Seeing like a city: a kenarchic theology

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I confirm that the work submitted is my own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

As the world becomes increasingly urban, and the power and importance of cities grows, scant attention has been paid by both political theology and political theory to the politics of urbanism. The hegemonic idea of the liberal democratic nation-state, together with the global order on which it is based, faces multiple threats and crises. 'Seeing like a city' is a radical critique of the hegemony of 'seeing like a state' and reframes the political in the city, within a global cosmopolis of interconnected cities. This thesis develops a political theology of the city as theorised by Henri Lefebvre and by the ensuing 'spatial turn' in urban theory, with a focus on the city as *polis* and not merely a political subsidiary of the nation-state. Most contemporary political theology critiques the nation-state and its relationship with the church, while 'urban theology', for the most part, considers the role and responsibility of the church in the city. In both cases, the influence of Augustinian 'two cities' theology has resulted in a generally negative view of the 'secular city'. The question of how God 'takes place' in the complex spatiality of the secular city logically precedes any discussion of what it then means to be church in the city. Whereas the nation-state is predicated on its political sovereignty, it is argued that the city is inherently resistant to sovereignty and so invites a theological approach which disavows divine, and therefore also human, sovereignty. Kenarchic theology (*keno-arche*) finds common ground with "seeing like a city", and offers an engaged, embedded, and theologically positive hermeneutic and praxis for cities. The thesis concludes that the city is an important and exciting new field for political theology beyond the old accommodations of church and state.

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Abbreviations

CoG City of God by Augustine of Hippo.

Introduction

At the heart of this thesis is the question of what it means to love a city. Globally, most people now live in cities or urban areas and cities are being created and forever recreated, inscribing stories of what it means to be human with our others, whoever they may be, in shared space, in urban culture, and in the built environment. Cities are made by people but in turn shape human-being-in-relation. There is a rich and varied terrain of discourse making meaning of the city, from which *political* theology has been largely absent. I will be traversing this terrain looking for theological tools old and new to navigate the city, and to support faithful engagement in the shared *oeuvre* of city-making. Such a theology can only ever be provisional because each city is unique, alive, and changing and in the city (as Aristotle said) there is always the possibility of encounter with the Other.

Human being is increasingly urban. We make cities and they, in turn, shape our lives for good or ill. It matters that we learn how to make cities that are good for humans and for the more than human world. This is where we need to rediscover politics as city-making. More than 55% of the world's population now live in urban areas and this is expected to rise to 68% by 2050.[1] Power, as well as population, is increasingly concentrated in cities; the UN-Habitat World Cities Report 2016 identifies decentralisation of power to cities as one of eight key global trends:

> As cities grow, and spread out over the land, they have been the recipients of a worldwide trend to devolve power from the national to the local level…the fact

[1] United Nations. 2019. *68% of the world population projected to live in urban areas by 2050, says UN.* [Online]. [Accessed 03 June 2019]. Available from https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/2018-revision-of-world-urbanization-prospects.html

> that so many states have chosen to move along the path of decentralization constitutes a remarkable phenomenon.[2]

The United Kingdom remains one of the most centralised and centralising states in the Western world, with local municipal authorities having lost powers to the centre, along with substantial cuts in revenue, since 2010.[3] Nevertheless, here, too, the creation of elected mayors of regions and cities and demands for more local and regional autonomy point to the same devolutionary trend.

At the same time as cities are on the rise, many observers consider that the modern liberal democratic nation-state faces existential crisis. Zygmunt Bauman, for example, says:

> The old order founded until recently on a (…) 'triune' principle of territory, state, and nation as the key to the planetary distribution of sovereignty, and on power wedded seemingly forever to the politics of the territorial nation-state as its sole operating agency, is by now dying (Bauman, 2009, p.2).

This divorce between power and politics has resulted in a loss of popular trust in governments, a simultaneous resurgence in nationalism, and a reassertion of state sovereignty. This state of affairs is preventing the kind of cooperation needed for the various and grave global crises we face.

The Bible starts with a garden and ends with a city. Along the way, the loss of innocence, alienation, and hubris is often told via the stories of cities, but the consummation of the story of redemption, of God and humankind reconciled, is a city, a new Jerusalem. Cities are both the medium in which we

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[2] United Nations Human Settlements Programme. 2016. *Urbanization and Development: Emerging Futures. World Cities Report 2016*, p.10.

[3] IPPR. 2019. *Decentralising Britain – the 'big push' towards inclusive prosperity.* [Online]. [Accessed 18 November 2019]. Available from: https://ippr-org.files.svdcdn.com/production/Downloads/decentralising-britain-july19.pdf

work out our collective human being in the image of God, and the *telos*. My goal is to analyse the city theologically and to explicate the relationship between human and divine activity that makes for a good city.

Overview of research topic

The political hegemony of the nation-state means that we normally think about politics within the framework of supposedly sovereign states, and about cities as politically inferior to, subordinate to, and limited by the state. Yet the modern nation-state is of comparatively recent origin – the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 saw the transfer of sovereignty from the Holy Roman Empire to its fledgling nation-states, but it was only in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that the principle of what U.S. President Woodrow Wilson termed "national self-determination" was universally accepted, to the exclusion of all alternatives. In contrast, as the historian of the city Lewis Mumford says, "at the dawn of history, the city is already in a mature form" (Mumford, 1961, pp.3-4). Moreover, the modern idea of politics was birthed in the city, the classical Greek *polis.* Given the political hegemony of states it is not surprising that political theorists and political theologians alike have given scant regard to the city as *polis.* Seeing the city as *polis* challenges this hegemony and disrupts the political imaginary on which it depends. More importantly, it offers the possibility of restoring what Bauman calls "the commensurability of power and politics" (Bauman, 2009, p.6).

Cities do not yield to simple definition. Mumford says: "Since it has taken more than five thousand years to arrive at even a partial understanding of the city's nature and drama, it may require an even longer period to exhaust the city's still unrealised potentialities" (Mumford, 1961, pp.3-4). Consequently, as urban geographer Ed Soja says:

> [the field of urban studies] has never been so robust, so expansive in the number of subject areas and scholarly disciplines involved with the study

> of cities, so permeated by new ideas and approaches, so attuned to the major political and economic events of our times, and so theoretically and methodologically unsettled (Soja, 2000, xii).

Within this field, I focus my theological enquiry on what has been described since the 1990s as the 'spatial turn' in urban studies, following the seminal work of Henri Lefebvre (1991), who theorised the city as complex political space. This complex political space is in contrast to, and resistant to, the 'simple' political space of Bauman's "triune principle of territory, state, and nation" by which the nation-state is sovereign over its defined territory.

A further contrast is made between the political imaginary of the nation-state which depends on a mythic territorial sovereignty, and cities which need make no claim to sovereignty and are inherently (and often historically) resistant to it. The Canadian urban political thinker Warren Magnusson contrasts two ways of seeing the world: "seeing like a city" or "seeing like a state" (borrowing the latter term from James Scott (1998)). He says: "in principle, the city was a form of order resistant to and/or subversive of sovereignty. To see the city so is to recognise that it is not a miniature state, but rather an order of an entirely different type" (Magnusson, 2011, pp.117-118). He argues that the world, despite the apparent global 'order' of sovereign states, in practice is more akin to the relative anarchy of cities in how it actually functions. As a result, in seeing the world more "like a city" we can see the city, any city, as a node or fractal of a global cosmopolis, rather than as a minor subsidiary of the state within a global collection of states.

The city, as a different order of *polis* and in all its complex, granular *cityness,* calls for a different kind of political theology from that which concerns itself with critiquing the secular state as normative political space and its various accommodations with the church. Because I am proposing a

reframing of politics by the city as *polis*, I situate my research within the field of *political* theology but also as a challenge to many of its statist assumptions. Likewise, I distinguish my project from the kind of '*urban* theology' which considers the relationship of the church and its mission to the city but does not engage theologically with the nature of the city as *polis*. Accordingly, my focus will be on the city, deferring any consideration of how we might understand the church in the city until after I have developed a theological hermeneutic for the spatially complex city. This is also necessary because the historical developments of church and nation-state are so closely imbricated that I do not presume to know what church might mean when "seeing like a city".

My thesis aim, then, is to develop a political theology of cities. Political theology not only analyses and criticises politics from "the perspective of differing interpretations of God's ways with the world" (Scott and Cavanaugh, 2004, p.1) but also enables Christians to develop a more faithful political imaginary in symbiotic dialogue with various non-confessional and confessional schools of theology, philosophy, critical social theory, and political thought in other religious traditions (Bretherton, 2019, pp.23, 29). Dialogue with and between confessional (explicitly Christian) and non-confessional thinkers is inherent to my kenarchic (see below) method of doing theology, learning from both and being cautious to not overly categorise them as such too soon.[4] My two starting points in this dialogue are: i) the spatial complexity of cities and ii) their latent potential for non-sovereigntist ways of being political. As to the first, in a post-Christendom and post-secular context, neo-Augustinian theology likewise finds hope in complex political space for a more faithful political imaginary. Augustine of Hippo's construal of two cities in his *City of God*, written in the early fifth century to deconstruct the conflation of religion with the Roman empire, describes two contemporaneous citizenships pertaining to the *saeculum* (the era between the first and second comings of Christ):

[4] For example, Hannah Arendt, who is a key political theorist for my thesis, is a non-confessional thinker but from her familiarity with Augustine of Hippo clearly understands theological thought.

those of the 'earthly city' and of the 'city of God'. My second starting point provides fruitful ground for a discussion and application of kenarchic theology to the politics of cities. Whereas, in the modern era, state sovereignty derived legitimation from the doctrine of God's sovereignty, 'kenarchy'—a neologism coined by Roger Mitchell (2011)—is a political imaginary (*arche*) rooted in the *kenosis* (self-emptying) of God. Jesus Christ's kenosis empties out sovereignty and invites a faithful political imaginary grounded in love. This thesis develops the new field of kenarchic political theology by showing its peculiar applicability to cities.

The Bible, of course, is replete with stories of cities, good, bad, and mythic. The biblical prophets do not give up on the city—the city is spoken to, warned, and wooed—and some of the Bible's most beautiful passages speak of God's love for sinning and sinned against cities.[5] Cities—and the wisdom to be found within them—are represented as feminine and the fulfilment of atonement is the city as the bride.[6] There is danger and a pitfall in a dualistic reading, either of Augustine's two cities, or of Jerusalem and Babylon, as archetypical of all cities. For example, Gillian Rose warns against the temptation and danger of escaping the worldly city to construct our own new Jerusalems, blind to the Babylons we carry within,[7] whereas Jacques Ellul, in alarmingly misogynistic and patriarchal language, sees nothing good in the human work of making cities.[8] Ellul exemplifies an Augustinian

[5] "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who have been sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her young under her wings, and you were unwilling!" (Luke 13:34). **"**When He approached Jerusalem*,* he saw the city and wept over it" (Luke 19:41). Jesus' lament over the city echoes the many poetic passages in Isaiah about Jerusalem, e.g., Isaiah 49:14-23; 51:3; 52:1-2; 54:1-17; 62:1-12.

[6] There are several references in which cities and nations as addressed as "daughter", e.g., Babylon (Isaiah 47:1); Egypt (Jeremiah 46:11); Zion (Isaiah 2:13). The new Jerusalem is the "bride" of the Lamb (Revelation 21:2,9). Proverbs 8 and 9 are about the female person of wisdom to be found in the city.

[7] Rose, 1996, pp.15-39.

[8] "The city cannot be reformed. Neither can she become other than what men have made of her. Nor can she escape God's condemnation of her. Thus, in spite of all those who have tried to make the cities more human … they are all cities of death, made of dead things, condemned to death and nothing can alter this fact" (Ellul, 1997, p.57). "The city as an expression of the spirit of power*, herself* a material and spiritual power, is vanquished and convicted only by a manifestation of power. The human word has no way of coming to grips with *her*. It cannot penetrate the city, which as we have said, is the place of confusion, the place of mutual incomprehension, the place of spiritual separation. The city cannot understand words, and Jesus speaks to *her*

theology that, to the extent it does engage with the city at all, does so negatively reserving eschatological hope to the church (Ellul, 1997, pp.57,118-119).

Much of the neo-Augustinian political theology I will refer to, having criticised the secularising nation-state with its unitary and 'simple' political space, presents the church as the true public/political space but in a way that may not be justified by Augustine himself.[9] It does not envisage another polity beyond the state and so still does its political ecclesiology 'seeing like a state'. Harvey Cox takes a very different line in his hugely influential *The Secular City,* first published in 1965. Refusing the secular-sacred dualism, he sees God taking place in the secular city, in its politics and history (Cox, 2013, p.57). Seeing how God takes place in the city (when seen 'like a city') logically precedes a discussion of what this means for being church in and for the city. I approach the city with Augustinian realism concerning the reality of corporate sin but positively in regard to the potential it holds for kenarchic politics.

Contribution

Perhaps due to the mostly negative view theology has had of cities and how urban theology foregrounds the church as the answer to the city's problems, there is a scarcity of political theology concerning cities per se and so scant engagement with the burgeoning cross-disciplinary discourse to which Soja refers. Sigurd Bergmann, regarding this as a "fatal lack", recognises the complexity of the discourse with which I bring theology into dialogue:

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only to curse *her*. (…) Here the Spirit manifests *himself* clearly, brutally, one might say. And no less is needed to speak to the city; for as both a spiritual and material power, *she* can be dominated only by a power which expresses itself by both material and spiritual means, and both at the same time" (pp.118-119, emphasis mine).

[9] Al Barrett calls these "ecclesial political theologies" (Barrett, 2017, p.15).

> One should not criticise the eclectic character of approaches like this, but evaluate them instead as a natural consequence when theologians realise their intention to enter an already complex discourse. The complexity of discourses on space, place and built environments on the one hand and the fatal lack of reflecting on these topics in traditional theology represents an obstacle so difficult that it might prevent weaker souls from dealing with these issues (Bergmann, 2007, p.363).

My methodology in the thesis, and in the praxis which it entails, is dialogical and so it is my hope that, beyond the academy, it will enable faith-full engagement by Christians with their others—whoever they may be—in the shared work (*oeuvre*) of making good cities.

Christopher Baker and Justin Beaumont identify the need for a post-secular analysis of cities using analytical tools not "secularly inflected" that offer "new ways of seeing what until now we have been looking at but not really SEEING" (Beaumont and Baker, 2011, p.265). Like them, I consider the categorisations of secularity to be "representations of space" based on "a concept derived from Western, post-Enlightenment debates" (p.265), and as my concern is with "spaces of representation" (Lefebvre's terms, 1991) I do not much engage with post-secular discourse. However, the hermeneutical tools I offer in Chapters 4 and 5 for reading the city theologically—eschatological, ecclesiological, and pneumatological—perhaps go some way towards meeting the need that Beaumont and Baker identify. Seeing like a city offers both challenges and exciting possibilities for political theology.

Beyond the field of scholarship, the fact that most of the global population now live in urban areas is reason enough for theologians to be giving thought to cities. Andrew Davey, like Bergmann

(above) warns that our failure to engage theologically with the lived reality of urban life, "may mean that we have contributed intentionally or unintentionally to the fragmentation and deterioration of community life in our towns and cities" (Davey, 2003, p.94). It is precisely the reality of urban life, or *cityness,* that "seeing like a city" (Magnusson, 2011; Amin and Thrift, 2017) and Lefebvre's "spaces of representation" engage with. My project addresses two major features of urban life—poverty and inequality, and demographic diversity—and identifies them not as problems to be managed or solved but as starting points for a new kind of politics as city-making.

My interest in the topic

I write in and from Leeds with a love and concern for the city that it might be good for all who live and work here. The faith I came to here, within a Pentecostal/Charismatic tradition, I have since worked out in a variety of roles, most of them concerned with social and racial justice: in social housing, as a Legal Aid solicitor, as a lay pastor, and latterly co-leading a Leeds-based charity, Together for Peace. This experience of the city has provoked my need to understand and engage with the city theologically beyond the normal parameters of urban mission. I have intentionally (and with a sense of calling) not been involved with a church congregation for a long time and this informs my search for a theology of the city that does not see the city through the lens of the church and its mission. At a time when many people are leaving church, I hope that this thesis may enable some to find new ways of faithful service to their own cities beyond the church.

Research objectives

My objectives for this research are to theologise the city and to critique existing political structures in dialogue with other disciplines' understandings of the city. Within a Lefebvrian spatial analysis of the city, my focus will be on the third of his trialectical spaces, the "space of representation" where, he says, the new humanity and the new city come into being. Here, I aim to develop a triadic

kenarchic hermeneutic for reading this space and for engaging in it. Throughout, I will test my hypothesis: that because the city is a polity resistant to and not reliant on sovereignty, it is uniquely amenable to kenarchic critique and praxis.

Chapter overview

In Chapter 1, I frame a political theology in the city in conversation with a growing body of scholarship on the city. I define my terms of what I mean when I say "city" – e.g., *civitas*/*urbs*, *ville*/*cité*, 'the city'/cities. I also distinguish my project from urban theology which is about the church in relation to the city, makes normative assumptions about each, and replicates the frame of statist political theology. Because my project is to develop a theology of cities *per se* I defer the question of what that may mean for the church to the last chapter. I trace the development of modern theories of the city— sociological, political, and philosophical—and follow a particular line of political theory stemming from Henri Lefebvre's spatial theorisation to the idea of seeing like a city, which carries an implicit and radical critique of the nation-state. I claim for the city a quasi-autonomous existence which is not totally subsumed by the state nor by neo-liberal, globalised capitalism. This way of seeing prioritises the kind of *polis* that the city is and so relativises the *polis* of the state, returning politics to where it began. I compare this with a neo-Augustinian critique of the secularising state, and particularly that of the Radical Orthodox and post-liberals, with which I largely concur. Augustine's disparagement of the "city of earth", however, carries through into a negative theological view of cities generally, so that these political theologians abandon, with the state, any other polity (including the city) beyond the church. Harvey Cox's *The Secular City,* published in 1965, was a radical reappraisal of the city as the arena of God's activity in the world.

In Chapter 2, I set out my kenarchic approach, which is a radical Christological critique of sovereignty, divine and political. Jesus, in the power of the exception (Schmitt, 1996; Agamben, 1998), empties out sovereignty. This approach is in sympathy with Augustine with respect to the political, and antithetical to him regarding the divine. Kenarchic theology rebuts sovereigntist ways of seeing and views the city from the position of the 'least and the last', and from an ineradicable particularity. This requires not only a political theology of kenosis but a kenotic way of doing theology and, by implication, a kenosis of the church from which theology is done. It is a theology that resonates with the political of cities and its complexity. The modern nation-state is predicated on sovereignty, whereas a long tradition of political theory holds that cities are not. I argue that the task of political theology is to support the city to resist and subvert all forms of sovereignty and so to become more true and more faithful to its creaturely nature as the teleological expression of corporate humanity in the image of God.

In Chapter 3, following the Augustinian thread, I rehearse some of the arguments of Radical Orthodoxy for complex political space (e.g., Cavanaugh, Ward, Milbank). Whereas Augustinian complex space is inassimilable to sovereignty, Thomist complex space is predicated on it, but then limits its unavoidably sinful exercise by subsidiarity. In much of the chapter, I set out the elements of Lefebvre's spatial analysis of cities that are relevant to my thesis. Lefebvre is a seminal thinker who has informed a considerable body of scholarship but, even though his analysis is of cities, such theological engagement as there has been with his thought has not been concerned with the political of cities. Of particular relevance to my thesis, because cities are increasingly 'super-diverse', is the emphasis Lefebvre places on the city space that comes into being in the encounter with the Other, the humanising encounter across difference giving rise to a *polis* of radical democracy. Given the church's historic participation in the production of dominant space, I question how far the

church is able to participate in such an encounter without its own kenosis. This is illustrated in Cavanaugh's reflection on a dialogue between Stanley Hauerwas and Romand Coles to which I return in the final chapter.

Having defined where I focus my theological critique within the field of urban studies and set out my theological approach, in Chapter 4 I develop my political theology that engages with "seeing like a city" and with Lefebvrian spatiality. Drawing on three confessional thinkers, Vítor Westhelle, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, and Nimi Wariboko, I employ a 'triadic' hermeneutic to read how God 'takes place' in the 'secular city': eschatologically (Westhelle, 2012), ekklesiologically (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2007), and pneumatologically (Wariboko, 2014). Each of these contains elements of the other two and together they can be viewed as if in perichoretic relationship to each other and within cityspace. Each redresses the dominance of temporal eschatology with a spatial eschatology and together they offer resources for a liberation theology for cities. The question of 'church' in the city remains deferred to the final chapter.

In Chapter 5 I consider friendship as the quality of relationality on which my three hermeneutical lenses are contingent. I propose a theology of kenarchic friendship that is a creaturely good and an essential element of corporate or collective humanity-in-relation in the image of God. From John 15, I argue that in the new creation friendship is the kenarchic relationality that 'empties out' relations founded in sovereignty, and that friendship love need not be a lesser love than *agape*. "Friendship as established by Jesus" (De Graaff, 2014, p.201) affirms the classical idea of political friendship as the condition precedent for the city to come into being *and* redeems it from its ideal and from its historical development. A growing body of current non-confessional scholarship on the politics of

friendship reflects the contemporary weakening of such relational bonds as hold in place the *polis* of the nation-state, but there is little (perhaps none) of this scholarship that looks to the city for its recovery. With Wariboko, I ask how a city can "promote rhizomatic networks of friendships" (Wariboko, 2014, pp.38, 119) and suggest the peace of the city is contingent on a kenarchic quality of friendship.

Because my theology is of the city per se, I have deferred the discussion of the church in the city until Chapter 6, where, having developed theological sight of the city, I address the question of what this might mean for the church. I argue that the church must undergo its own kenosis if it is to fulfil its vocation to hold open kenarchic space in the city, a space for the poor and the Other to appear. If the church can give itself away in radical democratic encounter it can do the "ekklesial work" (Carbine, 2006) of becoming a co-producer of radical democratic space in which the poor and the stranger can fully appear. In the "Charismatic City" (Wariboko, 2014) the confessional church (ekklesia) is to discern the Spirit's work and promote life by the Spirit and not by law. 'Seeing the church like a city' is to see the church as in and amongst, betwixt and between, plastic not elastic, mycelial. In the second part of the chapter, I apply my hermeneutic to the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission as an example of how this theology and practice cohere.

Chapter 1: The city – meanings in contention

Introduction

As cities have grown in number, power, and political importance, so the field of urban studies has expanded and diversified. *Political* theology has been largely absent from this discursive field. I adopt Luke Bretherton's approach to political theology as "a shared terrain across which there are multiple pathways" on which we encounter various schools of theology, philosophy, critical social theory, and political thought, both confessional and not (Bretherton, 2019, p.29). In this chapter I set out the features of this discursive terrain which are important for my project, and which will mark the path I take, beginning with urban theory and then finding points of dialogic connection with political theologies. I start this project with some tacit or more fully-formed hunches: that the city is worth this work (because I love my city); that politics is how we all make a good city (*polis*) that is good for all (a eu-topia); that sovereignty has no place in the human or divine horizon; and that God takes place in the city amongst us, particularly amongst the poor and the stranger. How I choose my path through the discursive terrain is, of course, influenced by these hunches.

A preliminary question that is fundamental to this thesis—a political theology of cities—is the extent to which a city can be differentiated from its wider political, economic, and social context to make it worthy of study as a *polis* or polity. In Part 1, I trace developments in European and North American urban theory of the 20th and 21st centuries to see how it has defined the city and answered this question. Most of this urban theory is sociological by discipline and not political. Whether or not cities have any meaningful *political* existence and agency independent of the state and globalising capitalism was and remains contested. This was the subject of a fundamental disagreement between leading thinkers, Manuel Castells and Henri Lefebvre. The spatial turn in urban theory that stemmed from Lefebvre's groundbreaking spatial analysis of the city (which I explore in detail in Chapter 3) does not deny the influence and impact of forces from outside the city but maintains that the

complex space of the city is inherently resistant to the sovereignties of states and markets and offers the potential for new humanising political space to come into being. I explore how urban geographer Ed Soja and political urban theorist Warren Magnusson each develop Lefebvre's analysis. Magnusson, who is an important thinker for my project, sees politics locally and globally through the lens of the city as *polis* for which he coins the term "seeing like a city" (Magnusson, 2011). Seeing like a city is an implicit criticism of seeing like a state and, with the aim of clearing the way to see like a city, Part 1 ends with Simon Critchley's and Benedict Anderson's radical critiques of the nation-state.

In Part 2, I identify how more explicitly theological routes through the terrain connect and intersect with the urban theory of Part 1 making meaningful inter-disciplinary dialogue possible. I begin with those that have their source in Augustine and Aquinas, who both, in very different ways, complexify political space. I begin with Augustine's archetypal two cities. William Cavanaugh's neo-Augustinian Radical Orthodox political theology demythologises, or desacralises, the nation-state in a way that closely corresponds with the theorists in Part 1 but for different reasons; whereas city theorists like Magnusson say the nation-state is a negation of the *polis* which belongs in the city, Radical Orthodoxy posits the church as the truly public and political space.

At this point, partly for chronological reasons and partly to explain why I will take a path that is more Augustinian than Thomist, I acknowledge how Thomist political theology offers a more positive view of the city and of human politics generally than Augustine, and how Thomist Catholic Social Teaching on subsidiarity offers a way of seeing cities as part of a larger whole.[10] I depart from Aquinas, where

[10] "Subsidiarity is the coordination of society's activities in a way that supports the internal life of the local communities". Benedict XVI, 2008. *Address to the participants in the 14th Session of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences* [Online]. [Accessed 28 July 2023]. Available from: https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2008/may/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20080503_social-sciences.html

he sees the city (and other intermediate societal forms) as subsidiary to a monarchical political order, for reasons that will become clear in the next chapter where I criticise notions of the political that are grounded in sovereignty.

I return to Augustine with Graham Ward who applies a Radical Orthodox hermeneutic to the city, much as Cavanaugh does to the state, identifying it with the hubristic and idolatrous secular city. This not untypical Augustinian verdict on the politics of the human city may explain both *urban* theology's treatment of the city as the object of the church's mission, and the lack of *political* theology's engagement with the city per se. In subsequent chapters I will argue that this verdict, and Radical Orthodoxy's conflation of the church with the city of God, may not be wholly consistent with Augustine himself. With Dylan Nickelson, I question the very idea of the secular with which Radical Orthodoxy is concerned, and, with Harvey Cox, I take a radical departure from this prevalent, negative Augustinian approach to the city. Cox's positive approach to the city and its politics, insisting that the secular city is fully part of God's design for humankind, is consistent with mine. Nevertheless, in how Augustine enables a clearsighted view of the politics of domination and self-interest *and* of the possibility of alternative political space, my thesis remains broadly but not uncritically Augustinian.

Why cities?

I referred in the introductory chapter to the rapid global shift of population to urban living and the remarkable trend, identified by the United Nations, for powers to be devolved from the national to the local level. Even in the overly centralised UK, the devolution of prescribed government to its constituent member nations, and the creation of elected mayors of cities and regions along with devolved powers and budgets, reflect this same trend and a growing political recognition of the

limitations of centralised decision making and of the need for more local forms of leadership and democratic engagement and accountability.[11]

Regardless of national governments' intent, cities individually and together are beginning to find and flex their political power. This kind of collaboration is not merely self-interested and concerned only with local issues. Cities, for example, have been much quicker than national governments to declare 'climate emergencies' and to experiment with new democratic forms like citizens' juries to decide what action should be taken in response. In the United States, in defiance of Presidential and Federal policy under the Trump administration, Sanctuary Cities asserted their right to welcome immigrants, and Mayors of several cities affirmed their commitment to the 2016 Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The New Municipalism movement is giving shape and rationale to a movement for more autonomy for cities vis-à-vis states and for citizens of cities to have more power over the issues that concern them. The Global Parliament of Mayors, founded by political theorist Benjamin Barber, held its inaugural assembly in 2016.[12] Barber points to the proliferation of cooperative and cross-border initiatives between cities (Barber, 2013, pp.106-144) as evidence showing they are more adept at global collaboration than cities:

> It is a most remarkable political conundrum that the unique power held by sovereign states actually disempowers them from cross-border cooperation,

[11] The Labour Party commissioned a report recommending further devolution which the Party Leader, Keir Starmer, said proposed "the biggest ever transfer of political power out of Westminster and into the towns, cities, and nations of the UK". Labour Party. 2022. *A New Britain: renewing our democracy and rebuilding our economy.* [Online]. [Accessed 02 August 2023]. Available from: https://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Commission-on-the-UKs-Future.pdf

[12] "The Global Parliament of Mayors is a governance body of, by and for mayors from all continents. It builds on the experience, expertise, and leadership of mayors in tackling local challenges resulting from global problems. At the same time, it brings local knowledge to the table and thus participates actively in global strategy debates and underscores the need for practical, action-oriented solutions." Global Parliament of Mayors. 2019. [Online]. [Accessed 12 June 2019]. Available from: https://globalparliamentofmayors.org/

> while the corresponding powerlessness of cities facilitates such cooperation (p.139).

My own city, Leeds, is a founder member of the UK's Core Cities group that came together in 1995 to advocate for greater decentralisation. It is a member of the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities initiative, along with 141 member cities in Europe and beyond, committed to seeing diversity as an advantage rather than a challenge.[13] And it is one of over 900 cities globally signed up to the Race to Zero commitment to halving global emissions by 2030.[14]

Important though the political agency of cities and their citizens is in existent national and international political institutions, in this project I focus on an inherent political dimension to cities and their citizens that is not delegated by, or sublimated into, the state. The extent to which cities have political identity and agency independent of the state, finance markets, and capitalism more generally, has been and remains a contested question amongst theorists. In their focus on the polity of the nation-state, political theory and political theology alike have tended to overlook the city as *polis*. This neglect in itself shows the historical capture of 'politics' by the state as the political importance of cities came to be eclipsed and negated by the rise of the modern, post-Westphalian[15] nation-state.

How we understand politics and 'the political', even our conception of the world and of our place in it, is determined by what we understand to be the *polis* (and vice-versa). Warren Magnusson, with

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[13] Council of Europe. 2023. *Intercultural Cities Programme*. [Online]. [Accessed 15 June 2023]. Available from: https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/home

[14] UNFCCC. 2023. *Race to Zero*. [Online]. [Accessed 02 August 2023]. Available from: https://racetozero.unfccc.int/system/race-to-zero/

[15] The Peace of Westphalia, 1648, brought to an end the Thirty Years War and laid foundations for the principle of state sovereignty. It affirmed the Peace of Augsburg 1555 which recognised the right of each ruler to determine the official religion of the state (*cuius regio, eius religio*).

a particular interest in the urban and the local as sites of politics and governmentality, challenges the hegemonic idea of the state as *polis*. He says "the dominant ontology of the political suggests that attention must be focused on the sovereign authority" which means the (supposedly) sovereign state. Academic disciplines are then differentiated accordingly as, "the state on the one hand and culture, economy, environment, and society on the other hand". The city, with its culture, environment, and so on, is then "a domain apart from the one that is always constituted as political'" (Magnusson, 2011, pp.34-35). The political is always thought of with reference to sovereignty and therefore with rule. The effect of thinking like this, of seeing like a state, is to depoliticise all those aspects of city life in which "people are already engaged in making their lives work, under conditions in which they are thrown together by their own aspirations or by the immediate necessities of life". Mostly people in cities find ways of making self-government work without recourse to "rule":

> To understand things politically is to focus on what we do, how we think, and interact with one another without assuming *either* that how we are ruled is the central issue *or* that how we act is predetermined by processes that unfold behind our backs. The focus is on human agency and purposive activity (p.35).

Magnusson, as we shall see, is not alone amongst urban theorists in his criticism of the dominant statist ontology of the political. To recover the city as *polis* is to negate its negation by the state.[16] To put it more strongly, the hegemonic idea of the nation-state as *the* normative *polis* has deprived the city as *polis* of its inherent political agency, and city citizens of theirs.[17] The ideas of the

[16] We are used to seeing like a state, says Magnusson, because *polis* came to be translated as 'state', that is, as a rational order free of religious and tribal traditions: "To see the *polis* in this way is to obscure its character as a city, however" (Magnusson, 2011, p.117). To negate the negation (in relation to this thesis) is to first negate the state as normative *polis* and then, in the second negation, to recognise the captivity and distortion of the true potential of the *polis* as radical democracy and so to restore it to where it properly belongs, to the city. ''The negation of the negation is the real return of the human being to herself, the 'freedom of freedom' if you will and thus the ultimate humanism" (Pomeroy, 2004, p.7).

[17] Simone Weil mourns the effects of such a negation in the migration of the *polis* from city to nation: "Every human being has at his [sic] roots here below a certain terrestrial poetry, a reflection of the heavenly glory, the

dominant became the dominant idea, so that we all ended up seeing like a state. To the extent that political theory and theology do the same, they are political disciplines. In this light, Lefebvre's insistence on reinstating politics in the city can be seen as revolutionary.

Part 1: the terrain

What do we mean when we say 'city'?

When I say 'cities' and 'the city' they carry different but overlapping meanings. By cities, I mean the irreducible particularity and granularity of each and every city which defy objective and 'one size fits all' analysis and theorisation.[18] 'Cities', I will argue, call for an epistemological kenosis (a letting go of what we think we know) and a kenotically incarnational (experiential and relational) mode of political theology, which is able to work with *haecceity* or the scandal of particularity. Despite this, it is possible to identify and theorise sufficient commonalities, and to posit and analyse those shared features that make an urban settlement into a city, to enable us to speak meaningfully of 'the city'. Magnusson warns of the risk when speaking of 'the city', and especially of the city as *polis*, of losing the cityness of cities and falling into the ancient Greek disparagement of particularity in the search for the universal and conceptual which infects the classical idea of *polis:* "Plato and Aristotle, the most influential of the Greek thinkers, were not comfortable with the cityness of the *polis*. They feared its disorder, its openness, its variety, and its multiplicity of contending

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link, of which he is more or less vaguely conscious, with his universal country. Affliction is the tearing up of these roots. Human cities in particular, each one more or less according to its degree of perfection, surround the life of their inhabitants with poetry. They are images and reflections of the city of the world. Actually, the more they have the form of a nation, the more they claim to be countries themselves, the more distorted and soiled they are as images. But to destroy cities, either materially or morally, or to exclude human beings from a city, thrusting them down to the state of social outcasts, this is to sever every bond of poetry and love between human beings and the universe" (Weil, 1974, pp.134-135).

[18] Amin & Thrift, 2017, pp.4-5, 30. Likewise Magnusson criticises political theory as: "an implicitly sovereigntist political imaginary which puts the [*political*] theorist at a distance from the world, issuing instructions to it like a would-be king or president (…) realistic political theory must instead be developed *in situ*, attuned to the complexities of a world that we cannot control as sovereigns. That world is urban, whatever else it is" (Magnusson 2011, p. 15).

authorities" (p.117). 'The city' is, amongst other things, an unfolding discourse with which political theology must be in dialogue.

Cities exist *and* we invest them with meaning. Richard Sennett makes a distinction between *ville*, meaning the built environment, and *cité,* "a mentality compiled from perceptions, behaviours and beliefs". These two ways of seeing the city, he says, are the long echo of Augustine's two cities (Sennett, 2018, p.1). Lewis Mumford begins his magisterial work on the history of the city saying that the city emerges at the dawn of history already invested with meanings in play with other meanings (Mumford, 1961, pp.3-4). And Graham Ward's neo-Augustinian trilogy on the city maps theological meaning onto, and against, postmodern, post-secular, neo-liberal, and globalised meanings of the 21st century city (Ward, 2000, 2005, 2009). We enter the city with questions.

Theorising the city sociologically

In considering the meaning of 'city', I pose three further questions. Whether the city can be sufficiently differentiated from its wider socio-economic context and so be worthy of study, is a fundamental question and of relatively recent origin. Then, can the city be differentiated politically from the polity of the state? Third, what does it mean to think of the city spatially?

Despite cities emerging from pre-history in an already developed form (Mumford, 1964, pp.3-4),[19] the assumption from Aristotle onwards was that the city was the image, albeit intensified, of society at large. The massive expansion of cities caused by the industrial revolution required

[19] "Since it has taken more than five thousand years to arrive at even a partial understanding of the city's nature and drama, it may require an even longer period to exhaust the city's still unrealized potentialities. At the dawn of history, the city is already a mature form" (Mumford, 1961, pp.3-4).

attention be given to the new problems and challenges that were urban in nature, but still, says Sennett:

> holding sway over all these particular discussions and experiments was what Karl Polanyi has called the "grand idea" of the 19th century intellectuals, that all these urban traits could be related in one way or another to society as a huge marketplace in which individuals or groups struggled with each other for gain. This system, generating the social conditions of cities, was thought to be perfectly clear as an idea (Sennett, 1969, p.4).

Following the rapid growth of urban populations in the mid-19th century, due to industrialisation, this somewhat mechanistic understanding of the relationship between the city and the market began to be challenged by the modern discipline of urban studies that began in the early 20th century with Max Weber (p.5).

Weber contended that cities do have instrumentality and thus positive and creative potential towards social individuality and innovation (p.6). Although he considered the modern industrial city to be a retrograde development, he nevertheless believed this potentiality to be of the essence of the city, on the evidence of its historical development. Whilst he and other German sociologists, Georg Simmel and Oswald Spangler, considered the city as a whole, and its impact on urban life, Sennett says (p.12):

> the Chicago School set out in an opposite way to deal with the city: they asked questions about the internal character of the city, about how the different parts of the city functioned in relation to each other, about the different kinds of experience to be had within the same city at the same point in time.

The founder of the Chicago School, Robert Park, who studied in Heidelberg under Simmel, speaks of the symbiosis between physical and organisational structures of the city and the emotional human experience of city dwellers in what he calls the ecology of the city. The city is both the product and adumbration of the culture and ethics of its citizens, and so has an organic character unique to itself: "The city possesses a moral as well as a physical organisation, and these two mutually interact in characteristic ways to mould and modify one another" (Park, 1969, p.93).

Louis Wirth, another urbanist and sociologist of the Chicago School, writing in the 1930s, coined the phrase "urbanism as a way of life" to describe the all-pervasive influence of urban life and culture even beyond urban areas. He defined the city as: "a relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals" (Wirth, 1969, p.148). These three variables of his definition— numbers, density, and heterogeneity— are symbiotic and account for the characteristics of urban life and for the differences between cities (p.158). Wirth is concerned not with the number of inhabitants per se but with the *effect* of the greater numbers on urban life in producing greater differentiation and therefore a weakening of the social bonds that exist in rural life. He thinks this results in: segmentalisation of roles; competition requiring regulation; the loss of a sense of participation and its resulting *anomie* and specialisation, wherein group interests are asserted through representation. The effect of density of numbers in a constant space, he argues, is diversification and complexity and so formal controls are required to bring order. Diversity in the city means that some modes of life may be mutually incompatible and antagonistic, and so persons of homogeneous status and similar needs unwittingly drift into, consciously select, or are forced by circumstances into the same area. As the different parts of the city acquire specialised functions, he says the city consequently comes to resemble a mosaic of social worlds in which the transition from one to the other is abrupt. (p.155). Wirth observed the tendency of this juxtaposition of divergent personalities and modes of life to produce a relativistic perspective and a toleration of difference,

which he recognised to be prerequisites of a rationality leading toward the secularisation of life (p.155).

Diversity breeds heterogeneity, says Wirth, not just between groups but in the life of the individual who has intersecting memberships of divergent groups that defy any hierarchical ordering of belonging. Subjectively, it is difficult to get a sense of the city as a whole and therefore to determine one's own best interests in it (pp.151-158):

> If the individual would participate at all in the social, political, and economic life of the city, he [sic] must subordinate some of his individuality to the demands of the larger community and in that measure immerse himself in mass movements.

Urbanism, Wirth saw, was becoming a "way of life", a new way of being human. As to the relevance of all the theorising about cities to the still substantial minority of people who do not live in cities and urban areas, Wirth contrasted "urbanism as a way of life" with a rural "folk" way of life that was gradually being subsumed in a process he saw taking place even outside of the urban centres of population. He recognised the wider effects of the rapid growth and importance of cities:

> the city is not only in ever larger degrees the dwelling-place and the workshop of modern man [sic], but it is the initiating and controlling center of economic, political, and cultural life that has drawn the most remote parts of the world into its orbit and woven diverse areas, peoples, and activities into a cosmos. The growth of cities and the urbanization of the world is one of the most impressive facts of modern times (pp.143-144).

In these passages Wirth observes the increasing momentum of the transition from rural lifeways to urban with a detectable sense of loss and foreboding of what was coming. Important to my thesis is

his recognition that urban living was changing how people understood themselves and related to others, in ways that can now be viewed as negative or as positive. As we shall see, this power of the city to shape the human is important for Lefebvre, who says we must therefore have the power (the 'right to the city') to shape the city in ways that are humanising. As I will argue, in an eschatological light human being comes to fullness in the city and not in a nostalgic return to the garden.

These 20th century sociologists paved the way for the development of urban studies, bringing anthropological, economic, cultural, and ecological lenses to bear on the city and seeing it as distinct from society, state, and market, and so worthy of study. They recognised the dynamic complexity of urban life, its loosening of pre-existent social bonds and formation of new ones, as the cause of its potential for innovation. They also recognised the city's tendency to stratification, segmentation, and inertia, the same conditions creating negative and positive effects.

Theorising the city politically

If the city is not simply a metonym for society as a whole, and if it is of the essence of the city to generate a particularised life of its own, can the city be sufficiently differentiated *politically* from the state to make it worthy of study as a polity and not merely as a somewhat minor subsidiary of the state? In other words, does a city have, and can it offer its citizens, the capacity to be political and the agency to be moral?[20] This is a key question for my thesis and for Augustinian political theology, as I will discuss when looking at spatial analyses of the city in Chapter 3, and it has been the nub of the argument between two of the most influential late-twentieth century Marxist urban theorists, Manuel Castells and Henri Lefebvre. Seeking the good city is futile outside of the struggle against capitalism which requires action at state level, according to Castells. Lefebvre sees that cities contain

[20] "Cities are in fact moral agents" (Wolterstorff, cited in Beaumont & Baker, 2011, p.224).

within themselves the potential beginnings of the good city. Simply put, I think Castells sees like a state, Lefebvre like a city. Although my thesis is a theological critique of Lefebvrian cityspace, it is important to understand Castell's argument if one is to be able to counteract the default to seeing like a state. Urban geographer Ed Soja, himself a major proponent of the spatial turn in urban studies, helpfully outlines both sides of the debate.

Manuel Castells

Castells chronicles the move from the city-state to the state whereby cities lost their power and became state-cities, grounding not only the state but its culture and economy, real and imagined. The development of industrial capitalism led to the ''virtual disappearance [of the city] as an institutional and relatively autonomous social system, organised around specific objectives'' (Castells, cited in Soja, 2000, p.101). Castells' belief in historical materialism, albeit later somewhat modified, left no room for the spatial specificity of the city or any causation within it, other than that of urban-industrial capitalism. His stance was a criticism of what he saw as the Chicago school's naivety in seeing the city in terms of a unique ecology and culture. It was also an attack on his former mentor, Lefebvre, claiming that the latter's spatial analysis was fatally undermined by his failure to acknowledge that the crucial divisions within the city were along antagonistic class lines. To attribute power to the ecology and culture of the city to shape urban life was to give "the reassuring impression of an integrated society, united in facing up to 'its common problems'" (pp.101-103).

It is not that Castells thinks that the city is unimportant politically, but its importance is determined by the struggle between the "contradictory classes" within it. These are determined by capitalism, of which the state is currently guarantor; for Castells the state as polity is central, not the city. The city cannot be understood outside of this Marxist framework:

> The heart of the sociological analysis of the urban question is the study of urban politics, that is to say, of the specific articulation of the processes designated as 'urban' with the field of the class struggle and, consequently, with the intervention of the political instance (state apparatuses) – object and centre of the political struggle and what is at issue in it (Castells, 1977, p.244).

If *the political*, for Castells, is determined by the power relations in society to give effect to the interests of the dominant social class, *politics* is the system of power relations by which one social class has the capacity to realise its interests at the expense of the others (p.260). Thus, although Castells has political hope in urban social movements, "the political importance of an urban movement can only be judged by relating it to the effects it has upon the power relations between social classes in a concrete situation" (p.377). For Castells, politics in the city has meaning and value only insofar as it is part of the class struggle against capitalism, and that must be undertaken at the level of the state.

Henri Lefebvre and the 'spatial turn'

While Castell's theorisation of the city in *The Urban Question* (1977), and in other writings since, has been influential, the spatial turn in urban thinking and practice of the late 1990s was largely due to Lefebvre, whose complex spatial analysis of the city is the basis of Chapter 3 below. Two theorists who develop and, at this stage of the thesis, offer a way into Lefebvre's thinking are Warren Magnusson and Ed Soja, both of whose work follows the spatial turn. Writing of this spatial turn Magnusson says, "we are best advised to think of the urban as a hyperspace of many dimensions, each of which is produced by political action and related to the others politically" (Magnusson, 2011, p.90). The political space of the city, he says, is not the 'simple space' of sovereign governmentality over bounded territory, but the complex space of multiple authorities and competing claims, so that he can say, "to embrace the city is actually to embrace a condition

that problematises claims to over-arching authority by generating rival claims" (p.117). The importance of this insight will become clear when, in Chapter 2, I discuss whether we can say the city is a polity without sovereignty.

Ed Soja argues that the *historical* and *social* dimensions of human life should be held together with the *spatial* dimension in what he calls "cityspace":

> Cityspace refers to the city as a historical-social-spatial phenomenon, but *with its intrinsic spatiality highlighted* … and adding more concreteness to its meaning is what can be described as the *spatial specificity of urbanism* (Soja, 2000, p.8, italics his).

Following the pattern of Lefebvre's analysis of cityspace, Soja describes his own trialectic of spatial perspectives.[21] "Firstspace" is the objective perception of "the set of materialized 'spatial practices' that work together to produce and reproduce the concrete forms and specific patternings of urbanism as a way of life" (p.10). "Secondspace" is the subjective perspective, the conceptual and the symbolic, the urban imaginary seen at play in our mental maps of the city, in our utopian imaginings, and in urban epistemology. These first two perspectives, he says, have dominated urban studies and place "certain constraints on our ability to recognise cityspace … as an active arena of development and change, conflict and resistance, and impelling force affecting all aspects of our lives" (p.11). They reduce the spatial specificity of cities to the "materialised products of what tend to be seen as non-spatial processes: historical, social, political, economic, behavioural, ideological, ecological, and so on" (p.11). "Thirdspace" is the perspective of *lived space*, "a simultaneously real-and-imagined, actual-and-virtual, locus of structured individual and collective

[21] Soja is greatly influenced by Lefebvre, who employs a variety of spatial trialectics in his analysis of city space (discussed in Chapter 3), but these are slightly different from and not as easy to grasp as Soja's.

experience and agency" (p.11). Soja likens the perspective of Thirdspace to how a biographer places their subject in their life context, acknowledging the impossibility of telling a complete story of the whole.

Thirdspace is a perspective suited to explorations of complexity through an infinite variety of spatial, social, and historical dimensions (p.12) and, therefore, to the non-binary complexion of struggles against inequality "encompassing questions of *identity, representation,* and *difference*" (p.279, italics his). These struggles do not negate the political struggle for equality across the binaries of class, of race, and of gender but, and in contrast to Castells, Soja believes, "many of the traditional practices of equality politics have … become increasingly limiting and ineffective". The politics of equality has given way to the politics of difference, to (what is now called) intersectionality. Although this carries a danger of fragmentation, and thus a weakening of the ability to organise, resist, and create, there is also the opportunity of "a heterogeneous reality that must be recognised and used to mobilise a more open, adaptively recombinant, coalition building politics" (p.280). Soja calls for the opening of new spaces for the practice of a radical intercultural and hybridised politics that goes beyond unmasking capitalism and can more directly confront and contend with neoliberal and post-modern capitalism, global and local (p.348).

Soja's epistemology of space derives from a radical post-modern perspective:

> it is an efficient invitation to enter a space of extraordinary openness, a place of critical exchange where the geographical imagination can be expanded to encompass a multiplicity of perspectives that have heretofore been considered by the epistemological referees to be incompatible, uncombinable (Soja, 1996, p.5).

Every binarism is opened up to the possibility of newness by the interjection of an-Other (in Lefebvre's words, "*Il y a toujours l'Autre*" (p.7)). Unsurprising, therefore, that Soja finds the writing of bell hooks and Cornel West, of other people of colour, and especially of women, to be his essential guides to Thirdspace, "the spaces that difference makes" (p.83). For hooks, who was also influenced by Lefebvre, third space is the margins of society but because she *chooses* to locate herself there, she rejects the marginality defined by the hegemonic centre. Instead, she sees marginal space as:

> site of resistance – as location of radical openness and possibility. (…)
> We come to this space through suffering and pain, through struggle. (…)
> We are transformed, individually, collectively, as we make radical
> creative space which affirms and sustains our subjectivity, which gives us
> a new location from which to articulate our sense of the world (hooks,
> cited in Soja, 1996, at p.105).

This, then, is an important space for political theology to critique and it is the focus of my project. It speaks of the revolutionary 'upside-down kingdom of God', the formation of a new humanity outwith pre-existent social hierarchies and boundaries, and the newness that comes in encounter with the Other. It offers super-diverse cities (like mine) the potential of a radically new and humanising politics arising out of the ferment of difference. Soja names this creativity and productivity of the city "*synekesis"*, by which he means not only people sharing the same space (*synoikismos*) but how this gives the city its generative capacity (Soja, 2000, pp.12-18).[22]

[22] The work of physicist and complexity expert Geoffrey West on the metabolism of cities as self-organising systems provides evidence for *synekesis*. He finds underlying rules at work in cities, regardless of history and personality, that enable us to predict the productivity and efficiency of a city in proportion to its scale. He says, "What the data clearly shows (…) is that when people come together, they become much more productive" (West, in Hollis, 2013, pp.26-30).

The trouble with the nation-state

Having established the city has an identity beyond the state and the market, and argued for the importance of seeing it as a *polis* which is counterpolitical to the nation-state, I now address how *polis* came to be identified with the nation-state. This conscientisation is needed to redress the historically determined default to seeing like a state; it is also important for neo-Augustinian political theology, as I discuss in Part 2 of this chapter. Like the mind-teasing pictures which portray two different images sharing the same features but you can see only one at a time, it is difficult, if not impossible, to see like a city and like a state at the same time. To see like a city is to stop seeing like a state, even while recognising that the nation-state or something like it will be around for a long time yet. In the paragraphs that follow, I look at how theorists and theologians "deconstruct" the sanctification and immutability of the state (Bretherton, 2019, p.23).

In the introduction I cited Zygmunt Bauman's terminal prognosis for the nation-state and the global order:

> The old order founded until recently on a (…) 'triune' principle of territory, state, and nation as the key to the planetary distribution of sovereignty, and on power wedded seemingly forever to the politics of the territorial nation-state as its sole operating agency, is by now dying (Bauman, 2009, p.2).

'Take back control', the winning side's slogan in the United Kingdom's 2016 referendum on leaving the European Union, meant to recover a sovereignty supposedly given away to European institutions and laws. Sovereignty now, says Bauman, is elusive, "un-anchored and free-floating … scattered between a multiplicity of centres", with multi-national corporations having more power than many states and successfully evading control, taxation, and regulation (p.2).[23] The crisis is also the crisis of

[23] "Sovereignty is no longer glued to either of the elements of the triune principle and entities; at the utmost, it is tied to them but loosely and in portions much reduced in size and contents. The allegedly unbreakable

liberal democracy as power "has evaporated from the level of the nation-state into the politics-free 'space of flows' (to borrow Manuel Castells' expression)" of globalised capitalism (p.5). Bauman's remedy requires "*the restoration of the commensurability of power and politics"* (p.6, italics his) by which he means the creation of international forms of political representation, institutions, and law that will be able to regulate the negative forms of globalisation hostile to institutionalised politics. The many threats and challenges to the post-World War II international order, and its sustained failure to rise to them, mean that Bauman's remedy is an even more distant hope than it was fifteen years ago. In the meantime, he says, we find ourselves in Gramsci's "interregnum" when changing circumstances render the extant order increasingly powerless, but new forms, commensurate with the changed circumstances, have not yet come into being: "the crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear" (Gramsci, in Bauman, 2009, p.1). I concur with Bauman's diagnosis, and his remedy of restoring the commensurability of power with politics, but, paradoxically, in the light of the loss of political power at the level of the nation-state, suggest the remedy must be found at the scale of the local, if it is to have global effect. To see like a city is to see each city participating in, influencing, and being influenced by a world seen as global city or cosmo*polis* beyond the *arche* of the nation-state. This way of seeing like a city is to see the global through the particular and so to place political value on hyper-local space within the spatiality of a city in a quantum world.

We do not lack urgent and good reasons for thinking and acting globally, not least to address the multiple fronts of our climate and ecological crises and to hold politically accountable a rampant globalising economy. Yet, just when it is most essential for states to be acting together for the planetary good, the wealthiest of them are asserting their own self-interest which, paradoxically,

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marriage of power and politics is, on the other hand, ending in separation with a prospect of divorce" (Bauman, 2009, p.2).

often coincides with the interests of the very political economy that is simultaneously weakening them as political actors. Liberals are right to be concerned by Gramsci's 'morbid symptoms', such as the rise of the far right in Europe and the United States, a growing intolerance of minoritised groups, and an impatience with the liberal order within and between states. Their assumption that the liberal order must be defended because there is no palatable alternative may not be so right. Critics of that same liberal order claim the way to recover the power that has been lost is to break the fetters of liberalism that has weakened the nation-state internally and in its external relations. Both positions make the assumption that with the state we have reached the end of history and have achieved the apotheosis of *homo politicus*; in other words, they see like a state. The understandable fear of what lies beyond or beneath prevents us from seeing, believing, and investing ourselves in alternative political economies. The result, Bauman says, is that we have become "retrotopic" in nostalgically crediting the past as the "site of still-free choice and investment of still-undiscredited hope" (2017, p.2).

