considering what he accomplished in his lifetime as a thinker and writer,* ***the idea suggests itself that what would come to be called the university from the Middle Ages on was anticipated in the figure of a single man.*** *The mind of Aristotle was the senate— as it were—of a university with a wealth of departments.*
>
> Peter Sloterdijk[246]

One of the most famous Renaissance frescos in history is Raffaello Sanzio's *Scuola di Atene,* painted between 1509 and 1511, which resides in the Stanza della Segnatura in the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican. Surrounded by a plethora of philosophers, scientists and artists of earlier and later ages, its central portion depicts the monumental figures of Plato and Aristotle deep in conversation – Plato with his right hand pointing towards the heavens, while Aristotle stretches his towards the Earth. Such representation feeds into the imaginary of them in opposing stances (such as in terms of idealism and empiricism) as convention has set them, particularly in modern times.

There are reasons for this view. Among others, Aristotle severely criticized Plato's Theory of Forms, as in the *Posterior Analytics*[247]. Divergences also appear regarding Plato's cosmology, and in the understanding of the soul, *inter alia.* Moreover, Aristotle pursued many fields of study that Plato did not undertake. Colourful accounts of Aristotle's biography[248] and of his relationship with Plato, combined with the paucity of accurate sources add to this dilemma. However, the

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[246] Sloterdijk, 2013, p. 14.

[247] As Aristotle states in *Posterior Analytics* (1. 22. 83a30-35): "But the things that do not signify a substance must be predicated of some underlying subject, and there cannot be anything white which is not white through being something different. (For we can say goodbye to the forms; for they are nonny-noes, and if there are any they are nothing to the argument; for demonstrations are about things [35] of this type." In *The Complete Works of Aristotle.* (Bollinger Series LXXI. 2) The Revised Oxford Translation Volume One and Two. Barnes, Jonathan (ed.) Princeton; Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1984. Digital Edition. Criticism is also present in his *Metaphysics* and in the *Nichomachean Ethics* (the Idea of the Good in particular).

[248] Aristotle detractors, such as the philosopher Epicurus and the historian Timaeus of Tauromenium, say that he was "a wastrel, who after devouring his father's fortune took to soldiering and selling drugs" (Diogenes Laertius (10.8) in recounting the biography of Epicurus (*testimonium* 59a), *apud* Natali, 2013, p. 9), or that "Aristotle made sacrifice to his late wife, the same sort of sacrifice that the Athenians make to Demeter" (excerpted in Eusebius 15.2.8 = *testimonium* 58i, *apud* Natali, 2013, p. 14). It seems that this last accusation was used in the charges of impiety raised against Aristotle by Demophilus of Athens after the death of Alexander, though the bulk of it was related to his relationship with Hermias. The charges of impiety, which carried a death sentence, were likely the cause of Aristotle's departure from Athens. (Natali, 2013).

extent of such opposition has never been unanimous[249], and there are contemporary scholars who argue that there is much more that unites them then sets them apart (Kenny, 2010; Reale, 1990). Endorsing Diogenes Laertius account, Reale (1990, p. 149) states

> And that judgment still stands in our view, contrary to what many modern scholars believe A faithful disciple of a great master is certainly not one who repeats his teacher, limiting himself to preserving the doctrine intact, but rather one who moves from the *aporias* of the master and tries to overcome them in the spirit of his teacher, and thus goes beyond his teacher. This is precisely what Aristotle accomplished with respect to Plato. [250]

It is out of the scope of this thesis to compare and contrast Plato's and Aristotle's philosophical stances, particularly in the domains of metaphysics/supersensible/cosmology, which are some of the areas where their comprehension varies. Some specific points of divergence/convergence will be raised in more specific discussions about their conceptualization of the polis, ethics and politics. However, on the general tones, in order to better frame their understanding, one will attempt to summarize some points of contact.

Figure 2. Scuola di Atene by Raffaello Sanzio, detail.

Source: https://m.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani-mobile/en/collezioni/musei/stanze-di-raffaello/stanza-della-segnatura/scuola-di-atene.html

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[249] *Diogenes Laertius* 5.1 states that "Aristotle was Plato's most genuine disciple", though he also reports a presumable quote of Plato "Aristotle spurns me, as colts kick out at the mother who bore them" (ibid., 5.2). *The Complete Works of Diogenes Laërtius.* Hastings: Delphi Classics, 2015. Digital Edition.

[250] Reale particularly criticizes a reading of Aristotle following a historic-genetic method of interpretation, originated in the work of Werner Jaeger, who, in his turn, was criticizing previous scholarship (systematic-unitary method) for being a-historical. For details of his analyses, see Reale, Giovani. *I. A Critical Premise: The Historical-Genetic Method and the Modern Interpretation of Aristotelian Though,* in Reale, 1990, p. 249-252. For Jaeger's account, see *Aristotle: fundamentals of the history of his development.* Oxford: Claredon Press, 1948 (1934). Samples of the development of this debate can be found in John M. Rist. *The Mind of Aristotle: A Study in Philosophical Growth.* Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 1989 and in Lloyd P. Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2005. For a more specific rapport in Antiquity, see George E. Karamanolis. *Plato and Aristotle in Agreement? Platonists on Aristotle from Antiochus to Porphyry.* Oxford: Claredon Press, 2006.

4.5.2.1 The Platonic "Second Voyage"

Following Reale's analysis (1990, p. 237-244), a key aspect in understanding the points of contact between Aristotle and Plato has to do with the Platonic "Second Voyage[251]", as approached by Plato in the dialogue *Phaedo* (also in the *Republic*), and, importantly, in what is believed to constitute the *Unwritten Doctrines. Phaedo* is a dialogue set in the moments leading to Socrates' death, and discusses arguments for the soul's immortality, the doctrine of knowledge as recollection, the theory of Ideas, among others. It relates to the theory of the Principles (upon which the theory of Ideas depends), the *principle of the Whole* and the global metaphysical explanation of reality, the essential meaning of dualism (physical, superphysical and their relationship), and the hierarchical structure of the real[252]. The author emphasizes that immediate successors to Plato, notably Aristotle, cannot be understood if such backdrop is not considered.

In Plato's theology, it is necessary to distinguish the impersonal *Divine* from a personal *God*. The Ideal world is divine, specially the Idea of the Good (the One). The traits of a God are those of the Demiurge, who **knows and wills** (p. 239, emphasis in the original), which is epistemologically and normatively subordinated to the One-Good. The **demiurgic activity** is described in the sense of **bringing** (the universe and what it contains) **from nonbeing to being.** Very importantly, "the creation of the Demiurge **is a creation of the mixture**; that is, the production of order out of disorder, because being is precisely this ordering of that which is disordered (a **uni**fication of an unlimited **multiplicity**)." The Demiurge forms the elements that enable the realization of the ideal world in the sensible world, therefore actualizing the Good in the highest way possible, particularly through numbers and mathematical/geometrical structures. For Plato, the philosopher is the dialectician – the one capable of a **synoptic vision** of the reality: **to see the *"whole"***; "which means to gather together a plurality into a unity, **the many into a one***"* (Reale, p. 241, emphases in the original).

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[251] "… that is, the discovery of the supersensible, must be attributed to Plato to acknowledge for the first time the possibility of seeing the divine in the perspective of the supersensible." (Reale, 1990, p. 239). The expression "second voyage" is used by Socrates in translations such as the one of Harold North Fowler (*Phaedo*, 99d). Plato. *Euthyphro - Apology - Crito - Phaedo – Phaedrus.* Harold North Fowler (translation). Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge (MA); London: Harvard University Press, 2005 (1914).

[252] "... begins from the first and supreme Principles, on which the sphere of the hierarchical structure of the Ideas follows, and then further the sphere of the mathematical entities hierarchically structured, and finally, the sphere of sensible realities. Each of these spheres is articulated, according to an hierarchical structure (with the emergence and the particular importance of the sphere of the Ideas, which is articulated in the ideal Numbers, the more general Ideas or the Meta-Ideas, specific Ideas), with a structural dependence of the lower level on the higher (and not vice versa) and in various ways with a dependence mediated of all reality at all levels on the primary Principle." (Reale, 1990, p. 238).

Again, the Platonic dialectic is the instrument to reveal the bipolar structure of the real, the cognitive procedure that can, at the same time, bring together the many into a unity, and break up the unity into many. It is this procedure that can lead to "become as much like a god as it is possible for a man to be." (*Republic*, X, 613b)

> Therefore to imitate God for Plato **means to achieve the knowledge and the capacity of realizing unity-in-the-multiplicity, which God possesses in its fullness. And this achievement in knowledge, in power, and in practical activity, is the most significant factor in the whole of Platonic philosophy,** in all its aspects: metaphysical, epistemological, ethical-religious, and political. In short, the imitation of God is the crowning knowledge, which joins man to God who is the Measure of all things and brings actuality in all things. (Reale, 1990, p. 242, emphasis added).

Lofty ambition, for sure, that let Plato to some inflexible propositions and unsurmountable *aporias* (ibid).

Still regarding Plato's metaphysics, Reale highlights the extraordinary value that the philosopher placed on Beauty. The beautiful relates to Truth as a faithful representation of the intelligible, of Beauty itself and, thus, of the Good, of the Principle of all things. However, contrary to what an architect would imagine, for Plato, it is not art that enables the fruition of the beautiful. It is the Hellenistic Eros, the "Platonic love", which demands a cognitive experience. Furthermore, the beautiful in the only transcendent Idea that can be accessed through the senses, and only through the most elevated of the them (in the ancient Greek context), that is, vision.

> This enables us to grasp the **extraordinary relevance that form and figure would have for the Greeks** (and hence the ***idea*** and the ***eidos***, which precisely means form and figure, and which in Plato has an extraordinary metaphysical role that is well known). In particular, for our philosopher, the Good is the One and the highest Measure; and the Beautiful (just as the Good) is explicated **by means of number and measure**; that is, **as a unity-in-multiplicity**; and it is this we "see" in the sensibly beautiful: the explication of the unity in the multiplicity according to order and harmony, which manifests itself at various levels and in various ways. In short, the Beautiful (first the sensible and then the intelligible) is shown with respect to the Good, because it is shown with respect to the One and its various and multiple explications at the highest levels. (Reale, 1990, p. 243, emphasis in the original).

And why to recap these arguments is important? Within Reale's analysis, it is **only** after the Platonic "Second Voyage" that terms such as *sensible* and *supersensible, empirical* and *metaempirical*, *physical* and *metaphysical* can be properly used. With Plato, philosophy has reached into the *intelligible world,* to the realm of realities that are not perceived/explained by the senses. "Against all the predecessors and (…) many contemporaries, Plato did not tire, for the whole of his life, to point out that his fundamental discovery was indeed revolutionary: there are very many things about which your philosophy limited to the physical world does not know!"

And to the fundamental philosophical (existential!) question of *why being exists instead of nothing,* Plato's "Second Voyage's" response is that "because being is good; and in general, all things that exist are so because they are positive, because it is good that they be just as they are (…). **The positive, order, and the Good are the basis of being.**" (ibid., p. 244, emphasis in the original).

4.5.2.2 The Aristotelian Voyage

> *But if there is nothing eternal, neither can there be a process of coming to be; for that which comes to be, and that from which it comes to be, must be something, and the ultimate term in this series cannot have come to be, since the series has a limit and nothing can come to be out of that which is not.*
>
> Aristotle, *Metaphysics,* B 4.999b5[253]

In one's journey into the footsteps of Aristotle in the hopes of better understanding how he conceived of man and the city, it felt prudent to heed to Reale's admonition that "Aristotle cannot be understood except by beginning with establishing what specific positions he took in comparison with Plato." Therefore, one will continue following his analyses of the basic points of contact between them, particularly in relation to the already mentioned "Second Voyage" (Reale, 1990, p. 253-261).

Among the first remarks that Reale makes about Aristotle's hefty criticism of Plato's doctrine of the Principles and of the theory of Ideas has to be understood in the context of Aristotelian metaphysics and the historical nexus from which they arose, including the lectures that Plato taught at the Academy (the already mentioned *Unwritten Doctrines*).

What Reale wishes to emphasize, as presented in the Aristotelian *corpus*, is that the Stagirite did not deny that some supersensible realities existed; what he wanted to demonstrate was that their nature was not as conceived by Plato.

[253] Text of W. D. Ross, *Aristotle's Metaphysics,* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1924, *in* Barnes, 1995 (1984), p. 3241, epub.

> Plato pointed out in the transcendent One-Good the Principle of the whole of reality. On the contrary, Aristotle denied the existence of the transcendent One-Good; **nevertheless, he did reiterate that there existed a transcendent reality in a firm, unequivocal manner.** However, he attributed a general function to this reality conceived at the supreme vertex as supreme Mind, precisely as a thinking on thinking, as the immobile Movent of all things, affirming explicitly that "on such a Principle depend the heaven and nature,"[254] and hence all realities. (Reale, 1990, p. 254).

Such clarification is necessary for there is, as some interpret the fresco to the School of Athens to represent, and that has sparked much debate in the history of thought, an understanding that Aristotle repudiated the existence of the supersensible. Reale extensively argues that is not the case. The importance of this, among other things, in the context of this research, it attached to Aristotle's *teleology*, which relates to the ultimate end of everything that exists in the Universe, including humans and cities and that, is his philosophy, is part of the realms of physics and metaphysics. Repeating the quote above, "*on such a Principle [the immobile Movement of all things] depend the heaven and nature," and hence all realities.* Reale defends that Aristotle held "the Platonic conclusion of the metaphysical priority of the form, making the form as act the intelligible content of the sensible in large part" (ibid., p, 256). It is also important in relation to the rapport between "real" and "ideal". For Reale, as for Bottici (2008), both Plato and Aristotle understand that "the things that are" [truer] are those conceptually clear (*ta onta*), not those that are just given in experience (*ta pragmata*). In Aristotle, what belonged to the realm of each of these realms on knowledge will become clearer in his classification of the sciences, as will be seen in a moment.

Despite Aristotle's keen and undeniable interest in the empirical sciences (something that, apart from medicine, Plato did not seem to share), Reale sustains that the opposition between them depicted by Raphael is incorrect. "Aristotle, notwithstanding all the love that he had for the phenomena, never tired of repeating that, from the speculative standpoint, they are 'preserved' only by the metaphenomena, only by putting them in relation to an immaterial, immobile, and transcendent cause". For him, the perceived dissensions between Plato and Aristotle – and they certainly exist – have been exaggerated because the fundamentally different way in which the two philosophers expressed their thought (in their extant *corpus*) is not considered. "[Plato} values the movement of the dialogue leading to the logos through the power of poetry, [Aristotle] values an impersonal and dry argument dense with complex notions" (Reale, 1990, p. 260-61).

[254] Reale's note #2, p. 423, refers the quote to Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, L7.1072b13ff.

Aristotle's Classification of Science

Aristotle organized the sciences into three great branches: (a) *theoretical sciences*, or those that seek knowledge for its own sake; (b) *practical sciences*, or those that seek knowledge to achieve moral perfection; and (c) *poietic or productive sciences*, or those that seek knowledge in view of making something with the goal of producing a determined object. The highest sciences in dignity and value are the first branch (theoretical), in which *metaphysics, physics* and *mathematics* are found.

Though there are elements of unification in the pursuit of knowledge (keeping in tune with Plato's quest towards universality), Aristotle will propose that each area of being may follow independent principles. Then knowledge, just as the reality which it seeks to unveil, will articulate itself in several levels that will be explored by three branches of learning (*Top.* 145a15–16) as "sciences" *(epistêmai)*: productive, practical and theoretical. (Reale, 1990, p. 265; Kenny, 2010, p. 64-67; Vegetti et al, p. 203-204; Shields, 2020, p. 4-5).

The **theoretical sciences** *(theoria* (contemplation)*)* is concerned with the part of reality that cannot be different than what it is (therefore, not contingent). It seeks knowledge for its own sake, through empirical and non-empirical pursuits. Prominently, it includes what Aristotle calls *first philosophy* (what we call metaphysics), *second philosophy* (physics, in an understanding of natural philosophy (including the soul), the study of the natural universe as a whole), and mathematics. (*Phys.* 192b8–12; *DC* 298a27–32; *DA* 403a27–b2; *Met.* 1026a18–19)

The **practical sciences** *(pràxis),* also contingent, focus on conduct and action, both of the individual and as a society. They also deal with "production", but of what has its end in itself, in opposition of the *pòiesis,* in which their ends are exterior to themselves. **Ethics and politics belong here.** (*Met.* 1064a16–19); *EN* 1139a26–28, 1141b29–32).

The **productive sciences** *(pòiesis)* are concerned with the realms of production, of the contingent. It encompasses crafts (artisanal of is general) and "professional activities" such as architecture, medicine, the arts, and rhetoric.

Just for the fun of it, so the reader can sample our herald himself, keeping in mind what was highlighted in the previous section, here are some of Aristotle's words on the subject, from the book of *Metaphysics*[255].

[255] Aristotle's passages referenced in this section are as highlighted by Shields (2020, p. 4-5) and distributed closer to the topics they more closely relate to, should the reader be interested in explore it further.

> And since natural science, like other sciences, confines itself to one class of beings, i.e. to that sort of substance which has the principle of its movement and rest [20] present in itself, evidently it is neither practical nor productive. For the principle of production is in the producer—it is either reason or art or some capacity, while the principle of action is in the doer—viz. choice, for that which is done and that which is chosen are the same. Therefore, if all thought is either practical or productive or [25] theoretical, natural science must be theoretical, but it will theorize about such being as admits of being moved, and only about that kind of substance which in respect of its formula is for the most part not separable from matter. (*Met.* 1025b17-28).
>
> Since there is a science of *being qua being* and capable of existing apart, we must consider whether this is to be regarded as the same as natural science or rather [30] as different. Natural science deals with the things that have a principle of movement in themselves; mathematics is theoretical, and is a science that deals with things that are at rest, but its subjects cannot exist apart. Therefore about that which can exist apart and is unmovable there is a science different from both of these, if there is a substance of this nature (I mean separable and unmovable), as we [35] shall try to prove there is. And if there is such a kind of thing in the world, here must surely be the divine, and this must be the first and most important principle. Evidently, then, there are three kinds of theoretical sciences—natural science, [1064b1] mathematics, theology. The class of theoretical sciences is the best, and of these themselves the last named is best; for it deals with the highest of existing things, and each science is called better or worse in virtue of its proper object.

Aristotle's Four Causes

As explained by Reale (1990, p. 268-69), as part of his metaphysics, Aristotle will inquire into the primary causes and principles. There are four of them in relation to the world of becoming. They were briefly sketched below for when Aristotle talks about man as a political animal and the naturality of the polis, the framework of his teleology cannot be left aside.

> (a) The *formal cause* is the form or essence of things (i.e. the soul of animals, geometrical figures, the structures of different objects of art);
>
> (b) The *material cause* is "that from which" a thing is made;
>
> (c) The *efficient/moving cause* is that by which the change and movement of the thing originates (i.e. the father is a movent cause of the son, the will is a movent cause of the various actions of a man; a blow that impels a ball);
>
> (d) The *final cause (telos)* is the goal or the end of the thing or action. It is that in *function of which each thing is or becomes*; and this, for Aristotle, is the good of each thing.

These four causes pertain to the realm of *becoming*, but they also applicable to the *being* of things. Aristotle will continue his investigation to approach the causes of the *being qua being*, the causes given by the movements of the heavens and by the primary immobile Movent, which cannot be approached here with competency. One will just observe that it is in the study of these causes that the all-important Aristotelian concepts of *being and nonbeing; of substance, accident and truth; of potency and act; and of categories* will be discussed. Reale (op. cit., p. 269-292) provides an explanation of the matter. It is also necessary to note that Aristotle will expand the scope of such inquiries into the realm of sensible realities (that which is characterized by movement). As emphasized by Reale, Aristotle's Physics is "an ontology or metaphysics of the sensible", and defined the outlook of science about it up to the Galilean revolution (ibid., p. 293).

4.5.3 The Aristotelian Corpus

"All men by nature desire to know. An indication of this is the delight we take in our senses; for even apart from their usefulness they are loved for themselves;[256]"

This opening statement by Aristotle in the first book of *Metaphysics*, more than a general rule, feels like a "confession"; a projection of the inner fire of an agile an omnivorous intellect that left an opera of around one million words (which is estimated to be one fifth of his written output) that fills out almost 2,500 conceptually-dense, tightly-printed pages in English, in works that encompass, among others, logic, metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics, politics, rhetoric, poetics, botany, zoology, biology, psychology, chemistry, meteorology, astronomy, and cosmology. (Kenny, 2010, p. 75). As Sloterdijk highlights, "Even in its driest enumerations and most industrious distinctions, the Aristotelian intellectual edifice still attests an original connection between knowledge and joy." (2013, p. 15). We have been left with some thirty-one writings, of perhaps as many as two-hundred treatises that may have been produced by this prodigious mind. (Shields[257], 2020).

Those of us less trained in such readings, however, may feel their "legendary difficulty", as mentioned by Reeve (2016, p. xxvi), more acutely than such joy, or than the "calming and enlightening effect" described by Manent (p. 95). There are, however, reasons for it being so.

First, as it has already been mentioned in other opportunities, it is necessary to reiterate that scholars disagree, as they do with Plato, in terms of the authenticity, chronology and authorship of the extant *corpus aristotelicum*. It is, however, generally agreed that, rather ironically, the majority of the opera that has reached us are his *esoteric* or *acroamatic (akròasis – lesson, listening)* works, meaning for "internal consumption" in the Lyceum, not polished for publication. They would be lecture notes (by him or taken by his students/colleagues), working papers, Q&As. They were "only to be heard by his students and hence they were the exclusive

[256] Metaphysics A 1. 980a25, W.D. Ross translation, published originally in 1908, in Barnes (2005, p. 3187, epub). It should be noted that the word that Aristotle uses in Greek refers to "men" not as gender, but "humans". See, for instance, C.D.C. Reeve's translation of Aristotle. *Metaphysics*. Indianapolis; Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2016 and Sloterdijk, Peter, 2013, p. 15.

[257] Shields, Christopher, "Aristotle", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/aristotle/

heritage of the school" (Reale, 1990, p. 420). Their esoteric character can also help to explain the "formidable difficulties to his novice readers" due to the use of unexplained technical terminology and the haphazard order in which many are presented (Shields, 2020, p. 3). In Kenny's words, "What has been delivered to us from Aristotle across the centuries is a set of telegrams rather than epistles" (Kenny, 2010, p. 63).

Nevertheless, the challenges found in the Stagirite's texts go beyond the format in which they have reached us. Back to Reeve's analyses, his are works of "staggering breadth and depth of intellect". Recalling the criticism of a Platonist[258] opponent who stated that he "escapes refutation by clothing a perplexing subject in obscure language, using darkness like a squid to make himself hard to catch," Reeve argues that, "though there is darkness and obscurity enough for anyone", such criticism would be unfair, for the obscurities would not have been intentional. (Reeve, 2016, p. xxvi). Moreover, as Shields highlights, "the unvarnished condition of Aristotle's surviving treatises does not hamper our ability to come to grips with their philosophical content." (Shields, op. cit.)

Of his *exoteric* writings, meant for the general public and publication, (possibly quite a few written following the dialogical format of Plato), sadly, only titles, fragments and references remain. Many of them would be youthful works, written during his time at the Academy. Of the titles worthier of note Reale[259] recalls *Gryllus,* or *On Rhetoric* (a defence of the Platonic position against Isocrates, perhaps the first of his exoteric work), *On the Ideas*, *Eudemus,* or *On Soul,* and the *Protreptic* or *On Philosophy,* possibly his final one. As an illustration, one will bring a small quote of *Eudemus*, when Midas insistently asks Silenus "what was the best thing for men and what the most desirable of all", for it quite resonates with the anguish of a soul struggling with an unfinished doctoral dissertation:

> "Shortlived seed of a toiling spirit and a harsh fortune, why do you force me to say what is better for you not to know? For a life lived in ignorance of its own ills is most painless. It is quite impossible for the best thing of all to befall men, nor can they share in the nature of what is better. For it is best, for all men and women, not to be born; and second after that—the first of things open to men—is, once born, to die as quickly as possible." (fr. 44)[260]

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[258] Though Reeve does not indicate, the detractor was possibly Atticus the Platonist, who lived in the second century AD, and who tried to purge the Peripatetic teachings that had infiltrated the Academy. Such criticism would have reached the Modern world through the writings of Eusebius (*Preparatio evangelica*) and heartily embraced by the anti-Aristotelian movement that grew from the humanist critique from the late fourteen century. For details on this see Schmitt, Charles B. "Aristotle as a Cuttlefish: The Origin and Development of a Renaissance Image." *Studies in the Renaissance* 12 (1965): 60–72. https://doi.org/10.2307/2857069.

[259] For a synthetic but detailed description of the *Corpus aristotelicum* in terms of its structure and reputable commentators on the exoteric works, see the biographical note on Aristotle in Reale, 1990. For a detailed account, see Natali, 2013.

[260] *F 44 R3* ([*Plutarch*], Consolatio ad Apollonium 115 BC) in Aristotle; Barnes (1995).

If one is to believe Cicero, who is widely considered the greatest stylist of Latin and who would unquestionably be a reliable critic of Latin and Greeks texts*, if Plato's prose was silver, Aristotle's was a flowing river of gold*[261]. Humbly judging from the sample above, one easily can. It is heart-breaking that these works were lost.

Going back to the structure of the surviving texts, it must be remembered that they were bequeathed to Theophrastus and, through many historical twists and turns, ended up in Rome by the hands of the dictator Sulla (138-78 BC) as spoils of the Mithridatic War. In Rome, a transcription of the works that had been started by a bibliophile named Apellicon (a soldier of Mithridates) was continued. But it was only in the first century BC that Andronicus of Rhodes (c. 60 BC), the tenth successor of Aristotle in the Lyceum, prevailed in preparing and publishing a proper edition of the Aristotelian corpus. Such publication enabled Aristotle's writings to travel through time and space, carrying the intellectual efforts of Greek commentators, Arab philosophers and medieval thinkers into the Renaissance. (Reale, 1990; Herman, 2013).

The systematization and sequencing of the Aristotelian corpus that reached us today is, therefore, mostly as defined by Andronicus, some three hundred years after Aristotle's death. It holds a connection with his Classification of Science, and could be summarized as follows (Aristotle; Barnes, 1995; Reale, 1990; Vegetti et al., 2008; Aristotle; Reeve, 2016):

- It begins with the *Organon* (which means "tools", "instruments"), a title added in late antiquity that encompasses all the logical treatises, which are *Categories (Cat.), De Interpretatione (DI), Prior Analytics* (*APr* - two books), *Posterior Analytics* (*APo*, also two books)*, Topics* (*Top.*, eight books), and *Sophistical Refutations (SE).*
- Secondly, all the treatises dedicated to nature and the physical world, which are: *Physics* (*Phys.*, eight books), *De Caelo (DC, On the Heavens)* (four books), *De Generatione et Corruptione (Gen, et Corr., On Generation and Corruption)* (two books), and *Meteorologica (Meteor., Meteorology)* (four books). Connected to them are his works on psychology, *De Anima* (*DA,* three books) and then a set of seven essays that discuss various natural phenomena involving the body and the soul that in the middle ages were grouped under the title *Parva Naturalia (PN).* It also comprises Aristotle's imposing works related to biology and zoology, which are *History of Animals* (*HA*, ten books), *Parts of Animals* (*PA,* four books), *Movement of Animals (MA)*, *Progression of Animals (IA)*, and *Generation of Animals* (*GA,* five books).

[261] Such quote is presented in Shields (2020, p. 3), referencing the following works of Cicero: *Ac. Pr.* 38.119, cf. *Top.* 1.3, *De or.* 1.2.49. (Respectively, *Academica Priora, Topica* and *De Oratore*).

- Next, which are considered by many to be Aristotle's masterpieces, the fourteen books organized under the title *Metaphysics (Met.)*. Aristotle himself would not have recognized his treatises under such title, since it is one that he had never used. *Ta meta ta phusika* was the terminology used by Andronicus and means "the things that come after *ta phusika*". Its contents focuses on what was very briefly addressed in the previous chapters regarding Plato's "Second Voyage" and Aristotle's response to it (and more).
- After the *Metaphysics* come the works on moral and political philosophy: *Nicomachean Ethics* (*EN,* ten books), *Eudemian Ethics* (*EE,* eight books), *Magna Moralia* (*MM,* possibly spurious) and the *Politics* (*Pol.,* eight books).
- Close the corpus the writings on Rhetoric (*Rhet.,* three books) and Poetics (*Poet.,* in Greek pòiesis means "production"; only one book survived).

The *corpus* includes other texts whose authenticity is disputed by commentators and Aristotelian scholars. It should be noted that in the end of the 1800s a papyrus containing the *Constitution of the Athenians* came to light, one of the over a hundred constitutions which, is believed, were compiled at the Lyceum during Aristotle's time. Aristotle's authorship of it is a matter of academic dispute.

Finally, citations of Aristotle's writings, such as in the case of Plato, follow a canonic edition which has served as reference to further translations and scholarly work. That is the classical edition of the *Aristotelis Opera* by Immanuel Bekker (Berlin, 1831).

Aristotle's contribution to Western thought and science has been interpreted under different lights throughout history. Misogyny and slavery were for centuries sustained using his authority as stanchion. Hellenocentric, chauvinist, exclusionary, racist, sexist, elitist are epithets added to him and his politics by many[262].

In the first four centuries of the Middle Ages the phrase *ut ait philosophus* ("as the philosopher states", the philosopher being Aristotle (and never before or since had a thinker been honoured with this formula) sufficed to invoke an almost god-like authority to an argument. And, contrary to the spirit of his philosophy, such attributed authority "evolved" to assume the monolithic, rigid, convoluted, dogmatic form of scholastic authoritarianism that was bombarded by early modern thinkers (Montaigne for one), when the name of the Stagirite was invoked to highlight his errors (Sloterdijk, 2013, p. 15). Bruno, Copernicus, Galileo unveiled a new

[262] Dietz (2012, p. 276) enrolls a list of philosophers, scholars and writers who have manifested their thoughts in such regards, such as John Stuart Mill, Hannah Arendt, Karl Popper and Alasdair MacIntyre. A more in depth account can be found in Lane, Melissa. *The Birth of Politics : eight Greek and Roman political ideas and why they matter. P*rinceton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014, particularly Chapter 5 – Citizenship (pp. 181-214).

understanding of the Cosmos. Some centuries later, Darwin consigned to grave his understanding of biological *telos.* One would risk arguing, however, that Aristotle would be pleased by such developments, for they employed reason and observation for a better understanding of the natural world, something that he pursued for most of his life.

