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**APOCALYPSE AND REDEMPTION IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY**  
**FROM JOHN OF PATMOS TO AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO<sup>1</sup>**

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Christianity began with the announcement that time and history were about to end.<sup>2</sup> This message, preserved variously in those documents that came to make up the New Testament, found its most flamboyant expression in the book that closes the Christian canon, the Apocalypse of John. John's vision of the final things—celestial disturbances, plagues and huge carnage; the persecution of the righteous by the whore of Babylon; the resurrection of the saints and their 1000-year reign with Christ—has long held pride of place in a paradoxically enduring tradition of millenarian apocalyptic expectation: the belief that Christ is about to return *soon* to establish his kingdom on earth.<sup>3</sup> As Christianity developed from its Jewish messianic origins into a central institution of late Roman imperial culture—as history, in other words, persistently failed to end on time—the church, of necessity, had to come to terms with its own foundational prophecy ('The kingdom of God is at hand!'), especially as this was embodied in the Book of the Apocalypse.

In the story of the Western church's efforts, Tyconius and Augustine hold pride of place. Earlier theologians had responded to the Apocalypse either by affirming the approach of the End while accounting for its delay, or by allegorizing any historical and temporal reference out of the prophecy, or by repudiating the text altogether. But Tyconius and, following him, Augustine introduced in the late fourth/early fifth century a reading of John that affirmed its historical realism while liberating it from the embarrassments of a literal interpretation. As we review these earlier responses, we can come to a clearer appreciation of the exegetical revolution<sup>4</sup> wrought by these two men; and as we measure its effects, both social and literary, on subsequent Latin Christianity, we measure as well the continuing power—and danger—of John's vision of the End.

### Apocalypse and the Early Church

'The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants what must soon take place... for the time is near' (Apoc 1:1,3). What John saw—perhaps in the 90s of the common era, during the reign of Domitian<sup>5</sup>—came heavily encoded in symbols, numbers, and obscure visions. The slain Jesus, appearing as a seven-horned, seven-eyed lamb (5:6-14), promises those killed for their witness that they will soon be avenged, once their full number is attained (6:9-11). Quakes rack the earth, stars fall, the sun blackens and the moon becomes like blood (vv. 12-15). One hundred and forty-four thousand martyrs, robed in white and 'washed in the blood of the Lamb' glory before the throne of God (7:1-17). Plagues ravage humankind for five months; the nations trample the holy city for forty-two months; they gaze upon the dead for three and a half days (9:5; 11:2, 8, 11). Terrible reptiles and beasts prey on the saints (12:1-16:21), while the great whore of Babylon, drunk on their blood, fornicates with the kings of the earth (ch. 17). Yet, finally, dramatically, Babylon is no more. An angel binds Satan as the martyrs wake at the first resurrection to rule with Christ for a thousand years (20:1-6). Fire from heaven consumes the evil Gog and Magog (vv. 7-10). All the dead are judged at the second resurrection (vv. 12-15). A new heaven and new earth appear with the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem, and death is no more (21:1-4). Spread this prophecy, urges John's angel, 'for the time is near.... Behold, I am coming soon.'

John's prophecy did spread. It reached Christian communities that could turn to authoritative Jewish scriptures,<sup>6</sup> as well as to the growing body of Christian ones, to flesh out their picture of life once the Kingdom came. Isaiah, Daniel, Jubilees and Baruch, sounding the great themes of Jewish restoration theology,<sup>7</sup> profoundly affected evolving Christianity. Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 200 CE) cites approvingly the teaching of Papias. This earlier father, a conduit of oral traditions going back to the first generation of apostles, proclaimed the approaching 'millennium after the resurrection, and a corporeal reign of Christ here on earth.'<sup>8</sup> According to Papias, who had it from the elders, who in turn had heard from John, the Lord himself had taught that 'the days will come when each vine will have a thousand branches, and each branch 10,000 twigs, and each twig 10,000 shoots, and on each shoot 10,000 clusters, and each cluster 10,000 grapes.'<sup>9</sup> Justin Martyr, appealing both to Isaiah and to the Apocalypse, spoke likewise of a coming period of

terrestrial superabundance, ubiquitous peace, and the thousand-year rule of the saints centered around the renewed Jerusalem.<sup>10</sup>

But when was 'soon'? How could one know? One way was to study the prophets' and evangelists' catalogue of apocalyptic disasters (persecutions, plagues, earthquakes, celestial and social disruption), and their cryptic descriptions of kings, armies, and empires, and see whether these matched the times. Particularly in periods of persecution, such interpretations, promising as they did the imminent vindication of those suffering, could be powerfully persuasive.<sup>11</sup> They were also pointedly political. John's apocalyptic Babylon, seated on seven mountains, is clearly Rome (17:9). Irenaeus sees in the fourth beast of Daniel 7 and the beast from the sea of Apoc 13 the 'imperium quod nunc regnat': the name of the two-horned earth-born beast, encoded in the numbers 666, is LATINUS. The 'mystery of iniquity,' the 'lawless one' foretold by 'Paul' (2 Thes 2:3-7), is the Emperor.<sup>12</sup> If this empire persecuted, then clearly the end of the age was at hand.

'Where is the promise of his coming?' complained some Christians in the early second century. 'For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things have continued as they were from the beginning of creation' (2 Pt 3:4). 'Peter', to both console and exhort his congregation, recalled to them a line from Psalms: 'With the Lord, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day' (2 Pt 3:8/Ps 90:4). This verse, together with the days of creation sketched in the opening verses of Genesis and the thousand-year reign of the saints promised in Apoc 20, became the church's support for a key eschatological concept: the cosmic week, or the ages of the world.<sup>13</sup> As God had created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh (Gen 1:3-2:3), and as a day to him is as a thousand years (Ps 90:4), so the world would exist for six ages of one thousand years each. Then, at the end of the sixth age, six thousand years since creation, Christ would return in glory to inaugurate the millennial Sabbath rest of his saints (Apoc 20:4-5). To know the time of the End, one had only to calculate the age of the world.

This approach to millenarianism, developed particularly in Christian chronography, permitted a traditional, historical interpretation of apocalyptic texts while at the same time gaining a control over the enthusiasms they inspired. The date of the year 6000 prevailing in Western tradition fell in the equivalent of *annus domini* 500: when Hippolytus and Julius Africanus, writing in the early third century, estimated that Christ had been born in the 5,500th year since creation,

they pushed the date of the Parousia well out of their own and their audiences' lifetimes.<sup>14</sup> In an age that saw the rise of the 'New Prophecy,' Montanism, when even Catholic bishops, firm in their belief that the End was upon them, urged their flocks to drastic action, such an exegetical strategy had much to recommend it.<sup>15</sup>

So did allegory. Many thinking Christians from the second century onward could not take seriously the proposition that lower, material reality was the proper arena of redemption.<sup>16</sup> Whether they held, as did Marcion and the various gnostic groups, that a lower god presided over the physical universe and thus that redemption in Christ, the son of the High God, was utterly spiritual;<sup>17</sup> or whether, as Origen, their grasp of the principles of philosophy made claims to physical redemption seem incoherent and ignorant, these Christians repudiated the idea of a fleshly resurrection and a kingdom of God on earth. Such people, complained Tertullian, understood death itself in a spiritual sense: not as the separation of body and soul, but as ignorance of God, 'by reason of which man is dead to God, and no less buried in error than he would be in the grave.' When, then, and what, is the resurrection? When they 'are with the Lord, once they have put him on in baptism.'<sup>18</sup> The wine that the saints will drink in the kingdom, explains Origen, is the wine of Divine Wisdom; the bread is the 'Bread of Life': these nourish the soul and enlighten the mind of the spiritual body.<sup>19</sup> Certain prophetic and dominical sayings, Origen concedes, might be construed as bespeaking an earthly and bodily redemption, but only if the interpreter failed to see that the force of such scriptures 'must be spiritual and figurative.'<sup>20</sup>

The church could not question the authority of the canonical prophets; at best, their millenarian passages could be allegorized. The Apocalypse, however, by comparison a recent comer to the canon, was vulnerable. When an Egyptian bishop, Nepos of Arsinoë, insisted in his treatise *On the Refutation of the Allegorists* on a more literal reading of Apocalypse, Origen's pupil Dionysius debated with his followers for three full days.<sup>21</sup> Returning to his see in Alexandria, Dionysius then wrote his own refutation of Nepos, entitled *On the Promises*. There he subjected the text of Apocalypse to rigorous linguistic and historical criticism. A holy and inspired man named John, Dionysius allowed, had indeed written the book, but he could not be that same John the apostle, the son of Zebedee and author of the gospel and the New Testament's Johannine epistles. The denial of apostolic authorship deprived the Apocalypse of much of its authority.<sup>22</sup>

Thus, by the early third century, Christians expressed a wide range of responses, social and literary, to the Apocalypse and the message it embodied. Some, like the bishops and their congregations in Pontus and Syria, actively anticipated the immediate arrival of an earthly Kingdom; others, generating world chronologies, carefully calculated the time of its arrival; others, most notably Origen, radically allegorized all millenarian texts; others, like Gaius of Rome and the mysterious Alogi, repudiated the text by ascribing authorship to the arch-heretic Cerinthus;<sup>23</sup> still others, like Dionysius and Eusebius, questioned its apostolic authority.

But with the events of 312, the political context of all these responses changed drastically. As a result of his victory, prompted by a vision, Constantine became the imperial patron of Christianity. From the perspective of John of Patmos, the Beast had entered the church.

#### Apocalypse in North Africa

North Africa was the 'bible belt' of the Mediterranean. At once severe and enthusiastic, fundamentalist and traditional in their biblical orientation and proud of their origins as the 'church of the martyrs', North African Christians gave to the Latin church its earliest acts of the martyrs<sup>24</sup> and most energetic cult of the saints. They buried their dead in wet plaster to preserve every detail of the body's outline; they could break into near riot if 'ivy' was substituted for 'gourd' in a reading from the prophet Jonah during a sermon.<sup>25</sup> The church's experiences in the drastic days of the Roman persecutions determined its view both of itself and of the outside world: it was the community of the holy, the ark of salvation sealed against the temptations and tempests of a hostile environment, a permanent option to pagan society. *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*.<sup>26</sup>

This community was undergoing one of its characteristic upheavals in the wake of persecution at the moment when Constantine entered the church. The admired ideal and established ideology of martyrdom notwithstanding, many North African Christians had given way under the pressure of his predecessor's actions nearly a decade earlier. Through a series of edicts issued between 303 and 305 CE, Diocletian had sought to coerce the participation of ecclesiastics and, eventually, laymen in the *pax deorum*, the *entente cordiale* between heaven and earth that sustained the empire.<sup>27</sup> Christian clergy in particular were ordered to turn

their holy books over to posses of imperial soldiers. Those who complied would suffer no disability; those who refused, imprisonment and even death.