And yet the state as the paramount political space is an idea of relatively recent origin. Its foundations were laid in the 16th century by the Augsburg Settlement, whereby the ruler of a realm had the right to determine its religion, and by the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 that saw the transfer of sovereign authority from the Holy Roman Empire to its emerging member states. This may have brought relative peace *within* Europe, as it became harder to make territorial gains, but the territorial ambitions and conflicts of European nations were now exported and given free rein as they colonised the world beyond Europe. It was only in the 19th and early 20th centuries that the principle of what U.S. President Woodrow Wilson named 'national self-determination' was universally accepted to the exclusion of all alternatives. Even then, Wilson did not envisage untempered state sovereignty because he recognised the dangers inherent in autonomous sovereign nations if there were no inter-state institutions, particularly following the 1914-1918 war.

In the rush to be rid of troublesome colonies after World War II, the nation-state was exported by the colonial powers as a one size-fits-all political construct, without regard to pre-existing boundaries and allegiances and with enduring and all too often negative consequences.

Given its relatively short lifespan, faith in the immutability of the nation-state is unwarranted but also of its essence. Loss of faith in the liberal political order is due to the failure of the state to be able to deliver on what it promises, and to its perceived failure to maintain a national identity and cohesion; these two foundations of the nation-state, say Simon Critchley and Benedict Anderson, have theological antecedents.

Faith in the state

Simon Critchley suggests that the problem is not that we have too little faith in the state but too much, or rather that we are not conscious of the fictive nature of the state that requires citizens to believe in it for it to exist at all. The work of the student of politics, Critchley says, is to demythologise the state and to lay bare its fictions "in order to see the old, rotting flesh of the state in the full light of day" (Critchley, 2012, p.90). Rooting his discussion of political philosophy in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract* (1762), Critchley argues that the state exists only by the faith of its citizens and that this is a faith tantamount to religious faith. The problem of the secular state, as Rousseau saw and could not satisfactorily resolve, is that it cannot exist without its 'civil religion', which is essentially a faith in sovereignty, a faith that brooks no competition from gods other than its own. 'The problem of politics' is that it requires religion to provide it with something that is transcendent (yet always subject to reason); Critchley gives the example of Barack Obama's 2008 United States presidential campaign slogan, 'BELIEVE' (pp.24-25).

For autonomous alienated individuals to become a people who freely bind themselves together under the rule of law, Rousseau saw that they would need to transcend their individual self-interest, lest politics descend to a mere barter between private interests: "Rousseau politicises the theological concept of [God's] general will: the divine is translated into the civic [to] provide the key to political legitimacy" (p.83). This is but one early instance of the history of all political forms "best understood as a series of metamorphoses of sacralisation" (p.84). This binding (*religio)* of the self to the general will is symbolised and strengthened by ritual observances such as honouring the war dead, national anthems, and respecting the flag. The United States' one-dollar bill is replete with symbol and statement of a civic religion that legitimates and mythologises the act of republican association: '*E pluribus unum*', 'In God We Trust', Masonic symbolism, assertions of divine approval, and of a new order of ages. The flag of the European Union, adopted in 1955, is based on a design by Arsène Heitz, a devout Catholic, who took as his inspiration the Catholic iconography of the twelve stars that encircle the head of the Virgin Mary and the blue associated with her (pp.78-79). Legitimacy, the great problem of political association whether for republics or monarchies,[24] is sacralised and maintained by a series of fictions.

Belonging to the nation

The modern nation-state came into being as an amalgam of the state as apparatus of political power and of the nation as its legitimating community. Benedict Anderson, reflecting on the global impact of his book *Imagined Communities*, twenty-three years and twenty-seven translations after it was first published, says of the two words of the title itself:

> This formulation opened the door wide for a critical assessment of the kind of 'age old' nationalism propagated in most contemporary states through the

[24] Monarchies, even when constitutional, as in the United Kingdom, are simpler to decipher mythically than republics. The recent coronation ceremony in Westminster Abbey performed the idea that sovereignty is embodied in the person of the monarch who in turn is given legitimacy by divine sanction and who, because they reign by consent, also embody the general will. Monarchs, unlike republican ideas, have the benefit of being visible but still 'have to be seen to be believed', as the UK's Queen Elizabeth II once said.

> means of mass communication and state-controlled educational institutions
>
> (Anderson, 2006, p.226).

How is it, he asks, that nation-states which objectively came into existence relatively recently, are able subjectively to lay claim to a legitimacy derived from ancient origins? So totalising is the concept of nationality that, despite its "philosophical poverty and even incoherence", everyone 'has' (or 'should have') one (p.5). The nation as community is *imagined* in that its members will never know any but a tiny percentage of its other members (p.6), and yet will feel a deep enough sense of identification with them, regardless of social class and position, to die and to kill for it (p.7). The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier perfectly symbolises and idealises one person who lays down their life for the nation and who, precisely because unknown and without limitation of particularity, can be perfectly identified with the national interest (pp.9-10).

The nation as community is imagined as both limited by its own boundaries, and sovereign. Although the nation-state emerges out of the decay of divinely ordered and hierarchical conceptions of sovereignty, the idea remains intact that sovereignty under God is the essence of freedom (pp.5-7). Anderson argues that the decay of religion's power to provide answers and meaning in the face of suffering and mortality coincided with the beginnings of nationalism in the eighteenth century: "What then was required was a secular transformation of fatality into continuity, contingency into meaning … few things were (are) better suited to this end than an idea of nation" (p.11). There is not space here to do justice to the complexity of factors contributing to Anderson's "morphology of nationalist consciousness" (p.226) but one of the most significant was the power of what he terms "print capitalism" to instate a *lingua franca*. As the use of dynastic languages like Latin, German, and French was declining, the growing usage of vernacular languages was ripe for exploitation by print capitalism. As it was not profitable to print books and other publications in each of the innumerable languages of Europe, the languages deemed to be worth the expense of printing were inevitably

those of the language groups with the power (and wealth) to assimilate those with less and who consequently "lost caste". The effect of these print languages was to give rise to the imagining of community amongst those who shared a language, now fixed in time and with the veneer of long duration (pp.43-45). This assumed venerability of a common language enabled the new nationalisms to "rediscover 'something deep-down always known' and so to fashion memory as a narrative of identity" (p.205).[25]

Conclusion of Part 1

Cities are too important for political theology (or political theory) to ignore. The spatial turn in urban theory offers exciting possibilities for restoring the very idea of the *polis* to its originary context and, with it, reimaging politics as the way we share with our others the political task of making good cities. It invests our everyday interactions with our fellow citizens with political meaning and effect, not simply in the hyper-local, but in the world seen like a city. If we are going to be able to see like a city, we have to be able to stop seeing like a state and believing in its

[25] Prescient though *Imagined Communities* was, Anderson could not have foreseen in 1983, nor even in 2006, how the supra-national successor to print capitalism would disrupt the various homogeneities of the nation and exploit their inherent disintegrative tendencies. The fragile fabric of nationhood that was stitched together by print capital is being unpicked by the exploitation of digital data harvested from social media. The commercial exploitation of this data, enabling messages to be tailored to many different segments of the market, turns humans into commodities whose data can be sold to the highest bidder; in May 2017, *The Economist* magazine ran an opinion piece entitled *The world's most valuable resource is no longer oil, but data*. [Online]. [Accessed 4 February 2020]. Available from: https://www.economist.com/leaders/2017/05/06/the-worlds-most-valuable-resource-is-no-longer-oil-but-data
The digital director of the Vote Leave campaign in the 2016 referendum is reported to have said a population of twenty million would need seventy to eighty types of targeted message. Such a broad diversity can then only be projected onto "some big, empty identity to unite all these different groups - a category such as 'the people' or 'the many'. The 'populism' that is thus created is not a sign of 'the people' coming together in a great ground-swell of unity, but is actually a consequence of the people being more fractured than ever, of their barely existing as a nation" (Pomerantsev, 2019). The weakening of national identity, of which digital media may be cause and effect, is giving place to the fragmentation of identities that are no less able to provide reasons to live or die for. When identity is at stake, particularly a vulnerable identity, issues of difference take on all-or-nothing importance. At the same time, the rising tide of nationalism carries with it the retrenchment and distortion of powerful mythic identities of ethnicity and religion that are divisive more than cohesive. Mainstream politicians traduce these powerful mythic identities at their peril and seek electoral advantage by exploiting them. Because divergent identities and forms of belonging were sublimated into national identity, there is a question hanging over the ability of the nation-state to survive their resurgence. It is to be hoped that these new forms and articulations of diversity will be effective resistance against fascistic nationalism.

legitimating mythos. In the remainder of this chapter, I ask how political theology maps onto the discursive terrain considered so far.

Neither Critchley nor Anderson are professional theologians, but they nevertheless demonstrate Bretherton's claim that theology is important for deconstructing myths of immutability and sacralisation of current political forms. In Part 2, I explore how political theologians do the same and, more importantly, how far they fulfil the second part of Bretherton's definition of political theology in "developing a more faithful political imaginary" for the city (Bretherton, 2019, pp.22-23).

Part 2: theology

Political theology

Political theology is important to Christianity, says Luke Bretherton, if we are to deconstruct the conflation of religion with any particular political order for the sake of developing a more faithful political imaginary (Bretherton, 2019, pp.22-23). This, he says, entails an approach that is open and dialogical. A Western Christian conception of politics should be seeking such an approach—especially by hearing the previously overlooked voices of minoritised groups—as therein lies the potentiality for its own conversion (pp.27-29). This is the approach I take as I engage with the growing field of cross-disciplinary 'secular' scholarship, with the rather more limited field of political theology about cities, and my experience of my own super-diverse and unequal city.

My project is to develop a faithful imaginary of and for the contemporary city with my focus on the city as *polis* and on 'the political' of cities. My argument is that at a time of existential crisis in the Western model of the liberal nation-state, with the loss of trust in politicians and political

institutions, the paradoxical fragmentation and hardening of national identities, and the rise of populist politics fuelled by social media, cities offer hope not only for a radical democracy that may no longer be possible in the old order, but also for a church that is caught up in the same crisis (for reasons that I argue below and in subsequent chapters). Bretherton's assertion is apt: "All political theologies exist on an axis between death and hope" (p.28). The church and its theology are deeply woven into the real and imagined fabric of the nation-state, for good or ill. As Benedict Anderson says, nationalism cannot be understood apart from the "the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which – as well as against which – it came into being … the two relevant cultural systems are the *religious community* and the *dynastic realm*" (Anderson, 2006, p.12, italics his), the latter itself religiously legitimated. Just as the *polis* of a city is of a different order from that of a state,[26] so cities call for and offer a site for a new kind of political theology freed from "the old herd-pieties of the 'Christian' Earthly City" (Shanks, 2015, p.241).

The earthly city - Augustine of Hippo

Contemporary confessional political theologians in the Augustinian tradition are also critical of the modern nation-state and along similar lines to Critchley and Anderson. In later chapters I will make frequent reference to these neo-Augustinian theologies of politics, liberal and post-liberal; here, I briefly outline Augustine's foundational critique of secular politics as a prelude to considering how this informs the theologies of William Cavanaugh, regarding the nation-state, and of Graham Ward, concerning the city.

[26] Warren Magnusson, writing about Weber's study of medieval European cities, says: "In principle, the city was a form of order resistant to and/or subversive of sovereignty. To see the city so is to recognise that it is not a miniature state, but rather an order of an entirely different type" (Magnusson, 2011, pp.117-118).

Augustinian political theology has had an enduring influence and particularly at critical moments of revolution, renewal, and reformation. Robert Markus says that "much of Western theology as well as of political thought has in fact been, at least in part, … a long drawn out conversation" on the implications of Augustine's thought and about the issues with which he was concerned (Markus, 2006, p.41). For post-secular theology, Augustine provides access to a worldview uncontaminated by secularism (Smith, 2004, pp.46-47), and for post-Christendom theology he offers a way to disentangle and reimagine the relationship between church and state. William Cavanaugh is right when he says, "what Augustine helps us to do is to question the modern distinction of religion and politics which has sapped the church's ability to resist the violence of states" (Cavanaugh, 1998, p.10). However, as Paul Weithman cautions, "the topic of Augustine's political philosophy must be approached with care. Augustine never devoted a book or a treatise to the central questions of what we now call 'political philosophy'" (Weithman, 2001, p.234).

Caution is also required lest it be assumed Augustine's principal intent is to speak of the politics of real cities. In *City of God* (CoG), Augustine's intent is not to address the polity of cities but to speak of starkly contrasting citizenships. The city of his day is the primary locus of sociality beyond the family, so employing the idiom of the city enables him to dialogue and debate with his contemporaries who are invested socially, politically, religiously, and philosophically in *actual* cities (Cavanaugh, 2016, p.154). The inspiration for Augustine's title and theme is its usage in the Psalms (CoG 11.1); Augustine's Latin Bible translated '*polis*' (from the Greek Septuagint) by '*civitas*', which suited Augustine's purpose in speaking of citizenship and a citizen body, rather than simply a physical city or geographic territory (O'Daly, 1999, pp.273-274). His genealogy of the two cities begins with the "two classes of angels", discusses the existence of evil and the position of humankind in the created order then, starting with Cain as the first city builder (CoG 15.1ff), goes on to delineate instantiations of the two citizenships throughout the biblical narrative. Thus, from the dawn of creation Augustine

identifies two ontologically distinct, predestined, and divergent trajectories and *teloi* for human history. The citizenship which is motivated by love and worship of God constitutes the city of God; that which is not, of necessity, constitutes the earthly city.

At the time Augustine was writing *City of God* (from about 412CE) the Roman Empire had been culturally Christianised for almost a century and the Christian church was beginning to be invested in the various political forms of empire and dominion. Eusebius's panegyric on Constantine a century earlier had drawn the analogy between the sovereignties of God in heaven and of the Christian emperor on earth. Augustine initially sees this as an unmitigated good but comes to recognise that, to a greater or lesser extent, the old paganism of the Roman empire is merely dressed up in Christian clothes (Markus, 2006, pp.34, 36) and so he aims to prise apart what is becoming fused. His concern is to de-sacralise the Roman Empire for both pagans and Christians alike (Cox, 2013, p.33); the empire is not God's chosen means of government, and is no different from any other form of humanly constituted, and therefore strictly temporal, government; it contains "no signposts to sacred meaning, no landmarks in the history of salvation" (Markus, 2006, pp.36-37). Augustine writes *City of God* at a time when blame for the Visigoths' sack of Rome in 410CE has fallen on the empire's departure from its traditional gods and its embrace of Christianity, and when Christians are anagogically interpreting this as the apocalypse. His defence is that Christians are the good citizens who preserve the health of the city and empire by preventing its inward decay, in stark contrast to the idolatrous citizenship rooted in the love of self—*amor sui*—and the will to power that comes from love of self—*libido dominandi.* Rome itself is "that great thieving empire" (CoG 4:4), its gods are idols, and the service of citizens to the institutions of state vainglorious.

On this basis, and to define boundaries in the eschatological overlap of the *saeculum*, *City of God* explicates the relationship between the kingdom of God, the church and temporal government (Markus, 2006, p.23). The fullness of the *civitas Dei* is reserved in heaven, where love of God is the only government required because sin has been done away with; it follows that before the Fall there was also no need of government. Augustine therefore has no interest, unlike Plato, Aristotle, and Aquinas, in describing forms of citizenship or government (Weithman, 2001, p.237). The *civitas terrena* is that form of citizenship and governmental order which has not yet accepted the lordship and victory of God in Christ and where government is necessary only because of sin. Because of *amor sui* and *libido dominandi,* government is required to regulate sinful behaviour and to keep the peace and is therefore only a limited good. It restrains evil but is unable to produce the good which is wholly contingent on love for God. By denying its ability to generate the good, Augustine strips the earthly city—both governmental institutions and citizenship—of its pretensions to idolatrous transcendence. This opens an ontological and critical distance between the two cities, a space in which to judge the operations of *civitas terrena* from the perspective of the constitutive love of *civitas Dei,* the former judged and condemned by the latter (p.248). The citizen of the city of God sees the earthly city with a clear eye, investing faith in it only insofar as it is necessary for the preservation of peace and the necessities of mortal life.

Critical political theology of the state – William Cavanaugh

As example of how Augustine is interpreted by the Radical Orthodox brand of neo-Augustinianism, I turn now to William Cavanaugh's radical criticism of the liberal secular nation-state. He identifies three foundational myths: of free association for the common good, of homogeneity, and of the state as saviour. Augustine, of course, condemns all mythologies of the state as idolatries: "In Augustine's withering treatment of the Roman multiplication of gods in book 4 of *City of God*, the creation of gods is a product of a city that claims to be self-legitimating" (Cavanaugh, 2016, p.228).

i) Free association

The post-Westphalian state[27] comes into being by forcefully subsuming other forms of allegiance and belonging, such as kinship and feudal ties.[28] While the state may have been somewhat liberative, both from these more constricting bonds and from the domination of empire, people and the forms of association that bound them did not willingly give up power to the centralising state in the interests of some common good or general will. Rather, the state needed tax revenues to protect its interests and to make war and so needed to exert control within its geographically fixed borders. This creeping control was resisted as the state either absorbed rights "previously resident in other bodies (guilds, manors, provinces, estates) or eliminated them altogether, as in the enclosure of common lands" (2011, p.15). The state, to raise finance to perpetrate war, operated as a protection racket by promising security from state-sponsored violence in return for tax revenues (pp.11-16). As state bureaucracies developed and trade flourished, the liberal form of the nation-state evolved to protect the bourgeois individual's freedom, life, and property. What had been held in common could now be appropriated to the individual by labour as property and thus become exchangeable by contract in the market:

> A new kind of space is invented in which individuals relate to each other through the mechanism of contract, as guaranteed by the center. Public and private interest is seen to coincide, but the discourse thus shifts from good to will and right (pp.21-23).

The state, then, does not come into being in response to the developing needs of society but rather subjugates the pre-existent, complex forms of societal belonging and allegiance. It creates an artificial society based on a simple conception of space, i.e., allegiance to a sovereign ruling over territorially bounded space.

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[27] See p.25 above, *fn.15*.

[28] And see above for Bendict Anderson's argument for the role played by print capitalism.

ii) Homogeneity

Cavanaugh, like Anderson, argues that the state cannot for long hold legitimate authority solely by the means of force or by the protection of private property, and so the nineteenth century sees the purposeful creation of a fictive unity through nationhood. The construction of a national identity brings about the uncoerced allegiance of citizens through their identification with the nation (p.33). This identity is constructed and maintained: by means of education propagating a particular narrative of history and myth of origin; by the spread of a common language; and most of all through war (p.34). The ultimate sacrifice of laying down one's life for the nation becomes the sacrifice that binds (*religio*) the nation (p.36), and the Cenotaph becomes the altar at which vows to the nation are renewed. Cavanaugh asks:

> How does a provincial farm boy become persuaded that he must travel as a soldier to another part of the world and kill people he knows nothing about? He must be convinced of the reality of borders, and imagine himself deeply, mystically, united to a wider national community that stops abruptly at those borders (2002, p.1).

The homogenisation of identity progressively dissolves other identities and yet, paradoxically, those who have gained least by identifying with national interests, and who have had their own sense of identity stripped from them through industrialisation, and now post-industrialisation, disproportionately sacrifice their lives for it, in the name of the mythic national identity.

iii) The state as saviour

Cavanaugh shares with Critchley the conclusion that the state takes what belonged to religion to itself in "migrations of the holy" (2011). In his account of "the myth of the state as saviour", like Critchley, he begins with Rousseau's opening line in *The Social Contract*, "Man was born free, but is everywhere in bondage", and contrasts this with his own "bold summary" of Genesis 1-11:

"Humankind was created for communion, but is everywhere divided" (Cavanaugh, 2002, p.9). His point is that political theory is founded in mythic accounts—of human nature, of the origins of conflict, and of the means to peace. If we are Hobbesian autonomous individuals in competition for limited goods, we need the state to mediate our conflicts, enforce our contracts, and guarantee our rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (p.17). The foundational myth of the secular state, that it was necessary to save us from the horrors of religious conflict, was a subterfuge for territorial claims and state legitimacy. The state "is best understood … as an alternative soteriology to that of the church … the state body is a simulacrum, a false copy, of the Body of Christ" (pp.9-10). Not only this, but the state based on such an anthropological myth cannot enact a truly social body in which the members relate to one another; instead, they must relate solely via the 'gigantic head' in a grotesque body, Hobbes' Leviathan.

Cavanaugh's radical criticism of the state, like that of other post-liberals and Radical Orthodox, suggests there is little to mourn in the demise of the modern political order.[29] He does, however, have hope for the *saeculum* if not the state:

> [*to recognise religion and politics are both acts of the imagination*] is to recognise their historical contingency, and thus give hope that things do not necessarily have to be the way they are (…) and thus open an opportunity for the theological imagination to enact alternative space-times (p.3).

[29] Other neo-Augustinians are not as damning of the liberal nation-state. Eric Gregory (2008), for example, is in search of an Augustine who offers a positive role for the state in advancing the good, even so far as allowing for love as a political motivation. Of the various Augustinianisms he considers, at the other end of the spectrum from the Radical Orthodox are 'Augustinian realists' like Robert Markus and Reinhold Niebuhr who, because they see sin as the prevailing human condition in the *saeculum,* advocate a strong secular state and legitimate state violence; hope for anything better is deferred to the *eschaton* (Gregory, 2008, pp.11, 84-86).

Cavanaugh's critique invites the question: if not the state, then of what polity and in what space, if any, is he imagining politics? Our imaginations, he says, should be shaped by an understanding of the church as the truly public space rather than by trying to situate the church in relation to the so-called public space of the state; the catholic church is not territorially bounded, so neither should our imaginations be. Rather than lobbying for economic justice in the *oikos* of the state, the church should give its energy to demonstrating and telling stories of an alternative economics. What he calls "the dreary calculus of state and individual" is best challenged "by creating truly free alternative spaces, cities of God in time" (pp.94-95).

Elements of Cavanaugh's ecclesiology have much to offer to a political theology of the city that must also be a political ecclesiology, as I will argue in Chapter 4. He avoids the accusation of advocating a neo-Christendom that might justifiably be levelled at John Milbank, for example, and of idealising the church (as Stanley Hauerwas tends to do) by suggesting "the history of the church must always be told in a penitential key" and accepting that the boundaries between church and not-church are "permeable and even ambiguous" (Cavanaugh, 2011, pp.66-67). Cavanaugh approves of much of Romand Coles' concept of radical democracy (p.188) that is to be found in the complex space of plural forms of political organisation which decentre and resist the centripetal power of the state and the domination of global capital; in this complex space, he imagines the church will find its true vocation in a "politics of vulnerability" (pp.193-194). The church is not a polity, but it *is* a truly public yet distinctive space in and amongst "a multiplicity of free spaces that are nonetheless fully public" (2002, p.94). The church, then, is not a self-enclosed and static space, but more a spatial practice that transforms other configurations of space. Here Cavanaugh comes close to what, in Chapter 6, I

will call a praxis of Christian e*kk*lesiality[30] that is not only amongst other "free spaces" but exists *for* them and the polity of the whole city.

Cavanaugh's critique of the polity of the modern nation-state is based in part on his criticism of the way it historically simplified political space and, in line with Catholic social teaching, is somewhat 'retrotopic', in that it looks back to the pre-modern and Thomist complexity of belonging and allegiance that relativised the sovereign power of the monarch. Despite the echoes of Augustine in the "creation of cities of God in time", his discussion of space remains ecclesiological in relational to the spatial character of the body of Christ and the Eucharist (pp.112-122). The question remains of upon what polity he sees the transformative and liberative public space of the church acting, and how.[31] However, his desacralisation of the nation-state which opens "an opportunity for the theological imagination to enact alternative space-times" (p.3) is of crucial importance if we are to stop *theologically* seeing like a state, and offers a tantalising glimpse of what, I will argue, can be found in the city, if only we look.

Thomist cities

Because I think theology must do justice to the granular and spatial complexity of the city, my theological approach is more Augustinian than Thomist. Even as they encompass empire and then kingdoms, these two paradigmatic political theologies each have the polity of city in view. It must be said, however, that Aquinas has a much more positive view of cities and citizenship than Augustine. Augustine has no interest, unlike Plato and Aristotle, in describing forms of citizenship or government. Although Augustine's two cities have no particular referents, they do have an analogue

[30] This spelling is Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's, to distinguish it from a normative ecclesiology. See Chapter 4.
[31] In Chapter 6, I refer to his recent writing in which he acknowledges with sadness that he had perhaps had too much faith in the church (Cavanaugh, 2021).

in that Augustine "thinks the internal dynamics of the two groups are to be explained using the same concepts appropriate for explaining the behaviour of more familiar political entities like Rome" (Weithman, 2001, pp.235, 237). Aquinas, unlike Augustine, has a positive view of government as both a pre-lapsarian and eschatological good, and so gives a great deal of thought to the political arrangements of society, drawing heavily on the recently rediscovered Aristotle.

As God creates the earth, so, according to Aquinas, analogically kings should create cities as a *theological task* (Ward, 2009, pp.209-210). As such, cities are the expression of God's design for humans to live in community towards the common good. As the good life is a fruit of virtue, "the city is conceived as the space within which human beings achieve a happiness born of coexistence and living virtuously" (p.210). Aquinas sets out what such a city requires in terms of buildings, economy, and politics: "both civic beauty and civic virtue serve the same end – participation in the life of God" (p.211). In theorising the relationships between the political categories of city, province, and empire; of kingdom and nation; and of the social categories of household, clan, and village (Aroney, 2007, p.161), his chief concern is the preservation of a social and political unity through a hierarchical ordering. This is, nevertheless, a complex unity that allows for these intermediate categories to have their being in their own right and not merely through delegated authority. Nicholas Aroney credits Aquinas, and before him Aristotle, as the source of the Roman Catholic concept of subsidiarity that allows for a complex arrangement of a plurality of forms of social and political relationships (p.163). This is "a conception of the body politic as itself constructed out of a plurality of smaller, intermediate corporations and communities of a political, ecclesiastical and social character" (p.167). Aquinas's political theory was welcomed in the Italian city-states where pursuit of the common good and civic friendship helped defuse factionalism and avoid despotic authority (Weithman, 1992, pp.375-376). Although Aquinas can be accused of a top-down 'federalism' his understanding of the complexity of forms of belonging was adopted by Althusius (1557-1668), the

pioneer of modern federalism (Aroney, 2007, p.166). Provided that the domains of reason and revelation are strictly demarcated, Aquinas can agree with Aristotle (but not with Augustine) that in the domain of reason "the city-state (*polis)* is the community in which human beings are enabled to secure their chief end and highest good" (p.170).

Returning to my terrain metaphor, the path of my argument runs somewhere between these two colossi of Western political theology. The importance of Augustine and Aquinas for my thesis, apart from the fact they both speak of cities, is how they each complexify political space; however, it is also important to draw a distinction between how they do so. Aquinas, like Eusebius,[32] believes that a unitary space is conducive to a peaceful social order under God and the sovereign secular power, but that it must be complexified to temper the power of the inevitably imperfect sovereign. With Aquinas, I too see the city as the expression of human-being-in-relation in the image of God, and the collaborative—political (not social)—work of making the good city[33] as the design of God for humankind.

Because of what I have said in Part 1 about the city and the state, and in Part 2 about the importance of desacralising the nation-state, I see the city as *polis*, not as part of a larger monarchical whole within a top-down order of subsidiarity. Magnusson, writing about Weber's study of medieval European cities says, "in principle, the city was a form of order resistant to and/or subversive of sovereignty" (Magnusson, 2011, pp.117-118).[34] On the other hand, a bottom-up subsidiarity that delegates political power upwards, from the most local through to the global—from *polis* to *cosmopolis*—is written in to politics seen like a city. I also share Hannah Arendt's criticism of

[32] See p.48.
[33] Lefebvre calls this the *oeuvre* of citizens, to denote the art of city making.
[34] In Chapter 3, I argue that the city as *polis* is a polity free of sovereignty.

the Thomist 'common good' because it is predicated on an apolitical concept of 'society' and 'nation'. She blames Aquinas for the subsumption of the political by the social through his Latin mistranslation of Aristotle's *zoon politikon* as, "man is by nature political, that is social". This, she says, leads him to see household rule as paradigmatic for political rule and gives rise to a conception of collective housekeeping, "one super-human family … we call society, and its political form of organisation … called 'nation'" (Arendt, 1958, pp.28-29). In this loss of public space, Arendt identifies a theological distortion, the beginnings of the negation of the *polis* in its migration from city to nation-state.

My path to the city takes me closer to Augustine's complex space: it is not a unitary space (mono-arche) in which the religious and the secular jostle for space, rather, as Cavanaugh says, it allows us to imagine and enact alternative yet co-existent space-times. Augustine's two cities (not a unitary one) allow for the ever-present possibility of a disruptive opening of the *civitas Dei* within the monarchical order. Cavanaugh, Critchley, and Anderson are all 'Augustinian' in that they radically critique the pretensions of the state to divine legitimation in a way that wholly aligns with seeing like a city. Augustine allows us to see the *poleis* of city and the nation-state paradoxically coexisting in space-time. My choice of an Augustinian rather than Thomist approach is not uncritical, however, because Augustine too can be blamed, as Arendt does, for the loss of the *polis* and its subsumption by the church. 'Seeing like a church', I will argue, has the same effect as seeing like a state, in keeping us blind to the city God 'takes place' in. In Christendom both ways of seeing were conflated; the risk for political theology is that it continues to see like a church.

Theologising the city

Having considered these roots of political theology and continuing to explore the discursive terrain, I turn now to the routes that political theology has (or more often has not) taken, concerning the city.

As I have begun to argue above, modern political theology has been concerned with the state—its apotheosis and its decay—and so has largely overlooked the city as *polis*. In the Introduction, I cited Sigurd Bergmann calling this is a "fatal lack" in political theology (Bergmann, 2007, p.363)[35] and he is not alone in using forceful language in speaking of the impact on cities, the church, Christian citizens, and theology itself.

Andrew Davey blames, "an inherent anti-urbanism in the Christian culture of Europe and North America" on *how* theology has been done. This, he thinks, is due to the prophetic denunciations of cities in both Testaments of the Bible, and more recently to the influence of Jacques Ellul's *Meaning of the City* (1997) (Davey, 2003, p.93). For Ellul the city is the epitome and fruit of humankind's hubristic rebellion against God. Isaiah's judgment on Babylon is typical of all scripture and all cities and their inhabitants:

> The city cannot be reformed. Neither can she become other than what men have made of her. Nor can she escape God's condemnation of her. Thus, in spite of all those who have tried to make the cities more human … they are all cities of death, made of dead things, condemned to death and nothing can alter this fact (Ellul, 1997, p.57).

The dualism of Augustine's two cities which, for Ellul, denote Babylon and the New Jerusalem of Revelation 21, produces the irredeemability of one and the eschatological deferral of the other, with mission reduced to redeeming the unregenerate (normally the poor) from one city for eventual rehabilitation in the other (Davey, 2003, p.95).[36]

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[35] See p.15.

[36] Reading Ellul many years ago when there was not much theology of the city to read, left me with cognitive dissonance. His strong denunciation of the city, supposedly on the biblical evidence, did not correspond with my experience of and love for my own city. Were all the good efforts of good people to make the city better in vain?

Davey believes the Church of England has a rural and therefore anti-urban bias: “The urban church seems to represent the antithesis of the popular image of the church on the village green or the tranquillity of the cathedral close” (p.95). The history of the naming of the Anglican diocese of Leeds seems to be a case in point: until 1999, Leeds, the second largest metropolitan borough in the UK (population in 2011, 812,000), found itself in the Anglican diocese of Ripon (Ripon: population in 2011, 16,700), when it was renamed the Diocese of Ripon *and Leeds*. The new diocese that replaced it in 2014 was named the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales until 2016 when it came to terms with being just the Diocese of Leeds.

We should be concerned about the lack of political theology which has to do with cities because, as Davey suggests, our failure to engage theologically with the lived reality of urban life “may mean that we have contributed intentionally or unintentionally to the fragmentation and deterioration of community life in our towns and cities” (p.94). He promotes the positive side of ‘two cities theologies’ where:

> an alternative system of rule is to be played out in the affairs of the present city, not least through anticipative ecclesial practice that might “enable us to reshape our civic imagination and reframe our urban practices” thus developing a new openness to the urban community (p.95).

Urban Christians can counteract the secularising privatisation of faith by engaging with the city as a matter of discipleship, liturgy, and spirituality; if they fail to do this and so take for granted the ‘peace of the city’, they are complicit in “urbicide” (pp.99, 102).

Angus Paddison (2011) asks a slightly different question: why should we reason theologically about cities? He offers three positive reasons:

i) Theology is interested in all things because all things, including cities, have their being in God and so "their role within the economy of salvation must be discerned".

ii) Because the incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ has bound together the things of this world and the world above—matter and spirit, body and soul—as Bonhoeffer says, "there is no real Christian existence outside the reality of the world". It is for theologians to ask what views of the human are embodied in the city.

iii) The lack of authentically political responses to what Paddison sees as the central political challenge of our time, i.e., "what it is to live in a space 'that is shared by others, with whom we have to negotiate, whose concerns we have to ponder and interact with' places a responsibility on theologians and the church *to contribute a distinctively theological vision to the making of a city that is good for all"* (Paddison, 2011, pp.224-225, emphasis mine).

Paddison criticises public theology, along with theologies of the city, for an *a priori* acceptance of the state's secularist prescription of what is public and private (pp.225-227). Chris Baker also critiques this kind of urban theology, of which he considers the 1985 *Faith in the City* report the high point, as "primarily interested in how the institution of the church relates (as institution) to other institutions: other churches and the government; large (anchor) institutions in civil society such as charities, NGOs, public sector and the academic sector" (Baker, 2013, p.4). Similarly, he and Justin Beaumont, in their Afterword to a volume of essays on post-secular cities, conclude that to move from the study of post-secular cities to a post-secular analysis of cities is to go beyond looking at cities through a post-secular lens; it suggests "new ways of seeing what until now we have been looking at but not really SEEING" (Beaumont and Baker, 2011, p.265).

The calls Bergmann, Davey, Paddison, and Baker and Beaumont make for more theological engagement with cities are welcome and urgent. At a time of rapid change within and beyond the city, the lack of theology leaves it to other stories and other ways of making meaning to shape cities and their futures. Theology can take part with other kinds of meaning-making, provided, as a discipline, it can be open, collaborative, and dialogic. Then it can resource urban Christians with tools and sightlines to form and shape their public discipleship and faithful citizenship. My specific project, however, is to engage with urban theory after the spatial turn, and to see theo-*politically* like a city. My concern with theologies of the city generally is that if they continue to see like a state, or like a church, they might unwittingly reinforce a normative view of both the church and the state to the negation of the city. We might say the omission of the city from much political theology is already political in that it too depoliticises the politics of cities and legitimises state sovereignty. In other words, political theology as a discipline is interpellated by the normative claim of the state to be the sovereign *polis*. By focusing my critique on the city, I hope to open new sightlines and horizons for political theology and then to see how it can contribute to investing the city with meaning beyond traditional sacred/secular fault-lines.

Graham Ward

A relatively recent and notable exception to this lack of political theology's concern with the city comes from Cavanaugh's fellow Radical Orthodox and neo-Augustinian political theologian, Graham Ward. Ward has written extensively about the city, not least in a trilogy published this millennium. Clearly, for Ward the city is theologically important enough to write about for it is here that "we experience and exercise our dealings with contemporary culture, the state and the world" (Ward, 2003, p.462). To speak about the city theologically, he says, is to speak about these aspects of life, not in abstraction, but in the concrete and specific ways in which these are experienced in everyday life. However, it is primarily about these three categories of experience—culture, state, and

world— that he writes, rather than about the "cityness" of the city (Magnusson's term). The city's importance is not just for theologians; most Christians, like most of the global population, live in cities. The Christian living in the world, in what Ward calls the Johannine sense, influences the city "in transformative practices of hope" for the city is "most truly ours in Christ: for though Christ was not received by the world, John tells us he entered into that which was 'his own (*ta idia)'"* (p.463). The fall from grace took place in the garden, but the fullness of Christian salvation is conceived as a city and therefore the contemporary city has eschatological significance (p.464). This enlightens and orientates what it means to be a citizen in accordance with a theological anthropology of human community that is in the image of Trinitarian relationality; discipleship and citizenship are indivisible. The analogical relationship between our current urban contexts and the heavenly city (p.472) means that cities are the site for Christian formation as citizens of the true Augustinian *res publica*, by which Ward means the *civitas Dei* and not the *civitas terrena*. The fruit of good citizenship is the good ordering of the city, "an ordering governed by, because constituted in the space opened up by, the Trinitarian God" (p.465). It should be noted, however, that Ward's focus here is not on the city per se, but on Christians and the church in the city and how they relate to it. Crucially, like Aquinas, he sees their citizenship as social and not political; politics has to do with the *civitas terrena.*

The analogical relationship of the earthly city to the heavenly means that "the heavenly city enables us to define and understand the earthly one" (p.472). Thus, cities, "as the greatest of human art forms [*are*] shot through with transcendent aspirations" and it is this that gives them "their buzz, their kudos, their charisma" (p.466). Cities are the expression of their citizens' conception of the good life, and all are "oriented toward an ideal future". This ideal future, however, is the ideal of Enlightenment thought, "the absolute freedom of the individual and the promise of the New at the heart of the meaning of the modern" (p.467). Contemporary cities have lost even this transcendence

and now aspire only to “the lifestyles of those without conscience, and those beyond good and evil” (p.467). This is the radiant and transparent city without shadows that aspiring cities want to show to the world, drawing attention away from “the dark spots, the overcrowding, the squalor, the red-light districts, the drug-corners, the ghettos where strange tongues are spoken and customs practiced, the alleyways behind the exclusive shops and restaurants, the parts renovation has yet to reach, the dingy undergrounds and the old established rituals of living in certain quarters” (p.468).

So, what does Ward think this means for Christians and for theologians? His answer is two-fold – to be involved, and to be prophetic. “The church needs then to be consciously involved at every level of city life and to encourage such involvement. It must celebrate the city's eschatological import, point to what this means” (p.470), and then, from the standpoint of this authentic involvement, remind the city in all its transcendent aspiration that we are not gods, and point to the neglected and suffering parts of the city. The calling of the church, distinguished from that of other social institutions, is to bear witness to the gospel of Christ and awaken consciousness that the things of the earthly city are not eternal. As for what this means for the city, and not just for Christians and theologians, the city bears an analogical, but not an ontological, relation to the heavenly city. The church participates in the Spirit of Christ, the city does not (pp.471-472). Because of sin, “the church has to continually remind the city that it cannot of its own will and ambition, make virtuous citizens” (p.472).

There is much that is useful in how Ward writes of the importance of the city for theology: the analogical relation of the city to the heavenly city; theology being employed in the specificity and concreteness of urban experience; the call for Christians to make the city their own, recognising it belongs to God; the shaping of city life now, in the light of the city’s eschatological significance; and

the city's spatial ordering seen within the space opened by the Trinity and therefore within relational space. These themes will recur throughout these chapters. It is not clear what this means in the "Johannine sense", as John uses the word *kosmos* with a variety of meanings, in much the same way that today we might speak of the earth, the inhabited earth, the whole world, the real world, the world as it is ordered economically and politically, socially, and culturally. Ward seems to mean the order of the world that is in ignorance of, or in rebellion against God, the world that needs to be redeemed and transformed. Yes, the city bears an analogical relationship to the city of God and so bears its image, but as the city of earth it is fallen, idolatrous, and irredeemable.

When Ward says that if the city realised "that all its best endeavours will only pass away, it would stop its work—and retreat to the countryside" and that "it cannot … make virtuous citizens (p.471) he is surely announcing the futility of political life. Despite the possibility of community because of Trinitarian relationality, and of the good ordering of the city made possible because of Trinitarian space, the city is a polity haunted by the impossibility of participation in the Trinity. Yes, the church as ekklesia is a political body (p.470) but, because it is ontologically related to the heavenly city and the earthy city is not, (p.469) it is not clear in what, if any, political space it can be political beyond itself. Ward's portrayal of the relationship between the Christian and the city is vulnerable to the criticism Hannah Arendt makes of Augustinian love - that the possibility of "meeting my fellow men (in their concrete worldly reality and in their relation to me) in their own right" is ruled out if my love for them is "for the sake of" love of God (Arendt, 1996, p.42). In Ward, the fellow citizen is encountered by the Christian citizen not in the immediacy of shared city space but in an analogical and eschatological relationship. From Jesus' dialogue with Nicodemus in John 3, Ward infers that the kingdom of God can be perceived only by Christians (Ward, 2003, p.469), but there is as least as much in the gospels about participation in, and reception of, the kingdom of God as there is about perception, along with warnings to those who believe their religious perception is privileged.

As there is no continuity between the city from below and the heavenly city that comes from above to disrupt it (Ward, 2009, p.213), it is hard to see why the church would pour itself into making a city oriented towards the *telos* of Christian hope. Indeed, he says: "our contemporary cities are not sites for the development of virtuous citizenship; they are not sites for the development of citizenship at all" (p.215). The inference is that the only citizenship worth giving oneself to is Christian discipleship that has half an eye on the heavenly reward. He suggests that good citizenship lies in the ability to be reflective in a whole economy of response to 'the Other', but beyond a wish that the Anglican church was not so middle-class (2003, p.470), there is no acknowledgement here of the church's political role as the historic legitimator of empire, slavery, capital and so no suggestion of what might then help the church to adopt what William Cavanaugh calls a penitential stance towards the world (Cavanaugh, 2011, pp.66 -67). The book of Jonah is read in penitential mode every Yom Kippur as a reminder and a warning not to write off the city, even the darkest, most violent, and terrifyingly alien Nineveh. Jonah stands as a provocation to engage with the city, even at the cost of one's own life, by calling it to hope, and there to be fundamentally challenged as to the nature of God. This is a story not just of theology challenging the city but of theology being vulnerable enough to be profoundly challenged *by* the city.

Like Castells, Ward does not appear to allow the city any agency free and independent of the global political, economic, and cultural forces that act upon it and its citizens: "The city is used metonymically to speak of the material and temporal realities in which we live" (Ward, 2003, p.462). Cities are a refraction of the "metaphysics and theologies of globalisation", a space of the flows of money, seeking only their own aggrandisement, rooted in "depoliticising hyperindividualism and neoliberal economics and a godlessness that places all its hopes in human endeavour and

technological advancement" (Ward, 2009, p.215). The city has corporate personality that enables us to talk of cities as 'they', but at its core is a power vacuum (p.217):

> There is a struggle for the soul of the city, that should be the collection of its citizens all working together toward what best cultural and social conditions might be provided for the common pursuit of human happiness and enjoyment. It is this working that constitutes the political and where the real struggle should take place. But who can represent such a collection today?

This scintilla of hope Ward offers for the political in the polity of the city is eclipsed by the powerful forces that do not believe the city or its citizens have souls. These powerful forces strive for dominion, for "this is what they understand as the political" and so the importance of theology is to help the church discern these two forms of the political so that it can affirm the one and resist the other. Like Cavanaugh, Ward comes back to the agency of the church: "The church must become the church in every relationship it creates and maintains throughout the city; it must perform Christ in every microcontext" (p.220). Here again, the problem with relying on the church's discernment is its historical agency or complicity in the formation of these forces.

Largely, Ward's analysis of the hubristic and idolatrous nature of the *civitas terrena* and his application of that to "our contemporary cities" is true to Augustine, much like Cavanaugh's Augustinian critique of the nation-state. Why then do I recognise the truth of what Cavanaugh says, but not Ward? As I said earlier, the comparatively short history of the nation-state does not justify the extent to which it has become normalised as *the* form of the political to the exclusion of all others, and it is now exhibiting signs of its demise. The fictive nature of the nation-state critiqued by Anderson, Critchley, and Cavanaugh leaves little of real substance to be redeemed whereas the redemptive possibility of the city in the biblical accounts referred to above, and the motif of the city

as the eschatological *telos*, suggest there is goodness and divine intent in the city from which the *civitas terrena* is the derogation/negation. Ward, then, helps us to become conscientised to the violence of these powerful forces so that we may recover our own souls and so, recover the soul of the city, but offers less than Cavanaugh to inspire our imaginations far in that direction.[37]

It is hard to love the city Ward depicts and yet, he says, love is the essence of what he terms "the politics of discipleship" for "love orientates desire and desire animates the intention to act" (p.271). This calls to mind the celebrated urban activist Jane Jacobs' account of meeting with Lewis Mumford, author of the magisterial *The City in History*:

> I had my doubts about him [Mumford], because we rode into the city together in a car and I watched how he acted as soon as he began to get into the city. He had been talking and all pleasant, but as soon as we got into the city he got grim, withdrawn, distressed. And it was so clear that he just hated the city, and hated being in it (cited in Davey, 2003, p.96).

We do not know whether Ward loves the city, but we know he assumes his fellow citizens in the city largely live by a civic imaginary that is "antithetical to Christian living today" (Ward, 2009, p.17). He calls Christians to open their eyes to the forces of dehumanisation, dematerialisation, and depoliticisation and to take up prophetic witness against them (p.300). These forces are real and structurally violent, but, as planning academic Libby Porter says, "these analyses fail to connect with our most obvious and powerful spiritual wellspring of hope and transformation in the face of that hatred and violence: love" (Porter, 2010, cited in Sandercock and Senbel, 2011). Love should not be

[37] Cavanaugh, 2002, p.3. See pp.53-54.

blind to the forces Ward sees at work in the secular city, but lament and grief, rather than judgment and condemnation, just might give sight of a city worth struggling for.

The secular city

The Augustinian idea of the secular haunts theologies of the city and has contributed to an enduring sacred/secular dualism in the popular Christian imaginary. Though, by many accounts, we are now living in a post-secular society, even in those terms the secular remains an important point of reference and a lens through which we see the city. For Ward, although the mythic cities of demonic Babylon and heavenly Jerusalem lie behind the facades of every city, it is Babylon, the human, secular city, that will fall. The new Jerusalem, he says:

> is no product of human engineering. It comes "down out of heaven prepared" (Rev.21:2 RSV). Its coming announces not a continuation but a disruption of the human city. The human city as an entity will pass away (Ward, 2009, pp.212-213).

The arrival of the post-secular is greeted by Ward with relief that religion can now again take its proper place. He closes his city trilogy with: "Religion will not go away; it will not be repressed; it will not succumb to instrumental reasoning. So let us herald the next stage: the advent of the post-secular state" (p.301).

Given that secularism is the child of European Christendom and is in the warp and weft of the state, as the result of the various historical accommodations between church and state, Dylan Nickelson queries whether the post-secular state is really something that Ward and his fellow Radical Orthodox want or is even possible. Radical Orthodoxy, he says, can be characterised as the criticism of a secularisation that has taken the forms of a pre-modern Christian past and emptied them of

the transcendent, leaving a nihilistic and dysfunctional modernity which is laid bare in the horrors of the twentieth century (Nickelson, 2014, p.94). Cavanaugh's argument—that the state is a counterfeit of the body of Christ and that it took to itself the power to give peace and salvation through the enactment of a social body—is typical of the state replicating and perverting the pre-modern religious forms (p.98). The enactment of a soteriological social body through participation in Christ via the Eucharist is replicated and perverted by the various forms of "liturgy" that enact participation in the social body of the state. Nickelson characterises Cavanaugh's argument thus:

> Secularization is then *the process of removing Christ from the Eucharist while retaining the concept and the practice.* Secularization thus creates a void where Christ once was while retaining important aspects of Christianity (p.99, italics his).

Radical Orthodoxy claims that the forms cannot function without that which they existed to preserve, namely the presence of God. What is required therefore is the return of God in public life in the form of "proper belief" and Christian theology (pp.99-100). It may be argued that God never went away, or that the secular is uniquely Christian (and Western), or that we are now witnessing post-secularisation, but none of this amounts to the prescriptions Radical Orthodoxy has for society. Dylan Nickelson explains Cavanaugh's Christian anarchism thus: if the genesis of the modern state was contingent on the privatisation of religious faith to deal with (what Cavanaugh calls) the myth of religious violence, it is not possible to return God to the public sphere without fundamental challenge to the state (p.101).

Radical Orthodoxy's diagnosis of the sickness of the liberal nation-state is not unique to them, as I have indicated, and their unmasking of the state's salvific pretentions are cogent and important political theology. But, if the problem Radical Orthodoxy poses is that the forms of society are

inevitably nihilistic without the content that they once expressed—Christian belief and theology—Nickelson suggests an alternative solution. Rather than bringing God, in the form of proper belief and theology, back into the public sphere, what if the *forms* of secularity themselves were abandoned? He says:

> If relegating religion to the private sphere while retaining the religious scaffolding of our public institutions has caused our modern ills, then just as restoring God to His rightful public place may offer a cure, so may removing the religious scaffolding that causes these institutions and practices to malfunction in God's public absence. Importantly, however, choosing this alternative solution would involve a leap into the unknown (p.102).

Nickelson does not propose this leap into the unknown as a realistic proposal, possibly because he is still seeing like a state and it is impossible to conceive of the state stripped of the scaffolding of its mythic Christian origins. If, however, we heed Magnusson's call to see like a city, which means to see it as an entirely different type of polity from the state (Magnusson, 2011, pp.117-118), the city is not the result of the centuries of secularisation that the state is. Seen like a city, the sacred/secular divide may become less meaningful or disappear altogether. As long ago as 1893 Henry Drummond, writing about the city in *The City Without a Church*, says:

> The distinction between secular and sacred is a confusion and not a contrast; and it is only because the secular is so intensely sacred that so many eyes are blind before it. The really secular thing in life is the spirit which despises under that name what is that part of the everywhere present work and will of God. Be sure that down to the last and pettiest detail, all that concerns a better world is the direct concern of Christ (Drummond, 1988, pp.24-25).

If Ward heralds the "advent of the post-secular state", Harvey Cox, writing forty or so years earlier, like Drummond, heralds the secular city as the *topos* of God's full involvement in human history. Ward assumes the emergence of the post-secular—in the return of religion and the re-enchantment of the world—has superseded Cox's earlier acclamation of the arrival of the secular city. He criticises Cox for his accommodation to the destructive forces of secularisation, as Ward sees them (Ward, 2000, pp.46-48).

My reason for turning to Cox now (nonchronologically) is that his theology of the city is the antithesis of the political theologies which define the secular against the sacred. Cox takes a truly radical step outside the trajectory of Western political theology and can do so, I suggest, precisely because his focus is the city and not the secularising state. Returning to my metaphor of finding a path through the discursive terrain, having travelled a way with neo-Augustinian theologies which have helped me define the city I am *not* looking for, Cox gives me an alternative setting off point for seeking the one I am looking for—the city as *polis*—and he becomes an important guide to the city I will explore theologically in Chapter 4.

Harvey Cox

If the Radical Orthodox see secularisation as the progressive removal of God from public life, Cox sees it as the condition for the returning presence of God, to be distinguished from secular*ism* that he sees as just another closed and controlling worldview:

> Secularisation implies a historical process, almost certainly irreversible, in which society and culture are delivered from tutelage to religious control and closed metaphysical world-views. We have argued that it is basically a liberating

> development. Secularism, on the other hand, is the name for an ideology, a new closed worldview which functions very much like a new religion (Cox, 2013, p.25).

Cox's 1965 book *The Secular City* had enormous influence and caught the spirit of its time, with multiple editions and translations selling over a million copies. It coincided with Vatican II, both in time and spirit, and particularly with the theology of Karl Rahner, a key architect of Vatican II, who refused any ontological duality between human history and divine event.[38] Rowan Williams' cover endorsement of the 2013 edition says:

> *The Secular City* is one of the undoubted classics of the great upheaval in religious thinking that took place in the sixties. We realise not only what has altered but what issues remain. His acute analysis is both a stimulus for fresh reflection and an invitation to return to his earlier work and study it more carefully.

With the Radical Orthodox, Cox sees secularity as the child of Christianity but does not accept their assertion that God is absent from the now empty forms. God is to be found in human history *and* in politics because history is the story of politics. Secularisation, understood by Gianni Vattimo (2006) as "the "destiny" of Christianity expressing its essential self-sacrificing or kenosis", is to be welcomed, as is John Caputo's "religion without religion", so long as this theology of secularisation is worked out in a global and political context. Theology's theme should not be church or religion, but the kingdom of God in the world (XXXIV-XXXV). Secularisation has enabled European Christians to perceive Christendom as a European phenomenon and construct and so to distinguish it from the universality of a truly catholic faith; the proper response of European Christians should be to rejoice that Christendom is over (pp.108-109).

[38] Boston Collaborative Encyclopaedia of Western Theology. 2019. Karl Rahner (1904-1984) [Online]. [Accessed 07 October 2019]. Available from: https://people.bu.edu/wwildman/bce/rahner.htm

By the 2013 edition, Cox accepted that the resilience and return of religion to public life had disproved part of his secularisation thesis, but not his understanding of secularisation as the liberation from controlling narratives and dogmas which has been seen by some as a harbinger of post-modernity (LVI, p.1). He saw urbanisation as the driver of a secularisation to be welcomed by Christians rather than seen as a threat; the early church grew in urban centres and both were the contexts in which people escaped their narrow tribal identities (p.13). Urbanisation, and with it the "cosmopolitan confrontations of city living", brings people of all faiths and none into contact with each other, causing them to question previously held assumptions about their own faiths and cultures (p.1), much as Wirth described above. Because the city is a place where choices have to be made between the multiplicity of options the city offers, it is the place of human freedom and creativity. This creativity is seen in the way urban dwellers make sense of the "illegible" city that cannot be contained within any single homogenising meaning or narrative and how they thereby become fellow citizens with their 'others' (LVI-LVII). Cox sees freedom, and with it, the assumption of human responsibility to choose, as the essence of the Gospel, in contrast to the Law[39] that constrains freedom by external means (pp.56-58). "The Gospel is the activity of God creating new possibilities in history" (p.57). He attributes the origins of the civil rights movement in the USA, with which he was deeply engaged as a friend of Martin Luther King Jnr., to the newly-gained mobility of African Americans moving to the cities: "People on the move spatially are usually on the move intellectually, financially, or psychologically. All of this naturally threatens those who already occupy the positions of power and influence in the society" (pp.64-65).