In the realm of politics, as Manent discusses, founders of modern political science such as Hobbes, Spinoza and Locke – who he dubs "the architects of the modern State" - made harsh criticisms towards Aristotle, as did Montesquieu, in his *The Spirit of the Laws (1748).* Other thinkers such as Voegelin, Cassirer, Strauss and Manent have revisited Aristotle's political philosophy and ethics and found juicy food for thought.

To illustrate the view of the first group, which goes frontally against what is at the heart of Aristotle's understanding (and, in some measure, also Plato's) about the nature of man and the political form it engenders,

> The modern take on the origins of man is that man is an 'a-social' being, solitary and isolated, and that the political community is this artificial and willed construct that these solitary creatures create to secure those goods that by their own means they are unable to (see Hobbes, 1991 [1651]; Kant, 1991; Rousseau, 1964). Thus the modern notion works on the level of wills and the bonding together of separate and autonomous wills via their agreement to secure mutual benefit and security. And this renders the political community as a merely voluntary construction by naturally a-social 'individual persons' a fundamental rejection of the Aristotelian teaching that man is by nature a social being. (Bates, 2014[263], p. 501).

Before taking any sides, let us hear what our herald das to say.

[263] Bates, Clifford Angell. "The Centrality of Politeia for Aristotle's Politics: Part II – the Marginalization of Aristotle's Politeia in Modern Political Thought." *Social Science Information* 53, no. 4 (December 2014): 500–517. https://doi.org/10.1177/0539018414532040.

4.5.4 PRÀXIS, EUDAIMONIA AND "THE CITY"

It could be argued that to address the issue of "the city" in Aristotle (*polis*), as in Plato, requires a comprehensive understanding, exposition and analysis of much of the complex and intertwined theoretical edifices they built. Such assessment is correct, and in conducting this exploratory research one had to venture, under the guidance of a few expert scholars, into several of the magnificent chambers of such towering structures. Regrettably, for, as in the words of Giovanni Improta, a character of a Brazilian soap opera played by the actor José Wilker, "o tempo ruge e a Sapucaí é grande"[264] (and one's capacity is limited), it will be necessary to exercise some restrain and attempt to focus on some of his key contributions. It must be noted that published scholarship on the matter, even in a *stricto sensu* approach, is virtually inexhaustible, and the present effort amounts to no more than a grain in a huge silo.

Flourish is actually an operative word in Aristotle. More accurately, it is *eudaimonia*, another one of those terms that eludes a clear-cut translation. "Happiness", "flourish/flourishing", "the good life" have been used to approximate its meaning. "(…) *eudaimonia* is achieved, according to Aristotle, by fully realizing our natures, by actualizing to the highest degree our human capacities, and neither our nature nor our endowment of human capacities is a matter of choice for us." (Shields, 2020, p. 27).

In the briefest of statements, which one then will proceed to unpack, for Aristotle, the purpose, the aim, the finality, the *telos* of a human life is to accomplish *eudaimonia* and, for humans, such state can only be achieved in the *polis*. The conditions for the individual flourishing are the domain of *Ethics*. How to exercise that collectively is the realm of *Politics.* Ethics and Politics, if the goal is to achieve the best possible life for us humans are, for him, inextricably, umbilically, connected.

[264] Roughly translated, "time flies and the Sapucaí is long". Sapucaí is the "avenue" where the Rio the Janeiro Carnival takes place, and the penalty for the samba schools that extrapolate their time is hefty. There is a play with the words, for the correct noun would be "urge" (the condition of being urgent, unavoidable, indispensable), but the character mistakenly (on purpose) uses "ruge", which means "roars" (like a lion does). The idea of a "roaring passage of time", though, feels about right!

4.5.4.1 The Life of Character: Aristotle's Ethics[265]

The man who is to be happy will therefore need virtuous friends.
Aristotle, *EN* [1170b18]

There are three ethical treatises that can be attributed to Aristotle: *Magna Moralia,* which, for those that consider it to be authentic, was perhaps the first one to be written; *Eudemian Ethics*, and *Nichomachean Ethics*, which is considered the most important of the three, and is one of the most read pieces in moral philosophy to this day. It should be noted that whereas in the physical and metaphysical components of the Aristotelian corpus it is possible to note traces of revision/rewriting, "it is only in the case of ethics that we have Aristotle's doctrine on the same topics presented in three different and more or less complete courses. There is, however, no consensus on the explanation of this phenomenon." (Kenny, 2010, p. 67). For the purposes of this research, the *Nichomachean Ethics (EN)* will be the one to be explored in as much as it provides the background for the good life in the *polis.* It is in fact in *EN* that Aristotle provides his most comprehensive definition of the term "politics".

Aristotle himself, in the *Politics,* refers back to his writings on *êthika,* and in doing so, emphasizes the fact that the central topic of these writings are *êthê* (plural of *êthos*), that is, traits of character (Kraut, 2012[266], p. 2). As Glanville (1976[267], p. 22) underscores, ethics deals with "the personal conduct of the human component of the *polis* in relation to the true purpose of human life, the motivation of individual action, and the principles of human association in the community. The work is intended to teach civic virtues which will bring the citizen true happiness in his community.

A base premise that needs to be considered is that he takes it as a given that most people desire the good. "Every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and choice, is thought to aim at some good; and for this reason the good has rightly been declared to be that at which all things aim." (*EN* 1. 1094a1). This is important to be highlighted, for it is one of the cornerstones of the Aristotelian thought: "Il carattere costitutivo della natura – lo si è detto più di una volta – è rappresentato dal suo finalismo, ossia **dal fatto di essere orientata verso il bene o il meglio**" (Vegetti et al., 2012, p. 216, emphasis added).

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[265] Éthica : "having to do with character" – (éthos), In Kraut, Richard. *Aristotle Political Philosophy.* Founders of Modern Political Thought, Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. p. 16

[266] Kraut, Richard. Aristotle on Becoming Good: Habituation, Reflection, and Perception. *The Oxford Handbook of Aristotle*. Christopher Shields (ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

[267] Downey, Glanville. "Aristotle on the Greek Polis: A Study of Problems and Methods." *Urbanism Past & Present*, no. 3 (1976): 21–25. http://www.jstor.org/stable/44403528

The soul is the organizing principle of all living beings, including their form (èidos). It performs three levels of functions: vegetative (concerned with the activities of nutrition, growth and reproduction); sensitive (perception and movement); and intellective (exclusive of humans, thought *(nous)* and will). (ibid, p. 218). The essential question then becomes *what is the good life for us humans?* Different than a stance in which beauty is defined in the eyes of the beholder, and that happiness would be mostly a matter of subjective preference, Aristotle believes that it is possible to reflect on the parameters that would lead to *eudaimonia*.

"In place of the Idea of the Good, Aristotle offers happiness (eudaimonia) as the supreme good with which ethics is concerned, for, like Plato, he sees an intimate connection between living virtuously and living happily" (Kenny, 2010, p. 69). However, as he also believes that people can choose to lead sub-optimal lives, proposing criteria to promote the superior form of life would help prevent such unfortunate occurrence. **And the utmost criterion is a life lived in accordance with reason.** *EN* explores such discussion and advances the criteria that the final good for human beings must:

> (i) be pursued for its own sake (*EN* 1094a1); (ii) be such that we wish for other things for its sake (*EN* 1094a19); (iii) be such that we do not wish for it on account of other things (*EN* 1094a21); (iv) be complete *(teleion),* in the sense that it is always choiceworthy and always chosen for itself (*EN* 1097a26–33); and finally (v) be self-sufficient *(autarkês),* in the sense that its presence suffices to make a life lacking in nothing (*EN* 1097b6–16). Plainly some candidates for the best life fall down in the face of these criteria. According to Aristotle, neither the life of pleasure nor the life of honour satisfies them all. (Shields, 2020, 26-27)[268].

What cannot be forgotten is his teleological understanding of nature, and that every living being has an ultimate end/finality in its existence (telos), and the potential/ function (ergon/dunamis[269]) to actualize it (energeia) in virtue/excellence (arete).

> But perhaps saying that the highest good is happiness (eudaimonia) will appear to be a platitude and what is wanted is a much clearer expression of what this is. Perhaps this would come about if the function (ergon) of a human being were identified. [⋯] For living is common even to plants, whereas something characteristic (*idion*) is wanted; so, one should set aside the life of nutrition and growth. Following that would be some sort of life of perception, yet this is also common, to the horse and the bull and to every animal. **What remains, therefore, is a life of action belonging to the kind of soul that has reason.** (*EN* 1097b22–1098a4 apud Shields, 2020, p. 27, emphasis added).

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[268] For a more comprehensive discussion, see, for instance Irwin, Terence H. Conceptions of Happiness in the Nicomachean Ethics. Chapter. In *The Oxford Handbook of Aristotle.* Edited by Christopher Shields. Oxford University Press, 2012. Online publication.

[269] Makin, Stephen. Energeia and Dunamis. Chapter. In *The Oxford Handbook of Aristotle.* Edited by Christopher Shields. Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 5. Online publication.

As human beings possess a soul that comprises three functions, and the highest is the intellective (thought and will), that is the part of the soul that ought to organize the others (very much like Plato though). If the good life is the one which enables the accomplishment of the *telos* of the being *(eudaimonia),* the best life for humans in the one that allows for the highest flourishing of the intellective function, which is the life dedicates to the study of *theoria*[270]*,* of contemplation. That is not, however, the end of the story. Even within *NE*, if one compares Book I and Book 10, there will be differences in what consists such *eudaimonia.*

> Whereas other animals have a single telos defining their nature (…), humans both have a distinctive human nature —arising from the unique capacity to use language to deliberate about how to act — and also share in the divine nature in their ability to use reason to understand the eternal and intelligible order of the world. Practical reason is the domain of ethics and politics, the uniquely human domain. Yet the political life is not necessarily the best life, compared with that devoted to the divinely shared human capacity for theoretical reason and philosophical thinking (compare *Nicomachean Ethics* I with X.7–9). (Lane, 2018, p. 13).

One will leave to the side exploring the meanders of this debate, taking leave from Aristotle himself, who acknowledges that such a life of contemplation is at the reach of very few, to explore the "second best life" (this is not an expression used by him), the one according to practical reason – the realm of what could be otherwise - and life in society. "Happiness turns out to be an activity of the rational soul, conducted in accordance with virtue or excellence, or, in what comes to the same thing, in rational activity executed excellently (*EN* 1098a16–17)." Shields (2020, p. 27) will underscore that when Aristotle states that happiness consists in an activity in 'accordance with virtue' (*EN* 1098a18), he "means that it is a kind of excellent activity, and not merely morally virtuous activity." **Activity is a key word, the virtue must be characterized and acted upon, so it is an investigation of reason both in its theoretical and practical forms.**

As Irwin explains (2020[271], p. 40), human beings have both rational and non-rational desires, and the excellent condition of the soul requires cooperation between them. "In someone has the right view of happiness and acts on it, rational desires control and organize non-rational desires, and non-rational desires cooperate with them. This is the condition of a virtuous person." That is not a vision of asceticism, but one of **moderation:** a cornerstone of Aristotle's understanding of ethics, which is often misunderstood. Continuing with Irwin (2020, p. 41-42),

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[270] Such interpretation is called by some the "intellectualist conception". See Irwin (2012) in *The Oxford Handbook of Aristotle.*

[271] Irwin, Terence. *Ethics Through History: An Introduction.* Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2020.

> This state of the virtuous person is the 'mean' (or 'intermediate') state of feelings and appetites, between total suppression and total indulgence. Aristotle does not say or imply that if we achieve the mean in relation to fear or anger (e.g.), we will be only moderately angry or afraid. On the contrary, the virtuous person will be extremely— though not uncontrollably—angry if extreme anger is called for. A virtue is a mean state because it neither endorses all our non-rational attitudes nor rejects them, but adjusts them to the correct rational desires.

Aristotle will explore in detail virtues of character and virtues of the intellect, the necessity of habituation, the states of vice, incontinence, continence and virtue, and Irwin's book provide a comprehensive guide. Nevertheless, before moving on to the realm of *ta politika*, a word must be said on the importance Aristotle placed on friendship, which is extensively approached in *NE.*

Aristotle's term 'philia', usually rendered by 'friendship', actually covers several cooperative relations. He distinguishes three kinds of friendship — concerned, respectively, with advantage, pleasure, and goodness. In its highest form, friendship is "the third and most satisfying summit of moral life. Justice is concerned with the general order of the political community. Friendship provides a necessary supplement to justice, and holds the polis together. Whereas true friends do not have a need for justice, Aristotle argues, just individuals still need friendship to enjoy a fine life (*NE* 1155a28-29)." Friendship in essential for happiness because in the activity of the intellect and the thoughtful conversation of individuals who are lovers of wisdom, friendship brings the natural human capacities for speech and reason to a complete realization (Irwin, 2020, p. 41-42; 49).

Korab-Karpowicz (2015, p. 42) analyses that, on the political level, the highest form of friendship is identified with concord among citizens concerning what is advantageous and just, and the way their country is governed (*EN* 1167b3-5). "Concord is a characteristic of decent persons who look out for the common good and act for the sake of what is equitable. Wicked individuals cannot be in concord, and are capable of friendship to only a slight degree. (EN 1167b10-15). They may enjoy relationships based on pleasure or utility, but they will tend to take advantage of others rather than pursue good for them."

Aristotle concludes his discussion of human happiness in his *Nicomachean Ethics* by introducing political theory as a continuation and completion of ethical theory. Ethical theory characterizes the best form of human life; political theory characterizes the forms of social organization best suited to its realization (*EN* 1181b12–23). (Shields, 2020, p. 28)

4.5.5 *TA POLITIKA* – THE SCIENCE OF THE POLIS[272]

The incursion in Aristotle's understanding of the political realm is a fascinating journey, which comprises a whole set of bearings for, as in Plato, it is deeply connected to the overall edifice of their philosophical thought. One also needs to "undress" some mental preconceptions as to what "politics" entails to appreciate a more encompassing perspective.

Keeping in mind that there is never unanimity among Aristotelian scholars and political philosophers/scientists in any of these issues, a few initial stances need to be highlighted in the building of the primary analytical framework.

The first has to do with the parallel that is often sought when approaching Aristotle's politics in comparison to Plato's. To that, Pellegrin (2012[273], p. 558) cautions "(…) one idea commonly sounded among historians of political doctrines is wholly false. This is the idea that Aristotle was a realist who intended to correct Plato's utopian excesses." Actually, **the key difference between Plato and Aristotle**, in such regard, **is the autonomy each affords to 'political science"**, particularly having as reference the confines of the *Republic.* There, everything is subsumed within the all-encompassing science of dialectic, and the dialectician alone (the philosopher-ruler) masters such knowledge and all that it entails, including those of legislator and ruler of a good city. Aristotle, as it has been shown, divides knowledge in different branches, separating theoretical from practical sciences, and the contingent objects that depend of human reasoning and will (ethics and politics) exhibit a rationality of their own: "(…) 'ethics' and 'politics' are not properly speaking different disciplines, but aspects, or moments, of one and the same research programme, the object of which is a specific **rational knowledge** aiming at reaching the 'human good', both individual (which is the object of ethics), and collective (which is the object of politics)." (op. cit., p. 559).

Having said that, throughout the books gathered under the ***Politics*** title, **Aristotle enlists three meanings of the term**: "it may refer to the whole sphere of the human good, and in this sense it includes ethics; it may also refer to the wisdom of the politician *par excellence*, viz. the legislator; and, finally, it may indicate the specific skill of one who partakes in the administration

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[272] Downey, Glanville. "Aristotle on the Greek Polis: A Study of Problems and Methods." *Urbanism Past & Present,* no. 3 (1976): 21–25. http://www.jstor.org/stable/44403528., p. 22 : "The traditional title employed in English for the Politics may be misleading; the English cannot represent adequately the Greek term that Aristotle himself uses in referring to his own work, *ta politika,* which actually means 'the science of the polis'" or, as in Cartledge, "matters relating to the polis" (2009, p. 3).

[273] Pellegrin, Pierre. Aristotle's Politics. *The Oxford Handbook of Aristotle.* Christopher Shields (ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

of the city." (ibid). Hence, in the reading of the treatise, it is necessary to keep such distinctions in mind.

In other words, *ta politika* is a practical and normative science aiming at modelling the life of a political community according to reason and justice, including inquiries into what mode of life happiness consists (which requires the study of human *ethos)*, and by which forms of government and political institutions it can be achieved (Korab-Karpowicz, 2015, p. 38).

A special mention must be made to the **role of the legislator**, which is much more encompassing than what the translation of such word might, at first, bring to one's mind. The legislator is the one that defines the *politeia* (the regimen, the constitution – think of Solon, or Lycurgus); the one who will conceive the just laws of the city. As it will be seen in more detail, the study of the *politeia* is one of the paramount discussions in the *Politics.* To fulfil such role, Pellegrin quotes, 'The true politician will have worked at virtue more than anything; for what he wants is to make the members of the citizen-body good, and obedient to the laws' (*EN* 1102a8). As seen in the *Ethics*, virtue is the result of the repetition of good actions, and the definition of the good and the bad is, ultimately, established by laws. Thus, good laws are the basic conditions for virtue among individuals (op. cit., p. 560).

At this point, one would go back to pinpointing some differences *vis a vis* Plato's *Republic*, *inter alia*, pertaining the reordering of the roles of political actors. In the *Politics,* Pellegrin highlights, as the legislator assumes the preeminent role, the task of his formation is brought first and centre. **Instead of ruling, the education of such pivotal character is the role of the philosopher.**

> Indeed, the *Politics* can be considered to be mainly a work the philosopher addresses to the legislator;[274] for this purpose the *Politics* calls upon the philosopher to exhibit an amazing amount of knowledge and to adopt various points of view. For a modern reader, this makes the *Politics* a treatise which is both unclassifiable and fascinating: Aristotle in turns makes use of history, sociology, anthropology, economy, psychology, politology, constitutional science, urbanism, but also mathematics, biology, etc. It is hard to resist the idea that this new task ascribed to the philosopher has to be related to the new historical conditions which prevailed in Aristotle's time. (…) When the legitimacy of power is to be found in a dynasty, and no longer in the body of the citizens of a city, the political reformer can at best be the prince's advisor or educator, and that is what Aristotle actually was, at least for a short period (Pellegrin, 2012, p. 561).

[274] Pellegrin's note #6, refencing Bodéüs, Richard. *The Political Dimensions of Aristotle's Ethics*. New York: SUNY Press, 1993.

The last part of the citation brings us to the fourth and final beam of the initial framework, which is the criticism to an excessive "polis centric" approach to the political realm, which would render much of Aristotle's contribution rather impractical or irrelevant to a contemporary understanding of "the city". Aristotle devoted to the city (polis) a very special place in his *Politics,* upholding it **"as the most developed form of social life, and indeed as providing the unextendable horizon of the perfect human life"** (Pellegrin, 2012, p. 561, emphasis added), bearing in mind that he was witnessing the twilight of the Greek polis as an autonomous political form with the ascendance of the Macedonian empire.

While it is a fact that Aristotle describes "the city of his prayers[275]" a political community much smaller than that which would characterize our cities today, there are some broad arguments for the continuing validity of his analyses, even in a more *stricto sensu* outlook.

> For in fact Aristotle is not, or not only, a reactionary bound to a vanished reality. On the contrary, he offered an impressively complete, highly acute analysis of the crisis of the city. And this he did in a most remarkable way. Aristotle does not take the actual historical situation of his time as a starting point in his analysis of the crisis of the city. (…) On the contrary, Aristotle is not an historian. What Karl Polanyi saw better than anyone else, (…) is that Aristotle was the first—and for many centuries the only—thinker who analysed the threat that the development of the merchant economy posed to the political society of his time. He was the first to grasp the difference between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft.* Thus, he did not describe, with the help of historical examples, the end of the ancient world and the birth of the new one. But he did theorize that transformation. About tyranny, we have seen, Aristotle was able to combine in the *Politics* a 'realist' analysis of social and political reality with a reaffirmation of the ethical destination of human beings. Aristotle's position is nevertheless an enigmatic one. He seems to think that the city, especially through the education of children, can resist the very transformations his brilliant analyses tend to show as ineluctable (Pellegrin, 2012, p. 582-83).

Another perspective on the current pertinence of his contribution is offered by Korab-Karpowicz. In thinking of the city-state and the nation state, he states that "In spite of the obvious differences between them, the overlap (…) is so great that it is possible to move between them as long as these differences are borne in mind. Aristotle's conception of the state as a political and moral community is not an antiquated idea that is related solely to the Greek polis; rather, it has universal significance." And why he considers it to be so? In contrast to the modern notion of the state as a political association that is organized for a specific task, such as providing security and protecting property, Aristotle's notion of political community *(koinonia politike)* suggests a core of shared tasks and values (Korab-Karpowicz, 2015, p. 39).

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[275] *Pol.* VII.4.1325b36 "Since this has been said by way of preface about these things, and since the other sorts of regimes were studied earlier, the beginning point of what remains is to speak in the first instance of the sorts of presuppositions there should be concerning the city that is to be constituted on the basis of what one would pray for. In: Aristotle; Lord, Carnes. *Aristotle's Politics.* Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2013.

4.5.6 THE "NATURAL" POLIS

> *It is evident, then, that the city exists by nature, and that a human being is by nature a political animal.*
>
> *Anyone without a city because of his nature rather than his fortune is either worthless or superior to a human being.*
>
> *Like the man reviled by Homer, 'he has no kin, no law, no home'.*
>
> *[Pol. 1253a1-5]*

Either worthless or a God. These are the necessary status granted to those who do not belong to a *polis.* In the history of the West, it could be argued that this is the most powerful statement ever made ontologically relating the individual and "the city".

As Shields summarizes and it will be explored in the next paragraphs, in Aristotle, the *polis* is the basic political unit. It agglutinates the authority-wielding monopoly associated to the sphere of the "state" and the variety of interests of a series of organized communities ("civil society"). And being by nature a *political animal* goes much beyond a gregarious disposition or ripening benefits from mutual commercial exchanges: it entails the strong sense that one's flourishing *(eudaimonia)* as a human being can only take place within the framework of an organized polis. And as Aristotle himself highlights, the polis **'comes into being for the sake of living, but it remains in existence for the sake of living well'** (Pol. 1252b29–30; cf. 1253a31–37, *apud* Shields (2020, p. 28), emphasis added).

Hence, in these first few lines, three foundational interrelationships are established and will be explored throughout the eight books that compose the treatise: not only the *polis* provides the contour for the fulfilment of human nature, but the *polis* itself is to be judged in relation to promoting *eudaimonia,* for a superior form of political organization enhances human life, whilst an inferior hinders it. Thus, a major pursuit in Aristotle's Politics revolves around questioning what kind of political arrangement best succeeds in promoting eudaimonia. (Shields, 2020).

Koslo[276] (2012) offers a brief analytical index of the main topics examined in each of the books: **Book I** addresses the naturalness of the polis, discusses the household and family, and some economic matters (includes Aristotle's discussion on slavery and the role of women). **Book II** investigates ideal states in theory and practice, including criticism of Plato's Republic and Laws. **Book III** returns to the nature of the polis and the citizen; explores in depth different types of constitutions; and discusses who should rule and different kinds of kingship. **Books IV to VI** embark on a detailed, historically grounded, scientific analysis of different poleis, including how

[276] Kolso, George. *History of Political Theory: An Introduction. Volume I: Ancient and Medieval.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

they work and causes of their corruption and decline. Finally, **Books VII and VIII** (incomplete) envision of the best possible state, which, in Koslo's perspective, appears to be modelled following Plato's *Laws.*

There is an enticing multitude of avenues that the Aristotelian texts would allow to explore in relation to "the city". Fruitful areas of investigation for contemporary debates could include the nature of political regimes, what defines citizenship, the education of the political body, power relations, the rule of law, the domain of the public and private realms, democracy, just to name a few.

In the impossibility of succeeding beyond a mere scratch on the surface, these next pages will endeavour to revisit the way in which this herald gave voice to one of the most genuine human aspirations – that of happiness – and highlight some of the connections he made between the pinnacle of a well-lived human life and the confines of "the city".

4.5.6.1 The Good that Controls all the Other Goods

The opening of the Politics (Book I) brings a categorical statement about the purpose of the *polis.*

> We see that every city is some sort of community, and that every community is constituted for the sake of some good, since everyone does everything for the sake of what seems good. Clearly, then, while all communities aim at some good, **the community that aims most of all at the good — at the good that most of all controls all the other goods — is the one that most of all controls and includes the others; and this is the one called the city, the political community**. [*Pol.* 1252a1-8, emphasis added][277]

Following Pellerin's analyses, Aristotle will proceed to investigate the hierarchy of mutual relationships within human society, particularly those of ruler and ruled. Very briefly, he will detain himself considering different power relations: husband over wife, father over children, master over slave, king over subjects, magistrate over fellow citizens. Each will follow different criteria and ought to be exercised differently, always within "nature", for acting against it will be harmful to the well-being of the city and its citizens.

Aristotle affirms the natural character of some human associations, particularly the "family" *(oikia*[278]*)* and the city *(polis).* The family has as its natural end "to satisfy the needs of

[277] Irwin, Terence; Fine, Gail; Aristotle. *Aristotle: Selections.* Indianapolis; Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1995.

[278] As Pellegrin observes on the note #7, what is implied as "family" does not mean family in the modern sense, even if it expanded to include more than two generations. As he describes it, the word *oikia* indicates a lineage which extends to people who are not even biologically related, including most notably servants.

daily life" and, when they gather "for the sake of non-daily needs" they form a village, which is also a natural association (*Pol.* 1252b15). The villages can gather into a larger society, forming the "next and ultimate stage of human natural development", that is, the city (Pellegrin, 2012, p. 563).

A clarification is important at this point: a city is not merely an ensemble of villages, but only that that reaches the limit of self-sufficiency *(autarkeia).* Both for him and for Plato, self-sufficiency regarding material needs is a defining feature of the polis, but goes beyond it (*Pol.* 1252b27; *Republic* 369b-c). The city is the *telos* (end) of the communities coming before it, for it is the city that can provide its citizens not only the satisfaction of their needs – *the living* - (more or less sophisticated as these needs may be), but the *living well (eudaimonia).*

In his unabridged words,

> The complete community, formed from a number of villages, is a city. Unlike the others, it has the full degree of practically every sort of self-sufficiency; it comes to be for the sake of living, but remains in being for the sake of living well. That is why every city is natural, since the previous communities are natural. For the city is their end, and nature is an end; for we say that something's nature (for instance, of a human being, a horse, or a household) is the character it has when its coming to be is complete. Moreover, the final cause and end is the best ‹good›, and self-sufficiency is both the end and the best ‹good›. [*Pol.* 1252b28 – 1253a1][279]

Hence, in Aristotle's view, beyond the aim of subsistence, the polis is self-sufficient environment where *the best good* can flourish; where "the mind can be enlarged and virtue can develop. The state is then for Aristotle a community that is not only political, but also moral." (Korab-Karpowicz, 2015, p. 39).

The use of the words "nature", "natural" in Aristotle is something that always has to be handled with great care. The treatises of *Physics* and *Metaphysics* explore such concepts in depth, and comprehensive analyses of their meaning and ramifications is beyond what can be achieved at this point. Nevertheless, due to associations that they inadvertently carry to non-philosophical ears, some clarification is needed.

Both Pellegrin and Korab-Karpowicz note that when Aristotle says that "every city is natural", or that "the state exists by nature" (depending on the translation), he does not mean that the state/city has a natural cause. For example, Pellegrin remarks that, for Aristotle, only things that are "substance" *(ousia)* can have a "nature", which is not the case of the city (but it is of humans) and that the city is not the property of a natural substance as well (2012, p. 564-65).

[279] Irwin and Fine *Selections*, 1995.

What they interpret him saying is that the city/state "**has a natural end, and that by striving toward this end it promotes the nature of human beings**", meaning it allows the ample realization of human potential. It enables "the natural human impulse for society and the capacity for virtuous living." *Allows* and *potential* are also operative words here: it may be so, it is not necessarily so. It is the abundantly known, and painfully experienced, gap between the ideal and the "real". Just as a person can underachieve in its goals, actual cities/states "are often imperfect and fall short of the end of realizing the good life." They will gather people together by common interest and serve the necessary but not sufficient ends of shelter, security, protection, commerce, etc. But they will fail in fulfilling their essential features of "complete friendship and a deliberate choice to live together." (Korab-Karpowicz, 2015, p. 45, emphasis added). Aristotle will also expand on this:

> Further, the city is naturally prior to the household and to the individual, since the whole is necessarily prior to the part. For if the whole animal is dead, neither foot nor hand will survive, except homonymously, as if we were speaking of a stone hand — for that is what a dead hand will be like. Now everything is defined by its function and potentiality; and so anything that has lost them should not be called the same thing, but a homonymous thing. Clearly, then, the city is also natural and is prior to the individual. For if the individual separated from the city is not self-sufficient, his relation to it corresponds to that of parts to wholes in other cases; and anyone who is incapable of membership in a community, or who has no need of it because he is self-sufficient, is no part of a city, and so is either a beast or a god. [*Pol.* 1253a19-25][280]

Pellegrin accentuates from this passage Aristotle's emphasis on the whole being prior to the part, so the city being prior to the family and to us (the aspect of self-sufficiency will be explored in the next section). This is not a *prior* in chronological perspective, but that an organism may live (however maimed) without some of its parts, but the part cannot have an independent life.

> If we take this analogy seriously, we have to acknowledge that, according to Aristotle, just as in the case of a dead hand or a stone hand, a man who is not part of a city should be called a man only homonymously. **For when separated from the city, he would not completely fulfil the very concept of 'man'. This is the farthest point Aristotle ever reached in adopting such a Platonic posture advocating a dependency of the individual on the city.** (Pellegrin, 2012, p. 564, emphasis added).

That is quite a strong statement, in tune with the one that was highlighted in the beginning of this section, particularly from a more "modern" and "individualistic" standpoint, and thus requires some further unpacking. Pellegrin proceeds by explaining some facets of what man's nature is in Aristotle: "properties like policity belong to him by nature, in the same way that his 'economic' character and his belonging to a village do as well." He concurs with Korab-

[280] Irwin and Fine *Selections*, 1995.

