

**THE CONCEPTION OF A  
KINGDOM OF ENDS  
IN AUGUSTINE,  
AQUINAS, AND LEIBNIZ**

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The Conception of a Kingdom of Ends in Augustine, Aquinas, and Leibniz by Ella Harrison  
Stokes

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**ELLA HARRISON STOKES**

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THE CONCEPTION OF A KINGDOM OF  
ENDS IN AUGUSTINE, AQUINAS,  
AND LEIBNIZ

A DISSERTATION

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OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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BY

ELLA HARRISON STOKES



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Every age has its prophets of a new and better moral order. They are usually men of marked individuality, with a vision and message uniquely their own. This we do not deny in affirming that the vision, though seen in some lonely Patmos, and the message, though heard in the isolation of a monk's cell or of a philosopher's study, are social both in their origin and in their purpose. It is only because the prophet is keenly alive to social needs and interests that the defects of the existing order are so clearly perceived by him, and that he strives to find remedial measures.

The vision of a new and better moral order comes at a time when not only the moral theorist, but also the community to which he belongs, have become aware that the old order no longer serves its original purpose in securing the social welfare. Customs and laws once adequate are no longer so. Bonds that held society together are badly strained or perhaps broken, and in some departments of social life anarchy is imminent. This the common man may see, but the moral theorist perceives it much more clearly because he sees it in relation to its causes and to their removal. His is the vision without which the people perish.

It is at just such crises in the social order that the various conceptions of a kingdom of ends which we propose to study have been formulated. They have come as a response to specific needs in the social body, and for a time at least they have really met those needs.

We shall attempt no exact definition of the phrase "kingdom of ends." It usually refers to a community whose purpose is the completest possible moral development of its members. Its scope is wide enough to include all rational beings, no one of whom, not even its divine Founder, may treat another as a mere means.

It is quite conceivable that men should be regarded as members of a kingdom of ends though their period of development were regarded as limited to life in the present world. In fact some of the Stoics had just such a conception. They accepted with resignation the thought of cessation of existence at death, and made no further demands upon the universe. They have had successors in every age and still have them. This, however, is not the attitude of the philosophers whose works we



shall treat. To them the thought that moral development may terminate with death is appalling. Man is regarded as an end in himself largely on account of his unlimited possibilities, and for this reason lower forms of life may be sacrificed for his welfare, and all higher beings are under bonds, as it were, to treat him with kindness and justice.

Means are just as necessary to the attainment of ends of infinite worth as in the case of the most commonplace ends. "Car dans le total les moyens font une partie de la fin," is the sentiment expressed by one of our authors.<sup>1</sup> In the description of means leading to the desired goal, given by each author more or less definitely, we shall find better than any formal definition can tell us what was really meant by a kingdom of ends and by the synonymous phrases "City of God" and "Kingdom of Grace."

The paper which follows is a study of the conception of a kingdom of ends as presented by Augustine, Aquinas, and Leibniz, and the relation of these conceptions to that of Kant. In the case of each author studied there will be an attempt to answer the following questions, the first of which is in the main historical, the second metaphysical, the third and fourth psychological and ethical, and the fifth ethical. They are:

1. What was the immediate situation which demanded a new statement of moral relations and thus led to this particular conception of a kingdom of ends?
2. Does the author's general conception of the universe permit or favor such a kingdom of ends, and make it possible or probable that the ideal involved in it will ever be realized?
3. Does he regard men as so constituted that they can become active and patriotic members of such a kingdom?
4. What is the author's valuation of social institutions already existing with respect to such citizenship, and if their modification is necessary what direction should it take?
5. What advance is noticeable in the conception beyond previous conceptions and what are its most striking defects?

The writer acknowledges great obligation to Professor James H. Tufts, under whose supervision this work was prepared. Her gratitude is also due to Professor T. G. Duvall, of Ohio Wesleyan University, and to Professors A. W. Moore, G. H. Mead, J. R. Angell, and E. S. Ames, of the University of Chicago, for guidance in the devious paths of philosophy and psychology.