God-given human freedom is the condition precedent for creativity which is a co-creativity with the Divine. Cox's name for the city of the 1960s was techno*polis*, emphasising human *techne* in the art and skill of making cities. This freedom, given to humankind in Genesis, is contrasted with an

[39] He later disavowed this misunderstanding of Jewish law in his introduction to the 2013 edition, p.LV.

Aristotelian givenness of the hierarchical cosmic order that is merely to be discovered and conformed to. This biblical freedom is seen in the prerogative of naming creatures, and so of creating a world of meaning, even as the Creator named light Day and darkness Night (p.88). Creation is not a *fait accompli* but is an ongoing partnership between Creator and creature, creating "[a] world", a cosmos of meaning which is wrestled out of a chaos of disorder" (pp.91-93). Whereas Ellul and Ward condemn the city precisely because it is the work of humans, Cox (like Aquinas) sees it as the proper work of humankind in partnership with God.

The Secular City was welcomed by liberation theologians in South America with whom Cox worked in the two decades following its 1965 publication; in his foreword to the 1988 edition, he writes, "Liberation theology is the legitimate, though unanticipated heir of *The Secular City"* (XLVIII). He calls for a theology of politics that needs also to be a theology able to respond to rapid social change. He argues that the lack of such a theology determined the course of Cuba's revolution. Castro's revolution, opposed by many Catholic clerics, was initially supported by many Baptist Christians but, because they did not have such a theology, their involvement in the ongoing post-revolutionary restructuring of society faded away. While a Lutheran two kingdoms theology, like Augustine's two cities, may have the benefit of preventing the sacralisation and blessing of political causes, Cox warns, "in actuality, however, this position frequently functions in a conservative way. It implicitly favours the "powers that be" …. At its worst, a two kingdoms theology can become an ideology of reaction" (p.128). A theology of politics must have the effect of drawing people into participation in political life in the emerging city whose symbolic *telos* is the new Jerusalem (p.130).

Cox addresses three anticipated objections and counters some, at least, of Ward's negative theology of the city:

i) 'The kingdom of God is God's work whereas the city is human work.' He accepts this has history; the conflation of social, economic, and technological progress with the Kingdom may have needed a corrective but it went too far. On Christological grounds, he rejects the human/divine, now/not yet binaries it assumes. Jesus identifies so much with the Kingdom that:

> its meaning is represented in his person. Jesus *is* the Kingdom …. The theological problem of the Kingdom thus becomes a Christological one, and all questions about whether it is to be interpreted as a divine or human act must be answered in terms of the person of Jesus. …. If Jesus personifies the Kingdom of God, then the elements of divine initiative and human response in the coming of the Kingdom are totally inseparable (p.132).

ii) 'The response to the advent of the Kingdom is repentance and renunciation, whereas the secular city is built by skill and know-how (pp.131-133).' But, says Cox, biblical repentance was not so much moralistic as profoundly social and effected the deprioritising of restrictive familial bonds in favour of participation in a wider sociality, which was itself the discipline of discipleship. Similarly, the city itself is the context in which pre-existent social ties are relativised by the demands of a citizenship that transcends individual or group self-interest (p.134).

iii) 'The Kingdom is above or beyond history, while the secular city is within it.' This view does not allow for an eschatological process of realisation in which the Kingdom, "*still* occurs. It still presents us with an objectively new social situation and provides the occasion within which we are summoned to discard the old and take up something different" (p.135). The identification of Christ with the Kingdom enables us to see the Kingdom coming towards us, calling for our decision in the homeless, the asylum seeker, the street sex-worker, in those who struggle against poverty, in the ecological crises we face. This is "the most promising context for theological reflection" but this comes *after* the commitment to doing, to "discipleship" (XLVI). The church is only truly the church

when it addresses itself to the city and takes up the challenge "to discard the old and take up something different" (p.135).

The Secular City is a foundational text for this thesis. In my view, Radical Orthodoxy and, indeed, much political theology, even when it has seen through the pretensions of the state, still continues to see like a state if it does not consider the possibility of another polity. Furthermore, it has the additional problem of seeing like a church,[40]and both prevent seeing like a city. Cox is one of the few theologians who foreground the city and only then, and in that context, consider what church might mean. Whereas a predefined concept of the secular assumes there is little point in looking for God there, Cox makes no such assumption and expects to find the God who has become human in the human city, much as bell hooks queers 'the margins' and finds humanity there.[41] Ward says the city belongs to Christians as it belongs to God but then offers them not much more than a critique of all that is wrong with the city or what Cox calls "an ideology of reaction". If Christians have inadequate theological tools to equip them for *positive* engagement with the rapidly changing city, as the Cuban Baptists found, they effectively abdicate their *political* responsibility for it. They are then left with attempts to mitigate the social effects of the negatives they *can* see - Christians and churches are much more in evidence in food banks than in arts and architecture, in largely homogeneous church meetings than in multi-ethnic community meetings. Ward and Cox each count citizenship as discipleship but if, as Ward says, the city is to be shaped in the light of the heavenly one, this is a city of tribes and nations which most UK church congregations do not reflect. The church is seen as conservative defender of what used to be, rather than the radical pioneer or progressive early adopter of "the kingdom that is coming towards us". Cox's insistence that theological reflection follows engagement recalls Magnusson's warning that any conceptualisation

[40] See p.57.
[41] See p.37.

of 'the city' must always remain answerable to the material cityness of city life.[42] Crucially for a theology of engagement, Cox's positive theology of the city inspires positive engagement (as demonstrated by the book's impact) in a way that Ward's negative critique cannot.

The extent to which Cox is foundational to my thesis will become more apparent in Chapter 4 where I discuss how Pentecostal theologian Nimi Wariboko builds on Cox's thinking to vivify the secular city with the presence and activity of the Spirit of God, so that the secular city is also the Charismatic city.

The city without patriarchy

I am conscious that nearly all the theologians and other thinkers I have considered in this chapter, apart from Augustine, have been men from the global North. In the introduction to this chapter, I said I started out with some hunches, another is that the city, usually characterised in biblical texts as female, will not be fully legible (Cox's term) to the male gaze.[43]

There are parallels between how Castells and Ward see the city as a passive and dominated site of global, economic, and cultural power and Ellul, who sees the city on the wrong side of salvation history, powerless to help itself. He describes the city as powerless and at the same time blameworthy, "an instrument used by man to strengthen his confidence outside of God"; an "independent *body* (…) called upon to repent of all she is, by her origin, by her material reality, and by her structure and meaning. She is found on the first row of all men's attempt to escape and

[42] See p.27.
[43] Leslie Kern says: "As feminist geographer Jane Darke says in one of my favourite quotes: "Any settlement is an inscription in space of the social relations in the society that built it…Our cities are patriarchy written in stone, brick, glass, and concrete" (Kern, 2020, p.13).

revolt" (Ellul, 1997, pp.117-118). In a discussion of why, in Luke 10:13-15, Jesus condemns the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum because they did not repent when they saw his miracles, Ellul speaks of miracles as a manifestation of power in which we see a confrontation between two powers:

> The city as an expression of the spirit of power, herself a material and spiritual power, is vanquished and convicted only by a manifestation of power. The human word has no way of coming to grips with her. It cannot *penetrate* the city, which as we have said, is the place of confusion, the place of mutual incomprehension, the place of spiritual separation. The city cannot understand words, and Jesus speaks to her only to curse her. …. Here the Spirit manifests *himself* clearly, *brutally*, one might say. And no less is needed to speak to the city; for as both a spiritual and material power, she can be *dominated* only by a power which expresses itself by both material and spiritual means, and both at the same time (pp.118-119, my italics).

Although he cannot avoid the use of the female pronoun (*la cité*), Ellul writes of the city in terms that are patently patriarchal, oppressive, and violently abusive.[44] This language is at odds with Jesus weeping over the city in Luke 19:41 and his use of a metaphor indicating a feminine God who wants to "gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings" (Matthew 24:37). At odds too with how the prophet speaks to the city in Isaiah 52, 54 and 62.[45]

What is to be done when the earthly city proves to be as bad as much of the theology about cities has portrayed it to be? Gillian Rose offers a powerful reflection on a painting by Poussin depicting the widow of Phocion "the Good", put to death by the city gone bad, who, with her female

[44] Ward makes the same point (Ward, 2000, pp.49-50).
[45] For example: "Fear not", "do not feel humiliated", "with great compassion I will gather you", "nor will I rebuke you", "the Lord delights in you".

companion, defies the order that her husband's body be left outside Athens' walls. They could condemn the city and escape from it to some new Jerusalem of idealised 'community', failing to see they might carry within and reproduce in worse form the construct of the old Athens. Instead, Rose suggests, by re-entering the city in their lament and mourning over its corruption and perversion, they call the city to be as it should be, the just city in which just women and just men enact justice (Rose, 1996, p.26). Rose says: "In these delegitimate acts of tending the dead, these acts of justice, against the current will of the city, women reinvent the political life of the community [*as*] mourning becomes the law" (p.35). Only by mourning can the suffering caused by the injustice done in the city be fully articulated and made plain, and the soul be restored to reengage, in vulnerability and anxiety, with the city (p.36).[46]

Conclusion

When the liberal political order is being challenged from many directions, it is timely to consider whether it should be rescued from what it apparently exists to save us from, or if its salvific pretensions should be exposed and demythologised "in order to see the old, rotting flesh of the state in the full light of day" (Critchley, 2012, p.90). To expose the mythic nature of the nation-state is to do no more than recognise that all forms of human being and doing are provisional and contingent, and so to afford the possibility of considering other existent political forms that may have been overlooked or suppressed and of imagining others not yet tried that more closely align with a faithful imaginary. I have sought to extract politics and 'the political' from what they have become in the hegemonic polity of the nation-state and suggested that they be recovered in the *polis* of the city. This is not to set up the city as an autonomous body or miniature statelet but to see

[46] The geographer (also called) Gillian Rose, in a volume of feminist geography, *Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge* (1993), characterises the hitherto universally masculinist academic discipline of geography as one that denies difference. Without plurality, as Hannah Arendt says, there can be no political life (Arendt, 1958, p.201).

it as part of complex cosmopolitical space in something like a bottom-up Thomist subsidiarity. The city is by nature more suited to interdependence and cooperation because, unlike the state, it is not founded on a notion of sovereignty. It has been necessary to view the city in contradistinction to the state in order to see how it avoids the problems with the state that I have outlined, but this can only go so far if the city is not of a different order of *polis* from the state, as Magnusson and others claim it is.

The terrain of modern and post-modern political theology has been significantly defined by Augustine and Aquinas, both of whom were writing at a time when the city was an important polity and before it was eclipsed by the rise of the modern nation-state. Although I have not considered their influence on the non-confessional thinkers I have referenced, there are certain to be traces, given their historical importance to the development of Western thought. I have not attempted to reconcile their political philosophies and am content to theologise the city in a third space (to follow a path between them). Augustine's paradigm of two cities warns against sacralising political forms and opens all existent forms to the ever-present possibility of disruption by the Other, Lefebvre's "*Il y a toujours l'Autre"*. On the other hand, it sets up a sacred/secular divide that can devalue and demonise political life. Aquinas, like Aristotle, values both political life and the city *polis* as God-given and looks for ways to equitably distribute power to compensate for the inevitably of sin. Yet, as I argue in the next chapter, his approbation of political and monarchical sovereignty and an Aristotelian givenness of societal order precludes truly political life and an Augustinian openness to the Other.

William Cavanaugh's critique of the state and Graham Ward's of the city are prominent examples of contemporary Radical Orthodox and Augustinian political theologies that demythologise both state

and city but fail to go much beyond the church in imagining an alternative polity. In contrast Cox sees the concomitance of secularisation and urbanisation as the environment in which the kingdom of God comes through the human-Divine work of making the city; in Cox's political theology, Christology and the city are central, not the church. Ward and Ellul are typical of the negative criticism that characterises much recent theological treatment of the city and which may account for the relative paucity of political theology concerning itself with cities.

To theologise the city cannot be to do theology as if we know already what the city is. I have outlined claims by Castells and Ward that the city cannot be adequately distinguished from the wider societal, political, and economic environment but consider these claims to be persuasively rebutted by Max Weber, Lewis Wirth, Ed Soja, and Warren Magnusson. The city, by virtue of *synekesis* and difference will always exceed any *arche* so that to see like a city is to see an-archically. Where the nation-state struggles to contain difference, the city thrives on it. Aristotle's definition of the city as the space where strangers meet is echoed in Soja's third space or cityspace and in Cox's understanding of the process of secularisation. These are the spaces of otherness in and from which a city theology must be done and where politics begins in company with the poor and the stranger. In this chapter I have done little more than sketch out the groundworks on which this project will be developed. To see like a city invites a fuller exploration of politics, space, difference, love, power, ecclesiology, sovereignty, pneumatology, and eschatology.

I have looked for the connections between political theology and how the city has been variously described and defined, in order to bring urban theory and political theology into dialogue. The primary connection I have made is where both disciplines complexify political space: the city theorised after the spatial turn is complex space (as is the world seen like a city). Seeing like a city is

inherently a radical critique of the 'simple' political space of the state and of the hegemonic idea of the nation-state. Neo-Augustinian political theology shares much of this criticism, not from the viewpoint of the city but from another that also long precedes the existence of the nation-state, namely the church. Where I say the nation-state is the negation of the city, Radical Orthodoxy says (in different words) that it is the negation of the church. These two standpoints—city and church—are set up in the chapter in agonistic relation, with their contradictory claims to be truly public space (*res publica)* and the context for a humanising politics and Christian discipleship. This is perhaps an appropriate paradox in the light of the eschatological *telos* of a "city without a church" (Drummond). The claim I am making is that a political theology of seeing like a city presents a different view and different questions from both seeing like a state and seeing like a church (Radical Orthodoxy's political ecclesiology). I place on hold until the final chapter a discussion of what my approach means for the church.

Sovereignty has been problematised throughout this chapter: the myth of sovereignty of the modern liberal nation-state; the city as an inherently anarchic polity that is not founded on a mythical sovereignty; the dynamic complexity of cities that resists and subverts sovereignty; the problem of an implicitly sovereigntist political theory and imaginary; and the sovereignty that is essentially patriarchal. A guiding hypothesis of my project is that if sovereignty is alien to the polity that a city is, only a political theology that is itself alien to sovereignty will be able to adequately read the text of the city. In the next chapter I will explore these claims about non-sovereign cities and develop my argument for a kenotic political theology that annuls sovereignty.

Chapter 2: The problem of sovereignty

Introduction

In the last chapter I began to lay out the discursive terrain on which I am bringing political theology into dialogue with the development of urban studies in the last century and this. I established an important connection between them in how they each complexify political space allowing for alternative political space-times other than the nation-state. I also identified mutually contradictory claims as to the location of truly public and political space and concurred with Harvey Cox who, in claiming the secular city is fully part of God's design for humankind, radically departs from the Augustinian theologies that have a mostly negative view of the city.

This chapter develops two foundational claims of the thesis and explores how they may be related– that sovereignty is alien to the city *and* to the God revealed in Jesus. To see like a city problematises sovereignty. My kenotic political theology, kenarchy,[47] does the same and recognises the historical contingency of political sovereignty on theologies of divine sovereignty. The idea of the nation-state is contingent on the combined myths of nationhood and sovereignty whereas the city, by virtue of being complex political space, is inherently resistant to domination. I consider what this means for the internal political life of cities and for how they relate and connect to the wider world. I argue that a political theology predicated on sovereignty, particularly one in the tradition of its modern-day founder Carl Schmitt, has no relevance to the city. Augustine rules out any justification for human sovereignty over others, and his theological motif of two cities allows for a more complex theological and political reading of the city than might be supposed from the neo-Augustinian Radical Orthodox theology I outlined in Chapter 1. As for Thomist political theology, Catholic teaching on subsidiarity sees the need to restrain sovereignty by means of complexifying political space. I go further in

[47] A composite neologism coined by Roger Mitchell (2011) from the Greek words *kenō* (to empty) and *archō* (to rule).

arguing for a theology—and a way of doing theology—that does not proceed from an assumption of necessary sovereignty, whether human or divine. Kenarchy argues that the 'emptying out' of divine sovereignty also delegitimates any human sovereignty. I argue that kenarchic theology and praxis renders the non-sovereign (an-archic) polity of the city theologically legible. Hannah Arendt and Giorgio Agamben are important referents for my project, as political philosophers whose thinking about politics and the political is not tethered to the idea of the nation-state and is radically critical of political sovereignty.

I follow the schema of the first chapter in bringing theology into dialogue with the 'secular' discourse on cities. A dialogical approach holds the potential for the discovery of new meaning among all participants.[48] When political theology and political theory meet in the city, they have things to give to and receive from each other and from the city itself and so, more accurately, mine is a trialogical approach, because the city itself is between them, much like Arendt's 'world'.[49] As I will argue in the chapters that follow, the truth of the city is not discoverable at a distance or in abstraction but in the particularity of each city's cityness through encounter and relationship, from the bottom up and the inside out. I begin with the arguments of Magnusson and Barber for the sovereignty-free city, and then consider how far Augustinian and Thomist political theologies map onto a city without sovereignty. I then introduce kenarchic theology, by way of Agamben's understanding of the state of the exception, and begin to explore its applicability to cities as theology and praxis, as a corrective to

[48] "The process of dialogue itself [is] a free flow of meaning among all the participants …. A new kind of mind thus begins to come into being which is based on the development of a common meaning that is constantly transforming in the process of the dialogue. People are no longer primarily in opposition, nor can they be said to be interacting, rather they are participating in this pool of common meaning which is capable of constant development and change" (Bohm, 1987, p. 175).

[49] "If someone wants to see and experience the world as it 'really is', he can do so only by understanding it as something that is shared by many people, lies between them, separates and links them, showing itself differently to each and comprehensible only to the extent that many people can talk about it and exchange their opinions and perspectives with one another, over against one another. Only in the freedom of speaking with one another does the world, as that about which we speak, emerge in its objectivity and visibility from all sides" (Arendt, 2005, p.128).

the deficiencies that I find in Augustinian and Thomist approaches. I ask what this means for a church that has been a legitimator of sovereignty and what a kenarchic church might look like.

Cities without sovereignty

The modern sovereign nation-state has overdetermined our concept of the political and of politics and so paramount importance has been attributed to sovereignty as the guarantee of liberty and autonomy. The power required to achieve these apparent goods has, likewise, been defined by sovereignty as 'power over' and so politics aims to obtain and exercise *that kind* of power. I referred in the previous chapter to Zygmunt Bauman's diagnosis of the crisis of the nation-state as the irrevocable divorce between power and politics. In this chapter I argue that we can look to the city for the recovery of a commensurability between politics and power (Bauman's phrase) and that to do so means redefining both.

I have argued the key ontological distinction between the city and nation-state as *poleis*[50] is to do with sovereignty and that to talk about the city in these terms is to criticise pretensions to state sovereignty. The state is predicated on sovereign power over territory and people, the city is not. This cannot be due simply to cities' subordinate position within the sovereign state because cities pre-existed nation-states. Some states may have developed from 'city-states', and although naming them as such tells us they had become something other than cities, Max Weber argues even city-states such as those of medieval Italy had internally diverse forms of authority and governance that were intrinsically resistant to sovereignty *intra-* and *extra-muros*.[51] If we start from the city, this

[50] Always bearing in mind Magnusson's concern that we do not lose the "cityness" of cities when speaking of the *polis* (Magnusson, 2011, p.117).

[51] Weber understood the medieval city to be "a form of order resistant to and/or subversive of sovereignty. To see the city so is to recognise that it is not a miniature state, but rather an order of an entirely different type" (Magnusson, 2011, pp.117-118).

resistance to sovereignty has profound implications for how we conceive 'the political'—the space in which politics takes place—a space variously conceptualised, from Carl Schmitt to Jean-Luc Nancy, as the space of the sovereign.[52]

Resisting sovereignty

Weber and Warren Magnusson claim that the city is essentially inimical to sovereignty. Magnusson says:

> One might argue that what typifies a city is not the imposition of an overarching authority, but the multiplication of challenges to existing authorities of all sorts. To embrace the city is actually to embrace a condition that problematises claims to over-arching authority by generating rival claims (Magnusson, 2011, p.117).

Weber sees the city essentially as a market – how most cities began - which requires freedom to operate effectively and rationally. Because domination of the market is inevitable, he thinks the state is needed as external regulator. Nevertheless, he still views this as "non-legitimate domination", in that domination was not the purpose of the market but an unintended consequence. But this mercantile way of seeing cities, says Magnusson, is true only to a degree. Countless interactions in the city are not primarily market-related but operate according to their own rationality and, crucially for his argument, generate what he calls *political authorities* "which may or may not be recognised by the state", and are "more-or-less political" (pp.17-18). We are

[52] "The distinction between politics and the political was popularized in the late seventies by Claude Lefort who saw the political as the manner in which society was produced as a unity through the now empty place of the King. Politics on the other hand was the interplay of conflicting powers within this unity. He suggested that in democracy, the political was the (empty) symbolic space of authority. In the absence of a king, legitimacy remained always in question. Thus, the political signified the space for the contestation of the very basis of power" (Wall, 2013, unpaginated).

therefore "best advised to think of the urban as a hyperspace[53] of many dimensions, each of which is produced by political action and related to the others politically" (p.90). We fail to recognise these dimensions *as* political because we are limited to seeing politics like a state and so discount the rest of life as non-political.

Self-government, a key principle for Magnusson, is observable in the ways people interact in cities without the need for any external form of governmentality beyond the forms of authority they create for themselves. *Synekesis,* the dynamic essence of what Soja says makes a city (Soja, 2000), perpetually generates new forms of authority—and contestations between them—all of which are political. What is true within cities is also true between cities so that global cities, for example, orientate themselves to the world by transcending state borders; urbanism as a way of life (Wirth) is a global reality that similarly transcends the global market (Magnusson, 2011, pp.19-20). "Urbanism" says Magnusson, "is ultimately uncontainable, and that means that its politics always exceeds the regulatory efforts of the highest authorities. That means that urbanism and statism are always at odds, since statism […] is inspired by the idea that everything can be contained or controlled by higher authority that is properly constituted and empowered" (pp.24-25).

Sovereigntist thinking

Because our conceptions of politics are so conditioned by statist politics, Magnusson says even radical political alternatives are "parasitic upon this statist understanding" in looking to ideals of a modern sovereign republic to guarantee rights and democratic freedoms (p.2). And even radical anarchic alternatives that do not look to the state are inevitably reactive to statism. This hegemonic

[53] "Much more helpful are recent ideas from physics about hyperspace: an *n*-dimensional space in which each domain is related to all the others, even though the other domains may be imperceptible from the vantage point of any particular one" (Magnusson, 2015, p.22).

ontology of the political is already political in that it denies political legitimacy elsewhere, but it is so instilled into our consciousness that even radical movements not focused on the state "will not … produce the difference that takes us past dreams of sovereignty. Those dreams are too much a part of our heritage, too much a part of the political ontology that we assume without thinking" (p.2). Magnusson's argument is that the overlooked *polis* of the city has a different ontology. A statist ontology is predicated on sovereignty over territory, on a hierarchy of authorities with the state as final arbiter, and on all citizens ultimately subject to the authority of the state. In reality however, the desire for sovereignty, for control and order, is little more than a dream – in a quantum and fast-changing world we have limited control over what happens to us and even less over the outcomes of our actions. To see like a city is to see that the way the world works is much more like the relative anarchy of a city than according to the supposed order afforded by sovereignty. With a multiplicity of internal forms of authority which may or may not be amenable to hierarchical ordering, and in and amongst other sovereign states (some more sovereign than others), sovereignty is always partial at best.

This challenge to sovereigntist thinking has implications for how we interpret, theorise, and theologise the city; it is neither understandable nor controllable from some sovereigntist model or viewpoint. Instead, Magnusson suggests: "If we were to model it, it would be with reference to ideas about self-organising systems, non-linearities, and emergent properties. It is not an order susceptible to sovereign authority" (p.5). He says:

> [In contrast to] an implicitly sovereigntist political imaginary which puts the [political] theorist at a distance from the world, issuing instructions to it like a would-be king or president … realistic political theory must instead be developed *in situ*, attuned to the complexities of a world that we cannot control as sovereigns. That world is urban, whatever else it is (p.15).

This is an approach that looks for the political in particularity and in the specificities of situations and localities without imposing prior "ideological, ethical or constitutional norms" (Magnusson, 2015, p,212). Magnusson's insight here, that an epistemology of the city should be determined by the political ontology of cities, has implications for how we do political theology, which I discuss below.

The anarchy of sovereign nations

How cities really function exposes the fallacy of a (Hobbesian) necessary sovereignty, says Magnusson, and we should read this back into claims made for state sovereignty in international relations. If the sovereign state (Hobbes' Leviathan) is necessary to mediate the claims and guarantee the rights of sovereign yet constitutionally sinful individuals, why is there not a corresponding need to do the same for sovereign states? The political theorist Benjamin Barber was founder of the Global Parliament of Mayors.[54] He contrasts the benefits of the absence of sovereignty of cities with the problem of statist sovereignty in the face of current global challenges. Cities, he argues, hold the key to the kind of global collaboration and interdependence called for by the problems of the twenty-first century and that states are impotent to address without compromising their sovereignty (Barber, 2014, p.163). State sovereignty is no longer fit for purpose: "The very sovereign power on which nation states rely is precisely what renders them ineffective when they seek to regulate or legislate in common" (p.147). Cities' lack of sovereignty and essential interdependence qualifies them to be building blocks in a global order of governance *and* to rescue democracy by returning it at one and the same time to a global and local—glocal—scale in the cosmo*polis*: "the absence of sovereignty becomes their special virtue" (p.165). With the 'hard power' of states impeding the agency of cities, and cities' typically 'soft power' in getting things done, Barber asks if cities can guard their political innocence and avoid the "rivalry, conflict,

[54] Global Parliament of Mayors, 2024. [Online]. [Accessed 26 February 2024]. Available from: https://globalparliamentofmayors.org/

isolation, and hubris typical of states" (p.152) and which goes along with hard power. Politics at city-level is about persuasion, debate, partnership, and good administration, rather than legislation, order, and enforcement at state-level. Cities are dependent and interdependent by nature, not self-determining and autonomous. Maybe, he suggests, it is precisely this soft power that enables them to succeed where centralised executive command and control fails (p.152).[55] This is not to idealise cities and how power operates within and between them (and their hinterlands), but to contrast their complex and necessary interrelatedness with the supposed order of sovereign nations.

For differing reasons but with similar effect Magnusson and Barber challenge what they regard as the *pretensions* of the state to exercise sovereignty within its borders as the *sine qua non* of politics. Standing in the city they see the abstractions and limitations of the state. Magnusson finds there the possibility of recovering the "commensurability of power and politics" (Bauman, 2009, p.6)[56] in the local, whereas Barber sees in the local cosmo*polis* the potentiality for effective global governance; both are urgent in their appeal for a recovery of democratic political life.

City of nations (*ethnos*)

From the vantage point of a city like mine—Leeds is one of the most diverse in the United Kingdom with over 170 languages spoken— there is a further compelling reason to critique state sovereignty. In cities, for the most part people from many different cultures and traditions coexist in a social, cultural, and economic *synekesis* that shapes both the city and its citizenship. After all, as Aristotle said, "a city is a place where strangers meet" (Cox, 2013, XXXVII). What is inherent in the city is a problem for the nation-state. State sovereignty may, as Benedict Anderson argues, produce strong *internal* national identity and cohesion by subsuming other identities into the imagined community

[55] See also Ch 1, pp.24-25.
[56] Where politics is the ability both to decide what should be done and what can be done. See Ch 1, p.39.

of 'the nation' but this nationhood is vulnerable to the political expediency of reinforcing a national*ism* that accentuates *external* differences. The result is a circular logic wherein, "in terms of law, sovereignty assumes a condition of anarchy among states, and nationalism heightens general consciousness of this condition" (Cavanaugh, 2011, p.38). Nationalism's accentuation of external differences becomes internal intolerance and rejection of pluralism. Ted Cantle, who has been at the forefront of thinking and of UK policy formation on social cohesion and is an advocate of interculturalism, also sees sovereignty as the political Gordian knot for national governments. The dilution of ethnically-based nationhood, and the inevitability of population flows, leaves governments attempting "to cling to the idea of national sovereignty and maintain the pretence that they still command all activities within their borders, and they see this as being fundamental to their contract with the people who vote for them" (Cantle, 2012, p.2). Demographic diversity, as we saw in Chapter 1, is intrinsic to cityness and to the everyday experience of living in a city. This is not so true for towns and rural areas where suspicion or fear of the stranger has not been tempered by the everyday experience of sharing space with them. National policies and discourse on immigration and integration are rarely able to encompass both realities and for political reasons, are liable to favour one at the expense of the other, exploiting a divide between cities and towns.[57]

The Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities network (referred to in Chapter 1) is an indication that cities are not leaving it to national government to determine city policy and that cities want to learn from each other's experience and practice.[58] Even there, however, the emphasis is on managing diversity and misses the *political* potential of a city's diversity. Hannah Arendt, whose political

[57] The UK's current Conservative Government, for example, favours its support base in rural communities and in towns where immigration tends to be a more emotive issue than in cities.
[58] See Ch 1 p.25.

philosophy is not tied to any particular form of *polis,*[59] makes clear the opposition between sovereignty and the plurality which she says is essential for political life and links her radical critique of sovereignty to a monotheism that holds power and freedom indivisibly (Arendt, 1958, p.235).[60] It is not in sovereignty that freedom and reality exist but in plurality:

> If it were true that sovereignty and freedom are the same, then indeed no man could be free, because sovereignty, the ideal of uncompromising self-sufficiency and mastership, is contrary to the very condition of plurality (p.234).

Politics does not arise in the homogeneous space of society or nation but in the public space or "space of appearance" of the *polis*. This space, to be public, must exhibit "the simultaneous presence of innumerable perspectives" (pp.50, 57). The political power and the freedom to act is *conditional* on plurality and is to be found only "in the unreliable and temporary agreement of many wills and intentions" (p.201).

(R)ejecting sovereignty

The claim that cities are without sovereignty carries within it a critique of state sovereignty in relation to both inter-state relations and intra-state democracy. But, as Magnusson points out, the pervading post-modern suspicion of sovereignty more generally can, ironically, reinforce its political hegemony:

> Uncovering the secretly political character of things has become something of an obsession among radical critics over the last half century. They certainly have succeeded in convincing many people that rule is ubiquitous, that the

[59] "The *polis*, properly speaking, is not the city-state in its physical location; it is the organisation of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true space lies between people living together for this purpose, no matter where they happen to be" (Arendt, 1958, p.198).
[60] Arendt says 'monotheism' is a 17th century neologism; before then 'monarchy' was used of God (Arendt, 1958, p.235-6).

> king or the father is always present in our lives, that we are always already trying to liberate ourselves, and that this perpetual struggle is politics. I want to say: *not so*. This way of thinking about things just replicates the dominant ontology of the political and distracts us from the more difficult problem of understanding our way of life—urbanism or the city—politically. To understand things politically is to focus on what we do, how we think, and interact with one another without assuming either that how we are ruled is the central issue or that how we act is predetermined by processes that unfold behind our backs. The focus is on human agency and hence on purposive activity (Magnusson, 2011, p.35).

To which I want to say yes and no. I share his refutation of the statist political ontology, his hope that the city holds the possibility of non-sovereigntist political space, and his insistence on human agency for overcoming the inertia produced by centralised power. But, as Barber says, the state does exert juridical and political sovereignty over cities and this is not just a mindset but an ever-present reality that cities and their citizens must negotiate. With Magnusson (and as I will argue in Chapters 4-6) I think seeing politics through the lens of the city is itself liberating and empowering, but I am not convinced it is enough to free us from a mindset produced by socio-economic relations predicated on asymmetrical power. Just as conscientisation is needed "in order to see the old, rotting flesh of the state in the full light of day" (Critchley, 2012, p.90), so I argue it is necessary to expose the roots and routes of political sovereignty and this, as we saw with the nation-state, is a theopolitical task.

For citizens of liberal democracies, relatively few everyday activities and interactions may, as Magnusson says, be directly impacted or governed by the state, Nevertheless, via the tacit social contract, we put our faith in the state, cede our political agency to it, and want it to be sovereign when we need it to be. The myth of sovereignty has hegemonic power because we believe in it; the

slogan “take back control” with its appeal to recover a sovereignty ‘lost’ by the United Kingdom to the European Union, appeared to strike a chord with the majority of UK voters in the 2016 Brexit referendum campaign. Similar moves and sloganising by populist politicians globally suggest our perverse attachment to sovereignty runs deep and wide. Freire, like Foucault, understands that the real power of governmentality and oppression lies in its internalisation whereby it becomes a “submerged state of consciousness” which can then be ‘filled’ with “slogans that create even more fear of freedom”. To gain the freedom for truly human political agency—and to prevent the oppressed in turn becoming the oppressor—Freire says we must come to a consciousness (conscientisation) that we “house” oppression within ourselves and then “eject these slogans” (Freire, 1996, p.76). This is what I think the “radical critics” (whom Magnusson criticises) are trying to do when they problematise sovereignty as something in and beyond the state, but also as an internalised oppression.

Theologies of sovereignty

The city without sovereignty calls into question the church and its theology, deeply implicated as they are in the history of how sovereignty came to be the definitive and paramount political value of the nation-state – the post-1945 international order holds state sovereignty over territory to be an impugnable fact. In the last chapter we saw how the idea of divine sovereignty, assumed to be the absolute and necessary condition for freedom, was translated into state sovereignty (whether monarchical, republican, or communist) in a “migration of the holy” (Cavanaugh, 2011).[61] Christendom’s confusion and conflation of religious and secular power over the last two millennia means that the West has developed its political forms under a sovereign sky. And so, from Christendom’s beginning, middle, and end, I will now briefly consider how Eusebius, Aquinas, and

[61] See Ch.1 p.52.

Carl Schmitt understood the analogy between divine and human sovereignty, before turning to Augustine's more nuanced approach.

Christendom

Eusebius of Caesarea, the first historian of the early church, welcomed, in Constantine's reign, the divine mandate of the Roman Empire to bring about the unity on earth patterned on the unity of heaven under the sovereignty of God. This was a unity that erased difference - for Eusebius, Jewish monotheism and sovereignty were indivisible. Polytheism, plurality of governments, and national identities were offences against the sovereignty of God and societal unity under God, and obstacles to the advance of the eschatological peace (Mitchell, 2011, pp.34,39).

At the dawn of the European Renaissance, Aquinas distinguishes the origin, mode, and use of sovereignty. The origin and use can be bad, but the mode is "good in all cases, for the mode of sovereignty consists in a proper order of ruler and subject, and it is in this latter respect alone that sovereignty can be said to be from God *simpliciter*" (Aroney, 2007, p.175). Aquinas finds support for monarchy and aristocracy from the "Old Law" in the Hebrew scriptures, the natural law principles of which can be applied, despite the supervening revelation of the Gospel, because they are the optimal form of virtuous political order (pp.213-220). Cities merit substantial attention from Aquinas because Thomist political theology aims to temper sovereignty by subsidiarity.[62] Subsidiarity is not subordination because each social and political form—such as a city—is similarly ordained by God as part of the virtuous ordering of the whole.

[62] Aquinas, as we saw in Chapter 1, grants the virtuous necessity of subsidiarity, but only because of the inevitable fallibility of rulers. In today's world, William Cavanaugh has doubts about the ability of these intermediate forms of association to withstand the state in its subservience to global capital. The evidence points, he says, to the "withering of civil society" (Cavanaugh, 2011, pp.27-29).

For Carl Schmitt, "the twentieth-century godfather of political theology … and sometime Nazi" (Hollerich, 2005, p.107),[63] the link between divine sovereignty and political sovereignty is not causative but correlational: the ontology of the political is grounded in a prevailing metaphysical worldview which, in turn, is grounded in a sovereign God.[64] Schmitt sees the decay of a religious metaphysics as, *ipso facto*, the decay of "the political", thus reducing politics to liberalism, economism, and "technicity". The move from monarchy to liberal democracy obscures sovereignty and masks liberalism's implicit rejection of God's sovereignty. Liberalism's dispersal and obfuscation of sovereignty also entails the loss of the friend-enemy distinction that is axiomatic to Schmitt's understanding of the political and which he considers to be rooted in an Augustinian doctrine of original sin (p.111-115). Schmitt famously defines the sovereign as, "he who decides on the state of exception" (Agamben, 2005, p.1), who suspends the law to defend the law, who sacrifices democracy to save democracy.

Augustine

Unlike Aquinas, Augustine de-conflates temporal and divine power and sees no such virtuous analogy between divine and human sovereignty: "Therefore" he writes, "I cannot refrain from speaking about the city of this world, a city which aims at dominion, which holds nations in enslavement, but is itself dominated by that very lust of domination" (CoG 1.1). Sovereign power, he says, is ineradicably violent because it can brook no challenge.[65] Such is his repudiation of any human power over other humans, in the *saeculum*, pre-fall, and in the *eschaton*, that he says:

[63] Schmitt initially supported the Nazi regime that suspended the German constitution by the Enabling Act of 1933, inaugurating the 'state of exception' that endured the length of the regime.
[64] Marc de Wilde says Schmitt, starting "from a Catholic perspective on the political, emphasizing the necessity of the existing legal-political order … advocates the authoritarian state, because he compares it with God's omnipotence" (de Wilde, 2011, pp.365-366).
[65] "Anyone whose aim was to glory in the exercise of power would obviously enjoy less power if his sovereignty was diminished by a living partner. Therefore, in order that the sole power should be wielded by one person, the partner was eliminated" (CoG, 15.5).

> [God] did not wish the rational being, made in his own image, to have dominion over any but irrational creatures, not man over man, but man over beasts. Hence the first just men were set up as shepherds of flocks, rather than kings of men, so that in this way also God might convey the message of what was required by the order of nature (CoG 19.15).[66]

Thus, he says, Christian faith transvaluates[67] the patriarchal power of the head of the household from domination into "compassion in taking care of others".[68] Oliver O'Donovan says of this passage that Augustine "conveys the message that the practice of the Christian householder is in fact subtly subversive of these institutions [of governance and slavery] in that it reasserts the primal equality of every human being to every other" (O'Donovan, 2004, p.68). Such a Christian household is "the beginning, or rather a small component part of the city, and every beginning is directed to some end of its own kind, and every component part contributes to the completeness of the whole of which it forms a part" (CoG 19.16). The implication is that this household, as a domination-free space, an o*ikonomia*, contributes, as a cell to a body, to the city of the same domination-free order. Just as there are many homes in a city living side by side peaceably, he imagines small kingdoms living in peace and justice without the need or desire to extend their influence by dominating each other.[69]

Performing Augustinian citizenship – Cavanaugh and Ward

William Cavanaugh suggests Augustine's title, *Civitas Dei,* means that he is speaking not of the *polis* but of citizenship, and so not of two cities but of "two performances, two practices of space and time" (Cavanaugh, 2011, p.49). These performances (but of time more than space, he suggests) are

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[66] He goes on to say, however, that the same order of nature demands that people be subjected to slavery because of their sin, and that enemy slaves taken in just war are, *ipso facto*, sinners.
[67] Oliver O'Donovan says "transvaluated" because transformation awaits "the coming of Christ's kingdom" (O'Donovan, 2004, p.68).
[68] CoG 19.14.
[69] "To rejoice in the extent of empire is not a characteristic of good men" (CoG 4.15).

modalities, either of love of God and service of neighbour (*caritate*), or of love of self and the lust for domination (*libido dominandi*). Graham Ward also sees the cities as performances and says, although "the difference between the kenotic disposition of *caritate* and the despotic disposition of *libido* emphatically remains", it is difficult to judge between them because the two performances are commingled and exceed both church and state (Ward, 2000, pp.227-228). Perhaps then, all one can say is that its inevitable (predestined) end is seen only at the *eschaton* (p.233). In seeing the cities as performances, we see that they are not predefined but defined by the nature, virtuous or not, of performance. While this offers the exciting possibility (for my thesis) of an Augustinian performance of a citizenship freed from, and subversive of, all sovereigntist relations, it is a performance of the age to come, i.e., of time, but not of space. Citizenship takes centre stage; other citizens and the material reality of the city fall away, indistinct, into the shadows. Augustine himself, in *City of God,* may use 'city' allegorically but he was writing at a time when political discourse centred on virtuous citizenship of real cities that were the centres of social, religious, political and philosophical life within the empire. Although he is inspired and provoked by the anagogical 'city of God' in the Psalms, (CoG 11.1) it too has a concrete referent, namely Jerusalem, in the light of which he is theo-politically imagining a sovereignty-free city and wider world. Cavanaugh and Ward are at risk of abstracting virtuous citizenship from the secular state and, in their desire to repoliticise the church, conflate it (the church) with the city of God in a way Augustine does not (and that Arendt says is merely *social*). By their definition, which citizenship is which cannot be confined to the church or to Christians – citizenship is as citizenship does. As we shall see in the next chapter, the evidence that any citizenship is *political*, according to Lefebvre, is that it *must* have produced new political space in the city, and according to Arendt, that it has brought about newness ("natality").

Ward references Michel de Certeau's depiction of the city haunted by other voices (*heterology*) and other spaces (*heterotopia*) that subvert the totalising spatiality of "the planned and readable city".

This suggests the possibility of a kenarchic performance of citizenship that, in subverting and refusing any and all forms of domination, chooses to *be* other and encounters the transcendence of the city of God in the face of the Other (Ward, 2000, pp.230-232). But more than that, in the aftermath of the revolutionary event of Paris, 1968, and perceiving the emergence of a new politics of space, Certeau, (like Lefebvre, whose spatial analysis I explore in some depth in Chapter 3) is asking "the questions concerning subversion and a totalising spatiality" (p.231). Unlike Cavanaugh and Ward, Certeau ties together performance, space, the Other, and the city. For Ward, however, Certeau's city remains virtual, and cities only metonymic for larger economic, political, and cultural forces. He sees no continuity between the eschatological city of God of Revelation, chapters 21 and 22, and the human city which will pass away (Ward, 2009, p.213) where there is no possibility of Christian citizenship beyond participation in the church's contestation with the city.[70]

Ward says the 'performance' of Christian citizenship needs to be understood within the "framework" of theology; political theology, he says, begins with "Yhwh reigns" (p.167, fn.12) and "with the sovereignty of the one God and the operations of that sovereignty in and across time" (p.166). Augustine's sovereignty is more nuanced: he allows no sovereignty in human relations but reserves to God absolute sovereignty in relation to human free-will (increasingly as time passes) (Madsen, 2001, pp.43-44). This is the root of his doctrine of predestination which we may normally think of in terms of human free-will but which he also applies to his two cities. His genealogy of the *civitas terrena* demonstrates that from the first it is predestined to destruction, an unbridgeable gulf fixed between it and the city of God. But here is an example of the problem in abstracting citizenship and its performance from real cities. The cities which Jesus says are to be judged for their corporate

[70] "Our contemporary cities are not sites for the development of virtuous citizenship; they are not sites for the development of citizenship at all" (Ward, 2009, p.215).

sin he also says would have been able to repent;[71] and in the story of Jonah, with whom Jesus identifies himself, even the most egregiously sinful city of Nineveh can repent if God's prophet will only be kenotically obedient to give it the chance of doing so. The problem with holding to an Augustinian idea of divine sovereignty is that it cannot help but seep into the performance of political citizenship in the city.

Taking and leaving Augustine

A political theology of cities, such as this, must negotiate Augustine's two cities. Clearly, I am not uncritical of Augustine and Augustinian political theology and of how helpful it is to my project of theologising the city. However, a premise of this thesis is that the city is an answer to the crisis of the liberal democratic nation-state, and in successive historical crises Augustine's political theology has been the source material for imagining and enacting the possibility of another *polis*, one not determined by what has been, but eschatologically by what is to come. Arendt recognised this in Augustine, and believed she was doing the same in her time. From Augustine himself I take forward: the refusal of human-on-human sovereignty; an essential anarchy in which there is no need for governmentality pre-fall or in the *eschaton*; and the relativisation of any political space that claims sovereignty by the interpolation of other space that disregards and transcends it. On the other hand, the echoes of his disparagement of the political life of Rome and its empire can be heard in the largely negative theological critique of cities to which I referred in the previous chapter. As to Ward's Augustinianism, three further problems come to mind. The first is the opposition between sovereignty and plurality on which, Arendt says, hangs the political. The other two follow on and are linked: a dialogic mode of doing theology in the (Aristotelian) city where meeting and creating the city together with strangers is delimited by a sovereign God, as Arendt warns; and radical

[71] "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes" (Matthew 11:21, NASB).

democracy, which I will argue in Chapter 4 is the only politics worth hoping for, entails a dialogic commitment.

Before I leave Augustine for the moment, he offers the city three possible solutions to the problem of sovereignty. The first is the complete analogical lack between divine and human sovereignty, meaning that if God's sovereignty bears no relation to any human use of the word, it annihilates/negates/eradicates human sovereignty. Secondly, in Augustine's city of God, in place of government is love, love of God and neighbour.[72] The third, and most important for this thesis, is how he complexifies political space, as I discuss in the next chapter. From the point of view of the city as sovereignty-free space, the problem of Augustine's doctrine of absolute divine sovereignty (Ward's "sovereignty of the one God") remains and carries the risk of the church reinfecting the politics of the city with sovereignty.

Kenarchy

I have said that my theology is kenarchic. Kenarchy is an ongoing project of theo-praxis with which I have been engaged from the start and to which this thesis contributes. Kenarchy asks what follows for political theology if God is the very opposite of sovereign and, in the Christ-Pentecost event, has decisively 'emptied' out sovereignty - not from God (in whom there is no sovereignty), but from humanity and all human affairs. Because the incarnation is not only enfleshment but also the sharing of humankind's broken and sinful condition, it is possible to speak of Jesus taking on and self-

[72] Notwithstanding Arendt's criticism of Augustinian love of neighbour that it is apolitical. "I never love my neighbour for his own sake, only for the sake of divine grace. This indirectness, which is unique to love of neighbour, puts an even more radical stop to the self-evident living together in the earthly city. This indirectness turns my relation to my neighbour into a mere passage for the direct relation to God himself …. This indirectness breaks up social relations by turning them into provisional ones" (Arendt, 1996, p.111). The philosophical bind that Arendt sees in Augustine is succinctly put by Patrick Boyle in his commentary on her thesis on Augustine: "in the centre of moral considerations of conduct stands the self; in the centre of political considerations of conduct stands the world" (Boyle, 1987, p.47).

emptying (in his *kenosis*) the humanly created forms of sovereignty and kingship.[73] From their attribution of the titles belonging to Caesar and kingship to Christ, it is widely accepted that this was how the early church interpreted the Jesus event. The titles signify current accepted usage but in the process of attribution, "Jesus's history comes to fill out and define the title. One moves from saying that Jesus is Lord to recognizing that Lord is Jesus" (Schlesinger, 2016, pp.636). Kenosis is not a temporary laying aside of sovereignty by Jesus during his earthly life only to be picked up again in his ascension; this post-resurrection kenotic divinity is no longer aligned with, but is seen to be in confrontation with, sovereignty in all its forms[74] so that the title Lord is used ironically.

To distinguish his approach from kenotic theology generally, and to signify its implications for the political, Roger Mitchell coins the word *kenarchy*. God incarnate permanently empties out sovereignty from the theanthropic eschatological horizon. Power, previously and in the condition of sin, vested in sovereignty, is now by the Christ-Pentecost event freely given for the renewing of the creation by a reconciled and restored humanity.[75] Mitchell says:

> The effect, expressed in colloquial terms, is to turn the hierarchical system of empire on its head. Life-laying-down loving becomes the *telos* and motif from which all cultural, political, and creational life is ordered. Hence the ultimate expression of rule described as "highly exalted…above every name"[76] … is permanently kenotic and by no means implies a return to the place of imperial sovereignty. Its effect is to turn all imperial configurations of rulership and

[73] And other forms such as patriarchy, ethnicity, religion, et cetera.
[74] And with it, *kyriarchy*, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's word, signifying not just patriarchy but all forms of domination and submission (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1992).
[75] "For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are children of God …. The anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the children of God" (Romans 8:14, 21, NASB).
[76] Philippians 2:9.

> political relationship upside down by making the lowest place the highest place, and the exercise of power the emptying of it out (Mitchell, 2011, pp.174-175).

This is a theology of the exception where Schmitt's sovereign exception (the necessity of sovereignty beyond the law to constitute and guarantee the law) is instead understood by Mitchell "as the fulcrum of divine grace and outpoured love where God's choice to love abolishes the whole soteriological genealogy of church and empire expressed today as biopower. This identifies Jesus' choice to love as the heart of the gospel testimony" (p.175). Of all humans in all time, Jesus is uniquely able to claim sovereignty and use sovereign power, but in his Gethsemane decision[77] the historic choices he makes for kenotic power and love are made permanent: "God, understood in this sense, is the God of the eternal decision to love" (p.194). The decision to love is the true authority behind things and "God's kenotic love is disclosed as the abiding constituent choice behind the cosmos" (p.195). Kenarchy, then, is a theo-political reimagining of politics, power, and economics occasioned by "God's eternal decision to love".

For the purposes of this thesis, I am using kenosis to refer to an economy of relational and apposite loving response to and reception of the Other. As a source text for kenotic theology, the *Carmen Christi* of Philippians 2 has been subject to a range of interpretations. Once Chalcedon had decreed in the fifth century that Jesus was fully divine and fully human, the debate centred on verse 6 and to which attributes of his equality with God the Son's kenosis referred.[78] Kenosis itself yields a variety of interpretations: "'self-emptying', 'self-withdrawing', 'self-limiting', or 'self-giving'" (Oord, 2015,

[77] "Not my will, but yours be done" and "Do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?" (Luke 24:22, Matthew 26:53, NASB)
[78] "[Jesus] although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped" (NASB).

p.156).[79] More recent discussions have focused on verses 7 and 8[80] and on how the kenosis of the Son reveals God's nature *and* how God acts in the world.[81] Mitchell argues for a political reading of kenosis; the incarnate Son does not lay aside supposed divine sovereignty but negates it altogether, his kenosis a confrontation with, and delegitimisation of, sovereignty in all its forms. It is human and not divine sovereignty that Jesus in his human incarnation empties out.

The incarnation is not primarily understood doctrinally or metaphysically but as the narrative history of an event and the possibility of encounter. Living by faith in a kenotic God and cosmos brings into being and presence the eschatological and socio-political possibilities of the event which are always "at hand"[82] as irruption and interruption to the de-eschatological *chronos* time of imperial sovereignty that would defer the messianic to the end of history.[83] Kenosis is not simply a doctrine about the incarnation and a pattern for Christians to follow, but the theo-political event that inaugurates a keno-*archo,* the rule of self-emptying love, which is to say the rule that abolishes rule.[84] Ken*archy* as keno-*arche* refers to the originary kenotic archetype or first principle of the cosmos.[85] The contradiction in keno-*archo* is at the heart of kenarchic theology - rule itself is

[79] Jürgen Moltmann's understanding of kenosis is God's "self-withdrawing" in order to make space for creation (Moltmann, 1991, p.109).
[80] "… emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (NASB).
[81] Thomas Oord briefly summarises these (Oord, 2015, pp.153-159).
[82] "From that time Jesus began to preach and say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'" (Matthew 4:17, NASB).
[83] Mitchell references William Cavanaugh's theology of the Eucharist that forms and sustains the social body and inscribes it into counterpolitical time and space. In place of the Eucharist as the true body being in the priestly control of the Catholic church (and therefore apt to reproduce sovereignty), Mitchell posits the people of God as the *corpus verum* laying down their lives in kenarchic love: "transubstantiation takes place, not in the act of mediated appeasement conducted by the hierarchical priest, but in the political space of everyday temporal reality, when the people of God non-violently lay down their lives by faith against oppression and injustice as Jesus did" (Mitchell, 2011, p.204).
[84] "Kings and Queens smash your Crowns, The King has taken Kinghood down." Paylor, S. 2015. Join the Feast (Dumpster Divers). Fugitive Music. *Songs of Resistance & Comfort Vol. I.*[download]. Available from: http://fugitivemusic.blogspot.com/p/d.html
[85] Giorgio Agamben makes a similar point about the two meanings of arche – "origin, principle" and "command, order" (Agamben, 2019, p.51).

emptied out in the state and decision of the exception. In keno-*arche*, sovereignty as typified by rulership and kingship is seen as an intrusion into God's world. My premise, which I go on to develop in the remaining chapters, is that kenarchy offers cities—in which sovereignty is also an intrusion— a critical and performative theology.

Kenarchy in critical mode

Earlier, I called kenarchy a theo-praxis. Having summarised the theological framework, I now want to consider the critical praxis it entails and begin with an example of how it may be applied. I wrote the first draft of this chapter in the weeks following the killing of George Floyd by Minnesota Police and the world-wide Black Lives Matter response it provoked. Part of this response in the UK has been the campaign to remove statues of those who promoted and profited from the transatlantic slave trade, along with a call to rehistoricise—and thus repoliticise—British history. Behind this call is the insistence that white people (like me) must become aware of our racial power to let go of it, must be conscious of our privilege if we are not to use it, and that power and privilege accrue through history to beneficial and maleficent effect as, what Chantal Mouffe calls, "sedimented hegemonic practices". To recognise their historical and discursive contingency, she says, is to see that "things could always be otherwise" (Mouffe, 2007, p.2).[86] I am not sure that we can really do this except through encounter with those whom our power has disempowered and over whom our privilege has gained us advantage. This is a call to repentance, kenosis, and conversion to a new kenarchic economy of relations in the *polis*.

[86] "What is at a given moment considered as the 'natural' order—jointly with the 'common sense' which accompanies it—is the result of sedimented hegemonic practices; it is never the manifestation of a deeper objectivity exterior to the practices that bring it into being" (Mouffe, 2007, pp.2-3).