Karpowicz is as much as the city is the frame of reference within which man can achieve the full flourishing of his nature. Nevertheless, takes one step further, and this is key: **"the city does not make man political, even if good laws should develop the potential policity of the citizens: where there are no men sufficiently political, there is no city."** (emphasis added). Again, one must not confuse what Aristotle conceptualizes as "nature" and "natural" with the idea of something that would happen effortlessly, a free-flowing innate skill. Actually, and this is something the Stagirite explores in length in his ethical treatises, and also in the *Politics*, **"the political nature and destination of man requires a kind virtue of which many are incapable.** Accordingly, one of the main tasks of the legislator is to keep out of power those who are incapable of realizing their political nature." (ibid., p. 564-66, emphasis added).

However, the statement that the polis is prior to men, and that a man that is not part of a polis is not fully a man, is not to be interpreted within a structuralist approach. Pellegrin has already argued that the city does not make men political. Korab-Karpowicz (2015, 44-45) will expand on it.

He posits that when Aristotle states that that human beings are by nature political and that their nature is expressed in rational activity, he does not mean that the property of being political and rational applies universally. Also, though reason and speech are their natural capacities and can only be fully exercised in the environment of the polis, humans derive the characteristics of being rational and political from their *telos*, the natural end for which they strive (that is, to be rational and to live in the most fulfilling social environment). Having said that, Korab-Karpowicz will emphasize an important feature of Aristotle's acknowledgement of the bond between the individual and the community at one hand, and individual agency at the other:

> Aristotle ( ) does not endorse the view of Marxists and today's critical theorists that human beings are completely dependent on their social or cultural conditioning. **People become excellent by "nature, habit, and reason"** (1332a39-32b7[281]). They become what they are first through their inborn human capacities and natural qualities, second through the habits or ways of life they follow in society, and third through the guidance of their own reason, which sometimes, if they are persuaded that some other course of life is better, makes them act contrary to their own habitual ways. Therefore, since by using the faculty of reason it is possible for us to choose right things, we cannot blame our social environment for what we do and what we are. Society may have a

[281] "There are three things which make men good and excellent; these are nature, habit, reason. In the first place, every one must be born a man and not some other animal; so, too, he must have a certain character, both of body and soul. But some qualities there is no use in having at birth, for they are altered by habit, and there are some gifts which by nature are made to be turned by habit to good or bad. Animals lead for the most part a life of nature, although in lesser particulars some are influenced by habit as well. Man has reason, in addition, and man only. For this reason nature, habit, reason must be in harmony with one another; for they do not always agree; men do many things against habit and nature, if reason persuades them that they ought. We have already determined what natures are likely to be most easily moulded by the hands of the legislator. All else is the work of education; we learn some things by habit and some by instruction. [Pol. 1332a39-1332b12, Barnes edition)

> considerable influence on us, but we are not reducible simply to products of society. Our choices are results of a process of deliberation. **The ability to enter into a rational deliberation about what is advantageous or harmful, just or unjust, and to live the best possible life in accordance with virtue is for Aristotle what properly constitutes being human.** (*op. cit,* emphasis added).

Engaging in a debate over agency exploring Aristotelian and critical theory standpoints, fascinating as it would be, will have to be cut short at this time. There will be further exploration on his take in the relationship between what constitutes a human being and the polis. But before advancing to the political and moral aspects of it, a few words on some features in terms of "pragmatic" sphere of *the living.*

4.5.6.2 The Living

Pellegrin offers a helpful clarification to the *autarkeia* definition. More than an economic term, such "full self-sufficiency" is achieved only when the community does not depend on exterior factors for its "living" (functioning or surviving) as well as is not under political ruling from an exterior society. "In this sense 'self-sufficient' is almost a synonym for 'perfect' or 'complete' *(teleion).* Such a true and complete self-sufficiency cannot be found but within a city." (Pellegrin, 2012, p. 565)

Nevertheless, there is an inherent conflict between that which would naturally pertain to the domain of the *oikia* (family) and its direct connection to the economic self-sufficiency of the polis, and the "complete self-sufficiency", which encompasses its political-ethical dimensions. Such conflict, though acutely studied by Aristotle, is part and parcel of the societal panorama at the time.

One can recall Sophocles' *Antigone* (441 BC), a tragedy depicting the dilemma between the obedience to the laws of the family and the laws of the polis, can attest. It is important to remember that the Greek tragedy represents not a struggle of good against evil, but a battle of *right against right*[282].

[282] As summarized by Ruth Fainlight and Robert J. Littman in *The Theban Plays* introduction, "*Antigone* embodied the struggle of two rights: on one side, divine law, which obliged kin to bury their dead relatives, no matter what the situation; on the other side, Creon, who represented civil law and government. Each side had legitimate claims to defend its action. While modern audiences might tend to side with Antigone, who willingly died in her resistance to what she considered an unjust law, the Greek audience, as well as many audiences throughout history, would have found Creon's position preferable, sympathetic, and defensible. Sophocles. *The Theban Plays : Oedipus the King, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone* Translated, with notes and an introduction, by Ruth Fainlight and Robert J. Littman. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009.

Plato equated the issue by nipping the evil in its bud, supressing the family ties and private property for the Guardians in his Kallipolis, therefore preventing "the civic duties from being endangered by the solidarities of the blood." (Pellegrin, 2012, p. 566). Aristotle, in his analytical way, goes deeper in the relationship of the *oikia* and the city, and advances a more moderate approach (if compared to Plato's).

Pellegrin, in analysing Aristotle's outlook, underlines that, as families are meant to satisfy the needs of reproduction and preservation, their self-sufficiency is mostly economic (in Greek, the word economy comes from *oikia*). To achieve such self-sufficiency, the family would rely on its own working force (no wonder that, in Aristotle, it would be the sphere of women and slaves…), and trade would be considered natural up to a certain point (exchanging one useful thing for another, even if intermediated by money, so much as money was a facilitator). Hence, "the familial (economic) sphere, which is natural and necessary for the city to satisfy the natural needs of its members (…) has to remain subordinated to the city. (…) **Translating this into epistemological terms, politics is architectonic in relation to economics[283].**" (Pellegrin, 2012, p. 566, emphasis added).

Expanding on this point, which one considers quite interesting and would constitute a topic for further inquiry in a future research (the architectonic relation between politics and economics and how it has changed since then), Pellegrin highlights that, in setting up boundaries to which trade and money could be considered "natural", Aristotle was the first to distinguish between *use value* and *exchange value* (see, i.e., *Pol.* 1257a1-40). Markedly, the Catholic Church's condemnation of lending money for profit (usury) used his analyses to strengthen its theoretical stance (and which was a point of dispute in the Reformation). To enhance his argument, Pellegrin brings to the forefront what he considers to be the remarkable work of Karl Polanyi[284] in *Aristotle Discovers the Economy*[285]. For, if that is the case, it will be, among other reasons, because the Stagirite "has been the first to see clearly the very functioning of the market economy, a form of which develops at his time, and because he desperately tries to keep the political sphere free from any contamination by the economic sphere" (Pellegrin, 2012, p. 565-66).

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[283] It is worth noting that is part of the expanded *Aristotelian Corpus* a treatise entitled *Economics,* which is included in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, after *Politics*. The majoritarian position is that it is spurious. Nevertheless, it is good evidence of the peripatetic position on the administration of the household, as Pellegrin (2012) argues in his note #14.

[284] Karl Polanyi (1886-1964), born into a Jewish family, is an Austro-Hungarian thinker in the fields of economy, history, sociology, anthropology and philosophy, whose best known book is *The Great Transformation* (published in 1944, when he was already living in the US), which carries out an in-depth analyses of the rise of the market economy in England and its social and economic ramifications. Among his contemporaries at the University of Budapest, where he accomplished a doctorate in Law, were György Lukács and Karl Mannheim.

[285] Karl Polanyi. Aristotle Discovers the Economy. Chapter. In Karl Polanyi, Conrad M. Arensberg, Harry W. Pearson. (Eds.). *Trade and Market in the Early Empires : Economies in History and Theory*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1957, pp 64-94.

A couple of quotes may help to illustrate these perceived dangers. The first is from Book I, that addresses the essentials of the polis, and the second from Book V, that addresses the modes of destruction and preservation of it.

> The most hated sort, and with the greatest reason, is usury, which makes a gain out of money itself, and not from the natural object of it. For money was intended to be used in exchange, but not to increase at interest. And this term interest, which means the birth of money from money, is applied to the breeding of money because the offspring resembles the parent. That is why of all modes of getting wealth this is the most unnatural. (Pol. 1258b1-8; Barnes[286]).

> The greatest safeguard in every political system is to order the laws and the rest of the organization so as to prevent ruling officials from making a profit. This precaution is especially necessary in oligarchies. For the many are less offended by exclusion from ruling (indeed they are even pleased to have leisure for their own affairs) than by the thought that the rulers are stealing public funds, with the result that the many are offended by being excluded both from honors and from profits. (*Pol.* 1308b33-39; Barnes)

Hence, how will Aristotle strive to keep the separation between the political and economic realms, so the city does not end up with a deviated constitution (plutocracy, tyranny) imposed by an economic rationale; so it does not fail to achieve its natural goal of happiness?

Pellegrin explains that, under the name *khrêmatistikê*, Aristotle will describe the art/expertise which renders the economic domain autonomous. In Barnes' edition, it is called "an art of wealth-getting (…) riches and property have no limit" (*Pol.* 1256b41-1257a1; Barnes), a variation of the "art of acquisition" (*Pol.* 1256b26; Barnes). It follows that when the householder organizes his life and the life of the *oikia* towards the art of wealth-getting, he ends up by relinquishing the role of citizen, properly speaking.

> This is why Aristotle excludes craftsmen from the body of the citizens, an exclusion which has been misunderstood by modern readers. Like many people in his time, Aristotle probably despised manual labour, but not mainly because he socially despised 'base-born' people. The main reason is that in order to live life whose goal is to earn as much money as possible a person must develop certain dispositions over others and therefore also, ultimately, must develop a character incompatible with the life of a citizen. (Pellegrin, 2012, p. 566)

One final point must be made regarding the incommensurability of the economic life and the political life of the city, and the conditions of citizenship in Aristotle's reading. One can never forget that the status of citizen pertains to a select group of "people", of which women and slaves, among others are (inexpiably) excluded. As Pellegrin highlights,

[286] The quotes followed by "Barnes" were taken from Aristotle; Barnes, Jonathan (ed.). *The Complete Works of Aristotle, Volume One and Two.* Bollinger series ; 71:2. Princeton and Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1984.

> (…) the Aristotelian city politically needs slaves, because the basic structure of the city is the articulation between the familial and the political spheres (…). Masters need slaves to be citizens, which they could not be without slaves to carry out various necessary tasks; such tasks would not only waste the time needed by citizens for political life, but also could turn the citizen into a *homo economicus* rather than a political animal. (Pellegrin, 2012, p. 569)

Making an almost 2,500 years ellipses, one cannot help but wonder about the contemporary "requisites" of citizenship and, if in the due course of time, the *homo economicus* has led the political animal to the verge of extinction – both from the weight of the daily tasks as from allure of the *khrêmatistikê*. How much the treadmill to tend to the *living,* and to the desire of wealth-getting, preclude the possibilities of *living well?* If, as highlighted in the previous section, "where there are no men sufficiently political, there is no city", has the *homo economicus* also expunged "the city"? And, worse yet, if one "becomes excellent by "nature, habit, and reason"", by forfeiting nature, abandoning virtue (excellence), indulging in immoderate habits, and precluding reason with sophism, can we call ourselves properly humans?

4.5.6.3 The Living Well

> It is evident why a human being is more of a political animal than is any bee or any gregarious animal; for nature, we say, does nothing pointlessly, and a human being is the only animal with rational discourse (*logos*). (…) For this is distinctive of human beings in contrast to the other animals, that they are the only ones with a perception of good and evil, and of just and unjust, and so on; and it is community in these that produces a household and a city. [*Pol.* 1253a8-18][287]

This is but one of the paragraphs where Aristotle accentuate the connection[288] between ethics and politics. It is his premise that happiness pertains to the flourishing of the most distinctive human capacities, which are those in accordance with reason, and it follows that happiness entails the dedication to "activities involving the exercise of reason that are excellent, continued over the course of a lifetime". (Korab-Karpowicz, 2015, p. 41). The link between *logos* and the city is also emphasized, for if nature does nothing in vain (i.e. Pol. 1253a9), and it has endowed men with *logos*, the city emerges as the natural stage to fulfil this capacity to collectively signify the good and the bad, the just and the unjust. "Therefore, it is in cities that speech will fully perform its function." (Pellegrin, 2012, p. 564)

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[287] Irwin and Fine *Selections*, 1995.

[288] On this particular topic, Korab-Karpowicz recalls calls attention to the following passages: *NE* 1098a7-8; *NE* 1101a15-17; and *Pol.* 1328a37-38.

> Everyone has a natural impulse, then, toward this sort of community, and whoever first constituted it is the cause of the greatest goods. **For just as a human being is the best of the animals if he has been completed, he is also the worst of them if he is separated from law and the rule of justice.** For injustice is most formidable when it is armed, and a human being naturally grows up armed and equipped for intelligence and virtue, but can most readily use this equipment for ends that are contrary to intelligence and virtue; hence without virtue he is the most unscrupulous and savage of animals, the most excessive in pursuit of sex and food. **Justice, however, is political; for the rule of justice is an order in the political community, and justice is the judgment of what is just.** [*Pol.* 1253a25-1253b][289]

A few aspects of Aristotelian ethics and the importance he attributes to friendship have already been mentioned in a previous section. But the value of friendship also encompasses the scale of the polis, and he build parallels between the virtues and shortcomings of different types of friendship at the individual level and the political realm, which are analysed by Korab-Karpowicz (2015).

In the life of the city, complete friendship relates to concord (unanimity) among citizens in regards to what is advantageous and just, and its connection to government. It is an attribute of those who look out for the common good and for equity. On the other hand, there can be no concord among the wicked, with deleterious consequences to the public good. Incomplete forms of friendship, such as those based on pleasure and utility, also find a parallel on the political level, and their characteristic of dissention is mirrored in *stasis,* which also destroys the possibilities of concord and the common interest. "A political community is grounded upon solidarity and friendship, and not upon the mere exchange of commodities or reciprocal protection. Where there is no friendship, but only envy and contempt, no community can properly exist." (op. cit., p. 42). One of Aristotle's passages about this is as follows:

> Unanimity seems, then, to be political friendship, as indeed it is commonly said to be; for it is concerned with things that are to our interest and have an influence on our life. Now such unanimity is found among good men; for they are unanimous both in themselves and with one another, being, so to say, of one mind (for the wishes of such men are constant and not at the mercy of opposing currents like a strait of the sea), and they wish for what is just and what is advantageous, and these are the objects of their common endeavour as well. But bad men cannot be unanimous except to a small extent, any more than they can be friends, since they aim at getting more than their share of advantages, while in labour and public service they fall short of their share; and each man wishing for advantage to himself criticizes his neighbour and stands in his way**; for if people do not watch it carefully the common interest is soon destroyed.** (*NE* 1167b1-13, Barnes)

One of the most important roles of the legislator is to promote ethical education and the cultivation of friendship (*NE* 1155a24-28). Aristotle would be at odds with outlooks on human

[289] Irwin and Fine *Selections*, 1995.

nature that see it as strictly selfish and individualistic. And, although he builds strong arguments supporting an understanding that people can only fully develop their potential in a community, as Korab-Karpowicz (2015, p. 44-45) underscores, it would be incorrect to align his views with thinkers who argue that human beings are strictly dependent on their social or cultural milieu.

> People become excellent by "nature, habit, and reason" (*Pol.* 1332a39-32b7). They become what they are first through their inborn human capacities and natural qualities, second through the habits or ways of life they follow in society, and third through the guidance of their own reason, which sometimes, if they are persuaded that some other course of life is better, makes them act contrary to their own habitual ways. **Therefore, since by using the faculty of reason it is possible for us to choose right things, we cannot blame our social environment for what we do and what we are. Society may have a considerable influence on us, but we are not reducible simply to products of society. Our choices are results of a process of deliberation.** The ability to enter into a rational deliberation about what is advantageous or harmful, just or unjust, and to live the best possible life in accordance with virtue is for Aristotle what properly constitutes being human.

Aristotle would also object (as would all the other three heralds, for that matter), to a political understanding of "the city" decoupling the dimensions of state and society. In the analysis of Strauss (1964, p. 32),

> Aristotle knew and rejected a view of the city which seems to foreshadow the modem view of political society and hence the distinction between state and society. According to that view, the purpose of the city is to enable its members to exchange goods and services by protecting them against violence among themselves and from foreigners, without its being concerned at all with the moral character of its members.[290] Aristotle does not state the reasons which were adduced for justifying this limitation of the purpose of the city unless his reference in this context to a sophist is taken to be a sufficient indication. The view reported by Aristotle reminds us of the description given in Plato's Republic of the 'city of pigs[291]' - of a society which is sufficient for satisfying the natural wants of the body, i.e. of the naturally private.

Aristotle will take a different stance from Plato in regards to the drive towards unity (harmonia) that is ingrained in *Republic*. Aristotle, within his own limits, will open room for diversity and see the life of the *polis* more as a symphony. There is still strong drive towards stability, but that will be pursued through the means of a mixed regime (*politeia*). Aristotle, within the confines of his Lyceum, studied over a hundred different constitutions. As remarked by Korab-Karpowicz (2015, p. 49), he derives his philosophy of human affairs from observation. The *polis* is composed of a multitude of groups (*Pol.* 1261a23-24) representing different interests, values and notions of justice. The life in common within such diversity offers both the possibility

[290] Strauss note # 44 references the following passages: *Politics* 1280a25-b35. Cf. the kindred criticism of this kind of society by Augustine in *De Civitate Dei* II 20. (p. 32)

[291] Strauss note # 45 references the Republic 372d4 and e6-7. (p. 32)

for cooperation as for conflict. Hence the importance of an institutional solution capable of counterbalancing excessive polarities (a stable *politeia*) and a social component (that would possibly bring a smile to contemporary economists), "the presence of a strong middle class. To begin with the latter, he argues that, in contrast to either the very rich or the very poor, those who are in the middle have a stabilizing effect on the community."

To the eyes of this researcher it seems striking how, in essence, Aristotle's prescriptions resonate with how one would approach desirable features for a city today: a sense of community and belonging that motivates citizens to actively participate in the deliberation of the public realm, but that is open enough to accommodate diversity and the pursuit of one's particular interests; a robust middle-class that circulates more or less evenly the existing wealth, easing the pressure on the extremes; and institutional responses capable of managing the tensions that are inherent in any human system that is in movement. Such observation does not mean to equate ancient Athens to contemporary Sao Paulo but, within the spirit of identifying the resonance of these mythopoetic voices, it appears that Aristotle can still be heard.

Lane (2014, p. 4), in her introductory chapter to *The Birth of Politics*, explains her epistemological choices to explore the topics she did in light of the voices of Ancient Greece and Rome. Part of her justification addresses the perception that they would be "naïve" if compared with contemporary scholarship, or that they would not have suffered enough scrutiny from their own contemporaries. The advantage she sees in her chosen approach is that what makes Greek and Roman ideas "such good resources for thinking is the remarkably wide spectrum of possibilities of power that they covered. It is hard to find a modern critique of Greek and Roman politics (on slavery, on gender, on elitism, on imperialism) that some particular Greek or Roman did not make first." That is a reassuring observation to introduce one's parting thoughts in relation to **the city that Aristotle "would pray for"** (*Pol*[292]. VII.4 1325b36). In the synthesis presented by Manent (2013, p. 98), **it is a city of "self-sufficiency, perfection, happiness and beauty".** Moreover,

> One could also call a "city" a zone of commercial exchange or a forum of intermarriages. In all these cases, the life of the "city" has nothing properly civic. Yet the city, since it exists, must have a life of its own. **"Political life"—the life of the polis—must have a content of its own. What is this content? We know Aristotle's answers: sharing in happiness, life according to deliberate choice, or life for the sake of noble actions**[293] (ibid, p. 96).

[292] Aristotle's *Politics.* Translated and with an introduction, notes, and glossary by Carnes Lord. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2013 (1984).

[293] Manent's note # 41 references *Pol.* 1280a33–34 and 1281a2–3 (p. 334).

4.6 CICERO

Who Alone is Perhaps Worth all the Philosophers of Greece[294]

(…) to paraphrase John 21:25[295]**, not all of the books in the world could contain the full story of Cicero's influence.**
William H. F. Altman[296]

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC) lived in what in perhaps one of the most fascinating periods in history, the transition from the Roman Republic to Empire – a tumultuous time; a controversial character. He shared the world political stage as an active participant with the mythological figures of Julius Caesar, Pompei, Crassus; Octavian Augustus, Mark Anthony and Cleopatra; Brutus and Cato, to name a few. He read Plato and Aristotle in the original Greek, and it is through his translations that some of their works survived the passage of the centuries. He studied philosophy with some of the best minds of his age, having had the opportunity of experiencing teachings of the Academy, Peripatetic, Stoic, Sceptic and Epicurean schools. A prolific writer, his command of the Latin language, rhetoric skills and powers of persuasion are legendary[297]. He left a treasure in letters, speeches, rhetorical treatises and philosophical works that sum up thousands of pages.

Cicero lived through exile, shame and loss. Though a clever an experienced politician, he had a knack for picking the losing side. Vain, petulant, susceptible to adulation, opportunistic, at times timid and insecure, are also adjectives that describe facets of this personality. "There are many Ciceros (…) and, behind all these, there is the real Cicero, one of the most remarkable

[294] "The romans have their Cicero, who alone is perhaps worth all the philosophers of Greece." Voltaire, *Dictionnaire philosophique, portatif.* London, 1765, p. 304, apud Jed W. Atkins. *Cicero on Politics and the Limits of Reason : The Republic and Laws.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 1.

[295] Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written. In *The Holy Bible*, New International Version® NIV®, available at https://www.bible.com/bible/111/JHN.21.NIV

[296] William H. F. Altman. Introduction. Chapter. *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Cicero.* William H. F. Altman (ed). Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2015.

[297] As an example, John O. Ward quotes the medieval grammarian Geoffrey of Vinsauf *(Poetria Nova,* circa 1200 AD*)*: "Such a one is intelligent like Cato, speaks like Cicero, is strong like Pyrrhus, energetic like Paris, daring like Campaneus, loves like Theseus and plays music like Orpheus." See John O. Ward. Ciceronian Rhetoric and Oratory from St. Augustine to Guarino da Verona. Chapter. *Cicero Refused to Die : Ciceronian Influence Through the Centuries.* Nancy van Deusen (ed.) Leiden: Brill, 2013. pp. 163-196.

men of a most remarkable period, and one whose varied and pioneering life was crowned with tragedy." (Ward, 2013, p. 163; Schofield, 2021[298], p. 4).

Cicero left his mark in several areas of human knowledge, in branches of philosophy, law, political science, rhetoric, literature. One of his most lasting legacies was the creation of a philosophical lexicon in Latin, so that Romans could understand it, and it is a fact that many philosophical terms in modern languages were coined by him (Kenny, 2010). Cicero's influence has remained for over two millennia. Notably, he was an inspiration in the development of republican thinking during the French and American Revolutions, on the French Illuminists and the American 'Founding Fathers'.

One of the truly great orators in the Latin language died a tragic death, decapitated by the order of Mark Anthony, whom he had relentlessly opposed in the aftermath of Cesar's assassination. Though details differ in the accounts that have reached us, there is concord that he "met death with containment, courage, and resolution." (van Deusen, 2013[299], p. 1). Through his political and his philosophical activities alike, he endeavoured, in vain, to turn the unsurmountable tide that led to the collapse of the Roman Republic, but also to the birth of the Roman Empire (Korab-Karpowicz, 2015). And though he could not change the course of history, "as long as there is interest in discernment, in good, efficient, and effective, government with a foundation in justice, clarity, and consensus—for which Cicero fought unrelentingly—and in "the good life," in youth as well as in old age, Cicero will refuse to die." (op. cit., p. 4).

[298] Schofield, Malcolm. *Cicero : Political Philosophy.* Founders of Modern Political and Social Thought Series. (Mark Phillip, ed.) Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.

[299] van Deusen, Nancy. Introduction : Cicero Refused to Die. Chapter. *Cicero Refused to Die : Ciceronian Influence Through the Centuries.* Nancy van Deusen (ed.) Leiden: Brill, 2013. pp. 1-4.

4.6.1 THE LIFE

My whole inquiry aims at making governments sound, establishing justice, and curing the ills of peoples.

Cicero[300]

The story of Cicero is, in many ways, also the story of the later Roman Republic. His life coincided almost exactly with the last six decades of this period in Roman history. To understand him, we must also consider how he viewed both the political climate at Rome and his role within it.

Kathryn Tempest [301]

Cicero was born on January 3rd, 106 BC in Arpinum, a hilly portion of central Italy, about 60 miles south-east of Rome. It was a community of Roman citizens, voted as such in 188 BC, which meant its residents were accounted for in the census and could partake in the citizenship's rights and duties, though historical sources are not clear on the extent that those who lived far from Rome actually did so. Curious to note that 106 is also the year that Pompey (later Magnus) was born (September 29th). Also noteworthy is that Gaius Marius[302] was also from Arpinum, and related to the Cicerones by marriage. The Cicerones were one of Arpinum wealthiest families and had connections with the political and social elite in Rome.

It is believed his father decided to move to Rome in the mid-nineties, most likely to further Cicero's and Quintus' (younger son) education. There, he began structured training in rhetoric (in Greek), the study of law, and to frequent the elite political circles, under the tutelage of Licinius Crassus (consul 95 BC, one of the finest orators of his day), Mucius Scaevola (*the Augur,* consul 117 BC), and his cousin (also) Mucius Scaevola (*the Pontifex*, consul 95 BC). The outbreak of a war between Rome and its Italian allies in 91 had him serving in the armies of Pompeius Strabo and Sulla. During the strives in the 80s between Marius and Sulla, Cicero continued his studies in rhetoric and philosophy in Rome, and formally begun his legal career in 81 BC. A major successful performance in the courts in 80 BC, defending a man of parricide charges, marked the beginning of his ascendance of the *cursus honorum*, which he continued to

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[300] *Laws* 1.37, apud Korab-Karpowicz, 2015, p. 56.

[301] Tempest, Kathryn. *Cicero Politics and Persuasion in Ancient Rome.* London, New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011, p. 6.

[302] Gaius Marius (157 – 86 BC) was one of Rome's finest generals and most important (and sanguinary) statesman, who fought and lost the first of Rome's Civil War (88 BC) against Lucius Cornelius Sulla (138-78 BC), before regaining power in 87-86 BC. Among other feats, he held unprecedented seven consulships, five of them in a row (104-100 BC). Marius was a "new man", meaning that he was the first man in his family to serve as consul.

climb the next years exploiting his outstanding power as an orator and his reputation as an advocate to make a name for himself and ingratiate influential friends.

During Cicero's youth, eminent Greek philosophers spent time in Rome, such as the Academic (Sceptic) Philo of Larissa (head of the Academy at the time and one of Cicero's greater influences) and the Epicurean Phaedrus (Cicero enjoyed no predilection for the Epicurean stance, is spite of its fair popularity among Roman elite, including with his close friend Atticus). In 79 BC Cicero married Terentia and travel abroad. It is likely that his beloved daughter Tulia was born in 78, and his son Marcus in 65. From 79 to 77, in his late twenties, he visited Greece and Asia Minor to continue his philosophical and rhetoric studies, hearing lectures of the (Old) Academic Antiochus of Ascalon in Athens[303], again of Phaedrus and of the then Epicurean scholarch Zeno of Sidon. Cicero, Atticus, Varro, Brutus and Horace also studied in Athens with with Cratippus, the leading Peripatetic of the time. After Athens he went to Rhodes, where he attended the lectures of the renowned Stoic Posidonius. Throughout his life he had in his household the counsel of the blind Stoic teacher Diodotus (Kenny, 2010).

The next climbed step in the course of honour was taken in 76 BC (aged 30), when he was elected *quaestor* (financial officer) to serve in Sicily. The years of 73-71 BC were marked by Spartacus' revolt, in which Crassus and Pompey fought later forming a joint consulship (70 BC). In 70 BC Cicero prosecuted Verres, on account of his corrupt governorship in Sicily, marking a stance against the extorsion that Roman subjects endured in the provinces. It was a risky move that turned out to be one of his most famous cases and, with this victory, he finally began to defend the political elite and senatorial clients. In 69 BC he became plebeian aedile and, in 67 (aged 39) he became *praetor* (the second most important magistracy) and delivered his first political oration, which gave Pompey the command of the war against Mithridates (which Pompey won decisively). In 64 BC Cicero launched his campaign for the consulship and was elected in 63 BC, at the earliest possible age of 43. He had reached the pinnacle of Rome's intense, fierce, well-established aristocratic political order, a relatively rare accomplishment for anyone with his kind of background; a *new man* (Tempest, 2011; Korab-Karpowicz, 2015).

[303] As Therese Fuhrer highlights, "The school buildings (scholae) of the Academy, the Peripatos and the Stoa in Athens were closed in the early first century BCE; the reason usually given is the sack of the city by Sulla in the First Mithridatic War (87/6 BCE). As an institution led by a continuous succession of scholarchs, only the Epicurean school still existed in Athens after that time." Fuhrer, Therese. Philosophy in Rome. Chapter. *Ancient Philosophy : Textual Paths and Historical Explorations.* Lorenzo Perilli and Daniela P. Taormina (eds). Oxon, New York: Routledge, 2018, pp. 545-572

The principal legacy of Cicero's term as *consul* was his defeat of what became known as the Catiline conspiracy. Lucius Segius Catiline was a member of nobility, one of the consulship candidates defeated by Cicero. Cicero believed to have identified a threat to the sacredness on the Roman *res publica* spearheaded by Catiline; an (incipient) popular uprising demanding land reform in the tradition of the Cracchi[304]. Catiline would be manipulating the plebeian classes to rebel against the Senate. The question whether Catiline was serious about his intent is a matter of scholarly dispute. Nevertheless, Cicero, under a skilful guise of advocating on the people's behalf, was strongly opposed to such reform. He acted swiftly to dismantle the conspiracy with support of senators and *equites,* undertook the prosecution of Catiline and, victorious, increased his fame and earned the accolade of "father of his country". Catiline's doom was settled in the military operation the consuls launched against him. Several of his supporters, however, were summarily executed, after the senate expeditiously issued an exceptional decree *(senatus consultant ultimum),* which was followed by Cicero (Steel, 2013[305]).