Many clergy did comply. Those who did not, clergy and lay, resented these *traditores*, challenged their ordinations, and insisted that they be restored to the church through rebaptism.<sup>28</sup> This last policy put local practice too much at odds with transmarine custom: in 313, finally, the Roman pope pronounced the re-baptizers guilty of schism. The rigorists subsequently lost their appeal to the newly-involved emperor. They were no longer Catholics: they were the Donatist Church.<sup>29</sup>

Despite imperial patronage, however, the Catholics were and remained a minority in North Africa up through the late fourth century. Both groups had equally dense episcopal bureaucracies,<sup>30</sup> but it was the Donatists who enjoyed strong local support: Catholicism was the import to Africa. And, despite occasional outbursts of violence, these North Africans married each other, bequeathed or inherited property to and from each other, and, in short, found ways to live with one another.<sup>31</sup> Beyond the social webbing of family and property relations, they were bound together by a shared Latin Christian culture.<sup>32</sup>

An uncomplicated millenarianism figured prominently in this culture. Late fourth-century North African Christians, as Christians elsewhere, continued to look forward to the approaching Kingdom on earth. Its due-date—worked out two centuries earlier by Julius Africanus, affirmed one century later by his compatriot Lactantius—was drawing near: in 397, the bishop Hilarianus reiterated that the year 6000 since the Creation was a scant century off.<sup>33</sup> If Catholics, despite the benefit of imperial patronage, so actively anticipated the coming End, how much more so did the Donatists who 'beneath the purple and scarlet robes of the apocalyptic whore ... could still recognize Rome'?<sup>34</sup>

The cult of the dead, energetically observed by both sides, provides extra-literary evidence of these enthusiasms. 'All Africa,' observed Augustine, 'is filled with holy bodies' (Ep. 78, 3), and to their shrines the faithful regularly repaired to feast, dance, and get splendidly drunk.<sup>35</sup> On the *laetitia* of the saint, people gathered to hear the martyr's *passio* and receive cures, while (as the word '*laetitia*' suggests) thoroughly enjoying themselves and their *bons verres*.<sup>36</sup> Augustine, annoyed to distraction by such '*carnalis ingurgitatio*,' complained to a colleague that these observances were pagan corruptions brought into the church with the influx of forced converts after 399.<sup>37</sup> Perhaps true:

pagans also feasted their dead at family gravesites. But in the abandon round the martyr's *mensa*, in the drinking and feasting of the faithful gathered at the shrine of the saint, we also glimpse ancient Christian hopes for life after the *prima resurrectio*.<sup>38</sup> an affirmation—moving, in a society where hard work, if one would eat, was unremitting; where social position, cemented as it was by civil legislation, was all but unmovable; and where starvation was never so very far away—that when the Kingdom came social distinctions would dissolve, life would be joy, labors would cease, the earth would yield its fruits in abundance, and God would wipe away every tear.

From this world, sometime in the closing decades of the fourth century, emerges the elusive figure of the lay Donatist theologian Tyconius. We know little about him, and his literary legacy—four known writings, of which all but one are lost—is exiguous.<sup>39</sup> Nonetheless, it is Tyconius who stands at the source of a radical transformation of African—and thus, ultimately, of Latin—theology, and whose reinterpretation of his culture's separatist and millenarian traditions provided the point of departure for what is most brilliant and idiosyncratic in Augustine's own theology.<sup>40</sup> And it is Tyconius, most precisely, whose own reading of John's Apocalypse determined the Western church's exegesis for the next eight hundred years.<sup>41</sup>

His commentary on Apocalypse no longer exists—or, perhaps more accurately, it lives on obscured in the penumbra of the later Catholic commentaries which drew on Tyconius even as they repudiated him.<sup>42</sup> Its literary vestiges attest to his remarkable originality: Tyconius championed a typological reading of this text that avoided the ahistoricism of allegory while insisting, against earlier Western apocalyptic commentary in general and the temperament and traditions of African Christianity, especially Donatism, in particular, that the time of the End and the identity of the saved could in no way be known.<sup>43</sup> The details of his exegetical argument are lost to us. Its logic, however, can be inferred from Tyconius' sole remaining work, the *Liber regularum*.<sup>44</sup>

The Law, says Tyconius (by which he intends both Old and New Testament), is mediated through seven rules. These rules are *mysticae*: they are the compositional principles of scripture, encoded in the text itself, which conceal or obscure its meaning.<sup>45</sup> Sometimes, for example, the Bible speaks of the Lord; other times, seeming to, it actually speaks of the Church, his body (Rule I, *de Domino et corpore eius*). And the Lord's Body is itself bipartite, *permixtum*: it is both 'black' and

'beautiful', the good and the wicked both abide therein (Rule II, *de Domini corpore bipertito*). The Law is the Bible, and thus it encompasses God's promise; it speaks both to the period of Israel and to the period of the Church. Both Law and promise obtain at all times, and the Law works in the predestined to arouse faith (Rule III, *de promissis et lege*). Scripture can ambiguously express general truths through seemingly simple reference to particular persons and events (Rule IV, *de specie et genere*), naming periods of time quite precisely, it nonetheless resists calculation, for the numbers themselves are elastic, infinitely interpretable *mystica* (Rule V, *de temporibus*). Something as seemingly straightforward as narrative conceals complications: apparently sequential events may actually reiterate one another, so that what seems like sequence is really repetition (Rule VI, *de recapitulatione*). Even references to the devil are less than clear: when scripture speaks of Satan, it might well intend his 'body', those who follow him, the unrighteous (Rule VII, *de diabolo et eius corpore*; cf. Rule I).

By so complicating the biblical text, Tyconius gained a way to approach some of its most unabashedly apocalyptic and millenarian passages head-on, affirming their historical significance while obscuring their eschatological value. Rules I and VII, for example, enable him to insist with seeming simplicity that the Son of Man really will arrive seated at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven,<sup>46</sup> and that Gog and the 'mystery of lawlessness' really will be revealed in time of persecution:<sup>47</sup> but since these traditionally apocalyptic figures refer, according to Tyconius' hermeneutic, to the church and to the unrighteous within the church, respectively, their 'appearance' is within history, not at its edge. So also on the issue of persecution generally. Tyconius can agree with his Donatist colleagues that the suffering they now endure at the hands of Rome was indeed foretold in Daniel and in Apocalypse. Nonetheless, he insists, what currently occurs in Africa must take place *per orbem*: persecution itself does not indicate that the End is at hand.<sup>48</sup> Nor, until that hour, does it serve to identify the community of the righteous. In the meanwhile, the righteous and unrighteous must and will remain together, mixed, within the church.<sup>49</sup>

As with these typological figures and events, so with numbers and periods of time: their multiple referents defy easy categorization. In Rule V, sums long-favored in traditional millenarian calculation skitter across Tyconius' page: 6000 (the years of the age of the world), 1000 (the reign of the saints), seven, ten, twelve, 144,000 (the number of the

redeemed, Apoc 7:4), 1260 (days, Apoc 11:3), 42 (months, Apoc 11:2), 350 (years, derived from three and a half days, Apoc 11:11). Thanks to the principle of synecdoche—the whole for the part, and vice versa—Tyconius, with vertiginous ease, can stretch each of these so many different ways that any absolute numerical value evaporates.<sup>50</sup>

Scriptural numbers thus do not and cannot quantify: rather, they symbolize and indicate certain spiritual truths. 'Ten', for example, can signify either a perfect whole or a part representing a whole or a simple sum, and it has the same significance even if squared or further multiplied by itself.<sup>51</sup> Hence, though the world is to endure six days, or 6000 years, says Tyconius, and though humanity currently finds itself in the 'last day', since during this day 'the Lord was born, suffered, and rose again,' nonetheless, what is left of this last day is also called '1000 years'—more particularly, it is 'the thousand years of the first resurrection' during which the believer has received his 'spiritual body' through baptism. The Son of Man—that is, the Church—has come and, during this last day and final hour, risen from the dead; Satan is now bound, and the thousand-year reign of the saints progresses now, on earth, through the church.<sup>52</sup>

Tyconius likewise dissolves the gross periodization of 'Old' Dispensation and 'New'—rather, he insists that the important distinction is moral and spiritual rather than temporal. For, he argues, the dynamics of salvation, that subtle and mysterious interplay of grace, free will and divine foreknowledge, are constant across nations, times, and individuals: whether for Jacob or for the generation of the Babylonian Captivity, for Paul or for the contemporary believer, they remain the same.<sup>53</sup> As a process, then, salvation history is less linear than interior. And it is the Bible that stands as the historical annals of these interior events, the inspired record of God's saving acts. To understand the Bible is to understand the relation of prophecy, grace, and history; to understand, in brief, how God works in human time.<sup>54</sup>

Tyconius' reading of scripture thus emphasized the historical realization of prophecy while denying the sort of social and temporal transparency to the text that would allow for a millenarian interpretation. A radical agnosticism controls his estimate of both current events and traditional prophecies: neither persecution nor peace indicates God's ultimate time-table; and no exterior fact (like persecution), can forming to a church's view of itself as holy (hence persecuted), can actually confirm that view. The time of the End is unknowable in princi-

ple; and until it come, the church must remain a *corpus permixtum*, containing both sinner and saint.<sup>55</sup>

#### Augustine and the Apocalypse

Augustine himself had once been a millenarian, believing that the first resurrection, described in Apoc 20:1-6, would be bodily, and that the sabbatical rest of the saints after this resurrection would last for a thousand years.<sup>56</sup> Still, he later insisted, he had held even then that the saints' delights would be of a spiritual character, unlike 'those people' who asserted that the raised would 'spend their rest in the most unrestrained material feasts, in which there will be so much to eat and drink that those supplies will break the bounds not only of moderation, but also of credibility'—a fair description of the prophecy of superabundance found in Baruch, attributed to Jesus, repeated by Papias, Justin and Irenaeus, affirmed in Lactantius, and actively anticipated in the laetitia observed by Catholic and Donatist alike.<sup>57</sup> When in the early years of his priesthood Augustine worked to reform the traditional observance of these festivals, to turn the 'carnales foeditates' of the martyr's banquet into a day of preaching and orderly congregational prayer, more than a question of Christian deportment was at stake: he sought to superimpose a vision of the reign of the saints, as previewed in these celebrations round their *memoriae*, that was fundamentally different—in his own terms, 'spiritual'.<sup>58</sup>

The years of Augustine's episcopacy coincided with a stream of dates and events within Africa and beyond that Christians could readily view as harbingers of the Kingdom.<sup>59</sup> Of these, Alaric's invasion of Rome in 410 was by far the most dramatic. 'Behold, from Adam all the years have passed,' some exclaimed, 'and behold, the 6000 years are completed, ... and now comes the day of judgment!'<sup>60</sup> The pious noted prodigies and watched for signs of the End. Spurred by a recent solar eclipse that had coincided with great drought and an earthquake, the bishop of Salona, Hesychius, inquired whether the faithful might now rejoice, as the evangelist Luke had urged, 'for redemption is at hand' (Lk 21:28). Hesychius, further, based his case on a fundamentally optimistic reading of recent Roman history. Since the emperors had become Christian, most of the signs of the approaching Parousia predicted in the gospels had been accomplished, and the gospel had been preached throughout the whole world (Mt 24:14).<sup>61</sup>

Against such sentiments Augustine argued tirelessly. He made commonsense observations: a specifically named deadline invites disappointment and lack of faith once it is past; and inferences cannot be drawn from wars and portents because wars and portents occur constantly, and Christians might thus be mocked 'by those who have read of more and worse things in the history of the world.'<sup>62</sup> He cited the evangelists: if Jesus himself preached that man was not to know the hour of the End (Acts 1:7), and taught that not even the Son, but only the Father, knew when it would be (Mk 13:32 and par.), then human calculation was worse than dangerous: it was actually forbidden. Finally, armed with Tyconius' exegetical strategies, Augustine moved to confront the premier text of Christian millenarianism, the Apocalypse of John.

Augustine's most mature and measured statement of his position appears in Book XX of *De civitate Dei*. Asserting that belief in God's final judgment and the second coming of Christ is the standard of orthodoxy, he nevertheless immediately cautions against any facile understanding of the texts that bespeak such things (1,2). Jesus himself proclaims the coming Son of Man, the destruction of Jerusalem, the final judgment, and the end of the age; but, urges Augustine, many of these passages, culled from Matthew, are ambiguous. Upon examination, they turn out to refer 'to the coming of the Savior in the sense that he comes throughout this present age in the person of his church; ... the destruction may be only of the earthly Jerusalem', and so on.

Augustine refers his reader to his correspondence with Hesychius for an extended demonstration of how best to understand these evangelical passages (1,4). What concerns him here is the distinction between the first and second resurrections. The second resurrection, he asserts, is the resurrection of the body; as such, it can only occur at the end of the world (6,1). But the first resurrection occurs now: it is of the soul, which through its reception of baptism and life in the church is raised from the death of irreligion. The first resurrection, for the saints, brings life; the second, for all humankind, will bring judgment (6,1-2).<sup>63</sup> Having established this line of interpretation through an appeal to Matthew, the Gospel of John, and Paul's letters (1,5-6,2) Augustine then moves to discuss the actual scriptural source of the teaching on the double resurrection, John's Apocalypse.