<sup>1</sup> Gerhardt, *Leibniz' Werke*, I, 360.

## CHAPTER II

### AUGUSTINE AND THE "CITY OF GOD"

#### I. GENERAL POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SITUATION IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE IN THE AGE OF AUGUSTINE

(1) *Political situation.*—The attitude of Augustine toward the political state, though often presented in an exaggerated light, was really in many respects striking. In order to judge him fairly in the matter a rather full statement of the political situation of his period seems advisable.

As we study the history of the period we are likely to infer that the citizens of the Roman empire must have lived in constant dread because the empire was so evidently tottering to its fall. The truth however is that they had become accustomed to ominous tremors and usually the distress felt was only local and temporary. In the hearts of some there existed a blind faith that the eternal city was destined to remain the center of an almost world-wide dominion. This faith was not coupled with ardent patriotism. There was but little interest in political affairs. In fact, the body politic wasted away so slowly and gradually that the hour of its death cannot be determined with certainty.

Though historians hesitate to fix an exact date for the death of the empire they generally agree that long before its demise extreme political and social confusion prevailed. The empire nominally one was practically two, and the people of the East and West were rapidly becoming alienated from each other. In the West, Ravenna not Rome was usually the seat of imperial power. There were revolts in Britain, Gaul, Spain, and Africa. Ostrogoths and Visigoths, Suevi and Alans, Huns and Alamanni, Vandals and Moors pressed in upon the empire, sometimes content with plundering the outskirts, sometimes penetrating to its very center. The sack of Rome by Alaric in 410 aroused unusual excitement and terror. It was the event which gave the pagans an opportunity to assert that Rome could not survive without her guardian gods and to plead for the restoration of the old religion, as well as to declare that the precepts of Christianity were not consistent with Roman citizenship. These objections brought Augustine's problem to vivid consciousness but by no means furnished its whole content. The treatise *De Civitate Dei* deals with these charges.

Most of the barbarian invaders sought a home rather than plunder. A hundred thousand of them were admitted as *foederati* in 376 but two years later, provoked by injustice, they revolted, and the eastern emperor met defeat and death at their hands. Often large numbers of barbarians entered the army, coming in from captivity, or as mercenary soldiers, or as *foederati*. Some of them soon won their way to the highest military offices, even to the consulship itself. Without these barbarian troops many Roman victories would have been impossible, for the native born Romans had lost their former military zeal, but, on the other hand, troops trained to fight with the legions knew well how to fight against them. In the households of the wealthy innumerable Gothic and Scythian slaves were found, and many of the tillers of the soil were German. If all of Rome's rulers had been just, and her administrators of government honest it may well be questioned whether it would have been possible to bind together in a living unity so many races scattered over so vast a range of territory, without a representative system and means of intercommunication unknown at that day. With the existing government it was clearly impossible.

(2) *Economic conditions.*—It is generally conceded that the empire suffered more from internal maladies than from the enemy on the borderland. The former left her helpless against the latter. A bureaucratic system at the head of which was the emperor as the sole source of law had crushed out the earlier political life. Taxation, necessarily heavy in order to support imperial courts and large armies, was rendered especially burdensome by unscientific methods of assessment and collection. Its weight fell upon the *curiales*, the middle class upon whose strength the very life of the nation depended. The law not only oppressed this class but it made it the oppressor of the classes beneath it. In many directions the *curiales* sought escape from their unhappy condition. Some entered the army, others the clergy, a few of the wealthier obtained senatorial rank, some voluntarily sank to the level of *coloni* and slaves, and still others surrendered their land to their richer neighbors and received it again under a sort of feudal tenure. Soon severe laws were enacted to prevent the *curiales* escaping from their burdens. Everywhere there was a marked tendency to transform class into caste and to bind the son to the occupation of the father. In the larger cities the free "bread and circus" of Juvenal's time were still furnished to the populace at the expense of the state or of great public officials, thus perpetuating economic parasitism and paralyzing the primitive virtues, but these two "indispensables" were no longer sufficient. Free wine and oil had been added.