Such a controversial act, however, carried to him dire consequences, for "Putting Roman citizens to death without trial or opportunity of appeal, however expedient it might have been judged, [ ] violated the very law giving protection against such action to which Cicero himself had appealed in denouncing the provincial governor Verres" (Schofield, 2021, p. 5). To his greatest chagrin, Cicero soon fell from grace (aided by the antagonism of Publius Clodius), and was soon accused of tyrannical behaviour and punished with exile in 58 BC. The irony of such situation cannot be avoided since, in the years that followed, he was a strident opposer of Julius Caesar for (also) what he considered to be tyrannical behaviour, and though he did not take part of the plot for his assassination (44 BC), he wrote extensively and influentially in his *De officiis (On Duties)* on the moral justification of tyrannicide.

The aftermath of Cicero's political life forever carried the imprint of the unfolding of the Catilinarian conspiracy. Though he was able to return to Rome in 57 BC and resume public activities, partially due to Pompey's intersection, he very much stayed in the margins of the political scene, focusing on writing and on the courts.

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[304] *Tribunes of the Plebs* Tiberius Gracchus (murdered 133 BC) and Gaius Gracchus (murdered 122 BC) attempted to pass laws redistributing public land (*ager publicus*) to war veterans and the Roman poor, along other social and constitutional reforms. Such laws faced strong opposition of important parts of the senate, including the fact that such public land – which constituted an important variable of the *res public* – was "irregularly" being appropriated by aristocratic families.

[305] Steel, Catherine. "Introduction." Chapter. In *The Cambridge Companion to Cicero,* edited by Catherine Steel, 1–6. Cambridge Companions to Literature. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

> (…) the warlords Pompey, Caesar, and Crassus now exercised increasing control of political life, mostly in concert with each other, and in the early summer of 56 BC, after they had renewed their pact, it was indicated to Cicero that he needed from now on to be careful over what line he took in his political pronouncements. This was in a way testimony to the weight his voice still carried; and Cicero did not entirely withdraw from the public scene. But his wings had been clipped. And it was now—from 56 to 51 (…) - that he first turned in his adult years to serious theoretical writing. (Schofield, 2021, p. 5)

The next years[306] continued to be dominated by the tug-of-war power struggles and shifting alliances involving Pompey, Caesar and Crassus, (the *first triumvirate*) that culminated in yet another civil war (49 BC), which Caesar won in 48 BC. Cicero was away from Rome in 51-50 BC serving as governor in Cilicia (southern Turkey), and it is a source of scholarly debate whether he could have helped to avert the conflict. "Cicero's shifting political attitudes during this period were shaped by fear and ambition as much as by principle. He bitterly lamented the loss of the *res publica*; yet he was prepared for pragmatic reasons to support, and at times to cultivate, Caesar as well as Pompey." (Atkins et al, 2000[307], p. 486-87).

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[306] In the briefest timeline of the period, Caesar was elected consul in 59 BC, along with Marcus Biblus. After his term finished, he was appointed to the governorship of Gaul and embarked upon a series of remarkable military conquests (58-49 BC). While Caesar was in Britain (55 BC) his daughter Julia, who was Pompey's wife, died in childbirth, and the last threads of their alliance disintegrated. In 53 BC Crassus led a military campaign to the Parthian Empire, which resulted in thorough defeat and his death. Pompey, his counterpart in the consulship that year, was appointed sole consul and intensified his campaign against Caesar. Fear of a civil war led to several attempts in the Senate to pacify the situation in 50 and 49 BC (in which Cicero strongly advocated to diffuse the animosities). In 49 BC, after the Senate refused to vote on Caesar's renewed proposition to his and Pompey's disarmament, Caesar was declared an enemy of Rome and the same final order that was issued against Catiline's supporters was issued against him. Caesar then famously crossed the Rubicon, and then him and Pompey engaged in a series of battles that culminated in Pompey's defeat at Pharsalus (Greece), in 48 BC. In the aftermath, Caesar was appointed Dictator of Rome, having Mark Anthony as his second in command. Right after he was elected consul, he resigned the dictatorship and left Rome in pursuit of Pompey, who had sought refuge in Egypt to regroup his armies. He was captured and beheaded upon orders of the reigning pharaoh of the Ptolemaic dynasty who, with this gesture, hoped to ingratiate Caesar's support in his own civil war against his co-ruler and sister Cleopatra. Caesar is said to have been outraged by Pompey's ignominious murder, having his killers murdered in return. Perhaps due to this, Caesar sided with Cleopatra and their forces defeated the pharaoh in 47 BC and Cleopatra ascended to the throne. Caesar and Cleopatra had a relationship that lasted for the coming years, and it is possible they had a son (Cesarion) together. Caesar continued to be successful in his military campaigns in the coming years, including one in 46 BC which resulted in the suicide of the stoic senator Cato (the Younger, 95-46 BC), who had sided with Pompey, famous for his stubbornness, integrity and unwavering opposition of Caesar. He was then appointed dictator for 10 years, being elected consul for two more times within this period (46 and 45 BC). Though he promoted regular consular elections in 45 BC, he also got himself appointed dictator for life, amidst his preparations for a new military campaign in Parthia (Iran). By the historical accounts Caesar fell at the Senate's steps on the Ides of March, 44 BC, in a conspiracy to "restore freedom" to the Republic. It is said that sixty men took direct part in his assassination, famously including Brutus. He was stabbed 23 times, though only one of them was fatal. Against the expectations of the conspirators, Caesar's death did not restore the Republic, but was the last straw for its end, with the Roman middle and lower classes getting enraged by his (perceived) paladin's cowardly murder. The next years were of chaos, persecutions, proscriptions and civil wars, which had as protagonists Caesar's general Mark Anthony, and Caesar's grandnephew Octavian (who Caesar had named heir). Octavian emerged victorious in the Battle of Actium (31 BC), which led to Anthony and Cleopatra's suicide (30 BC). Octavian was crowned emperor Caesar Augustus in 27, and reigned for over forty years, until his death in 14 AD. Writings about this historical period are abundant and include writers such as Caesar and Cicero themselves; Sallust and Tacitus; Pliny the Elder, Plutarch and Suetonius; Augustine; Virgil; Shakespeare; Gibbon, and so many others. For a couple of contemporary and lively accounts see Mary Beard's *SPQR : A History of Ancient Rome.* London: Profile Books, 2015 and Adrian Goldsworthy's *Caesar : The Life of a Colossus.* Yale University Press, 2006.

[307] Atkins, Eleanor M., Simon Harrison, and Melissa Lane. "Cicero." Chapter. In *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought,* edited by Christopher Rowe and Malcolm Schofield, 477–516. The Cambridge History of Political Thought. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Caesar did not engage in proscriptions after been appointed dictator in 46 BC. He issued a pardon to Cicero (who had, not without reluctance, sided with Pompey, and was in an internal exile in Brundisium (Brindisi)), and proceeded a series of reforms and administrative measures, including a new census, a new calendar, tax and land reforms.

Cicero returned to Rome but kept away from the courts and politics. He and Terentia got divorced in 46 BC, after more than thirty years or marriage. His daughter Tulia died in 45 BC, as a consequence of childbirth, leaving Cicero heartbroken. After Caesar's assassination in 44 BC (which, though sympathetic to the cause, he was not part of it) he left Rome and reengaged in the political disputes by writing, among others, his *Phillippic* series (fourteen in total). These were incendiary attacks on Mark Anthony, hoping to prevent him from taking over Caesar's position and to reinstate the Senate's authority, which resulted in Antony being declared a public enemy (April 43 BC). Later in the year Octavian occupied Rome, assumed the consulships, and formed the "second triumvirate" along Anthony and Lepidus. A series of proscriptions were ensued, along with orders for Cicero's death, in December 43 BC. His hands and his head were cut off and hanged for public display in the forum, a poignant testament to the fate of the hopes of a republican resurgence (Howard[308], 2010). "Cicero therefore met a miserable end, conscious not only of the frustrations and failures of his own life in politics, ever since the triumphant year of 63 BC, but even worse of the demise of everything he had championed, including the very possibility of a participatory republican politics and of the oratory of which he had been the master." (Schofield, 2021, p. 7)

[308] Howard, Dick. *The Primacy of the Political. A History of Political Thought from the Greeks to the French and American Revolutions.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.

4.6.2 The Ciceronian Corpus

The reception of Cicero's philosophical works varied widely throughout history. After its summit in the eighteenth century, it plunged into a nadir of discredit and claims of being derivative at best, before its more recent reappraisal and revaluation. As Anthony Long[309] (2003, p. 197) summarizes,

> Cicero's status as a world-historical figure owes much to his extraordinary combination of rhetoric, politics, and philosophy. (…) even a summary assessment of them needs to be prefaced by recognizing that Cicero never detaches himself from his identity as an exceptionally accomplished orator and participant in the Roman public arena. Over the last five hundred years his reputation as a thinker has fluctuated hugely. It reached its highest point during the Renaissance and Enlightenment. More recently, however, Cicero has frequently been regarded as an edifying windbag, technically deficient and valuable largely as a source for the lost works of Hellenistic philosophy. Now, after years of neglect and depreciation, his philosophical writings are again being studied intensely. His achievement has begun to be recognized in terms of the criteria appropriate to his Roman time and place. Although he makes no claim to be a thinker with a fresh set of theories or methodologies, his philosophical output is creative in numerous ways, and it is marked throughout by his powerful personality.

Cicero wrote extensively, and a significant part of it has reached our times. There are abundant letters and orations, as well as many philosophical writings, which were composed mostly in the interludes of his adult life in which he was away from politics.

As mentioned, he was exposed to the several currents of Hellenistic philosophy in his time. It is Plato, by his own admission, the philosopher who influenced him the most, and it is believed that he was familiar with at least part of Aristotle's exoteric corpus. His *De Re Publica* (*Republic*, also translated as *Commonwealth*) and *De Legibus (Laws)* were written in a dialogical form.

As point of dissention between him and Plato (and up to a point also Aristotle), and also where the Romanness of Cicero is most evident, is his understanding of oratory and defence of rhetoric (Lane, 2014, p. 270). As Raphael Woolf highlights (2022[310], p. 3), in the *Gorgias*, Socrates launches a demolishing attack on rhetoric, in contrast with philosophy, as concerned with outright persuasion rather than truth. "For Cicero, as probably the supreme orator of his day,

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[309] Long, Anne A. "Roman Philosophy." Chapter. In *The Cambridge Companion to Greek and Roman Philosophy*, edited by David Sedley, 184–210. Cambridge Companions to Philosophy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

[310] Woolf, Raphael, "Cicero", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2022 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL = https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2022/entries/cicero/

matters could not be that simple. The use of speech to manipulate others for self-serving ends could not, of course, be condoned. But the idea that pure reasoning, divorced from communicative skill, was sufficient to win people round to philosophy struck Cicero as, if anything, even more dangerously misguided". In his own words,

> After long reflection, reason itself has led me to the following conviction above all: philosophy without eloquence is of little help to communities, but eloquence without philosophy is generally harmful. Therefore if anyone, neglecting reason and duty, which are the most correct and honourable pursuits, devotes himself to a rhetorical training, he grows into something useless to himself and damaging to his country. He, on the other hand, who arms himself with eloquence, not to attack his country's interests but to fight for them, will be in my opinion a man most useful both to his own and to public concerns and a most loyal citizen. (*De Invention,* apud Long, 2003, p. 203).

Cicero presents himself as an Academic, though it must be noted that at his time the Academy, under the presidency of Philo of Larissa, followed a Sceptic alignment: "that is to say, someone who, while disclaiming any access to objective certainty practises pro and contra argumentation with a view to arriving at verisimilitude or approximation to truth." That said, vivid tones of stoicism can be found in his writings, noting that, in a larger perspective, within the philosophical palette available at the time, "(…) so far as Plato is concerned, his cosmology, theology, ethics and political theory actually were prime influences on the Stoic tradition". Such was the position of Antiochus, under whom Cicero also studied. This dual allegiance allowed him "(…) to draw heavily on Plato and Stoicism, in advocating positions he strongly supports, while preserving an exploratory rather than dogmatic style, and reserving the right to criticize Stoics and even Plato on occasion". Some of his most acknowledged writings *(i. e. De Officiis, De Amicitia, De Senectude, De Legibus)* carry an unequivocal Stoic ethical *tupos*, with its strong emphasis upon rationality, social obligation and the control of passions, intermingled with his nostalgia for the Roman *mos maiorum* (i. e. frugality, industry, temperance, simplicity) and a fierce criticism of those who, in his eyes, had ruined the Republic. Finally, Cicero's underlying epistemology displays firm beliefs in the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, divine providence, natural justice, and the divinity of human reason, which also mark his position as unequivocally opposed to the Epicureans. (ibid., p. 198-99).

Cicero's complete works[311], as published by Delphi Classics (2014), is a compendium of circa 15,000 pages, in a dual edition digital edition in English and Latin. It comprises his letters, orations and his treatises on rhetoric, politics and philosophy[312].

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[311] Cicero, Marcus Tullius. *Delphi Complete Works of Cicero.* Delphi Classics, 2014. Epub.

[312] A comprehensive whilst succinct presentation of the Ciceronian corpus is developed by Therese Fuhrer in the chapter Philosophy in Rome, in *Ancient Philosophy : Textual Paths and Historical Explorations,* edited by Lorenzo Perilli and Daniela P. Taormina. Abingdon, New York: Routledge, 2018, particularly pages 558-564.

As mentioned in the brief account of his life, Cicero's main philosophical production can be organized in two chronological periods that mostly coincide with the interims in which he was away from politics in his maturity.

The first encompasses the years of 54-51 BC and sees the writing of his great treatise on the nature and role of oratory *De Oratore (On the Orator),* and his two main works of political philosophy, *De Re Publica (On the Republic*) and *De Legibus (On the Laws).*

The second incredibly prolific period took place between the tumultuous years of 44-45 BC, which saw his divorce, the death of his daughter and the assassination of Caesar. This is when he composed most of his philosophical works, and his intention was to write an "encyclopaedia" of Latin philosophy. The series was comprised of twelve pieces, but the first two were lost: *Consolatio*, on the death of Tullia; and *Hortensius,* an exhortation to the study of philosophy that was hugely influential in the life of Augustine. Among the ten remaining essays are the *Academica* (a defense of Academic scepticism), the ethic treatise *De finibus (On Ends),* the theological *De natura deorum (On the Nature of the Gods),* his age-long popular *Cato Maior De Senectute (On Old Age)* and *Laelius De Amicitia (On Friendship),* and his final essay on moral conduct and dispositions, which is considered by many his political testament and his most personal and passionate contribution to philosophy, *De officiis (On duties).* (Long, 2003, p. 202; Woolf, 2022, p. 3; Kenny, 2010, p. 85-86).

4.6.2.1 Cicero's Key Works in Political Thought

An analysis of Cicero's contribution to political thought would inevitably require getting acquainted with three of his works: *De Re Publica, De Legibus* and *De Officiis.* The following paragraphs aim at succinctly describing their structure and main topics of concern.

The text of *De Re Publica* was published in 51 BC, but it had been in the works since 54, taking longer to write than any other of his treatises. It was composed of six books, representing three conversations, written in a dialogical form meant to broadly emulate Plato's *Republic,* both in style as in content. From the six books, only one episode, the *Dream of Scipio*, has been known throughout history. The remaining parts have been known to scholars through citations/commentaries from later writers and fragments adding up to a third of the total, until substantial sections of the first three books and a few pages of the fourth and fifth were discovered in 1819 in a palimpsest in the Vatican Library. Thus, in spite of having survived only in fragmentary condition, the addition of all these parts allow for a decent identification of the structure and contents of the work (Schofield, 2021; Atkins et al, 2000).

In terms of content, it provides parallel discussions to the Republic on the definitions of justice, the origins of the best city, underlying philosophical principles, education and the afterlife, having as the main spokesperson Publius Scipio Africanus, a great Roman commander and statesman (second century BC). It also embraces two essential Platonic principles for the success of a *res publica*: stability is its primary criterion, and that its flourishing relies upon the education of its leaders. Having established these parallels, however, Cicero's work is Roman to the core.

The narrative is set on Scipio's state just outside Rome over successive days of a public holiday, and the participants were Scipio, Gaius Laelius (also a general and statesman, fought along Scipio), and other leading contemporary political personalities in the year of 129 BC, a crucial juncture for the Roman Republic and a few days antedating Scipio's sudden death. As Schofield summarizes (op. cit, p. 62), Books 1 and 2 discuss 'the best system' for the *civitas*; Book 3, Justice as the foundation of political order; and Book 4, the apparatus (institutions, customs and practices needed bring citizens up properly; and Books 5 and 6 characterize 'the best citizen *(civis)*'.

Some will actually argue that Cicero's main object in the treatise "is to discuss not the constitution of the city, but the education and ethics of its leading men." Atkins et al (op. cit., p. 496).

> *De Re Publica* implicitly blames the failure of the traditional constitution on the corruption of the ruling class. Cicero's basic remedy, in good Platonic tradition, is not constitutional, but ethical: to restore the patriotic and aristocratic ideals that the Roman ruling class supposedly possessed in the Republic's prime. (ibid, p. 497).

In broad strokes, Scipio will advocate for "a mixed constitution, with an elected meritocracy and a judicial system that emphasizes the equality of all in law." Instead of venturing an ideal *res publica*, Cicero defends his understanding of the mature Roman constitution, emphasizing "the value of checks and balances established over a long period of trial and error, as reflected in Rome's early struggles and eventual success." (LONG, 2006. P. 200). Atkins et al (op. cit., p. 491) also identify Aristotle's and Polybius influence in Cicero's defence of a mixed constitution.

As Howard (2010, p. 114) stresses, while Plato identifies justice with harmony, Cicero (under Stoic influence) will understand justice as the precondition of harmony (concordia). Injustice is harmful to the city, "who will fall victim to their own hubris, overreaching, and disharmony." The Ciceronian assumption is that though the capacity for justice is always present, it will need the moral politician's leadership to make it manifest. "There is no morality without a republic, and no republic without morality". However, as virtue will only truly exist through public action, and it is the law the agent of justice, moral reform needs a legal theory. Enters *De Legibus*, which is believed to have been written *pari passu De Re Publica* and are part and parcel of his political thought.

As remarked by Atkins et al (2000, p. 498), *De Legibus* is intended to complement *de Re Publica*, by revealing the laws appropriate to Scipio's 'best condition of the city' (*Leg*. I.15, II.23, III. 12). It is set at his family home at Arpinum. Cicero himself is the narrator, in conversation with his close friend Atticus and his brother Quintus. It is believed it was composed by five books, but only three survived. Book I describes the 'source' of justice; Book II entails the religious laws of the best city; and Book III its provisions for magistracies. The lost probably included the topics of the law-courts and of education.

Finally, *De Officiis,* "the most obviously political work of Cicero's philosophical cycle". It was completed in 44 BC, and takes shape of a letter of advice addressed to his son Marcus organized in three books. In Book I, Cicero asks what does *honestas* (honourableness) consist and answers it by describing the four cardinal virtues. Book II approaches what is *utile* (useful), while Book III discusses a series of "case studies" in which the honourable and useful courses appear at first sight to conflict. (Atkins et al, 2000, p. 505). Cicero's presentation of the purpose of the city and the importance of private property in Book II are issues of note, and will be explored in the subsequent pages.

4.6.3 CIVIS ROMANUS SUM[313]

> *I impeach you by your own words. He said that he was a Roman citizen. If you, O Verres, being taken among the Persians or in the remotest parts of India, were being led to execution, what else would you cry out but that you were a Roman citizen? And if that name of your city, honoured and renowned as it is among all men, would have availed you, a stranger among strangers, among barbarians, among men placed in the most remote and distant corners of the earth, ought not he, whoever he was, whom you were hurrying to the cross, who was a stranger to you, to have been able, when he said that he was a Roman citizen, to obtain from you, the praetor, if not an escape, at least a respite from death by his mention of and claims to citizenship?*
>
> Cicero *In Verrem*, 5.2.65

Out of the many more possible ways to explore Cicero's contribution to political thought, one will attempt to focus mostly on the differences between his conception in relation to some of the aspects presented in Plato's and Aristotle's understanding of "the city", having as a frame of reference the dissolution of the polis and the ascendance of the Roman empire, as presented by Manent (see. Section 4.1)

> Like Plato and Aristotle before him, Cicero found that his reflections on politics took him in the direction of imagining a better republic, with a better set of laws, which he set down in his writings just as the integrity of the actual republic was slipping away in a series of bloody struggles for power – in the course of which he himself would be one of those murdered. That vision put a particular understanding of what liberty required at its centre, an understanding giving pride of place to the roles of private property, law, and virtue in supporting the republican constitution. (Lane, 2014, 22-23)

One has to again untangle difficulties in terminologies, for there will be words that encompass intricate concepts, and which may assume different meanings according to the context, even within one same author. Another red flag is that, considering that the history of Ancient Rome in the West spans over twelve centuries (753 BC – 476 AD), the words will change their connotation depending on the epoch. Hence, the focus will again be narrowed to the more specific interval that surrounds Cicero's time. The departure point will be (aspects of) the ideas of *populus*, *civitas/cives*, *res publica* and law.

[313] I am a Roman citizen, *In Verrem* 5.2.57

In trying to establish some parallels with what has already been seen, and emphasizing that this is by no means the only possible interpretation, the Greek *ta politika* means the things or matters of concern to a certain political community. It is, for instance, the Greek title of Aristotle's treaty about 'politics.' Those entitled to participate in the *ta politika* are the *polites*, the 'citizens', and the body of citizens defines the *polis.* Such citizens share a set of common attributes that makes them equal, is spite of being richer or poorer (Lane, 2014, p. 12). The collective dimension is the defining identity element, and will supersede the individual. The way the *polis* organizes and manages the *bios* of a society is defined by the *politeia* (often translated as constitution or regimen), which, as seen, roughly, is the rule of the one, the few and the many in its several more or less virtuous forms, as well as the cornerstone for the definition of justice. Adherence to the law is what distinguishes civilization from barbarism, and laws, in striving to mirror the cosmos, are meant to give each one its due (Lane, 2014; Manent, 2013).

In Latin, the term most commonly used to refer to "the matters of concern to a political community" is *res publica,* which literally means "people's thing or affair." As in the case of the *ta politika*, those entitled to participate in the content and conduction of these concerns are the citizens, the *cives*, and the body of *cives* is the *civitas*[314] (plural *civitates*). In a stricter sense, the overall organization of the public life can also be referred to as *res publica*[315]. It is the title under which Cicero translated Plato's *Politeia (Republic)* and wrote his own *de Re Publica*, which is often translated as *On the Republic,* but also *On the Commonwealth.* This last one may lead to a more restrict translation of *res public* as that which is the common property of the people, such as public lands[316].

Though Rome began its history as a 'polis', as its appetite and proclivity for exploring and incorporating new territories was unleashed, it soon 'metamorphosed', to use Manent's terminology, into a new 'species' of territorial and political organization. If the polis was a highly

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[314] Though, in following these parallels, it would appear logical to equate civitas and polis, the correspondence is not absolute. As stated by Benveniste, the etymological properties of these words vary, in which, in Greek, polis (collective) is 'dominant' in relation to the *polites*, while in Latin the relationship will be the inverse. Also, although there is a specific word to define the 'urban' portion of the polis (*astu*), with its accompanying infrastructure, polis holds in itself an all-encompassing meaning due to the notions of self-containment and autonomy. Though there will be aspects in which the *civitas* will subsume the rural and urban 'divide' (in taxation purposes, for instance), there is a stronger decoupling of the dimensions of the *civitas* and the *urbs,* in which the latter refers mostly to the physical infrastructure that enables the functioning of the collective life. See Benveniste, Émile. *Essere di parola: Semantica, soggettività, cultura.* Milano: Bruno Mondadori, 2009.

[315] The expression 'res publica' in Cicero, as in Latin authors and texts both before and after him, has a notoriously elastic range of uses. It is 'public[-spirited] activity', 'public affairs/business', 'the public interest', 'the community [sc. as the prime locus of public activity/the prime beneficiary of the public interest]', 'the community constituted by the civitas or populus', and—particularly in rousing patriotic contexts—'the country'.

[316] Lane (2014, p. 245) provides a useful clarification on how the idea of the *res publica* came to represent in English the Roman republic "as a normative ideal, as the best constitution to protect and advance that common concern." And how the common concern of the people, in Roman thought, "included an emphasis on the concrete and material: what was *publicum* paradigmatically included collectively owned lands, revenues and provisions, generating the useful English translation of *res publica* as 'commonwealth'."

homogeneous and self-contained entity, the Roman Republic/Empire had to create different mechanisms to arbitrate the borders and the belonging to the political community, as well as new instruments to conceptualize and manage their matters of concern.

Firstly, let us remember that in Athens the condition of citizenship was denied to foreigners. Rome, with the expansion of its frontiers, used it as currency to pacify strife, build alliances, and settle military issues, therefore refashioning the idea of citizenship under different premises very much connected to one's political status. The *civitas* remains "a gathering of free individuals who come together by recognizing and sharing a public sphere, the existence of which makes them citizens". However, it will absorb "people from different origins who decide to coexist under the same law, which in turn gives them the condition of citizenship" (Aureli, 2008, p. 94-95). Hence, the crux to the right to political participation becomes a legal (as pertaining to law) issue. A possible definition then, as presented by Lane, is that "A Roman citizen was someone who was free, (…), who was protected in his private affairs and who enjoyed important powers related to the welfare of the common thing, the common concerns." As Schofield (1999, p. 168) states,

> Cicero's treatment of *res publica* has a quite different structure from Platonic and Aristotelian political philosophy, despite his debts to them. What makes the difference is the conceptual framework of Roman law, for it is Roman law which enables questions to be formulated about the rights a free people has to own, lend, transfer or place in trust powers conceived on the model of property. The Roman legal framework is the common denominator in Cicero's theory of *res populi* and in the later tradition beginning with the formulations of the jurists.

And, as presented by Cicero himself at *De Re Republica*[317]*.* I.39a,

> Scipio: Well then: the commonwealth is the concern of a people, but a people is not any group of men assembled in any way, but an assemblage of some size associated with one another through agreement on law and community of interest. The first cause of its assembly is not so much weakness as a kind of natural herding together of men: this species is not isolated or prone to wandering alone, but it is so created that not even in an abundance of everything < do men wish to live a solitary existence > * [one leaf missing]

Secondly, another important matter to emphasize, also considering Manent's analyses, complemented by Schofield[318] and Lane that relates to the ideas of legitimacy, representation, and the virtues and vices of the different constitutions. Recalling Aristotle's position on the naturalness of life in the polis and that every form of community has an appropriate form of rule, the fact that someone must rule who deserves to do so is not contended (Schofield, 1999, p.

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[317] Cicero. *On the Commonwealth and On the Laws.* Edited by James E. G. Zetzel. Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

[318] About this point, Schofield (1999, p. 157) references the analyses of the emergence of the State by Quentin Skinner.

155). He continues by stressing that in Cicero's understanding of the *res publica*, while the powers of the community may be exercised by a magistrate, such power is simply *entrusted* to him; there is never *transference* of the people's sovereignty to a political agent, as will latter happen, for instance, in the European absolutist regimes of the seventeenth century. Hence, in following the Ciceronian principles, "there is no logical space for the idea of a state or commonwealth distinct from the people or the community", in a marked difference of its conception by the time of Hume, Rousseau and Hobbes. In Roman writers, Schofield summarizes, the "focus is moral rather than constitutional" (Schofield[319], 1999, p. 157-58).

For the sake of comparison with what was partially discussed in Plato and Aristotle, it is necessary to highlight that, for Cicero, the degenerate forms of *res publica* (tyranny, oligarchy and 'mob rule'[320]) cannot be qualified as *res publica* at all, period. He develops the arguments in this regard in *Rep.* III.43-47. As a demonstration,

> LAELIUS: But there is no state that I would more quickly deny to be a commonwealth than the one that is completely in the power of the crowd. If we did not consider Syracuse to be a commonwealth, or Agrigentum, or Athens, when there were tyrants, or here at Rome when there were decemvirs, then I don't see how the name "commonwealth" is any more appropriate to the rule of the crowd. In the first place, according to your excellent definition, there is no "people" unless it is bound by agreement in law, and that mob is as much a tyrant as if it were one person. It is all the more disgusting because there is nothing more awful than the monster which pretends to the appearance and name of the people. (*Rep.* III.45)

To cap this point, it is fair to mention that, more than discriminating between good and bad constitutions, Cicero's main concern is to frame the basilar issue of what determines the legitimacy of a government. A *sine qua non* condition for it to be a *res publica* is that the government, in adequately conducting its duties, consults the interests of the people. If that is not the case,

> (…) the reason will usually be that the regime in power has abused or infringed or wholly removed the rights of the *populus* over its own *res.* Aristotle talks of concern for the common good as a test of a correct constitution. He operates with a notion of the city as a collection of citizens whose interests the constitution is there to safeguard. **By focusing his discussion on the notion of the *populus* and its rights, Cicero effectively creates an entirely new theory, cast in a legal vocabulary which has no parallel in Greek generally or in Greek political philosophy in particular. Its legal inspiration makes it a distinctively Roman contribution to political thought** (Schofield, 1999, p. 164, emphasis added).

[319] Schofield, Malcolm. *Saving the City : Philosopher-Kings and Other Classical Paradigms.* New York, Routledge, 1999.

[320] *Ochlokratia*, a term used by Polybius (and also Thucydides) to refer to unbridled democracy. Lane (2014, p. 253),

Further development on the legal dimension is necessary. Before that, however, a clarification is due so not to ascribe to Cicero enthusiastic democratic proclivities. Though he will advocate for a mixed constitution – something that Polybus[321], for instance, had already identified and argued as determinant for Rome's incredible expansion and domination -, which is actually already the case during most of the Republican period, with the senate, the tribunes, the assemblies[322], Cicero "marries a fundamental recognition of popular sovereignty with an unshakeable and deep-seated commitment to aristocracy as the best practicable system of government." (ibid., p. 165).