It is one thing to criticise sovereignty and its operation, another to render it inoperative. Bringing to light is a first and necessary step, but to be radical is to go to the roots of sovereignty and then track the routes it has taken to become biopower, to analyse the "sedimented hegemonic practices" that sovereignty has engendered, and then to neutralise it.[87] This is Mitchell's method as he considers, via certain historical "conduits", how a sacralised sovereignty "impregnated the West", rooting the political economy of the modern nation-state in law, war, and money, and now that of global capitalism in biopower. We have seen how Cavanaugh and Schmitt, Critchley and Anderson, all agree that the rise of the modern state from the sixteenth century saw "migrations of the holy" (Cavanaugh, 2011) from the religious realm to secular ideas and institutions, in particular the understanding that sovereignty was the guarantee of peace and the ontological ground of liberty. Radical Orthodoxy exposes the pretensions of the state to what properly belongs to the church and wants us to see the church as the truly political space of which the world is a simulacrum. But, if the state took its necessary sovereignty from the church's theology, then the church was the bearer of sovereignty into the modern era and the state is her progeny. The crisis of the state and of sovereignty is also the crisis of the church and her theology, but it may also be its catharsis (purgation).[88] Might it be just possible that as the church carried sovereignty into the politics of the West, so a church purged of sovereignty and in faithful continuity with the kenotic event of the

[87] Giorgio Agamben in a 2011 lecture says something similar. I will come shortly to his idea of destituent power which I take to be identical with kenarchy: "It seems to me that it is this destituent power that the thought of the twentieth century tried to think, without really succeeding. What Heidegger thinks as the destruction of tradition, what Schürmann thinks as the deconstruction of the *arche*, what Foucault thinks as philosophical archaeology, that is to say, to go back to a certain *arche*, a certain historical a priori and to try to neutralise it. It seems to me that these are efforts that go in this direction (and that's what I tried to do myself) without perhaps really getting there." Agamben, G. 2013. *Towards a theory of destituent power*. [Online]. [Accessed 29 April 2020]. Available from: https://autonomies.org/2019/08/giorgio-agamben-challenging-the-anarchy-of-power-through-the-anarchy-of-forms-of-life/

[88] Andrew Shanks says something similar in relation to the current "shrinkage" of the church: "in order for the gospel truth to be shaken loose, in actual practice, from its age-old confusion with respectability-religion, It seems to me that the Church also has to be purged by passing through an extended period of severe leanness, in which all the old psychological *rewards* of respectability-religion are so far as possible withdrawn …. Our having shrunk is - in theological terms - absolutely an act of God. *God has been shrinking us*. It has been for the purging of our Faith And so - thank God!" (Shanks, 2015, p.241, italics his).

incarnation is uniquely mandated to continually empty it out, to be its *katargēsis*, so rendering it inoperative.[89]

I will say more about what this kenarchic theology of the city might mean for what we understand by 'church' in later chapters. Here I limit my discussion to one example of kenarchic ecclesial praxis, one I return to in the final chapter, viz. the church and the poor. For individual Christian discipleship mimetic kenosis is a matter of self-denial, the embrace of vulnerability, and cross-bearing, and yet we consider the church and its institutions need to remain strong for the sake of that same gospel. Kenarchy as a critical ecclesiology calls the church to its own kenosis—to deny itself in taking on the suffering of the world, not as an autonomous spiritual discipline, but as kenotic *response*—to the poor, the stranger, the city. The church, however we may come to understand it, is no longer the central performer but is decentred. Jon Sobrino, whose critical ecclesiology brought admonition from Rome, goes so far as to say, "The poor constantly summon [the church] and call it to conversion" (Sobrino, 2008, p.58).[90] It is not a just matter of the church acting ethically towards the poor for "they are its centre. They are the hinge that makes it operate in a Christian fashion" (p.107). Like Moltmann, Sobrino places God's mission logically prior to the church, and what he terms "the mystery of the poor" prior to ecclesial mission. Kenarchy, working with the hermeneutic of a Christology which Sobrino calls "Christology from below", is what Gustavo Gutiérrez terms "theology from the underside of history".[91]

[89] *Katargēo* and its compounds are used 26 times in the Pauline epistles which, Agamben says, means "I make inoperative, I deactivate, I suspend the efficacy". So, for example, I Cor.15.24: "the Messiah 'will render all rule, authority, and power inoperative [*katargēse*]'" (Agamben, 2005, pp.97-98).
[90] By "the poor" Sobrino means "the deprived and oppressed, with respect to the material basics of human life; they are those who have no voice, no freedom, no dignity; they are those who have no name, no existence" (Sobrino, 2008, p.26). I adopt his usage as shorthand throughout.
[91] Gutiérrez, 1983, pp.169–214.

Kenarchic epistemology in the city

A call for a kenarchic ekklesiology,[92] which I explore in later chapters, is also a call for a kenarchic *mode* of doing political theology - a letting-go of theological assumptions and epistemologies and the humility to listen to and learn from the particular. Mitchell says: "kenosis is praxis not dogma, and the hegemony of ontological certainty is something it empties out, not something it grasps after" (Mitchell, 2011, p.189). Magnusson says something similar about the mode of political theory that fails to be attuned to the urban "complexities of a world that we cannot control as sovereigns" (Magnusson, 2011, p.15). Likewise, the city in its ineradicable cityness and plurality should be the hermeneutic key for political theology, not the Greek abstraction of *polis* that erases the cityness of the city and ab-uses it as a metonym for the political, nor the anagogical city of God in Augustine. The city, seen like a city, can ground and rescue political theology from abstraction. A political theology of cities, at least one that accepts Magnusson's premise of seeing like a city, must undergo its own kenosis,[93] insofar as it is done from a sovereigntist theological imaginary or from the position of the church that sees itself as ontologically distinct from the city.[94]

How do we read the city, or as Cox says, how does the city become legible?[95] The NT Greek *logos* comes from the Ancient Greek *légō* (to speak), which, via Latin, is the root of the English *legible.* For

[92] I use this spelling to distinguish it from the more normal spelling and its association with the church and all things ecclesiastical.

[93] Scott Cowan says: "True theology could only be done outside the church as an institution. Wherever the Spirit of God is, there is the church, in all grace …. Christians as a collective must be willing to give up self-referential pursuits in order to find God's work outside of Theology". Cowan. S. 2013. *Towards an Empty Theology: A brief thought on Kenosis*. [Online]. [Accessed 12 May 2018]. Available from: https://thanassuming.wordpress.com/2013/02/14/towards-an-empty-theology-a-brief-thought-on-kenosis/

[94] If kenosis is giving of self without reserve, it might answer Hannah Arendt's criticism that Augustine's love of neighbour is for the sake of God and *not* for the sake of the neighbour. Kenotic love is wholly for the sake of the neighbour without reserve.

[95] This is Harvey Cox's term. Cox cites, with approval, Jonathan Raban: "The city and the book are opposed forms: to force the city's spread, contingency, and aimless motion into the tight progression of a narrative is to risk a total falsehood. There is no single point of view from which we can grasp the city as a whole. That indeed is the distinction between the city and the small town… A good working definition of metropolitan life would centre on its intrinsic illegibility" (Raban, in Cox, 2013, LVI).

kenarchic theology, then, the kenotic Logos is understood from the interpretative site of the city which itself becomes legible through the Logos in a way that can best be described as dialogically emergent and diverse.[96] Or, perhaps the way *into* the city for kenarchic theology is the feminist wisdom that calls out to *men* to *listen* as they enter the city "where the paths *meet* … at the *opening* to the city, at the *entrance* of the *doors* (Proverbs 8 and 9, NASB, emphases mine).

Kenarchic praxis

For those of us who are engaged in developing kenarchic theology and practice, Giorgio Agamben is an important thinker, not least because of his influential study of the state of exception and his thinking about messianic time. In a 2013 lecture,[97] Agamben asks what kind of power can undo our human proclivity to create political forms that end up having power over us. I quote this at length because he comes close to describing the kenotic politics—kenarchy—that I think will enable the city to engender sovereignty-free spaces for political life. He uses the terms 'constituting power' or 'constituent power' to refer to the sovereign power that stands outside the law (Schmitt's exception) having the power to create law but not be subject to it, and 'constituted power' to refer to juridical authority (Agamben, 1998). Speaking of 'constituent power', he considers what "form of life" would be "*de*stituent" of any form that would seek to *con*stitute life, and so then have power over it:

> Our tradition inherited the concept of constituent power from the French Revolution. But here, we must think of something like a destituent power, precisely because constituent power is integral to this mechanism that will

[96] James Dunn (2006) suggests that the ecclesiae of the NT cities were as different from each other in how they interpreted the essential *kerygma* as were the cities they typified.

[97] Agamben, G. 2019. *Towards a theory of destituent power*. [Online]. [Accessed 29 April 2020]. Available from: https://autonomies.org/2019/08/giorgio-agamben-challenging-the-anarchy-of-power-through-the-anarchy-of-forms-of-life/

> make any constituent power found a new power. …. This is what we have always seen, revolutions happen like this: there is a violence that will constitute rights, a new right, and then there will be a new constituted power that will be put in place. Whereas if one were able to think of a purely destituent power, not a power, but precisely instead what I would call a purely destituent power, one would perhaps be able to break this dialectic between constituent power and constituted power which was, as you know, the tragedy of the Revolution …. Immediately, there were constituent assemblies and they were followed by something worse than what was there before. And the new constituted power that was put in place by this diabolical mechanism of constituent power becomes a constituted power …. It is thus my belief that these are concepts that we must have the courage to give up: to put an end to constituent power … we must think a power or rather a potentiality that has the strength to remain destituent (2013, unpaginated).

Agamben looks for a "form of life" or "habitus" that is destituent in its very being and not simply as against constituent and constituted power, and points to Ivan Illich's 'vernacular'[98] as an example of what he means. I think this is also Magnusson's point (above) - if the political of the city exists under a sovereignty-free sky, it calls for "a way of thinking" that "does not just replicate the dominant ontology of the political and distract us from the more difficult problem of understanding our way of life—urbanism or the city—politically".[99]

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[98] "We need a simple, straightforward word to designate the activities of people when they are not motivated by thoughts of exchange, a word that denotes autonomous, non-market related actions through which people satisfy everyday needs — the actions that by their very nature escape bureaucratic control, satisfying needs to which, in the very process, they give specific shape …. By speaking about vernacular language and the possibility of its recuperation, I am trying to bring into awareness and discussion the existence of a vernacular mode of being, doing, and making that in a desirable future society might again expand in all aspects of life" (Illich, 1981, pp.57–58).

[99] See pp.92-93.

What Agamben comes to philosophically, Magnusson through urban political theory, and Mitchell and I through theology, is a significant agreement about political life outwith sovereignty. This should not be a surprise because it is how negation works – when the negation of political life by sovereign power is negated, the second negation brings back into sight what had been lost in the first. What kenarchy offers is conscientisation as to the *theological* roots and historical routes of political sovereignty which, I suggest, must also be negated theologically; merely negating its contemporary *form* in the nation-state is not enough. Sovereignty was the sky (Schmitt's prevailing metaphysical worldview[100]) under which the French revolutionaries tried to bring about the new but could not, with the consequences Agamben speaks of. This recalls Cox's example of the failure of the Protestant church in revolutionary Cuba for want of a *theology* of politics.

Beyond a way of thinking—philosophical or urbanist—Agamben acknowledges the need for "a *power* or rather a *potentiality* that has the *strength* to remain destituent" (emphasis mine). This neo-Marxist quest for a source and type of power other than sovereign power[101] is recognised and met in kenarchic theology which is a political theology of the Spirit – kenarchic life is by the Spirit and not by Law. With specific application to the neo-Marxist philosophy of Agamben and others, Mitchell makes the argument for the 1906 origins of the global Pentecostal-Charismatic movement to be understood as the historic irruption of counterpolitical power[102] into the constitutive power of

[100] See p.96.
[101] For example, Hardt & Negri speak of love as the constituent power of the multitude (Mitchell, 2011, p.164).
[102] Sayed Sayeed provides a pertinent account of the counterpolitical: "The logic of power in the mode of resistance, in the mode of the quest for and preservation of freedom, is considerably different from the logic of power when it functions as power proper. To ignore this fundamental fact results - as it has so often done in history - in the agency of freedom turning into a structure of oppression therefore, the strategy of freedom must be essentially antithetical to the tactics of power, that is to say, it must be counterpolitical.
Great care has to be exercised in articulating the counterpolitical, since one of the basic manoeuvres of the political is to insinuate itself into those domains which are potentially antithetical to its dynamics and neutralise their opposition by appropriating their discourse. Therefore, a discourse that posits itself at a fundamental level as "the other" of the political must be forged. Very briefly, the first requirement of such a dis-course would be that it must not only work against the dynamics of the political by exposing its metaphysic, but must keep itself free from such a metaphysic. It must deconstruct the ever-forming pyramids of power play and expose their operation. This way alone can resistance succeed in the sense of dismantling the hierarchies

empire (Mitchell, 2011, pp.151-167). There is not space here to expand on Mitchell's argument and his historical account of the early Pentecostal phenomena which he evidences for it, but I will return to the importance of pneumatology to my political theology of the city in Chapter 4 where I consider the Pentecostal city-theology of Nimi Wariboko.

Conclusion

In Chapter 1, I situated this thesis in the terrain of urban theory and theology and argued that political theology needs to engage with the cross-disciplinary discourse on the city that has followed the spatial turn in urban studies which understands the city to be a polity of a different order from nation-states. In this chapter, I have explored the connection between how seeing like a city and kenarchic theology challenge the conceptual hegemony of nation-state sovereignty. This makes both theorias (ways of seeing) natural conversation partners in exploring how the city offers the possibility of a politics without sovereignty. The city that is without sovereignty becomes legible and amenable to kenarchic theology in a way that it would not to a political theology predicated on the sovereignty of God.

The considerable correspondence between seeing like a city and kenarchy is perhaps unsurprising, given the depiction in Revelation 21 and 22 of the anagogical city's fulfilment in its eschatological union with the Lamb of God who signifies kenotic divinity.[103] If Christian theology has been implicated in the production of sovereigntist political space, via Mouffe's "sedimented hegemonic

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of power by intervening at the nodal points of those hierarchies. But the problem, as I tried to indicate above, lies in the fact that the hierarchies of power quickly re-establish themselves. In order to obviate this possibility, it must be ensured that the very logic of the system of resistance is antithetical to the logic of power, such that it is impossible for those in control of power to appropriate resistance. By the counterpolitical I mean basically this alternative logic" (Sayeed, 2011).

[103] The foundation stones of the city are the apostles of the Lamb (Revelation 21:14); the Lamb is its sanctuary (21:22); its lamp is the Lamb (21:23); a river of life flows from the throne of the Lamb (22:1).

practices", kenarchic theology not only penitentially recognises their historical and discursive contingency, but offers a theology for seeing that "things could always be otherwise". The next chapter looks in some depth at how space in the city is produced and what kind of city space allows for my claim that a city can be a city without sovereignty.

Chapter 3: Cityspace

Introduction

In the first two chapters I have argued for the importance of reframing thinking about politics, and therefore political theology, away from the normalisation of nation-state and sovereignty, so that cities come into view as *poleis* without sovereignty thus holding the possibility of a kenarchic politics. In the first chapter I argued that cities are under-theorised in political theology due to seeing like a state, and that seeing like a city offers exciting possibilities for political theology. In the previous chapter I argued that if one of Augustine's chief complaints about the secular city is that it is shot through with vainglorious pretensions to human sovereignty, then the claim of Barber and Magnusson, that cities are not sovereign entities, invites political theology to fresh and positive engagement with cities. I am proposing that the politics inherent in seeing like a city is the politics with which political theology should be engaged and that kenarchic theology offers a way to make this city theologically legible.

Though the sovereign state may be in existential crisis, as Zygmunt Bauman says, it is likely to perdure for some time to come and will continue to impose limits on the political potential and power of cities (Barber, 2013). Even more so, the city's subjugation by forces far beyond the control of local democracy and by the "full spectrum dominance" of biopower (Hardt and Negri, 2006, p.53). But that is not the end of the story. In this chapter I will argue from Henri Lefebvre's spatial analysis of cities that this does not exhaust or extinguish the political potential of cities. In how Lefebvre complexifies the city spatially he demonstrates its inherent counterpolitical potential for resisting the control of state and market. He analyses how cityspace comes to be and how it can change. I then explore the extent to which it is possible to read across from Thomist and Augustinian complex political space to cities as theorised by Lefebvre and others after the spatial turn and identify problems for political theology where it is not possible.

As in previous chapters, I begin the chapter with political theory. In Hannah Arendt's political theory, the "space of appearance" is (literally) central to any possibility of the political. My principal focus then turns to the seminal thinking of Lefebvre and the spatial turn in urban studies. Both Arendt and Lefebvre as foundational thinkers are engaged in rethinking politics and power amidst the crisis of the nation-state and of the political itself in late modernity. I set out Lefebvre's thought at some length as it undergirds seeing like a city and indicates how, where, and when cities may be the locus for new counterpolitical space outwith sovereignty and global capitalism. Lefebvre's spatial analysis is foundational to my project of developing theological sight of the city and tools for engagement with it. I then critically consider the extent to which Augustinian and Thomist concepts of complex political space map onto Lefebvre's spatial analysis.

Although both Augustine and Aquinas address cities theologically, the political theologies they inspire tend to be concerned with the *poleis* of states and their relationship to the church. I suggest that a neo-Augustinian critique of the state juxtaposes the city of God with the church to an unwarranted extent, so that the church is foregrounded as public space in place of the state. Likewise, a Thomist approach can make uncritical assumptions about both church and state. Both approaches are vulnerable to a charge of being apolitical. Lefebvre helps us to relocate them in the spatial *polis* and politics of the city and there to critique them from the standpoint of kenarchic theology. Lefebvre's atheistic political philosophy may bear traces of his undergraduate study of Augustine[104] and, I suggest, enables us to find in the city something like his two cities in redemptive synergy. Although the theologies of space that I consider in this chapter may map onto only some aspects of Lefebvre's spatial analysis, the theological hermeneutic of cityspace which I develop in the following chapter does so much more comprehensively.

[104] Lefebvre studied Augustine as an undergraduate (Shields, 1999, p.9).

Cities old and new – Arendt and Lefebvre

The social upheaval and disruption of the late 1960s provoked new thinking about the city and political space, and Lefebvre was amongst the foremost of these thinkers. Rob Shields says of him: "in the aftermath of the Parisian occupations of May 1968, Lefebvre insisted that any lasting revolution has to be urban"; and David Harvey says, "our political task, Lefebvre suggests, is to imagine and reconstitute a totally different kind of city out of the disgusting mess of a globalizing urbanizing capital run amok" (cited in Shields, 2013, p.345). Although Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* was published in 1974, it was only the English translation of 1991 that brought about the spatial turn in urbanism (Soja, 2000, p.101). In his afterword, David Harvey writes:

> The book is … an opening towards new possibilities of thought and action … which contains much that is explosive, much that has the power to 'detonate' (a word he [Lefebvre] himself frequently chooses) a situation that threatens to become fixed, frozen and ossified. It is, above all, an intensely political document (Lefebvre, 1991, p.431).

Lefebvre, like Arendt, opens towards new possibilities and new beginnings for politics but, unlike hers, his thinking derives from the contemporary city and not from the ancient classical *polis*.

Arendt's space of appearance

A stream of recent publications and articles attest to Arendt's political thought being cogent and relevant as ever it was and, true to her idea of natality, she continues to inspire fresh thinking about politics and the political. Following the 2016 election of Donald Trump as U.S. President, her 1951 book *The Origins of Totalitarianism* sold sixteen times its normal volume of sales. She is so relevant to my project because, in relation to kenarchy, she articulates the elements of a politics without rule, and, in relation to the city, hers is a politics true to the city whence it came (and so not as it has become in its statist negation). In this chapter on space in the city, her stress on the space which

makes politics possible complements and amplifies Lefebvre's 'third' space, which is the focus of my theological critique in this chapter and the next.

Arendt's rethinking of politics and the political is readily applicable to cities, not least because she draws on the ancient classical *polis* of the city to rethink a politics beyond modernity and the nation-state. James Bernauer says of her: "Hannah Arendt possessed the gift of thinking poetically amid the ruins of modernity's dark times" (Bernauer, 1987, p.1). Because her concern was "to formulate new principles and foundations for truly human life and to re-assert the possibility for human beginnings" (Boyle, 1987, p.89) she does not tether her conceptualisation of political space to any existent political, spatial, or geographic construct. Space, wherever it comes into being, is intrinsic to the political in Arendt's thought.

From Plato onwards, Arendt thinks, political philosophy had failed to be about politics and had been about ruling (Parekh, 1981, p.15). The collapse of politics into the unifying concept of *society* had led to the progressive loss of both private and public space and of the all-important distinction between them. For Arendt, public space is the space between people in which they can appear as public persons in a space of appearance. People appear in this space through speech and action and so it is the space that humans fabricate to live in with others. This is the space in which to be human is political (as Aristotle said) and it is to be distinguished from the private space of the household or *oikos.* As we saw in Chapter 1, she says Aquinas 'mistranslated' Aristotle's *zoon politikon* by "man is by nature political, that is social". This led him to see household rule as the paradigm for political rule and is the root of a confusion between public and private space by the insertion between them of *social* space. It also gave rise to a conception of collective housekeeping: "the collective of families economically organised into the facsimile of one super-human family … we call society, and its

political form of organisation … called 'nation'" (Arendt, 1958, pp.22-25, 28-29). Arendt sees that the loss of truly public space brings in its train the dangerous loss of politics as such.

Foremost amongst the elements of public space she believes essential for political life in the *polis*, is the "space of appearance": "For us, appearance—something that is being seen and heard by others as well as by ourselves— constitutes reality" (p.50). 'Public' space, for Arendt, means the world that is common to all of us (i.e., the world we make rather than the natural world) which is between us, rather like a table which both joins and separates at the same time (pp.52-55). The reality of this world is constituted only by "the simultaneous presence of innumerable perspectives" that arise from different and incommensurable locations (p.57). This public space is a space of freedom from being ruled and the space within which speech and action give rise to the political realm:

> The *polis*, properly speaking, is not the city-state in its physical location; it is the organisation of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true space lies between people living together for this purpose, no matter where they happen to be (p.198).

The space of appearance is prior to any formal constitution and "does not survive the actuality of the moment that brought it into being"; any gathering of people in accordance with the elements outlined above has the potential to be a space of appearance (p.199).

Power is actualised in the space of appearance but "only where word and deed have not parted company", and it remains where there is sufficient proximity between people for them to act together: "the foundation of cities, which as city-states have remained paradigmatic for all western political organisation, is therefore indeed the most important material prerequisite for power" (p.201). That power is independent of numbers and means can be seen, says Arendt, when a small

oligarchy has effective rulership over many, but equally, when a small number of people act together in non-violent resistance against superior force. Strength and force, which can both be possessed, are to be distinguished from power, because power, in Arendt's terms, is conditional on plurality and is to be found only "in the unreliable and temporary agreement of many wills and intentions" (p.201). Whereas the will to power of an individual or a faction is a vice of the weak (like greed or envy), power that "preserves the public realm and the space of appearance, and as such is also the lifeblood of the human artifice, … of the web of human affairs and relationships and the stories engendered by them, [finds] its true *raison d'être*" (p.204). The space of appearance—plurality, proximity, and power between (not over)—is political to the extent we are engaged with others in making (and loving[105]) the (human) world.

Arendt's and Lefebvre's thought shares many features. Lefebvre maintains that "a new political economy must no longer concern itself with things in space … rather, it will have to be a political economy of space (and of its production)" (Lefebvre, 1991, p.299). Arendt writes about how political space comes into being and what are its constituent elements. Both are looking for the new: Lefebvre for the newness that can come *in* the city and not from leaving the city, for a new beginning of the city as *oeuvre*; Arendt for natality, the new beginning required by the political failures of modernity and for political life as 'making the world'. Lefebvre is not concerned to reform existent space and, likewise, Arendt sees no political potential in the unitive 'society' into which public space has been subsumed. For Arendt, public space as the space of appearance maps onto Lefebvre's space of representation where, as we shall see, the "total person" can appear, unmediated by prior

[105] "The all-absorbing passion of Hannah Arendt's life was a love for the world which exhibits itself in a relishing of human action's promise and in a respecting of the political structures which make action possible. It is in the stage of education that she locates the 'point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it', a decision which determines the meaning of human existence itself. Human beings achieve worldliness to the extent that their lives are illumined by the recognition that care of the world is superior to care of the self" (Bernauer, 1987, pp.1-2).

representations. For both, space formed by encounter is axiomatic. Arendt's *public* space, meaning the world that is common to all of us, the world we make rather than the natural world, the world which is between us, equates with Lefebvre's right to the city, where what is 'between us' is to make the city as *oeuvre*. Arendt agrees with Lefebvre on the requirement of plurality and the presence of the Other in space for it to be political space. Finally, their respective spaces are free from rulership, or power-over.

Even in this brief overview, it is possible to trace the influence of Augustine on both Lefebvre and Arendt. Arendt's doctoral thesis, to which she returned in the 1960s with a view to publishing a reworked version, is about love in Augustine's philosophy. She describes Augustine as her 'old friend' (Arendt, 1996, p.115). Lefebvre, too, studied Augustine as a student. In each there are traces of an Augustinian rejection of *libido dominandi* and a vision of a citizenship not constituted by pre-existing power structures. Both Arendt and Lefebvre speak of differential space, not derived from what exists nor tied to the state, but (eschatologically?) holding the possibility of the new. Like Augustine, both bring the politics of power-over to light, defy its mythic pretensions, and relativise its hegemonic space. Where Augustine has humans appearing before God to find their true selves, Arendt and Lefebvre have them appearing before each other and thus to themselves; Lefebvre goes further and has them also appearing in the space of the Earth. In this space of appearance, they can make a new beginning. Where they both radically depart from Augustine is in their insistence on a political life— on the shared task of making the *polis*— for fully human being.

Henri Lefebvre

Having considered in the two previous chapters the paradoxical claims that the city in its cityness is a *polis* without sovereignty *and* the site of a concentration of global capitalism, Lefebvre's spatial

analysis offers an explanation of how both can be true. In Chapter 1, I described the discursive terrain in which this thesis engages as urban theory after the spatial turn. It was Lefebvre who first marked out this terrain with his spatial analysis of the city, and because the hermeneutic of the city I develop in the remaining chapters follows its contours, and because it helps me know my own city in a new way, I recite it at some length here. The analysis, like its subject matter, is complex and requires the reader to get a sense of the whole in order to understand its parts. My goal is not to critique his analysis but to critically engage with the relevance of Lefebvre for my own project and from there to consider the application of Thomist and Augustinian theologies of political space to the salient aspects of the city of which he offers sight. Lefebvre's writing is notoriously fluid and at times contradictory, being mostly dictated live to typists in a somewhat dialogical fashion, and he purposively invites an intuitive and not always a logically consistent reading (Shields, 2005, pp.6-7).[106]

It would not be wholly accurate to describe Lefebvre's thought as 'not theological', as it bears traces of his Catholic upbringing and undergraduate theological study of Augustine and Pascal, in which he sought to find a way—theologically—to move from an alienating rationalism to intuition. Although soon afterwards he became a convinced atheist, Lefebvre retained this mystic sensibility and was influenced by the trinitarian eschatology of Joachim de Fiore, the 12th century Italian theologian. Joachim holds that there are three successive ages: the age of the Father characterised by law (Old Testament), the age of the Son by faith (New Testament), and the age of the Spirit by joy, and so, for Lefebvre, "revolution is thus marked by the transition through this cycle towards 'joy'" (p.31). Crucially, Joachim's millenarianism rejected Augustinian eschatology, holding that the kingdom of God appears, not at the end of the *saeculum*, but in politics and in historical time. Lefebvre gives

[106] In addition to my own reading of Lefebvre, I draw on scholars of Lefebvre such as Rob Shields, David Harvey, Ed Soja, and Chris Butler to help my own understanding of his complex thought.

primacy to authentic experience and encounter, which he calls 'presence'; presence is both time and space—now and nearness—in everyday life ("*le quotidien*") (p.63). As a philosopher of everyday life, he defines 'lived space' as the space of Hegelian 'moments' of otherness – of intuition, of Spirit (capital his), of joy, of art, and of love. Thus, says Rob Shields, his "contribution is to strengthen our faith in our own intuitive and collective experiences and our knowledge of the good and the ethical" (p.189). Art and festival are central to Lefebvre's revolutionary praxis of lived space: art that disrupts our ways of seeing,[107] and festival as a moment of "dis-alienated desire" (p.1).

The Production of Space

Lefebvre is concerned with everyday life within capitalist modernity. He recognises that the spatial dimension in which life is lived is not empty or neutral space but is 'produced' by a multiplicity of influences and forces of human agency.[108] He seeks a way of bringing together physical, mental, and social space which, with some reservations, he likens to energy, space, and time; these he calls the "'substance' … of this cosmos or 'world', to which humanity with its consciousness belongs". He says:

> When we evoke 'energy', we must immediately note that energy has to be deployed within a space. When we evoke 'space' we must immediately indicate what occupies that space and how it does so: the deployment of energy in relation to 'points' and within a time frame. When we evoke time, we must immediately say what it is that moves or changes therein. Space considered in isolation is an empty abstraction; likewise, energy and time (Lefebvre, 1991, pp.12-13).

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[107] Lefebvre closely associated with Surrealists and Dadaists (Shields, 1998, p.1).

[108] I am intrigued by David Harvey's comment that Lefebvre's experience of being a taxi driver in Paris for two years "deeply affected his thinking about the nature of space and urban life" (Lefebvre, 1991, p.426) as it parallels my own experience of working as a delivery driver in Leeds for a period in my early twenties which had a similar effect on me.

We must question conceptions of space that fail to recognise it as the product of human agency and, as such, that it can be changed and new space produced. Because such philosophical conceptions of space are not external to time-space but are *themselves* product and producer of it, they should not simply be replaced but must rather be recognised for what they are and then reversed or inversed, rather like Marx's movement in reverse from products to productive activity.[109] Understanding that space is produced, and how, is the key to conscientisation as to its present effects on being human.

Lefebvre sees space as existing between bodies which are themselves both space and in space; his concise proposition is *"(Social) space is a (social) product"* (p.26, italics his). In the hegemonic ordering of social space:

> [everyday life is] the lower or 'micro' level, on the local and localisable – in short on the sphere of everyday life on which the whole weighs down … and also *depends*: exploitation and domination, protection and—inseparably—repression (p.366, italics his).

He insists that resistance to this oppressive control of social space can be effective only through the production of counter-spaces; these spaces, detailed below, should not be seen as a subset of the city (as sub-cultural spaces are) but as being in dynamic interrelation with other spaces in the ongoing production of complex cityspace. Crucially, the context for his thinking about space—and the site of possibility for creating counter spaces—is urban. The complexities and contestations of cityspace mean that space is itself politicised, it is not merely the space *in which* politics happens.[110]

[109] In Chapter 1, I called this process the negation of the negation.
[110] This is what Magnusson means when he says (previously cited): "we are best advised to think of the urban as a hyperspace of many dimensions, each of which is produced by political action and related to the others politically" (Magnusson, 2011, p.90).

Lefebvre's 'trialectic'

By 'space', Lefebvre means three spaces or "fields" that are always in play in a neo-Hegelian trialectic, "that is, three elements and not two" (pp.38-39). Although he describes and defines these in various ways and not always consistently, they are: "the physical – nature, the Cosmos; secondly, the mental, including logical and formal abstractions; and thirdly, the social" (p.11).[111] He further categorises these three spaces as follows:

Spatial practice. Because space is both "presupposed" and "propounded" in the dialectic between daily reality and urban reality, it is slowly and imperceptibly being produced. This field has a certain cohesion but has no need to be coherent; only when subjected to empirical analysis does it become "perceived space".

Representations of space. Conceived and conceptualised space is the field of planners, social engineers, lawyers, scientists, et al. This is the field of knowledge and ideology (p.41) which, because it is intellectually coherent, is dominant in the production of cityspace.

Spaces of representation. Also translated as "representational spaces" (Butler, 2009, p.319), this is "space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users', but also of some artists" (Lefebvre, 1991, p.39). This is space passively received but then reappropriated and reimagined by means of inscribing symbols and signs on dominant space. This is the space of counter-hegemonic possibility (pp.38-39). We saw, in Chapter 1, how Ed Soja understands this space as "a space of extraordinary openness, a place of critical exchange [for] a multiplicity of perspectives that have heretofore been considered by the epistemological referees to be incompatible, uncombinable" (Soja, 1996, p.5). It is here, in what I will usually refer to as Lefebvre's 'third space', that I will focus my theological critique.

[111] See p.122 above for how he relates these to energy, space, and time.

Because this trialectical nature of space comprehends and must account for the concrete lived reality of everyday life, Lefebvre says his model is delivered from being a purely mental and abstract duality; in his words, "*Il y a toujours l'Autre*". It is a "necessity" that the three fields are trialectically connected, for the human subject moves between them without confusion (Lefebvre, 1991, p.40).

Abstract space

I said earlier that Lefebvre's analysis accounts for freedom from rule *and* for the all-pervasive empire of capitalism. Trialectical cityspace is itself in a spatial interrelationship to the spatiality of capitalism and this he calls "abstract space". Historically this came into being as the plane on which a socio-political compromise between the aristocracy (land) and the bourgeoisie (money) was reached (p.308). The development of the medieval town was a *spatial reordering* to suit these dominant forms of social relations. The onset of a capitalist mode of production, in abstracting labour from the field of social life, reconfigured medieval urban space on the plane of abstract space (p.49).

Abstract space is the space of power wherein the centre is self-defined at the expense of its peripheries, overlaying and gradually obliterating historical and religio-political spheres. Lefebvre says: "it is true that it dissolves and incorporates such former 'subjects' as the village and the town; it is also true that it replaces them" (p.51). Abstract space goes unchallenged because of what it offers by way of stability, 'peace', and prosperity, *and* because "a semantic void abolishes former meanings (without, for all that, standing in the way of the growing complexity of the world and its multiplicity of messages, codes and operations)" (p.307). Chris Butler explains:

> abstract space is characterized by both a normative and discursive non-aggression pact and the coercive exercise of institutional power to preserve an apparently

> 'non-violent' social order. It therefore achieves a repressive efficiency which hides deceptively behind the pretence of civic peace and consensus (Butler, 2009, p.324).

Abstract space is a hegemonic illusion, held in place by mass media and state bureaucracy in service to a capitalist world order, and it is ultimately underwritten by state violence.

Here, Lefebvre offers another of his trialectics. Abstract space has three orientations or tendencies - fragmentation, homogeneity, and hierarchy (p.323).

Fragmentation: The instrumentalisation of space as 'exchange value' "cuts it up into pieces" (Lefebvre, 1991, p.89), each with its own specialisation, so that it can be amenable to control and thus have exchange value. Because the historical production of this spatial order is occluded and normalised, we focus on: "what exists in space (things considered on their own, in reference to themselves, their past, or their names), or else onto space emptied, and thus detached from what it contains" (p.91). This failure of historical vision means we are unable to adequately consider what "another space and another time in another (possible or impossible) society" requires of us now (pp.91-92, 109).[112]

Homogeneity: This fragmentation, however, does not contradict the paradoxical tendency of abstract space towards homogeneity. The state cannot be understood apart from its spatiality, viz., its sovereignty over a territory within which it seeks a unification, "which subordinates and totalises the various aspects of social practice— legislation, culture, knowledge, education— within a determinate space; namely, the space of the ruling class's hegemony over its people and over the nationhood it has arrogated" (p.281). The tendency and pressure of abstract space may be towards

[112] This can be seen in the current controversy over whether the school curriculum should be decolonialised. Chantal Mouffe (cited in Chapter 2) makes the same point: "What is at a given moment considered as the 'natural' order - jointly with the 'common sense' which accompanies it - is the result of sedimented hegemonic practices; it is never the manifestation of a deeper objectivity exterior to the practices that bring it into being" (Mouffe, 2007, pp.2-3).

homogeneity, but it cannot hold, and is ultimately undone by, the internal contradictions that inevitably arise and produce “differential space” (p.52).

These contradictory and irreconcilable orientations—fragmentation and homogeneity—are held as a fist “clenched around sand”; in order to exercise control political power creates fragmentation, “but fragmented reality (dispersion, segregation, separation, localisation) may on occasion overwhelm political power” (p.321). Like Cavanaugh, Lefebvre says the myth of state sovereignty founded on self-legitimating violence is foundational to both inter-state and intra-state orders: “state power endures only by virtue of violence directed towards a space” (p.280). The homogenising and fragmenting tendency of sovereignty is not particular to the scale of individual states; we see it in the way global capitalism exploits the fragmentary global order of sovereign states, each with their own tax and regulatory frameworks, and at the same time flattens out spatial diversity and difference. The use value of abstract space at both state and global level is exclusively political - the political subject is “power as such, and the state as such” (by which I understand, power for its own sake and the state for its own sake, and the disappearance of the human political subject into political object). This political power is sometimes concentrated, sometimes diffuse (p.287). It is important to note here that Lefebvre understands space to be produced and held, not by political power as such, but through social relations; political power holds in place the reproduction of social relations.

Hierarchy: The third orientation of abstract space is hierarchy whereby the centre organises that which is “around it, arranging and hierarchising the peripheries … in the distribution of power, wealth, resources and information” (Butler, 2009, pp.323-4). Lefebvre says, “there are beneficiaries of space, just as there are those excluded from it, those ‘deprived of space’ …. There is a violence intrinsic to abstraction” (Lefebvre, 1991, p.289). We do not stand as the Cartesian subject before space as object but rather, because inclusion and exclusion are implicit in abstract space, we know

that we *have* a space and *are* in this space and not that, also that some spaces are prohibited, and some are accessible (p.294). Prohibition is the negative basis of the social order, whether by legal and physical barriers that preserve and protect private property, or by invisible barriers at thresholds of elite spaces (p.319).[113]

The right to the city

Lefebvre's spatial theory and analysis is urban. Whilst admitting to the impossibility of an essential definition, he defines the city "as a *projection of society on the ground*, that is, not only on the actual site, but at a specific level, perceived and conceived by thought, which determines the city and the urban" (Lefebvre, 1996, p.109, italics his). The city is not simply *read* through the inscriptions and projections of the wider society which it mediates (p.101), it is also *heard* as music with its own particular rhythms and times. This particularity of individual cities does not prevent generic discussion of cities but gives rise to a second definition, namely "the city *as the ensemble of differences* between cities" (p.109, italics his). Looking back to the pre-industrialised city, he sees the city as *oeuvre*, as the creation of its citizens, particularly in their beautification of the city made possible by commercial wealth. Economic disparity, conflict between factions, and even oppression, did not prevent a common sense of belonging, love for, and contribution to the *oeuvre* which was of use value to all (p.66). This *use value* to all citizens has been opposed and destroyed by exploiting the *exchange value* in the marketisation of space, products, and goods (p.86, italics his). We are left, says Lefebvre, with the fear-inducing spectre of the contemporary city and a nostalgia for the pre-industrial, pre-consumerist medieval city beloved of tourists (p.142).

[113] See Chapter 6, p.239 for an example of how the commissioners of the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission made visible these invisible barriers.

The dismembered and dissociated human being

The result of this exploitation is the city made up of disassociated elements, fragmented, segregated, and ghettoised: "Here is a daily life well divided into fragments: work, transport, private life, leisure. …. Here is the dismembered and dissociated human being" (p.143). Attempts to synthesise this urban reality are illegitimate and doomed to failure. The desire for cohesion and integration is evidence of the city's incoherence and disintegration, but it does not interrogate why it is there in the first place and so is unable to fix it.[114] Similarly, participation that is allowed within pre-ordained limits, for example by representative democracy or citizen engagement, will not fix divided human being; this will come only through full participation, which requires self-management, and is therefore denied (pp.145-6).

Happily, the city is amenable to a praxis, viz. "the gathering together of what gives itself as dispersed, dissociated, separated, and this in the form of simultaneity and encounters" (p.143). "The dismembered and dissociated human being" must have what Lefebvre calls "the right to the city" if they are to resist the city's abstracting and dehumanising fragmentation, and so to co-create their city in a myriad of ways that are re-humanising. Precisely because difference in the city resists and exceeds the homogenisation of abstract space, it becomes the condition of possibility for encounters across difference of a kind and quality that liberates from the authoritarian and administrative desire for coherence.

Lefebvre's prescription for resisting the power of abstract space, and for escaping the representations of space that sustain in being abstract space, is neither to create new revolutionary

[114] Community *cohesion* was the policy of the UK's New Labour government (1997-2010), a policy aimed at managing multi-culturalism. The contemporary rhetoric of "inclusive growth" is an attempt to fix the symptoms, but not the cause, Lefebvre identifies.

space in some return to a ‘year zero’, nor to occupy existing space. Rather, conscientisation is needed to analyse the existent spaces that are produced by, and that reproduce, social relations. By such spatial analysis, the signs and symbols of abstract space now appear in new light as the markers of historic social relations and modes of production, so that “the ‘world of signs’ clearly emerges as so much debris left by a retreating tide” (p.417). The production of new space ensues from the reorientation of the now-conscientised self in relation to other bodies in a new space-between that does not reproduce abstract space nor the social relations that hold it in place.

Trial by space

Crucially, for Lefebvre such renewed social relations and modes of production attain no actuality unless they themselves produce space – this is not an incidental effect, “it is a matter of life and death” (p.417). This is “trial by space”, where the viability of new forms of social relations are tested as they enter into spatial existence in the real world of other historical and contrary spaces. He says: “Moreover, and more importantly, groups, classes or fractions of classes cannot constitute themselves, or recognise one another as ‘subjects’ unless they generate (or produce) a space” (p.325). More foundational still is Lefebvre’s turn to the Earth (sic). Abandoning the teleological Marxist dialectic of history as a foundational ideology, he turns instead to the primordial planetary space, and its own process of becoming, as “the centre around which various (differentiated) spaces are arranged” (pp.417-8). He says:

> The finiteness of nature and of the Earth thus has the power to challenge blind (ideological) belief in the infinite power of abstraction, of human thinking and technology, and of political power and the space which that power generates and decrees (p.330).

This ecological framing or limit situation of all political space will be the ultimate trial by space of all representations of space and of abstract space itself. Lefebvre’s aim is an “orientation” towards a

"planet-wide space as the social foundation of a transformed everyday life open to myriad possibilities – such is the dawn beginning to break on the far horizon" (pp.422-423). He has no interest in replacing one system with a better system; rather he wants to "break up systems … to open up through thought and action towards possibilities by showing the horizon and the road" (p.63).

The new city

Because, Lefebvre says, there can neither be incremental progress from what presently exists nor a return to the city of tourist nostalgia, he envisions "the construction of a new [city] on new foundations, on another scale and in other conditions, in another society" (p.148). This cannot be the job of "the architect, the planner, the sociologist, the economist, the philosopher or the politician, … only social life (praxis) in its global capacity possesses such powers" (pp.150-1). The praxis of Lefebvre's third space is utopian and experimental, learning from 'successful' spaces and improvisational models. Those groups and social classes currently marginalised to the peripheries, segregated from the decision-making centre and denied full participation, must be at the leading edge of change if it is to be more than cosmetic (p.154). Art and play come to the fore in creating the city as *oeuvre* and in the playful interplay between the parts of the social whole (p.172).[115]

The right to the city *exists* simply by virtue of inhabiting the city: "The right to the city manifests itself as a superior form of rights: right to freedom, to individualisation in socialisation, to habitat and to inhabit" (p.173). Harvey says:

[115] Jean Paul Lederach, likewise, says that any re-creation of society following conflict necessitates a transformed 'moral imagination' via some or other form of creativity that opens up the pessimism of the present to alternative future possibilities (Lederach, 2005, pp.38-40).

> The question of what kind of city we want cannot be divorced from that of what kind of social ties, relationship to nature, lifestyles, technologies, and aesthetic values we desire. The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights (Harvey, 2008, p.23).

The right to the city has been proposed as a new form of political citizenship that challenges the monopoly of the state to grant citizenship.[116] A proposal for the right to the city to be endorsed by the 2016 United Nations' future of cities summit, Habitat III, was blocked by China and the United States, but the word 'inclusive' appeared 36 times in the final New Urban Agenda document.[117] Ada Colau, Mayor of Barcelona, wrote in the Guardian newspaper following the summit: "I believe you can't talk about a just, sustainable, equitable or inclusive city if you don't speak about the right to the city [a model of urban development that includes all citizens]".[118] In the next chapter, I argue that the right to the city is synonymous with 'radical democracy' and with human-being-in-relation in the image of God.

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[116] This has, for example, been employed to defend the interests of asylum seekers in Australia (Butler, 2009, p.326).

[117] Perry, F. and Herd, M. 2016. The world is in Quito to discuss cities – but are local voices heard at Habitat III? *The Guardian*. [Online]. 18 October. [Accessed 29 March 2019]. Available from: https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/oct/18/world-quito-ecuador-future-cities-local-voices-habitat-3

[118] Colau, A. 2016. After Habitat III: a stronger urban future must be based on right to the city. *The Guardian*. [Online]. 20 October. [Accessed online 29 March 2019]. Available from: https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/oct/20/habitat-3-right-city-concrete-policies-ada-colau

Theologies of space

Standing in the city of spaces, with Lefebvre and Magnusson, where and how do theologies of political space appear and fare in Lefebvre's "trial by space"? Mapping the city with much of the political theology I have considered so far faces three immediate hurdles (in addition of course to the major problem of divine sovereignty considered in the last chapter): that it continues to see like a state (albeit critically); and/or that it sees like a church, and so not like a city; and that it gives priority to eschatological time over space, an imbalance I redress in the next chapter. Although my thesis critically evaluates political theologies from the stance of seeing like a city, my hypothesis is that political theology has a *positive* contribution to make to the field of urban theory following the spatial turn. Accordingly, and regardless of my caveats above, in what follows I look for where existing political theologies of space might positively critique Lefebvre's analysis and theologically 'thicken' it, and for where they are critically challenged by it. The Lefebvrian themes I consider are: the space of everyday life; the relationships between city spaces; the differential space of encounter and the space of the new (third space). I then look at cityspace in relation to Godspace.

The space of everyday life

How has theology engaged with lived space and the relationship between spaces? Lefebvre, like Magnusson, sees ("perceives") the city being slowly formed by the everyday lives and interactions of people and this "lived space" is a reality against which any conceptions of the real must always be evaluated. Indeed, this is the lower layer, oppressively weighed down by the other spaces he analyses – representations of space (or "conceived space"), abstract space, and the state. Just as Magnusson says city theorists have failed to be attuned to urban complexities and sit above them viewing them from a distance (Magnusson, 2011, p.15)[119] so, when Augustinian political theology can find no good in the city and represents urban space and citizens negatively as mere symbols and

[119] Cited in Ch.2.

cyphers of these oppressive forces and without agency, it is at risk of being part of the spatial structures of oppression.[120] Lefebvre warns that such philosophical conceptions of space are not neutral but are themselves products and producers of space. The same warning applies to theologies of space, particularly where theology has historically legitimated sovereignty, has been a major producer of mental, physical, and social space, and has been complicit in the production of capitalism's abstract space. The city calls theology to its own kenarchic conscientisation.

Subsidiarity

As we saw in Chapter 1, Aquinas pays more attention than Augustine to the detail of cities and citizenship, which he sees as God-ordained. Thomist political theology recognises the existential and inherent value of intermediate social and political forms and not merely as subsidiaries of the whole, and so also gives attention to their spatial ordering within an order of subsidiarity.[121] I earlier criticised Thomist subsidiarity for its legitimation of a mon-archic state and its subsumption of the political by the social, as per Arendt. Recent Catholic teaching on subsidiarity, says Cavanaugh, preserves this autonomy of intermediate forms of belonging and governance between the individual and the state, in contrast to the simple political space that pertains between sovereign and individual (Cavanaugh, 2016, p.128). Cavanaugh himself identifies, "two trajectories in the interpretation of subsidiarity", one of which has a positive view of the modern state, the other less so. Of the latter kind, *Caritas in Veritate (*Benedict XVI, 2009, §57) seeks love and truth in public life. Love cannot be enforced by the state, and truth cannot be left to the market's proliferation of consumer choice. Both love and truth require human-to-human encounter at a scale that makes this possible and which "disperses" the power of state and market in a "more radical reconfiguration of social space" (pp.134, 139). Cavanaugh has doubts about the ability of these intermediate forms of association to

[120] For example, Ward says: "our contemporary cities are not sites for the development of virtuous citizenship; they are not sites for the development of citizenship at all". Citizenship of such Godless cities means, for those who are able, "to cultivate lifestyles without conscience, beyond good and evil" (2009, p.215).
[121] Ch. 1, p.55.

withstand the state in its subservience to global capital. The evidence in the United States points, he says, to the "withering of civil society" (Cavanaugh, 2011, pp.27-29). The contemporary loss of public space on which liberal democratic politics depends is well rehearsed, but it is hard to see how love and truth could ever constitute the public space of the nation-state state founded on myth and violence, as indeed Cavanaugh and others argue.

Writing more recently, Cavanaugh retains his faith in subsidiarity, not now as a political arrangement of the state but, "deeply rooted in a Christian anthropology of the person as essentially in relationship with others. Subsidiarity works against both individualism and collectivism by establishing the priority of deep forms of face-to-face community" (2016, p.133). Reframing subsidiarity within the world seen like a city and starting in the city, at the face-to-face scale Benedict recognises as necessary, love and truth between citizens can indeed be seen as the virtuous foundation for the *polis*, even as it 'scales up' in a bottom-up version of subsidiarity.

For his part, the Radical Orthodox thinker John Milbank warns against an uncritical reading of subsidiarity and of the "worrying hybridity" of Roman Catholic teaching on complex space. The Roman church fails to be self-critical about its historical support for fascist and right-wing regimes, and it exerts hierarchical control over its own internal subsidiarity (Milbank, 1997, p.284-285); yes, there should be trades unions, but they should be *Catholic* trades unions (p.273). The Christian social teaching of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (until the 1960s) that advocated complex political space tended to be allied with right-wing politics in countering the universalising claims of socialism. Milbank prefers the early Christian socialists' embrace of a neo-Gothic complex spatiality in their repudiation of modernism. The simple political space of the state is "suspended between the mass of atomic individuals on the one hand, and an absolutely sovereign centre on the other". This space is

either natural (normative) or artificial, with intermediate organisations existing by permission of the centre which is "the self-legitimating community, namely the state" (p.275). In Gothic spatiality, on the other hand:

> multiple associations cease to 'mediate' between part and whole, but become themselves a new sort of context, a never 'completed' and constantly ramifying 'network', involving 'confused' and overlapping jurisdictions, which disperses and dissolves political sovereignty (p.276).

This space is exemplified in how the Gothic cathedral was constructed, not according to some masterplan but effected by the collaboration of the various and relatively anarchic trades' guilds, an endeavour never completed and entailing a constant recognition of imperfection.[122]

In Milbank's complex space, there is always room to adjust for individual free choice without surrendering the quest for harmonic coherence, but the infinite diversity of individuals is a representation of an infinite excess always beyond our reach, perceived by faith and *not* by rational conviction or calculation (p.280). Complex space has a certain natural, ontological priority, and simple space remains by comparison merely an abstracting, idealising project (p.281). Thus far, he appears to agree with Lefebvre's critique of the homogenising tendency of abstract space. However, for Milbank, and more than for Ward and Cavanaugh, the archetypical complex social space is the church, which in its unity with the heavenly city and with Christ as its head, infinitely exceeds the state and, unlike the state, is not an enclosed and defensible terrain.

[122] The term 'Gothic' in relation to architecture was first coined by Vasari in the 1530s to disparage the unplanned and asymmetrical buildings of the medieval period by comparison with Roman and neo-classical Renaissance buildings. Wikipedia. 2021. *Gothic Architecture*. [Online]. [Accessed 05 January 2021]. Available from: https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gothic_architecture

Like Lefebvre, Milbank grants the complexity of everyday life and the "infinite diversity" of individuals an ontological priority which calls into question any representation of space that tries to impose some rational coherence or order. In Milbank, however, this is not just a matter of thinking differently (as Magnusson says we must) but it is a matter of *faith* in a transcendent unity that comprehends infinite diversity, a faith that can resist the rational desire for order; in his metaphor of the Gothic cathedral, it is the vertical excess of space (signifying transcendence) that allows for diverse horizontal space. His Gothic metaphor has further relevance in respect of Lefebvre's abstract space and to the city as the *oeuvre* of its citizens: the neo-Gothic revival was a negation of the dehumanising effects of capitalist modernity and industrialisation, and a disalienation of alienated labour by the recovery of the building crafts.

Milbank's critique of the state and advocacy for the political nature of the church may be stronger than other Radical Orthodox, but he is not unaware of the dangers of an uncritical political ecclesiology. For example, in relation to his metaphor of the Gothic cathedral, he says:

> As regards the inescapable dimension of the vertical and hierarchical, the upwardly aspiring building is simultaneously 'deconstructed', or subordinated to the function of sheltering the many altars, many depictions, many procedures, enacted within its frame (p.278).

Like Ruskin and others, his fondness for the Gothic is nostalgic and, although it may be useful to critique what he calls the "monotonous" simple political space of the state (p.271), he falls prey to the danger that Lefebvre sees in looking backwards and not forward to the new city. He does not re-imagine a complex *political* space other than the church, which might avoid the problem he sees with the simple political space of the state.

Spaces in relation

The Lefebvrian city is internally complex, thanks to the dynamic and agonistic interrelationships of the spaces he identifies. These spaces are a continuous production of social relations that either reproduce the status quo and so reinforce the existent spatiality or, in his third space of differentiation, are of the kind that come about outwith existent spatiality and so create new space-between. Third space, as Magnusson says, must then be seen in its dynamic political relationship to other city spaces. It is this relationship, and its correspondence to how neo-Augustinians speak of the relationship between Augustine's two cities, that I consider here, based on my heuristic assumption of a correlation between third space and the city of God.

Two cities

Because Augustine, unlike Aquinas, does not think the earthly city can produce virtuous citizens, *ipso facto,* it cannot produce virtuous political space. I suggest, however, that there are clear connections between how Lefebvre's contested spaces are found in a single city and how Augustine's two cities share in common what pertains to earthly life in the *saeculum* (the period before the *eschaton*). However, it is how Augustine's two cities complexify political space that lies behind the revival of Augustinian political theology,[123] and this is my focus here. There are similarities between how Lefebvre characterises the oppressive spaces of the city and how Augustine characterises the city of earth: the social relations where some hold power over others and self-interestedly work to keep things as they are to benefit themselves; the quasi-religious and unquestionable belief that the political economy of empire/capitalism is the source of security, identity, and peace; the arrogance of philosophical conceptions that themselves are a form of power. There are similarities, too, in how they (and Arendt) see that no good thing can come from these spaces (or that city), and that the good city needs new space. For Lefebvre, the new city is to be found spatially in the old; for

[123] "Rowan Williams, John Milbank, Oliver O'Donovan, et al" (Cavanaugh, 2011, p.57).