Then I saw an angel descending from heaven, holding in his hand the key of the abyss and a chain. He seized the dragon, that serpent of old, whose

other names are the Devil and Satan, and he chained him up for a thousand years, and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it up and sealed it over him, so that he could no more lead astray the nations until the thousand years should be ended. After that he must be let loose for a short time.

Then I saw thrones, and those who sat on them; and judgment was given. And the souls of those slain because of their witness to Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshipped the Beast and its image, or received its mark on their forehead or hand, these reigned with Jesus for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not come to life until the end of the thousand years. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the man who shares in this first resurrection. Over them the second death will have no power; but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with him for a thousand years.

Apoc 20:1-6

This passage, explains Augustine, has been a seedbed of many materialist and millenarian misconceptions. Some people, assuming that the first resurrection would be bodily, have interpreted these verses together with 2 Pt 3:8//Ps 89:4 and, 'particularly excited about the number 1000', conjecture that there will be a millennium-long Sabbath rest of the saints at the end of the six ages ('days') of creation (7.1). What makes this incorrect understanding intolerable, Augustine complains, is its focus on material feasts and drinking. Declining (perhaps wisely, since such a reading of this text was so well established) to refute this interpretation directly, Augustine proceeds to explain how John should be read.

What might seem like final events have in fact, says Augustine, already been accomplished. With the first coming of Christ and the establishment of his church, for instance, the Devil has already been bound; that is, his power is bridled. 'For a thousand years' may indeed indicate that this binding is accomplished 'in the last thousand years, that is, in the sixth millennium, the sixth day' which accordingly should be understood to last one thousand years.<sup>64</sup> Or maybe not: '1000' is a perfect symbolic number, and thus might stand simply for 'totality' or 'all generations' (6.2).<sup>65</sup> Satan thus is bound until—not at—the end of the age. And 'bound' where—in what abyss? In the 'innumerable multitude of the impious, in whose hearts there is a great depth of malignity against the Church of God' (6.3).<sup>66</sup>

Thus Satan is bound and the church, ruled by its own enthroned authorities, reigns with Christ for the 'thousand years' (however long that might actually be) of his Kingdom, that period stretching from its

foundation to the end of the age (9.1-2). Both righteous and unrighteous dwell in this Kingdom, and will until the final judgment (9.2). This present period of mixed membership is nonetheless the thousand-year reign of the saints, however, because the martyrs, whose bodies have not yet been restored to them, rule spiritually with Christ in his church through their souls (9.2). Asserting this through his Tyconian reading of Apocalypse in Book XX, Augustine makes the case more creatively in Book XXII, where he closes his lengthy masterwork with a review of the miracles known to him and accomplished through the relics of the martyrs.<sup>67</sup> These miracles are energetic proof of the saints' power and manifest presence, evidence that they truly do reign 'now', in the age before the End. Thus these End-time events and more—Antichrist, Gog and Magog, the sea giving up its dead—Augustine, through Tyconius, can consistently de-eschatologize, transposing them back into the present, where they serve to describe the current experience of the church.

But Augustine's reliance on Tyconius was both more profound and more independent than this reiteration of the latter's exegetical strategies might imply. The long meditation on Paul begun in the 390s, when he had first encountered Tyconius, had led Augustine to formulate ideas on time and history as experienced objectively and culturally, on the one hand, and individually and subjectively, on the other, that radically departed from earlier views of salvation, and of salvation history. When turning to the Book of the Apocalypse, and thus concentrating on traditional Christian millenarianism, Augustine effectively altered the terms of the discussion.

In his earlier works on Genesis and on Paul's letter to the Romans, Augustine had drawn on two different periodizations of history: a seven-age model, on the analogy with the creational days, and a four-age model, emphasizing the Law and grace. The seven-age model coordinated periods of biblical history with humanity's spiritual progress toward redemption. The first five ages (demarcated by Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, and the Exile) pertained to the Old Testament; the sixth age began with the coming of Christ and would end with his Parousia; the seventh will be the millenarian Sabbath rest of the saints.<sup>68</sup> But in the 390s, Augustine moved quickly from an emphasis on the historical to the individual within this scheme: already in *De vera religione* (c. 389-90) he dropped the analogy to the days of creation, and concentrated on the seven spiritual ages of man.<sup>69</sup>

His four-age model, derived from Romans, begins on this note.



Paul's letter had implied a history of salvation, stretching from Adam 'before the Law' to the imminent redemption of humanity and indeed all creation at Christ's second coming.<sup>70</sup> Augustine schematized this history—*ante legem*, *sub lege*, *sub gratia*, and *in pace*—and related these stages to the development of the individual believer, who sins freely before knowing the Law, struggles not to once it is known, and succeeds in this struggle with the reception of grace. Man ceases to need to struggle against sin only with the transformation of his body in the fourth stage, when he will have perfect peace.<sup>71</sup>

Thus Augustine, as Tyconius before him, can argue that salvation history is both linear and interior.<sup>72</sup> Scriptural history and the individual's experience coincide at their shared extremes: birth in Adam, eschatological resurrection in Christ. What interests Augustine is the interior history, the anthropology which this scheme implies: how, given man's fallen nature, does one move *sub lege* to *sub gratia*? In the agitated stream of works on Paul produced in the mid- to late 390s, Augustine no sooner formulates an explanation for the dynamics of this crucial moment than he discards it.<sup>73</sup> Finally, in his brilliant, melancholy response to Simplicianus, meditating once again on Romans 7 and 9, Augustine arrived at an answer from which he never wandered: He does not know. If God can give grace to such an enthusiastic, flamboyant, unrepentant sinner as Saul, if he can hate Esau when Esau was still in the womb and therefore had done nothing to deserve either mercy or condemnation, then God is absolutely inscrutable, his ways 'past finding out'.<sup>74</sup>

God's opacity is matched by the individual's. Because of the great sin that marks the beginning of human history, man cannot know or control himself. Not only does his spirit struggle against 'this body of death,' his flesh as now constituted (Rom 7:7-25) but, within his soul, man's will is itself divided: loves are disordered, compulsion governs desire, volition and affect diverge, morally paralyzing the child of Adam. Constructing this image of fallen man with great theological precision in the *Ad Simplicianum*,<sup>75</sup> Augustine repeats the image as self-portrait in its autobiographical companion piece, the *Confessions*. Despite its ostensibly 'happy' resolution, the conversion rendered with such passion in Book VIII, the *Confessions* is a terrifying book, an unflinching acknowledgment of how little one can understand even of one's own experience, because of the 'wounded will ... this monstrousness ... the mysterious punishment that has come upon all

men, the deep, hidden damage in the sons of Adam' (*Conf.* VIII.9,21). Disoriented, divided, man has an infinite capacity to deceive not only others, but also and especially himself. As Augustine catalogues his self-deceptions and mistakes, his seeking for God in places where he could not possibly find him, causing suffering to others and to himself, he acknowledges that they have been revealed as such only within the 'eschatological' perspective of the conversion. Only now does he see the doomed randomness of his earlier efforts, only now the pattern, known then solely to God, that would ultimately bring him to the saving moment in the garden.

Deceiving and self-deceived, Augustine had been opaque both to others and to himself. Thinking that he understood and even constructed his own circumstances, he later realized that they, too, had been opaque: he had not really understood, while living it, his own history.<sup>76</sup> And God himself had been opaque, unavailable where Augustine had most fervently sought him, unobtrusively present when Augustine most despaired. The only clear moment of revelation comes in the garden, when 'a light of serenity infused my heart, and all the darkness of doubt vanished away' (VIII.12,29). The book's literary style poignantly underscores this divine opacity: though the *Confessions* is a fervent dialogue with God, Augustine has the only speaking part. God remains silent throughout, his 'responses' to Augustine's inextinguishable prayers, questions, observations and importunings mediated only through scripture, or recognized retrospectively in a personal history whose pattern could be perceived only once the 'ending'—the conversion—was known.

So too with public history. Augustine's brief seduction by the 'mirage of his generation,' the triumphalism of the Theodosian reforms with their coercive anti-pagan legislation, gave way to a thorough-going historical agnosticism from which, again, he never wandered.<sup>77</sup> Scripture alone, he asserts, records the unambiguous acts of God in history; and the period corresponding to the record of those actions had, by his own day, long passed. The present, Augustine argues, might be punctuated by infinite miracles, but it remains nonetheless inscrutable: God's immediate intentions cannot be divined with any security, no matter how strenuous the effort to match prophecies to contemporary events. Here public history is even more opaque than personal history, because the Christian does know how the story will end—with the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the transforma-



tion of the body, and the establishment of God's kingdom.<sup>78</sup> But history's timeframe is known only to God; and if the hour of the End is unknowable in principle, it cannot serve to impose a plot on time—none, rather, that those living in time can discern.<sup>79</sup>

Given this radical agnosticism, history cannot serve as the prime medium of salvation. Augustine emphasizes, rather, the individual as the locus and focus of God's saving grace,<sup>80</sup> and so plays stunningly creative variations on the great themes of Christian millenarianism—communal corporeal redemption, the Kingdom of God, and the millennial sabbath rest of the saints. The fleshly body will be raised spiritual, he insists with Paul (I Cor 15:44-54); but 'spiritual' refers to the body's moral orientation, not its substance.<sup>81</sup> The risen body will have corporeal substance. It will even have gender—women, too, shall as women be raised.<sup>82</sup> But this raised corporeal body will not dwell on a transformed earth. In nonchalant defiance of the scientific thinking of his day, Augustine insists that these corporeal bodies will dwell in the heavens: the Kingdom of God will not come on earth.<sup>83</sup> Apocalyptic traditions of agricultural fecundity and social harmony thus drop out of Augustine's picture: no food, sex, or social relations in the Kingdom. His saved individuals, in their perfected bodies—spiritually oriented, physically flawless, thirty-something—stand in comradely contemplation of the beatific vision of God.<sup>84</sup> In a final reinterpretation of a classically millenarian theme, Augustine wrenches all temporal reference away from that amalgam of the seventh world-age and the thousand-year reign in Apocalypse 20, the Sabbath rest of the saints. The six preceding world ages, Augustine asserts, are indeed historical; but the Great Sabbath, the eschatological seventh day, is the saints themselves. 'After this present age God will rest, as it were, on the seventh day; and he will cause us, *who are the seventh day*, to find our rest in him' (*De civ. Dei* XXII.30,5).

How successful was this Tyconian-Augustinian tradition? And how do we gauge 'success'?

In terms of establishing orthodoxy's hermeneutical approach to Apocalypse, this tradition, as we have noted, succeeded famously. Tyconius and Augustine virtually defined the content of all later Catholic commentaries.<sup>85</sup> And, of course, in terms of empirical verification, the essence of their argument has been vindicated by the simple passage of time, which has continued not to end.

Contemporaries, however, were less convinced. Events combined

with long tradition to undermine the persuasiveness of a non-apocalyptic understanding of current history. Thanks to the Vandal invasions of the Western empire in the mid-fifth century, where Christian chronological calculation had long fixed 500 CE as the year 6000 since Creation and thus the expected date of the Parousia, the world very nearly did 'end' on time. The Donatist chronicler of the *Liber Genealogus* knew exactly, in 452 CE, how things stood: he had divined that the name of the Vandal king of Carthage, Genserich, revealed the number of the Beast, 666.<sup>86</sup> His contemporary, Augustine's own student, Quodvultdeus, in his analysis of salvation history, the *Liber de promissionibus*, argued strenuously that the apocalyptic signs of the approaching End-time were currently—again, thanks to these barbarians—being fulfilled. John's Apocalypse and the prophecies in Daniel both pointed to the Holy City's humiliation by the forces of Antichrist, in particular 'ab haereticis et maxime Ariani qui tunc plinium poterunt' (IV.13,22; these tribes, of course, were Arian). The Getas and the Massagetas, furthermore, two other tribes, were none other than the long-foretold forces of Gog and Magog.<sup>87</sup>

Even after the year 500/6000 slips past, allusions to active millenarian expectation, popular and clerical, glimmer in our problematic sources. 'False christi' appear and gather followings; Western chronographers nervously recast the global time-table as the recalculated year 6000 draws near; *rustici* importune more learned clerics for the age of the world, the better to know when it will end; famine, earthquakes, and assorted terrestrial and celestial disturbances continue to send people into panic.<sup>88</sup> Such movements continue throughout the Middle Ages and on into the modern period.<sup>89</sup> And in our own day, with the approaching end of both the century and the millennium, we see once again that the combination of current events, biblical apocalypses, and millennial numbers continues to exert its ancient appeal.<sup>90</sup>

Western culture, in brief, continues to move within the charged field that lies between the twin poles of the Christian message, the 'now/not yet' of a messiah who has come and a messianic age yet to arrive. Though few moderns, Christian or otherwise, know the ancient traditions of the world ages and the chronological count-downs to the millennial Sabbath Rest of the saints, the year 2000 nevertheless serves as a focus of apocalyptic speculation. Christianity's texts and its doctrine permit—indeed, encourage—the pursuit of the millennium as a perpetual possibility; and thus John's vision of the End will continue to

support and inspire those who hope to live to see the coming of God's Kingdom.

# NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Research for this essay was supported by a summer grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Bernard McGinn and Richard Emmerson originally proposed the topic as my contribution to their forthcoming volume *Apocalypse in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca 1991): I thank my editors for permitting me to develop and present my more detailed study here. Elizabeth A. R. Brown, Richard Landes, and Robert Markus criticized earlier versions, for which I thank them. Finally, I thank Charles Kannengieser for inviting me to present these ideas to a plenary session of the 1989 North American Patristics Association.

<sup>2</sup> Paul consistently preached the imminent Parousia, from his earliest extant epistle (1 Thes 1:10; 4:13-17; 5:23) to his last (e.g., Rom 13:11). Of the canonical gospels, Mark is the most unambiguously apocalyptic; the later evangelists adjust tradition in light of the lengthening period between the resurrection and the Parousia. Expectation of the imminent arrival of the Kingdom (as distinct from the Parousia) most likely goes back to the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, the retrospective starting-point of Christian tradition; he held this belief in common with many of his Jewish contemporaries. See E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia 1985), for a compelling reconstruction of both Jesus and his social and religious environment; on the ways that apocalyptic expectation and disappointment affected traditions from and about him, my own study, *From Jesus to Christ. The Origins of the New Testament Images of Jesus* (New Haven 1988). On the apocalypticism of the Pauline communities, Wayne Meeks, *The First Urban Christians* (New Haven 1983), esp. ch. 8; of the early movement generally, John Gager, *Kingdom and Community* (Englewood Cliffs 1975). A reliable guide to the huge secondary literature on this topic is W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville 1975).

<sup>3</sup> Some definitions: I use *eschatology* to mean those beliefs concerned with the end of time and final destiny of humankind; they imply no necessary time-table. *Apocalypticism* holds that the End, however conceived, is imminent. *Millenarianism* holds that the redemption brought by the End, whenever it comes, will be collective, historical, and earthly (as opposed to heavenly or exclusively spiritual): the earth will sprout fruit in abundance; both human and animal society will be transformed and at peace. The idea of a thousand-year period implicit in the term is less essential to its import than is its focus on the earth and human history as the ultimate arena of redemption. *Apocalyptic millenarianism*, finally, holds that such redemption is imminent. For a more detailed discussion of these distinctions, see R. Landes, 'Let the millennium be fulfilled: Apocalyptic expectations and the pattern of western chronography, 100-800 CE,' *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. W. Verbeke, D. Verhelst and A. Welkenhuyzen (Leuven 1988) 205-208.

<sup>4</sup> The phrase is Yves Christe's, 'Traditions littéraires et iconographiques dans l'interprétation des images apocalyptiques,' *L'Apocalypse de Jean. Traditions Exégétiques et Iconographiques IIIe-XIIIe siècles* (Geneva 1979) 111.

<sup>5</sup> This is academic consensus, though the dating is uncertain. See discussion in Kümmel, *Introduction* 466-69.

<sup>6</sup> The concept of a 'New' Testament as something completing and superseding the 'Old' was a while in coming. As late as the mid-second century, as orthodox a figure as Justin Martyr could refer to the gospels as the apostles' 'memoires' (*Dialogue with Trypho* 105): 'Scripture' for him, as for most early Christians, was the Greek translation of the Jewish Bible, the Septuagint. Christians considered oral traditions as authoritative as written ones, and Papias even preferred 'the living voice' to mere books (Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 3.39,12).

<sup>7</sup> For example, the restitution of the twelve tribes of Israel (e.g., Isa. 11:11); the confluence of all peoples at the renewed temple in a renewed Jerusalem (Isa 2:2-4); peace guiding not only human but also animal society (Isa 65:25); the earth bringing forth fruits in abundance (Baruch 29:5). For a discussion of these themes and their transfer to early Christian redemptive mythology, see Fredriksen, *Jesus*, 81-86, 98-102, 165-75; Sanders, *Jesus*, ch. 1-8 passim and 335-40; also J. Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations* (Nashville 1958).

<sup>8</sup> *Adv. haer.* 5.33.4; cf. Eusebius' disapproving review, *HE* 3.39,12; for Irenaeus' own millenarianism, the last five chapters of Book 5, deleted from most Western MSS once the church had condemned such opinions. According to Eusebius, one Cerinthus, an early second-century Christian, taught likewise that 'after the resurrection there would be an earthly kingdom of Christ, and men again inhabiting Jerusalem.' Bad enough, but worse was Cerinthus' alleged belief that, in this kingdom, 'there would be a space of a thousand years for celebrating nuptial festivals' (*HE* 3.28.2). The orthodox Lactantius, almost two centuries later, opined similarly (*Div. inst.* 7.24). On Cerinthus, see *infra* n. 23.

<sup>9</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 5.33.3. This same passage, here ascribed to Jesus, occurs almost verbatim in the Jewish *Apocalypse of Baruch* 29:5 (c. 70-100 CE).

<sup>10</sup> *Dialogue with Trypho* 81, referring specifically to Isa 65 and Apoc 20:4-5.

<sup>11</sup> The link between the suffering of the righteous and impending redemption comes directly from Jewish tradition (e.g., Dan 7:21; 12:2-13; 2 Mac 6:12-7:38), and carried over into the synoptic apocalypses (Mk 13:1-37 and par.). See discussion in W. H. C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids 1981; orig. pub. 1965), esp. 31-103. During the reign of Severus, a Christian chronographer named Judas calculated, on the basis of Daniel's 70 weeks (Dan 9:24), the imminent appearance of Antichrist, 'so mightily did the agitation of persecution, then prevailing, shake the minds of many,' Eusebius, *HE* 6.7. Faith in the world's imminent destruction strengthened the resolve of Pionius, martyred in Smyrna in the mid-third century, *Martyrdom of Pionius* 4 (*Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, ed. H. Musurillo (Oxford 1972), 141-42); see the reconstruction of the events behind this text in R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (New York 1986) 460-92.

<sup>12</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 5.26.1; 30.3; Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 3.13,10, though the Roman state also hinders the coming of Antichrist (the *πατέρας* of 2 Thes 2:7; *De resurr. mort.* 24; *Apoc.* 32). Victorinus of Pettau, before 303 CE, awaited the 'ruina Babylonis, id est civitatis Romanae,' *In Apoc.* 8.2; 9.4.

<sup>13</sup> See esp. the discussions in J. Daniélou, 'La typologie millénariste de la semaine dans le christianisme primitif,' *Virgiliae Christianae* 2 (1948) 1-16; A. Lunéau, *L'histoire du salut chez les pères de l'Eglise. La doctrine des âges du monde* (Paris 1964); G. Lader, *The Idea of Reform* (New York 1967) 222-32; Landes, 'Apocalyptic expectations,' 141-56; B. McGinn, 'Endtime and Eternity: Biblical Apocalyptic in Western History,' (unpub. MS; pp. 1-18 and nn. 1-42); and the dossier of texts assembled by A. Wilkenhauser, 'Die

Herkunft der Idee des tausendjährigen Reiches in der Johannes-Apokalyypse,' *Römische Quartalschrift* 45 (1937) 1-24, discussed by Hans Bietenhard, 'The millennial hope in the early church,' *Scottish Journal of Theology* 6 (1953) 12-30; also *La Cité de Dieu*, BA vol. 37, 768 n. 26 on millenarianism. The classic monograph is L. Giry, *Le millénarisme* (Paris 1904), esp. chs. 3-5.

<sup>14</sup> 'The first Parousia of our Lord took place on a Wednesday ... 5,500 years after Adam.... One must, therefore get to 6,000 years before the Sabbath, the type and figure of the future kingdom of the saints who will reign with Christ after his descent from the heavens, as John tells in the Book of Revelation.... From the birth of Christ one must count another 500 years, and only then will the End come,' Hippolytus, *In Danielen* 4.23-24; cf. Julius Africanus, *Chronographia* (fragments), *ANF* 6, 130-138. For the pastoral and exegetical context of this argument, David D. Dunbar, 'The Delay of the Parousia in Hippolytus,' *Vig. Chr.* 37 (1983) 313-27. On Christianity's conflation of chronology and eschatology, Momigliano's rich essay, 'Pagan and Christian historiography in the Fourth Century A.D.,' *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, ed. idem (Oxford 1963) 79-99, esp. 83f. On ancient Christian chronography more generally, V. Grumel, *La Chronologie* (Paris 1958); and Landes, 'Apocalyptic expectations.'

<sup>15</sup> On Montanism, T. D. Barnes, *Tertullian* (Oxford 1971); Lane Fox, *Pagans* 375-418; J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, vol. 1: *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition* (Chicago 1971) 97-108; specifically in N. Africa, Paul Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique Chrétienne*, vol. 1 (Paris 1901) 399 ff. Hippolytus tells of two Catholic bishops: One, in Syria, persuaded by his reading of scripture that the End was at hand, led his people (including women and children) out into the desert to meet Christ. They were almost arrested as bandits. Another, in Pontus, became convinced by his own visions. His congregants devoted themselves to prayer and repentance to the neglect of their fields, and as a result fell into confusion, and the community into financial ruin (*In Dan.* 4.18-19). Hippolytus' commentary was probably directed against the millenarian calculations of the obscure Judas: above, n. 11. On chronography as an anti-apocalyptic strategy, Landes, 'Apocalyptic expectations'; also Lane Fox, *Pagans* 267.

<sup>16</sup> In the imagined architecture of the ancient cosmos, the earth stood at the center of the seven planetary spheres, at the furthest remove—spatially and ontologically—from the regions of increasing stability and harmony that stretched from the moon upward toward the planets and the realm of the fixed stars. Such a worldview is prejudiced in favor of the 'upperworldly' and spiritual; the redemption of the physical and earthly is, accordingly, incoherent. On the religious significance of this model of the universe, E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety* (New York 1965) 5-36, 43; Hans Jonas, *Gnosticism* (Boston 1963) 3-47; more generally, as evinced in Justin, Clement and Origen, H. Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition* (Oxford 1966); for an early fourth-century pagan statement of this cosmology and its religious implications, Sallustius, *Περὶ Θεῶν καὶ κόσμου*, ed. A. D. Nock (Cambridge 1926).

<sup>17</sup> None of Marcion's own writings survives; the classical heresiologists universally condemn him. See esp. Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 3.24.2-4, ridiculing Marcion specifically through appeal to Apoc 20: he reports that recently (late second century) witnesses in Judea had seen the Heavenly Jerusalem suspended above them for forty days. See also, against docetists and gnostics generally, idem, *De resurr. mort.* (ch. 19 and 25 on Apoc); also his *De praescriptione haereticorum* 7, warning against the consequences of excessive philosophizing.

<sup>18</sup> *De resurr. mort.* 19. He goes on heatedly to defend the resurrection of the flesh by an appeal to Apoc 20:2-14, *ibid.*, 25. The position he protests is similar to that taken by Tyconius and Augustine on the first resurrection: see *infra*, p. 161.