There are, nonetheless, counterparts on the side of the aristocracy, described, for instance, in *De Officiis*. One of the examples highlighted by Schofield, which brings forth a key feature, is "It is therefore the special responsibility of a magistrate to understand that he **represents the city,** and ought to maintain its dignity and distinction, preserve its laws, dispense justice and remember what has been entrusted to his **good faith**." (*off.* I.124, apud p. 167, emphasis added). The idea of good faith *(fides)* reflects a distinctive Roman virtue and institution: "fides fundamentum iustitiae", or "good faith is the basis of justice". (*off* I.23, apud Schofield, op. cit.). On this, Schofield quotes Margaret Atkins[323], who argues that *fides* (mutual trust and trustworthiness) as the cement of society, which plays a paramount role in Roman moral and political thought. (op. cit.)

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[321] As quoted in Lane (2014, p. 250), Polybus asks his readers "How, and with what kind of constitution, almost the whole inhabited world was subjected and brought under a single rule, that of the Romans, in less than fifty-three years?". Observers at the time saw the Roman constitution as distinctive in being a special combination of the three simple Greek constitutional types (one/few/many).

[322] There are many particularities to the Roman political system at the time of the Republic. Following Polybius analysis, Lane summarizes that it was a complex constitution consisting of the balanced competition of the three-partite classification of the one (kingship), the few (aristocracy) and the many (democracy). The 'Senate and the People of Rome' (Senatus Populusque Romanus – S.P.Q.R.), with its *gravitas,* had deliberative, investigative, managerial and advisory powers which, in general, were used to manage public funds, investigating public crimes, handling foreign relations. Senators served for life and embodied the aura of elite status. Special decrees could be issued (*senatus consultum ultimum*, as was the case in the Calitinarian conspiracy) with views to preserve the republic. Within the Senate, two Consuls were elected each year and had the responsibility to organize all military preparations, command the armies in the field, participate in setting the agenda for the Senate and some of the popular assemblies, execute their decisions and expend public monies. The tribunes of the plebs (elected only by non-noble plebeians) could block any senatorial decree and even bar the Senate from meeting altogether. The people held the lawmaking capacity and the popular assemblies had the unique capacity to pass and repeal laws, reshape the Senate's prerogatives, make peace and war, and ratify treaties and alliances (upon recommendation from the Senate). However, differently from the Athenian experience, for instance, only a magistrate or a tribune had the right to propose a law to a popular assembly, and no one had the right to speak in a voting assembly. It is curious to note that Polybius described the future degeneration of the Roman Republic in deeply Platonic terms, predicting that it would eventually become unable to ward off corruption, bitter rivalries for power and popular ambition, degenerating into an *ochlokratia* that would fall prey to despotism. For the complete analysis and the references to Polybius texts see Lane, 2014, p. 262-266).

[323] *Domina et regina virtum*

4.6.4 CICERO, STOICISM AND THE LAW

Similar to what Plato and Aristotle had done, Cicero will, in Book I of *De Re Publica*, set some of the bearings of his inquire. Though a bit long, the following quote elucidates much of what he has to say on the subject of defining "the city". The addition of the Latin expressions to the citation mean to illustrates the layers that the word may encapsulate[324] *(urbs/res publica/civitas).* Interesting to note that he also refers to the ideal model as something built in speech.

> SCIPIO: I will do what you want to the best of my ability, and I will begin my discussion with this proviso – something that speakers on every subject need to use to avoid mistakes – namely that we agree on the name of the subject under discussion and then explain what is signified by that name; and when that is agreed on, only then is it right to begin to speak. We will never be able to understand what sort of thing we are talking about unless we understand first just what it is. And since we are looking into the commonwealth *(re publica)*, let us first see what it is that we are looking into[325].
>
> When Laelius agreed, SCIPIO said: In talking about such a well-known and important subject, I will not begin by going back to the origins which learned men generally cite in these matters, starting from the first intercourse of male and female and then from their offspring and family relationships; nor will I give frequent verbal definitions of what each thing is and how many ways it can be named. In speaking to knowledgeable men who have earned great glory through participation in the public life, both military and domestic, of a great commonwealth *(re publica)*, **I will not make the mistake of letting the subject of my speech be clearer than the speech itself.** I have not undertaken this like some schoolteacher explaining everything, and I make no promises that no tiny details will be left out.
>
> LAELIUS: The kind of speech you promise is just what I am waiting for.
>
> SCIPIO: **Well then: the commonwealth is the concern of a people[326], but a people *(populus)* is not any group of men assembled in any way, but an assemblage of some size associated with one another through agreement on law and community of interest.** The first cause of its assembly is not so much weakness as a kind of natural herding together of men: this species is not isolated or prone to wandering alone, but it is so created that not even in an abundance of everything < do men wish to live a solitary existence > *

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[324] Scipio returns to explore such definitions in Book III, 43-44. As an illustration of the interchangeability of the works in translation and the difficulties in having cleat-cut interpretations. "SCIPIO: And you are right. What was the ''concern of the Athenians'' *(Athenensium res)* at the time when, after the great Peloponnesian War, the Thirty Tyrants ruled that city *(urbi)* with great injustice? Did the ancient glory of the city *(civitatis),* or its beauty, or the theater, gymnasia, porticoes and gateways, or the citadel and the marvelous works of Phidias, or the great harbor of Piraeus make it into a commonwealth (rem publicum)?" (*Rep.* III. 44).

[325] In Latin, *"quare quoniam de re publica quaerimus, hoc primum videamus quid sit id ipsum quod quaerimus."* Delphi Complete Works of Cicero

[326] As observed by the editor "The definition *(est . . . res publica res populi)* is virtually untranslatable, playing on the meaning of *res* (lit. ''thing'') as property. (···) The account of the origins of society given here is basically Aristotelian." (Note # 53, p. 18).

> (one leaf missing)
>
> Lactantius, *Inst.* 6.10.18 *Others have thought these ideas as insane as they in fact are and have said that it was not being mauled by wild animals that brought men together, but human nature itself, and that they herded together because the nature of humans shuns solitude and seeks community and society.*
>
> And nature itself not only encourages this, but even compels it (Nonius 321.16)[327]
>
> * what we can call seeds; nor can we find any deliberate institution either of the other virtues or of the commonwealth *(rei publicae)* itself. These assemblages, then, were instituted for the reason that I explained, and their first act was to establish a settlement in a fixed location for their homes. Once they had protected it by both natural and constructed fortifications, they called this combination of buildings a town or a city *(urbem),* marked out by shrines and common spaces *(communibus).* Now every people *(populus)* (which is the kind of large assemblage I have described), every state *(civitas)* (which is the organization of the people), every commonwealth *(res publica)* (which is, as I said, the concern of the people) needs to be ruled by some sort of deliberation in order to be long lived. That deliberative function, moreover, must always be connected to the original cause which engendered the state *(civitaem)*; and it must also either be assigned to one person or to selected individuals or be taken up by the entire population (*De Rep.* I. 38-42).

Within the argument, there is the emphasis on what is characteristic of Ciceronian thought, which is to condition the definition of a "people" to **the agreement on law.** Thus, his understanding of law is something that must be looked into, since the *civitas* is the organization of the people.

An important part of this debate revolves around Cicero's "theory of natural law *(ius naturae)*" (Atkins et al, 2000, p. 498), which is mostly developed in *De Legibus* I and is taken by many scholars as a primary source for Stoic ideas on the matter.

On her *On the History of the Idea of Law*, Shirley Robin Letwin[328] writes an in-depth analysis of the intricacies and subtleties on the different Latin terms that could be translated as "law" (notably *ius* and *lex*), their meaning in Roman times in general and in Cicero's thought in particular (with an often-severe take on the consistency of his ideas).

It must be emphasized that this topic, while exceedingly fascinating, is an enormous area of study, since Roman Law is at the root of uncountable discussions about natural law, positive and negative law, customary *versus* constitutional law, international law, etc., etc. One does not dare, at this point, to venture in this universe but for the most succinct of ways, hoping to highlight some similarities/differences to what was seen in Plato and Aristotle and how Cicero's "new take" (within the overall Roman perspective) might impact the idea of "the city".

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[327] The text in blue are interpolations added in the consulted English edition, not being present in the surviving "original" text as presented in the Latin version within the Delphi Classics compendium.

[328] Letwin, Shirley Robin. *On the History of the Idea of Law.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

> The discussion of law takes a radically different turn with Cicero. He departs not only from Plato, whom he regarded as his master, but also from the entire Greek tradition by taking little interest in what the Greeks emphasized: that law consists of rules that are clear and fixed and publicly known to be so. One reason for this may be that Cicero was reflecting on the very different experience of the Roman Republic where there was little law in the form familiar to Plato and Aristotle, that is to say, explicitly formulated rules authoritatively declared to the public. The Twelve Tables, which were supposedly based on Greek models and enacted in the middle of the fifth century, were not a set of rules, but decisions on certain matters that were commonly disputed. Their provisions varied in form as well as substance and, taken as a whole, the Twelve Tables hardly constituted a comprehensive system of law. Nor is it clear how they were related to the many different sources of *lex* or rules for both private and public actions (Letwin, 2005, p. 42).

Without getting entangled in the specificities of her argument, an important initial point is that the Roman Republic's manner of dealing with law[329] was very flexible, allowing for ample latitude in the magistrates' interpretation, whose major concern, more than a clear establishment of the rule, was the desirability of the effects of a particular decision. Such disposition may partially account for later Roman legal inventiveness and the possibilities of using it as a tool to expanding the frontiers of its dominions.

Following Letwin, Roman legal framework differentiated *ius gentium* from *ius civile.* Originally, *ius civile* was the encompassing term, while *ius gentium* - "the law common to nations" -, was as an addendum meant to facilitate foreign relations, which later came to mean the provisos observed in commerce and general dealings. Cicero, writing in the first century BC, rearranged these terms, equating *ius gentium* to "universal law", as can be seen in *De Officiis.* Hence, it becomes equated with natural law, a set of requirements that demand respect of man's essential nature.

> The same thing is established not only in nature, that is in the law of nations *(iure gentium)*, but also in the laws of individual peoples, through which the political community of individual cities is maintained: one is not allowed to harm another for the sake of one's own advantage. For the laws have as their object and desire that the bonds between citizens should be unharmed. If anyone tears them apart, they restrain him by death, by exile, by chains or by fine. Nature's reason itself, which is divine and human law *(lex divina et humana)*, achieves this object to a far greater extent. Whoever is willing to obey it (everyone will obey it who wants to live in accordance with nature) will never act so as to seek what is another's, nor to appropriate for himself something that he has taken from someone else (*Off.* III, 23[330]).

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[329] There would be to terms to designate "law": *ius* and *lex.* Though there are specificities, in the traditional application at the time, it is generally agreed that "*ius* referred to the broader body of prescriptions or ideas about right and wrong of which *lex* was a particular determination." Letwin highlights that Cicero inverted such usage, or used both as synonyms. (Letwin, 2005, p. 43). For an example of Cicero's usage of *ius civile*, see *De Legibus*, I. 17.

[330] Cicero. *On Duties.* M.T. Griffin and E. M. Atkins (ed.). Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991. The Latin expressions inserted were taken from the texts in the Delphi Classics edition of The Complete Works of Cicero (2014).

The next step of the argument, developed mostly in *De Legibus*, is the direct connection between law, reason and divinity.

> This has, I know, been the opinion of the wisest men: that **law was not thought up by human minds**; that it is not some piece of legislation by popular assemblies; **but it is something eternal which rules the entire universe** through the wisdom of its commands and prohibitions. Therefore, they said, that **first and final law is the mind of the god who compels or forbids all things by reason.** From that cause, the law which the gods have given to the human race has rightly been praised: it is the reason and mind of a wise being, suited to command and prohibition (*De Leg.* II. 8[331], emphasis added).

Letwin (op. cit., p. 44) highlights that Cicero correlated law with reason, reason being the guiding principle of the universe. And though the "conception of the cosmos as a rational order and of human reason as a participation in that order, on which this description of law rests, was not of course peculiar to Cicero", he hugely simplified something that had been cause of great concern both in Plato and in Aristotle[332] by glossing over the fundamental gap between "the human faculty of rationality and the cosmic principle of reason".

The citation below presents Cicero's own words about this relationship in which a few facets of the underlying stoic palette will be accentuated.

> MARCUS: You don't have long to wait. This is its relevance: this animal – provident, perceptive, versatile, sharp, capable of memory, and filled with reason and judgment – which we call a human being, was endowed by the supreme god with a grand status at the time of its creation. **It alone of all types and varieties of animate creatures has a share in reason and thought, which all the others lack. What is there, not just in humans, but in all heaven and earth, more divine than reason?** When it has matured and come to perfection, it is properly named wisdom. And therefore, since there is nothing better than reason, and it is found both in humans and in god, reason forms the first bond between human and god. And those who share reason also share right reason; and since that is law, we humans must be considered to be closely allied to gods by law. **Furthermore, those who share law also share the procedures of justice;** and those who have these things in common must be considered members of the same state, all the more so if they obey the same commands and authorities. **Moreover, they do obey this celestial order, the divine mind and the all-powerful god, so that this whole cosmos must be considered to be the common state of gods and humans.** And as in states distinctions in the legal condition of individuals are made in accordance with family relationships (according to a kind of system with which I will deal at the proper time), **it is all the more grand and glorious in nature at large that men should be a part of the family and race of gods** (*De Leg.* I. 22-23, emphasis added).

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[331] Cicero. *On the Commonwealth and On the Laws.* James E. G. Zetzel (ed.). Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

[332] Namely, as emphasized by Letwin (2005, p. 47), "At no point does Cicero stop to consider the question that both Aristotle and Plato addressed with such careful attention – how in a mortal world, where both human beings and things are constantly altering, could unchanging law be equally suitable for all times and places. (…) In short, Cicero's identification of law with justice and nature, and his insistence that the one true law is known intuitively by all men, takes no account of the mortal character of the human world.

Within this passage, editor Zetzel (1999, p. 113-14) added four footnotes (27, 28, 30, 31) to illustrate the influence of Stoicism. They correspond to the highlighted portions of the passage and, sequentially, identify that "the emphasis on reason as the guiding principle of the universe is Stoic, as is the sharing of reason between humans and gods (27)". The phrase *What is there, not just in humans, but in all heaven and earth, more divine than reason?* would be a Stoic maxim attributed to Chrysippus (28). The connection between right reason, law and the cosmic city is also Stoic (30), noting that in Latin "state" reads *civitas* (Delphi Classics, 2014), as is the reference to the structure of a cosmic family under divine authority (31).

Keeping this in mind, as well as the influence of the other Hellenistic Schools already mentioned, Korab-Karpowicz (2015, p. 59-65) construes his investigation of Cicero's contribution in more commendable tones. One aspect is the Ciceronian identification of the essence of being human with the capacity to reason and to make moral judgements (as would also be the case in Plato and Aristotle, though each in its own way, and that would all differ from the perspective of Hobbes, for instance), therefore capable of acting beyond the pursue of pleasure and the fulfilment of egoistic or domineering impulses. And because reason in present as a fraction of the divine in each of us, there is a similitude between humans and gods. Such attribute enables an individual to reconcile love of one's community/*patria* and love of humankind, making room for a positive take in cosmopolitanism (one has moral obligations to kinfolk and to all humans, though, since there are many more people in need than one's limited resources can address, such obligations value according to social relationships and circumstances, being those that connect one to one's homeland the principal).

Cosmopolitan comes from the Greek *kosmopolitês* (citizen of the world) and its root lies in the concept of natural moral law that was prefigured in Plato and further developed by the Stoics.

> In Plato's *Republic*, Socrates defends the idea that there exist unalterable principles of morality and law. He contests the view that laws are merely conventional and justice is merely a matter of expediency. Insofar as he distinguishes what is naturally just from what is only legally or conventionally just, he defends justice as a universal moral value against Thrasymachus' ethical and legal relativism. He thus rejects a double morality — one toward those who belong to our community and another toward outsiders — and affirms a common morality and the same rights for all humans (op. cit., p. 62).

Cicero will embrace such idea that justice in not defined by opinion or arbitrary will; nor by the fear of punishment or mere obedience to a written norm. It consists in doing what is by nature right, with positive laws founded on ethics. A few mordant passages of *De Legibus* will illustrate his outtake.

> (…) if justice is obedience to the written laws and institutions of a people, and if (as these same people say[333]) everything is to be measured by utility, then whoever thinks that it will be advantageous to him will neglect the laws and will break them if he can. The result is that there is no justice at all if it is not by nature, and the justice set up on the basis of utility is uprooted by that same utility: (…) If justice were determined by popular vote or by the decrees of princes or the decisions of judges, then it would be just to commit highway robbery or adultery or to forge wills if such things were approved by popular vote. If the opinions and the decrees of stupid people are powerful enough to overturn nature by their votes, why don't they ordain that what is evil and destructive should be considered good and helpful? (*De Leg.* I. 42-44).

As emphasized Korab-Karpowicz, throughout history, the Ciceronian message has been used by opponents of totalitarian regimes to challenge the established political order by invoking moral principles and the bonds of human fellowship. And while that is faithful to his conceptions, Cicero is by no means a 'revolutionary', nor does he believe that people (and countries) should be selfless. The pursuit of one's interest, competition and determination to win, so long as it is done without injuring others, are necessary enterprises. Such position will lead to a fierce defence of the inviolability of private property, which was, actually, at the heart of his attitudes towards Catiline.

Furthermore, back to Letwin's (2005, p. 49) more severe assessment of his reflections on natural law and its relationship with "utility", "self-interest" and "justice", she takes on the same passage of *De Legibus* to point out that in the rhetoric exercise of asking if law serves "self-interest" or "justice," Cicero fails to unpack not only the character of self-interest but also how to adequately understand the relationship between law and interests. Instead, his focus is of a negative definition, denying that the principles of justice are not founded on the decrees of peoples, magistrates, or judges.

> Nowhere does Cicero recognize that a degree of rigidity is inseparable from law and that this accounts for both the benefits and the drawbacks of law. Whereas Plato emphasized that rule by the philosopher king is preferable because such a ruler can make decisions perfectly suited to the changing circumstances of human life as rules of law cannot do, and Aristotle argues that even the wisest of rulers – being human rather than philosopher kings – would do well to rely on law, Cicero never raises this question about law. He praises rule by the wise man and identifies law with the rule of wisdom and justice, but never stops to consider the relation between law and steady, general rules, nor the injustice that is inseparable from submitting the changing multiplicity of the human world

[333] "People" here would be Epicurus and his followers, as indicated in the Editor's notes # 54, 57, 58, p. 120-21.

> to fixed rules. Nor does he consider the problem of interpreting natural standards of justice for human conditions here and now. When arguing in favor of "natural law," he speaks as if what constitutes "true law" and the best possible regulation for every community at any time is obvious (Letwin, 2005, p. 51).

Cicero's ideal constitution (*optimum statum civitatis; De Rep*. I.33) will be a balanced mixture of the three basic types (one, few, many; monarchy, aristocracy, democracy) which was a hallmark of the healthy *civitatis* Rome (and only Rome) had managed to achieve in the past. As Lane (2014, p. 272) highlights, "Scipio is said by Augustine[334] to have summed up his argument at the end of the first day of reported dialogue with this claim: 'What the musicians call harmony with regard to song is concord in the state, the tightest and the best bond of safety in every republic; and that concord can never exist without justice' (*De Rep.* 2.69a)."

4.6.4.1 Private Property

Closer to the end of Book II of *De Officiis* Cicero wishes to discuss the kinds of services that concern the nation, equating that "one should consider the interests of individuals just as fully, but in such a way that the matter benefits - or at least docs not harm - the republic." (*Off.* II. 72). In doing so, he will strongly advocate in defence of private property.

One would venture that, notwithstanding his acute understanding of the realm of the *oikos,* Aristotle prioritized the public sphere of "the city" as the privileged site for humans to pursue the summit of their flourishing capabilities. Cicero, notwithstanding his defence of the realm of the *civitas,* advocated, within Antiquity, one of the strongest (and influential) stances for the untouchability of the private property.

It would not be fair to state that Cicero did not elevate the importance of thought, education and service to the collectivity, which is one of the key themes of *De Re Public*. As an illustration,

> Who would think anyone wealthier than the man who lacks nothing of what nature requires, or more powerful than the man who achieves all that he seeks, or more blessed than the man who is freed from all mental disturbance, or of more secure good fortune than the man who possesses, as they say, only what he can carry with him out of a shipwreck? What power, what office, what kingdom can be grander than to look down on all things human and to think of them as less important than wisdom, and to turn over in his mind nothing except what is eternal and divine? Such a man believes that others may be called human, but that the only true humans are those who have been educated in truly human arts (*Rep*. I. 28).

[334] Lane references Augustine following the translation of A. S. L. Farquharson (*Meditations*) and R. B. Rutherford (*Letters*) in Marcus Aurelius 1989. (Note # 27 and 30, p. 374).

As Lane (2014, p. 274) analyses, while Cicero embraces the Platonic standpoint of justice as the foundation of civic concord, when he discusses the institutions, *mores* and laws that can foment a true *res publica,* Scipio and Gaius Laelius scold both Plato's Republic and Spartan customs is as much as "they see the Platonic and Spartan constitutions as involving a flawed and dangerous understanding of political community: to wit, as based on property held in common rather than privately."

Unfortunately, of the elements of this discussion in *De Re Publica* very few fragments survived. Nevertheless, Cicero's orations attacking land reforms proposed in his lifetime associate such changes to threats to peace and liberty[335]. Other treatises such as *De Legibus* and *De Officiis* also add tiles of the mosaic to comprehend his stance.

In the preceding chapter, one aimed at illustrating fundamentals of the Stoic stance on natural law in Cicero, anchored in the understanding that law is the embodiment of reason and that the roots of justice are in nature. As humans partake reason with the gods, "this whole world must be considered to be a common political community [*civitas*] of gods and humans" (*De Leg.* 1.23, apud Lane 2014, p. 277, translation of her own).

However, this abnegated outlook is confronted with utmost pragmatism. When arguing the definition of justice in *De Officiis (I.21),* he states that "since what becomes each man's own comes from what had in nature been common, each man should hold on to whatever has fallen to him. If anyone else should seek any of it for himself, he will be violating the law of human fellowship."

And then, further on in the discussion, he will add a rather unprecedented "plot twist" when he explains why cities come into being. Some elements of the Ciceronian outlook in such regard[336] have already been presented in the beginning of the previous section through quotes from *De Re Publica* which, in some senses, echo arguments also advanced by Plato and Aristotle. This, however, is specific of his.

[335] In this, Lane highlights Cicero's *De Lege Agraria Contra Rullum (Opposing the Agrarian Law)*, second speech, 2.16 and 2.17

[336] In addition to what has already been presented, see *De Officiis* I. 158

> The men who administer public affairs *(rem publicam)* **must first of all see that everyone holds on to what is his, and that private men are never deprived of their goods by public acts.** Philippus acted perniciously in his tribunate in proposing an agrarian law (…) That speech deserved to lose him his civic rights, pointing as it did to an equalization of goods. What greater plague could there be than that? **For political communities and citizenships** *(res publicae civitatesque)* **were constituted especially so that men could hold on to what was theirs. It may be true that nature first guided men to gather in groups; but it was in the hope of safeguarding their possessions that they sought protection in cities** *(urbium).* (*Off.* II. 73, emphasis added).

So, in Cicero, "the city" materializes the dimension of stronghold of private property, property that public acts would have no right in interfering with. Such understanding is heralded by him, a voice that resonated the sentiment of quite a few of "the few". Suffices to remember that, in his lifetime, the Senate issued the exceptional order to summarily execute Roman citizens involved in the Catilinarian conspiracy and that Caesar escaped an assassination attempt after managing to pass with great difficulty a land reform bill (which he achieved only by gathering the support of Pompey and Crassus) in his first year as consul (59 BC), facing the sternest opposition of his co-consul Bibulus and of the senate (chiefly Cato and Cicero).

Such umbilical partnership between "the city" and the protection of private property (so well emphasized and explained through family, tradition and religion by Fustel de Coulanges[337]) seems to have become progressively ingrained in legislation and in the framework of public offices. In the chapter on Aristotle, one highlighted, following Pellegrin (2012), that in epistemological terms, politics is architectonic in relation to economics for the Aristotelian polis. It would be interesting as well to conduct a future epistemological investigation exploring the if/how the defence of private property became architectonic in relation to the *res publica* in the "mythologies of the contemporary city", particularly through the use of the law and the idea of justice. In the words of Lane (2014, p. 278)

> By basing justice firmly on the rights of private property, Cicero advanced a tradition of Roman thought about justice and property that was unabashedly elitist in its context, in at least two ways. He worked to entrench certain entitlements of the political elite, and he rejected any redistribution of certain public lands. These political (and social and economic positions) underpinned his broader ethics of republican probity. As a result, those ethics were influential, though far from universal. In the rivalrous politics of his day, his understanding of justice and property was undeniably partisan. His ideas have, nonetheless, resonated beyond the confines of the debates of his own day.

Cicero did not live to see Octavian Augustus become the first emperor of Rome. Though progressively emptied of their power, the Republican institutions of the Senate and of the Tribunes remained. Their final demise would take place with the momentous changes lived by Augustine, our final herald.

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[337] Coulanges, Fustel de. *A Cidade Antiga.* Martin Claret, 2009.

4.7 AUGUSTINE

if anyone told you he had read all the works of Augustine, he was a liar[338].

> *To gain insight into the importance of Saint Augustine in his time is to gain insight into his importance in our time. For, like all minds of the highest order, Augustine examined profoundly the situation of his time and place in quest of the permanent truths of human existence.*[339]
>
> Timothy Fuller

4.7.1 THE LIFE

Aurelius Augustinus was born in 354 in the small town of Tagaste, Numidia (present day Souk Ahras, Algeria), in the "periphery" of the Roman Empire. As so many parents who have higher ambitions for their children, his family made the effort to send him off to study. From Tagaste he went to the university town of Madauros and then to the great city of Roman Africa, Carthage. There, he taught the premier science for the Roman elites, rhetoric. When he was 18, he read Cicero's *Hortensius* and was enchanted by Philosophy and the work of Plato. In 383 AD, aged 28, he went to Rome to try a career for himself and, by virtue of the political power plays at the time between the prefect or Rome, Symmachus, and Ambrose, bishop of Milan, he ended up in Milan with an imperial appointment to teach Rhetoric.

His father died while he was still young, and his mother Monicca (a devout Catholic) followed him to Milan. During his time in Milan, he remained under the philosophical influence of Plotinus. Monicca entered into marriage negotiations with a preeminent Milanese family on his behalf, which led Augustine's long-time lover to return to North Africa, leaving him their son, Adeodatos (who later died, around the age of 18). This was a period of personal turmoil for Augustine. Breaking off the engagement negotiations, he resigned his teaching post and retired

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[338] Peter R. L. Brown, "Political Society," in Richard Markus, ed., Augustine: A Collection of Critical Essays (Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1972), p. 311, apud Jean Bethke Elshtain, Why Augustine? Why Now? In *Augustine and Postmodernism : Confessions and Circumfession,* edited by John D. Caputo, and Michael J. Scanlon, Indiana University Press, 2005, p. 255.

[339] Fuller, Timothy. Invited Introduction: The importance of St. Augustine in His Day, and in Ours. Chapter. *In Augustine in a Time of Crisis : Politics and Religion Contested.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, p. xvii.

from public life. On the other hand, it was a fruitful period of studying, writing, and it was during this time, in late August 386 AD that he reports the episode of his conversion.

Augustine was baptized by St. Ambrose in 387 AD and ordained priest in 391 AD. Shortly after, he was appointed bishop of Hippo. Living in a time of many turbulent changes, he used his writings to strengthen the position of the Church against the currents of Manicheism, Donatists and Pelagians and, notably, to defend it against the charges that it would have been responsible for the Fall of Rome after the invasions led by Alaric in 410 AD.

In the year 429 AD, hordes of Vandals had crossed to North Africa from Spain, burning down catholic churches in their wake, causing a tide of refugees to flee to Hippo Regius (modern Annaba, Algeria). Aurelius Augustinus, Bishop of Hippo, lived long enough to see yet this chapter of world history, before dying of fever on August 28th in 430 AD, aged 75, in the third month of the siege the Vandals set up to take down the city. A few months after that, Hippo fell.

Upon his death, Augustine bequeathed posterity a legacy of over five million written words, distributed in about a hundred and seventeen book-length works and a vast number of sermons and letters, which survived the sack of the city. He was a supreme rhetorician, “an ambitious discourse and narrative thinker”. To that, it can be added a highly skilled and original way of expression in an unsystematic form. Such an extensive body of work was composed throughout the eventful decades of his life and encompasses several areas of thought, therefore eluding an overall categorization. “His enterprise is at once theological, philosophical, historical, cultural, and rhetorical. His works are characterized by an extraordinarily rich surface as well as vast depth, making it difficult to get a handle on them if one’s own purposes are not so ambitious. He traffics in what we generally call ‘universals,’ but he is also a nuanced ‘particularist’ and historicist” (Elshtain, 2005, p. 244). Augustine reflected on the nature of self, free will, time, love, evil, war and peace, and all in between.

4.7.2 The Augustinian Corpus

> *Dietro alla dialettica agostiniana tra città terrena e città celeste si cela non la fuga ascetica dal mondo, non la divisone tra i buoni e i cattivi, ma un potente invito al rinnovamento esistenziale alla luce della rivelazione cristiana intesa come nuovo orizzonte antropologico. Nelle Confessiones e nel De civitate Dei, la cultura antica viene riletta, distillata e tramandata fino a noi come patrimonio da non disperdere perché lì sono le basi del nostro vivere e del nostro pensare.*[340]
>
> Luciano Zappella

As Cristiani (2018[341], p. 677, emphasis added) observes,

> **Augustine lived, almost emblematically, the intellectual and spiritual experiences offered by the urban civilisation of the Imperial period.** His vast body of works, a self-conscious elaboration of the new Christian culture, at the same time represents a rethinking of several important philosophical themes inherited from a long tradition (mediated principally by the works of Cicero) and a deeply original, and sometimes radical, interpretation of essential elements of the Revelation transmitted by the Scriptures. Augustine retold his own life story with original literary genres in order to demonstrate the role of Grace in the life of the individual, by drawing inspiration primarily from the doctrines of the Apostle Paul.

Fuhrer (2012[342], p. 270) highlights that the richness and heterogeneity of his legacy "probably distinguishes Augustine from all other ancient authors in his role as a writer in dialogue with other people." They comprehend philosophical discussions with friends, students, and family members; debates with opponents about theological questions in the so-called "controversial dialogues" (in relation to religious power struggles of the time, such as Manicheans, Pelagianism and Donatists); letters in which he converses with friends, acquaintances, and even strangers, on issues that range from theological to life in general. Many exegetical texts and commentaries also present the character of talks, posed by the people of his time or himself. His *Confessions* and *Soliloquies* created novel literary genres.