Augustine, the spatial city of God awaits the *eschaton*. For Lefebvre, there must be conscientisation as to those social relations and the means of production that have produced oppressive cityspace, if these are not to be reproduced in his "new city on new foundations". In Augustine, the city of earth can only be known *as such* by its analogical relationship with the city of God by which it is shown to be a *privatio boni,* a falling away from, a *lack* of the city of God. This too is a tool for conscientisation.

Augustine argues the *res publica* or public space of Rome cannot be truly public because it is not founded on the justice of which God alone is the fount - in a God-less public space the human lust for power over others will surely prevail (CoG 19.19-25). Although Augustine, for the most part, does not conflate the church in its institutional forms with the city of God, Cavanaugh suggests that where he does, he means that, "as Christ's body, the church is ontologically related to the city of God, but it is the church not as visible institution but as a set of practices. The city of God is not so much a space as a performance" (Cavanaugh, 2011, p.59). As we saw in the last chapter, based on Augustine's title *civitas Dei* (*citizenship* of God), Cavanaugh understands the two cities as "two performances, two practices of space and time" but principally of the eschatological time of the 'now' and 'not yet' (pp.49, 59).

Ward, who also speaks of the cities as performances, goes some way towards locating them in a spatial dimension. He cites Michel de Certeau who, with Lefebvre, was rethinking the city and politics post-Paris, 1968. Certeau says the "text" of the city may be that of architects, planners, corporations, politicians and the like (Lefebvre's representations of space), but it is 'haunted' and subverted by the practices and performance of everyday living: "these practices of space refer to a specific form of operations (ways of operating), to "another spatiality" … [that] slips into the clear text of the planned and readable city" (Certeau, cited in Ward, 2000, p.230). For Ward, however, as I said in Chapter 2,

because he sees the city as a metonym for all that characterises the city of earth, and so without agency independent of it, Certeau's city "can only ever be a virtual reality", his "another spatiality" metaphoric. But it surely follows that the text of the city will be subversively changed by other practices or performances of space, suggesting that there is not merely an intermingling of the two cities, as Augustine allows, but an unavoidable synergy between them in which both are changed. Cosmically and analogically, in space-time, the city of earth indwells the city of God and is derived from it and *vice versa*.

To illustrate the interplay between the two performances of the two cities, Cavanaugh takes up Sam Wells' metaphor of 'overaccepting' from improvisational theatre, "an improvised reframing of the action of a drama in light of a larger story one wants to tell" (Cavanaugh, 2011, pp.64-65). Cavanaugh suggests we think of the story of the earthly city as "tragic", framed in human sinfulness and the consequential need for coercive government - violence to subdue violence. The story of the "comedic" city of God is rooted in the original goodness of creation and, as its performers improvise in their engagement with the tragic story, they open up, "a second city, a new kind of imagination that does not treat sin as a given". In the last chapter, I suggested that rather than equating the performance of the city of God with the church, we could see it as a kenarchic performance that does not treat sovereignty as a given. This idea of performance nicely complements Lefebvre's description of third space as the space of a performance of the city that re-makes the givenness of space into the space of artists and of joy, and of humanising encounter.

How do Cavanaugh's and Ward's idea of two performances fare in Lefebvre's "trial by space"? Their take on the two cities as two performances helps us to see the city as the performative space of contrasting citizenships, but they foreground time and not space. For Lefebvre, capitalism takes

effect spatially, asymmetrical power in social relations takes effect spatially, life chances are determined spatially - we might also say salvation must also be spatial and have spatial effect. Performance that does not have spatial effect by Lefebvre's reckoning fails to be political because being political means to effect change in the *polis.* A performance of time and not space can only be partially salvific if it defers salvation from oppressive space to the *eschaton* - and that favours some more than others.

Where I suggested in the last chapter that we can judge which performance is which only on their merits, for Ward and Cavanaugh, it is the church which is doing the performing of the city of God, which assumes a certain pre-valorisation of the performance, to say nothing of a presumption of what 'church as performance' then is. In Lefebvre's understanding, both performances necessarily either produce, or reproduce, space – they cannot avoid doing so. Nor can they themselves avoid being the historical product of historical space, and so we cannot think of the church's performance of the *civitas Dei* as something independent of, untouched by, or wholly separate from the particular city in which it takes place, or as other than its own history tells us it is. The New Testament scholar James Dunn, for example, says that aside from sharing the essentials of the *kerygma*, the primitive church communities bore much more resemblance to their particular social and cultural contexts (more often than not, urban) than to each other, and that to abstract those gospel essentials from the diversity of expression and context would be to negate the diversity that is fundamental to Christianity (Dunn, 2006, pp.449-451). This difference between cities is of the city's dynamic creative essence; as Lefebvre says, "the city [is] the ensemble of differences between cities", with its own particular rhythms with which any improvised performance will need to hear.[124] There is no escaping the city – more than being merely intermingled, the city shapes the church, and the church shapes the city in an ongoing production of space. The performance in the city of the *civitas terrena* is the

[124] p.128.

easier one to identify – the form of social relations that it comprises produces the abstract space and the representations of space necessary for control and exchange value. The church is historically implicated in this space, not least in the historically various accommodations of secularity and so, as Cavanaugh says, its proper stance must be penitential.

Third space

But what of the performance of *civitas Dei* and Lefebvre's third space? I said in Chapter 1 that the focus of my thesis is a theological critique of Lefebvre's third space, the space of humanising encounter across difference (differential space) and the space of newness. Here, I want to consider the questions third space raises for these political theologies of space. Because space is produced by social relations, third space comes into being as the space of new social relations, i.e., social relations unmediated by prior representations of space. It is the encounter across difference and in spaces marginalised by the hegemonic centre (abstract space) that makes this possible, and it is the quality of the encounter that brings about new (third) space. This, of course, has echoes of the Aristotelian city coming into being as strangers meet and engage together in *polis*-making (politics), in what Arendt calls a "space of appearance". In the following chapter I will suggest that this is analogous to the new social relations that come into being in the Pentecost event.

Performance and improv are useful ways of thinking about the relationship between church and others; Cavanaugh says of church as performance: "the church is not a separate enclave, but as … it joins with others to perform the city of God, … the boundaries between what is church and what is not church permeable and even ambiguous" (Cavanaugh, 2011, p.66). Performance, however, can suggest unilateral action, even game-playing, by the church, as if it already has the answer to the city and is privileged to know what others do not. This view of the city of God as a performance in which

the church is engaged with others raises the question of its approach to the kind of encounter and dialogue which characterises third space. It is of the essence of third space, and of Arendt's space of appearance, that there be no Thomist-like assumption of a societal 'common good' which in Arendt's terms is apolitical. The new comes into being in, and as the evidence of, the political encounter.

Although Cavanaugh is not engaging with Lefebvre's analysis nor with the city, he does consider the nature of the encounter between the church and/or Christians in the context of 'radical democracy', which I see as more or less identical with third space in that it also entails vulnerability, openness, and newness.[125] Cavanaugh identifies what I think is the nub of the matter via his critique of a dialogue between post-liberal political theologian Stanley Hauerwas and Romand Coles, the political theorist and radical democrat. These two agree on relocating political life away from the 'simple' space of the state and on the "multitude of peoples enacting myriad forms of the political in the radical ordinary". These forms are not confined to the strictly local or the particular, nor should they be seen as contributing to the larger whole (the nation-state), but they are translocal in scale and so insurgent in opposing and decentring the state and global capital (p.188). Where they do not agree is to what degree the church can participate in radical democracy. Hauerwas insists on the church's necessary role in Christian formation (and therefore, he says, political formation) and as the guardian of orthodoxy. Coles argues that this prevents an open, generous, and potentially transformative encounter with the Other:

> Radical democracy meets the other unsure of what will become of one's story in the encounter … in which one story does not try to incorporate the other … such that each … narrative is profoundly *thrown out of joint*, out of narrative structure, even out of improvisational narrative structure, and what develops comes to be

[125] In Chapter 4, I discuss radical democracy more fully, as it is intrinsic to Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's "ekklesia of wo/men" and, I argue, to seeing theologically like a city.

> seen as essentially unexpected newness born of an unexpected encounter (p.191, italics his).

Significantly for my thesis, Cavanaugh wonders if some of the difference between them is due to Hauerwas thinking primarily of the rural church, while Coles is writing of the urban context (p.192). Like Augustine, Hauerwas's 'red line' is worship of Christ as the object and goal of Christian faith and the condition precedent of Christian political engagement. Coles thinks this prevents a truly immanent engagement in radical politics and suggests that in Christ we see "not the object of our hope (an ordered and secure topography in the form of his resurrected body) but the vulnerable *way* of radical hope (in which his body is disordered in crucifixion and is disordered in new ways with his resurrection)" (p.193). Furthermore, asks Coles, isn't Christ always in exile from humanly-formed communities including, therefore, the church? Cavanaugh appears to side with Coles but with some reservation: in response to Hauerwas', "God is God, and I ain't", he says this is not the same as knowing *how* God is God, and the congruent worship that engenders vulnerable dependence and unseen trust is the beginning of "a politics of vulnerability" (p.194).

With Coles, I maintain that the exigency and crisis of third space require a kenarchic response, i.e., a letting go of certainty and security of forms. This is synonymous with faith, and in this case faith that God is to be found in the secular city and in ways that God could not be discovered otherwise. Knowing *how* the kenotic God is God surely constitutes the church, its faithful witness, and its political engagement. The kenotic performance of the city of God opens kenarchic space for others and implies the kenosis of the church. The Christian distinctiveness that Hauerwas (and many fellow Christians) do not want to let go, may be precisely its self-kenosis for the love of others and (with Arendt) of the world we make together. I will address more fully in the next and final chapters what I think kenarchic theology might mean for the political nature of the church.

Eucharistic space

If we are not to see third space as a purely immanent, humanly produced space, it will require, like Milbank's gothic cathedral, its 'vertical' dimension. How might third space be related to the space of creation as it relates to God?

Cavanaugh and Ward both develop a Eucharistic political spatiality. Ward writes that Christians in their day-to-day engagement with the world around them are the fractured body of Christ in the power of the Spirit and are—at one and the same time—gathered into the unity of the Word. Until the twelfth century inversion of meaning, this was the meaning of the *corpus verum*, whilst the Eucharistic elements were the *corpus mysticum*. In the fracture of this older sense of the true body, space is opened between its members in such a way that those who are 'other' can enter into a space that, elsewhere, Michel de Certeau calls Eucharistic space (Ward, 2000, p.178). This space participates in and is bounded (or unbounded) by the cosmic space of the Christ which, in turn, participates in Trinitarian space.[126] As Certeau says, "Christianity was founded on the *loss of a body* - the loss of the body of Jesus Christ, compounded with the loss of the 'body' of Israel, of a 'nation' and its genealogy. A founding disappearance indeed" (cited at p.92). Ward describes this as a kenotic loss or, as he prefers, a "displacement" (p.92).

Ward writes of this cosmological Eucharistic spatiality opened by the loss or displacement of the body of Jesus of Nazareth but then fills this space with the church. On the one hand, "the body of Jesus Christ, the body of God, is permeable, transcorporeal, transpositional. Within it all other

[126] Ward points out that Augustine was completing his *De Trinitates* at the same time as composing *De Civitate Dei*, and so, despite the apparent ultimate judgment and separation of the two cities in the last three books of the latter work, he (Ward) can argue that Trinitarian participation "points the way towards a contemporary theology of the city" (Ward, 2000, pp.233-236).

bodies are situated and given their significance" (p.113), and "the emphasis of all things being *en Christoi*, of Christ [opens] a space in the fallen world in which resurrection life expands" (p.114). On the other, he refers to Ephesians 1:22-23: "The Church [capital C, Ward's] is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all". The verse qualifies "church" by "which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all". In the last chapter I said that in kenarchic mode we can say 'Lord is Jesus', so we might say 'his kenotic body is the church'. Ward, however, says, "To understand the body of Jesus we can only examine what the Church is and what it has to say concerning the nature of that body as scripture attests to it" (p.113). Yet the language of Ephesians is spatial – a body can be in space but can be, in itself, (as Magnusson says of the city) a hyperspace of many dimensions. It is the space of His body that fills and fulfils creation so that the creation finds its fulness in Christ, not in the church in any way we might be able to see it or know it. If it is a mistake to conflate the church with the city of God, so it is with the church and the cosmic body of Christ. Eschatologically speaking, the *space* is already universalised in the cosmic Christ, the *not yet* is the occupation and obstruction of that space by what is not Christic space. Ward says the ascension opens a "vertical, transcending spatiality" between creation and creator to be filled by the Spirit at Pentecost (p.112) but then seems to want to place the church, albeit as the expanded and dispersed body of Christ, in the space opened up in Christ, in order to occupy it. My problems here are with Ward's positivist definition of the church as observable ("we can only examine what the Church is"), and with his starting point for political theology: "the sovereignty of the one God and the operations of that sovereignty in and across time" (Ward, 2009, p.166). Yet, this is space of the Spirit who, in blowing where she will, transgresses all boundaries and includes the formerly excluded, offending those who would place boundaries on what is and is not church. I want to say that all who enter into the space—stumbling, fleeing, falling, failing—are the ekklesia vivified by the Spirit into becoming the Christic body of which the cosmic new Jerusalem is its *telos*. Here is where a new city can begin to be knit together.

Conclusion

Augustinian and Thomist versions of complex space may be incommensurable, due to their differing views of the good of politics and of government, but I take from Augustine a rejection of all forms of human sovereignty or power-over and the possibility of a citizenship that does the same but in the secular city. From Thomist complex space I take: the positive value Aquinas places on the disparate elements of a *polis*; his recognition of how the whole can be dynamically formed by the parts without subsuming them; and how a bottom-up subsidiarity places the most-local space in a global context. What Lefebvre helps us to do is relocate and synthesise both versions in a city context where we may see them anew through the hermeneutical lens of seeing like a city (an already complex space).

On the discursive terrain significantly shaped by Lefebvre, I said that my course lies closer to Augustinian political theology than Thomism. Spatially, Thomism encloses space within a mon-archic whole, even while complexifying the space within it in useful ways. Augustine, on the other hand, provides a critical distance between the two cities and opens space to the prophetic imagination of another city without sovereignty. That Augustinian complex space does not map easily onto the city of Lefebvre's spatial analysis is not surprising, given the mostly negative view of the city engendered by Augustine's *civitas terrena*, and then the conflation of that with the secularist nation-state and with the city as its metonym. And yet, Lefebvre's third space as "another spatiality" which "haunts" and subverts the legible text of the city, is surely the space in which we might hope to find the kenarchic space and form of life of the *civitas Dei*. Cavanaugh's and Ward's idea of the two cities as performances thickens an understanding of the dynamic interrelationship between the Lefebvrian city spaces, of how they are produced, and how they may be subverted. The eucharistic spatiality they (and Certeau) propose offers to Lefebvrian spatiality a Christological ontology of space together

with a pneumatological account for the syneketic[127] dynamism of the city. These in turn enable a theological conscientisation as to the spaces produced by power-over and offer sight of the kind of space and action that are in eschatological continuity with the cosmopolitan *telos* of the new Jerusalem. The nation-state is alien to these neo-Augustinian performances, whereas they suggest a peculiar synergy with the complex space of the city.

Even in the process of writing in this chapter about neo-Augustinian complex space, and despite my thesis being about the city and not about the church, I have found seeing like a church exerts a strong centripetal pull on my own theo-political imagination, so that the city fades away and becomes indistinct, much as seeing like a state makes it hard to begin seeing like a city. Conceptualising the spatiality of the city of God is made harder by conflating it with the church; the church then *appears* to occupy space and so not open it for its others. Lefebvrian spatiality, however, helps us see that the spatiality of the city of God is discovered in encounter and so cannot be contained and controlled. By framing Lefebvrian space ontologically in the kenarchic space of the body of Christ it is seen as space of kenotic flows. Lefebvre's "trial by space" then becomes a discernment of all that impedes, blocks, and reverses (negates) the kenotic flows of divine *energeia* in kenarchic space. It is not the church, positivistically defined, which is the measure of what is truly public space but, as I will argue in subsequent chapters, it may be for a kenarchic ekklesia to open in the city truly public space for others.

There are significant similarities, beyond sharing radical criticisms of the nation-state, between Lefebvre's hopeful view of what the city can be and how my neo-Augustinians referents view the church. But in this chapter I have identified some intractable contradictions between their church as

[127] "Synekesis" is Ed Soja's term – see Ch.1.

performance and public space and Lefebvre's third space and Arendt's space of appearance. In the next chapter, to see how God takes place in the city without regard to the church, I leave these neo-Augustinians (and questions about church), for the moment, to develop my own hermeneutic of third space.

Chapter 4: A theology of third space

Introduction

So far, I have defined what I mean by the city, argued that cities are essentially resistant to sovereignty, and followed the spatial turn in urban theory. In each chapter I have sought to bring theological critique to this field of urban studies. My argument has been that, amidst the crises facing the nation-state, we could be looking to the city for a renewal of politics adequate to the challenges and possibilities of the twenty-first century. And so, for the sake of the city and for theology, political theology needs to engage, not only with the growing multidisciplinary discourse about cities, but with the city itself in what Magnusson calls its "cityness". When seen like a city the *polis* and therefore 'the political' look very different from what they have become in the nation-state and offer exciting possibilities for dialogue between political theory and theology. In the previous chapter I said that the theology is not simply a matter of swapping the city for the state and remaining with the essentially *ecclesiological* question of how church and *polis* relate to each other. I problematised the neo-Augustinian political theology that looks to the church for truly public space (seeing like a church) and risks falling into normative assumptions about 'church', failing to adequately recognise that the church is both producer and product of historic public and political space. In following Lefebvre, I look for public and political space (Arendt's "space of appearance") alternative to the nation-state in the city and particularly in third space which, I argue, allows for something very like a kenarchic politics. I ended the last chapter questioning the possibility of the church and a sovereigntist theology entering through the 'eye of the needle' (or dialogic encounter) into this sovereignty-free third space.

In this chapter, I focus theological critique on the politics that seeing like a city brings into view, and specifically the politics of Lefebre's third space, where the right to the city can be exercised and where political agency unfurls between people as they encounter their various others and Earth

herself. It is common to speak of 'theories of change' when discussing how positive social, environmental, and economic change happens, but the growing recognition of systemic complexity requires a more open, questioning, and reflexive 'approach to change'. Seeing like a city calls for, and stimulates, new political and theological approaches.[128] This chapter proposes a theological approach to change in spatially complex cities. My hope is that this might inform Christian praxis and contribute to the still-nascent field of city-focused political theology. In this chapter I focus in on Lefebvrian third space and identify three theological readings of it – eschatological, ekklesial, and pneumatological. These offer a triadic hermeneutic for seeing "how God takes place" in the city (Bergmann, 2007, p.366). I choose these three readings because they are not predicated on the relationship between church and the city; they offer a more richly textured theological reading of the city than much Augustinian political theology; and they illuminate kenarchic praxis in the city. They are not intended to be hermeneutically exhaustive but offer some pathways in, what is still, a relatively new field of political theology.[129]

[128] Sigurd Bergmann asks if "the spatial turn represents just a new theme or a necessity at theology's own depth" and argues for the latter. "Theology's reflections about space and place provide a deep challenge and an urgent necessity for theology to become aware of its embeddedness in the existential spatiality of life" (Bergmann, 2007, p.353). He goes so far as to ask: "Can Space set theology free? How does the God of the Here and Now 'take place'? Could the new consciousness of being embedded in space, places and movement encourage theologians to break from their conventional stereotype discussions about the identity of theology in favour of lifting the eye a bit further than one's own nose in order to discover a wide open land of pain and hope?" (p.376)

[129] "Future research and theorisation might … need to shift from the study of post-secular cities *per se* to the post-secular analysis of cities. Such a shift would suggest that the post-secular is not only a lens for reinterpreting cities and their diversities, it becomes a methodological and theoretical challenge for new ways of seeing what until now we have been looking at but not really SEEING. Those secularly inflected tools and methods that have up to now attempted to map our diverse and plural cities (post-colonial theory, multicultural theory, equalities and human rights theory) now perhaps seem to behind the curve to really map and analyse what is really going on in our increasingly urbanised world. Do we now not also need an analytical tool or framework called post-secular? We are, in effect, waking up to the realities of the twenty-first-century diverse, liminal, fluid, dangerous, beautiful, exciting, divided and religiously imbued city of global neoliberalism" (Beaumont & Baker, 2011, p.265).

How God takes place in the city

At the end of the last chapter, we saw that Graham Ward and Michel de Certeau see the space opened by the loss of the body of Jesus Christ—displaced, disappeared, ascended—as the kenotic space in which all things come to have their being and significance. We can then think of all spatiality (Augustinian or Lefebvrian) within that Christic cosmic space and not just the space produced by or in whatever we understand by 'church'.[130] Within the spatiality of the city we can expect to discover traces, more or less evident, of this Christic space. More readily *apparent* are the physical, mental, and social spaces produced by asymmetries of socio-economic power relations (Lefebvrian spaces of oppression), but these are a negation of what is essentially kenarchic space; to negate the negation is to begin to reveal kenarchic space in which kenarchic relations can flourish, free of sovereignty. My criticism of Ward and Cavanaugh in the previous chapter was that they then want to fill this space with the church. But, as Harvey Cox says: "Theology … is concerned *first* of all with finding out where the action is, the discernment of the opening. Only then can it begin the work of shaping a church which can get to the action" (Cox, 2013, p.149, italics his). I concur, and so this chapter foregrounds the city seen like a city and proposes a kenarchic hermeneutic for understanding how God takes place in this city without sovereignty.

I focus on three salient characteristics of this city-as-theorised after the spatial turn: its spatial complexity, politics, and generative dynamism. I explore these theologically via a triadic hermeneutic – eschatological, ekklesiological, and pneumatological respectively. The hermeneutic enables us to notice and interpret urban phenomena theologically and so see how God takes place in the warp and weft of cities that we might otherwise miss, given how much of urban theology is focused on the negative aspects of the city. Furthermore, this hermeneutic is in keeping with the Lefebvrian 'space

[130] We could then understand the promise to Abraham in Hebrews 11:10 of "a city with foundations" as a city founded on/in this post-ascension space, cityspace now theo-ontically grounded in Christic space.

of differentiation', in that it brings together, and discovers complementarity between, three thinkers from different traditions and nationalities: Vítor Westhelle (Brazilian, Lutheran), Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (North American, feminist, Catholic), and Nimi Wariboko (Nigerian, Pentecostal).

Just as in Lefebvre's analysis, city spaces, with their different epistemologies, intersect so each frame of this triadic hermeneutic is insufficient without the other two. My focus is on Lefebvre's third space, but this "space of representation" is in agonistic relationship with "spatial practice", "representations of space", and the "abstract space" of global capitalism.[131] Magnusson says of this spatial complexity:

> It is impossible to understand the world in which we live if we imagine it as a three- or four-dimensional space. Much more helpful are recent ideas from physics about hyperspace: an n-dimensional space in which each domain is related to all the others, even though the other domains may be imperceptible from the vantage point of any particular one …. The boundaries between different domains, like the social and the political, are always at issue, and the issue is always political. [And so], we are best advised to think of the urban as a hyperspace of many dimensions, each of which is produced by political action and related to the others politically (Magnusson, 2011, p.90).

If, as Magnusson says, this hyperspace can be understood as "a *multiplicity* of movements" (Magnusson, 2015, p.23, italics his), then the three elements of my theological hermeneutic can operate as a conceptual perichoresis - a dance between them internally, and also externally, between them and the domains, dimensions, and movements of the city.

[131] p.126.

Third space eschatology

Lefebvre's spatial analysis bears more than a trace of Joachim's eschatological progression through the ages of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; he explicitly links the space of representation, the space in which he says the new city comes into being, with Joachim's age of the Spirit, which is present—in time *and* space—and is characterised by freedom and joy.[132] Secular theorists following on from Lefebvre have, unsurprisingly, not considered the eschatological dimension of his spatial analysis of cities, perhaps because it is hidden within his (unconventional) Marxism. He looks to time *and* space, to what he calls 'presence', for liberation because of his understanding of the spatial architectures and archaeologies of domination. The "new city" in the space that comes into being through new social relations, is to be found in the old city (Lefebvre, 1996, p.148).

In this chapter the theme of *newness* runs through the political theology and theory. For Arendt, the catastrophic end which had come with Nazi Germany demanded a radical rethink of politics and the political. Natality, the possibility for human beginnings and therefore freedom to speak and act, is axiomatic to her conception of politics (Boyle, 1987, p.98). Lefebvre was also writing at an end—of the era of hope in Marxist revolution through the state—and so he looks for new beginnings within the city which are, *ipso facto*, new beginnings *of* the city. In the introduction to this thesis, I quoted Zygmunt Bauman: "the old order founded until recently on a similarly 'triune' principle of territory, state, and nation as the key to the planetary distribution of sovereignty, and on power wedded seemingly forever to the politics of the territorial nation-state as its sole operating agency, is by now dying" (Bauman, 2009, p.2). My claim throughout is that we should be looking to cities for the new politics even as the old politics of the nation-state is dying. My focus in this chapter is on the political space in cities that gives birth to the new, whether it is Lefebvre's space of representation, Soja's

[132] Westhelle says: "The Joachimite revolutionary change was to retrieve the apocalyptic roots of Jewish eschatology and turn it immanent to world history itself. He thus breaks with the Augustinian dual view of history and brings the Spirit to realise itself in the secular sphere" (Westhelle, 2012, p.59).

third space, or Arendt's space of appearance, and the relationship of this to other spaces in the city. Newness is implicit in the ekklesia of wo/men, which is ever open to those currently marginalised or excluded from the radical democracy that defines it and resists its closure. Ekklesial work is the convening and weaving together of a new political sociality amongst the previously marginalised and oppressed. Wariboko's Charismatic City is a city's inherent potential for newness and its openness to the generative and intensifying work of the Spirit. This newness is the renewal of the material and relational by the spiritual and not their defeat (the kind of eschatology Emily Pennington criticises – see below). For Westhelle, every *eschaton* is also a threshold, a crossing into the choratic space between margins, with the potential of a newness beyond the ending and, as Wariboko says, "Every end has only one option, to be a new beginning" (Wariboko, 2014, p.124).

Kathryn Tanner says eschatology, "has a direct bearing on ethical questions via its influence on psychological dispositions to act [and so] is a major topic in much of contemporary Christian thought concerned ... to promote social and political activism" (Tanner, 2005, p.41). Augustinian eschatology has been a major influence in concepts of the secular regarding religion and the state, but what does it mean to see through an eschatological lens, and so act, in the complex political space of the city? Cities play a conspicuous role in biblical eschatology for good and for ill, in salvation or in judgment, from the central place Jerusalem holds in the Judaeo-Christian imaginary to the prophetic warnings given to cities in both Testaments. Augustine's title, *City of God*, is inspired by the Psalmist's love and yearning for the city of God. In Hebrews 11:10, Abraham is commended for his faith in looking for the "city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God", a city promised to all people of faith who come after him. In the Bible cities, as corporate entities, are judged but might also be saved – for

the sake of a few, Sodom could have been saved, and Nineveh was saved for the sake of all its inhabitants, human and animal.[133]

Whether the city is an intrinsic part of God's good intention for creation or, as Ellul claims, the product of Cain's rejection of God's promise,[134] biblical accounts suggest it is God's intention to redeem it. Augustine's earthly city is a derogation from the good city of God. Cavanaugh writes:

> Much has been written about Augustine's supposed pessimism, but it is Augustine who reminds us that evil is not natural, but is rather a privation of good. The import of the fall is precisely that there is an original good to fall away from, rather than seeing creation as flawed from the start (Cavanaugh, 2016, pp.150-151).

To look for how God takes place in the city is to anticipate the reign of God *and* to recognise what negates it. Henry Drummond says it well: "In every City throughout the world today, there is a City descending out of Heaven from God. Each one of us is daily building up this City or helping to keep it back" (Drummond, 1988, p.15). Prophets call even the most rebellious and violent cities to repentance, and when Jesus laments over Jerusalem, "If you had known on this day, even you, the conditions for peace!" (Luke 19:41-42), it must mean that the city could have fulfilled those conditions. Just as in every human we can see the image of God, no matter how marred or depraved, we must have a sense of what a city should be, in order to see how it falls short; this then is not a Jerusalem-Babylon nor a city of God-city of Earth dualism. This is the argument of Gillian Rose in her reflection on the widow of Phocion, referred to in Chapter 1 (Rose, 1996, p.51). The women (the widow and her friend) reinvent the political life of the community *as they return* into the city that has murdered righteous Phocion, mourning what it has become; they are not to

[133] Jonah 4:11.
[134] Ellul, 1997, p.5.

abandon it. The city, and all it means for human flourishing, is at stake. Their story, like that of Jesus of Nazareth, indicates that those who have been violated by the city may be its best hope.

That the reign of God is spatially present ('here and not there') and not just temporally ('now and not yet') is (at least) not excluded by the gospel proclamation in Mark 1.15: "The *time* is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has *come near*, repent and believe the gospel". Eschatologies of space *as well as* time yield perspectives on our contemporary cities rather different from Augustinian political theologies predicated on a predominantly temporal eschatology. From Lefebvre's concept of *produced* space, we can see that if we eschatologically prioritise time over space then the possibilities of liberation from spaces of oppression and domination, and of salvific space, are also deferred indefinitely – to the benefit of those who have the power to control, order, and normalise space to their own benefit. The opening of spaces of otherness—heterogeneous spaces, counterpolitical spaces—gives room for reversals of power and for different social and political forms of life to come into being. The significance of understanding space eschatologically is that it offers the possibility of space not defined by what has been, nor constituted by the hegemonic centre (Lefebvrian "abstract space"). Vítor Westhelle quotes Jacob Taubes: "The God beyond … is by nature eschatological because he challenges the world and promises new things" (Westhelle, 2012, p.59). If this new space is ultimately grounded in the cosmic body of Christ, it is essentially humanising space in which, as per Lefebvre, the new humanity and the new city is being formed.[135]

[135] Magnusson does not write with an eschatological frame in mind but, in championing the city as the hope for democracy, he maintains we should understand this not in the world as it has been, but as it *now* is - the space of the global city or cosmopolis which, as we shall see, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Nimi Wariboko both say is a new Jerusalem. He says: "The idea that urbanism transcends particular states is especially important, because it enables us to see that states are entities within the urban global. The conventional ontology of the political puts cities in a position subordinate to states. A focus on urbanism enables us to invert that hierarchy" (Magnusson, 2011, p.50).

Eschatology frames how we believe God is taking place in the granular cityness and particularity of the city and so how we might act accordingly. Kathryn Tanner understands "eternal life", not as life after death, but as "a new quality of life in God", given wholly *now* as an essentially *relational* patterning of life as it is in Christ. As such, it is a "realm or sphere" in competition with and co-extensive with the realm (patterning) of death, and "infiltrating, seeping into the whole"; this "promotes a more spatialised than temporalised eschatology" (Tanner, 2005, pp.49-50). From a more explicitly feminist standpoint, Emily Pennington is critical of the kind of patriarchal future-oriented eschatology that prizes the future over the present and the spiritual (associated with the male) over the material (associated with the female).[136] When inordinate value is given to the spiritual, and the optimal future state of existence is brought about by the "imposition of the spiritual upon the material", the materiality and relationality of everyday life are devalued both now, and in the eschatological future (Pennington, 2013, p.221-223). In contradistinction to an eschatology that ultimately sees God acting unilaterally in masculinised independence, Pennington, like Tanner, argues for a relationality that, far from its demeaning characterisation as feminine, is core to creation and to Godself (p.226). Furthermore, the ability of the female body to create new life offers a very different understanding of how the eschatologically new comes into being in the immanent frame (p.222).[137]

[136] See below for how Nimi Wariboko says this manifests pneumatologically in cities.

[137] "Such an imaginary need not, indeed should not be limited to birthing, but can also incorporate the experiences of those who do not or cannot give birth, and those women for whom birthing and/or mothering is not a positive experience. The ability of the female body to create something new, however that may manifest itself, is an invaluable tool with which to consider the dynamic newness of the eschatological future. It is partly in acknowledgement of the diversity of women's experiences that I employ the language of natality, as it indicates a spectrum that encompasses all generative acts, not just the literal, gendered processes of birthing and mothering. Moreover, natality is relevant and applicable to all of creation on account of the fact that 'we are all natals'. Still, natality has allusions to that which is specifically feminine, and so its reclamation is not without gendered implications. Indeed, Jantzen observes that 'natality cannot be thought of without body and gender'. As such, Jantzen enables us to consider natality as a model for eschatological embodiment that is rooted in but is not, ultimately, limited to, women's varied experiences of creating new life" (Pennington, 2013, p.222). "Natality" is Hannah Arendt's term for how politics creates the new.

For a spatial eschatology that closely follows Lefebvre's analysis of space, I turn now to Vítor Westhelle. Although he does not explicitly apply his eschatology to cities, his faithfulness to Lefebvre means that it is important to my thesis.[138] He attributes Western modernity's "sequestration of eschatology" to the dominance of historical thinking (Westhelle, 2012, XII). He writes:

> The etymology of the word [eschatology] lifts up dimensions of what "end" means, and these etymological nuances have been ignored. Moreover, the spatial denotations of eschaton have been glaringly absent from Western eschatological discourse. As much as the longitudinal perspective has insisted on an end within history and not beyond it, it is necessary to realise that eschaton also implies an end within space and not beyond it (p.79).

He claims this "longitudinal perspective" has its source in Augustine's attempt in *City of God* to "dissociate faith from social and political reality" in the context of the crisis facing the Roman Empire following the sacking of Rome by Alaric in 410 CE.[139] Augustine introduced into Western thought "longitudinal trajectories by which truth and final verifiability is exclusively time bound [in] a view of history as the church's pilgrimage into the progressive unfolding of time (procursus), while paganism was represented as an aimless spatial wandering around in a purposeless endeavour" (XII). This view of history is not shared by many non-Western cultures for which "the other is definitely some*where* else and not just "some*when*" else" (XIV, italics his). We should think of an *eschaton* as an

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[138] Nimi Wariboko admires Westhelle's book but is critical of Westhelle's abstraction of *chóra* (third space): "He does not show how it touches the ground in terms of human flourishing. He does not contextualise it. He does not relate his concept of chora to the networked worlds and rhizomatic spaces global cities and late capitalism are creating in our midst today" (Wariboko, 2014, p. 211).

[139] "Augustine's work hides behind itself the crisis of the Roman Empire whose capital, Rome, was plundered and sacked by Alaric in 410, two years before this African completed his most celebrated work, written explicitly in response to Rome's tragedy. … Augustine's solution was to dissociate faith from social and political reality, even if not denying the divine origin of creation … Nature as God's creation remains as the neutral infrastructure beneath the drama of salvation, but as an infrastructure that becomes a wandering space with no goal or value to guide the sojourner. Caught in such aimless pilgrimage sinful humans are deprived of the blessed move forward in a *procursus* toward the splendorous city of bliss" (Westhelle, pp.12-13). Hannah Arendt drew comparisons between her own time and that of Augustine which she described as a "catastrophic end" (Boyle, 1987, p.84). Unlike Augustine, she sees in the catastrophe the eschatological opportunity and necessity to reimagine social and political reality.

"experience of ultimacy" (XIV), "the crossing of a threshold [that] entails exposure". This exposure (which he likens to Lefebvre's "trial by space") is to "the ends in the spectrum of the eschatological discourse …. What redemption and damnation mean cannot be presupposed or foreknown; it comes with the crossing". The exposure comes in the crossing into the space of another which is also the exposure "to the Other. Hence the importance of theology, the God-talk, the Other-talk" (XV).

Westhelle, like Lefebvre, says the "space of differentiation" (Lefebvrian "third space") exposes the way in which "abstract space", from its hegemonic centre, homogenises and tries to suppress difference. But Westhelle prefers to speak of "tangential space" to draw attention to how spaces intersect:

> A tangential space is the one whose limit intersects the line that demarcates the limits of the centred space, which defines the hegemonic location of an entity. However, the limits of such space are hidden. They are hidden because the superimposed illusionary space warrants its homogeneity. Only the tangential space reveals the confines of a given hegemonic space, its limits, and thus also the mechanisms through which domination are exercised. In other words, tangential spaces are apocalyptic. Tangential spaces are the end of the freedom of power and the beginning of the power of freedom. To use biblical images, it is the wilderness for the slaves in Egypt, it is Golgotha in the limits of Jerusalem (p.20).

An example of tangential space is how post-colonialism exposes and transgresses the boundaries—physical, mental, and social—of coloniality (p.76). Similarly, liberation theologies, in locating the coming of the kingdom of God to particular communities:

> shift the emphasis from the univocal transcendental or longitudinal understanding of eschatology to a multilayered topological or latitudinal

> perspective. This eschatological approach has the impending urgency of apocalyptic tidings because what is to be expected lies here already, nearby or adjacently, instead of being perennially deferred to an impending future, or else already realised (p.78).

Eschatological space is in the margins, the space between the spaces, in what Westhelle calls *choratic* space (from *chóra*) which "etymologically means 'to lie open, be ready to receive', a space between places or limits" (p.79). This exposure, by the presence of difference, of what was previously unseen and normalised, makes this eschatology particularly relevant and challenging to superdiverse and increasingly unequal cities. In the city where we meet the stranger and where wealth and poverty are adjacent, Westhelle brings an eschatological edge to what is happening when we encounter our other (whoever that may be for us) in a way that threatens, or entails going beyond our own positionality, our boundaries of identity and security: "[the] other is the mark of the limit of our way of thinking and imagining" (pp.108-109). This is a feature of Lefebvre's "trial by space", which, says Westhelle, is a secular version of God's judgment. The presence of the stranger and the poor in the city holds eschatological judgment and potential; in the words of Jesus' lament over Jerusalem, the peace of the city is conditional on their flourishing. It goes beyond a Judaeo-Christian ethic of generosity and hospitality [140] to something more transformational, to a new space in which I, together with my neighbour who is other to me, might discover a new and shared humanity in the cosmo*polis* in which we are both inscribed.[141]

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[140] Luke Bretherton advocates a Chrisitan ethic of hospitality to the stranger in our midst but is also aware of the power asymmetries inherent in the host-guest relationship (Bretherton, 2010, pp.86-88). He recognises the transformative potential of the relation: "A Christian account of hospitality, while often not practised, does demand making room for the vulnerable other a priority and hold open the possibility of a new form of life emerging through the interaction" (fn.92, pp.114-115).

[141] This is what Gillian Rose means by the politics of re-cognition. The politics of recognition respects cultural difference and accepts that identities are formed in part through recognition, or not, as the case may be. For Rose, recognition is something more: recognition is the dynamic, mutual, and ongoing process of "cognition followed by re-cognition or coming to know again". It recognises that mis-recognition is not simply a lack of cognition but is rooted in our refusal to give recognition to the other for fear of what it exposes in ourselves – "our implication in those norms, values, and structures that marginalize and oppress" (Schick, 2015, p.96). Re-cognition, then, is to allow ourselves to become vulnerable, and to accept the "messiness and unpredictability

Westhelle explicates the dynamic relationship between such spaces and abstract space, in much the same way that Magnusson speaks of how politics lies at the intersections of boundaries between different domains. There are two dimensions to *eschata,* time and space (*kairos* and *chóra*), which "demarcate in space and time a moment of fissure in a terrain assumed to be under dominion (*topos*) or they are points of suspension and disruption in a time thought to be administrable (*chronos*)" (p.99). Here is where Westhelle locates Michel de Certeau's distinction between strategy and tactics. Strategy is concerned with the dominion of space over time, leaving the *eschatoi* (the least ones) dispossessed of space but also with tactics which are "an art of the weak" (pp.119-120).[142] Westhelle's argument is that much of Western eschatology, in its prioritisation of time, is a strategic avoidance of the *eschaton* by those who possess *topos* space and wish to keep hold of it over *chronos* time (pp.120-121). "The difference between strategy and tactics is that strategy is space (*topos*) administering time (*chronos*), while a tactic is time (*kairos*) intervening in space (*chóra*)" (p.122). This weak counterpolitical and, I would argue, kenarchic power refuses the temptation to power-over, which is the power of the homogenising centre, and recognises the power of small interventions to effect significant change in the complex system of the city.

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of our human world, highlighting our vulnerability as political agents and the riskiness of political action" (p.96). This is how we can work out justice, but it is not the certain justice of the liberal state, or the justice desired by the autonomous and invulnerable subject, but the outcome of our essential relationality, recognising that we will get it wrong and have to try again. To accept the challenge of Rosean recognition is to be unsettled and disrupted, but also to find joy in the process of coming to experience a broader relationality and thus a greater possibility of love and care; it is to do 'love's work' (pp.101-102). True to Rabbinic Judaism, this is the work of co-creation with God, of politics as a process towards transcendent justice, and of "the growth of the self in knowledge [that] mediates the social and the political" (Rose, 1996, p.38).

[142] Ash Nigel Thrift suggest some of the ways in which such a politics of complexity works: "We are talking here about a politics of leverage, a politics of small interventions with large effects, a politics of locating pinch points, and a politics of urban life as a trickster assemblage of like and unlike … a politics true to the machine that the city is, which is able to convert often small interventions into very large gains for the many, without necessarily touching on what some have come to regard as the only available levers of change, whether planning or political party or revolution" (Amin & Thrift, 2017, p.6).

bell hooks and Jon Sobrino illustrate the importance of the *eschata* of the *eschatoi* (the space of the last and the least) to the stranger and to the poor. Injustice for the poor and the stranger in the city is exposed and judged in eschatological space. Speaking of the centre and margin, and of tactics in relation to her own experience as an African American woman, bell hooks chooses the space of the margin):

> [The margin is] much more than a site of deprivation … just the opposite: … it is also the site of radical possibility, a space of resistance … a central location for the production of a counter hegemonic discourse that is not just found in words but in habits of being and the way one lives …. It offers to one the possibility of radical perspective from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds (hooks, 1989, pp.20, 22).

To those who have no such experience of being marginalised, hooks issues an invitation (p.23):

> from that space in the margin that is a site of creativity and power, that inclusive space where we recover ourselves, where we move in solidarity to erase the category colonised/coloniser. Marginality as site of resistance. Enter that space. Let us meet there. We greet you as liberators.

Where Magnusson and Amin and Thrift say the city in its dynamic complexity resists epistemologies of order and control and can only be known from the particular and from the inside out, hooks privileges the perspective from the margins. In the same way, as we saw in Chapter 2, Jon Sobrino says the locus of knowing the truth about how things are—and therefore of salvation—is to be found amongst the poor: “The question is not whether or not someone looks for God”, he says, “but

whether they look for God where God himself said he was" (Sobrino, 2008, pp.58, 71).[143] The poor and the marginalised in the city call us to repentance, conversion, and into new political space.

Westhelle says, "the *eschaton* is the location in which a reversal occurs. It is not so much something to be waited for as it is something already and presently near" (Westhelle, 2012, p.80). The reversal is where the last (*eschatoi)* will be first and the first last. We tend to read this is as a reversal of asymmetric power relations but, instead, we could see the *eschatoi* becoming first, as in a new beginning or the condition precedent of a just *polis*. If temporal eschatology defers the revolution of Christ to the *eschaton*, spatial eschatology brings it so close so that it is "at hand", adjacent or bordering. hooks and Sobrino illustrate the exposure (to redemption or judgment) at the threshold of encounter with those who are *eschatoi.* Of this topologically adjacent reign of God, Westhelle says, "we might have overstepped it in our amusement in the playgrounds of promise" (p.79).

Lefebvre writes of the importance of art for creating humanising spaces of representation. An example in Leeds is a major piece of public art by world-renowned British-Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare commemorating the life of David Oluwale.[144] As a young man, Oluwale stowed away on a boat from Nigeria to Britain and was imprisoned as a result. He worked as an engineer and, loving American music, he was nicknamed Yankee by his workmates. Mental ill-health led to in-patient treatment and homelessness. He was hounded by Police officers who would pick him up at night, take him a long way out of the city and leave him to walk back. His life came to a violent end in 1969 when, chased along the riverbank in the city centre by two of the Police officers who had habitually harassed him, he fell in and was left to drown. Shonibare's memorial to Oluwale, a brightly

[143] The poor are "the deprived and oppressed, with respect to the material basics of human life; they are those who have no voice, no freedom, no dignity; they are those who have no name, no existence" (Sobrino, 2008, p.26). In adopting Sobrino's definition, I also use "the poor" metonymically throughout these chapters.
[144] Hibiscus Rising in the result of a long campaign in Leeds to keep his memory alive and to combat racism. Remember Oluwale. 2023. [Online]. Available from https://rememberoluwale.org/

patterned hibiscus flower (common in Nigeria), towers out of a plaza in the newly developed south bank of the river, close to where he died. Hibiscus Rising exemplifies aspects of Westhelle's eschatological space. It is a space of exposure of a (still) racist city and its policing, of judgment on society's marginalisation and exclusion of the poor, the homeless, and the mentally ill. In a space of reversal and of rehumanisation, Shonibare celebrates—and so enables us to see—the young African who loved life, adventure, music, and dancing and how a city is enriched by the presence of the stranger.

Third space ekklesiology

In this eschatological space of differentiation and of representation, the right to the city is exercised collectively and the political work begins. The second frame of my triadic hermeneutic of third space concerns the *political* relationship of people in their encounters in this space across difference. The *polis* and democracy are indivisible - the *polis* is the creation of the *demos* embodied as *ekklesia*.[145] The city, by Aristotelian definition, is multicultural and so is the optimal space for radical democracy and ekklesiality. Against what has been repeatedly declared to be a crisis of European multi-cultural*ism*,[146] Arendt insists that plurality is the condition precedent for political life and that political *space* is where we can appear "being seen and heard by others as well as by ourselves" (Arendt, 1958, p.50). Similarly, Zygmunt Bauman calls multiculturalism, "that ideology of the end of ideology", not because it has failed but because it lacks any truly *political* vision and offers no political process of evaluating incommensurable conceptions of the good (Bauman, 2001, p.125).

[145] Arendt says: "The *polis*, properly speaking, is not the city-state in its physical location; it is the organisation of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true space lies between people living together for this purpose, no matter where they happen to be" (Arendt, 1958, p.198).

[146] "Angela Merkel stated in October 2010 that 'multiculturalism in Germany (Multikulti) had failed, completely failed'" (Emerson, 2013). Shortly afterwards David Cameron, UK Prime Minister, in his first speech on the issue spoke of the failure of the "doctrine of state multiculturalism (under which) we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and the mainstream. We have failed to provide a vision of a society to which they feel they want to belong…We have even tolerated these segregated communities behaving in ways that run counter to our values …. Frankly, we need a lot less of the passive tolerance of recent years and a much more active, muscular liberalism" (Cameron, 2011, cited in Cantle, 2012, p.68).

Instead, and like Arendt, he calls for a dialogical process, "in which all voices are allowed to be heard …. Recognition of cultural variety is the beginning, not the end of the matter; it is but a starting point for a long, and perhaps tortuous, but in the end beneficial, *political process"* (pp.135-136, italics his). As I argued in Chapter 2, whereas multiculturality is a challenge to the nation-state, just as plurality is to sovereignty, both are germane to cities.

The early church comes into being in the space of empire and in the political and semiotic space founded on the ideal of the Greek *polis.* The Hebrew *qahal,* meaning a gathering/assembly, is translated in the Greek Septuagint as *ekklesia*. The early Christians' choice to self-designate their gatherings/assemblies as *ekklesiae* suggests a context—a *polis*—for which an ekklesia is required. Augustinian two cities theology defers this *polis* to the temporal *eschaton* and the world to come, whereas the eschatology outlined above locates it within the spatial complexity of actual cities. The translation of *ekklesia* by 'church' is itself a political move that obscures its radical political meaning.[147]

Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza points out that the English word church derives from *kyriakon*—belonging to the lord/master/father—indicating "a historical development that has privileged the kyriarchal/hierarchal form of church" (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2007, p.78). Schüssler Fiorenza reclaims the political importance of the word e*kklesia* for all those excluded from, or marginalised by, the

[147] Whoever gets the name church, wins! The ire of Thomas More at Tyndale's translation of *ekklesia* by 'congregation', and Tyndale's defence of it, indicates the political freightedness of the name church. Hail and Fire, 2023. *An Answere unto Sir Thomas More's Dialoge, made by William Tindale*. [Online]. [Accessed 23 October 2023]. Available from: https://www.hailandfire.com/library_books_Tyndale(William)_AnswerMoresDialogue.html

politics of church and state. Her "ekklesia of wo/men"[148] not only carries the originary political sense of *ekklesia* but also epitomises kenarchy, and so I describe it in some detail here.

The ekklesia of wo/men is "a radical democratic hermeneutical space" (p.69). Schüssler Fiorenza distinguishes "radical democracy" from Western democracy as it has come to be historically.[149] The classical Greek definition of democracy may have promised equal participation to all in the ekklesia of the *polis* but, "in practice, granted such rights only to imperial, elite, propertied, educated male heads of household by restricting full citizenship to them" (pp.71-71). The ideal of the ekklesia has never been fully realised and so democracy remains a promise while ever it denies equality and inclusion. Schüssler Fiorenza says: "The oxymoron ekklesia of wo/men … seeks to provide a hermeneutical space from where to [critically] read" (p.76) what passes for democracy in church and state.

The ekklesia of wo/men, however, is not an abstract hermeneutic but is a *space* that is "already" and "not yet", a present space that is open to an eschatological future. As such, it is not merely a

[148] Schüssler Fiorenza explains: "In order to take into account not only the changing definitions of woman as a social-political category but also subaltern women's and men's experiences of domination by elite women and men, I write wo/men in a broken fashion, to destabilise this category woman" (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2007, p.13). Rosemary Carbine further explains: "The ekklesia of wo/men refers to "a feminist movement of self-identified women and women-identified men" (i.e., men in solidarity with women) struggling for its emancipatory vision of religious and political life in a patriarchal world, especially for marginalized women and men. To resist any misinterpretations of the ekklesia of wo/men as an essentialist or separatist religio-political space of, for, and by women, Schüssler Fiorenza inserts a slash in the middle of wo/men, which is an effective linguistic strategy to underscore the integrity, equality, and solidarity of women and men in her vision of a more just religious and political life" (Carbine, 2006, p.446).

[149] There are different versions of "radical democracy". The impossibility of achieving radical democracy in a nation-state polity, precisely because of its reliance on sovereignty, is Jacques Derrida's "democracy to come", where the ideal of democracy can never be realised because the rule (*cratos*) of the people (*demos*) is contingent on a sovereign *polis* that can protect and guarantee it. This acts like a fatal autoimmunity in the body politic: "democracy destroys itself by closing off, unifying and essentialising the multiplicity that enables the formation of democracy in the first place. The plurality of the *demos* must be contained and restrained in a sovereign community: 'the people' or 'a nation'. And yet the 'to come'- '*à venir'*- does not point to a deferred future but holds open the potentiality of 'event' that disrupts and transforms democracy from within in the here and now." (Matthews, D. 2013. *The democracy to come: notes on the thought of Jacques Derrida*).

resistance to or reversal of kyriarchal domination and subordination, but it is the present alternative to empire (p.70). She says:

> Ekklesia, as the decision-making assembly of full citizens, insists on the ancient Roman and medieval democratic maxim: "that which affects all should be determined by every one". In and through struggles for liberation, the vision of the ekklesia, of G*d's life-giving and transforming power for community, becomes experiential reality in the midst of structural sin, which is constituted by death-dealing kyriarchal powers of exploitation and dehumanisation (p.77).[150]

The early Christian usage of ekklesia signifies a radical democratic ethic for an eschatological cosmo*polis*, "foreshadowed" at Pentecost as all, "Jews, Greeks, Barbarians, wo/men and men, slave wo/men and free, those with high social status and those with nothing in the eyes of the world … share in the multi-faceted gifts of Divine Wisdom-Spirit" (pp.77, 79).

In her usage of ekklesia, Schüssler Fiorenza aims to overcome the dualistic division between religion and culture, and "to name the vision of justice and salvation which feminist movements seek and in which biblical religions share" (p.75). The ekklesial space and praxis opened in Christ and inaugurated by the Spirit is germane to church or to any other social movement with a vision for radical democracy. She locates the ekklesia of wo/men eschatologically in both the 'now and not yet', between the originary impetus of Pentecost and the horizon of a radical democratic and utopian vision (pp.77, 79-81). There is one teleological horizon, not two, thus collapsing the need for

[150] Schüssler Fiorenza uses a number of neologisms to expose the freighted power of words, e.g.: *G*d*: she started out using the Jewish spelling of G-d but changed it to G*d when she realised this was still a usage by *men* as authoritative interpreters of scripture. *The*ology* follows on. *Kyriarchy*: "I have developed a complex analysis of interstructured and multiplicative dominations and have coined the neologisms kyriarchy/kyriocentrism (from Gk. Kyrios= domination by the emperor, lord, master, father, husband, elite propertied male), as descriptive of the workings of empire. These neologisms seek to express the intersecting structures of dominations and to replace the commonly used term, patriarchy, which is often understood in terms of binary gender dualism" (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2007, p.14).

dichotomous and divergent visions of church and city. The ekklesia of wo/men is a principle and a horizon, but it is also a struggle, process, and calling, "constituted not by super- and sub-ordination but by egalitarian relationships". Because equality, freedom, and democracy are inherent in what it means to be image bearers of G*d, and not the "property of the superior races of western European civilisation", they can never be qualified or suppressed, and so the ekklesia of wo/men has no need of some guarantor of rights, such as the state and the law, for its realisation (p.80).