<sup>19</sup> Those who think otherwise 'reject the labor of thinking and seek after the outward and literal meaning of the law, or rather, give way to their own desires.... They go on to say that even after the resurrection there will be engagements to marry and the procreation of children, for they picture to themselves the earthly Jerusalem about to be rebuilt with precious stones....' *De principiis* 2.11.2-3; cf. his earlier exegesis of 1 Cor 15 against those 'of our own people who either from poverty of intellect or lack of instruction introduce an exceedingly low and mean idea of the resurrection of the body,' 2.10.3.

<sup>20</sup> *De princ.* 2.11.2, with reference to Isaiah 54, 61, 65, Ezek 28, and Mt 26. The passage begins with a refutation of the vision of the New Jerusalem in Apoc 21:10-12.

<sup>21</sup> Nepos had died beforehand, but his opinions, circulated through his book, continued to gain popular support. Dionysius carried the day: see Eusebius, *HE* 7.14, 1-3; Lane Fox, *Pagans* 265.

<sup>22</sup> On Dionysius' criticism of Apoc, *HE* 7.24.6-8. Eusebius clearly shared his lack of enthusiasm for the book and endorsed Dionysius' conclusions, though cf. 3.18 and 24. In the East the differences in the Greek style of the gospel as opposed to that of the Apocalypse were evident: Cyril of Jerusalem, Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret, and the Council of Laodicea did not receive Apoc into the canon, nor did it appear originally in the Peshitta or the Armenian NT. In the West, however, the Latin translations suppressed perception of linguistic differences between these texts. For discussion, see the indexed references in B. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament* (Oxford 1987).

<sup>23</sup> Gaius, debating against a Montanist, had rejected both the Fourth Gospel (favored by Montanists because of its emphasis on the Paraclete) and Apocalypse (*HE* 3.28); fragments in Syriac of Hippolytus' defense of Apoc against Gaius survive, ed. and trans. J. Gwynn, *Hermathena* 6 (1888) 397-418. For Gaius, *DTC* 2, cols. 1309-11 (under 'Caius'). The Alogi, a late second-century group in Asia Minor, apparently rejected both texts for the same reason, but their position is described by hostile heresiologists (Epiphanius, *Haer.* 51; see *DCT* vol. 1, col. 898-901).

Whoever Cerinthus was and whatever views he held, his name ultimately became a code word for 'millenarian heresy' in the patristic lexicon of bad names. It was not always so. Irenaeus, himself millenarian, had grouped Cerinthus rather with the Christian dualists Marcion and Valentius: if doctrines can have antitheses, gnosticizing dualism with its radical spiritualizing would be the opposite of millenarianism. Relating Polycarp's story that John the Apostle fled the public baths upon learning that Cerinthus was within, Irenaeus presented the author of one of the gnostics' favorite gospels (i.e., John) as implicitly condemning Cerinthus for gnosticism (*Adv. haer.* 5.3.4). By the time Eusebius retold the story, Cerinthus had become a millenarian, so that John the putative author of Apoc condemns Cerinthus for his carnal interpretation of a thousand-year reign of the saints on earth, *HE* 3.28.

<sup>24</sup> 'Nul pays n'a conservé avec plus de soin les archives de sa geste du sang,' A.-G. Hamman, *La vie quotidienne en Afrique du Nord au temps de S. Augustin* (Paris 1979) 318. The texts of these two *acta*, the court 'transcript' of the Scillian martyr, executed in Carthage in 180 CE, and the prison diary of Perpetua, may be found, with facing English translation, in Musurillo, *Acts* 86-89, 106-31 ('Passio Sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis' 1-2 and 14-21 are editorial extensions of the diary). On the effects of the persecutions on

N. African tradition, R. A. Markus, *Saeculum. History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine* (Cambridge 1970) 106-109; Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire* 1, 28-96.

<sup>25</sup> On the cult of the dead, particularly the feasting and drinking associated with it, F. van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop* (New York 1961) 471-526; Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* 207, 299; also, idem, *The Cult of the Saints* (Chicago 1981) for the Western church generally; Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 114, 174; ibid., p. 99, for this burial practice, apparently by pagans too. Also, idem, 'The North African cult of the martyrs,' *Jenseits-vorstellung in Antike und Christentum: Gedenschrift für Alfred Stüber. Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 9 (1982) 154-67. G. Bonner comments on the 'stern, enthusiastic element' in Latin, and esp. N. African Christianity, 'to which the visions of the Apoc made an immense appeal.' S. Bede and the tradition of Western apocalypse commentary, *Jarrow Lectures* 1966, 3; on the 'ivy' controversy—the result of introducing Jerome's new translation of Jonah at mass—Augustine, Epp. 71.3.5; 75.6.21 and 7.22; on a congregant's similarly violent rejection of liturgical innovation, *Refr.* 2.11; discussed in van der Meer, *Augustine* 341.

<sup>26</sup> See esp. Markus, *Saeculum*, loc. cit., on the characteristic features of this community 'born during the age of the persecutions'; idem, 'Christianity and Dissent in Roman North Africa: Changing Perspectives in Recent Work,' *Studies in Church History* 9, ed. Derek Baker (Cambridge 1972) 21-34, on the ways in which this construction of the Christian community's identity—Donatism's in particular and North African Christianity's in general—'was the local expression of a permanent religious option,' 21. The slogan derives from Cyprian, *De unitate catholicae ecclesiae* 5-6.

<sup>27</sup> Given the Empire's collapsing economic and political fortunes (not to mention frontiers) in the second half of the third century, Diocletian's concern with the health of the *pax deorum* was reasonable and, by his lights, well-placed. Before turning on more 'orthodox' Christian communities, he legislated against Manichees as well, to bring them to religious conformity; see his instructions to Julianus, proconsul of N. Africa, collected in *Fontes Iuris Romani Anteiustiniani*, 2nd ed. (Florence 1940-43) 2:544-89. See Brown's essay, 'The diffusion of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire,' *Religion and Society* 95ff., on Diocletian; a brief review of his other policies in T. D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge 1981) 3-14; also Lane Fox, *Pagans* 592-95; on the 'great persecution,' Frend, *Martyrdom* 477-535.

<sup>28</sup> The authority of Cyprian stood behind rebaptism as a way to reintegrate the lapsed (e.g., Epp. 69-75); and the experience of the African church in the wake of the Decian persecution rehearsed, in many ways, events after Diocletian. See Hans Lietzmann, *History of the Early Church* (London 1961) 2:250-57; Frend, *Donatist Church* 125-40; Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire*, vol. 2; J.-P. Brissson, *Autonomie et Christianisme dans l'Afrique Romaine* (Paris 1958) 33-121. On Catholicism's betrayal of African, Cyprianic Christianity, Markus, *Saeculum* 106-15.

<sup>29</sup> On the origins of the schism, Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* 213ff.; Frend, *Donatist Church* 1-24; Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire* vols. 3 and 4; Lietzmann, *History* 3:82-93. Constantine's conversion thus resulted in no necessary change of world-view for the disenfranchised Donatists. As Markus notes, 'It was a "Cyprianic Church" that entered the "great persecution" of Diocletian in 303, and the same Cyprianic Church that emerged when it ended, in 305.... Donatism was, quite simply, the continuation of the old African tradition in the post-Constantinian world. It was the world that had changed, not African Christianity,' 'Christianity and Dissent,' 29; also Frend, 'Cult,' 160f.

<sup>30</sup> On the 'dense pattern' of North African bishoprics, Lane Fox, *Pagans* 272; Serge Lancel, *Actes de la conférence de Carthage en 411* (Paris 1972) 1:192ff. By 395, over three hundred bishops on each side faced each other in little towns; Brown, *Augustine* 203; ibid., 226, on the Donatist majority in Numidia. Frend, *Donatist Church*, analyzes the geographical distribution of allegiances in terms of local (i.e. African) vs. Roman culture; see below, n. 31. Donatists went to Augustine to settle disputes in the early years of his episcopacy (Epp. 33.5), and on occasion would attend Catholic services and public debates (Posidius, *Vita* 4; 7). On cohabitation between Catholics and Donatists, Ep. 35.2.

<sup>31</sup> On violence, Brown, *Augustine* 227-43; on the mysterious Circumcelliones, whose violent acts increase with the government's moves against Donatism, ibid., 229; Brissson, *Autonomie* 325-57; Emin Tengström, *Donatisten und Katholiken. Soziale, wirtschaftliche und politische Aspekte einer nordafrikanischen Kirchenspaltung* (Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia XVIII, 1964) 24-83. Anti-Donatist legislation after 393 specifically targeted the familial and social relations that this *modus vivendi* expressed and facilitated (patterns of intermarriage and inheritance; Catholic tolerance for Donatists, and so on), Brown, ibid., 227. Finally, in the intimate towns of Late Antiquity, these communities lived virtually on top of each other, visiting the same graves, praying cheek by jowl (e.g., Ep. 29.10-11: congregants in Augustine's church could hear the Donatists worshipping in theirs).

<sup>32</sup> Persuasively argued by Peter Brown, 'Christianity and Local Culture in Late Roman Africa,' *Religion and Society in the Age of St. Augustine* (New York 1972) 279-300, orig. pub. *Journal of Roman Studies* 58 (1968) 85-95; an interpretation developed by Markus, 'Christianity and Dissent'; idem, *Saeculum* 105-32. Augustine's Donatist counterpart, the bishop Parmenian, was himself Italian, not African (see the entry in *Prosopographie Chrétienne du Bas-Empire*, vol. 1, ed. A. Mandouze (Paris 1982)).

<sup>33</sup> On Julius Africanus, *infra* 153; Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, looks forward to the post-millennial procreation of 'an infinite multitude' by the saints, mountains oozing honey, wine flowing down in streams, and rivers running with milk (7.24). 'Perhaps someone may ask now when those things we mentioned are going to take place.... The entire expectation or length of time left seems no greater than two hundred years' (7.25, cf. 14). Lactantius writes Book 7 c. 313. Hilarius' *De cursu temporum*, a workmanlike calculus of the world's age derived from the generations given in scripture, concludes with a review of the final things as revealed in Apoc, *Chronica Minora*, vol. 1, ed. Carl Frick (Leipzig 1892) 155-74. His reassertion of this traditional time-table may in fact have been a delaying tactic: were some in his community insisting that the End would come sooner? See Landes' remarks, 'Apocalyptic expectations....' 152. Efforts to view Hilarius as Donatist rather than Catholic seem to me a somewhat desperate disavowal of Catholicism's own normative millenarianism (*Prosopographie*..., 558); Martin of Tours believed that Antichrist had already been born and was approaching maturity (Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogues* 1, 14 (CSEL 1, 197)); crowds in Constantinople were thrown into a pre-millennial panic in 398 after witnessing signs and prodigies (Augustine, *De exordio urbis* 6, 7, mentions the incident without such an interpretation; the later historian Philostorgius attributes the panic to fear of the impending apocalypse, *Church History* 11.6-7. See additional ancient literature on this episode in Landes, 'Apocalyptic expectations,' 155 n. 70a). The fact that the elusive Commodian can arguably be placed anywhere between the third and fifth centuries obliquely makes the same point: millenarianism was

normative. On Commodian, esp. P. Courcelle, *Histoire littéraire des grandes invasions germaniques* (Paris 1964) 319-37; Brissson, *Autonomisme* 378-410; cf. H. Grégoire, *Les persécutions dans l'empire romain* (Brussels 1950) 114-17. The fall of Rome in 410 only added to the level of nervous anticipation; more on that, *supra*. See finally Jean Hubaux, 'Saint Augustin et la crise eschatologique de la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle,' *Académie royale de Belgique. Bulletin de la classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques* xl (1954) 658-73.