For Kenny (2002, p. 16), "Augustine was one of the most interesting human beings ever to have written philosophy. He had a keen and lively analytic mind and at his best he wrote vividly, wittily, and movingly." Philosophically, he engaged with Aristotelianism, Middle Platonism, Neoplatonism, and Stoicism (with highlights for Plato, Plotinus and Cicero). "Because

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[340] Zappella, Luciano (ed.). *Le due città : Paganesimo e cristianesimo in Agostino.* Milano: Carlo Signorelli Editore, 2005.

[341] Cristiani, Maria. Augustine of Hippo And The New Christian Culture. Chapter, In *Ancient Philosophy. Textual Paths and Historical Explorations.* Edited by Lorenzo Perilli Daniela P. Taormina. Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2018.

[342] Fuhrer, Therese. Conversationalist and Consultant: Augustine in Dialogue. *A Companion to Augustine.* Edited by Mark Vessey with the assistance of Shelley Reid. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

of the immensity of Augustine's corpus and the complex intellectual patrimony that informs it, attempts to place him within the history of philosophical traditions are often partial and in need of supplementation" (Byers, 2012[343], p. 175).

Given such prodigious enterprise, Elshtain (op. cit.) continues to argue, if one looks more specifically to his contribution to political thought "it is perhaps unsurprising that attempts have been made to reduce Augustine to manageable size. To that end he got tagged a political realist and canonized, if you will, as the theological grandfather of a tradition that includes Machiavelli and Hobbes." In her analysis, he is read primarily (if read at all) through excerpts from his works that will support a framing of his position as a "political realist" of whatever else.

Miles Hollingworth[344] (2010) also looks into this difficulty, highlighting that Augustine did not produce a treatise directly comparable to Plato's *Republic* or Aristotle's *Politics* in the sense of articulating a methodical exposition where his leading ideas about man, society, and the state can be found. Nor did he produce a systematic synthesis such as St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*, with his views on topics such as law, justice, and obedience. The lack of such works, in Hollingworth's view, substantially impacted the transmission and reception of Augustine's political ideas as time went by, and "For nearly 1,600 years they have been subject to all manner of mercenary treatment at the hands of thinkers committed to making capital out of their ambiguity. That makes for an extremely complicated tradition of interpretation." (Hollingworth, 2010, p. 2-3).

St. Augustine was first and foremost a theologian, canonically referred to as one of the "Fathers of the Church[345]", and proponent of the theory of predestination. As Fuller states (2021, p. xviii), "Saint Augustine is arguably the greatest Christian thinker and certainly uniquely influential. In many respects, he laid down patterns for Christian thinking that have endured to this day. He is perhaps the only Christian thinker, apart from the New Testament authors, who is equally central to both Catholic and Protestant thought." One of the reasons is that, in the historical formation of 'Western Civilization', St Augustine of Hippo is an important ligature between Antiquity and Modernity, as the channel through which ancient though (notably Platonic ideas) travelled to the Middle Ages (Kenny, 2010, p. 7).

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[343] Byers, Sarah. Augustine and the Philosophers. Chapter. *A Companion to Augustine.* Edited by Mark Vessey with the assistance of Shelley Reid. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

[344] Hollingworth, Miles. *The Pilgrim City : St Augustine of Hippo and His Innovation in Political Thought*, London, New York: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2010.

[345] "[…] a phrase used to denote a cadre of primarily Greek- and Latin-writing Christian teachers who flourished in the first five or six hundred years of post-Apostolic Christianity and whose reputed agreement on salient points of doctrine was appealed to by theologians across Christian denominations, in their efforts to document orthodoxies rooted in an early (or "patristic") era." Vessey, Mark. Introduction. Chapter. *A Companion to Augustine.* Edited by Mark Vessey with the assistance of Shelley Reid. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012, p. 2.

> Augustine remained to the end of his life an unreconstructed ancient philosopher. He believed that human beings should take their lives in hand, and that no training of the self could hope to succeed if it were not grounded in reality—that is, in as true a view as was possible for humans to attain of the nature of God, of the universe, and of the human person. The philosopher was the man who lived by truth: he had put his life in order in the light of a higher reality, which the conventional wisdom of his contemporaries had evaded or blurred. St. Augustine (Brown, 2006[346], p. 36).

Augustine's two greatest works are his *Confessions* and *The City of God*, which are "indubitably masterpieces of the Western tradition, and are essential reading for anyone who wishes to understand the Western tradition and the role of Christianity within it." (Fuller, 2021, xxi). What does not mean they have not been challenged every step of the way. Among the authors read in the exploratory research regarding the heralds, Augustine's commentators are the most careful to highlight that his writings are subject to diverging reception and interpretation.

His *Confessions* "established the pattern of human self-interpretation which was to guide reflection for a millennium, and which can call to us still today" (ibid, xxi). Some will consider it histrionic at best, and the inaugural text in a litany of self-deprecation of human beings in regards to themselves and their 'nature', a "fundamental inquisition against human self-love" (Sloterdijk, 2013, p. 22). Others will be moved by the ineffable beauty of some passages, and by the public unveiling of body and soul of a creature that puts himself naked in search of knowledge of himself at the mercy of his Creator. Human, so human, echoes our contradictions, such as in the famous "Grant me chastity and continence, but not yet." (*Confessions,* 8.7). Human, so human, echoes the pain of feebleness when he succinctly describes the departure of his mistress, the woman[347] who he had been faithful to for fifteen years, resonate with anyone who has ever loved and lost for the sake of convenience. "For there was first burning and bitter grief; and after that it festered, and as the pain grew duller it only grew more hopeless." (*Confessions,* 6.15). Nevertheless, the *Confessions* are, foremost, an extended prayer. An intimate conversation between the humble creature and the mighty Creator in the hopes of His mercy; "a story of a human being who has become a question to himself." (Elshtain, 2005, p. 246)

In the conclusion of her essay, Elshtain underscores that "The vast mountain of Augustinian scholarship keeps growing. It long ago surpassed a book version of Mt. Everest, so much so that no single scholar or group of scholars could master it all. This is true of Augustine's work alone. (…) One always has the sense with Augustine that one has but scratched the surface."

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[346] Brown, Peter. Introduction. Chapter. In St. Augustine, *Confessions* F.J. Sheed (trans.) Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006.

[347] This woman in not named in his writings, and is supposed to have been of humble origins and, therefore, not suitable to be his wife.

(ibid., p. 254-55). And it is within this mountaineering comparison that one wishes to take heed of Augustine's *Confessions* and advance a "confession" of one's own.

How to approach Augustine, the last of our heralds, felt, many times, an unsurmountable proposition. To properly climb this mountain, one needs to be equipped with the tools of Theology, so to attempt to cling to the surface if its inscrutable "object" of study, God Almighty, and all the mysteries that pertain to His kingdom. That is an ontological castle that one does not begin to have the epistemological keys to explore. And then, now, what?

In reading some of the works of Augustine's commentators, a curious note is the overall emphasis on the complexity of his contribution. Fact to the matter is that a *corpus* of over five million words written in ancient Latin, subject to sixteen centuries of reinterpretation, and entangled in some of the thorniest issues of modernity, the relationship between church and state, revelation and knowledge, faith and reason, is, *per se*, the definition of a minefield. It this writer's opinion, however, there is an additional layer of complexity that is not overtly acknowledged but that is nevertheless unavoidable. Augustine, in his conversion, felt that he had been touched by the grace of God, that he had heard in his core the voice of his Maker. Even to those who believe in the existence of the soul, of a transcendent and immanent God, of the divinity of Christ and His message, there remains that genuine Faith is grifted by rare and mysterious Grace. Hence, to those of us that do not commune in this experience, a level of Augustine's writing will forever be inaccessible, for it is veiled. By feeble proxy, it is the same feeling of perplexity and amazement one experiences in trying to conceive how a deaf Beethoven could compose the most powerful of symphonies within himself. One can attempt to understand it through reason, but faith cannot be subsumed by reason. In Augustine's own words, "(…) seek not to understand so that you may believe, but believe so that you may understand.[348]"

To avoid desperation while faced by such conundrum, one will appeal to the lesson of yet another of the world's great religions and apply a Buddhist meditation technique. To try to diminish the anxiety, one will acknowledge this hermeneutic limitation, look at it, encapsulate it in a mental balloon, and watch if float away. One will contemplate the Everest, but will make no attempt to climb its summit. It is still beautiful. And then, one will strive to tie one's floating self back to Earth and to the scope of this research, and substantially narrow the focus of this inquiry, while leaving a note to the reader that such will be but only the proverbial tip of the iceberg. And then, following again Augustine's own words, ***"what shall we say of the city?[349]"***

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[348] Augustine of Hippo. Tractates on the Gospel of John, 29.6, in *The Fathers of the Church,* Vol. 88, trans. John W. Rettig (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1993), p. 18.

[349] Augustine of Hippo. *Concerning the City of God Against the Pagans.* A new translation by Henry Bettenson with an introduction by John O'Meara. London: Penguin Books, 1984 (1467), Book XIX.5.

4.7.3 The City of God, an Outline

De Civitate Dei (*The City of God)* was written to address a momentous historical change that was the invasion and sack of Rome by the Goths tribes led by Alaric, ending an eight hundred years period during which it had not been subject to foreign invasion. Such a catastrophe had to have an explanation, and many were quick to point the dethroning of the ancient gods of Rome by the new Christian faith – the *tempora Cristiana* - as the cause of it.

Motivated by the need to address this challenge to the Church, and taking the opportunity initiated by the correspondence with his friend Marcellinus, Augustine will undertake the enterprise, which resulted in twenty-two books written in about thirteen years (413-426 AD).

As briefly outlined by Manent (2013, p. 231), The City of God is organized as such,

> **Books 1 - 5:** refutation of those who believe that worship of the pagan gods is a necessary condition to the prosperity of human affairs and who explain present miseries by the prohibition of this worship
>
> **Books 6 - 10:** refutation of those who defend worship of the pagan gods not for the sake of this life but in view of the future life
>
> **Books 11 - 14:** the origins of the two cities
>
> **Books 15 - 18:** their progress and development
>
> **Books 19 - 22:** the ultimate ends of the two cities and the triumph of the heavenly city

As Manent (ibid) emphasizes, Augustine's task was to set up the defence that the new religion not only introduces changes in the life and mores of Rome, but that "it truly brings about a new city whose principles or wellsprings are radically distinct and different from those of the old Rome." One must not lose sight, specially while reading the first books, that Augustine

> is engaged there in the particularly difficult exercise **of defending the new city before the tribunal of the old, all the while setting up the tribunal of the new** whose laws and principles are very different from those of the old and are even opposed to them. He summons the new city to appear before the tribunal of the old, all the while setting up the new tribunal that judges the old city. **Augustine lets us see—on a very large screen, dare I say—the intrinsic and perhaps insurmountable difficulty of any Christian statement about politics** (ibid).

At other points of this dissertation (i.e. section 4.1), one has already highlighted the importance that Manent places in the historical moment when the political form of the Greek city and its regime transitions to the Roman empire as an important field for new and necessary studies. He argues that the account prepared by Augustine of the Roman experience as a whole, from Romulus to the Christian Church, can importantly add to such scholarship.

> Augustine describes a human association that is neither a city nor an empire, but one that, animated by a principle of its own, is complete and self-sufficient, which is the Church. In our perspective, we will say that with the description of the city of God Augustine offers us a novel and unique political form that probably neither ancient nor modern political science can adequately grasp. (ibid, p. 229)

While approaching the City of God it is important to keep in mind, as emphasized by O'Meara (1984, p. 14), that, in spite of the at times somber tones, the "keynote of the City of God is fulfilment, not destruction", and its great lesson is that "out of all things comes good".

> The practical problem with which Augustine had to deal was the problem of a spiritual Church in a secular world: **the city of God in the city of this world**. It is of the first importance to understand that he did not condemn out of hand the city of this world. It was God's creation. **It was used by God for his purposes. It was not only of practical use to the citizens of God's city but was also intended by God to give compelling example to them of what efforts they should make in their striving for something greater and something higher** (ibid, p. 14-15).

With this, Augustine keeps in tune with the three previous heralds, that the city of this world, even if in an imperfect relation to the "city is speech", is an instrument for humankind to strive for something greater and higher. Nevertheless, the rapport between a city is speech, the City of God, that is not of this world, with the earthly city, is not one that is easy to make. As Manent (2013, p. 235-35) analyses,

> at this point a difficulty arises that Augustine's perspective allows us to grasp clearly. The amelioration brought by Christianity could only be indirect, for its intent is not to introduce a new religion into the world in order to improve the world, but to introduce people into a new city in order to sanctify them. The amelioration of human life that we speak of can concern only this zone of uncertain status situated at the interface or intersection of the two cities. And if Christians can legitimately expect to observe indirect positive effects, they will not be surprised at times to notice indirect negative effects: by troubling the vicious functioning of the earthly city through the good it brings, Christianity is susceptible of hindering the good effects that the vicious city can produce. Good and bad effects could at times appear as the two opposite and inseparable aspects of the same phenomenon.

4.7.3.1 *What of shall we say of the city*: a few underlying tenets

> *To acknowledge the limits of reason does not lead to irrationalism. (…) the power of reason paradoxically lies in its ability to recognize its own limits, but the transgression of these limits nonetheless leads straight to irrationalism.*[350]
>
> Luc Brisson

One will attempt to highlight Augustine's pertinence to the understanding of "the city" and its "mythologies" by following the triple-thread that connects the three previous heralds: the city as the place of *eudaimonia,* of justice and ethics as fundamental tenets of life in common, and the construction of an idealized city is speech. And, seeing the weaving of these threads in terms of the shifts in paradigm, of points of continuity and of change, we are presented with a rather paradoxical situation: these three compasses remain valid, but there is a fundamental change in the bearings; due North is redefined: the "city of our prayers" (in an intended word-play with Aristotle) becomes, truly, the city of our prayers, for it leaves its residence on Earth to be found in the Heaven.

Granted (and importantly), Plato, Aristotle and Cicero, each of them built specific conceptual frameworks to envelope these themes into a consistent philosophical proposition and, though they may diverge (even by a lot) on their analyses, they share the understanding that the things that pertain to the *polis*/*res publica* – the political life – are fundamental in the fulfilment of a happy life is a just universe, always in tandem with the cosmic understanding of "to each its own."

Augustine will remain adherent to the idea of an ordained universe. But this order is now designed by a God, who created everything, including men and women. Not only created, but created in His own image. But Adam and Eve sinned, breaking the original covenant with the Creator and were cast out of Paradise to an earthly mortal life. Every single descending human carries the stain of this original sin and, for Augustine, it will be only through God's mercy that, come Judgement Day, the selected few will re-join Him in the City of God. Hence, a well-lived life is no longer defined by the measuring rod of *ta politika*; its justice, its virtues, and its conditions of citizenship. It will be defined by love: love of the self (*amor sui*), which will lead to damnation; and love of God (*amor Dei*), which may lead to salvation.

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[350] Brisson, Luc. *How Philosophers Saved Myths : Allegorical Interpretation and Classical Mythology.* Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004, p. 3.

There is colossal amount of scholarship dedicated to the study of love in Augustine. Hannah Arendt for one, had it as the topic of her doctoral dissertation[351]. It will not be possible to analyse here Augustine exegesis in the meaning of love and the ensuing scholarship. However, it cannot be overlooked, for love in the very fountainhead of his definition of "the city".

> **We see then that the two cities were created by two kinds of love: the earthly city was created by self-love reaching the point of contempt for God, the Heavenly City by the love of God carried as far as contempt of self.** (*D. civ. D.* 15.28, emphasis added).

It must be remembered that, according to the Gospel (Mark 12:30-31[352]), the revisited covenant expressed by Jesus was "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." As these are the pillars of the Catholic faith (particularly following a Pauline exegesis, as Augustine did), the Bishop of Hippo wholly embraces it as the defining features of the two civitates described in *The City of God.*

> Since love of neighbor as a Christian commandment depends on the love of God, which the believer embraces, and on the resulting new attitude toward his own self, each of the first two parts will have to start with the question of what it means to love God and oneself. (..) Augustine's every perception and every remark about love refer at least in part to this love of neighbor. Thus the question about the neighbor's relevance always turns into a simultaneous critique of the prevailing concept of love and of man's attitude toward himself and toward God. (Arendt, 1996, p. 3)

Such epistemological "love overflow" will spill over his conceptions on the possibilities of a good life, of justice, of social and political arrangements. There will be a paradigmatic inflection – one will not call it break, for the echoes of previous voices will continue to be heard – that Arendt will capture and synthesize in the following Augustinian quote[353], "They have not understood that 'Do not do to another what you do not wish to have done to you', **cannot be varied in any way by any national diversity of customs. When this rule is applied to the love of God, all vices die; when it is applied to the love of our neighbor, all crimes vanish."**

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[351] Arendt, Hannah. *Love and Saint Augustine.* Edited and with an Interpretive Essay by Joanna Vecchiarelli Scott and Judith Chelius Stark. Chicago & London: The University Of Chicago Press, 1996 (1929).

[352] See https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/__PWE.HTM

[353] *Christian Doctrine* III,14,2Z; also *Commentaries on the Psalms* 57,1., apud Arendt 1996, p. 4-5.

It is necessary to recall that, within the proposed research, the herald is someone who epitomizes the historical moment in which he lives, giving voice, naturally, to his thoughts and ideas, but which are imbedded in a specific time and place. It is this characteristic that allows for a synchronic analysis, meaning to investigate how his ideas (in this case, about the city) resonate their own time, and also diachronically, in the sense of how it resonated through time, helping to identify the points of continuity and inflection in the investigation of paradigm shifts and the "genealogy" of "the city" mythologies.

As already noted, each one of our heralds had a front row seat to momentous changes, but perhaps Augustine witnessed the most dramatic one. Historical sources underscore the deep psychological shock the sack of Rome represented, expressed in words such as those of St. Jerome[354]: "If Rome be weak, where shall we look for strength? [⋯] If Rome be lost, where shall we look for help?" But it was not just the city of Rome that fell, but the Western Empire with it. It was, as earlier pointed by Mumford, the dissolution of the network of five-thousand plus cities connected by eighty thousand kilometres of roads. **It was the simultaneous collapse of the *urbs, the civitas and the res publica.*** It took hundreds of years for this network of cities to reform and, in the process of doing it, and well into the birth of modernity, it was the Catholic Church, with its monasteries, convents and churches, that somewhat filled the void the Roman Empire had once occupied.

[354] Letter to Heliodorus from St Jerome, available at http://media.bloomsbury.com/rep/files/primary-source-13-and-51-st-jerome-letter-to-heliodorus.pdf

4.7.3.2 *What of shall we say of the city*: the push towards universality

> ***"I have already stated in the foregoing books that God chose to make a single individual the starting-point of all mankind, and that his purpose in this was that the human race should not merely be united in a society by natural likeness, but should also be bound together by a kind of tie of kinship to form a harmonious unity, linked together by the 'bond of peace'. (DCD XIV.1[355])***

Of the many possible approaches to investigate the contribution of Augustine in the history of Western thought in relation to "the city", upon careful consideration, it seems that his call to universality may be the most fruitful one to be explored, in as much as through it one can follow the three main threads that connect the four heralds (eudaimonia, justice and ethics in relation to the common life). In doing this, one will heed to Manent's circumscription of focus as a first stance, in the sense of not engaging with doctrinal and institutional issues of the Church:

> The city [here Manent in referring to the *polis*] is characterized by the intensity of the association, the empire by its extent. The Church for its part seeks to constitute a more intense and more intimate association than the city (*polis*), and that is yet at the same time more extended than the empire. **It is not for us to consider the validity— the truth—of this claim of the Church.** The Church is of interest to us as a novel human association, a novel political form. This form is elucidated with the greatest breadth and precision in Augustine's City of God (Manent, 2013, p. 230[356], emphasis added).

As pointed out by Elshtain (2005, p. 248), in studying the limits of human capacity for knowing, Augustine will pay special attention to the role of language. The conventions of language both limit and enable our possibilities of communication and learning and, as humans are driven to communicate by a deep-seated sociality, for him, this sociality is foundational in relation to the nature of human societies. In a way, it is a "pre-discovery" of what has been much latter, and, naturally, with other tools of investigation, that Searle and Tomasello will analyse. It goes beyond the political, being connected with the bond of trust needed for mutual understanding.

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[355] All quotations from *The City of God,* unless otherwise stated, were extracted from St. Augustine, *Concerning THE CITY OF GOD against the Pagans,* a new translation by Henry Bettenson with an introduction by John O'Meara. London: Penguin Books, 1984 (1467), electronic edition.

[356] Though one will not advance that far in the argument, it is worth highlighting that Manent, in his *Metamorphoses of the City,* analyses how, from the debris of the convoluted clash between the "two cities", the City of Men and the City of God, the State proper, in the sense of the nation-state, emerged.

The first "public realm" was forged in the relational space in between the first couple that ever was and, as the whole of humanity descends from this one couple, the whole of humanity is but one family, and the foundation of the public space in forged in the interstices of our relationships to one another.

> Created in the image of God, human relationality defines us. The self is not and cannot be freestanding. Social life is full of ills and yet to be cherished. Thus, civic life, among those social forms, is not simply what sin has brought into the world but what emerges, in part, given our capacity for love, our use of reason, as well (alas) as a pervasive lust for domination attendant upon human affairs (Elshtain, 2005, p. 249).

Again, as she continues to explain the Augustinian perspective, all human beings, without exception, are citizens of the City of Man and, "even in this fallen condition there is a kind of 'natural likeness' that forges bonds between us." Though these natural bonds will not be strong enough to prevent us from exercising the whole palette of miseries, cruelty and wars of our own making, there will be, so long as we recognize one another as humans, a calling to partake on a naturalistic sociality and basic morality available to all rational creatures. "A kind of unity in plurality pushes toward harmony; but the sin of division — with its origins in pride and wilfulness — drives us apart." (ibid)

Following perhaps a faint Aristotelian echo, Augustine's *practical philosophy* (history, ethics, social and political philosophy) will lay its roots on love of friendship. "Pinioned between alienation and affection, human beings—those "cracked pots[357]"—are caught in the tragedy of alienation but glued by love." Hence, for him, the crux of the matter will be the nature of this love; what shall be loved and how. (ibid)

An exploration of Augustine's complex ethical theory will not be attempted here. A few of its fundamentals, nevertheless, must be highlighted, still following Elshtain, and also Breyfogle (2013[358]), so to define the proper sense in which the words *societas, civitas* and *ecclesia* will be used.

> (…) it must be noted that **political life is one form that human social and ethical life assumes.** We are always in society, and we always seek the consolation of others. **Society,** for Augustine, **is a species of friendship, and friendship is a moral union in and through which human beings strive for a shared good.** All of Augustine's central categories, including war and peace, are in the form of a relationship of one sort or another. And the more we are united at all levels in a bond of peace, the closer we come to achieving that good at which we aim and which God intends (Elshtain, 2005, p. 249, emphasis added).

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[357] In reference to Augustine's *Expositions of the Psalms* 99, 11.

[358] Breyfogle, Todd. Citizenship and Signs: Rethinking Augustine on the Two Cities. *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought,* edited by Ryan K. Balot. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2013.

Breyfogle will enter into more detail[359], seeking to untangle the usage of these terms - *societas, civitas* and *ecclesia* - having as a particular window of examination *The City of God* 15.1-8, where Augustine reflects upon the relationship between Cain and Abel, and "the corrosive effect of *invidia* [envy], citizenship in the earthly and heavenly cities respectively, the personifications of *amor sui* and *amor Dei*, the preference of one's own to the inexhaustible store of divine goods." The clarification is also needed to underscore the differences Augustine establishes between eschatological and historical citizenship, since Rome/Babylon, Jerusalem (Israel) and the Church will also be referred to as actual historical institutions. Therefore, it is necessary to properly distinguish things from loves, institutions from allegiances. For example, Cain is born a participant of the eschatological *civitas terrena*, but also establishes an actual, historical *civitas*. "Augustine's bewildering play of terms underscores the complex tension between eschatological citizenship and historical citizenship, disclosing an interpenetration whose contours shift beneath the weight of mixed motives of love and the creative possibilities of human invention." Hence, emphasis will be placed in framing theological-political disputation between those who are material citizens (Cain) and spiritual pilgrims (Abel) with respect to the goods of this world" (Breyfogle, 2013 p. 527-28).

The *amor sui* and the *amor Dei* are at the basis of the Augustinian three analytical units of *societas, civitas,* and *ecclesia.*

> *Civitas* Augustine understands to be the perceptible continuity of loves shared by a people, whether understood in historical or eschatological terms. *Societas* refers to that web of interpersonal relations, however weak, formed in the daily conduct of the business of living, reaching from passing familiarity to formal contract. *Ecclesia* represents a specific set of relations shaped by participation in common ritual and eschatological hope. Of the three, *societas* opens most widely to encompass a wide variety of human associations; *civitas* concerns the relations of citizen; *ecclesia* expresses the mutual relations of Christians. (Breyfogle, 2013 p. 528).

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[359] As much usefully summarized by Breyfogle (2013, p. 527-528):

societas – fellowship or association, human or divine

civitas^c = *in or do causarum* – the societas of just and loving command and obedience in the mind of God (Christ) (as observed on note #7 p. 550, had this *civitas* existed in time without the corruption of sin, its members would have understood themselves to be pilgrims en route, through the wisdom learned in a life of virtue, to the civitas Dei.)

in eternity

civitas Dei – eschatological heavenly city (spiritual citizenship); the redemption of *civitas^c* (Abel; Seth = resurrection 15.18)

civitas terrena – eschatological earthly city (spiritual citizenship); the eschatological fulfillment of civitas^t (Cain)

in time

ecclesia – that historical *societas* of citizens of the *civitas Dei* who, while possessing citizenship in a *civitas^t,* live in sin but under grace as pilgrims whose primary love or allegiance is to God; the positive (hopeful) deformation of *civitas^t* (spiritual pilgrimage)

Jerusalem/Israel – a specific *civitas^t* which, in bondage, signifies *ecclesia* (Abel)

civitas^t = *in ordo temporum* – the *societas of command* and obedience under the condition of sin; the negative (damned) deformation of *civitas^t* (material citizenship)

Rome/Babylon – a specific *civitas^t* which, in domination, signifies by negative example the *civitas Dei* on earth (Cain) (as observed on note #8 p. 551, following *De civ. D.* 15.8. *Civitas^t* has no ontological status and so, both historically and eschatologically, indicates only the privation of the *societates* for which we were created and redeemed.

Before returning to Breyfogle's analysis, some snippets of Augustine's words so to experience the herald in his own voice, extracted from Book XV. 1-18 of *De Civitate Dei.*

> I classify the human race into two branches: the one consists of those who live by human standards, the other of those who live according to God's will. I also call these two classes the two cities, speaking allegorically. By two cities I mean two societies of human beings, one of which is predestined to reign with God for all eternity, the other doomed to undergo eternal punishment with the Devil. (…)
>
> Now Cain was the first son born to those two parents of mankind[360], and he belonged to the city of man; the later son, Abel, belonged to the City of God. (…) When those two cities started on their course through the succession of birth and death, the first to be born was a citizen of this world, and later appeared one who was a pilgrim and stranger in the world, belonging as he did to the City of God. ( )
>
> Scripture tells us that Cain founded a city, whereas Abel, as a pilgrim, did not found one. For the City of the saints is up above, although it produces citizens here below, and in their persons the City is on pilgrimage until the time of its kingdom comes. (…)
>
> There was certainly a kind of shadow and prophetic image of this City which served rather to point towards it than to reproduce it on earth at the time when it was due to be displayed. This image was also called the holy city, in virtue of its pointing to that other City, not as being the express likeness of the reality which is yet to be. (…)
>
> This manner of interpretation, which comes down to us with apostolic authority, reveals to us how we are to understand the Scriptures of the two covenants, the old and the new. One part of the earthly city has been made into an image of the Heavenly City, by symbolizing something other than itself, namely that other City; and for that reason it is a servant. For it was established not for its own sake but in order to symbolize another City; and since it was signified by an antecedent symbol, the foreshadowing symbol was itself foreshadowed. (…)
>
> Thus we find in the earthly city a double significance: in one respect it displays its own presence, and in the other it serves by its presence to signify the Heavenly City. But the citizens of the earthly city are produced by a nature which is vitiated by sin, while the citizens of the Heavenly City are brought forth by grace, which sets nature free from sin. (…)
>
> The earthly city will not be everlasting; for when it is condemned to the final punishment it will no longer be a city. It has its good in this world, and rejoices to participate in it with such gladness as can be derived from things of such a kind. And since this is not the kind of good that causes no frustrations to those enamoured of it, the earthly city is generally divided against itself by litigation, by wars, by battles, by the pursuit of victories that bring death with them or at best are doomed to death. For if any section of that city has risen up in war against another part, it seeks to be victorious over other nations, though it is itself the slave of base passions; and if, when victorious, it is exalted in its arrogance, that victory brings death in its train.

[360] For the Biblical description, see Genesis 4, available at https://www.vatican.va/archive/bible/genesis/documents/bible_genesis_en.html#Chapter%204

Falling back to Breyfogle's interpretation (2013, p. 529), Augustine transcends the regime theories of his predecessors (the rule of the one, the few and the many in its several possibilities) and puts forth a dual division that synthesize the animating spirits of human sociability, the two cities formed by the two loves. Accordingly, it should be noted that, following Jesus' words in the Gospel, that "My kingdom does not belong to this world" (John 18:36), and "Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God" (Mark 12:17), and the ensuing Pauline exegesis, Augustine will, for most of the discussion, leave human political constructs on the background. Though he will acknowledge the need for a rule of (secular) law and will debate[361], for instance, within the statesmanship attributes of Macedonius, how Christian values could guide the mundane exercise of power, this is not where the essence of his apology is placed.