The ekklesia of wo/men is therefore not tied or beholden to any particular form of polity, nor is it "the counter or anti-space to empire" (p.70). As a *principle* of radical democracy, it is logically prior to, and a qualifier of, any polity that would aspire to be democratic. Schüssler Fiorenza stresses the importance of realisable scale for radical democracy, citing Arendt's definition of *polis* as *space* for action and speech lying "between people living together for this purpose, no matter where they happen to be" (p.72). The ekklesia of wo/men "also articulates a vision of the Christian community as one radical democratic assembly among many, in the *cosmopolis* of G*d's very different peoples" (p.82, italics hers). Schüssler Fiorenza quotes the eminent political theorist Sheldon Wolin: "Democracy was and is the political ideal that condemns its own denial of equality and inclusion" (p.76). The ekklesia of wo/men is an explicitly intersectional space and hermeneutic, with gender recognition and equality as its lodestar, but qualitatively equivalent ekklesiae might have race, disability, economic justice, and so on, as theirs. The principle of radical democracy within and between ekklesiae prevents closure.

The power of the ekklesia is found in plurality. In Chapter 2, I wrote that the founding idea of the nation-state—that freedom depends on sovereignty—had migrated from the holy to the secular.

Hannah Arendt bases her rejection of political sovereignty on the political necessity of plurality. She says:

> if it were true that sovereignty and freedom are the same, then indeed no man could be free, because sovereignty, the ideal of uncompromising self-sufficiency and mastership, is contrary to the very condition of plurality (Arendt, 1958, p.234).

Arendt explicitly ties her radical critique of sovereignty—that it is inimical to real political freedom—to a critique of a monotheism that holds power and freedom indivisibly (p.235).[151] Power, in Arendt's terms, is conditional on plurality and is to be found only "in the unreliable and temporary agreement of many wills and intentions" (p.201). Whereas the will to power of an individual or faction is a vice of the weak (like greed and envy), power that preserves the public realm and the space of appearance, and as such is also "the lifeblood of the human artifice, … of the web of human affairs and relationships and the stories engendered by them [finds] its true *raison d'être"* (p.204). Furthermore, because Arendtian power requires sufficient proximity to be actualised, "the foundation of cities, which as city-states have remained paradigmatic for all western political organisation, is therefore indeed the most important material prerequisite for power" (p.201).

In my view, the ekklesia of wo/men and Arendt's definition of power in plurality effectively counter Augustine's characterisation of the politics of the *civitas terrena* as the lust for power-over and love of self; rather, they preserve and promote the kenarchic political nature of the city. As hermeneutic, they enable us to recognise ekklesiality in spaces hitherto overlooked or just not regarded as Political,[152] and to discern the quality and *telos* of instances and forms of political life in the city: does

[151] See FN61.
[152] This recalls Magnusson's argument that statist Politics arrogates the title to itself whilst relegating the politics of everyday life to 'civil society'.

this or that ekklesiality embody the principle and openness of radical democracy and the power in diversity of the Pentecost event? The ekklesia of wo/men epitomises kenarchy in exposing sovereignty (kyriarchy) and by prioritising the standpoint of all those classified as subaltern, as an ever-present affront to constituted forms of power-over. This is a politics of the last and the least—politics *not* charity—because it declares they are rendered so by the *polis* that fails to enact and embody equality, freedom, and democracy.[153] Any ekklesia and *polis* can be judged by the extent to which they grant equal weights of existence and identity to all and enable every citizen to exercise their right to the city.

If, as Schüssler Fiorenza says, equality, freedom, and democracy are inherent to being human in the image of God and are an *a priori* principle of true democracy, ekklesiae can be expected to come together spontaneously, in response to issues of common concern or interest. But this does not exclude agency to convene and facilitate and Rosemary Carbine considers this in relation to the ekklesia of wo/men. "Ekklesial work", she says, is a rhetorical, symbolic, and prophetic praxis of space:

> Seeking more than gaining access to public debate and more than adding women's voices to existing patriarchal politics, the ekklesia of wo/men marks out a rhetorical counterspace or counterpublic and a set of distinctive practices so that a different political reality might be imagined, debated, and at least partly constructed (Carbine, 2006, p.451).

A task of public theologians, then, is "to (re)envision and (re)make a public, a political community", to convoke and weave together a "reconciled body of multiple communities in the socio-political

[153] Alain Badiou writes (albeit with identarian politics in his sights): "The state is an extraordinary machine for manufacturing the inexistent" and so "it is necessary to learn from the inexistent, for that is where the existential injuries done to these beings, and hence the resource of equal-being against these injuries, are manifested" (Badiou, 2012, pp.68-71).

order". The *spatial* locus of ekklesial work (and of public theology) is "a middle space in between multiple communities" to whom it is accountable; *temporally* it lies between "this world and the ever-coming fulfilment of the world" (pp.452-454). Carbine thus draws a distinction between the ekklesial work that is (or may be) Christian and the plural and intersectional ekklesia for and amongst which it works.

Schüssler Fiorenza and Carbine are not writing about cities explicitly but their use of 'ekklesia' implies engagement with a *polis* at a scale that allows for and makes possible political change of the whole. In a way wholly consistent with seeing like a city, Schüssler Fiorenza locates the ekklesia of wo/men, as political conscientisation and action that are both local and translocal, in a cosmopolitan and not a statist frame, to recognise the participation of the local in the global. Ekklesial work offers a pattern for Christians' kenarchic praxis in the city, where the good is not foreknown or predetermined by them, but is discovered only together with others, and especially the poor and the stranger. This goes a step further than the question of how Christians might *engage* in radical democratic processes *qua* Christians, to ask if a kenarchic ekklesia just *is* the space of appearance for others, that is to say the sovereignty-free space opened to all by the event of Jesus' kenosis. Ekklesial work as kenarchic praxis would then be to discern and hold open such space and to exercise the work of reconciling "multiple communities" into a body politic, an ekklesia. I will return in the final chapter to what this may mean for an ekklesiology and for existent forms of church, but suggest what is signified by the simple change of spelling goes a long way towards satisfying the desire of Radical Orthodoxy to recover the implicit political meaning and significance of 'church'.

Third space pneumatology

My approach to the city is positive – to understand how the city is in God and God is in the city. With Harvey Cox, my presumption is that "God is just as present in the secular as in the religious realms of

life" (Cox, 2013, XLIII). We are not being saved from the city; the city as the fulness of human-being-in-relation in the image of God is integral to salvation; if the city cannot be saved, neither can we. Eschatological time means the kenarchic reign of God in the city is not left to human activity, and eschatological space is not simply the space *over* which we progress towards the *eschaton*, or the *eschaton* comes towards us (Augustine's *procursus*[154]). This third frame of my hermeneutic is concerned with *how* God takes place in the city (Bergmann, 2007, p.366). Cox asks the same question: "How is the biblical God, who acts in history, and not just in the church, present in our history today?" (Cox, 2013, xiii). This is a question of the action of the Spirit in space (*chóra*) and time (*kairos*)[155] and it coincides with Lefebvre's understanding of third space as the space animated by Joachim's age of the Spirit. The enormous growth of the global Pentecostal-Charismatic movement from the beginning of the 20th century, together with the world-wide move to cities, underlines the critical need for a pneumatological political theology focused on the city. [156] I and others who are working with kenarchy as a political theology of the Spirit locate ourselves within this movement.[157]

Nimi Wariboko

I wrote in Chapter 1 that Cox's *The Secular City* has been hugely influential from when it was first published in 1965, through multiple reprintings and translations to its most recent English edition in 2013, and it is a seminal text for this thesis. Cox regards Nimi Wariboko's *The Charismatic City* as its

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[154] *City of God*, 16.3

[155] From Proverbs chapters 8 and 9, it is also a question of the operations of Wisdom in the city. See, for example, Grinnell, A. 2021. *Wisdom Cries Out: Public Theology from the Margins.*

[156] T. Ryan Davis draws a helpful distinction between "two dominant methodological trajectories that organize theological approaches among Pentecostals - a focus on the day of Pentecost, on the one hand, and a pneumatological orientation, on the other". The latter approach, which I take here, is the "pneumatological imagination" which offers a "pneumatic optic to objects of investigation". Quoting Amos Yong, Davis says: "The pneumatological imagination thus celebrates the gift of 'multi-cultural multiplicity amid cross-cultural communicability' so as to 'encompass the full spectrum of humanly evolved discursivity.' The logic of the Spirit therefore incorporates the voices from various ethnic, gender, social, political, and disciplinary spheres of involvement to 'probe deeper and wider' the Spirit's work in creation" (Davis, 2022, pp.115-116).

[157] See Mitchell, 2011, pp.151-163.

sequel.[158] As a Pentecostal thinker, Nimi Wariboko, in dialogue with Cox, sees cityspace as the space *in* which the Spirit moves, but also as the space *of* the Spirit; he calls this the Charismatic City and likens it to Westhelle's choratic space (Wariboko, 2014, p.211). The significance for my project of Wariboko's highly original thesis is that he brings a pneumatological hermeneutic to the eschatology and the ekklesiology of this chapter and to the most significant aspects of seeing like a city; I suggest we can read Lefebvre's third space *as* the Charismatic City. Unlike much popular Pentecostal and Charismatic literature about cities which sees like a church, Wariboko sees like a city and does so through a thoroughgoing Pentecostal hermeneutic with radical implications for how we understand 'church'. He helps us see how the Spirit affirms, inspires, and empowers the political task of building the good city, as God works with and alongside us (Cox, 2013, pp.309-310). The complexity of the city *is* charismatic, says Wariboko, and it is this spatial complexity that allows for the intensifications of the Spirit within cityspace to bring the new into being. Each city, he says, is a spatial embodiment of the global cosmo*polis* of which the Pentecost event was the new beginning and the new Jerusalem signifies the fulfilment. Wariboko applies both a spatial and temporal eschatological hermeneutic to evaluate cityspace and its trajectories of change towards justice and human flourishing. As a transdisciplinary thinker he brings wide-ranging referents and applications to social, racial, and economic justice, and to city-planning and politics.

Wariboko sees the church as a new beginning, "a point of departure for historical and geographic analyses of urban civilisation." The Charismatic City cannot be understood apart from its evolution from this new beginning. This evolution—of Sacred City to Secular City, and then to Charismatic City—is not successive and results in the contemporary city as a palimpsest of all three (Wariboko, 2014, pp.7, 31). Much like Lefebvre's spatial trialectic, the city contains all three Cities. By 'church'

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[158] On the sleeve notes to *The Charismatic City*, Harvey Cox describes *The Charismatic City* as a fitting sequel to *The Secular City*, and Catherine Keller says its "charism [is] crucial to the work of post-secular political theology". Willie Jennings says: "This will be a book that will be referred to and commented on for many years" [Online]. [Accessed 27 December 2023]. Available from: https://www.waterstones.com/book/the-charismatic-city-and-the-public-resurgence-of-religion/n-wariboko/9781137449344

he means something much like Schüssler Fiorenza's radically democratic and open *ekklesia,* and defines it as the expression of "the voluntary principle":

> The voluntary principle calls persons out of the gene-pool identities, blood and soil, castes, races, tribes, nations, classes, and state into interactive networks that link practices, events, and people into a distinct network society …. The church is a detribalising movement marked by universality and radical openness (pp.31-32, 34).

As such it exhibits the heterogeneity of Lefebvre's third space and is congruent with Westhelle's eschatological space as "a space between spaces" (p.7). The "voluntary principle" and "divine presence", both of which come to fullness in the Charismatic City, are Wariboko's hermeneutical key for analysing the two other Cities, Sacred and Secular.

Sacred and Secular Cities

The Sacred City is the centred concentration of power and "channelisation of charisma" on which all other space is dependent and where "the invisible energy is managed, utilised, and channelled into pre-approved or sacral sites or authorised and authenticated subjects" (p.34). Thus, using his hermeneutical key, Wariboko scores the Sacred City high on the intensity of divine presence but low on the voluntary principle. The power of the Sacred City is masculine, "coming from above, penetrating the receptacle of the world" (p.101).[159] In the Secular City, divine presence is dispersed away from the authorised sites of the Sacred City and is now immanent in the city. However,

[159] Compare Al Barrett's criticism of Graham Ward's political theology: "When Ward writes more explicitly of the urban church he appears to locate that church primarily in the more affluent city centre or suburban areas. The church, he argues forcefully, 'must not allow areas of the city to be walled up. Ghettos and gated communities must be *entered*; the no-go zones riddled with racial and economic tensions and ruled by violence must be *penetrated* and linked back to the wider civic society; and the Christians in these places [presumably less representative of "the church"] *must be hospitable*'. (Ward, 2009, 219–220, Barrett's emphases) …. In that example and in much of his eucharistic theology, Ward seems to follow a model of 'spermatic flow' that Marcella Althaus-Reid identifies as the dominant, patriarchal 'logic of theology' (Althaus-Reid, 2000, p.155)" (Barrett, 2018, p.87).

although he scores the Secular City high on the dispersion of divine presence, it scores low on the voluntary principle because historically, in the absence of the sacred centre, it needed the identarian power of the nation-state to supply the bond larger than family or ethnicity and so lost its "inherent promise of universalizability" (p.35). Wariboko's Charismatic City is not a refutation[160] of Cox's Secular City but an evolution and fulfilment of its promise. Wariboko "elevates" Cox's Secular City, into:

> [the] rhizomatic pluralism in which a plurality of constituencies divided along several dimensions enter into a complex network of differences and connections informed by a general ethos unmarked by a single cultural constituency at the centre (p.36).

This sounds much like Magnusson's city as n-dimensional space. The Charismatic City emerges into this complex space but is of a different order and "defined by different (kenotic) dynamics than the other two Cities" (p.37).

The Charismatic City

The Charismatic City emerges kenotically in and through:

> the network of sites of dispersed divine presence. …. If the Secular City is the hoped-for cosmopolitan common life plus the routinisation of charisma, the Charismatic City is the cosmopolitan common life plus the *improvisation, eventalization,* or *eros-tization* of charisma. The invisible energy of charisma (*eros*) erupts here and there, moving and crossing boundaries and connecting

[160] By contrast, Graham Ward accuses Cox of failing to see that secularisation is the outworking of an ideological secularism. Despite the impact of *The Secular City* on subsequent liberation theologies, Ward claims: "His [Cox's] secular Christian values are indistinguishable from the values of consumer capitalism" (Ward, 2000, pp.46-47).

> subjects in sensual and creative ecstasies outside of authorised channels of communication and connectivity (p.36).

Wariboko, like Cox, understands the Pentecostal Spirit not only as that which comes 'from above' but also as a species of an immanent "primal spirituality" which is common across and beyond all religious identities (pp.84-85). The Charismatic City is a synthesis of this immanent (feminine *kairos*) *and* the irrupting (male *kairos*) Spirit, which together bring about a new creation (pp.101-102). In language that recalls Tanner's and Pennington's insistence on the eschatological presence and activity of God in human sociality and materiality, Wariboko says of the Charismatic City:

> The divine presence is always involved in materiality, in human sociality animating and reanimating it to manifest and actualize maximum goodness. The gritty materiality of the city is a complexly structured set of doings and being, a human coexistence that is radically oriented to continual opening and reopening; the inside always exposed to the outside. All forms of existence participate in the divine presence. This view of social ontology allows for intensities of participation at certain sites or moments (pp.100-101).

In similar language, Westhelle says spatial eschatologies "must take into account *phusis*, the material reality of human beings and all of nature (in and through which the spirit breathes and blows across the eschaton – from inside to outside and from outside to inside)" (Westhelle, 2012, p.138).[161]

[161] Westhelle considers Augustine to be responsible for a separation in Christian theology between the Spirit and the material world because of his concern to limit the revelation of God to the mind by the Spirit through scripture and so not to the body through the created natural world (Westhelle, 2012, pp.15-16).

The Pentecostal principle: new beginnings

Like Lefebvre and Arendt, for whom politics, freedom, and newness are inalienable, Wariboko says, "The Charismatic City is … a place of new beginnings" (Wariboko, 2014, xvi). He quotes Arendt:

> Beginning before it becomes a historical event, is the supreme capacity of man; politically it is identical with man's freedom. *Initium ut esset homo creatus est* - 'that a beginning be made man was created,' said Augustine (p.124).

Wariboko offers a pneumatological cause of this newness: just as the Charismatic City is in perichoretic relation to the Sacred and Secular Cities, so (what Wariboko terms) "the pentecostal principle" is in relation to Paul Tillich's "catholic substance" and "protestant principle". There are similarities between the Sacred City and the catholic substance and between the Secular City and the protestant principle (pp.123-124). The catholic substance is the institutionalised repository of religious orthodoxy, with which the protestant principle is in constant reforming tension and struggle. Beyond this dialectic, the pentecostal principle and the Charismatic City are the capacity within the city to begin anew, temporally and spatially:

> If the pentecostal principle is about the appearance of the new in history, the Charismatic City is the appearance of new existential spatiality. The Charismatic City as a tool of interpretative history is the spatial counterpart of the temporal pentecostal principle (p.102).

A foundational claim of this thesis is that, amidst the crises of the nation-state, we should be looking to cities for a new politics of radical democracy not constituted by the state. The pentecostal principle means that we are not left to our devices to bring about the new. Furthermore, Lefebvrian third space, which I have suggested we see as eschatological space, can be understood as the space in which the Spirit brings freedom and constitutes the new humanity.

Cosmopolis

To see like a city is to see the city as a particular intensification, in a place, of the global city that transcends and transgresses the borders of nation-states. Wariboko considers Pentecost to be the originary event by which we can read globalisation.[162] Due to its globalising flows the Charismatic City "cuts its umbilical cord with the territorial states" (p.36). History "inspired by the eschatological promise of the New Jerusalem" is headed towards the fulfilment of, "an urban cosmopolitan civilisation, toward a global civil society" (p.44). In his theological panorama of history, the church is not something apart, on a different trajectory from the city, rather its historic function was as the new beginning of which the Charismatic City is now the outworking. Here, like Schüssler Fiorenza, he understands Pentecost as the divine affirmation of inassimilable difference which comes to fulfilment in the appearance of all *ethnōn* in the cosmopolis (new Jerusalem). Responding to Westhelle's spatial eschatology,[163] Wariboko locates the Charismatic City in:

> the *messianic space* between this world/place/reality and an adjacent one. The messianic space is not a third space situated between the global city and the new Jerusalem, the secular and the sacred cities, or between the present time and the deferred future, but a cut, caesura, or fissure that divides margins between any one of these pairs and introduces a new space (pp.209-210, italics his).

These fissures (or cracks[164]) in the empire of late capitalism are the spaces in which "those at the margins, edges, fringes, outside, [can] be comfortable and possess their proper space"; that is, exercise their right to the city. The Charismatic City, he says, "lies within the global city already, nearby or adjacently, even if we have not fully and resolutely inhabited it" (p.210).

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[162] Wariboko draws heavily but not uncritically on Max Stackhouse's views on globalisation (Wariboko, 2014, pp.54-55)

[163] Westhelle's book was published shortly before Wariboko's so, he says, his response to it is briefer than it otherwise might have been (p.246, fn. 28).

[164] See also: John Holloway, 2010b, *Crack Capitalism*.

The church was an irruption into the world of a new sociality and ekklesiality, against which all other ekklesiae can be judged (pp.45-46). Preferring Jean-Luc Nancy's term 'mondialisation', Wariboko, on the basis of an Acts 2 Spirit-inspired differentiation that is integral to the process of world-forming, rejects a homogenised globalisation.[165] This "affects and permeates globality with a drive to include the margins and reject indistinct totality that undermines it from within" (p.53). He recognises the ambiguity of the charismatic nature of globalisation in the flows of capital and technology, as depicted by Hardt and Negri in *Empire*, but even so cannot deny their essentially charismatic nature (p.37). There is, then, a role for public theology to shape the ethos of participation and to organise the common life of global civil society, and to influence globalisation towards "the ultimately redemptive tides of history God intends, and not only to critique or resist it hopelessly" (p.52).

There are several implications of Wariboko's global Charismatic City. It enables us to see and embrace, in our super-diverse cities, the presence and activity of the Spirit, and to work with the Spirit, as Carbine says, in weaving together a "reconciled body of multiple communities in the socio-political order". It means that we can see our actions in the hyper-local as no longer purely local – they are globally connected, in and by the Spirit, with other localities and other struggles, in a way that minoritised and racialised groups know already to be true. The city does not exist for itself; our failure to recognise this might be to sin against the globalising Spirit.

Space value

An evidential phenomenon of the Spirit at Pentecost was the affirmation of difference opening a new counterpolitical space of differentiation; another was socio-economic commoning.[166] Wariboko

[165] "The difference between them captures what Jean-Luc Nancy names as the contrast between globalization (globality, integrated totality) and mondialisation (creation of a more habitable world)" (Wariboko, 2014, p.52).
[166] "And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing with all, as anyone might have need" (Acts 2:44,45 NASB).

understands the Charismatic City as an expression of the global commons (pp.18, 38). As an economist, he offers ways to measure the good of human flourishing in the space and time values of the city. “Space value” is the measure of mutuality, relationality, and opportunities for economic and human flourishing that particular spaces afford those who live there, with the presumption that wide variations in the space value of different parts of the city are not good for the city as a whole. He says: “the measure of space value of each neighbourhood, if carried out in a large scale, will show the ethics of power differentials that are coded in a city’s design and functioning” (p.146). Mapping the changes in space value over time, the “time value”, reveals the city to itself. Space and time values “enable us to view the experiences of the poor and the marginalised with analytical clarity and to do so in relation to the naked awareness of the play and the display of economic and political powers in the city” (p.150). This mapping may seem to be just another representation of space but, in my view, avoids being so because it has the potential to be an empowering tool of conscientisation for the poor and marginalised.[167]

Similarly, space and time values can be applied to how far the city is politically heterogeneous. With Cox, Wariboko understands cosmo*polis* as the anticipation of the new Jerusalem gathering of God’s people; as such, it is the meeting place of strangers in such a way that they do not remain indifferent to each other but in their differences “provoke interactions, reactions, learning, and relationality to promote human flourishing” (p.178). The Charismatic City is “the image *of* the body of Christ, but simultaneously … a movement *toward* the body of Christ” (p.180, italics his). Due to its globalising flows the Charismatic City “cuts its umbilical cord with the territorial states” (p.36) and guarantees

[167] Leeds City Council recently adopted the Social Change Index to map progress over time of the city’s poorest neighbourhoods under the headings: Basic Human Needs, Foundations of Wellbeing, and Opportunity. Discussions are currently taking place (October 2023) aimed at involving residents in conducting their own baseline research to inform this strategy. (Inclusive Growth Leeds. 2023. *The Leeds Social Progress Index*. [Online]. [Accessed 25 October 2023]. Available from: https://www.inclusivegrowthleeds.com/leeds-social-progress-index)

the ability of the city as ekklesia "to be truly existent, to stand outside of … nationalism, statehood, racism, or ethnicity" (p.103). This city—as polity other than the nation-state—offers the hope of a new politics.

Complexity and movement

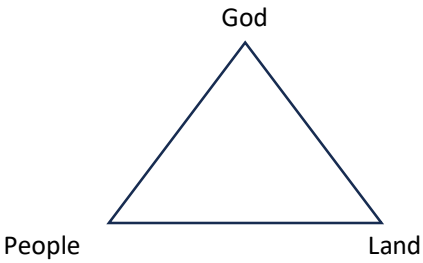
The focus of my triadic hermeneutic is on third space which is "always at issue" with other city spaces (Magnusson, 2011, p.90). Magnusson says we should see the city as an n-dimensional hyperspace of multiple dimensions which are in movement, not static or fixed:

> The world is all movements. The world that we have to deal with is produced by a *multiplicity* of movements, good and bad, and we have to learn to cope with that. In that context the urban looms larger than ever (Magnusson, 2015, p.23, italics his).

It is important, therefore, that the three strands of this chapter's theological hermeneutic be able to navigate this dynamic complexity. I suggest they can be seen in perichoretic movement between themselves and between the urban domains, dimensions, and movements of which Magnusson speaks. This perichoretic movement allows for the appearance of eschatological space, ekklesiae, and the Charismatic City in both *kairos* time and choratic space and shifts "the emphasis from the univocal transcendental or longitudinal understanding of eschatology to a multilayered topological or latitudinal perspective" (Westhelle, 2012, p.78). For his part, Wariboko understands church to be "a detribalising *movement* marked by universality and radical openness" (Wariboko, 2014, p.34, emphasis mine), and "a space between spaces" (p.7). He speaks of the "plasticity" of the body of Christ in and through these systems (p.189) and of the Holy Spirit in "quasi-random, wind-like movement" and "energy flows" (p.37).

The covenantal relationship between God, people, and land is often expressed as:

Fig.1



In contrast to Figure 1, which gives the impression of an established and static relationship, the movement of and between the elements of the triadic hermeneutic I have offered in this chapter can be expressed as Figure 2:

Fig.2

Thus, it is the Pentecostal Spirit who is agentic in the encounter with the Other in eschatological space. It is the Spirit who enables an ekklesial body to come together and to function in the distribution of gifts that the Spirit gives to all for the flourishing of the whole. Eschatological space is 'thin space' where the Spirit is more likely to be encountered and is the space of differentiation in which ekklesiality can flourish. The ekklesia produces space (and so passes Lefebvre's "trial by space"), is constituted *by* the Spirit, and intensifies the activity *of* the Spirit. Spirit, ekklesia, and eschatological space are found in, amongst, and between the complex spatial movements of the city and the global city. Given this sense of movement, I am reluctant to furnish examples of space, ekklesia, or Charismatic City which would be to fix them in time or space and which, following de

Certeau, will always be tactical, never established. My hope is that by offering a hermeneutic they may be discerned for what they are when they appear.

Conclusion

My questions in this chapter have been to do with how God takes place in the city seen like a city, and what kind of praxis this entails. I have argued that the city is replete with meaning as the site and production of human and divine creativity, anticipating, and enacting the eschatological new Jerusalem. The three key referents for my triadic hermeneutic have, to say the least, a certain ambivalence towards the church and each is critical of the nation-state, and therefore ecclesiology and the state are not central to their political theology in the way that they have been for Radical Orthodoxy. By starting from the city and not from the church, I hope to have avoided the problems that, as I have argued in previous chapters, beset a neo-Augustinian political theology that counters state-secularism with a recovery of political meaning for the church. Discerning how God is taking place in the city, in "the opening" (Cox, 2013, p.149), precedes the question of the church in the city. In Chapter 6, I will apply this hermeneutic to offer new sightlines for ekklesiology and ekklesial work/praxis.

My starting point has been the city seen like a city and I have then looked for a way to think about it theologically. But even as I write this, I realise that it is my experience of the city that has provoked my questions and prompted tacit theological reflection and these have enabled me to see like a city and so to find resonance with my primary sources. If in some sense the cityness of the city has its being in God, as Cox and Wariboko say, it follows that there is a close affinity, a family likeness, between the political theory and theology of the city. This chapter has made the theology and its affinity with the spatial turn in urban theory explicit. Both approaches—theology and theory—share

a positive approach to the city as a new political space, sight of which is recovered in negating the nation-state as negation of the originary city-polis. The approach I have taken throughout, in bringing political theology into dialogue with urban political theory, has been in the expectation that something new might emerge in the dialogic space between them. This approach is true to the spatiality of encounter I have set out in the last chapter and in this; in the encounter with the Other lies the potential for something new to emerge.

There is an intrinsic political, social, and moral good in fellow citizens finding how to share common ground. For Wariboko, the Charismatic City and the global city (cosmopolis) are, by nature, commons shared across all manner of difference. Magnusson argues that democracy assumes we can take shared responsibility for the literally common ground on which we live, beyond the needs and interests of our own tribe or culture. He says, “It is this common ground, rather than shared identity, that brings us together” (Magnusson, 2015, p.282). Democracy works when people put their trust in it, and, in lived reality, cities generally work well because, “people are surprisingly resourceful, individually and collectively, and surprisingly accommodating of one another” (p.174). Likewise, theologically there is intrinsic goodness to be discovered and acted upon in citizenship of the secular city. Much as, in Augustine, the trace of the good is not erased in the derogation from the good (*privatio boni*), so the good of the city is not wholly negated by *libido dominandi* and *amor sui*. The citizenship that believes and works for the good is in contrast with what Cavanaugh calls Augustinian “pilgrim politics” that has its goal, not in the good city, but in God. (Cavanaugh, 2016, pp.151, 155-156). The foregoing hermeneutic therefore recognises and affirms the good (and God) in the city and offers a praxis consistent with it.

The eschatological fullness of reconciled, healed, and restored relationships—human, more than human, and divine—is the apocalyptic vision of a new Jerusalem. Each of the three hermeneutical frames is contingent on the quality of relationship, none are the possession of the individual. Eschatological space comes into being in the encounter; the power of the radically democratic ekklesia lies in speaking and acting together; the Charismatic City is to be found in the webs and flows of relationship, human and divine. In the next chapter, I look more closely at what quality of relationality constitutes the city and enables it to be all it can be in the economy of God.

Chapter 5: Befriending the city

Introduction

This chapter builds on the last in suggesting political friendship is foundational to each element of my triadic hermeneutic for seeing like a city. My argument thus far has been that political theology has not kept track with, nor adequately engaged with, the thinking about cities in other disciplines nor with the growing political importance of cities globally. I have outlined the development of urban theory and particularly that which claims that cities are to be distinguished as a species of *polis* from that of the nation-state, and that to see like a city is to cast a radically critical light on the latter. That the city is complex political space is core to my thesis. I have explored how far neo-Augustinian notions of complex political space map onto Henri Lefebvre's seminal analysis of the production of cityspace, which is foundational to seeing like a city. Whereas Augustine helps us see not one city/performance of citizenship, but two, I have criticised the political theologies of Graham Ward and William Cavanaugh insofar as they demonstrate a lack of imagination of an alternative to the nation-state beyond the church and so, despite their protestations, continue to see like a state as if the state is the only possible secular *polis*.

My kenarchic theological approach is based on an understanding and application of kenosis as the decisive "emptying out" of sovereignty from the divine and human horizon, which invites the reimagination of a *polis* and politics without sovereignty. The claims of Barber and Magnusson that the *polis* of the city is not contingent upon, and is even intrinsically resistant to, sovereignty, resonate strongly with this kenarchic approach and invite theological enquiry. This is not to say that the city is immune from the external political and economic sovereignties of state and market, nor that forms of sovereignty are not at play internal to the city. Rather, it is the dynamic spatial complexity of cities that renders them inassimilable to political sovereignty *and* that offers the possibility of discovering and enacting a kenarchic political space in and *for* the city. In the previous

chapter, I explored this possibility by means of a triadic hermeneutic key to seeing like a city: eschatological, ekklesiological, and pneumatological. I suggested that in the correlation between them and the multiple dimensions of the city we might discern in each city a corporate (human-being-in-relation) *imago dei* – marred of course, but still worthy of love.

In this chapter I continue to pursue a theology of the city itself and not (yet) of the church in the city. The city deserves a 'thick' theology which inscribes the city in God and God in the city, beyond the city as the theologically 'thin' object of the church's mission. As the last chapter's hermeneutic indicated, seeing like a city helps us also see theologically what we might not see when seeing like a state. To be human is to be in relation and the city as an intensification of relations can be seen both as a metonym for all human relationality and, following Lefebvre, as the product of social relations for good or ill. Seeing like a city, then, is a lens through which we can more clearly see a political relationality that is not constituted by the state, nor by asymmetric social, economic, and political relations. Each hermeneutical frame in the previous chapter sees citizens[168] in relation as being fundamental to the existence and meaning of the city. Relationship, then, is a way to think about the connection between the three hermeneutics: eschatological space is found in encounter; the ekklesia exercises the right to the city through shared power; and the Charismatic City exists in the web and flow of relational connectivity. In short, kenarchic political space and relationality are contingent upon one another. I explore this essentially kenarchic relationality in this chapter and argue that it can best be understood as friendship. In doing so, I bring political friendship back to the city where it started, but to the city I have now located in eschatological space and time.

[168] I use citizen (in the way that Ada Colau, the Mayor of Barcelona does) to refer to anyone living in the city and so having the right to the city (see p.132) and not according to the citizenship constituted by the state.

There is a renewal of scholarly interest in the ancient classical understanding of political friendship and how it might be relevant now. As in previous chapters, I bring this developing field of political theory into conversation with a theology of friendship and consider their application, via my triadic hermeneutic, to the city. If friendship is a good in creation and intrinsic to creatureliness in the image of God, a theology of friendship can positively engage with ancient classical thought and recent non-confessional scholarship on political friendship. I argue that friendship as established by Jesus becomes the relationality of eschatological space, ekklesiality, and the Charismatic City. The peace of the city is contingent on political friendship, and I conclude the chapter with a brief account of how friendships held a traumatised neighbourhood together.

Friendship and the *polis*

"Men come together in the city to live. They remain there in order to live the good life" says Aristotle (Mumford, 1961, p.111). Politics is the means whereby, together, they fabricate *eutopia.* Arendt, following Aristotle, sees relationality as the necessary antecedent of the *polis* and so, inevitably, whatever kind of relationality it is, kyriarchal or kenarchic, is inscribed in the political.[169] If the Aristotelian city is where we meet the stranger and co-create the city with them, and if cityspace is continually being (re)produced, what is it that constitutes a political relationship, i.e., one that produces the city? Aristotle's answer is virtuous friendship; Arendt's includes binding promise, respect, friendship, and forgiveness (Arendt, 1958, p.238). In the ancient classical world, political friendship was a prerequisite for the flourishing of the *polis* (Nordin, 2020, p.93)[170] and, until the

[169] "It is hard for us to understand the political relevance of friendship. When, for example, we read in Aristotle that *philia*, friendship among citizens, is one of the fundamental requirements for the well-being of the city, we tend to think that he was speaking of no more than the absence of factions and civil war within it. But for the Greeks, the essence of friendship consisted in discourse. They held that only the constant interchange of talk united citizens in a *polis*. In discourse, the political importance of friendship, and the humanness peculiar to it, were made manifest" (Arendt, 1993, p.24).

[170] "In Greco-Roman tradition the link between politics and friendship goes back at least to Pythagoras and Zeno (Thom, 1997; Boys-Stones, 1998). It is found in all the major thinkers; Plato connects friendship to the individual's pursuit of the good, to statesmanship, and the law (Plato, 1987); Aristotle claims it holds cities

arrival of the nation-state, friendship was seen as a fundamental element of the public realm. A recent renewal of interest in political friendship (following Jacques Derrida's 1994 foray into the subject[171] (Derrida, 2020, vii)) acknowledges its ancient classical beginnings and is a "radical endeavour of realigning our understanding of the political itself" (Devere and Smith, 2010, p.343). However, although there is little, if any, application, in this recent literature to the political of the city, it has much to offer to seeing like a city: in its radical realignment of the political, its excavation of the originary *polis* as the context for political friendship, and its critique of the nation-state. I argue that friendship is key to a spatial city-politics—and vice-versa—due to the spatial context in which people become friends and to the quality of space that comes into being between friends. Friendships hold the potential for new space to come into being that is not defined by already existent "produced space". In turn, new space (as Lefebvre argues) produces a new humanity and the new city.

Seeing like a city enables us to see the political nature of all kinds of relationships (and the spaces they produce in the city) whose political importance we may miss when seeing like a state. In the development of the nation-state, friendship was relegated from the public to the private, feminised sphere of life. Therefore, in this chapter political friendship implicitly includes the politics of friendship: the everyday bonds of friendship that are part of the complex connective fabric of the city, beyond ties of family and community, *are already* political within the terms of seeing like a city. As Heather Devere and Graham M. Smith say: "Friendship suggests non-vertical points of reference: it focuses on the horizontal, affective, and moral affinities that act as the tissue of society binding person to person, and group to group" (Devere and Smith, 2010, p.343). The importance to the city

together (Aristotle, 1999); Cicero views friendship as a precondition for the existence of any state (Cicero, 1991: 88). Friendship to these writers took place between men, it enabled good government, and it was absolutely central to their philosophy" (Nordin, 2020, p.93).

[171] "This essay resembles a lengthy preface".

of friendships, which are inevitably particular and resist homogenisation,[172] come into view when seeing like a city.

The ancients understood friendship in common with others beyond ties of kinship as a necessity for life in the *polis*. Theologically speaking, friendship is a creaturely good amongst humans-in-relation in the image of a relational God. A theology of friendship can therefore positively engage with ancient classical thought (as did Augustine and Aquinas, who each gave considerable thought to private and public friendships) and with recent secular scholarship on political friendship. In other words, political friendship is not necessarily idolatrous in Augustinian terms - in fact, the creaturely goodness of friendship may be what keeps politics relatively good. In what follows, I consider how theologies and theories of political friendship 'thicken' the previous chapter's triadic hermeneutic.

Friendship and eschatological space

We saw in Chapter 3 that space is produced through social relations, and political power holds in place the reproduction of those relations. Thinking spatially, if the city is where we meet the stranger (as Aristotle said), the city has its being in the public space between strangers who do not remain strangers to each other but, in recognising each other, co-constitute each other's identities in the process of becoming friends. The city comes into political being in the space of peaceable relations. This is Arendt's "space of appearance" wherein we are "seen and heard by others as well as ourselves" in a space that is truly public.[173] Following my hermeneutical scheme, this is where we

[172] This is why Guido de Graaff, for example, says his monograph on politics in friendship is the study of a particular friendship, that between Dietrich Bonhoeffer and George Bell in the lead up to, and during World War II. "Friendship *simpliciter* comes in many shapes and forms. Indeed, what is friendship apart from particular *friends*, and friends' particular *stories*?" (de Graaf, 2014, p.22).
[173] See p.118.

might expect to find eschatological space in the encounter with the stranger and the poor (the *eschatoi*), where social relations and identities are arighted,[174] made anew, and so not reproduced.

Friendship as creaturely good

Biblical accounts highly prize friendship, human and divine. The relationship between David and Jonathan is paradigmatic of covenantal friendship; in the Septuagint and most English translations, Moses and Abraham are "friends" of God; in John's gospel we read "our friend Lazarus" (John 11:11) and "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23). Jesus even addresses Judas at the moment of betrayal as "friend" (Matthew 26:47-50). In John 15, as I shall argue, Jesus makes a performative utterance about being friends of God. 'Friend' signifies a bond of divine-human and human-human relationship capable of holding across, but not collapsing, infinite difference. It also, of course, stands for solidarities hostile to God: for example, the very political friendship that arises between Herod and Pontius Pilate in their scapegoating of Jesus (Luke 23:12), and the friendship with the world which is enmity towards God (James 4:4).[175]

Human being in the image of God is relational and the particularity of friendship is a characteristic of divine and human relations. A political theology of friendship should therefore offer an account of human friendship as a creaturely good before qualifying it by post-lapsarian individualism and sin. In eschatological space, we should anticipate a recovery and redemption of the goodness of friendship in the relational patterning of life as it is in Christ (Tanner, 2005, pp.49-50). The city may not exist pre-fall, but the relationships that constitute its eschatological fullness do. If, as I argue in this chapter, the city is a relational matrix, then the quality of relationships, and the value put on them,

[174] From David Blower's translation of dikaiosuné, usually translated 'righteousness' or 'justice'. 'Arighted' conveys the sense of an event (Blower, 2022, p.36).
[175] "Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God" (James 4:4, NASB).

determines how far a city is a good city. This, I suggest, should qualify any dualistic reading of Augustine's two cities and is why Eric Gregory, for example, finds, in Augustine, resources for a politics of love in the secular city.

Friendship in Augustine

The "most notable attempt to define civic friendship after Aristotle is St. Augustine's", says Judith Swanson; and according to Hannah Arendt, "Augustine seems to have been the last to know at least what it meant once to be a citizen" (Gregory, 2008, pp.350, 358). Augustine affirms the essential goodness of human sociality without which there is no city of God: "How could [the city of God] have made its first start, how could it have advanced along its course, how could it attain its appointed goal, if the life of the saints were not social?" (CoG 19.5). Beginning from a "faultless natural state … the *choice* of evil is an impressive proof that the *nature* is good" (CoG 11.17); the good relations that pertain pre-fall, and in the *eschaton*, need no extrinsic form of government.[176]

Where Aristotle's and Arendt's *polis* is founded in friendship, Augustine says Cain's city is founded in fratricide and is the archetype of all the cities of men [sic] which are hostile to the city of God. In *City of God*, the two cities then follow their predestined courses (justifying the stream of anti-urban theology I referred to earlier[177]). A more careful reading of CoG 15.5 in the light of the two cities being citizenships or performances, shows that the sin of Cain's city, Enoch, is its hostility to the good, and the sin behind the fratricidal founding of Rome (true to the Enoch archetype) is the desire of both brothers for *mon*archical power. In the case of Rome and of empire, shared power would

[176] See p.55.

[177] Jacques Ellul is amongst the most extreme of this stream but influential. David Smith says Ellul bases his whole theology of the city on this one story of Cain, ignoring the many and varied approaches to cities in the biblical narrative, resulting in "a profoundly negative verdict on the city, unfolded with a consistent and unrelenting pessimism" (Smith, 2011, p.122).

mean diminished sovereignty, says Augustine; for him, as we have seen, human sovereignty over others is anathema but, presumably, less so the more power is shared.[178] Goodness, on the other hand, is shared by definition and increases with the sharing: "Goodness is a possession enjoyed more widely by the united affection of partners in that possession in proportion to the harmony that exists among them" (CoG 15.5). Taking Ward's and Cavanaugh's idea of the two Cities as performances, the performance of sharing power for the good of all is surely more a performance of the citizenship of God (*civitas Dei*) than not. This is an invitation to seek goodness and godliness in the secular city and not to have to look away from it to the church.

This is Eric Gregory's argument for an Augustinian politics of love in liberal democracy, of which he says "civic friendship" is a species. I do not share his hope for the liberal nation-state but in applying his positive Augustinianism to the city, think I am being true to Augustine's titular use of 'city'. Gregory says Augustine's "preoccupation" with friendship is "a neglected theme in Augustinian liberalism". In the *civitas terrena*, Augustine regards particular friendships as the school of virtue, "the place where compassion and social trust are first learned" (Gregory, 2008, pp.356-357). Friendship, should begin with our closest family relationships, be extended to strangers, and even extend so far as to hope that our enemy—because of our shared humanity in creation—may become our friend. The recognition of common humanity between the self and the stranger, or even one's enemy, is most fully realised in friendship (p.356). Friendship is a free gift and expression of God's love and so must be open to all but, "because of creaturely finitude", it is at the same time inevitably particular (pp.355-356). The universal love of God is particularised in friendship. For

[178] *City of God* 1.1.

Augustine, what can only begin with the particular does not remain there but becomes public as friendship spreads out to others without any outer circumference (p.356).[179]

Objections to *political* friendship may be raised because its inevitable particularity lacks transparency, or because it is anti-democratic and results in the concentration of political power amongst a few. Awareness of these possible abuses of public and political friendship certainly existed in the ancient classical era but not the objection to political friendship *per se*; this is of relatively recent origin and, as we shall see, has an historical context. In Augustine, the particularity of friendship is not defeated by the public demand of universality. Gregory says: "to use current vocabulary, Augustine provides an early discussion of the proper relationship between cosmopolitanism and particularism as it relates to citizenship" (pp.350, 354). Human finitude means that the universal awaits the fullness of time and love, but in the meantime, Augustine preaches: "Is a person unknown to you? He is a human being. Is he an enemy? He is a human being. If he is a friend, may he remain a friend. If he is an enemy, may he become a friend" (Augustine, *Sermo Denis* 16.1, quoted in Gregory, 2008, p.356). Augustinian realism warns of friendship's vulnerability, unreliability, and even corruption but, nevertheless, for Augustine, friendship is not limited to the private spheres of family and personal relationships but extends its radically humanising embrace beyond them into the public square. To 'love your enemy' is one thing, to desire them as a friend even while enmity exists, is another.

[179] Jonathan Sacks makes the same point. He says the assumption that particularity is to the cost of the universal, or of the common good, is rooted in Platonic philosophy wherein truth is found not in the particular but in the universal. Of the Hebrew Bible, he says, "by reversing the natural order, and charting, instead, a journey from the universal to the particular, the Bible represents the great anti-Platonic narrative in Western civilization" (Sacks, 2003, pp.50-51). He says: "The universality of moral concern is not something we learn by being universal but by being particular …. There is no road to human solidarity that does not begin with moral particularity - by coming to know what it means to be a child, a parent, a neighbour, a friend. We learn to love humanity by loving specific human beings. There is no shortcut." Nowhere, says Sacks, is this more important than in the most difficult issue we face, "*the problem of the stranger*". (p.58).

Where Augustine does condemn political friendship, says Gregory, is when it is the love of friendship for its and one's own sake or where, as in the ancient classical world, it is an opportunity for pride and domination. Augustine's antipathy to empire and to human sovereignty and his preference for smaller scale political forms (and thus for complex political space) might provide the conditions for an Augustinian political friendship that is able to resist domination and the temptation to dominate others (p.357).

Guido de Graaff, who writes extensively on the theology of political friendship, values Augustine's account of the vulnerability and unreliability of friendship and his pessimism regarding the human ability to have and maintain true friendship outside of the city of God, let alone political friendship without idolatry. He welcomes this more realistic view of the secular tension in Augustine's two cities than some Thomist accounts of political friendship offer. Nevertheless, he is critical of an Augustinianism that limits politics to the strictly public-political sphere and regards as idolatrous[180] any attempt to achieve the good via political means and political friendship (de Graaff, 2014, pp.22-30). The Augustinian refusal to allow political community to *provide* the goods it seeks to *protect*—like friendship—is to ignore "the nexus of goods enjoyed and pursued in society - which may or may not be promoted politically" and which are part of the original creation and, as such, are "the object of the Creator's blessing". In other words, friendships beyond kith and kin are part of the 'glue' that holds in place a public sphere and so are part of the public good "which may or not be promoted politically" (p.28-29).

[180] De Graaff is specifically critiquing Gilbert Meilaender's Augustinian *rejection* of political friendship on the grounds that the ideal of civic friendship is "a 'surrogate' perfection of friendship, disregarding the Heavenly City as friendship's true fulfilment". (de Graaff, 2014, p.28).

A healthy Augustinian reserve about friendship because of its possible sinful use does not mean we should treat others in an un-friendly way, whether in private or public space. Rather, we should see the distortion and abuse of political friendship as a derogation from the creaturely good, which is all the more grievous in that it does harm to the idea of the goodness of public friendship. In the *saeculum* (and in the secular city), within an Augustinian longitudinal eschatology, I agree with Gregory that there is every reason to promote and support the idea and practice of political friendship.[181] Even more so in Westhelle's latitudinal eschatological space which, I go on to suggest, is contingent on friendship "as established by Jesus" and not just as a creaturely good.

Friendship and the new creation

As I said earlier, Lefebvrian cityspace is the product of social relations and political power holds in place the reproduction of those social relations, to the benefit of some and the detriment of others. If those social relations of existent space are not to be reproduced, new social relations *must* produce new space (Lefebvre's trial by space). There must be sufficient conscientisation as to the nature of 'produced space' and the social relations that produced it to avoid their replication. In Chapter 4, following Westhelle, I said that eschatological space is the end and exposure of kyriarchal relations and the beginning of new social relations, of "a new quality of life in God" given fully *now* as an essentially *relational* patterning of life as it is in Christ (Tanner, 2005, pp.49-50). And in Chapter 2, I suggested that Agamben's description of a *de*stituent form of life is helpful in explicating this new human relationality which is not *con*stituted by any extrinsic *form* of social relations such as the nation or the state. If the relationality and encounters that produce Lefebvrian third space in cities are not to be defined by the political of the nation-state, nor to socially reproduce kyriarchy, they must be of a different order of being. The political space of the state which comes into being between self-interested individuals in the Hobbesian "war of all against all" is very different from

[181] A former colleague recently elected to Leeds City Council begins his speeches with "Lord Mayor, Friends…"

space between friends. Because of the contingency between space and sociality, human-being-in-relation (*bios*) itself will be of a different order in the city where strangers become friends for the sake of the *polis* (Wariboko, 2014, p.38). In what follows, I argue from John's gospel that Jesus establishes friendship as the relationality of the new humanity and so of the eschatological city.

Friendship in John's gospel

Kenarchy is defined as a politics of love (Mitchell, 2018, pp.592-609). Earlier, I argued that Jesus empties out sovereignty in the power of the exception; so, in John 15, he empties out relationships based on unequal status and power and reconstitutes them in friendship. I suggest that the way Jesus makes friendship and love indivisible opens up the *political* potential of love in eschatological cityspace. Jesus, in word and deed, establishes a new kenarchic relationality of friendship, and this friendship "as established by Jesus" (De Graaff, 2014, p.201) can indeed be called political.

Following the same kenarchic logic I set out in Chapter 2, wherein Jesus, in the power of the exception, empties out sovereignty from the divine and human horizon, Jesus's performative declaration in John 15 as part of his 'farewell discourse', kenarchically and decisively annuls all relationality stemming from kyriarchy/sovereignty and, in its place, (re)-instates friendship:

> I do not call you servants (δούλους) any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing, but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father (John 15:15, NRSV).

Jesus's use of δούλους ('slave') here suggests an Exodus-type liberation and transfiguration of the human condition from slavery to friendship. We are called friends and recognised as such by the one who is Other, across all possible alienation, difference, and enmity. In friendship comes a knowing unique to itself; in terms of recognition and constitutive power, we come to know our own humanity as we recognise and co-constitute each other as friends, the more so as we make friends with those

who are "not like minded and not like situated" (Lederach, 2005, p.85). The kenarchic quality of this friendship is made clear by verse 13: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends". In kenarchic friendship we grow in mutual knowledge towards the relational *imago dei.*[182] The friendship given by Jesus—in which we are also given as friends to each other—means "just as we are given to each other, we must also learn to accept each other's service" (de Graaff, 2014, pp.162-163). In other words, whereas love can be unilateral and *agape* is almost defined as unreciprocated love, receiving as well as giving *philia* love is intrinsic to friendship.

Just as I argued in the previous chapter that eschatological space is present as a spatial element in the city, so kenarchic friendship, as established by Jesus, is the relationality proper to this eschatological space. As such it preserves the sovereignty-free *polis* from kyriarchy and sovereignty and exposes the social relations in which they are reproduced. This charism of gifted friendship, I maintain, is given for all and is not limited to the church. I make this claim despite a dominant strand of Johannine scholarship which limits "You are my friends…" (John 15:14) (and indeed references to love throughout John) to the Christian community, with not a lot said about love of the neighbour or enemy. Because friendship was thought of in Aristotelian terms in New Testament times, Peter Dula argues this has influenced studies of friendship in John's gospel. He suggests that, rather than reading friendship in John in the light of its contemporary classical usage, instead we should draw from John a theology of political friendship which can then help us see the classical ideal in new light. John's gospel gives an account of friendship that resists and goes beyond "the gravitational pull" of Aristotelian definitions of friendship, and of Nygren's hierarchy of loves (Dula, 2015, pp.38-39).This is not to displace, but to affirm the idea of political friendship in and for the city, and by

[182] I say relational rather than social, heedful of Arendt's criticism of a depoliticised Thomist sociality.

reinscribing it in a Christian anthropology of the flawed yet graced human, to liberate it from an ideal (yet elitist, gendered, and homogeneous) ancient classical ontology.

This eschatological spatial correlate of friendship is the "tangential space" that intersects and exposes the limits of centred space and the social relations that pertain to it, as we saw from Westhelle in the last chapter (Westhelle, 2012, p.20). The kenarchic giftedness of friendship as established by Jesus cuts across the classical ideal (Aristotle, Cicero) of political friendship amongst the elite, who choose their friends carefully, and across a Chistian ethic of charity or love of neighbour in which the service is all one way. Furthermore, the rest of John 15, and into chapter 16, makes plain that this counterpolitical relational patterning of life will be violently contested by those who hold the power in what Wariboko calls the Sacred City, whose sin is thereby "exposed". This is a very public and political friendship.

The friendship that pertains to eschatological space, friendship as established by Jesus, turns the self-regarding virtuous friendship of the ancients on its head. Instead, it is often seen to be bound up with eating and drinking with disreputable folk: "Don't invite your friends …" says Jesus, by whom he means those who are like you; rather, invite the *eschatoi* if you want to dislodge yourself from the transactional mode of relationships that pertain elsewhere.[183] Jesus, the *skandalon,* the "friend of sinners", participates in their convivial activities of eating and drinking, goes to the places they live in and go to, does the things they do (Luke 7:34). Friendship, as delimited by Jesus, is a hermeneutic of

[183] "Whenever you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor wealthy neighbours, otherwise they may also invite you in return, and that will be your repayment. But whenever you give a banquet, invite people who are poor, who have disabilities, who are limping, and people who are blind; and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous", says Jesus. Luke 14:12-13 (NASB).

eschatological space – on the one hand we are exposed by the limits we put on our friendships, on the other they open us to the full catholicity of the kenarchic reign of God.

Philia or agape

An over-emphasis on agape has been at the expense of philia, a case of the best being the enemy of the good. The highest form of Christian love is love of one's enemies, a love that expects no reciprocation, so the argument has gone. But, as we have seen from Augustine, one should never stop hoping that an enemy become a friend and so must behave accordingly. Dula argues that Peter's denial of Christ aligns him with the enemies of the vulnerable Johannine community and yet, in John, he too is called friend by Jesus; friendship is seen to be prone to brokenness and division in a way that most of our contemporary accounts of political friendship gloss over. It can properly be called political because it is not defeated by conflict and so annuls the friend-enemy distinction of Carl Schmitt: "That Peter is friend raises the possibility that friends and enemies may cease to be discrete categories" (Dula, 2015, p.48).[184] The Johannine community knew that reconciliation was the 'way' of Jesus and that this meant reliance on the Spirit, not on governmental authority. Commenting on John 15, de Graaff agrees that the supposed (but unwarranted) distinction between *agape* and *philia* is collapsed:

> We find the supposedly 'Greek' concept of philia in what is arguably a central piece of dominical teaching on agape. One may therefore assume that in Jesus' teaching, love and friendship are complementary, or mutually explanatory, rather than mutually exclusive (de Graaff, 2014, p.157).