<sup>14</sup> Markus, *Saeculum* 55. Donatists preserved the continuity of persecution with millenarian hope. Catholics, on the contrary, could see Constantine's and the Empire's conversion as pointing to the realization of biblical prophecies about God's righteous kingdom. Hesyclus, bishop of Salona, argues this apocalyptic interpretation of current events c. 418 (Augustine, Epp. 197-99; see G. Coulé's discussion in *La Cité de Dieu XIX-XXII*, B4 37 (Paris 1960) 763-65; also J.-P. Bouhot, 'Hesyclus de Salone et Augustin,' *S. Augustin et la Bible* (Paris 1986) 229-50; also Markus' comments, *Saeculum* 39. *Mutatis mutandis*, Eusebius argued similarly: Constantine's conversion realized Isaiah's millenarian prophecies. Eusebius is a non-apocalyptic millenarian thinker, e.g., his argument in *Laus* 16.6-7. Augustine and his colleagues felt similarly in 399, when Imperial fiat led to the destruction of pagan property—in more prophetic perspective, the overthrow of idols 'secundum prophetiam veritatem,' *Enarr. in Ps.* 62,1; 149,7; cf. *Sermo* 24,6; *De cons. Ev.* 1.14,21: 34,52; discussion in A. Mandouze, 'Saint Augustin et la religion romaine,' *RA* 1 (1958) 187-223; Markus, *Saeculum* 22-44, esp. 30ff.; on Hesyclus in particular, 39; Brown, 'St. Augustine's attitude toward religious coercion,' *Religion and Society* 265-74, and his reprise of this discussion, *Aug.*, 231ff.

Jaroslav Pelikan's observation on Christians of the second century seems to me equally true for those of the third, fourth, and fifth: 'The impression seems unavoidable that the relation between "already" and "not yet" in Christian apocalyptic raised more problems for philosophical theologians ... than it did for believers and worshippers,' *Christian Tradition* 1:126.

<sup>15</sup> See esp. van der Meer's wonderful evocation of these festivals, *Augustine* 471-557, esp. 498ff.; Peter Brown, *Cult of the Saints*, who places the cult within its larger context of Latin Christendom, extending up to the period in Gaul of the Franks; idem, *Augustine* 206, 217-20, 229; Frend, *Donatist Church*, 172-75, who notes the prominent role of Circumcelliones (*circum cellas*) in such observances; Brissson, *Autonomisme*, 293ff. on martyrs.

<sup>16</sup> 'In the great churches [where the *mensa* stood] the pious offering of wine gradually degenerated into a carousal which no-one could definitely forbid because it took place under the pretext of pious observance and in obedience to an ancient tradition, and was therefore in a certain sense protected.... As to the pleasures of the table, it is sufficient to note that a certain church ... was actually called the *basilica triclinium*,' van der Meer, *Augustine* 514f. Ambrose kept a tight rein on such observances: the sacristan in Milan prevented Monica from taking a meal at the oratory, *Conf.* 6.2.

<sup>17</sup> Ep. 29,11. On forced conversions after 399, *Serm.* 10,4; 47,17; Brown, *Augustine* 230f., 234. The dead were another generation, and family celebrations were themselves more decorous than the community-wide *laetitiae*: van der Meer, *Augustine* 498ff.; Brown, *Cult* 23.

<sup>18</sup> 'At [the saints'] graves, the eternity of paradise and the first touch of the resurrection come into the present,' Brown, *Cult* 78. Whatever the inheritance from older pagan

custom, these Christian feasts over the martyr's body did not substitute for, displace, or sublimate envisaged millenarian society, but actively anticipated it through re-enactment. Augustine complains about the feasts and about millenarianism in exactly the same terms: they focus over-much, he says, on food and on 'carnal' pleasures (by which he means 'physical' as well as corrupt in a moral sense, Epp. 22, 29,11; *De mor. man.* 1.34,75; cf. *De civ. Dei* 20,7,1). Inveighing against both, he boldly identifies the saints' feasts, the miracles worked by their relics, and their one-thousand-year reign in the first resurrection, but argues that this should be understood as present and non-eschatological: see above, p. 163.

The violent enthusiasm of the Circumcelliones might best be understood in light of this anticipatory apocalypticism, and thus the interminable argument about their essential orientation—political? religious?—put to one side: millenarian groups typically seek to flatten distinctions of social status within their communities (hence the frequent use of sibling language, 'brother' and 'sister'), and such flattening can at the same time be intended as a critique of current society and perceived by those outside as a threat to it. See Gager's discussion, *Kingdom and Community* 32-27. On the 'class background' of the Circumcelliones, Frend, *Martyrdom* 556 and *Donatist Church*, *passim*; cf. Tengström's critique, *Donatisten*, and Markus' review of the discussion, 'Christianity and Dissent.' <sup>19</sup> These are *De bello intestino* (c. 370?), on the universality of the church; a subsequent defense of his position, *Expositiones diversarum causarum* (c. 375?); the sole surviving work, the *Liber regularum* (c. 382), on scriptural exegesis; and finally, perhaps c. 385, the now-lost *Commentary on Apocalypse* (on which see below, n. 40). On Tyconius himself, Genadius, *De viris illustribus* 18, PL 58, 1071; Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire* 5: 165-219; *Prosopographie*... 1122-27.

<sup>20</sup> On his transformation of his own tradition, Markus, *Saeculum* 56, 115-26, and my own discussion, 'Tyconius and the End of the World,' *REAug* 28 (1982) 59-71; on his influence on Augustine, esp. the latter's views on grace, and thus on Paul and conversion, A. Pincherle, *La formazione teologica di Sant'Agostino* (Rome 1947) specifically on Augustine's reading of Tyconius during the crucial decade of the 390s, idem, more recently, 'Sulla formazione della dottrina agostiniana della grazia,' *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* XI.1 (1975) 1-23; U. Duchrow, *Christenheit und Weltverantwortung* (Stuttgart 1970) 216-33, with special reference to the early interpretation of Paul; W. S. Babcock, 'Augustine's interpretation of Romans,' *Augustinian Studies* 10 (1979) 54-74; idem, 'Augustine and Tyconius. A study in the Latin appropriation of St. Paul,' *Studia Patristica* XVIII, pt. 3 (1982) 1210f.; E. TeSelle, *Augustine the Theologian* (London 1970) 180-82; most recently, my own essay, 'Beyond the body/soul dichotomy. Augustine on Paul against the Manichees and the Pelagians,' *RA* 23 (1988) 87-114, esp. 99-101. I will address the issue of Tyconius' influence on Augustine's ideas on history and the cult of the saints as these appear in *De civitate Dei* above. Martine Dulaey has recently offered a minimalist interpretation of this influence ('L'Apocalypse. Augustin et Tyconius,' *Saint Augustin et la Bible*, ed. A.-M. Labomardière (Paris 1986) 367-86), but she neglects to consider the Pauline material and concentrates solely on Apoc.

<sup>21</sup> On Tyconius' success in influencing subsequent generations of commentators, see e.g., Yves Christe, 'Apocalypse et *traditio legis*,' *Römische Quartalschrift* 71 (1976) 47f., 54; idem, 'Traditions littéraires,' 111; Bonner, 'St. Bede,' 5 and *passim*; B. McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York 1979) 27, 40, 77. See also the following note.

<sup>42</sup> Jerome evidently used Tyconius for his own de-millennianizing re-edition of Victorinus of Pettau's Apocalypse commentary (see Haussleiter's edition, CSEL 49); also influenced were the Apocalypse commentaries of Apringius (ed. M. Feroiin, Paris, 1900); Beatus (ed. H. A. Sanders, Papers and Monographs of the American Academy in Rome, vol. VII, 1930); Bede (PL 93.129-206); Caesarius of Arles (ed. G. Morin, Maredsous, vol. 2 (1942) 209-77); Primasius (PL 68.793-936); and finally the Turin fragments (ed. F. LoBue, Texts and Studies, N.S. vol. 7, Cambridge 1963). Gerald Bonner has attempted to reconstruct Tyconius' text by collating passages from these later commentaries, 'St. Bede', 21-29; idem, 'Toward a text of Tyconius', *Stud. Pat.* 10 (TU 107) (1970) 9-13. More recently, L. Mezey has tentatively identified a fragment of a Budapest MS as Tyconian, 'Un fragment d'un codex de la premiere epoque carolingienne (Tyconius in *Apocalypsin*)', *Miscellanea Codicologica F. Masai dicata*, vol. 1 (Gand 1979) 41-50; cf. A. Pincherle's response to Mezey's original Hungarian article (pub. 1976), 'Alla ricerca di Ticonio', *Studi Storico-Religiosi* 2 (1978) 355-65. See also the substantial textual note in Lader, *Reform* 260 n. 93. These studies have now been superseded by Kenneth Steinhauser, *The Apocalypse Commentary of Tyconius: A history of its reception and influence* (Frankfurt 1987).

<sup>43</sup> Genadius says Tyconius 'nihil in ea [i.e., the Commentary] carnale sed totum intelligens spirituale', *De vir. illus.* 18; Tyconius, in his preface to the *Liber*, calls his exegetical principles 'mysticae', and argues specifically that the time of the End can neither be calculated nor deduced. His own disclaimer notwithstanding, modern scholars have nonetheless held both that Tyconius was the source of the later Catholic anti-millennarian Apocalypse commentaries and that he himself expected the End in his own lifetime. This fundamentally incoherent interpretation seems to have begun with F. C. Burkitt's efforts to fix a *terminus ad quem* for the composition of the *Liber*: he focused on Tyconius' invocation of the period 350 years in Apoc 11 (*Liber* V, 60-61) to conclude that Tyconius was himself making millennarian calculations, *The Book of Rules of Tyconius*, Texts and Studies III, pt. 1 (Cambridge 1894) xviii. A near-century of authoritative scholarship then repeated his misreading: T. Hahn, *Tyconius-Studien* (Leipzig 1900): Tyconius refers all millennarian prophecies to the future (p. 7), yet 'letztes Ereignis erwartet T. als nahe bevorstehend,' (p. 6); W. Kamlah, *Apokalypse und Geschichtstheologie* (Berlin 1935): Tyconius' 'Auslegung hat überall die konkreten Bilder der Ap zu verflüchtigen gesucht' (p. 10); nonetheless, he 'berechnet die Zeit von Christus bis zum Ende auf 350 Jahre, er erwartet das Kommen des Herrn als nahe' (p. 71); E. Dinkler's excellent article in *Pauly-Wissowa Realencyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (1936) VI A, 1, col. 853: states that 'T. von der historisch-realistischen Exegese zur geistlichen überging, und mit dem starren Chiliasmus brach,' though, referring to Burkitt, Dinkler adds that 'im Anschluss an Ap 11:2, die Geschichte der Kirche auf 350 Jahre nach Christi Kreuzigung errechnet und ihr Ende und der Einsatz der letzten grossen Verfolgung als kurz bevorstehend notiert wird.' Bonner follows Kamlah, 'St. Bede', 5 and n. 21. Dulacy most recently has reiterated this misreading of Tyconius' use of the 350-year period, 'Tyconius et Augustin', 374 (again citing Burkitt and Rule V); cf. my arguments against this particular misconstrual, 'Tyconius', *REAug* 28 (1982) 60-83, and against this misinterpretation generally, *passim*; so also Markus, *Seeculum* 58. <sup>44</sup> Burkitt's is still the critical edition (full reference in preceding note); this has recently been translated by W. S. Babcock, *The Book of Rules of Tyconius*. Society of Biblical Literature (Atlanta 1989). On the immediate relation of the *Liber* to Tyconius' lost com-

mentary, the current work of Charles Kannengieser, *A Conflict of Christian Hermeneutics in Roman Africa: Tyconius vs. Augustine* (Berkeley Center for Hermeneutical Studies, forthcoming 1990). Kannengieser speculates that the seven seals of Apocalypse 5-10 inspired Tyconius' formulation of seven exegetical rules in the *Liber*: 'It looks as if Tyconius had attempted to transfer the celestial symbolism of the sealed scroll ... into the rhetorical culture of Roman Africa.... Out of the archaic form of apocalypticism proper to the Johannine Revelation, the heavenly "seals" become ... *regula* submitted to rational inquiry,' MS p. 17. His student, Pamela Bright, suggests more strongly that the *Liber* should not be considered 'a general introduction to exegesis but specifically as an introduction to the exegesis [of] the Apocalypse,' *The Book of Rules of Tyconius. Its Purpose and Inner Logic* (Notre Dame 1988) 185.