Since words are the means to express the developed concepts, there is a term that inspires a curious reflection. As in Plato's Greek the word to designate "private" interests in opposition to the public life is *Idiōtēs,* in Augustine's Latin *privatus* (from *privatio*) will convey the meaning of loss. As quoted by Breyfogle (2013, p. 531) from *De Genesi ad litteram*[362] *(Gn. Litt)* the term is used in the context of the already sketched human's natural proclivity to sociability, while identifying avarice as a radical evil, in as much as it is a function of

> the attitude by which a person desires more than what is due by reason of his excellence, and a certain love of one's own interest, his private interest, to which **the Latin word *privatus* was wisely given, a term which obviously expresses loss rather than gain. For every privation [*privatio*] diminishes.** Where pride, then, seeks to excel, there it is cast down into want and destitution, turning from the pursuit of the common good to one's own individual good out of a destructive self-love. (*Gn. litt.* 11.15.19, apud Breyfogle, emphasis added).

Idiocy and deprivation are possibly not the first words that would come to the contemporary mind in such context since it is a fairly widespread notion, following Adam Smith for one, that pursuing one's private good is actually to the interest of society; a fountainhead of the collective good life. In Augustine, countervailing the evils of "privatization", is the paradigmatic virtue of *caritas.* "Opposed to the 'disease' of perverse self-love which separates us from society is 'charity', who seeks not her own [1 Cor. 13:5], that is, does not rejoice in her own [*privata*] excellence" (*Gn. litt.* 11.15.19). Having established the rupture in *societas* in the substitution of the private for the common good, Augustine launches into his formative conception of the two cities (*Gn. litt.* 11.15.20)" (Breyfogle, 2013, p. 531, emphasis on the

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[361] *Letter 155 to Macedonius, inter alia.* For a sample of the rather tart discussion in this regard, see Dodaro, Robert. "Political and Theological Virtues in Augustine, Letter 155 To Macedonius." *Augustiniana,* vol. 54, no. 1/4, Peeters Publishers, 2004, pp. 431–74, http://www.jstor.org/stable/44992694.

[362] A set of twelve books in which Augustine, in an exegetical work, focuses on the defense of the biblical creation narrative presented in the Genesis. See Pollmann, Karla. "De Genesi ad litteram." In *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

original). But not before leaving one wondering, for instance, how much idiocy is involved in the rejoicing on the depriving "private excellence" of gated condominiums in relation to the contemporary cities.

As the great scholar of Medieval Philosophy Étienne Gilson underscored in his *The Metamorphoses of the City of God* that, although Augustine takes the title from the better city, in the twenty-two books that it comprises, both histories are narrated. The task the assigns to himself is not only to address the immense pressure of the circumstances of the sack of Rome, as reflected in Marcellinus anguished correspondence, and defend the Church for these contingent accusations. He seeks to narrate an epic of cosmic proportions identified with world history and, in that, emphasises the theme of universality contained in the trajectory of the cities.

> The message that the bishop of Hippo thus presents us is, indeed, that the whole world from start to finish has the single end of constituting a holy society in function of which everything, the universe itself, has been made. **Perhaps never in the history of human speculation has the concept of society undergone a metamorphosis that is comparable in depth or that, by being metamorphosed, led to such amplification of perspective. Here the City does more than extend to the limits of the earth or the world; it includes it and explains it, to the point of justifying its very existence.** Everything that is, except God alone whose work the City is, exists only for it, has meaning only through it, and if we can have faith in the ultimate intelligibility of the smallest occurrence or the most humble being, the City of God holds its secret (Gilson, 2005[363], p. 30-31, emphasis added).

[363] Gilson, Étienne. *The Metamorphoses of the City of God.* The Catholic University of America Press, 2020 (1952).

4.7.3.3 Contrasting Cicero

> In contrast, the Heavenly City – or rather that part of it which is on pilgrimage in this condition of mortality, and which lives on the basis of faith – must needs make use of this peace also, **until this mortal state, for which this kind of peace is essential, passes away.** And therefore, it leads what we may call a life of captivity in this earthly city as in a foreign land, although it has already received the promise of redemption, and the gift of the Spirit as a kind of pledge of it; **and yet it does not hesitate to obey the laws of the earthly city by which those things which are designed for the support of this mortal life are regulated; and the purpose of this obedience is that, since this mortal condition is shared by both cities, a harmony may be preserved between them in things that are relevant to this condition.** (*De civ. D.* 19.17, emphasis added).

There is intense scholarly debate as to how much emphasis Augustine places on "earthly politics" as incidental to the pilgrimage towards the heavenly city and, for this matter, Plato and particularly Cicero will be called to the conversation.

As seen, political society was considered the arena for the pursuit of the goof life. As Korab-Karpowicz (2015) points out, Augustine will deem this ideal illusory, launching a penetrating critic toward ancient philosophical tradition and the "folly" of achieving bliss on this earth through our own efforts (*De civ. D.* 19.4), a critique that may have been heard by the Chicago School of Sociology.

> To put Augustine's view in more modern terms, history is for him just the same damn thing over and over again: wars, bloodshed without cause, suspicion and competition among states, and ultimately, the rise and fall of great powers. Conflict prevails within the city, as well as between states: "The larger the city, the more it is filled with civil lawsuits and criminal trials" (*De civ. D.* 19.6). (Korab-Karpowicz, 2015, p. 79)

Importantly, Augustine's realism, with its acute emphasis on the frailties and shortcomings of human nature and its "tendency to hide selfishness behind the facade of values" is not cynical, and it "does not serve to justify evil deeds." (ibid, p. 80)

To Augustine, the notion of justice seems to dominate the pagan concept of *city*; is the first condition required for the existence of the city. As conceived by Cicero, for instance, every society would be similar to a musical concert where agreement or harmony finally emerge from different sounds from instruments or voices. What the musician calls harmony, the politician calls concord.

Let us recall, Cicero had defined, and Augustine quotes in the construction of his defence of the *Civitas Dei*, *res publica* in the following terms: "the commonwealth is the concern of a people, but a people is not any group of men assembled in any way, but an assemblage of some size associated with one another through agreement on law and community of interest." (*De Re Republica*[364]. I.39a). Such definition of *res publica* will not do for Augustine. Every society worthy of the name is either the City of God or defined in relation to the City of God and, in his argument, there had never been a true Roman society, for true justice had never reigned.

> I there promised that I would show that there never was a Roman commonwealth answering to the definitions advanced by Scipio in Cicero's On *the* Republic. For Scipio gives a brief definition of the state, or commonwealth, as the 'weal of the people'. Now if this is a true definition there never was a Roman commonwealth, because the Roman state was never the 'weal of the people', according to Scipio's definition. For he defined a 'people' as a multitude 'united in association by a common sense of right and a community of interest'. He explains in the discussion what he means by 'a common sense of right', showing that a state cannot be maintained without justice, and where there is no true justice there can be no right. For any action according to right is inevitably a just action, while no unjust action can possibly be according to right. For unjust human institutions are not to be called or supposed to be institutions of right, since even they themselves say that right is what has flowed from the fount of justice; as for the notion of justice commonly put forward by some misguided thinkers, that it is 'the interest of the strongest', they hold this to be a false conception.
>
> Therefore, where there is no true justice there can be no 'association of men united by a common sense of right', and therefore no people answering to the definition of Scipio, or Cicero. And if there is no people then there is no 'weal of the people', but some kind of a mob, not deserving the name of a people. If, therefore, a commonwealth is the 'weal of the people', and if a people thoes not exist where there is no 'association by a common sense of right', and there is no right where there is no justice, **the irresistible conclusion is that where there is no justice there is no commonwealth.** (*De civ. D.* 19.21, emphasis added).

To this stand, Augustine will propose his own lapidary definition of people and *res publica*, one that connects with the central thesis of his work, hence replacing justice with love as the cornerstone of human societies.

> If, on the other hand, another definition than this is found for a 'people', for example, if one should say, **'A people is the association of a multitude of rational beings united by a common agreement on the objects of their love', then it follows that to observe the character of a particular people we must examine the objects of its love.** And yet, whatever those objects, if it is the association of a multitude not of animals but of rational beings, and is united by a common agreement about the objects of its love, then there is no absurdity in applying to it the title of a 'people'. And, obviously, the better the objects of this agreement, the better the people; the worse the objects of this love, the worse the people. (*De civ. D.* 19.24, emphasis added).

[364] Cicero. *On the Commonwealth and On the Laws.* Edited by James E. G. Zetzel. Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Continuing his critique of the classical political perspective, Korab-Karpowick underscores that Augustine will not only considerer it inadequate but bound to failure for, at best, **"it only exists in speech".**

> In this respect, Augustine's critique of the ancient philosophical tradition is similar to that of the early modern philosophers who implied that it was impractical. Yet he is anything but a Machiavellian or a Hobbesian. It does not occur to him to lower politics by divorcing it from ethics. The standards of human conduct that he derives from Christianity are even more stringent than the standards of virtue provided by the ancient philosophers. In his view, ancient political philosophy failed, not because it expected too much of human beings, but because it was ignorant of the true end to which all human actions were to be directed and by which all truths should be measured. Having no conception of original sin, it did not apply the proper remedy to the disordered and conflicting character of human life. This remedy for Augustine consists in following God, who reveals the true goal of human existence and gives "instructions for the promotion of the highest morality and the reproof of wickedness" (Korab-Karpowick, 2015, p. 82).

To cap this point, two observations must be made. The first is that, despite his pessimistic outlook about the human condition, Augustine believed that everything that has been created by God holds a measure of goodness, so genuine improvement of the world can be achieved through our *peregrinatio,* so long as the ordering of love is observed. As Kilcullen and Robison observe (2019[365], p. 8) "Augustine's is not a philosophy of 'black and white', of stark opposition between the forces of light and the forces of darkness [⋯] According to Augustine there is no absolute evil[366] [⋯] Anything evil must be to some extent good, or it could not exist at all. Its evil consists in disorder or misdirection, in its failing to attain all the goodness appropriate to it."

The second is that, to maintain the sin of pride in check, the citizens of the City of Men and City of God go through life hand in hand, distinguishable only by the eyes of the Lord. Hence, the justice of the City of Man in also necessary, particularly in deference of the common goal of both cities, which is peace.

> For Augustine, Christians live in the earthly part of the heavenly city. This is an invisible, spiritual kingdom, not identical with any particular city, nation, or empire. Neither can we know who is truly a member of this invisible kingdom of the saved. Only God can see into people's hearts to discern the true motive for their outward behavior. The political cities coexist and intermingle with the spiritual. The two kingdoms are mixed together. We do not possess the insight adequately to distinguish them. Earthly authorities are not competent to pass final judgment on the fate of human souls. The most important question—the salvation of one's soul— is, in principle, removed from the jurisdiction of the state. The state's only certain purpose is to maintain that necessary earthly order without which we cannot get on with the real business of our lives. (⋯) The civil order can repress evil, but it cannot create the good. (Fuller, 2021, p. xix)

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[365] Kilcullen, John and Jonathan Robinson, "Medieval Political Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2019/entries/medieval-political/>.

[366] The referred authors point towards *City of God* XI.22, XII.2, 3, 7; *Confessions* VII.xii.18–xiii.19; *Enchiridion* 11–12).

To hit the nail in the head one final time, in Augustine's words,

> "For it was a witty and a truthful rejoinder which was given by a captured pirate to Alexander the Great. The king asked the fellow, 'What is your idea, in infesting the sea?' And the pirate answered, with uninhibited insolence, 'The same as yours, in infesting the earth! But because I do it with a tiny craft, I'm called a pirate: because you have a mighty navy, you're called an emperor" (De civ. D., IV.4).

4.7.3.4 The *Civitas* Peregrina

Within the push towards universality, one would like to stress a couple of other elements of "the city" in Augustine, which is its peregrine status, and aspects of citizenship, per association. For this, the essay of Martin A. Claussen[367] (1991) will be the main reference.

Pilgrim is the status of the city of God while on earth and in human history (civitas Dei *peregrina*), and pilgrims (*peregrini*) is the status of the citizens of the heavenly city in their life on earth (peregrinatio/pilgrimage) (Claussen, 1991, p. 33 ; O'Meara[368], 1984, p. 27)

Augustine, as all the other studied heralds, was a brilliant rhetorician. He was highly knowledgeable of the vocabulary of his time and of their sources, and the implications that distinct terms carried in the intellectual milieu. Hence, it seems reasonable to suppose that such terms were selected with specific purposes in mind.

> The idea of the *civitas* - a metaphor that after all comes from the realm of politics - has a natural connection with *peregrinatio*, given the civic and legal foundations of that word. Had Augustine used another such principle for *City of God,* one, for instance, based more closely on traditional interpretations of sacred history, these political aspects of *peregrinatio* would have been inappropriate. But Augustine, using this city imagery, consistently describes the *civitas Dei* on earth as *peregrina*, and this remains his most used, and his most useful, epithet for it (Claussen, 1991, p. 43).

From its earliest usage *peregrinus* carried a legal meaning, one that changed from the time of the Rome's foundation, Republic and Empire. A *peregrinus* is the antonym of the Roman citizen (*civis* Romanus). If living among romans, his rights and prerogatives would be limited to those defined by the *ius gentium*, the legal dispositions that applied to all peoples. Among other things, a *peregrinus* would not be entitled to full property rights (dominium)[369].

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[367] Claussen, Martin A. "'Peregrinatio' and 'Peregrini' in Augustine's 'City Of God.'" *Traditio*, vol. 46, Fordham University, 1991, pp. 33–75, http://www.jstor.org/stable/27831259.

[368] O'Meara, John. Introduction. Chapter. In St. Augustine, *Concerning THE CITY OF GOD against the Pagans,* London: Penguin Books, 1984 (1467), electronic edition.

[369] As Claussen highlights (1991, p. 96), it is generally held that the *constitutio Antoniniana* of 212 AD elevated all the free inhabitants of the Empire to the status of citizens. However, that remains unclear; for some groups or individuals

In a broader literary sense, its usage becomes more ambiguous, meaning, *inter alia,* someone foreign, to sojourn abroad (outside Italy), the condition of being a stranger. It is also used in philosophical and theological texts by Plotinus and Porphyry, whose works Augustine knew well, and which transform the *topos* of the wanderer - much linked to Odysseus/Ulysses - into a separation from one's true *patria*, one's spiritual Ithaca. "This Plotinian motif has been interpreted, then and now, as expressing an alienation from and disenchantment with the world; has made a lasting impression on Augustine and many other late antique thinkers. This quest for the true *patria* Augustine described as a *peregrinatio*, but in his hands the idea becomes almost completely transformed." The words *peregrinus/peregrinatio* also finds usage in the Bible (particularly in the Old testament), and in the *Vulgata,* there are the added meanings of alienation, of something which is imported. In the New Testament, among the more common senses, the book of *Hebrews* and St. Paul Epistles will use them to describe the longing to *arrive at* – and not to return to – the heavenly *patria*, something that seems to have struck Augustine in particular (Claussen, 1991, p. 38-42).

Peregrinatio toward God is the defining feature of the *civitas* Dei. In coupling *civitas* and *peregrinatio*, Augustine uses one of the basic structures in Roman society (*civitas*) to transform *peregrinatio* from an individual to a social movement, and the city will only achieve its ultimate destination because its *civitates* act in a communal fashion. "*Peregrinatio* is the essential activity (and being a *peregrinus* the essential characteristic) of the citizens of the city of God who dwell on earth. The very fact that they are here, separated from God by this trouble-filled and bothersome existence, urges them, with their companions, on reach the place where they know true happiness will lie for all." (ibid, p. 43).

In coupling *civitas* and *peregrini*, Augustine strengthens the early Christianity ideal of universality[370] while providing common attributes of citizenship. Humanity is brought together by the primacy of their allegiance to the city of God. "One of the most important points in the whole work is that the city of God is ubiquitous in space and time, bound neither by national borders nor by chronological periods. It has existed - as *peregrina* - almost as long as there have been people on earth, and will not end until its members are no longer *peregrini* but *cives* gathered together in the heavenly Jerusalem." (ibid, p. 48)

At this point one may hit pause and wonder if the attributes of *civitas* and *peregrini* can connect to our contemporary cities, particularly in relation to the simmering tension that resides

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continued to be named as peregrine. Regardless of eventual changes in the citizenship status of some peoples/groups, such concepts/categories were "alive and well" among those who studied the law, for instance.

[370] As in *Gal.* 3.28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Available at https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/__P103.HTM

in them while trying to accommodate diversity. Maybe it is not too daring to approximate "refugee" (or even a 'lighter' term, migrant) to "pilgrim" in the stricter sense of it, as relating to foreign, alien, displaced individuals, who may endure a condition of "second tier" citizenship status in their places of arrival (if they ever manage to cross its borders). Their *peregrinatio,* more often than not, is a *move away* from war, violence, persecution, dire economic need, natural catastrophes, environmental causes. But there may be as well a *move toward* something, fed by the hope of a better life at the destination. What seems to be missing in the creation of better cities – and in saying it one is aware that, from the testimony of our heralds, this is a millenary absence -, is the Augustinian realization that such *peregrinatio* should be a *collective* movement toward the good life for all citizens of the earthly city, for which charity (appetite for the beatitude) and peace are paramount. As in the description of the two cities, the possible thread of redemption is love.

> Eudaimonism is the general context for the development of the Augustinian theology of love. In his study of the notion of self-love in Augustine, Oliver O'Donovan shows how authentic self-love is identical with the love of God. Love is the active pursuit of happiness, and God is our happiness. Love of neighbor is helping others in pursuit of the same goal. (…) For Augustine, to live is to love—what is needed is the right ordering of love, and he finds that ordering in loving in and for God. (Scanlon, 2005[371], p. 167)

The "caveat" (one of them, at least), is also identified by Augustine in his synthetic formula related to the chaotic and unfathomable depths "of the restless human heart – *homo abyssus est.*[372]" (ibid, p. 170)

Back on play, still following Claussen (1991, p. 50-51), there are further consequences related the *peregrini* condition, already hinted in the Roman subdivision of *ius civilis* and *ius gentium*. Augustine will explore facets of this relationship in an ethical level, in evolving fashion, in several of his writings, such as *De diversis quaestionibus 83 (On eigthy-three varied questions)*, *De doctrina christiana* (*On Christian teaching*) and *The City of God*. It is an important Augustinian notion the distinction between use and enjoyment (*utor/fruton*) of the *res*, which is moving from the *res* itself to the user's attitude towards the *res*, especially in relation to love. When he gets to *The City of God* he concludes, in a parallel with the legal status of a *peregrinus* in the Roman world in relation to property (no *dominion,* only rights of servitude), how the relationship with earthly goods should be.

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[371] Scanlon, Michael J. Arendt's Augustine. Chapter. In *Augustine and Postmodernism : Confessions and Circumfession,* edited by John D. Caputo, and Michael J. Scanlon. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005.

[372] As detailed in Scanlon's footnote # 64, p. 172 "In *Ennarationes in Psalmos*, commenting on Psalm 41, Augustine explores the abyss that the human being is. The source of this metaphor is Genesis 1:2 ("The earth was a formless void, and darkness covered the face of the deep—faciem abyssi")."

Rights of servitude were personal, and the two most important ones were *usus* and *usufruct*. Both would be inalienable personal rights limited in duration of to the life of the beneficiary. In both, the *dominus* retained the full legal rights over the property, including *possessio*, which left the beneficiary in a more precarious state. The beneficiary would be, for instance, fully liable to prosecution if the *res* was damaged, diminished or unreturned. Nevertheless, that was not an unprotected state, and the beneficiaries did have real legal rights. The usuary would have the legal right to the use of the property; and the beneficiary of the usufruct would have the right to the use and to the fruits of the *res.* Augustine's message to the postulants to the heavenly city, of *peregrini,* was to relate to early goods in a relation of *usus* (perhaps usufruct), not *dominus,* so not to be burdened, seduced, enslaved, by the realm of *res.*

Keeping in sight such perspective in relation to the *res* helps to keep the *amor sui*, the *libido dominanti* in check, for pride remains for Augustine the cornerstone of all sin. Keeping such desires in check is a crucial element for peace which, for him, is the desire of both the earthly and the pilgrim city (Clausen, 1991, p. 54;56).

Thinking of the "contemporary city", some of the terminology in the last paragraphs may invoke quite a few associations, albeit in a much more "mundane" level. It may bring to mind facets of the discussion about the right to the city; of the relationship between property rights and social justice; of planning mechanism and urban legislation; and the enormous and fruitful scholarship that they unfold.

There is perhaps another association, less overt, that could connect the ideas of a *peregrine* condition, of *usus* and *fructus,* to, for instance, the Brundtland definition of Sustainable Development, which grants us the rights to the fruits of this glorious planet to provide for our material needs, but without endangering the possibilities of future generations to do the same. And, for that, as so many studies about the carrying capacity of the Earth demonstrate, our greed, our concupiscence, our "*appetitus*" to use an "Augustinian word", must be reined in.

4.8 THE FOUR HERALDS "FACE TO FACE"

> ***The inquiry into the city thus follows from the character of human life and existence as inextricably tied to place and situation*** *[···] not only because of its inevitable spatialization and materialization, but also because the being of the human is political (a point most famously made by Aristotle in his talk of the human as a 'political animal' [1984, 1253.a2]). To say that the being of the human is political is to say that it is of the polis—it is a being-with and together, a being 'in-commonality'—**and so the city appears as the place of human being.** The historical changes in the character of the city that are part of the development of modernity thus take on **a special significance because they are changes in the underlying structures in and through which human life and existence is formed and shaped**. On this basis, engaging with the city philosophically means the opening up of a mode of inquiry that asks both after the nature of the city itself and the modes of life and existence that the city enables. This involves not only what emerges within the physical bounds of the city, but also that which arises in the larger space—within the city or without, materially or conceptually—to which the city gives rise.*
>
> Keith Jacobs and Jeff Malpas[373]

The four of the pictures have now been painted, it is time to look back to address one of the specific objectives, which was to verify aspects of continuity, inflexion or rupture between the *cities in speech* as conceptualized by the four heralds.

The period comprised in the study of their voices is one of about a thousand years. That is a significant amount of time. Let us remember that in Kuhn's proposal of paradigm, some are of a broad nature; some are references within specific fields. Also, the perspective of the agent that is observing the phenomenon is fundamental. Within such a long timeframe, and the variety and complexity of the topics each of them subsumed under the umbrella of their cities in speech, the possibilities of study are overwhelming. Notwithstanding, a few aspects will be highlighted.

One would argue that there would be a paradigm change embodied by Plato. Plato is a transitional figure from a world that communicated and kept knowledge through orality and memory (let us remember one of the definitions of mythos as something worth being remembered) to a world where the written word will become dominant in terms of storage and transmission of knowledge. Plato is believed to have been part of the first generation of young Greek men who had at their service a fully functioning alphabet to write with. The way he

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[373] Jacobs, Keith; Malpas, Jeff. Introduction. *In Philosophy and the City: Interdisciplinary and Transcultural Perspectives.* Edited by Keith Jacobs and Jeff Malpas. London and New York: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2019, Kindle Edition.

composed his writings, trying to keep the dynamics on the spoken word in his dialogues, in addition to his complex relationship regarding the use of myths, are testimonies to this momentous change. Not for nothing, Plato's *Republic*, with its powerful imagery, elegant writing and vivid wordplay, in terms of blueprint for the reproduction of other "cities in speech" is, by far, the one with the longest lineage. As historical sources indicate that, even closer to his own time, other *Politeias* were written, even if in contradistinction, such as Zeno of Citium did. Cicero wrote his *De Re Publica* inspired by it. From the dawn of Modernity onwards, even considering Machiavelli's harsh criticism, there will be plenty of attempts to create other "Callipolis", "Magnesias" and "Atlantis" in speech (some even in "reality"). More, Campanella, Bacon, Howard are just a few to be named. Whenever the hope to improve the material and the spiritual life of "the city" is set forth through an act of well-informed knowledge and creative will, one argues, Plato's voice can be heard.

Augustine is at the other end of our heralds' spectrum in relation to Plato. One argues that he will also embody a change of paradigm. Mario Vegetti wrote a most precious book about Plato's political philosophy called *Un paradigma in cielo*[374]*.* Though appropriate for Plato, it would be even more appropriate for Augustine. Augustine had a first-row seat to contemplate the "end of history", as the sense of loss in the words of St. Jerome help us comprehend. Though the symbolism of an invaded and sacked Rome is hard to surpass, along with the "eternal city", the whole network of the empire, of thousands of cities connected by thousands of kilometres of roads, collapsed. It is no wonder that Augustine will set up his city in speech, his "eternal city", in heaven, untouched by the predications of this earth, and accessed by a means that requires no infrastructure at all; death, the love towards God and the gift of His mercy. Augustine's heavenly city (the one we can inhabit while on this earth by living in the love of God) is peregrina; by being peregrina it is rootless, it is everywhere and nowhere. Augustine's ultimate city is speech is one of absence for, while in this life, it can never be achieved. Nevertheless, while we are not joined in Perfection, the heavenly city and the earthly city travel side by side and, as human nature carries the stain of the original sin, a continuous effort to live a life in justice, in virtue and in love is the necessary requirement for the greatest good of the earthly city, which is peace. Whenever the bonds of community are thought in terms of what unites us in the sharing of the frailties of this earthly existence, one argues, Augustine can be heard.

[374] Vegetti, Mario. *Un paradigma in cielo: Platone politico da Aristotele al Novecento.* Roma: Carocci Editore, 2009.

Cicero paid with his life the price of seeing world history being made. He is conceiving his *city is speech* while stepping on quicksand. The political form of the Roman Republic is disintegrating as he writes. It is curious that he set his *de Res Publica* in the past, for it is only in the past that Scipio's Rome can subsist. The political form that gave birth to Rome's successful mixed constitution, which dynamically balanced the one, the few and the many in the stances of the consulship, the senate and the tribunes crumbled under its own weight. The *urbs* became too big, the *civitas* too rarefied, and the *res public* too compromised by the interests of the emerging power players to be sustained. With the form of the Empire, the political power was concentrated in the one, the *urbs* continued to expand for some time more, as did the *civitas*, while the *res publica*, the things held in common for the common good, dwindled. It is also curious that some of the core elements of Cicero's city in speech - patriotic values, the preservation of private property, and the condition of citizenship as rights and duties defined by law – while set in the past, reached farthest into the future.

In turning our eyes to Aristotle, we recall that he was part of Plato's Academy for twenty years as a student and faculty. They actually engaged in conversation. Within the one thousand years timeframe spanned by the intervals of their lives, this is as close as it gets. One can only wonder at how these two exceptional minds interacted. And though there will be differences in the philosophical conception of each, there will be much more uniting them than setting them apart. Still, history informs us that Aristotle lived through a change in paradigm, embodied in his very former pupil, Alexander.

Nevertheless, different from the other three, who rather clearly manifested in their works the turmoil each experienced, Aristotle, at least in his extant corpus, makes no reference to Alexander nor to the emerging form of the Macedonian Empire, other than in a letter that is considered spurious by most. To many scholars, that is cause for perplexity. Alexandre's Empire, while on the one hand spread the culture of the Hellas to a large part of the known world, on the other, by subtracting the political autonomy of the polis, hollowed it from its very essence, and the demise of this political dynamo was just a matter of time. One could argue that Aristotle knew all of this perfectly well, but refused, within his keen understanding of what makes humans truly humans, and that of the *polis* as the only political form conductive to life in *eudaimonia*, to give in. And, by not giving in, he left for posterity a most remarkable mirror for self-examination, and for what we understand by ethics, friendship, and what pertains to the public and private realms. Every time the flag is raised for the city as the privileged site for agency, one argues, Aristotle's voice can be heard.

Other analyses can be sparked. All four of them wrote in contexts where wars had taken place; civil war, as in the cases of Plato and Cicero, imperial wars, in Aristotle, and invasions, as at the time of Augustine. It seems that the more challenging the times, the harder the effort to devise solutions. To Plato and Aristotle, who were part of the self-contained environment of the polis, to counteract such destructive impulses, unity (Plato) and stability (Aristotle) were paramount. For Cicero, within the much ampler confines of the Roman Republic, the solution was the re-founding of the *Res Publica.* For Augustine, to strive towards peace was the ultimate goal for both the earthly and the heavenly city. There are also some remarkable differences when thinking about the form of "the city". The Stagirite Aristotle thinks that Plato's Magnesia is way too big. Nevertheless, for both, size matters, for both will value the idea of autarkeia (among other things, another way to prevent wars). Also, citizens engage in political life directly. For that, size also matters. By the time of Cicero, Rome, but for the rule of an emperor, was already an empire, which for war and peace established dialogues with other nations at its borders. Within its constellation of nodes and connections, all sorts of exchanges happened. The size of the city was not a concern, for the condition of citizenship, as seen, was defined from different premises. Augustine's city is the world, for the movement of the Church is towards universality. Though they may see the issue of the size of the city differently, they all subscribe to an "ethics of moderation", for in moderation there is virtue, and virtue is a necessary condition for a happy life. Politics and ethics intertwine as a happy life is also a life in community (albeit solitude and the contemplation of the universal truths may be a path open to some). Logos will be seen more or less differently by each one of them. Nevertheless, all – including Augustine – understand reason as a characteristic feature of human beings, which is to be exercised and used to better understand the world we live in.

This reading seems to demonstrate that while there may be inflexions or even ruptures in a horizontal reading of one in relation to the other, and in a vertical reading, some voices may be subdued for a while, that does not mean that, with the changes, the voices cancelled each other out. *Au contraire*, since they were in an endoxic relationship with one another, what could be perceived as a breakage actually brings new layers of understanding to the debate. And the reason for that is, perhaps, not so extraordinary. As stated at the very beginning of this journey, one studies the city as a proxy to better understand ourselves. And though the answers may be as varied as the eight billion plus disordered should that presently inhabit this planet, the questions we wish to answer the most are very much the same since the dawn of time.

5 ECHOES IN THE CONTEMPORARY CITY

> *I am looking at the horizon at dawn: I foretell that the sun is about to rise. What I am looking at is present, what I foretell is future—not the sun, of course, for it now is, but its rising which is not yet. But unless I could imagine the actual rising in my mind, as now when I speak of it, I could not possibly foretell it. But the dawn which I see in the sky is not the sunrise, although it precedes the sunrise; nor is the dawn the image of the sunrise that is in my mind. But both—the dawn and the image of the sunrise—are present and seen by me, so that the sunrise which is future can be told in advance.* ***Thus the future is not yet; and if it is not yet, it is not; and if it is not, then it is totally impossible to see it. But it can be foretold from things present which now exist and are seen.***
>
> Augustine, Confessions, XI.17

In the first sentence of Mumford's *The City in History*[375], back in 1961, the author stated, "This book opens with a city that was, symbolically, a world: it closes with a world that has become, in many practical aspects, a city" (p. xi). Words that were not only evocative of cities past but also addressed cities present and that, maybe, foretold city futures. At least, it seems so, considering some of the significant trends in contemporary urban studies: the interplay between "the city" and "the urban".