[184] The friend/enemy distinction defines the political, according to Carl Schmitt, and friend signifies no more than homogeneity. Hobbes before him believed that without enemies outwith the state there could be no friendship within. On the other hand, Aristotle devoted two volumes of the Nicomachean Ethics to friendship with barely a mention of enmity (Nordin, 2020, p.93). Rendering enmity inoperative is powerfully expressed by "We refuse to be enemies" written on a sign at the entrance to The Tent of Nations, a farm outside Bethlehem owned by a Palestinian Christian family and surrounded by hostile Jewish settlements. Tent of Nations. 2022. [Online]. [Accessed 09 May 2022]. Available from: https://tentofnations.com/

The effect of the friendship of Jesus is not to diminish or negate, but to "sustain and transform creaturely practices of friendship (e.g., as observed and commended by Aristotle)" (p.201). This natural, "freely chosen and desired", human friendship helps us find "freedom and humanity" (pp.213, 216).

So far, I have argued that the recovery of political friendship is peculiarly appropriate for the city, and this is unsurprising given its ancient classical origins. Friendship as a creaturely relation beyond kinship takes many and various forms and is always particular; it is a good gift in creation and should be affirmed and promoted as politically important for the city, always recognising that it is not immune from selfishness and abuse. Jesus establishes kenarchic friendship in the new creation and so eschatological space is where we anticipate a pattern of relationality freed from kyriarchy. It is the space of humanising encounter across difference and of reconciliation across division and the relations that ensue constitute both the self and the city.

Friendship and ekklesia

The eschatological space of encounter is both an end and a beginning – an end and exposure of what has been, and the beginning of a new humanity/city. Arendt (following Augustine) says politics is all about making a beginning (natality) and this is contingent on a plurality of relations. I come now to the explicitly political aspects of friendship in relation to Schüssler Fiorenza's radically democratic ekklesia of wo/men.

Friendship as established by Jesus is not exclusive to the Christian church as ekklesia but is *for* all ekklesiae. As hermeneutic, kenarchic friendship enables us to see the quality of relationality that enables an ekklesia to flourish and which it can then promote for the city as a whole. An ekklesia embodies and expresses this kenarchic friendship to the extent it is 'for others' and is always open to

the Other, so avoiding the enclosure latent in homogenous, single issue, and locally-focused groups and communities. Friendship becomes a way of understanding and forming urban movement-building relationships across diverse ekklesiae, each focused on their own particular issues of justice/care. Rosemary Carbine's recognition of the need for the "ekklesial work" of convening and reconciling these groups presupposes their inner and outer fragmentation, alienation, and violation by the homogenising centre. It also recognises the need for a theological/eschatological imagination of a bond of relationality catholic enough to resist all future exclusion.

This emphasis on ekklesial friendship is intrinsically political in that it reinstates to the *res publica* what, historically, has been relegated to the private, feminised spaces on the margins of the public square. The friendships in an ekklesia of wo/men displace the masculinised version of political friendship formalised and normalised by 'fraternity'. They also challenge the normalisation of political enmity, with its weak shadow of friendship. Schüssler Fiorenza writes that radical democracy has no need of the state to guarantee or provide it because it is an *a priori* principle of democracy[185] (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2007, p.80); the same can be said of political friendship.

Jesus, in John 15, specifically rules out kyriarchy from ekklesial relationships and, in calling his disciples friends, does not collapse otherness into sameness. In the previous section, I addressed the question of whether Jesus's instatement of kenarchic friendship is exclusively for the Christian church/ekklesia. De Graaff's response is that even if the ascription of 'friends' was, first and foremost, to the Christian community, "[the church is not] a distinct 'association' within society, or indeed an alternative society. The church is not 'a' society, but God's ἐκκλησία: a community 'called' to point towards and anticipate what society (including the life of friendship) will one day be" (de

[185] See p.169.

Graaff, 2014, p.201). Eschatological space means that there is no need to wait for "one day" to practise this kind of friendship but, instated by Jesus, it can be present and practised in space and time. If the church of Jesus knows friendship as the full measure of humanising relationality, it must not treat those outside its ranks any differently nor promote any lesser quality of relationship for the city of which it is part.

Friendship and justice

As with the ekklesia of wo/men and radical democracy, I suggest reinstating political friendship is a feminist and radically democratic move, a tactic against the dehumanising politics of enmity and kyriarchy. Political friendship, as we have seen, has a history. From its earliest conception, together with the democracy of which it was part, it was gendered and elitist but, just as Schüssler Fiorenza and other radical democracy proponents have not lost faith in democracy despite its history, the same can be true of political friendship. Radical democracy and political friendship belong together.

From the time of the European Renaissance, friendship came to be displaced from the public square and relegated to the personal, private, and particular spheres of life. Astrid Nordin says:

> This understanding of friendship as ultimately emotional, irrational and inexplicable came to displace the Ancient understanding of friendship …. In a process that is now well rehearsed in the wider history of thought, politics came to be associated with the rational and masculine public sphere, in opposition to the irrational and feminised private sphere (Nordin, 2020, p.93).

While personal friendship lost any political significance, the notion of friendship as between the emerging post-Westphalian sovereign states took hold:

> Yet this friendship between sovereigns was quickly tied in a constitutive relationship to enmity. Thomas Hobbes suggested that those who lack a common enemy quickly descend into war amongst themselves. Thus, no friendship within the state without enmity outside of it (p.94).

If it is the decision of the Schmittian sovereign to decide what/who is an enemy, friendship has "survived only as the residual other of enmity" (p.95). And yet, Aristotle devoted two volumes of the Nicomachean Ethics to friendship with barely a mention of enmity (p.93).

Jacques Derrida, too, sees the need to decouple political friendship from its historical diversions and distortions but wonders if it is possible for it to have any meaning beyond its history – indeed, radical democracy is conditional upon it being so. His long "preface" to the subject is a contemplation on a quotation attributed to Aristotle: "O my friends, there is no friend" (Derrida, 2020, vii, pp.1, 2). As well as looking to free political friendship from its historical capture by enmity (as above), he traces how friendship came to be subsumed by fraternity in the monastic tradition, in philosophy, and in revolutionary thought (p.237). And so, he asks:" What is a friend? What is a feminine friend?" (p.240). In hope of a radical democracy that always remains "to come" (because never fully realised), he concludes with another question: "Is it possible to open up to the 'come' of a certain democracy which is no longer an insult to the friendship we have striven to think beyond the homo-fraternal and phallogocentric schema?". On the basis of Aristotle's understanding that "friendliness is considered to be justice in the fullest sense" (Aristotle, 1976, p.259), Derrida continues: "When will we be ready for an experience of freedom and equality that is capable of respectfully experiencing that friendship, which would at last be just, just beyond the law, and measured up against its measurelessness?" (Derrida, 2020, p.306).

Political friendships and ekklesiae like the ekklesia of wo/men are constituted by horizontal relationships that need no guarantee of law or state. The principles of radical democracy and of

friendship, as hermeneutic and practice, prevent ekklesiae from being self-interested and determine what kind of power they embody and exercise. This 'weak' power of relationships, conditional on plurality, Arendt says, "preserves the public realm and the space of appearance" (Arendt, 1958, p.201) and safeguards it from the lust for power-over and the love of self against which Augustine warns. This kind of ekklesia as a space of appearance can preserve the sovereignty-free *polis* of the city and achieve Derrida's "justice beyond the law". The city itself provides the conditions for the rediscovery of a political friendship that goes some way towards satisfying Nordin's and Derrida's concerns to free it from its history. Without situating it in the city, however, it remains abstract, dis-located from a *polis* at a scale which Schüssler Fiorenza (and Augustine) recognise is necessary for it to flourish. A theology of political friendship does more: it provides an ontology for friendship as a creaturely good, beyond its historical development. In answering Derrida's question, I would point to the kenarchic friendship, established by Jesus, and anticipated in eschatological space beyond law. To do ekklesial work is to affirm, support, and promote such friendships as the mode and goal of reconciliation.

Friendship can be a practice of defiance and resistance in a society that fosters enmity for political purposes. Arendt gives the example of a friendship between a German and a Jew in Nazi Germany. If their friendship were simply based on their shared humanity so that they failed (or refused) to recognise the distinction between them, the friendship would not be humanising in itself, says Arendt, and "they would not have been resisting the world as it was". Only in the situation where such a friendship was prohibited by law, and where they recognised each other's different situations, would "a bit of humanness in a world become inhuman [have] been achieved" (Arendt, 1993, p.23). Of this passage, de Graaff says, with "the majority of German citizens in general, accepting and accommodating themselves to the gradual dehumanising of society … to say, and to

live out together the phrase, 'A German and a Jew, and friends,' was nothing less than an act of political defiance. Friendship had itself become a political practice" (de Graaf, 2014, p.121).[186]

In the next chapter I bring the kenarchic theology of seeing like a city to bear on the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission (LPTC) which is predicated on the power of relationships to bring change. I have worked on the LPTC with Andrew Grinnell whose doctoral thesis is a public theology of missional and incarnational relocation into neighbourhoods that suffer 'multiple deprivation' (so-called); he has also written about the PTC experience generically. He explains his thesis title, *Just Friendships,* only in the concluding paragraph, when he recounts being at a meeting with public- and third-sector providers of care for the many residents of his neighbourhood who were living with multiple and complex needs:

> At the meeting were public and third sector representatives. Their worlds were dominated by outcomes, outputs, key performance indicators and measurables. They referred to those they were supporting as clients or customers. As the meeting progressed, I grew increasingly irritated. The language being used about some of my neighbours seemed dehumanising. After a while, I was asked to talk about the weekly meal we had where many of the people we were considering in the meeting came to cook and eat together. A leading authority on addiction within the city asked me what the goal of our meal was. My reply was 'just friendship'. My answer seemed to annoy the questioner, so she clarified her question. 'No, what do you want to happen for those who attend?' she asked. 'Just friendship with us and one another', I replied (Grinnell, 2019, p.232).

[186] Guido de Graaff's monograph is a study of the friendship between George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer in the context of The United Kingdom and Germany in the 1930s and 1940s. C.S. Lewis recognises the freedom of friendship but also its scandalous particularity: "It is therefore easy to see why Authority frowns on Friendship" he says. "Every real Friendship is a sort of secession, even a rebellion" (Lewis, 1987, p.75).

He continues: “there is a ‘just’ dynamic to this friendship. ‘Just Friendship’ contains an understanding of justice whose eschatological vision of good relationships means that those who struggle against poverty are able to speak truth to power” (p.232). That they can do so implies an eschatological space outwith kyriarchy in which they, and those with power, can appear in their full and equal humanity and become ekklesia together.

Befriending the city

Inherent in most meanings of political friendship is the sense that friendship—humanising, affective, and philial though it must be—is also for the sake of the *polis*. Patrick Hayden, a political theorist and scholar of Arendt, links the constitutive power of political friendship with the politics of recognition (which has so informed the discourse around multi-culturalism). He says: “Identity is intertwined with the manner in which we reveal the distinctiveness or uniqueness of “who” we are through the exchange of words and deeds with and amongst others in a shared world” (Hayden, 2015, p.754). Plurality is indispensable to the reality of a shared world which is “coextensive with the achievement of identity and the ability to appear before others in a quasi-objective world” (p.755).

For Hayden, as for Nordin and Smith, the dyad of two friends does not foreclose each having other friends, but it further opens in a *tri*adic relationship of like care and friendship to the *context in which* they are friends. Friendship exists only within a shared world, “a third shared object of concern that serves as a site of political coexistence”, as a space of appearance (p.755). Political friendship therefore means not only acknowledging persons as citizens but also the “common public-political space between them” (p.756). With echoes of Aristotle’s virtuous friendship for the sake of the *polis*, and Arendt’s “*amor mundi*”, Hayden wants to entail the reciprocity of political friendship with the mutuality of “befriending the world”, cherishing it, and giving to it the same care

as we do our friends (pp.756, 760).[187] Where he and Arendt say "the world", I say 'the city' and define ekklesial political friendship accordingly.

Friendship and the Charismatic City

Finally, what is the relationship between friendship and how God takes place in the city in the person and work of the Spirit? As we saw in the last chapter, Wariboko is explicit that the Spirit works in and through the connectivity of friendships that constitute the city as *a* city. Friendship is fundamental to the Charismatic City. It is what gives the city its intensive and extensive connectivity, its ability to "resist the anarchic tendencies of late capitalism" (p.119) and provides it with a unity via a horizontal shared authority which is not dependent on the state. Friendship, as an infinitely scalable connective bond (rather than community), enables the city and its citizens to be ever open to new 'strangers' (who can become friends) and to the Spirit's irruptions, and so to the new (natality). Such friendships are the fluid and dynamic connective medium of the Spirit in the Charismatic City where "the invisible energy of charisma (*eros*) erupts here and there, moving and crossing boundaries and connecting subjects in sensual and creative ecstasies outside of authorised channels of communication and connectivity" (Wariboko, 2014, p.36). This account of the Spirit's operation lets pneumatology loose from its ecclesiastical domestication to be the connective and creative energy of the city.

[187] Arendt ties our knowledge of the world to plurality: "If someone wants to see and experience the world as it 'really is', he can do so only by understanding it as something that is shared by many people, lies between them, separates and links them, showing itself differently to each and comprehensible only to the extent that many people can talk about it and exchange their opinions and perspectives with one another, over against one another. Only in the freedom of speaking with one another does the world, as that about which we speak, emerge in its objectivity and visibility from all sides" (Arendt, 2005, p.128). Seeing like a city requires the same kind of knowing, impossible from Lefebvre's objective "representations of space".

Friendships in the city are a "rhizomatic network" of "crisscrossing connections, alliances, and allegiances" (Wariboko, 2014, pp.38, 119) or, as I prefer and argue in the next chapter, a mycorrhizal network. What Wariboko calls the city's "communion" (in contradistinction to unity) "derives from the people and their networks of friendship, remaining immanent in their practices and 'conspiracies' (spaces where they conspire together, *conspirare*, *spirit-together*, spaces where people 'breathe together')" (p.120, italics his). Importantly for super-diverse cities, this is a "communion" that does not collapse difference in the name of a managed cohesion, recognises different conceptions of the good, and, with Aristotle and Arendt, sees plurality as fundamental to a city's being. This idea of the city's communion reflects Wariboko's understanding of the Charismatic City as commons[188] rather than community, with friendship comprising "singular/common being" as its essence (p.39).[189] Seeing the city as a hypercomplex web of relationships enables us to see past a taxonomy of communities and to see how Magnusson's city as a "hyperspace of many dimensions" holds together anarchically (Magnusson, 2011, p.90).[190]

This difference between the politics of community and of friendship is important for an understanding of how the Charismatic City's horizontal relationality can remain open to the Other, and to the intensifications of the Spirit. Nordin and Smith likewise contrast the openness of the politics of friendship with the politics of community, and although their argument makes no reference to cities, it underlines the difference between seeing like a city and seeing like a state.

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[188] See pp.181,185.
"Wariboko sees friendship as 'a route to the common'. He goes on to say: 'Friendship is between the private and the public, family, and state; It is indeed in the common, a civil *ecclesia*…. [The common] is an in-between platform that is not beholden to biology or nation-state sovereignty. It is a space between denominations, nations, and sovereignties; it is a consociation of voluntary associations, networks of friendship, which creates a social space not subject to blood, race, ethnicity (genetic connection), special interest, or central political control by force'" (Bretherton, 2019, pp.147-148).

[189] Wariboko, quoting William Cavanaugh, says: "By resorting to friendship to think community, I am moving away from the idea of organising 'bodies into one unitary 'society', policed by a sovereign or authority'" (Wariboko, 2014, p.119).

[190] See p.153.

Political friendship is a corrective to the politics of community which has been "a central trope of modernity" (Nordin and Smith, 2018, p.1). They call the *imagined* national community [191] of the nation-state "a fantasy", to draw attention to its affective power and its susceptibility to the various shades of populism which exploit the *felt* sense of community lost (often because of the presence of the stranger), and then offer hope for its recovery (pp.3-6). This *nation* community emphasises what is essential to each and then common to all, rather than what can be shared (as commons), and so tends towards insiders and outsiders (pp.2,8).[192] "If community must coalesce around identity" say Nordin and Smith, "friendship coalesces around difference" (p.9).

Where the politics of community aims at an "ossified and totalising" whole, political friendship realises "an interconnecting and dynamic relay of sameness and difference" and is "a complex intermeshing of persons" such that "no person is complete or sufficient in their own right" (pp.3, 10, 11). In stark contrast with the political of the nation-state as the space of missing king, (Ward, 2009, p.55) of sovereignty, and of constitutive enmity:

> Friendship starts from the premise that politics is built upon the co-constitution of self and other, who inhabit a shared world, and whose relations are dynamic. It is this tying and retying of the bonds or knots between persons which creates the political fabric onto which seemingly more stable entities are secured (Nordin and Smith, 2018, p.4).

[191] Benedict Anderson's term (2006). See pp.42-44.

[192] "The fantasy of community is thus based on an arbitrary and unsustainable sameness. It works on the basis that a signifier (a particular characteristic or property) can subsume all the single beings …. Despite the desire for completeness, something always stands outside of community. In this way, community aims at an impossible immanence (Bernasconi, 1994, p.4). Put succinctly, community attempts to make an irreducible plurality into a unified singularity …. This focus on identity and immanence also leads to a logic of hostility to difference" (Nordin & Smith, 2018, p.8).

Friendship is not exclusive - a friend does not place limits on their friend's other friendships, and so friendship is an open and infinitely extendable relationality (p.9). Like Wariboko, Nordin and Smith see how friendship "criss-crosses" and "binds together sameness and difference, self and other, and is endlessly capable of reconfiguration" (p.10). Although politics is a form which friendship *can* take, but will always exceed, they say, "friendship is anarchic and anti-authoritarian" (p.10); no one should be able to tell us who our friends can be.[193]

Of course, the politics and language of community is also prevalent at city level, for example when referring to neighbourhoods, and to racialised and other minoritised groups. Local government and statutory agencies manage the competing claims and aspirations of these 'communities' and are charged with promoting 'community cohesion', with its implication of the need to integrate communities with some greater 'community' for the sake of the peace of the city. 'Community' carries a sense of internal homogeneity and belonging which is then amenable to segmentation and management, and to the identification of 'community leaders' and representatives via whom public authorities can 'engage hard to reach' communities. This may be preferable to seeing a city as an anarchic mass of atomised individuals, but it reinforces vertical political power relations and comes at the cost of failing to recognise complex identities, the true complexity within and between 'communities', and those criss-crossing relational bonds and knots which constitute the city and are intrinsically political. Wariboko has a nice phrase: "Friendship deanarchizes cities because it fosters transpersonal and trans-local unity through the building of criss-crossing connections, alliances, and allegiances among residents of any city" (Wariboko, 2014, p.119).

[193] C.S. Lewis recognises the freedom of friendship but also its scandalous particularity (Lewis, 1987, p.75).

Research from the 1970s goes some way to explaining just how friendship deanarchises the city. Whether or not we call them communities, there are multiple forms of belonging and sociality in the city: cultural, racial, and religious communities; clubs, societies, and identity groups; interest groups and neighbourhoods; and so on. Mark Granovetter's seminal network analysis of "strong and weak ties" describes the relationships that bind and those that connect. Strong ties are those that bind like-with-like, within cultures and interest groups, and from regular close contact, and they form a "dense network" (Granovetter, 1973, p.1370). Weak ties bridge these strongly tied groups and carry new information and the potential for newness (p.1371). By plotting the macro effect of dyadic interpersonal relationships in the micro, it is possible to see how such relationships provide coherence for the macro: "Small-scale interaction becomes translated into large-scale patterns, and … these, in turn, feed back into small groups" (p.1360). Strong ties may provide group cohesion, but they do not make for inter-group cohesion nor for opening up opportunities and resources to their group (p.1378). Evidence shows that the capability of a community to bring about change for itself increases in proportion to the number of weak tie people who enable other resources to be mobilised on its behalf (pp.1373-1375). It only takes a very small minority of weak ties for this effect to be seen.

Weak tie people operate in weak space, the choratic space between margins (Westhelle). The person who is a "weak tie" extends themself beyond the security of their identity, which Granovetter calls the "ego self", into the eschatological space between margins, to encounter their other.[194]The embrace of ego 'weakness' and vulnerability in forming a weak tie is a kenotic move and produces weak space-between. 'Community representatives' and 'community leaders', on the other hand, are more likely, as strong-tie people, to have a vested interest in demarcating and

[194] Granovetter says that "weak ties [have] often been denounced as generative of alienation" (Granovetter, 1973, p.1378)

maintaining their own group's homogeneity. Weak space is kenarchic—and potentially charismatic—space in which the Spirit *is* the "strength of weak ties" (Granovetter's title). It is the space into which one goes out, beyond what is known, to encounter the Other who is similarly extended, and so is the space in which newness/natality can come.[195]

City of peace

It should be clear by now that I am claiming the strength of horizontal relationality is an overlooked and undervalued means of peaceable relations in the city. This, a core principle of our work in Leeds over the last twenty years through Together for Peace, was inspired by Jean Paul Lederach, a North American Mennonite known for his peace-building practice and scholarship. He writes of how peace is restored to conflict-ridden communities through the development of strong "webs" of relationship.[196] As a conflict-transformation practitioner, he speaks metaphorically of "web-weaving" describing how a spider uses its spatial genius to construct a web of phenomenal strength. The strands of the human relational web are "thickened" by investing in *personal* and not just organisational relationships (Lederach, 2005, pp.74-86). He says:

> Relationships are at the heart of social change. Relationships require that we understand how and where things connect and how this web of connections occupies the social space where processes of change are birthed and hope to live (p.86).

It is important to notice that these relationships must be across difference, amongst the "not like-minded and not like-situated", if they are to hold the space between them (p.85). Contrariwise, the

[195] Wariboko calls it "friendship natality" (Wariboko, 2014, pp.129-133).
[196] Lederach's *The Moral Imagination* (2005) has had the status of a textbook for our work in Leeds through Together for Peace.

devaluation and loss of these kinds of relationships presages the breakdown of peaceable relations (p.74).[197]

This is illustrated by an example from my own city. The terror attacks that took place on public transport in London on 7th July 2005 (often referred to as 7/7) had major implications for Leeds as the home city of three of the four perpetrators. This was the UK's first incident of "domestic terrorism" by suicide bombers. The "terrorists" grew up in the city, belonged to family and friendship groups, studied and worked in Leeds, and prayed in local mosques. The area of the city most involved and affected was Beeston, a densely populated area of older terraced houses with a large South Asian population. The 'bomb factory' was close to my home in a different neighbourhood of the city. In both neighbourhoods, in the years prior to 2005, there had been remarkable, but informal and so unremarked, inter-faith relationships and friendships built between local community-minded Muslims and Christians.[198]

Mel Prideaux's subsequent research in Beeston found that these relationships went beyond 'inter-faith relationships' to personal friendships – one interviewee speaks of "camaraderie" (Prideaux, 2008, pp.181,183,208, 219).[199] These friendships had spatial impact - a Christian place of worship

[197] "We are thinking social spaces and watching for where things meet, even when those meeting places are seemingly unimportant. Think spaces of relationships and localities where relationships intersect. Those are the spaces that create multiple coordinated and independent connections that build strength. A relationship-centric approach must see spaces of intersection, both those that exist and those that can be created" Lederach, 2005, p.85).

[198] Most of these people also were, or subsequently became, my friends too.

[199] "On the whole inter-faith theology fails to value the significance of the informal relationships or living dialogue between people who live alongside one another in religiously diverse neighbourhoods. At best, the dominant discourse sees the demotic as a necessary precursor to 'real' dialogue, which is about doctrinal truth and textual meaning. Issues such as doctrinal truth claims are however notably absent from the demotic discourse, where Muslin-Christian dialogue appears to put aside issues of doctrine and text in favour of concerns about social justice and peaceful coexistence" (Prideaux, 2008, p.227).

was repurposed as a healthy-living community centre for the local South Asian population.[200] Christian-led and Muslim-led organisations had been involved in the reconfiguration of buildings but, as one interviewee pointed out it was the personal 'weak tie' relationships that enabled the 'strongly tied' organisations to work so well together:

> The relationship between us and Building Blocks is a very strong one because of the friendship that exists for instance between [local Muslim community worker] and [local Christian community worker] and me ... but I think what I like the most is the relationship of trust between the two organisations and that camaraderie and neighbourliness that's very strong (p.219).

It is significant, and Prideaux herself makes the link with Lefebvre's "trial by space", that prior to 7/7 these relationships had already been given spatial effect to meet the various needs of the area's population as a whole.

When the awful news of 7/7 broke, and the harsh glare of attention from global media fell on this very ordinary community, the far-right British National Party saw an opportunity to provoke and exploit racial and religious hatred and division (p.167). While it is always impossible to prove beyond doubt why something does *not* happen (to prove the negative), it is reasonable to surmise that the neighbourhood's resilience and resistance to attempts to sow division were due in large part to the pre-existent friendships (p.163). These now came into their own in "holding" the neighbourhood and its many and diverse residents with great care through extremely testing times (p.182).[201]

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[200] Prideaux cites the importance of Lefebvre's insistence on the role of space to her research: "If inter-faith dialogue is understood as concerned with social relations, then the physical, mental and social space underpinning these relations must be implicated in their study" (Prideaux, 2008, p.107).

[201] In my own neighbourhood, the public displays of solidarity across communities were amongst the best the area has seen and included residents giving hospitality to those evacuated from their homes.

The friendships that developed in Beeston and in my own area, were not in response to any 'top-down' strategy such as 'community cohesion' or 'integration' but came about because of people's long-term involvement in and care for their neighbourhoods. Prideaux points out that "community, like identity, is a contested term" (p.162) and that where policy makers, and 'inter-faith' practitioners think of relationships between communities they fail to see the importance of interactions between individuals (p.9). One of her respondents, an Anglican vicar, says: "a succession of ordinary everyday encounters between people, who come from different backgrounds … enlarge our vision of God's presence among us and are therefore very precious" (p.203). The demography of both neighbourhoods *required* relationships across difference to hold them together when the crisis came, and the crisis strengthened them further as, in the context of increased Islamophobia, Muslim communities needed the support of weak-tie friends. Were these friendships political? They were virtuous in Aristotelian terms in that they existed in and for their contexts in diverse city neighbourhoods and were intentional in the same way as Arendt's example of "a German and a Jew". At the same time, they fulfilled Lederach's criterion of being *personal* relationships and were not merely organisational or representational.

Conclusion

I have argued that friendship is a creaturely good and is the new creation relationality instated by Jesus. And so, political theology can critique and incorporate classical and contemporary ideas of political friendship without condemning or excluding them as necessarily sinful or idolatrous. Just as in the last chapter I argued that we can see God taking place in the 'secular' city, so we should expect to see the good, analogical/univocal, and salvific elements of friendship in, amongst, and through the "all things" of the city. Indeed, friendship is critical to each of the three elements of my triadic hermeneutic and is their common denominator: the contingent relationship between

friendship and space; the importance of political friendship for ekklesial life; and friendships as the connectivity and openness of the Charismatic City. Friendship as the measure of human (and divine) relationality is intrinsic to the good city.

Instead of *agape* love which can be unilateral and heroic, friendship *philia* is the relationality that kenarchically incarnates love. Philia puts the focus on the mutuality, reciprocity, and particularity of real—and therefore vulnerable— human friendship *and* on the space that comes into being between friends. Friendship as creaturely good is reinstated by Jesus as the way of relating (and reconciling) in the new creation, free of all sovereignty/kyriarchy. Friendship was the precondition for the *polis* in the classical world and is the mode of human being and relating in the eschatological city. The politics of friendship need not be utopian but already, as *politics*, *require* difference and the potential for conflict. Intriguingly, Hannah Arendt says that forgiveness is integral to the political because of the inevitability of promises not kept (and that it was Jesus who discovered it).[202] Reconciliation is implicit in friendship as established by Jesus. The choice is between relationships governed by law, or relationships good enough to trust (have faith in) across all difference, in dependence on the Spirit. Friendships, in their intensity and extensity, hold the peace of the city in a criss-crossing matrix of flows and spaces.

Conceptually, political friendship realigns the political in a way that challenges the politics of community of the nation-state, displacing its focus on individual liberty and the vertical relationship of the individual to the state, with the horizontal, moral, and affective affinities of friendship. Just as seeing like a city implies the crisis of the nation-state, the reappraisal of political friendship, and how it links with recognition, is an implicit criticism of the politics of imagined community on which the

[202] Arendt, 1958, p.238.

modern nation-state is founded and on which policies of multi-culturalism have foundered.[203] Political friendship has recognition at its heart and has co-constitutive potential for a citizenship that carries the shared right to the city as commons. It is anarchic and open, and yet, spanning difference, it binds and connects person to person and group to group, "deanarchising" the city and creating a political fabric out of an irreducible plurality. Friendships are triadic both in their openness to other friends and in their befriending of their shared world; perhaps this is why Jesus sends his friends out in dyads to find the third "person of peace" as his way of extending the kenarchic reign of God.[204] This space across difference is the space of weak ties but also the space in which change is birthed and the peace of the city is held in being. Each friendship reveals something new about us and about the world—Wariboko calls this "friendship natality" (Wariboko, 2014, pp.129-133). A plurality of relationships in criss-crossing networks, anchored by the 'knots' of particular friendships, make up the super-diverse and spatially complex city.

The open and dynamic connectivity of friendships maps onto the spatially complex city as seen by Magnusson and Wariboko, but It is hard to find any theoreticians (beyond Wariboko) who make the link between political friendships and cities.[205] It is a connection Nordin and Smith, for example, do not make, given their "theoretical and somewhat speculative approach".[206] And yet, the politics of friendship surely belongs with the political of cities and, with it, the hope for a radical renewal of democratic politics (such as expressed by Derrida and Nordin). Political friendship in a city is the relational bond that can hold the intensity of the local *and* the extensity of the global, and so is not a retreat from responsibility for the world beyond the city but a scalable way of connecting into it. As we saw in the first chapter, increasingly friendships between cities are proving to be effective in

[203] See fn.148
[204] Luke 10:1-12
[205] There are some recent sociological studies of friendships and the urban, for example: Vincent, Neal and Iqbal (2018).
[206] Nordin and Smith, 2018, p.2.

tackling global challenges where nations are impeded by their constitutive sovereignty and enmity. The Darwinian ‘survival of the fittest’ is slowly being superseded by ‘the survival of the collaborators’.

To see like a charismatic city is to see complexity, particularity, and plurality, dynamically held in a criss-crossing weave of koininonic friendship, human and divine, a weave open enough to receive the Spirit when she moves. It has been my contention throughout that the neo-Augustinian political theology which sees like a church and like a state, misses much of how God is already taking place in the city. In the next and final chapter, I begin to rethink church in the city seen like a city and in the light of my triadic hermeneutic.

Chapter 6: A kenarchic ekklesiality for cities

Introduction

In previous chapters I have brought neo-Augustinian political theology into conversation with Lefebvrian political theories of the city where they share the idea of complex political space as a radical critique of the nation-state. Henri Lefebvre, and those who follow on from him, invest hope for the possibility of a renewal of political life within the complex space of the city itself. Neo-Augustinians, on the other hand, counter liberal nation-state secularism by reinvesting the church with political significance and agency. I have expressed these positions as seeing like a city and seeing like a church respectively. My criticism of the neo-Augustinian theologies of Graham Ward, William Cavanaugh, Stanley Hauerwas, and John Milbank has been that, despite their opposite intention, their ecclesiologies are apolitical (much as Hannah Arendt argued against Augustine), because the church lacks a *polis* in which to *be* political, at least one that it can take seriously enough to commit to fully. Despite the radical critique they bring to the state, from the viewpoint of seeing like a city they are still seeing like a state in not considering the possibility of the city as alternative *polis* beyond church itself. Recent writing by Graham Ward and William Cavanaugh,[207] however, indicates that for each of them, for different reasons, church is no longer so central to their political theologies.

My project has been to develop a kenarchic political theology of seeing like a city and so to discover "how God takes place" (Bergmann) in such a city beyond the church. Inevitably, this begs the question of what church means and looks like. In Europe and the UK, the historical symbiotic relationship between church and state means that any *political* understanding of church is inevitably conditioned by seeing like a state, and so I have argued that the crisis of the nation-state is also the crisis of the church. In the first part of the chapter, I explore how Chapter 4's triadic hermeneutic for

[207] See below.

seeing like a city enables us to reimagine and reinvest church in the city with political meaning (as ekklesia) because we can now see politics differently. It should be apparent from what I have said in the last two chapters that in terms of *political* theology my preference is to speak of ekklesia rather than church,[208] and that ekklesiae (by my definition) must be open to all citizens of the city and so cannot be the preserve of Christians. That being the case, I explore whether there is a place for Christian ekklesiality in the city. In the second part of the chapter, I tell the story of the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission (LPTC) as an instance of kenarchic "ekklesial work" and, by way of illustration, apply my hermeneutic to see how God may be at work in this particular story and city.

Part 1: The church in the city

The church and eschatological space

In Chapter 3, I referenced how Ward and Cavanaugh associate the space brought into being by the Christ event, and the city of God itself, with an elasticised and porous church. I, on the other hand, have located this space (or something like it) within the complex space of the city as eschatological space. This is the space of endings and of new beginnings, and of transformative encounter with the *eschatoi*, the last and the least, the poor and the stranger, which Westhelle calls an "experience of ultimacy" (Westhelle, 2012, XIV). As we saw in Chapter 4, this eschatological space is found at and beyond the end of the ego-self in the space-between self and other, in the space between margins, which is the choratic space beyond place. Crossing the threshold into this space "exposes" us to eschatological judgment: "What redemption and damnation mean cannot be presupposed or foreknown; it comes with the crossing" (XV). How the church responds to the poor and the stranger, whether or not it makes "the crossing", is its redemption or damnation.

[208] Also bearing in mind Schüssler Fiorenza's disliking for the word 'church' because it is derived from *kyrios* and because, all too often, church has functioned as kyriarchy (see Ch.4).

The eschaton of the church

The persistent decline in church attendance and in the proportion of the UK population who identify as Christian,[209] which 'decades of evangelism', 'church growth', 'church planting', and 'emerging church' strategies have failed to stem, raises existential questions for the UK church. But could this be seen as an eschatological rather than an existential crisis? The church which worships the crucified God should not be afraid of dying. Andrew Shanks agrees and says: "Let us acknowledge: our having shrunk is – in theological terms – absolutely an act of God. *God has been shrinking us.* It has been for the purging of our Faith. And so – thank God!" (Shanks, 2015, p.241). What the church is being purged of, he says, is its addiction to "establishment-pomposity" and "respectability" (p.241). Perhaps God can do more through the weakening and even the dying of the church, than was possible through a 'strong' church. If, as I have argued (following Mitchell, Anderson, *et al*), the church in its strength was the carrier of sovereignty into Christendom, and thence into modernity and the foundations of the nation-state, what might be the wider effect of the church's own kenosis and kenarchic disavowal of sovereignty? In other words, if kenosis is the essence of the church and its gospel, perhaps the truly public and Christic space for others is contingent on the church's death, not its life; after all, Paul says, "So death works in us, but life in you" (2 Corinthians 4:12, NASB).[210] If the church can 'enter' eschatological space, it may fulfil its purpose as ekklesia in opening it for the people as a true *res publica,* a space without/outwith sovereignty.

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[209] The 2021 Census from the office for National Statistics reported that: "For the first time in a census of England and Wales, less than half of the population (46.2%, 27.5 million people) described themselves as "Christian", a 13.1 percentage point decrease from 59.3% (33.3 million) in 2011". Office of National Statistics. 2022. [Online]. [Accessed 17 December 2022]. Available from: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/bulletins/religionenglandandwales/census2021

[210] Pertinent to how I, with Schüssler Fiorenza and Wariboko, see eschatological continuity between *polis*, cosmopolis and the new Jerusalem is Henry Drummond's "city without a church". He says of the new Jerusalem, "Almost nothing more revolutionary could be said, even to the modern world, in the name of religion. No church - that is the defiance of religion; a City - that is the antipodes of Heaven. Yet John combines these contradictions in one daring image and holds up to the world the picture of a City without a Church as his ideal of the heavenly life" (Drummond, 1988, p.23).

The church of the poor and stranger

For the church to enter eschatological space it would need to come to its own *eschaton* (beyond its organisational ego boundaries) in the encounter with the *eschatoi*, who are the poor and the stranger, the excluded and marginalised. As we saw in Chapter 2, Jon Sobrino goes so far as to say that this is where the church must find its own salvation, because the poor "are its centre. They are the hinge that makes it operate in a Christian fashion" (p.107). The space of the *eschatoi* is the perspectival locus, the tangential cut in centred space (Westhelle, 2012, p.20), from which the church might *begin* to see the city theologically and to participate in the city of God.[211] Encountering the poor in eschatological space most likely means also encountering the stranger: in Leeds, 20% of its citizens live in the bottom 10% of 'areas of multiple deprivation' ranked nationally; for the city's global majority citizens, the figure rises to 50%.

In our increasingly multicultural and pluralistic cities, the threshold of eschatological space is our encounter with our other who is "the mark of the limit of our way of thinking and imagining" (pp.108-109). The encounter is dialogic and so potentially productive of a new sense of self-in-relation-to-other. This challenges the church's sense of its selfhood as constituted by, and accountable solely to, God and raises the question of the extent to which it can embrace kenosis if this is co-extensive with the depth and transformative power of encounter. I referred in Chapter 3 to William Cavanaugh's critique of the dialogue between Stanley Hauerwas and Romand Coles in which they discuss the extent to which the church can engage in the kind of dialogic encounter radical democracy entails:

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[211] Bonhoeffer is similarly explicit about the indivisibility of participation in Christ, and the church giving itself away to the poor: "the church is the church only when it exists for others. To make a start it should give away all its property to those in need" (Bonhoeffer, 2001, pp.144, 145). This is because Jesus Christ is "the man for others": "His being there for others is the experience of transcendence …. Faith is participation in this being of Jesus (incarnation, cross, and resurrection) …. Our relation to God is a new life in 'being there for others' in participation in the being of Jesus. The transcendent is not infinite and unattainable tasks, but the neighbour who is within reach in any given situation" (pp.143-144).

> Radical democracy meets the other unsure of what will become of one's story in the encounter … in which one story does not try to incorporate the other … "such that each … narrative is profoundly *thrown out of joint*, out of narrative structure, even out of improvisational narrative structure, and what develops comes to be seen as essentially unexpected newness born of an unexpected encounter" (Coles, 2005, cited in Cavanaugh, 2011, p.191, italics his).

All three elements of my hermeneutic are present in this quote: the encounter with the Other in eschatological space; the radical democracy of ekklesial life; and the newness (natality) of the Spirit in the Charismatic City. In short, Cavanaugh identifies the principal difference between Hauerwas and Coles being to do with worship: for Hauerwas "Christ is the goal and radical democracy is a process" whereas for Coles, Christ is "not the *object* of our hope … but the vulnerable *way* of radical hope" (p.193). In response to Hauerwas's 'red line' of "God is God, and I ain't", Cavanaugh says "knowing God is God … is not the same as knowing *how* God is God", and a politics of vulnerability begins with worship as an expression of radical dependence (p.194). My own kenarchic position, which Cavanaugh comes close to, is that if *how* God is God is kenotic then worship is the acknowledgment and mimetic living out of that in all other relationships. The church would not lose itself but find itself and its God in its radical openness to the Other.

More recently Cavanaugh has distanced himself from the ecclesial political theology (Barrett, 2017, p.15) of Radical Orthodoxy and written: "Finally I have realised that I have had too much church and not enough God".[212] He cites Pope Francis's 2019 speech to the Bishops of Central America,[213] in which he says the church is free from the corrupting desire for power and influence only when

[212] I had to learn to love the church. Then I had to learn to love God. *The Christian Century*. June 16, 2021.
[213] Vatican News. 2019. *Pope Francis to Bishops of Central America: full text*. [Online]. [Accessed 22 November 2022]. Available from: https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2019-01/pope-francis-panama-wyd-2019-address-bishops-central-america.html

"centred in the kenosis of her Lord" which "involves giving up 'virtual' ways of living and speaking, in order to listen to the sounds and repeated cries of real people who challenge us to build relationships" (Pope Francis, 2019). Cavanaugh warns that, "the church needs to contemplate God in the icons of poor people, not contemplate itself in the mirror of its own self-identity", lest it be guilty of the idolatry of self-worship, an idolatry all the worse because it is "couched explicitly in the language of the worship of God" (Cavanaugh, 2021). What, then, of hope for the church? Cavanaugh quotes Thomas Merton: "Hope then is a gift. Like life, it is a gift from God, total, unexpected, incomprehensible, undeserved... but to meet it, we have to descend into nothingness".

Where Cavanaugh and Pope Francis speak of the church's kenosis, Graham Ward has recently spoken of (what I would call) a kenosis of theology itself. In the light of the precarity of global populations living at subsistence levels, dependent on their natural environments now facing catastrophic change, he questions the validity of theology done from a place of privilege and asks what it would mean for theology to be done from the space of the marginalised in a way that questions the "spatialising of centre and margins entirely?" (Ward, 2022, p.4).[214] This, he says, requires imagination and attentive listening and a theology that is ever open to the challenge of "'not in my experience', 'not from where I'm standing'" (p.10).

[214] "What would theology sound like, articulate, if done from those living subsistently? … a theology of and from the newly marginalised who are joining in their droves the wretched of the earth and questioning the spatialising of centre and margins entirely? …. I must register the world from where I see it *and* actively seek out those with greater access than mine to the situations affecting the 'little ones' (Matt.18:6) …. Then I need to reflect theologically upon the notion of the common good from a radically different perspective and discern ways in which my privileges can have distributive effects. If I do not do this I am just moving intellectual deck chairs on some well-heeled deck on the Titanic. And that is not good news nor salvific. In fact, it is dangerously delusionary" (Ward, 2022, pp.3-4, 10).

My argument throughout has been that seeing like a church, for which I have criticised Cavanaugh and Ward, prevents us from seeing like a city, much as does seeing like a state. In this recent writing they are recognising an *eschaton* for the church overtaken by its own history (the U.S. church for Cavanaugh) and confronted by the exigencies of the poor. I am suggesting that, rather than be concerned about its own continued existence, the church find itself in radical solidarity with the poor and the stranger and allow the encounter profoundly to 'throw it (and its theology) out of joint'; that rather than seek its growth or even survival, the church Christologically recognise and embrace its own *eschaton* and give itself away for love of the city, in the faith that if it is sown into the city, it just may be for the life of the city.

church as ekklesia

Turning now from church to ekklesia (church after church?), what might a Christian ekklesia be in eschatological cityspace, in the Charismatic City? In Chapter 1 suggested Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's "ekklesia of wo/men" is paradigmatic for other radically democratic ekklesiae that are also taking political responsibility for the life and flourishing of the city. In what follows, because seeing like a city sees the political in the "hyperspace of many dimensions, each of which is produced by political action and related to the others politically" (Magnusson, 2011, p.90), I am assuming multiple forms of ekklesiality exist in any city. An ekklesia, by definition, is for the *polis* and the *polis* is of the city. My question here is: what is a distinctively *Christian* ekklesiality? By saying ekklesiality rather than ekklesiology, I mean to avoid reification and emphasise a provisionality and fluidity that is always contingent on the pneumatology and complexity of the Charismatic City. Christian ekklesiality is a kenarchic way of being ekklesial.

It is doubly axiomatic for a kenarchic ekklesiality that the ekklesia does not exist for itself but for the flourishing of the *polis* (and that each *polis* is likewise a friend to other *poleis*, and to the Earth).

Oliver O'Donovan's criticism of Radical Orthodoxy, that it makes ecclesiology, rather than Christology, too central to political theology,[215] and Cavanaugh's own recognition of the same, reflects a point succinctly put by Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer's Christology—Jesus the "man for others" —is paradigmatic for Christian ekklesiality: "The church is the church only when it exists for others" (Bonhoeffer, 2001, p.144). The good of the city (and the good city) is contingent upon ekklesiae that can be kenarchic/radically democratic in the way that the radically inclusive ekklesia of wom/en exemplifies. Each ekklesia itself must be a microcosm of the *res publica* and recognise that the *res publica* of the city is a space of multiple ekklesiae. Any Christian ekklesiality is for all ekklesiae as it is for the city, working to keep the city free of sovereignty in its internal and external relations.

ekklesia and eschatological space

In Matthew 23, Jesus condemns respectable religion, contrasting it with the kenarchic way his disciples must follow, saying: "do not be called Rabbi … do not be called leader … the greatest among you shall be your servant …. But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people, for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in" (Matthew 23:13, NASB). Kenarchic ekklesiality has responsibility to enter into the adjacent eschatological space (Lefebvre's spatial presence) of the kenarchic reign of God *and* to open it for the people as a true *res publica,* space without/outwith sovereignty. Applying to the ekklesia Lefebvre's test of whether an encounter is political ("trial by space"), kenarchic ekklesiality produces eschatological space. Schüssler Fiorenza and Wariboko situate their contemporary ekklesiae spatially and temporally in eschatological continuity with the cosmopolitan new Jerusalem. As the hermeneutical space from which to read and judge the city the ekklesia has the two-fold orientation of being "against-and-beyond".[216] The ekklesia is both a site of negation and

[215] O'Donovan (1996, pp.123, 159, 174).

[216] I borrow "against-and-beyond" from John Holloway: "Moving against-and-beyond the state, representation, labour, against-and-beyond all the fetishised forms that stand as obstacles to the drive towards social self-determination: such a moving against-and-beyond is necessarily always experimental, always a question,

conscientisation of all that dehumanises and defeats human and ecological flourishing, *and* site of an improvisation of the city to come. Such ekklesiality is necessarily improvisational because of its intrinsic relation to other city spaces. As de Certeau's tactics are to hegemonic strategy, we could see kenarchic ekklesiality as "another spatiality … one that insinuates itself into the clear text of the planned, readable city" and of "processes … foreign to the 'geometric' or 'geographic' space of visual, panoptic or theoretical constructions" (de Certeau, 1985, pp.125-126). The political relation of Lefebvrian third space to other city space is in the same order of relation as that of ekklesiae to the existent Political order of the city. The ekklesia is insurgent and emergent; in the complex and dynamic spatiality (synekesis) of the super-diverse city, it cannot be predicated or predicted where ekklesial life might emerge but it can be recognised after the fact.[217]

A distinction arises here between an ekklesia and the agency of those who discern the temporal and spatial openings (kairotic and choratic) in which ekklesiae emerge. Harvey Cox writes: "theology is concerned *first* of all with finding out where the action is, the 'discernment of the opening'. Only then can it begin the work of shaping a church which can get to the action" (Cox, 2013, p.149). This is very much like the "ekklesial work" Rosemary Carbine says is the proper work of public theologians, convoking and weaving together a "reconciled body of multiple communities in the socio-political order" (Carbine, 2006, pp.452-454). Ekklesial work does not seek to constitute ekklesiae into an Ekklesia but supports the weak ties of connection, the "horizontal aggregations" of friendship and solidarity,[218] between various and disparate ekklesiae. The discernment of kairotic time and of

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always unsure, always undogmatic, always restless, always contradictory and incomplete" (Holloway, 2010a, p.242).

[217] "The emerging city signifies a purposeful process, not an achieved goal" (Cox, 2013, p.130).

[218] "Politics is the activity of the forming of a common front, the horizontal aggregation of a collective will from diverse groups with disparate demands. Such a neo-anarchism, which is what makes it neo-, cannot hope to achieve the classical anarchist dream of society without the state, which I simply do not think is an option for most of the earth's population at this point in time. But such a neo-anarchist experience of the political can articulate a politics at a distance from the state, what I call … an interstitial distance within and against the

choratic space, of the breath of the Spirit, of the logos of Christ, of the nature of (Wariboko's) Secular and Charismatic Cities—of how God takes place in the city—is what this thesis has articulated.

church in the Charismatic City

Christian faith is grounded in resurrection[219] and so what follows from the church's existential crisis, whether from laying down its own life for the other "in participation in the being of Jesus" (Bonhoeffer, 2001, p.143), or the slow dying of its historic forms of life, is the hope of a resurrection body. This resurrection body cannot be guessed at: "it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body" (1 Corinthians 15:44, NASB). Like the proverbial 'I wouldn't start from here, if I was you' response to a request for directions, there is no linear logic between the two bodies, church and ekklesia. The Spirit precedes and always exceeds church, as Wariboko says, "Pentecostalism is not so much a quality that belongs to church (some churches, if you like), as church is the body that possesses pentecostalism" (Wariboko, 2012, p.16). In the Charismatic City, where the presence of God is dispersed through the city *and* evental, church must be charismatic and ekklesiology pneumatological. In a remarkable passage on the relation of the Spirit to church, and of both to the Charismatic City, Wariboko says:

> If the body of Christ, the church, is the temple of the Holy Spirit, the Charismatic City is a body that is becoming the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit …. We need to expand the activity of the Spirit of Christ, the borders of God's temple, the edges of Christ's body from the church as we have conceived it narrowly to the Charismatic City itself …. This effort will mean the *stretching* of the body of

state. Resistance is about the articulation of distance, the creation of space or spaces of distance from the state" (Critchley, 2007, pp.147-148)

[219] I Corinthians 15:17: "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless" (NASB).

> Christ with the awareness that the expansion will not be characterised by *elasticity*, but by *plasticity*…. What is the difference? With elasticity, as French philosopher Catherine Malabou teaches us, the church goes into a stretch mode thinking that it has the capacity to return to its original form after its adventure into the Charismatic City. But with plasticity, there is no going back, no return to any original form. The church … will carry the power of formative destruction of forms, both of its own and others that thwart human flourishing (Wariboko, 2014, p.173, italics his). [220]

If the Spirit and the city determine ekklesiality, any form it may take remains provisional as it follows the movement of the Spirit in, and into, the city. Following the logic of Spirit and ekklesia being for the city, this formative/creative destruction of forms is the Christian ekklesia's originary charism of destituent power.[221] For the church to become kenarchic ekklesia it would have to undergo its own creative destruction of forms: "Truly, truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24 NASB).[222]

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[220] Graham Ward and William Cavanaugh, in their laudable desire to defer any ecclesial definition of who and what can be included/excluded, want the church to be as *elastic* as possible. Cavanaugh's eucharistic ecclesiology might seem to endorse the plasticity of the decentred church as it centres around each eucharistic celebration, but its legitimation is still the preserve of the centred (and so elastic) church (Cavanaugh, 2002, pp.112-113; Ward, 2009, p.288).

[221] Destituent power is Agamben's term for a form of life (or 'habitus') that is immune to the constituent power of sovereignty to *con*stitute dehumanising forms of life. I have discussed this as a kenarchic form of life in Chapter 2. My own experience of helping to bring a church through creative destruction bears out Wariboko's last two sentences. Since then, I and others have been working with an "eco-cycle" model to help organisations and individuals plot where they are on a continuous infinity loop cycle of gestation, birth, maturity, creative destruction (death), gestation, and so on. Coming to the realisation that death is but the end of a form of life, not of Life itself, is liberative.

[222] *apothnḗskō* ("die off, from") … stresses *the significance of the separation* that always comes with *divine closure* … the *ending* of what is "former" – to bring what (naturally) *follows*. Bible Hub. [Online]. [Accessed 09 February 2024]. Available from: https://biblehub.com/john/12-24.htm

If, in the Charismatic City, the Spirit is at large and given for all, this still leaves the question of what if anything remains particular to believers and Christian ekklesiality? A senior church leader, newly arrived in the city a few years ago, told me he was unsure of what the church in Leeds was *for*. Chris Baker writes of the retreat of urban theology from the high point of the *Faith in the City* Report era of the 1980s, into an "introverted agenda" and a managerial focus on church growth (Baker, 2013, p.5). A pneumatological ekklesiology begins with the work of the Spirit in the city and offers the why and the how of church. Following the Spirit into the Charismatic City ("which is becoming the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit" (Wariboko, 2014, p.173)) beyond even extroverted forms of church, is an invitation to theo-politically imagine and discern the purpose, power, and operations of the Spirit, previously understood to be for the church's life and mission, now as given for the life and flourishing of the city – *polis* and diverse ekklesiae. Harvey Cox urges the importance of having a theology of social change, by which he means revolutionary, rather than incremental, change, in which church is God's "avant-garde": "the church is first of all a responding community, a people whose task it is to discern the action of God in the world and to join in his work" (Cox, 2013, p.125). If the Spirit at work in the city is the "powers of the coming age" (Hebrews 6:5), church can no longer be defined by what has been, but must "allow itself to be broken and reshaped continuously by God's continuous action" (Cox, 2013, p.125).

A metaphor for kenarchic ekklesiality

Metaphors are helpful for thinking about church and the NT writers employ several, including, body, household, city, temple, light, and salt. Chris Baker, in the article referred to above (Baker, 2013, pp.5-6), comes close to the kind of urban ekklesiology that follows from my theological sight of the city. Using metaphors of tree and rhizome (following Deleuze), he distinguishes arborescent

from rhizomatic forms of church.[223] Arborescent forms of church see the church like one tree in a forest of trees, as one organisation/organism relating to others in the city in a Cartesian relationship of subject-object; this, he says, is the ecclesiology of *Faith in the City* (1985). He contrasts this with a rhizomatic ecclesiology stressing connection, ecological interdependence, emergence, and what is not visible above the surface. However, because a rhizome is still a unitary form, limited to its genus and species, and given the hermeneutical priority I gave in the last chapter to seeing the city as a dynamic web of relations across difference rather than a community of communities, I suggest mycelium may be a better metaphor for Christian ekklesiality.

Research shows that the health of a forest is contingent on the fungal life in the soil below the surface. Mycorrhizal strands connect with the root systems of plants and provide them with the nutrients taken up by the mycelial network in the soil and can so become part of the host organism that it is not possible to speak of them as separate.[224] In this aspect, mycelium is a servant organism without which, it is thought, the Earth would not have been able to produce plant life on land. Key factors in the unfathomable complexity of mycelial networks are the innumerable ways in which they reproduce and the correlation between the arboreal diversity of a given forest and the health of the mycelial network.[225]

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[223] "Rhizomatic urban theology, in contrast to arborescent urban theology, emerges in cracks and crevices beyond the purview of both institutional church and theology. It tends to start with the givenness of the city in its increasingly material and spatial complexity. It experiments with different forms and discourses and is often prepared to take the risk of working alongside others, creating nodes and joining networks in a spirit of pragmatism – in short helping to create new assemblages of events, discourses and practices. It is less concerned with institutional church and far more interested in fluid church (or even churchless church). It tends to eschew grand narratives or normative explanations, choosing instead to inhabit the liminal, third space between the binary opposites usually favoured by arborescent theology. It is fortunate enough to operate within the new freedoms and opportunities presented by the post-secular public and urban space" (Baker, 2013, pp.5-6).