<sup>45</sup> 'Necessarium duxi ante omnia quae mihi videntur libellum regularem scribere, et secretorum legis veluti claves et luminaria fabricare, sunt enim quaedam regulae mysticae quae universae legis recessus obtinent et veritatis thesaurus aliquibus invisibilibus facit,' Prol. 1.1-5. As Kannengieser notes, the 'rules,' as Tyconius sees them, are *in scriptura* already: he intends not to produce them, but to write an essay on them, *op. cit.* MS p. 7; cf. Augustine's misreading of Tyconius, *De doctrina christiana* 3.30.42.

<sup>46</sup> Mt 26:64; cf. LR I.4,13-5,10, on the distinction between the continuous coming of Christ's glorious body, the Church, and Christ's own Parousia at the End.

<sup>47</sup> 2 Thes 2:7; Ezek 39:1-4; cf. Apoc 20:7f; LR VII.74, 16-75,6.

<sup>48</sup> LR VI.67,7-28. Apparently in his Apocalypse commentary Tyconius correlated anti-Donatist persecution with John's prophecy: Bede criticized him for it ('... et martyria vocans, has [these persecutions] in eadem gloriatur Apocalypsi fuisse praedictas,' PL 93, 133a). Augustine levels a similar critique against Gaudentius (c. *Gaud.* 1.27,30-31). Similarities between Apoc 6:9-11 and present circumstances probably struck most thinking Donatists as obvious, and for obvious reason: see my earlier discussion, 'Tyconius', 65f., 69-72. If Tyconius did construe the persecutions in light of John's Apocalypse, he would have interpreted them no more 'apocalyptically' than he did John's own text.

If persecution does not indicate the nearness of the End, according to Tyconius, then neither does the cessation of persecution: his invocation of the 'peace of the church' 350 years after the Passion (which occurred, according to N. African Christian chronology, in A.D. 29) refers not to an expectation that the Parousia would occur in 379 but, more likely, to the accession of Flavian, himself a Donatist, as senior Imperial officer in Africa following a period of severe anti-Donatist legislation. Cf. LR V.60-61; Friend, *Donatist Church* 199f.; Brown, *Augustine* 226; Fredriksen Landes, 'Tyconius', 73 and n. 69.

<sup>49</sup> Such an ecclesiology, as Augustine was quick to point out, shatters the theological foundations of Donatist separatism, *De doct. chr.* 3.30, 42ff.; C. *ep. Parm.* I.1,1; Markus *Seeculum* 111-26; BA 28, p. 718 n. 10; Dinkler, 'Tyconius', col. 855.

<sup>50</sup> On his technique, Burkitt, *Rules* xv.

<sup>51</sup> In other words, 10, 100 (10×10), and 1000 (10×10×10) all have the same 'value', and can stand for perfection. See LR V.59,20ff; also 60-61, for his exegetical feat of establishing an essential synonymy between 42, 350, and 1260.

<sup>52</sup> LR V.56,10-20 on the 1000 years of the first resurrection; for the church as the 'spiritual body'—'nubes corpus est spiritale post baptismum et claritas filii hominis; primus est enim adventus Domini iugiter corpore suo venientis'—VI.43,1-5, a complex de-eschatologizing of one of Paul's most apocalyptic and eschatological concepts, 1 Cor 15:23-53. Tyconius' argument here is very similar to that of Gaius in the second century,



on account of which Gaius was denounced by Hippolytus as a heretic (see above, n. 21; discussion in Bietenhard, 'Millennial Hope', 18). The difference is that Tyconius, while so spiritualizing these classically millenarian passages, nonetheless also insists on fleshly resurrection and an historical Kingdom of God. He apparently developed this idea in his Apocalypse commentary as well. So Gennadius: 'in qua expositione ... mille ... annorum regni in terra iustorum post resurrectionem futuri suspensionem tulit; neque duas in carne resurrectiones futuras inter iustos et inter iniustos, sed unam et simul omnium.... Distinctionem sane duarum resurrectionum ita facit: *Primum, quam iustorum Apocalypsis dicit, credimus modo in ecclesiae incremento agi, ubi iustificati per fidem a mortuis peccatorum suorum per baptismum ad vitae aeternae stipendium suscitantur, secundum vero generatim omnis hominum carnis*, *De vir. inlus.* 18 (PL 58.1071-72).

<sup>33</sup> Thus, in a striking conflation, Tyconius understands Isaac to have received 'the spirit of the adoption as sons, crying "Abba", Father' (Rom 8:15), LR III.25.10-13. This insistence on the unity of scripture is a strong defense against the criticisms of the Manichees, who repudiated the Old Testament while revering the New.

<sup>34</sup> This confluence of salvation history and interiority, which Tyconius in Rule III works out with special attention to the letters of Paul, marks as well Augustine's early Pauline commentaries, written in 394. The chronology is difficult—we have no sure proof that Augustine had read Tyconius until he mentions him in Ep. 41, written in 396—and Augustine's own intellectual independence, which so transforms his sources, often obscures their precise influence (a problem esp. for reconstructing his reading in the Neoplatonists during his period in Milan, on which esp. P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions* (Paris 1968) 157-67. The methodological problem here is similar). See my earlier arguments, 'Augustine's Early Interpretation of Paul', (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University 1979. Ann Arbor 791.9772) 209-15; more recently, 'Body/Soul', 99-101. Pincherle, *Formazione* 175ff., is the standard study; see too his comments, 'Da Ticonio a Sant'Agostino', *Rich. Rel.* 1 (1925) 464 (his appeal to Ambrosiaster I find unnecessary). Also Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire* 5.218-19; TeSelle, *Augustine* 180-82; Babcock, 'Augustine's Interpretation', 67-74, and 'Augustine and Tyconius', 1210f. Duhaey's search for unambiguous influence—which, for someone like Augustine, who so dominates his sources, I fear we can rarely detect—in part compels her minimalism, 'Tyconius and Augustine.'

<sup>35</sup> Fredriksen Landes, 'Tyconius', 72-73; Markus, *Saeculum* 115-25; Christie, 'Traditions littéraires...', 110. This theme of the eschatological (as opposed to quotidian) holiness of the church underlies Tyconius' appeal to the 'two cities,' Jerusalem and Babylon, the city of God and the city of the devil. For Augustine's variations on this theme in *De civitate Dei*, see the comments in BA 37, 774-77 n. 28.

<sup>36</sup> *De civ. Dei* 20.7.1; see esp. G. Folliet, 'La typologie du sabbat chez Saint Augustin. Son interprétation millénariste entre 386 et 400,' *REAug* 2 (1956) 371-90.

<sup>37</sup> *De civ. Dei* 20.7.1; on the tradition from Barnab, *supra* p. 152 and nn. 7 and 9; Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* 7; on the laetitia, *supra* p. 156 and nn. 35-37.

<sup>38</sup> In 388, writing against the Manichees, Augustine had already complained about those Christians who '... worship tombs and who drink with utmost self-indulgence over the dead and set food before them. In so doing, they bury themselves at such graves, and then attribute their gluttony and drunkenness to religion,' *De moribus manichaeorum* 1.34.75; in Ep. 22, to Aurelius of Carthage, he urged a total reform and suppression of such practices. See van der Meer, *Augustine* 520-25 on the suppression of a feast day at Hippo; also the literature cited *supra* nn. 35-37.

<sup>39</sup> An alternative Christian chronology that had named 400 CE as the year 6000 since Creation 'coincided closely with a series of independent eschatological traditions in which computists variously added some 350, 365, or 400 years to Christ's birth or death in order to discover the end of the interim period between the First Coming and the Parousia. In the period between 350 *Annus Incarnationis* and 400 *Annus Passionis*, then, a series of target dates for the Parousia fell due, coming most densely in the final years of the 4th century,' Landes, 'Apocalyptic expectations', 155 and nn. 68-70a, for abundant citations of primary documents. B. Köting lists a series of signs and prodigies occurring between the years 389 and 420 throughout the Empire (Rome, Jerusalem, Constantinople, Africa), 'Endzeitprognosen zwischen Lactantius und Augustinus,' *Historisches Jahrbuch* 77 (1958) 125-139, esp. 137f. For Augustine's own discussion of such phenomena and calculations, his correspondence with Hesychius, Epp. 197-99; *De civ. Dei* XX-XXII passing; cf. his earlier discussion of the pagan prophecy that the church would end 365 years after the Crucifixion, XVIII.53.2; his sermon *De exordio urbis*, on the fall of Rome in 410 (CCSL 46, 249-62; critical edition and translation by M. V. O'Reilly, *Patristic Studies* 89 (Washington D.C. 1955)); *Ennar. in Ps.* 89. See also, finally, Hubaux, 'La crise eschatologique,' (full reference *supra* n. 33); also, idem, 'Saint Augustin et la crise cyclique,' *Augustinus Magister*, vol. 2 (Paris 1954) 943-50.

<sup>40</sup> Serm. 113.8.

<sup>41</sup> Hesychius' first letter to Augustine, written in 418, is lost; Epp. 197, 198 (Hesychius' answer to Augustine's first response), and 199 (Augustine's final rebuttal of H.'s position) records their remaining correspondence. For the argument drawing on the two evangelical passages cited above, Ep. 198.5 and 6. The correspondence has been reviewed most recently by Bouhot, 'Hesychius,' (full reference n. 34 *supra*).

<sup>42</sup> Ep. 198.15 (disappointment); 34-39 (the eschatological worthlessness of arguments from current events). Augustine had apparently suggested to Orosius, his younger colleague, that he compose a world history to make the point that things had been worse (and so, by implication, that bad things do not the End of the World make). Orosius, misconceived the project and, sliding into a by-then traditional Christian progressivism, argued that, since the empire had become Christian, things had never been better. See esp. Th. Mommsen, 'Orosius and Augustine,' *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, ed. Eugene F. Rice, Jr. (Ithaca 1959) 325-48; H.-I. Marrou, 'Saint Augustin, Orose et l'augustinisme historique,' *La storiografia altomedievale* I (Spoleto 1970) 59-87; F. Fabbrini, *Paolo Orosio, uno storico* (Rome 1979) 369-433; H.-W. Goetz, *Die Geschichtstheologie des Orosius* (Darmstadt 1980).

<sup>43</sup> 'There are thus two rebirths...: one according to faith, which comes here and now through baptism; and the other in the body, a rebirth which will come in its freedom from decay and death, as a result of the great and last judgment. Similarly, there are two resurrections: the first, the resurrection of the soul, which is here and now...; and the second, which is not now, but is to come at the end of the world,' *De civ. Dei* XX.6.2. Cf. Apoc. 20:5-5, the actual source of this idea of two resurrections, though Augustine does not allude to it here; for Tyconius' interpretation, *supra* n. 50.

<sup>44</sup> In the traditional reading of Apoc, this 1000-year period begins in the seventh age, after the Parousia of a sovereign Jesus. Augustine, by placing this in the sixth age, before the year 6000, moves it back into 'normal' history, before the Second Coming.

<sup>45</sup> Here he depends on Tyconius: see *supra* p. 159 and n. 51.

<sup>46</sup> On these Tyconian themes, see BA 28, p. 720 n. 10; on the appearance in Augustine of the theme of the city of God, F. C. Cranz, 'The development of Augustine's ideas on



society before the Donatist controversy,' *Augustine*, ed. R. A. Markus (New York 1972) 336-403, at 391 n. 59; cf. Dulaey, 'Tyconius et Augustin', 382.

<sup>67</sup> XXII.8, where Augustine reviews the many miracles known personally to him, which occurred locally, through prayer to saints and contact with their relics. They concern the restoration of bodily integrity—they are healing miracles—and thus, he says, 'testify to that one supreme miracle of salvation, the miracle of Christ's ascension into heaven in the flesh in which he rose from the dead' just as the redeemed will rise when the final Kingdom is established (8.1). Cf. esp. the miracles worked by Stephen's relics, 8.11-20 and 22. On the perils of viewing such piety as 'vulgar' and 'ignorant', Brown, *Cult* 12-22.