As Martinez et al. (2020[376]) synthesize, with no claim to present a totalizing account, there is a current that advances shifting away from "the city" as the default unit of urban analysis ("citycism") towards a thesis of "planetary urbanization", which has among its leading advocates Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid[377]. Building upon Lefebvre's legacy, one of its key tenets is that "the whole planet is affected by a condition of 'extended urbanization' and that urban theory may not have an 'outside' (Brenner, 2014, p. 21 apud Martinez et al., 2020, p. 1011), and that

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[375] Mumford, Lewis. *The City in History. Its Origins, Its Transformations and Its Prospects.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1961.

[376] Ricardo Martinez, Tim Bunnell & Michele Acuto (2021) Productive tensions? The "city" across geographies of planetary urbanization and the urban age, *Urban Geography*, 42:7, 1011-1022, DOI: 10.1080/02723638.2020.1835128

[377] Examples are Brenner, Neil. (2014). Introduction: Urban theory without an outside. In Neil Brenner (Ed.), *Implosions/explosions: Towards a study of planetary urbanization* (pp. 14–30). Jovis; Brenner, Neil, & Schmid, Christian. (2014). *The "urban age" in question.* In Neil Brenner (Ed.), Implosions/explosions: Towards a study of planetary urbanization (pp. 310–337). Jovis. Brenner, Neil, & Schmid, Christian. (2018). Elements for a new epistemology of the urban. In Suzanne Hall & Ricky Burdett (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of the 21st century city* (pp. 47–67). Sage. Angelo, Hillary, & Wachsmuth, David. (2014). Urbanizing urban political ecology: A critique of methodological cityism. In Neil Brenner (Ed.), *Implosions/explosions: Towards a study of planetary urbanization* (pp. 372–385). Jovis. Angelo, Hillary, & Wachsmuth, David. (2020). Why does everyone think cities can save the planet? *Urban Studies*, 57(11), 2201–2221. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098020919081

"taking the city as a proxy for urban processes as a whole obscures those analytical dimensions where 'the non-city may also be significant'" (Angelo & Wachsmuth, 2014, p. 377, apud Martinez et al., op. cit.).

The other side of the spectrum has the proponents of the "urban age" thesis, which sees the city "as a key scale of action and analysis in international affairs", which is supported by its growth "in popularity as a major referent in several areas of work in the United Nations and across the multilateral world[378]" and how that has "increasingly been invoked as the solution to today's most pressing global challenges" (Martinez et. al., 2020, p. 1012). From its economic standpoint, the authors reference the work of Glaser (2011[379]), among others, that could be named by giving pre-eminence to the city.

The article interestingly analyses both positions, underscoring the different epistemological stances each embraces in defining the "urban" and "the city", and proposes to productively explore the friction points between both, suggesting that "the city as a frame for the politics of place and the transformative power of local political communities not only remains important in its own right, but compels wider considerations on the role of human social organization and politics in extended geographies of urbanization." (ibid., p. 1013). Such understanding is one that this author shares, and provides a thought-provoking entry point to lead this dissertation to its concluding pages.

The outset of this academic journey was to investigate if there would be "myths' that shape our contemporary understanding of the city and, should one conclude that such was the case, if some of their roots could be found in Ancient western thought and their subsequent development throughout time and geography. Four thinkers were selected for such task – Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and St. Augustine. Though unquestionably commanding voices, their selection entails the risk of a certain amount of discretion. Another set of heralds may have emphasized other elements of their common experience. That is a handicap on the exploratory methodology that cannot be overcome. Nevertheless, as explored in previous chapters, the richness of their contributions seems to authorize, if not exclusivity, relevance.

In a leap of faith (guided by reason), it can be argued that the two described contemporary stances (urban age and planetary urbanization) embody two "mythologies" about the city/urban phenomenon that find echo in the voices of our heralds: one that highlights the potential agency of cities as political actors and sites to enact change, while the other highlights the impacts of

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[378] An in-depth analysis of this relationship can be found in Michele Acuto & Benjamin Leffel. Understanding the global ecosystem of city networks. *Urban Studies,* vol. 58, no. 9, July 2021, pp. 1758–1774, doi:10.1177/0042098020929261 and in Anna Kosovac, Michele Acuto & Terry Louise Jones. Acknowledging Urbanization: A Survey of the Role of Cities in UN Frameworks. *Global Policy*, vol 11, no. 3, May 2020, pp. 293-304, doi: 10.1111/1758-5899.12783

[379] Glaeser, Edward. (2011). *Triumph of the city.* Penguin Press.

globalizing social-economic forces, particularly the "fundamental, relentless modification of the socio-spatial conditions of the planet under late capitalism." The first puts in relief attributes of "the city" as *polis*, while the second underscores features of the *civitas augences*[380], the ever-growing city that first emerged with the Roman Empire (Cacciari, 2010). In this sense, as *becoming*, the myths of the "ideal types" of the *polis, civitas* and *urbs*, have always remained.

That seems to indicate the existence (and persistence) of a set of ideas that may bend but not completely break, reflecting the cumulative character of the cities' history and the consolidation processes of the urban phenomenon. Hence, closer to Peirce's continuity than to Kuhn's overthrowing in terms of paradigms. Or, as in Hegel's dialectics, "Later concepts thus replace, but also preserve, earlier concepts." (Maybee, 2020[381], p. 4).

Martinez et al. do not call it mythologies but, at a later section in the text, while presenting facets of the critique to the planetary urbanisation thesis, they make the following point: "This begs the question: what is lost through the scholarly endeavour of deconstructing the city as 'an *ideological representation* of urbanization processes' (Wachsmuth, 2014[382], p. 77, emphasis in the original, apud Martinez et al., 2020, p. 1016)?" While the authors will aptly debate such losses, the correlation that one wishes to emphasize here is that they invited into their analysis the dimension of "myth" by association (ideology).

There is a whole field of study dedicated to the role of myth in political thought and, within such realm, the commonalities and differences between myth/mythology and ideology[383]. Among the plethora of more contemporary thinkers that dedicated themselves to study the relationship of myth/ideology and politics, the works of Ernst Cassirer's *The Myth of the State* (1946), Hans Blumenberg's *Work on Myth* (1979), and the controversial earlier influences of Georges Sorel and Carl Schmitt are unavoidable. If pending towards an outlook more connected to the critique of capitalism, Roland Barthes' *Mythologies* (1957) is influential.

Wachsmuth (2014) is very clear in his epistemological position, interpreting ideology in a negative connotation[384] and challenging the city as a *pseudoconcept* within a Lefebvreian perspective, and calling into question the "traditional city" as thought of by the Chicago School.

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[380] Cacciari, Massimo. *A Cidade.* Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gili, 2010, p. 15.

[381] Maybee, Julie E., "Hegel's Dialectics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2020/entries/hegel-dialectics/>.

[382] Wachsmuth, David. (2014). City as ideology: Reconciling the explosion of the city form with the tenacity of the city concept. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space,* 32(1), 75–90. https://doi.org/10.1068/d21911

[383] See, for instance, Robert Elwood review essay "Is Mythology Obsolete?" about the works *Theorizing about Myth.* By Robert A. Segal. University of Massachusetts Press, 1999 and *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship.* By Bruce Lincoln University of Chicago Press, 1999. In *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Sep., 2001, Vol. 69, No. 3 (Sep., 2001), pp. 673-686.

[384] "Here I draw on the "negative" (Larrain, 1983) or "critical" (Purvis and Hunt, 1993) tradition, according to which ideology expresses the way that the forms of appearance of social reality under capitalism are systematically distorted to the benefit of some and the detriment of others." (Wachsmuth, 2014, p. 77).

(op. cit., p. 75-76). Though these are all extremely valid theoretical standpoints and enjoy robust and extensive scholarship, this was not the outlook that framed this exploratory research in "understanding the understood" about "the city". Recalling a quote by Midgley (2011, p. xii), already presented in earlier stages of the text,

> Concepts are embodied in myths and fantasies, in images, ideologies and half-beliefs, in hopes and fears in shame, pride and vanity. Like the great philosophers of the past who helped to shape our tradition, we need to start by taking notice of these things. There is nothing wrong with the fact that our imagination plays a part in shaping our world view. We need it to do so. But we also need to notice how it is doing it.

The investigative path that connected Searle, Tomaselli, Midgley, Harari, Brisson and others tried to underscore that "myths" are as unavoidable as they are flexible, in the sense that they are deep-seated in evolutionary mechanisms and in the attributes of language, particularly institutionality, and imagination. And it is in the "in-between" of these interactions that a certain amount of freedom, free will and agency can be exercised. It is necessary, however, to take notice. And by taking notice, maybe we can envision and engage new pacts that hopefully can transcend the civilizational equivalent of "it is the economy, stupid[385]" tunnel vision. The beauty of the relationship between *mythos* and *logos* is that it is opened to possibilities; its laws are not those of gravity.

In this perspective, the contribution of Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza is particularly enriching. As analyzed by Bottici (2009[386]), Spinoza offers a very original insight within Modern thinkers that combines an emphasis on the symbolic conditions for the constitution and preservation of a polity combined with a radical theory of democracy, as presented in his *Tractatus theologico-politicus* (1670), articulating prophecy (*prophetia*) and imagination (*imaginatio*) (Bottici, 2009, p. 374-75). In tandem with what was argued in the developed investigative path of the dissertation,

> (…) political myths must be recognized for what they are: narratives that provide significance to the particular conditions and deeds of a given social group by putting on the stage particular exemplars of human nature. Their universality is the universality of what we are accustomed to feign and should not be mistaken for the universality of the laws of nature. The reason for this is easy to understand: whilst laws of nature cannot be changed, political myth can and should be changed to adapt to different circumstances. The reason why Spinoza provides a better guide than both Cassirer and Sorel to the theory of political myth is that he never thought our social world could be completely rationalized. The recourse to imagination is not an exception to the world's rationality, but rather a normal component of it. (ibid., p. 379).

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[385] Phrase coined by political strategist James Carville in 1992 for Bill Clinton's presidential campaign and that is now in common parlance.

[386] Bottici, Chiara. "Philosophies of Political Myth, a Comparative Look Backwards: Cassirer, Sorel and Spinoza." *European Journal of Political Theory* 8, no. 3 (July 2009): 365–82. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474885109103840

The second point of dissent with Wachsmuth's position is the temporal horizon used to explore the idea of "the traditional city". And though there is also in this regard plenty of well-informed and substantial scholarship that focuses on the rupture points of its understanding from the emergence of the capitalist city (Cerdá and Choay come to mind), it seems necessary to look further back. The phenomenon of "the city" spans over millennia, and though it may be argued that it has mutated beyond recognition since the time of our heralds, at the very least, every mutation carries in itself fractions of the original DNA. It is worth emphasizing, however, that "Precisely in being free from advanced bureaucracy and capitalism, the ancient Greeks were aware of certain aspects of human development and potential which we have tended to forget." (Lane, 2011[387], p. 23).

Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Augustine focused their attention on the agent that built, "since Cain", every single earthly city that ever was, us humans, and how is it that we can live a good life (or, more modestly, a better one) together. The leitmotif of this research was to understand how they had understood "the city" in such terms and then attempt to find echoes of their understandings today. Theirs is an ethical-political domain, hence not prioritizing more traditional spatial features that are closer to an architect's purview. If nothing else, looking consciously back may significantly humble one's aspirations for originality and rein in the myopic push to *presentism* (Hartog, 2015). As argued by Lane (2014, p. 5),

> To respond to the ranks of critics and to the plight of the outsiders, to think for ourselves about the value and limits of politics, we need to understand the development of these influential classical ideas. Why turn back to classical ideas and models rather than simply think about what these terms have come to mean today? Greek and Roman versions of these ideas are radical in the original sense of the term. They serve as the roots (the etymological meaning of 'radical') of a multitude of modern ideas, roots that have sprouted in many different ways in the intervening centuries, in the West but also beyond it. Indeed, these ideas have been recovered, revised and contested in all parts of the world where the classical thinkers have been read or classical practices prevailed.

And finally, the third divergence one would open with Wachsmuth's point of view is about the "nature of the city". Despite the many many challenges, one's outlook is much closer to the already quoted definition, "The city is that ordering of the human world that makes action possible and meaningful" (Manent, 2013, p. 4). In is worth recalling that in the sense argued by the author, the original experience of the city is represented by the Greek *polis,* and the "prodigious innovation that was the first *production of the common*." (ibid, p. 14, emphasis in the original).

[387] Melissa Lane. *Eco-Republic : Ancient Thinking for a Green Age*. Oxfordshire: Peter Lang Oxford, 2011.

Within the original objectives of this dissertation, which hoped to identify continuities and inflexions in the qualitative understanding of "the city" as expressed in the voices of our designated heralds, perhaps the stronger thread that connects the four is that each of them contemplated in depth what such *production of the common* meant. When "the city" is reappraised some one thousand years by Machiavelli, a different outlook will guide the rapport between ethics and politics.

Manent (ibid., p. 17) highlights that the political character of the Greek experience was one of self-government, and the self-knowledge realized by this experience marks the birth of political science. It was expressed in the works of Thucydides, Plato and Aristotle, with the last two registering not only an analysis of the political panorama of their time, but also leaving for posterity a propositional understanding of how such *commons* should be dealt with, aiming at a good life.

> Self-government presupposes the city; politics in its full and original sense presupposes the *polis.* This is the meaning of Aristotle's sentence that sums up Greek political science: "Man is a political animal." Since the city was, according to the Greeks, the political form most in conformity with the nature of humanity, or even the only truly natural one, the Greek analysis not only of political life properly speaking but of moral life and in general of human life is an analysis of the life of humans in the city. In the eyes of Greek thinkers, the human phenomenon reveals itself first of all and most eminently in the city. (ibid., p. 18)

And, in interpreting this outlook against the frame of the contemporary political life, the author poignantly enunciates the following,

> We must take stock of what this means for us **who have long since ceased to live in cities.** This means that in the eyes of Europe's first political science, our moral life is necessarily mutilated, for, since the end of the city we no longer achieve the highest possibility inscribed in our nature; **we fall short of our potential.** The original political experience that ushered in the series of our political experiences, the one that continues to inspire them, has become strangely inaccessible. **In a great variety of forms, this feeling of shortcoming or loss has been with us for centuries.** In any case, the effort to know ourselves requires the **most rigorous examination possible of our relationship to this original experience,** and so first of all the most rigorous examination possible of this experience itself. (ibid, emphasis added).

It should be noted that the meaning of approaching some of the work of Plato and Aristotle (and also Cicero and Augustine) in regards to "the city" is done in the spirit of this examination of our relationship to this original experience. It is not naïve nostalgia or a "Greek-Roman revival" that guides one's search, but to better understand this "sense of mutilation" that leaves such a bitter aftertaste.

There is, however, another, slightly more upbeat aspect to consider. Though the original form of the Greek *polis* is no more, and along with it the self-knowledge it engendered, **it survives, for it was also built in speech,** in the philosophical oeuvres such as those of Plato and Aristotle. By building them in speech, as Manent underscores, they could convey to us the understanding of Greek political science (which was very well aware of political forms other than the city) that **"it was only in the city, in the mirror of the city, that it could see, and allow us to see, the human phenomenon in all its breadth and wholeness"** (ibid., p. 21, emphasis added). And by building cities in speech, they were able to subsume *mythos* and *logos* and have them persist through the *dialectics of endoxa* they engendered in upcoming centuries. The result is that they still inhabit our imagination today – more or less consciously -, and reverberate each time we think of "the city" not only as of the sites where our miseries gain relief but also as the places where our lives can potentially be more fulfilling. As argued by Mumford,

> The recovery of the essential activities and values that first were incorporated in the ancient cities, above all those of Greece, is accordingly a primary condition for the further development of the city in our time. **Our elaborate rituals of mechanization cannot take the place of the human dialogue, the drama, the living circle of mates and associates, the society of friends. These sustain the growth and reproduction of human culture, and without them the whole elaborate structure becomes meaningless—indeed actively hostile to the purposes of life.** (Mumford, 1961, p. 569-70, emphasis added)

In the history of "political metamorphoses" as presented by Manent (2013, p. 105), there are the forms of the city (polis), the empire[388], the Church, and the state. The city and the empire are considered by him the two mother forms of the ancient world. Within this framework, Rome, the symbolic object of our two last heralds (Cicero and Augustine), is an enigma, "a city transforming itself directly into an empire." The author is careful to underline that such understanding is not unanimous and that other political thinkers who studied the ancient world, such as Leo Strauss, do not share this view.

Manent will compare and contrast the Greek and the Roman experience, adding to it the voices of modern thinkers, which make for an exciting read. What one wishes to emphasize from his thought at this point is the convergence of the ascendance and assassination of Julius Caesar as the pivotal moment of the metamorphosis of the political idea of the polis in the configuration of Empire, and how Cicero chronicled this change, as it was narrated in Cicero's chapter.

Caesar's rule entailed the extraordinary elevation of a citizen above those who were meant to be his equals (represented by the Senate) and presupposed a significant modification of the form of the city. Previously, its surface must have been substantially extended so as to be

[388] For the purposes of this research, though the political form of the Empire as construed by Manent focuses mostly on its dimension as *civitas*, it does have a territorial reach, therefore encompassing the *urbs*.

capable of sustaining such heights. "The narrow city, 'where all that is odious becomes even more odious[389],' had to undergo such an extension (…) so that the laws of hate and love, the chemistry of the passions, were profoundly modified" (ibid, p. 132). Such distention blurred the limits of the political and moral order, as narrated by Cicero in De officiis (1.17) while discussing the different "degrees of human fellowship" (different gradus societatis hominum). Listed levels vary from humanity as a whole to the family circle, the nation, the city, friendship, inter alia, and the issue is how to arrange them by degrees of appreciation.

For Aristotle, as seen, the city was "the good that controls all the other goods", so his answer was clear. Though in Cicero, the pre-eminence is placed in the res publica, with the justification that "our native land embraces all our loves", he will also, at times, place value of blood ties over civic ones and elevate the domus, indirectly highlighting the loss of bearings during this transitional time. There is also the Stoic-inspired notion of the fellowship of the whole human race[390]; a bond already hinted in Greek thought on the affirmation of the unity of the human species (possessor of *logos*). Cicero defines it as *ratio et oratio, reason and speech*[391] that, as seen, will have repercussion in the definition of the *ius gentium* e *ius civile*, and the correlated citizenship attributes.

> The difference between Romans and Greeks resides in the framework in which this specific difference is inscribed and first of all that produces it. Aristotle in some way equates rational animal and political animal, an animal living in a *polis,* that is, in a determined political form. (…) With Cicero an uncertainty sets in that foreshadows our own uncertainties: do *ratio et oratio* develop in a framework constituted by humanity itself as the universal society of the human race or can they develop by themselves, independent of any determined political framework, in which case the human being could be a rational animal without being a political animal? This is an interesting question from a so-called ontological point of view, but politically it is an idle question. It is impossible to consider humanity as such as a political form. In both cases, human action as *ratio et oratio* tends to detach itself from any political form as well as any political regime. (ibid., p. 135).

Hence, just as there was a decoupling in the Roman city between the *civitas* and the *urbs* compared with the cohesive unit of the Greek *polis*, there was also decoupling from the territory as the defining features of citizenship. As stated by Sehlmeyer, "There are (…) significant differences between Greek *Politeia* and Roman *Civitas*. To put it very roughly, the former consisted in having a share in the *Polis* (*metechein tes poleos*) through active participation, while

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[389] A characterization is given while discussing the idea of the monarchy (Chapter 11). See Montesquieu, Charles de Secondat. *The spirit of the laws.* Anne M. Cohler, Basia C. Miller & Harold S. Stone (eds.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

[390] In the sense of sharing the faculty of reason with the mind of god. See the topic on Cicero, Stoicism and The Law.

[391] "reason and speech, which by the processes of teaching and learning, of communicating, discussing, and reasoning associate men together, and unite them in a kind of natural society [naturali quadam societate]", apud Manent, 2013, p. 134.

the latter in contrast denoted a privileged legal and social status (*civis Romanus sum*)." (Sehlmeyer[392], 2012, n.p.)". And, as emphasized by Cacciari (2016[393], p. 106), "romanus is not the expression of a specific ethnic group, a stationary root, but a will of ageless, unlimited growth."

But such growth is not only of the civitas; as hinted by Manent, there is also the distension of the *urbs*. In connecting the original history of the foundation of Rome (intertwining the gods Janus, Jupiter, Saturn and Fortuna; Romulus and Remo) with the dimensions of *civitas* and *urbs*, Cacciari (ibid) emphasizes:

> Roman history (⋯) manifests a will of integration and fusion: from the foundation of the temple dedicated to the god Asylum ("safe haven"), from the initial welcome extended to everyone—slaves and debtors, murderers and rebels—desired by the twins Romulus and Remus "in such a way that soon the city overflowed with people" (Plutarch), **until it turned the city (*urbs*) into world (*orbis*) and a divided *orbis* into a single *urbs*.** "Growing" (*augescens*) is the city's "most appropriate name" (*nomen propinquius*)[394]. It is Rome's foundational mythos that demands that Rome always expand. "I grow, therefore I am" (augeor ergo sum). At the same time the *urbs* remembers its own origins insofar as it assimilates, integrates, makes its own, all the displaced and conquered peoples (*peregrinos, hostes, victos*).

Ii was this change in the nature of citizenship and of the extension of the *urbs* that allowed, looking at the contemporary city, for better, the

> primeros procesos de interculturalidad por agregacíon; (⋯) fue un primer gran intento de globalizacíon. La cosmópolis global es en la que se construyen, tanto informal (símbolos compartidos) como formalmente (normatividad universal), ciudadanías compartidas a partir de las diferencias, la multiculturalidad y la diversidad sociocultural, que se expresan en una ciudad interconectada al mundo social, cultural y económicamente. (Fernandes Tapia, 2016[395], p. 136)

For worse, the "city faces new challenges, from the forces of decentralization on the one side and globalization on the other. Left increasingly to the private sector, it is struggling to

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[392] Sehlmeyer, M. (2012). Citizenship. In *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (eds R.S. Bagnall, K. Brodersen, C.B. Champion, A. Erskine and S.R. Huebner), online edition. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444338386.wbeah22056

[393] Cacciari, Massimo. *Europe and Empire: On the Political Forms of Globalization.* Alessandro Carrera (ed.). New York: Fordham University Press, 2016, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt18kr6d9.

[394] Here (note #8, p. 179) Cacciari makes reference to the work of Maria Pia Baccari, "Il concetto giuridico di civitas augescens: origine e continuitá."

[395] For this argument, developed on note #5, Tapias refrences the work of Blanch, J. M. (2013), "Dignidad personal y libertad: libertad y ciudadanía en la antigua Roma", en *Anuario de la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid* (AFDUAM), núm. 17, Madrid: UAM, pp. 163-182. In Fernandez Tapia, Joselito. Ciudadanía y desarrollo en las ciudades del siglo XXI: ¿polis y civitas o sólo urbs?. *Andamios*, Ciudad de México, v. 13, n. 32, p. 131-160, dic. 2016. Disponible en http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1870-00632016000300131&lng=es&nrm=iso

maintain what has long been a defining characteristic, its political identity. In the current climate of economic liberalism, *civitas* has been split from *urbs* anew" (Haynes, 2007[396], p. 301).

And, this is where, perhaps, the *incommensurability* between the *polis* and its intrinsic need for self-containment and stability; and the empire (the *augences urbs* and *civitas*), with its insatiable appetite (one would argue, also need) for expansion and movement.

As analyzed by Mumford (1961, p. 526),

> Cities like Rome, which historically came to the full end of their cycle before resuming growth again at a lower stage, afford an abundance of data for studying the rise and fall of Megalopolis. But unfortunately that data is too scattered and much of it is too illegible to provide a full insight into the facts. Though in our time Warsaw, Berlin, Tokyo, and many other cities were close to physical extinction, enough of the living tissue of the culture was preserved elsewhere to make possible their swift reconstruction, with many minor improvements, if with no decisive functional alteration. The persistence of these overgrown containers would indicate that they are concrete manifestations of the dominant forces in our present civilization; and the fact that the same signs of overgrowth and overconcentration exist in 'communist' Soviet Russia as in 'capitalist' United States shows that these forces are universal ones, operating almost without respect to the prevailing ideologies or ideal goals.

Would there be a way to reconcile what seems irreconcilable or, less ambitiously, approximate the positives of these two "ideal types"? One does not dare to say that there is. However, perhaps the studied heralds did.

In revisiting the travelled path of this endeavour, in which one hoped to identify some imprints from the past in our contemporary understanding of the city, following four voices and the registers they left to be interpreted in theirs and other times, it is a fair conclusion that each in his own way, made the connection between "the city" and an ethical-political proposition, in which the life in common plays an important part in the citizen's good life.

And, to establish the bearings for such propositions, *telos* and means, virtues and vices, the soul had to be aligned with each heralds concept of "the highest love". Though Augustine puts it front and centre in the definition of City of God and City of Men as the citizenship condition that leads to salvation or damnation (*amor sui*, *amor Dei*), the other three also dedicated to it central role. Plato, for instance, already had the clarity that "people are most devoted to whatever it is they love[397]". One will not discuss now the inexhaustible topic of how Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and St. Augustine approached the many dimensions of love. What one wishes to venture is that, if Plato was right, perhaps it is in acknowledging what it is that we (as

[396] Haynes, Christine. "Review Essay: The Coupling and Decoupling of *Urbs* and *Civitas*: The History of Urban Europe." *Journal of Urban History,* vol. 33, no. 2, Jan. 2007, pp. 296–305, doi:10.1177/0096144206294751

[397] *Rep.* III.412c-412d.

private individuals, as citizens and as "humans") authentically love the most that some strong bridges, in the sense advanced by Martinez et al., can be built. If Hobbes is right, maybe we better run for the hills. But his is not the only outlook. In his dialectic investigation of ancients and moderns, Manent offers the following insight (2013, p. 252).

> Modern republicanism makes a vigorous distinction between private or "selfish" motives and public or "selfless" motives of action, that is, between the motives of the individual and those of the citizen, and of course accords priority to the latter. Ancient republicanism largely ignores this distinction. [···] There is a very compelling reason for this: the domain of the individual and the private has not yet been identified as a separate domain. [···] This is because all the human motives are constantly at work in the city. It is on account of this extraordinary concentration of all the motives of action that the ancient city represents for subsequent ages the most impressive deployment of human nature or of what I would be tempted to call the *human operation*.

If one had been able to continue this exploratory research, a new set of heralds would have to be enlisted, a task that proved itself wholly unfeasible. The potential list of voices would keep growing and growing and, the closer to our own time, the more difficult it becomes to identify which ones are, in fact, authoritative in the debate. Moreover, as to "the city" the right to ignore the past is not granted, claims of originality are also increasingly difficult to sustain.

Such pulverization is not unexpected, given the multiplication of fora, the facilities offered by technology, and the widespread notion that the "truth", "the beauty", even "the facts" are in the eyes (or ears) of the beholder. Also, as in the already presented Wallace's metaphor of the fish and the water, it is very hard to exercise the necessary detachment to identify the outstanding voices if one is immersed in the "represented reality". Perhaps the true heralds, those whose voices synthesize their own time and carry on to the next can only be spotted in the rearview mirror. Whilst within the cacophony, the tendency is to compose a network of "bubbles", comprised of "smaller" voices relatively in tune that help us make provisional sense of the world we live in. A productive dialogue among different "bubbles" in the contemporary (amorphous) *agora* is becoming increasingly difficult.

And, if the voices become somewhat indistinguishable, in the contingency of such voluptuous becoming, we can perhaps focus on "the song." Elshtain (2005, p. 255), in the final lines of her essay of the contemporary relevance of Augustine, writes,

> The teleology of historic progress is no longer believable although a version of it is still touted by voluptuaries of techno-progress or genetic engineering that may yet "perfect" the human race. The presumably solid underpinnings of the self gave way in the twentieth century under the onslaught of Nietzsche and Freud. Cultural anthropology taught lessons of cultural contingencies. Contemporary students of rhetoric have rediscovered the importance and vitality of rhetoric and the ways in which all of our political and social life and thought must be cast in available rhetorical forms.

> **None of this would have surprised Augustine. What would sadden him is the human propensity to substitute one extreme for another,** for example, a too thorough-going account of disembodied reason gives way to a too thorough-going account of reason's demise.

Such atavistic propensity for extremes, such inappetence for restraint would not, in fact, have surprised any of our heralds. Each in their own way (and here Aristotle perhaps speaks the loudest) understood a virtuous life within an *ethos* of moderation (which goes much beyond consumption). Is such an *ethos* still relevant for the *theoria* and *praxis* of today's cities? And, aware that this is a controversial stance, between the universal and the singular, how much room is there for individual agency?

> The *question* of the universal is indeed in one sense *the* most pertinent and encompassing question, but it is not resolved at the end of history. If history had an immanent end that gives it meaning, it would have reached it long ago. To tell the truth, if history had an immanent end, how could it ever have begun? Nothing is stronger than the end, and human history would have begun by the end. Indeed, that is what has happened. The end that does not cease giving the beginning again and makes it possible to begin again unceasingly is nature, human nature. The only possible principle — the only possible cause — of the movement of human history is man himself, who strives to order his humanity by governing himself. (Manent, 2013, p. 103, emphasis in the original).

The governing of oneself in relation to oneself – the proper ordering of the soul - and the governing of the collective realm – the form and the organization of the things held in common – define the tonic of the Ancient City, and the well-known interplay between ethics and politics. One revisits what was explored in this journey. The forms of the ancient *polis* and of the Roman Empire are no more. What of the *cities in speech* created by Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Augustine to make sense of them? Are they still present in our contemporary cities?

The conclusion of this exploratory research is that they are, in the mythologies we use to try to make sense of our cities today. They remain because it is of the nature of the myth to keep the memory of what was true, and what is true is that to study the city is (also) to think the place and stance of humankind in the world. And on that, the voices of the heralds remain strong. It is in the city that one, the other, the collective and the universal meet. The city happens in all the spaces in between these scales. Not one definition will ever be able to fully encapsulate such an extreme kaleidoscope. As Balasopolous (2014[398], p. 19) indicates, "the city is not one thing or another because it is *no one thing.*" It is logical and mythological. It is fascinating and timeless. It is full of wonder.

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