<sup>68</sup> This seven-age division was a traditional Christian scheme. Augustine, in his allegorizing commentary on Genesis against the Manichees (written in 388) correlated these with stages in human development (*infantia*, *pueritia*, *adolecentia*, *iuvēntus*, *senior detas*, *gravitas*, and *senectus*), *De gen. c. man.* 1.23.35-24.42; this comparison is repeated, slightly later, in *De 83 div. qu.* 58.2, though in 393 Augustine can use it strictly temporally, discussing the sweep of history toward the reign of the saints, *Serm.* 259.2, cf. the final passage of *De civ. Dei* XXII, cited above p. 166. For discussion of this theme, and its importance to Augustine's theology, see esp. the fundamental article by Cranx, 'Augustine's ideas on society'; Folliet, 'La typologie du Sabbat'; Lunau, *Histoire du Salut* 283-356; Ladner, *Reform* 232-36; McGinn, 'Endtime and Eternity', unpub. MS, 18-22.

<sup>69</sup> *De vera rel.* 26.49; see discussion in Cranx, 'Augustine's ideas on society', 350f.

<sup>70</sup> E.g., death in Adam, *Rom* 5:12f.; the promise of redemption to Abraham, 4:1-24; salvation in Christ, prophetically in baptism 5:6-11, 6:5-14; final redemption with Christ's second coming, 8:12-38, 11:25-36, etc. To call this a 'pattern' is to exaggerate Paul's organization. On his argument in Romans, and the ways it contrasts specifically with Augustine's exegesis of it, my essay, 'Paul and Augustine. Conversion narratives, orthodox traditions, and the retrospective self,' *JTS* 37.1 (1986) 3-34, esp. 27ff.

<sup>71</sup> *Exp. Ep. ad Rom.* 13-18 and *passim*, written in 394; E. T.: P. F. Landes, *Augustine on Romans*. Society of Biblical Literature (Chico 1982). The outlines of a four-fold scheme of history appear a few years earlier, in *qu.* 61.7, when Augustine is considering Mt. 14:16; he develops it fully with Romans. See Cranx, 'Augustine's ideas on society', 355; Lunau, *Histoire du Salut* 357-83; Fredriksen, 'Body/Soul', 89-92.

<sup>72</sup> Their striking similarity on this point, expressed through an exegetical concentration on Paul, is one reason I incline toward seeing Tyconian influence in 394, the year in which Augustine produced these commentaries on Romans.

<sup>73</sup> These are: the two commentaries on Romans, *Exp. Ep. Rom.* and the *Inchoata expositio*; *Exp. Ep. Gal.*; *qu.* 66-68 of *De 83 div. qu.*; and finally, capping this period, the *Ad Simpl.* and the *Confessions*.

<sup>74</sup> *Ad Simpl.* I.ii,16, a reference to *Rom* 11:13. I analyze his exegesis and soteriological argument in 'Paul and Augustine', 23-28 and 'Body/Soul', 92-105. His formulation depends upon the development of his idea, when working on these texts, of the *masa damnata*.

<sup>75</sup> On the psychology of delight and the ways that love escapes conscious control as proof that the will is not free, *Ad Simpl.* I.2,13-22; Brown, *Augustine* 154-57; Fredriksen, 'Body/Soul', 97, 103f., 110-12; R. A. Markus, 'Augustine. Human Action: Will and Virtue,' *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, ed. A. H. Armstrong (Cambridge 1970) 380-94.

<sup>76</sup> 'I was blown about by every wind, and You steered my course too hiddenly,' *Conf.* IV.14.23; on his difficult departure from Carthage to Rome, 'Why I left one country and went to the other, You knew, O God, but You did not tell either me or my mother,' V.8.15; on leaving Rome for Milan to assume the municipal professorship of rhetoric, 'I applied for the post with support from men far gone in the follies of the Manichees—the purpose of my journey being to be quit of them, though neither they nor I realized it,' V.13.23; on his efforts to grasp the Platonic arguments on the nature of evil, 'You caressed my head, though I knew it not,' VII.14.20.

<sup>77</sup> See references to Brown, Markus, and Mandouze *supra* n. 34.

<sup>78</sup> See his affirmation of the order of final events, *De civ. Dei* XX.30.

<sup>79</sup> See esp. Markus, *Saeculum* 154-86, on the secularization of history, the Empire, and in a certain sense, the church concomitant with such a view.

<sup>80</sup> True already in 392 when Fortunatus, in the course of their debate, criticized Augustine's views on evil and redemption as androcentric and hence insufficient, *c. Fort.* 21 and 22. Cf. Augustine's comment on Romans 8:8-24: the 'creatura' who groaned for redemption was man himself (*Exp. Prop. Rom.* 53.4). On his creation of the introspective self as his premier theological category, the warrant for which he sees esp. in Paul, Fredriksen, 'Paul and Augustine', 25-28; see also U. Duchrow, 'Der sogenannte psychologische Zeitbegriff Augustins im Verhältnis zur physikalischen und geschichtlichen Zeit,' *ZThK* 3 (1963) 267-88.

<sup>81</sup> On the eschatological spiritual body, e.g., *De gen. ad lit.* XII.7.18; cf. 35.68; *De civ. Dei* XXII.21, where he insists on the corporeality of this spiritual body. North African Christians especially had long been insistent on this point (viz., e.g., Tertullian's *De resurr. mort.*); and this fact may account for the interruption of the debate between Fortunatus and Augustine in 392. Their audience (a mixed group of Catholics and Donatists) protested Fortunatus' 'unreasonableness', says the recording scribe, because 'rationibus potius agi volebant: quia videbant eum non omnia quae in Apostoli codice scripta sunt velle accipere' (*c. Fort.* 19). This popular command of scripture seems most unlikely, especially in light of the fact that Augustine, just prior to this outburst, had explained his reticence to cite Paul's letters in the debate because of the confusion they might elicit in his audience ('ad eas [scripturas] ego descendo, ac nihil praetermittendum esse postulo ne quibusdam capitibus utentes nebulas afferamus eis quibus notae scripturae non sunt'). The crowd reacted vociferously, I think, to the particular Pauline verse that Fortunatus adduced: 'caro et sanguis regnum Dei non possidebunt, neque corruptio incorruptam possidebit.' On the contrast of Paul's meaning in 1 Cor 15:50 to later Christian readings committed to a doctrine of physical resurrection, my essay, 'Vile Bodies: Paul and Augustine on the resurrection of the Flesh,' *Biblical Interpretation in Historical Perspective*, ed. M. Burrows and P. Korem (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, forthcoming 1991).

<sup>82</sup> There had obviously been some debate on the issue, *De civ. Dei* XXII.17. Augustine asserts emphatically, however, that gendered resurrected bodies will not be sexually active; cf. Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* 7.24.

<sup>83</sup> He enjoys defying contemporary science and scientific philosophy, *De civ. Dei* XXII.4-5; 11 (against arguments concerning the weight of the elements); cf. his earlier critique of philosophy's view of the human body, XIII.16-19; on this point, A. Trapè, 'Escatologia e antiplatonismo di Sant'Agostino,' *Augustinianum* 18 (1978) 237-44. For discussion of the theological and philosophical significance of Augustine's views on the body and resurrection, Margaret R. Miles, *Augustine on the Body* (Missoula 1979), esp.

99-125. Medical science fared no better when Augustine had a theological point in view: on this, Elizabeth A. Clark, 'Vitiated seeds and holy vessels, Augustine's Manichaean Past,' *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith. Essays in Late Ancient Christianity* (Queenston: Mellen Press, 1986), 291-349; Peter Brown, 'Sexuality and Society in the Fifth Century A.D.: Augustine and Julian of Eclanum,' *Scritti in onore di Arnaldo Momigliano* (Como 1983), 49-70.

<sup>84</sup> *De civ. Dei* XXII.15, the determination of age based on Christ's at the time of his resurrection; also 19 (people fat in this life will not be fat in the Kingdom) and 20 (amputees will have their limbs restored).

<sup>85</sup> See *supra* nn. 41 and 42.

<sup>86</sup> *Liber genealogus. Chronica Minora* MGH IX, 194 for the year 452 A.D. This text is a pastiche of earlier apocalyptic chronographies, notably those of Augustine's contemporary, Hilarianus [see *supra* n. 33] and the Latin translation of Hippolytus' chronology, as well as Victorinus of Pettau's commentary on Apocalypse. Both chronographies had named 500 A.D. as the end of the sixth age of the world. On this text, Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire* 6:249-53; also Landes, 'Apocalyptic expectations,' 162.

<sup>87</sup> 'Gog et Magog, ut quidam dixerunt Gotos et Mauros, Getas et Massagetas, per quorum saevitiam ipse iam diabolus ecclesiam vastat et tunc amplius persequetur, cessare etiam faciens iuge sacrificium [Dan 11:13]; propter quod ammonet dominus dicens: *venio cito, beatus qui vigilat et servat vestimenta sua ne nudus ambulet* [Apoc 16:15];' *loc. cit.* He almost got Augustine right: 'Gentes quippe istae quas appellat Gog et Magog non sic sunt accipiendae tanquam sint aliqui in aliqua parte terrarum barbari constituti, sive quos quidam suspicantur Getas et Massagetas propter litteras horum nominum primas...' *De civ. Dei* XX.11. See discussion, with respect to Tyconius, in Fredriksen Landes, 'Tyconius,' 67f.; Landes, on the Vandals' stimulation of such interpretations, 'Apocalyptic expectations,' 156-65.

<sup>88</sup> On the false Christ of Bourges, Gregory of Tours, *Hist. Franc.* X.25; on recalculating the year 6000 (a concern of, *inter alia*, Isidore of Seville, Julian of Toledo, Fredegar, Bede, Ademar of Chabannes, and the Carolingian computists), Landes, 'Apocalyptic expectations,' 161-203, with copious references to primary sources: see esp. his graph on 210-11. On the rustici who demand 'quot de ultimo milario saeculi restent anni,' Bede's letter defending his decision to alter traditional computus. *Ep. ad Pleguinem* 14 (in C. W. Jones, *Bede opera de temporibus* (Cambridge 1943) 313); on the effect of prodigies and signs, e.g., the apocalyptic panic in the year 968 induced in the army of Otto I by an eclipse, MGH SS. V. 12; for a similar response to an earthquake in the year 1000, MGH SS. IX: 202.

<sup>89</sup> Henri Destroche, *Dieux d'Hommes. Dictionnaire des Messianismes et Millénarismes de l'Ère Chrétienne* (Paris 1969) is a convenient florilegium; since 1969 the list could be added to. The classic monograph on the late Middle Ages and early modern period is Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (New York 1961). On the modern period, J. F. C. Harrison, *The Second Coming. Popular Millenarianism 1780-1850* (London 1979); for a popular apocalyptic decoding of current events, Hal Lindsey, *Late Great Planet Earth* (Grand Rapids 1970), now in its one hundred and fourth printing. Marxism is a modern secular vision of millenarian bliss; and in this sense, 1848 would be represent for International Labor what 500 A.D. represented for Latin traditions of the year 6000.

<sup>90</sup> To cite one recent striking example: 'Everything is falling into place. It can't be too long now. Ezekiel says that fire and brimstone will be rained upon the enemies of God's

people. That must mean that they'll be destroyed by nuclear weapons. They exist now, and they never did in the past.

Ezekiel tells us that Gog, the nation that will lead all the other powers of darkness against Israel, will come out of the North. Biblical scholars have been saying for generations that Gog must be Russia. What other powerful nation is to the north of Israel? But it didn't seem to make sense before the Russian revolution, when Russia was a Christian country. Now it does, now that Russia has become communistic and atheistic, now that Russia has set itself against God. Now it fits the description of Gog perfectly.' So former president Ronald Reagan, quoted in Martin Gardner, 'Giving God a Hand,' *New York Review of Books*, August 13, 1987, from Grace Haskell, *Prophecy and Politics, Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War* (Laurence Hill 1986).

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