[224] Sheldrake, 2021, p.164.

[225] "Some fungi have tens of thousands of mating types, approximately equivalent to our sexes (the record holder is the split gill fungus, *Schizophyllum commune*, which has over 23,000 mating types, each sexually compatible with nearly every one of the others" (Sheldrake, 2021, p.39)

This yeast-like fungal metaphor for church takes us closer to the complexity of charismatic interrelationality and interpenetration of friendship and away from the cartesian subject-object relation of the arborescent church. Furthermore, it enables us to see the life-giving interpenetration of Christian ekklesiality and city – the ekklesia is there for the flourishing of the city. Chris Baker questions whether "the resilience and creativity of the rhizomatic is sustainable in its own terms" and asks, "will it also need to think in creative terms about some sort of rapprochement with the arborescent?" (Baker, 2013, p.11). By changing the metaphor from rhizome to mycelium, a new synergistic relation between arborescent church and mycelial ekklesia comes into view. Mycelium has a vital function in breaking down the substance of fallen trees to return their goodness to the surrounding ecology. The mycelial ekklesia just might be the way the good substance of the dying arborescent church is not lost to the city.

The emphasis here on connectivity, rather than community, explains how Christian ekklesiae might *be* destituent and "carry the power of formative destruction of forms, both of its own and others that thwart human flourishing" (Wariboko, 2014, p.173) in and for the city. In the last chapter, I stressed the relational and political qualities of friendship as established by Jesus. The anarchic/kenarchic relational qualities that free humankind from the necessity and bondage of law and from sovereignty/kyriarchy are described as the 'fruit' of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-25, and Paul could not be more adamant that there can be no justification for a default to law to govern ekklesial relations (Galatians 5:1-12).[226] Similarly, in Ephesians 4, this same kenarchic freedom in the Spirit from law (*con*stituted power) is evidenced by the diversity of gifts, exercised in mutuality and reciprocity, for the ekklesial work of knitting together a kenarchic body politic. In 1 Corinthians

[226] See David Benjamin Blower's discussion of law and messianism in: Discharged from the Law: Paulos, Anarchy and Spirit, in *The Kenarchy Journal,* **4**(3), 2022, pp.26-43. "Law is deemed necessary in the present age to precisely the extent that we lack relationships good enough to trust. A political body, rooted in a praxis of the life of the age to come (this is my understanding of Paul's understanding of the messianic mission) can only exist by the praxis of *good faith*" (p.32).

4, Paul, in destituent mode, warns against confusing these gifts, given for the flourishing of all, with the persons through whom the gift is given. If a Christian ekklesia is structured by the kenarchic connectivity and the charisms of the Spirit and not by law, it is a carrier of this way of being for all ekklesiae and for the whole city. As with ekklesia, so with *polis*: the unity or political cohesion of the super-diverse city is in/ by/ of the Pentecostal Spirit and not by law.

The same is true of wisdom for the city: in the last chapter I argued from John 15 that friendship as it is in Jesus carries epistemological significance – we come to the knowledge of God and to wisdom through the relationality of friendship, not through hierarchy. There is a knowing that can only come through relationships of friendship as established by Jesus. This is not the protected, orthodox knowing of the Sacred City, but the knowing that can only come in differentiated consciousness, such as friendship. The divine *episteme* of the Charismatic City is perceived through a diversity of voices and the contribution of a diversity of gifts (I Corinthians 2:12). This calls for a radically democratic (ekklesial) *techne* and *phronesis* of dialogue and conversation, in which wisdom and truth for the city are likely to be heard from those formerly excluded, marginalised, and despised.

Part 2: Leeds Poverty Truth Commission (LPTC)

In this part of the chapter and to ground my kenarchic hermeneutic of seeing like a city in my own city and experience, I explore its application to a project in which I have been closely involved for the last decade, the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission (LPTC). My motivation for embarking on this thesis was wanting to develop and make explicit what had mostly been a tacit theological sense of how God takes place in the city, informed by my work and engagement in Leeds over the years. Much of this has been encapsulated in the LPTC, which I offer here as an instance of kenarchic ekklesial work.

I am *not* claiming the LPTC to be a confessionally 'Christian' initiative, as normally understood. Christians involved in initiating the PTC in Scotland and PTCs in Leeds and elsewhere were inspired and informed by a certain tacit and inchoate political theology, but other PTCs without Christians involved have been as effective. This is consistent with the Christian ekklesiality I outlined in the first part of this chapter – that it is of and for the city and so belongs to the city and not the church.

The Leeds Poverty Truth Commission (LPTC) began in 2014 and a fourth Leeds Commission is currently ongoing.[227] Inspired and supported by the Scottish Poverty Truth Commission[228] which began five years earlier, the founding principle of the PTC is that those who personally experience the struggle against poverty have a wisdom that is seldom, if ever, heard in the rooms where decisions and policies about poverty are made.[229] The PTC's adopted motto—"nothing about us without us is for us"—declares that such decisions and policies miss the mark precisely because they perpetuate the very power asymmetries which underlie the causes of poverty in all its forms.[230] I will describe the process and detail some outcomes of the PTC, and then consider to what extent it instantiates the political theology I have set out.

[227] Leeds is regarded as a prosperous and successful city but has also been called a two-speed city, with an ever-widening gap between the richest and poorest citizens, most starkly evidenced by the ten-year difference in life expectancy for children born in the richest and poorest neighbourhoods. Ryan, E. 2019. Children born in these Leeds areas will live 10 years longer, shocking inequality figures show. *Yorkshire Evening Post*. [Online]. 31 July. [Accessed 14 April 2022]. Available from: https://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/people/children-born-these-leeds-areas-will-live-10-years-longer-shocking-inequality-figures-show-632005

[228] Faith in Community Scotland. 2022. [Online]. [Accessed 14 April 2022] Available from: https://www.faithincommunity.scot/poverty-truth-community

[229] Grinnell, A. 2021. *Wisdom Cries Out: Public Theology from the Margins.*

[230] Poverty is a lack of money and much more than that. Jon Sobrino says the poor are "the deprived and oppressed, with respect to the material basics of human life; they are those who have no voice, no freedom, no dignity; they are those who have no name, no existence". (Sobrino, 2008, p.26). One of our Leeds commissioners summarises her own and others' experience of poverty as "poverty of spirit".

The PTC process[231] begins with the recruitment of fifteen or so 'community commissioners' or 'experts by experience', people who experience their own struggle against poverty and who, collectively, reflect the city's demography. The invitation to take part makes clear that participation may not change their own situation, but it may make a difference in the future to others with similar struggles. The Commission process begins with care-full listening as the community commissioners share stories between themselves of their own various experiences of struggle. Typically, they have not been listened to by the people and organisations that directly impact their lives. Poverty isolates people and it is remarkable how quickly empathy, recognition, and solidarity—friendships, in a word—develop between commissioners, despite widely differing stories of struggle: one community commissioner, a wheelchair-user who had experience of homelessness, at the end of their second gathering looked around the group saying, "we know each other, don't we?" In a later Commission, another, who was then seeking asylum in the UK, tells how she found real solidarity with long-term Leeds citizens when she realised they shared experiences similar to her own.

Through care-full listening and feeding back of what has been heard, and with a growing sense of group solidarity, community commissioners begin to believe that their experiences have given them something important to say that should be heard by the city. This growing self-belief counters the internalised stigma associated with being 'poor':

> "When you're experiencing poverty, what really grinds you down is the way other people perceive you. The media often portray low-income families in unsympathetic, and sometimes insulting terms. Feckless. Scroungers. Skivers. And this leads the public to think that the hard-up have only themselves to blame, and they treat them with

[231] There are now many PTCs that have been, and are, taking place in different parts of England and Scotland. There is a shared ethos amongst all and a network to enable cross-fertilisation and support, but each PTC is indigenous to, and owned by, its particular location and the process I describe is particular to Leeds. [Online]. Available from: https://povertytruthnetwork.org/

> disdain. Attempts to get help with money, benefits, housing and other basic essentials can sometimes be frustrating, complicated and bureaucratic. This reinforces the impression that anyone who is experiencing poverty is a problem."[232]

Paulo Freire writes that a vital stage in people becoming aware of the situation[233] that makes them poor is becoming aware of how they have internalised oppression.[234] When being poor is portrayed by popular media and promulgated by politicians as shameful, stigma is too often internalised as shame, leading to poor mental and physical health and social isolation. Commissioners wrote in a closing report: "It's important that people hear about the shame. It's about living the shame, feeling it, living on, inspiring people through that shame".[235] One community commissioner, towards the end of the commission, told everyone in the room that the shame she had always felt about being poor had now gone and, whereas she had blamed herself for being poor, she knew now blame lay elsewhere.

Through listening to each other,[236] community commissioners begin to develop their own bigger picture of the multifarious effects of poverty in the city and together decide on the themes to which they want to bring focus. Civic and business commissioners are then recruited accordingly.[237] Unlike

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[232] Leeds Poverty Truth. 2018. *HuManifesto* - the jointly written commissioners' report of the second Leeds PTC, 2018. [Online]. [Accessed 14 April 2022]. Available from: http://www.leedspovertytruth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/LPTC_HuManifesto_2018_NEW.pdf

[233] Freire calls this the "limit situation" (Freire, 1996, pp.83-91).

[234] Freire writes of the "false consciousness" whereby the oppressed "house" the oppressor, and so accept and even defend and parrot the "power…which violently represses them". Conscientisation is the revolutionary process by which the oppressed "leave behind the status of *objects* to assume the status of historical *Subjects*" (Freire, 1996, pp.140-141, italics his). I consider Paolo Freire's approach to pedagogy in *the Pedagogy of the Oppressed* to be kenarchic, in that it requires a letting-go of the epistemic privilege of formal education and learning to see the world (as it more truly is) with and through the experience of the oppressed. It seems that Jesus in John 15 correlates friendship as it is in Jesus with a way of knowing that is hidden by hierarchical relations. Friendship implies a different way of knowing.

[235] *Fighting Shame,* 2019. A Guardian Documentary co-produced by five women who were community commissioners in the second Leeds PTC. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bhx3jKEwbFA

[236] See: *Stigma: The Machinery of Inequality* by Imogen Tyler, 2020.

[237] Such is the reputation of LPTC that previous civic and business Commissioners often want colleagues to take part.

many consultation or listening processes which invite community members into the space of the decision-makers,[238] in the PTC it is the other way round - the decision-makers come into the space of the community commissioners and at their invitation. Feeling this spatial difference, civic and business commissioners can express some nervousness, particularly as they are asked to 'take off their lanyards' to signify they come, first of all, as people and not in their role in the city. They are *en*couraged to listen to the community commissioners' stories and *dis*couraged from defaulting to attempting to fix the problems they hear about, which would only reinforce their respective power asymmetries. The facilitators' aim is to enable them to see the city, and themselves and their organisations, from the perspective of the community commissioners. In Chapter 3 I said that one of the marks of Lefebvrian abstract space is spatial "hierarchy" meaning that "we know that we *have* a space and *are* in this space and not that, that some spaces are prohibited, and some are accessible". This became apparent when we asked people to pair up and identify the invisible borders in the city that they would not, or could not, cross – from the Job Centre to the city's most exclusive shopping arcade. The response of a senior public-sector officer, "I thought we were part of the solution, but I now see we are also part of the problem" is not untypical. Also not untypical is one comment of a community commissioner who said, "we used to think 'the suits' were the enemy, it was 'us and them', now it's just us".[239] Community commissioners begin to see civic and business commissioners as fellow humans struggling within a system that inhibits and restricts their power to do the good they want to do.

[238] For example, Church Action on Poverty's Poverty Hearings. Graham, E. 2007. Our task: 'hearing one another to speech'. *Church Times*. [Online]. 3 January. [Accessed 23 November 2022]. Available from: https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2007/5-january/comment/our-task-hearing-one-another-to-speech

[239] "Even people who aren't on a low income can be affected by the dehumanising effects of poverty in our city. People who deliver services to the low-paid often have to use systems that get in the way of treating their customers as real people with real lives and real stories. No one wants to make life harder for folk. Blaming 'the suits' does not make things better. And any society is weaker when some of its members are excluded. Poverty dehumanises us all." *HuManifesto* - the report of the second Leeds PTC, 2018. Available from: http://www.leedspovertytruth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/LPTC_HuManifesto_2018_NEW.pdf

In the final stage of the eighteen-month long PTC process, having jointly identified what they want to focus on, commissioners begin to work on jointly agreed improvisations and actions with a view to mutual learning about what solutions do and do not work. This distinguishes PTCs from other initiatives where decision-makers may listen to peoples lived-experience but then exclude them from decision-making agency.

It would be easy, as Magnusson warns, to categorise the PTC as a civil society initiative and so not *political*. One of the assumptions made by *both* sets of commissioners when they start out is that they have little or no power, that real Political power resides in, say, Westminster or in the City Council or that the iron rule of the neo-liberal market determines the economic life of the city. Urban geographers Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift challenge this 'top-down' view of power. Cities "work from the ground up" and "reconstructing the city ground-up requires making visible its hidden-in-plain-sight infrastructures and disclosing their force and performativity" (Amin and Thrift, 2017, pp.4-6). In words that ring true to the PTC experience and to seeing like a city, they stress that this is a political project:

> We are talking here about a politics of leverage, a politics of small interventions with large effects, a politics of locating pinch points, and a politics of urban life as a trickster assemblage of like and unlike …. Other kinds of politics exist, of course, none of which we are devaluing. Instead, we attempt to set out a politics true to the machine that the city is, which is able to convert often quite small interventions into very large gains for the many, without necessarily touching on what some have come to regard as the only available levers of change, whether planning or political party or revolution (p.6).

Invariably, civic and business commissioners discover through the PTC process that they do have power and that seemingly small changes can have significant effects. Likewise, community commissioners discover the importance and power of their own experience and acknowledge the wisdom it has given them; one has said that poverty made her "sit down and shut up" but being a commissioner made her "stand up and speak out". Perhaps, even more important than any change in material outcomes is the sense commissioners have that they are "speaking and acting together" (Arendt) for their city, beyond their own narrower spheres of influence, and so exercising political agency.[240]

PTC as eschatological space, ekklesia, and charismatic intensification

I tell the story of the PTC because I believe it has been a significant intervention in Leeds and beyond[241] and because it *felt* intrinsically theological. For example, we who were Christians working on the PTC often said it felt more like church than church ever did; powerful and deep encounters between commissioners were often transformative, personally and politically (i.e., for the *polis*). In the Secular City (Cox, as redefined by Wariboko) phenomena can be explained in secular and in theological terms without loss of meaning, and it is important for PTCs that this be so. As I argued in the first part of this chapter, any ekklesiality that is Christian is intrinsically "for others" and so cannot be the preserve of Christians; in other words, the gift/charism does not suffer loss in the transmission. In the same way, in parsing the PTC theologically here, I do so with the caveat that I am not suggesting it suffers loss when it is not represented theologically. In other words, if we do

[240] Leeds City Council has a "best city ambition" which says: "At its heart is our mission to tackle poverty and inequality and improve quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds home". We have been told that LPTC has contributed to making this core to the city's aspiration, possibly due to the number of senior Council officers and Councillors who have been commissioners. Leeds City Council. 2022. *Best City Ambition*. [Online]. [Accessed 04 January 2022]. Available from: https://www.leeds.gov.uk/plans-and-strategies/best-city-ambition#:~:text=The%20Best%20City%20Ambition%20aims,best%20city%20in%20the%20UK

[241] PTCs have taken place in more than twenty locations in the UK. PTN. 2024. [Online]. [Accessed 13 February 2024]. Available from: https://povertytruthnetwork.org/commissions/commission-locations/

not use God words it is *not* thereby a 'secular initiative'. In what follows I have separated the three parts of my hermeneutic (as in the previous chapter) for the purpose of critique, always remembering they are mutually interdependent.

Eschatological space

The PTC starts from the space of those who are last and least (*eschatoi*) and so, as in the reversal of the eschatological space, the last become first and their experience and voice is privileged as the starting point. The atomising impact of poverty and shame that produces social isolation is soon replaced by a tangible sense of a space produced by empathy, solidarity, affirmation, and by a growing consciousness of collective political agency. The "gritty materiality"[242] of people's lives is given witness through stories, in a supportive web of relationships in a way that accords with Pennington's and Wariboko's affirmation of a feminist eschatological spatiality.[243] The process of mutual listening, empathy, and building solidarity produces a new space-between, space not constituted by those with power, nor by the space, structures, and epistemology of the dominant status quo. Stories are the *lingua franca* of this space. Michel de Certeau distinguishes maps, which are two dimensional representations of space, from "itineraries", which were the older form of representing territory through multiple stories and encounters, thickening and peopling the description of a place.[244] This 'storied' space-between is, first, the space between, and in the midst

[242] Wariboko, 2014, p.101
[243] p.177.
[244] See Cavanaugh's discussion of this in Cavanaugh, 2002, pp.100-101, 116-117. "Modernity gave rise to the mapping of space on a grid, a 'formal ensemble of abstract places' from which the itinerant was erased. A map is defined as 'a totalising stage on which elements of diverse origin are brought together to form the tableau of a "state" of geographical knowledge.' Space itself is rationalised as homogenised and divided into identical units. Each item on the map occupies its proper space, such that things are set beside one another, and no two things can occupy the same space …. The type of mapping that Certeau describes is a corollary of the rise of the modern state, which depends on the ability to survey a bounded territory from a sovereign centre and make uniform the relations of each particular unit of space to every other" (pp.100-101).

of, commissioners (a space of appearance), and it then becomes a space between the hegemonically mapped spaces – a humanising space of representation in the city of other-storied spaces.

This space, into which the civic and business commissioners are invited, is tangential to the city space in which they are accustomed to work and in which they have status (where they stand, have their standing). As such, and in accordance with how Westhelle defines tangential space, it intersects and disrupts hegemonic representations of space, and is a space of "crossing over, a transgression of boundaries" (Westhelle, 2012, p.20). Westhelle says that tangential space has the "impending urgency of apocalyptic tidings because what is to be expected lies here already, nearby or adjacently, instead of being perennially deferred to an impending future, or else already realised" (p.78). In the PTC the community commissioners' stories of their lives in the city become apocalyptic tidings in the dual sense of what Andrew Grinnell calls "the cry" of wisdom that comes of lived experience[245] and of how they expose the limits of hegemonic representations of space. Westhelle's eschatological ("choratic") space is the space between margins: the PTC process invites both groups of commissioners to a dialogic encounter which transgresses boundaries of identity and security, transcending and transforming positionality. Isaiah 40:4 provides a topographical and kenarchic metaphor for eschatological space: "Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low"; Lefebvrian spaces of representation are from 'below', representations of space from 'above'. Poverty, the Leeds commissioners say, dehumanises us all and so the aim of the PTC is for commissioners to discover, in and through relationships, their common humanity in the eschatological space beyond positionality, and to remake the city accordingly.

[245] "David Ford commences his argument about 'Christian Wisdom' by arguing that 'prophetic scriptural wisdom is inextricably involved with the discernment of cries' (Ford, 2007, p.14)", (Grinnell, 2021, p.4).

A word about friendship and the LPTC. The relationships in the LPTC space are outwith the social relations that pertain to existent city space. LPTC is not a campaigning initiative – it is predicated on the development of personal friendships. Civic and business leaders sometimes express anxiety about getting involved, for fear they are going to be verbally attacked or lobbied about the specific issues for which they have some responsibility, but find their fears to be without foundation. Friendship as established by Jesus is without kyriarchy and brings with it recognition of shared and co-equal humanity. The knowledge and justice that come through such friendship are not just by hearing one another's words but by seeing the friend as another self, as Aristotle said. The more this becomes true in the relationships (both ways) between commissioners, the more powerful is the political effect (i.e. on the *polis*) of this friendship. Friendship is the horizon within which commissioners are urged to think of themselves and behave accordingly - for example, they are encouraged to meet up informally outside of commission sessions to get to know each other as people.

The PTC brings together elements which hold the potentiality of eschatological space but, in the Charismatic City, it is the Spirit who intensifies encounters across margins and brings new, humanising space into being. Instead of 'business as usual', in which incremental change within *chronos* time is the best that can be hoped for,[246] the PTC holds the promise of a kairotic disruption – the eschatological reversal is happening now and producing eschatological space.[247] Theology, says Harvey Cox, begins "finding out where the action is, the 'discernment of the opening'. Only then can it begin the work of shaping a church which can get to the action" (Cox, 2013, p.149). By this, as we

[246] At the recent launch of the fourth Leeds commission, responding to a community commissioner who had said they weren't expecting change to happen overnight, a senior health leader said, "We need a revolution".
[247] Westhelle says, "the *eschaton* is the location in which a reversal occurs. It is not so much something to be waited for as it is something already and presently near" (Westhelle, 2012, p.80). See p.164.

saw above, Cox means revolutionary and not incremental change, as the *eschaton* breaks kairotically into *chronos* time, and choratically into *topos* place.[248]

Ekklesia

Grinnell says the PTC "has created an alternative political space where relationships are formed across the divides, difficult issues are addressed, and localised change might begin to happen" (Grinnell, 2019, p.220). As we saw in Chapter 4, there is a symbiotic relationship between eschatological space and ekklesiae. Eschatological space is the space of the ekklesia: Lefebvre's "trial by space", the proof of political ekklesiality is the production of new and humanising political space in the city. In Arendt's theoretical model, the public space of appearance *precedes* the dialogue across difference that is proper to politics, whereas Lefebvre is clear that for the encounter across difference to be political it must *produce* space ("trial by space"). The formation of an ekklesia will produce new eschatological space *and* the condition of possibility for the ekklesia to come into being is the eschatological space that has been opened in and by the Christ-Pentecost event. What has been hidden in plain sight becomes visible and embodied through participation.

Grinnell writes of the importance to public theology of the people with the lived experience being able to speak for themselves, because it is in their experience of struggle that "wisdom cries out".[249] Drawing a distinction between the PTC and apparently similar processes that listen to people speak

[248] Jon Nixon says of Hannah Arendt: "Her central thesis is that revolution involves not just liberation from the old order but the constitution of a new order within which citizens can exercise collective agency …. Freedom is not merely freedom from obstruction, but the freedom to take positive action with others". He quotes Arendt: "The end of rebellion is liberation, while the end of revolution is the foundation of freedom . . . there is nothing more futile than rebellion and liberation unless they are followed by the constitution of the newly won freedom' (Nixon, 2015, pp.43-44).

[249] He cites Proverbs 1:20-21

of their own lived experience but then exclude them from decision-making agency, he says: "the cry belongs to the person uttering it and should not simply be 'used' by another" (Grinnell, 2021, p.13). Just as the maxim of the PTC is "nothing about us without us is for us", so Schüssler Fiorenza says: "Ekklesia, as the decision-making assembly of full citizens, insists on the ancient Roman and medieval democratic maxim: that which affects all should be determined by every one" (p.77). I make the claim that the PTC is an ekklesia in the city: *how* the commissioners work together is radically democratic within the terms of the ekklesia of wo/men and commissioners are conscious that their relationships and work together are for the just and good city. The idea to name the report of the second Leeds PTC a "HuManifesto"[250] came in a meeting of the commission that took place in the city's Council Chamber when commissioners drew up a manifesto for a Leeds without poverty. The message of the HuManifesto is simple - poverty dehumanises everyone, those who are afflicted by it *and* those who work in structures that fail to mitigate it or exacerbate it.

In Michel de Certeau's terms, the PTC is tactical in the face of hegemonic strategy. It is tangential to the Political of both city and state in that it does not identify power with Political levers of power. Although an MP and city Councillors have been involved as commissioners, they are not seen as more important or powerful than anyone else. As an ekklesia, LPTC does not follow the logic of power and democracy-as-we-know-it but aims to be radically democratic in its *modus operandi.* Crucially, the PTC is not a reversal of Political structures as we know them, nor a complement to them, making up for their lack.[251] Rather it is an alternative political space,[252] a sight and sign of a different politics which comes from seeing like a city.

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[250] http://www.leedspovertytruth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/LPTC_HuManifesto_2018_NEW.pdf

[251] In this respect the PTC is not like the various species of democratic engagement which complement or make up for the democratic deficit of the Political system, such as town-hall meetings, citizens juries, forms of direct democracy.

[252] "The commissioners believed a downward spiral between poverty and isolation was formed that led to low self-esteem, depression and a sense of being disconnected from wider society. Key to subverting this was to

The PTC is a hermeneutical space from which to read what ekklesia means and inform its praxis. I do not claim that the PTC is a Christian ekklesia (for reasons I have discussed in the first part of the chapter), but rather a form of ekklesiality, one more or less faithful to the originary event, and patterning of life, of Pentecost. The Spirit at Pentecost enables a hearing of one another beyond the boundaries of language and constitutes a new humanity and a new *polis* that is radically inclusive of those excluded by religious, political, and socio-economic forms of kyriarchy. The PTC enables people to transgress boundaries and to discover, in the crossing-over, a new humanity in themselves and others in a way that many church congregations do not. As we saw in chapter 4, the ekklesia has no meaning or purpose apart from the *polis* of which it is the democratic assembly. The commissioners of the PTC are clear that they are there (called out and convened) for the sake of the city. One commissioner, a business leader, puts it beautifully: "we have become the community that Leeds needs to be" (Grinnell, 2019, p.220).

The practice of change[253]of the PTC is that changed people transform their life and work situations and connect these into the 'mycelial' network of relationships they have formed during the commission.[254] Civic and business commissioners in the PTC say that they 'recognise' others who have been part of another LPTC cohort because they now share a common understanding and 'speak the same language'. The practice of change taken by the PTC is not simply that individuals 'go back' into their roles changed by their experience of the PTC, but that there is a growing "web"[255] of

overcome the 'them and us' that they argued characterised society. The commissioners believed that through building relationships with each across societal divides, they were no longer divided but were united in wanting to bring change. As one business leader claimed, 'we have become the community that Leeds needs to be' …. The commission will not eradicate poverty in Leeds. However, it has created an alternative political space where relationships are formed across the divides, difficult issues are addressed, and localised change might begin to happen" (Grinnell, A. 2019. p.220].

[253] Grinnell's preferred term.

[254] One senior Council officer also working with national Government, said that he always 'carried' with him the voice of one of the community commissioners into strategy meetings.

[255] Here, I am using "web" in the way Jean Paul Lederach does; see p.214.

people committed to tackle poverty in the city with a new understanding of what they can, and cannot, do.

Finally, the ekklesial space in which a commission comes together as ekklesia is kenarchic space. It is a space in which those with power and the knowledge from above 'come down' to the level of those without power to learn from and with them. This kenarchic movement of self-emptying in relationship and encounter with those who have no power is, at one and the same time, the instatement of both in alternative political space (Mitchell, 2011). There is a Freireian letting go of the kind of knowledge operative in representations of space and of the power and prestige that this knowledge gives (symbolised by 'taking off lanyards'). The PTC is a space of representation, first of community commissioners and their stories of lived experience, and then of them together with civic and business leaders in the transformative space of encounter.

Facilitation as ekklesial work

Rosemary Carbine's suggestion that the role of public theologians should be to do "ekklesial work" rings true in our experience. Writing of the wisdom that can be heard in the cries of those who suffer poverty in our cities, Grinnell says :

> For public theology to be wisdom crying out in the streets the theologian must be located in the context of the cries. This will enable the theologian to understand the particularity of the cries they hear, to appreciate the complexity of the issues that elicit them and to cry alongside others as they experience something of that injustice (Grinnell, 2021 p.10).

To facilitate a PTC is to do ekklesial work and it is to make a temporal and spatial eschatological intervention. There is an eschatological urgency in the space-time intervention of the PTC - now is the time and here is the space for the radical justice of the kenarchic reign of God. The face-to-face

encounter carries within it the ethical demand of friendship. It irrupts into 'business as usual' (in which incremental change in *chronos* time is the best that can be hoped for) and it opens new space-between in the city which begins from the space of powerlessness.

Charismatic intensification

In the Charismatic City, the presence of God by the Spirit is presupposed to be dispersed throughout the city *and* can be anticipated in evental moments and spaces of intensification. In a passage previously cited, Wariboko says:

> The gritty materiality of the city is a complexly structured set of doings and being, a human coexistence that is radically oriented to continual opening and reopening; the inside always exposed to the outside. All forms of existence participate in the divine presence. This view of social ontology allows for intensities of participation at certain sites or moments (Wariboko, 2014, pp.100-101).

What is going to happen between commissioners cannot be predicted and so facilitators work with a praxis of emergence: "creating a space where something might happen".[256] The 'happening' is how I interpret "intensities of participation" and comes at the point of real connection, perhaps when people realise something for the first time, or when a community commissioner's words carry particular power. I suggested above that the ekklesia is constituted by, and functions by, the combination of charisms of each member and that wisdom for the city is found in a multiplicity of voices. As we saw in Chapter 4, Schüssler Fiorenza's ekklesia is ontologically and performatively pentecostal, drawing on the experience of the crowd on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 when, in a reversal of Babel, each person hears in their own language and "those with high social status and

[256] With thanks to Michael Fryer, Professor of Practice at the Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies, University of San Diego, who gave us this wise advice in the early days of Together for Peace.

those with nothing in the eyes of the world … share in the multi-faceted gifts of Divine Wisdom-Spirit" (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2007, pp.77, 79). Wariboko, too, describes the kind of communication that takes place in the Charismatic City:

> The invisible energy of charisma (*eros*) erupts here and there, moving and crossing boundaries and connecting subjects in sensual and creative ecstasies outside of authorised channels of communication and connectivity (Wariboko, 2014, p.36).

The Spirit empowers speech and enables a new ability to hear. The paramount activity of a PTC is listening. This is a listening below the surface of things, a hearing of other and of self, and a deep hearing together that can become generative of transformational change.[257] The impact of really being heard and of really hearing cannot be measured.

Remembering that human flourishing is the mark of Wariboko's Charismatic City, we have seen the impact of the PTC when people freed from shame and stigma become gifted in speaking powerfully and prophetically to those in power and are empowered in acting to change their limit situations. We have also seen people be reminded of their ethical and moral motivations for choosing their career, and sometimes change jobs as a result. To say these are evidential signs of the Spirit at work is not to make a definitive claim, but if the Spirit is the *energeia* of God towards the new Jerusalem, she may be discerned in her effects and in how wisdom for the city is found.

[257] In Leeds we have found Otto Scharmer's Theory U helpful as a framework. This is a model for transformational change which emphasises these levels of listening as a prerequisite for change. U-School. 2022. [Online]. [Accessed 04 January 2022]. Available from: https://www.u-school.org/aboutus/theory-u

Conclusion

I have indicated in this chapter the kind of kenarchic praxis that this political theology of cities might inform. Prioritising how God takes place in the city, I have begun to suggest some implications of this for what it might mean to be 'church after church', where Christian ekklesiality is *for* the life of the city as Christ is for others. I have been reluctant to be definitive about what this ekklesiality may mean or look like because, according to my thesis, it is always secondary to how God is taking place in the city. Because, as Wariboko says, church is the body which is pentecostal and the Spirit blows where she wills, I have preferred to speak of ekklesial*ity* to stress kenarchic and pentecostal performance and to avoid the implicit/default identification of ekklesia with church. Given the crises in nation-state and church, and the still emergent idea of cities as alternative political space, this kenarchic praxis is tentative, provisional, and elusive, which perhaps befits a pneumatological political theology. This is a praxis that is also consistent with the city as complex system and with de Certeau's "tactics" in the face of strategy. At the end of this thesis, therefore, the question of ekklesiality in, of, and for the city remains a question that I suggest should be left open – open to the poor, the stranger, and the Spirit.

Kenarchic Christian ekklesiality is *for* all forms and expressions of ekklesiality in the city (ekklesial work instead of church planting?), as mycelium is *for* the flourishing of the whole ecology. As such, it carries "the power of formative destruction of forms, both of its own and others that thwart human flourishing" (Wariboko, 2014, p.173), and the grace of ekklesial work for weaving together radically democratic forms of social and political relations, to promote agentic and relational human being in the image of God. It is kenarchic and eschatological insofar as it disavows and exposes kyriarchal relations, begins from the space of the poor and the stranger, exposes centred and hegemonic representations of space, and produces new humanising city space.

A related question arises: from where should theology be done if not from the church? Throughout this project I have argued against the assumption, that has followed from a radical critique of the nation-state (which I share), that the church should be posited as the truly public space and the normative space from which to do political theology; for the most part, my criticism has been of this aspect of Graham Ward's and William Cavanaugh's political theology. I infer, from their more recent writings referred to above, that their church-centred political theology may have been somewhat "thrown out of joint"[258] by their acknowledgement of the importance to theology of the voices and experience of the stranger and the poor. With Sobrino, my argument has been that a city theology must begin from here, within the horizon of a new Jerusalem of eschatological justice and peace, of which a Christian ekklesia is the "avant-garde" (Cox, 2013). Kenarchic theology is a theology of participation and engagement. Entering the city's eschatological space is a costly choice; it cannot be truly discerned from outside, nor without facing the ethical demand of the poor or the stranger. Its ekklesiality consists in radical and dialogical inclusion and the freedom of the Spirit in the Charismatic City. There is a way of knowing, says Jesus, that comes only between friends; what is to be revealed is *most* fully revealed to life-laid-down love. We read the city through this cruciform logic.

What I have offered, by way of the story and hermeneutical analysis of the LPTC, is an example of the kind of theology and praxis I have articulated. I said that those of us who were Christians were inspired and informed by a tacit theological sense of it being the right time and space to initiate this in the city. This discernment (of an opening in the city) came in a context of our prior histories of commitment to arighting the socio-economic injustices of the city, and our existing (mycelial) engagement with the city beyond the church, informed by God's preferential option for the poor. LPTC would not have been born outside of friendships (friendship natality) which spanned Scotland

[258] Romand Coles' phrase – see p.143.

and Leeds, the Anglican diocese, the City Council, and diverse spheres/sectors of city life. These friendships were vital as we soon became aware that the *space* the LPTC would open in the city—independent of, and so at a critical distance from, any agency/organisation, yet interrelational and collaborative—was contentious and political. We were conscious of the weight of existent and produced city spaces 'weighing down'[259] on the space LPTC wanted to open.

I said that the LPTC 'felt' deeply theological. By that, I mean there have been many moments of tacit recognition of God's presence and that what was happening was resonant of biblical themes of eschatological justice, when we could have said (with Peter on the day of Pentecost) "this is that…". Furthermore, and in accordance with the biblical idiom of cities as persons capable of moral agency, LPTC has somehow engaged with the eschatological 'grain' of the city in that we see it responding to the priority of the poor and the stranger. My thesis questions arose out of a store of tacit theology gleaned from this and other experience of the city and this has informed the hermeneutic I have developed. In applying the hermeneutic back to the LPTC and to articulate what was previously tacit, in this final chapter I have demonstrated its use as a tool of discernment of how God takes place in the city and how it exists as part of an open cycle of action and reflection which cannot be extracted from practice. Are there intimations of eschatological space here? Are there elements of ekklesiality and friendship in how people are together? Are there signs and charisms of the Spirit amongst us?

[259] Lefebvre's term. See p.123.

Conclusion

I came to this project wanting to see if it was possible to understand my city theologically otherwise than simply as the context and object of the church's mission: what kind of theology could make sense of the city as I knew it and offer tools for imagining what good and God in the city might look like? This was within the wider context of what I saw as the various crises of the liberal nation-state and the world order based on it, and the existential crisis of a UK church in severe numerical decline. From my own experience, my tacit and piecemeal theological sense was that God "takes place in the city" (Bergmann) beyond the church and in ways that the church can be blind to or even resist, and that a theological praxis was needed beyond church-centred engagement with the city.

I have argued that theology is important for cities and cities for theology: most people globally now live in cities and urban environments and, on present trends, many more will; there is a global trend of devolving political power to cities and their regions; and there is a growing body of multi-disciplinary scholarship on cities in which theological critique is scarce. Beyond the kind of urban theology that places the church centre-stage, there has been little theological study of the city for its own sake and my thesis has been a contribution towards meeting that lack. My hypothesis has been that "seeing like a city" (Magnusson, 2011, Amin and Thrift, 2017) offers political theology a different way of seeing and acting in the world from "seeing like a state" and 'seeing like a church'.

I have articulated a political theology of the city-as-*polis* in dialogue with urban theory after the spatial turn. This has required a theological approach that accounts for complex political space, that demythologises/desacralises the nation-state as normative political space, and that disavows human and divine sovereignty. Defining 'kenarchy' as the theology and praxis that follows from Jesus 'emptying out' sovereignty from the human and divine horizon, I have demonstrated how the city can become legible to kenarchic theology and amenable to kenarchic praxis. I have employed the

city, seen like a city in its particularity and situatedness, to critique neo-Augustinian two cities theology.

Within the spatial complexity of the city as analysed by Lefebvre (1991), I have focused my kenarchic critique on his third space because it holds the possibility for radically democratic and humanising politics in the city outwith the cityspace and abstract space that preserve and support the reproduction of the social relations of domination and of capitalism. Throughout, I have drawn parallels between how third space and Augustine's city of God each conscientise us to the spaces and relations of domination and so refuse human forms of sovereignty (power-over others). However, in contrast to an Augustinian theology that takes a negative view of cities, I have affirmed (with Cox) that God takes place in the secular city: my hermeneutic, reading third space as eschatological space, ekklesial space, and the spatiality of the Spirit, is a tool for discerning how, where, and when.[260] Eschatologically, third space is the new space of humanising encounter with the poor and the stranger (the *eschatoi*) which opens to a new relationality and humanity in common, and so to an encounter with the Other (Westhelle, 2012) or *l'Autre* (Lefebvre, 1991). This new relationality outwith pre-existent social relations takes radically democratic political form in ekklesiae (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2007) and in spaces of appearance (Arendt, 1958) as shared power is exercised to co-create the city as the *oeuvre* of all its citizens (Lefebvre's "right to the city"). The city's dynamic and connective relationality (Wariboko, 2014) is in and by the Spirit and third space is the opening to the irruptions and intensifications of the Spirit as the impulse towards an eschatological arighting of the city.

[260] See Chapter 4.

Augustine's two cities, according to Ward, are intermingled but ontologically and eschatologically distinct,[261] whereas I have said that Lefebvre's third space is posited in dynamic and transformative synergy with other city spaces that are largely analogous to Augustine's *civitas terrena*, characterised by power-over (*libido dominandi*) and self-interest (*amor sui*). Following Lefebvre, I have posited eschatological space, ekklesiality, and the Charismatic City in transformative *kenarchic* relation to the other spaces of the city, as tactic in the face of strategy, weak power in the face of strong force. Whereas Augustinian theology has promoted a temporal eschatology ('now and not yet'), deferring spatial salvation to the *eschaton*, I have argued for the importance of spatial eschatology ('here and not here'). Our spatial bodies inhabit space and space comes into being between us. Thus, if eschatology is to be salvific (arighting what has been wrong) it must speak of human-being-in-relation beyond the individual, and so be spatial as well as temporal (in Westhelle's terms, *chóra* as well as *kairos*).[262] The city, I have argued, is metonymic for human-being-in relation beyond biological kin, and the city constituted by reconciled and healed relationality—human and divine—is metonymic for the *eschaton*. The work of co-creating the city as *oeuvre* with our others (whoever they may be) is intrinsic to becoming human in the image of the relational God.

A common theme I have identified in each of my three hermeneutical frames is the complex relationality of the city which gives sight of the city as a concentration of relational connectivity within a globally connected cosmopolis. In restoring the *polis* to its originary site in the city, I have also retrieved the ancients' idea of the importance of political friendship to the city's relational connectivity. Just as all loves can be seen as refractions of divine love, I have argued we can see political friendship as a creational good and as (re)instated by Jesus as kenarchic friendship, emptied out of all social forms of asymmetrical power (John 15). We can then see third space and the

[261] See p.64.
[262] See pp. 161-162.

Charismatic City as the space produced by the humanising web of friendships across difference which enables connections between diverse communities. With Wariboko, I have said that we need to learn the art of developing friendships across difference for the sake of the city.

I have considered the question of church in the city seen like a city as a corollary to my hermeneutic and concluded that seeing how God takes place in the city (Cox's "discernment of the opening") should determine any form that 'church' might take. I have therefore preferred to speak of ekklesiality for the sake of the *polis* (and so kenarchic and mycelium-like by nature) in contradistinction to the re-politicised church of neo-Augustinian post-liberal political theology and Radical Orthodoxy; my thesis is a theology of the city without a church, not a theology of the church without a city.

Methodologically, I have adopted Bretherton's definition of political theology as a shared terrain across which are multiple and diverse pathways and as the search for a more faithful political imaginary than the conflation of religion with existent political forms allows.[263] My premise that God takes place in the secular city has determined my trialogical method, bringing urban theory and political theology into dialogue and triangulating both with my own experience of the city. Consistent with how third space emerges in dialogic encounter, I have focused my discussion on points of connection and disconnection *between* the principal interlocutors, rather than offering detailed critique of each. My approach has also been consistent with my claim that new sight and new space comes in the dialogic and political space-between, but that this is always provisional because there is ever the Other; thus Mitchell's insistence that "kenarchy is praxis not dogma" (Mitchell, 2011,

[263] Pp.21,45.

p.189)[264] and Magnusson's warning against any theorisation that is not attuned to the particularity of cityness, (Lefebvre's priority of the "lowest level on which all others weigh down"). As I have indicated, Cavanaugh and Ward now also appear to be saying something similar and I read this as a corrective to their ecclesial political theologies which I have critiqued.

We have still not exhausted making meaning of the city, despite cities pre-existing "the dawn of history" (Mumford, 1961). I argued in Chapter 1 that, although we can speak meaningfully of 'the city', it is important not to flatten out individual and unique cityness into theoretical or theological uniformity and conformity (Magnusson, 2011). I considered the development of urban theory, with a view to seeing whether the city is worth of study as a polity in its own right and not merely as a political subordinate of the nation-state, and I took the path that followed the spatial turn, with Magnusson's urban political theory of "seeing like a city" (Magnusson, 2011) as an important guide to the terrain. I found substantial agreement between him and other theorists (e.g., Weber, 1969; Soja, 2000; Barber, 2013) that the city should be treated as a polity in its own right and understood as a different order of *polis* from the nation-state, one not predicated on sovereignty. The spatial turn in urban theory reframes politics in the city as complex political space or, as Magnusson describes it, an n-dimensional hyperspace. The state and the global markets are in the city, and vice-versa, but there is always an excess due to how the very complexity of space resists sovereign control. As Weber shows, this has been true of cities historically.[265] Seeing like a city is inherently a critical stance towards the hegemonic idea of the nation-state as the normative *polis* from which modern ideas of the political and of politics have been derived. I have therefore proposed that we should see the state as the negation of the *polis* that properly belongs to the city.

[264] p.108.
[265] p.85.

These three aspects of seeing like a city—spatial complexity, absence of sovereignty, and criticism of the state—were my initial points of connection with neo-Augustinian theology, and particularly with Radical Orthodoxy which, on the grounds of Augustine's two cities, also complexifies political space and is critical of the apparently simple political space of the nation-state. From Augustine himself, I took his disavowal of human sovereignty and of political forms giving effect to it. I also considered Thomist complex political space because of its affirmation of the city as intrinsic to God's design for human being. What I took from Thomism was the complexity of political space to temper the inevitable abuse of monarchical power, and the integrity of intermediate forms of political life having their existence under God and not as simply devolved by the monarchical authority. I also took a bottom-up version of the Thomist idea of subsidiarity because it enables us to see the hyper-local in the city within a set of upwardly delegated political forms appropriate to their scale, all the way up to the global city (cosmopolis), but without any diminution of power from the lowest level. However, the theological path I have taken across the terrain passes closer to Augustine than Aquinas, because I agree with Arendt's criticism of Aquinas's subsumption of *politics* by *society* and because Aquinas validates the intermediate forms of society, but sees them as parts of a whole mon-archical order, and affirms a sovereignty at odds with seeing like a city.

My principal neo-Augustinian interlocutors have been William Cavanaugh and Graham Ward: Cavanaugh because of his critique of the nation-state, and Ward because he has written extensively about the post-modern and post-secular city. It has been important to think about the nation-state even though my thesis has been about the city. Just as, in Augustine, evil is a derogation from the good, so the earthly city is a derogation from (negation of) the city of God; we come to see the true nature of the earthly from the viewpoint of the heavenly. As Augustine desacralises the Roman empire, Cavanaugh desacralises the nation-state (as do secular thinkers, Critchley and Anderson). It is important to be conscientised to the theological underpinning of the hegemonic idea of the nation-

state if we are to live free of it and be able, theo-politically, to imagine alternative political space; in the same way, we must stop "seeing like a state" (Scott, 1998) to be able to see like a city. Cavanaugh reclaims from the state for the church truly public space (*res publica*).

Ward applies this same Augustinian critical hermeneutic to the city which, for the most part, he characterises as Augustine's *civitas terrena*. I described this, and other theology of the city influenced by Augustine, as a negative theological hermeneutic, as it sees no inherent good in the city: "the church has to continually remind the city that it cannot of its own will and ambition, make virtuous citizens", says Ward (Ward, 2000, p.472). I have distinguished my thesis from the kind of urban theology that takes this negative view of the city and makes it the context and object of the church's mission so that the church, not the city, is the subject. Like Cavanaugh, Ward identifies the church with the city of God ontologically and eschatologically, while the human city is destined to pass away. Complex political space implies spaces in relation but also contention. I explored how Cavanaugh (like Ward) defines Augustine's two cities as two citizenships and then likens them to improvised performances, one tragic, the other comedic, the performance of the citizenship of the heavenly city more or less identical with the church (though not in its institutional forms).[266]

Because my subject has been the city, and not the church, taking the city seen like a city as my hermeneutical frame, I have critiqued this neo-Augustinian political theology. Because, in Lefebvrian terms, the church (and its theology) historically has been a major producer of hegemonic space and is itself a product of that space, it cannot claim to stand apart from—'in, but not of'—the secular city, but must itself undergo its own conscientisation to its complicity; Cavanaugh, more than Ward, owns

[266] See pp.140-141.

the need for the church's stance towards the world to be penitential. I identified a further problem for the church as regards Lefebvrian third space as the space of dialogic encounter in which new space comes into being that is not determined by the spatiality of existent social relations. In Chapter 4, I argued, with Westhelle, that we can see this as eschatological space – the space of endings and new beginnings. As kenarchic space, it is the space of letting go of securities and certainties, the end of sovereignty, and the beginning of sovereignty-free social relations. I suggested Cavanaugh, in his critique of the dialogue between Hauerwas and Coles, was aware of this problem. Ward's declaration of God's sovereignty as his starting point of political theology is problematised by a city *polis* not predicated on sovereignty, and by Arendt's conviction that sovereignty is the enemy of a politics predicated on plurality.[267] Instead of the church being the city's salvation, I argued (with Sobrino) that third/eschatological space could be the church's salvation through kenotic encounter with the poor and the stranger. As said above, more recent writings by Ward and Cavanaugh suggest they each have come to recognise the importance to the church and to theology of being attentive to, and then being changed by, the experience and voice of the poor.

Having identified these problems with neo-Augustinian theology from the point of view of seeing like a city, Cox provided me with a very different theological departure point, with his argument that God is to be found in the very idea of the secular city (which he distinguished from the city of secular*ism*). In Chapter 4, I developed my triadic hermeneutic for discerning *how* God takes place in the secular city, and specifically in Lefebvrian third space. Again, in keeping with third space as dialogic space, I brought together three interlocutors from different traditions and nations: Westhelle, Schüssler Fiorenza, and Wariboko. From the standpoint of seeing like a city, and in keeping with my kenarchic approach, it was important that each of them be thinking spatially and outside of any frame of

[267] p.92.

human or divine sovereignty. Because Westhelle closely follows Lefebvre's spatial analysis, I closely followed his spatial eschatology and applied it to the city which, despite Lefebvre's spatial analysis being uniquely urban, he had not done. Schüssler Fiorenza's "ekklesia of wo/men" speaks of the *political* nature, form, and power appropriate to the new humanity that comes into being in third/eschatological space, space without "kyriarchy". Wariboko's profound and wide-ranging thesis enabled me to see how city, space, and ekklesia were produced and infused by the Spirit. These enabled me to analyse (respectively and synergistically) third space as eschatological space wherein radical democratic ekklesiae come together to exercise the right to the city, the whole being the space and effect of the Spirit's irruption and intensification. I said these three elements of third space should be understood as mutually indwelling in perichoretic movement within and between the spaces of the city which are themselves also in dynamic movement. I then proposed that we see kenarchic friendship, as established by Jesus, as the relationality that holds the eschatological space and the ekklesia in being and which, unlike communities, can follow and be open to the movement of the Spirit in Wariboko's Charismatic City.

In Chapter 6, I considered the effect of my hermeneutic on how we might understand the church in the city. Taking Schüssler Fiorenza's usage of ekklesia to restore the church's originary political meaning as existing and kenarchically giving itself away for the sake of the city, I described ekklesial work (Carbine) as the service of ekklesiae coming into being. Finally, I offered an account and critique of the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission as an instance of the political theology of seeing like a city. The PTC is somewhat paradigmatic of the nature of theorising the city – it is particular, emerging from a particular city at a particular time, always particular to the commissioners who make up the commission, and yet has proven to be applicable to other places and cities. It is a practice of change predicated on a belief that change starts in the space of the 'last and the least' and on the importance of giving attention to their experience of the city in such a way that other

representations of the city may be 'thrown out of joint'. Crucially, I argued (with Magnusson) that LPTC is political (and so ekklesial) and cannot be relegated to a civil society initiative: citizens together are creating new space-between outwith normative socio-economic relations, for the sake of the good of the city. The theology that is found in the LPTC emerges through encounter and in searching out wisdom for the city in dialogue with the 'stranger and the poor', and it is rooted in intercessory love for the city.

My thesis has brought the city as theorised after the spatial turn, with its distinctive claim for seeing the city as *polis*, into the field of political theology. Where political theology has seen like a state or like a church, the spatial analysis of seeing like a city offers new sightlines and directions for a political theology of urban space, for example: the quality of city space, placemaking in cities, green space, safe space, intercultural space, space for play, other-abled-friendly spaces, the space (gap) between socio-economic classes of people, living space, traffic free neighbourhoods, 15/20 minute cities, gender-neutral space, the urban commons, privatised space, truly public space, space to thrive, the spatial relationship between the city and its hinterland, and so on. Seeing each city as a uniquely complex system and as a node in the global cosmopolis invites further research into the political theology of how systemic change happens and into complexity theory.

I alluded in Chapter 1 to the preponderance of male thinkers in this field of urban theory and theology, in contrast to the predominantly female imagery used of the city in the Bible generally and of wisdom for the city in Proverbs 8 and 9.[268] Just as I have argued that the city becomes legible to kenarchic theology in ways hidden to sovereigntist/kyriarchal theologies, it would become more

[268] "Beside the gates, at the opening to the city, at the entrance of the doors she cries out: "To you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men" (Proverbs 8:3-4, NASB).

legible still from other and minoritised theological perspectives. Likewise, I am only too aware of my lack of consideration of cities via an eco-theological lens. I referred in Chapter 3 to Lefebvre's replacement of a Marxist dialectic of history with the Earth's becoming and the Earth as the ultimate "trial by space",[269] and Magnusson briefly considers the *oikos* of Earth as a frame within which to see the *polis* (Magnusson, 2001, pp.125-138). I could not do justice to the importance these perspectives within the frame I set myself for this thesis.

A *positive* Augustinian political theology envisages the possibility of politics without domination, and political relationships without sovereignty, whilst being realistic about what makes for the *civitas terrrena*. It allows for an affirmation of the city as good in eschatological continuity with the city of God, and thereby offers conscientisation that the city is not good, as it should be and *can* be. The Augustinian secular city, conflated with secularism, has led to a *negative* theological view of the city as without and outwith God's presence. This has produced an ecclesiology and urban missiology which assume the church brings God into the city which lacks God. I have followed Rowan Williams' encouragement to revisit Harvey Cox's ground-breaking thesis of the secular city[270] which rebuts this assumption. I have done this in the company of Nimi Wariboko (2014), whose own analysis of the city is a significant but overlooked contribution to the field of political theology in this era of the worldwide growth of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement. It has been important to me and to the kenarchy project that my thesis also be a pneumatological political theology. Cox's secular city, as revisited by Wariboko, opens new theo-political imaginaries for ecclesiology and urban missiology in which we can ask "what if…?" and live 'as if…'. Many cities have adopted an asset-based approach to community development which identifies, validates, and builds on, a community's hitherto overlooked assets. I have suggested a similar approach, starting with the recognition of where and

[269] See pp.130-131.
[270] See p.72.

how God is already present and, as Cox says, always being ready to discern the opening. This cannot be done at a distance and so calls for a way of thinking and acting theologically that is present, attuned, and attentive to the rhythms, sounds, and sights of a city.

My thesis has developed and applied kenarchic theology to the city. Mitchell (2011) argues that the historical subsumption of divine transcendence by divine sovereignty means that the secular rejection of divine sovereignty also entailed the rejection of a Judaeo-Christian transcendence. In emptying out sovereignty from transcendence, kenarchy, in its pneumatology, contributes to the re-enchantment of the city with post-material meaning and resource, as an alternative to what Ward calls the transcendence of the Enlightenment idea (Ward, 2003, p.467). Beyond the 'horizontal' transcendence of encounter with the O/other, the pneumatology of the Charismatic City gestures towards the transcendence that makes possible an evental newness coming into being in the third spaces of the city.

Magnusson is convinced that the cityness of cities is an adequate antidote to sovereignty but, arguably, the historical development of cities into city-states means that cities are not immune to the temptations of power-over. Kenarchy offers to cities an originary mythos and a teleology which expose and counter the operations of sovereignty, and kenarchic praxis is an answer to Agamben's (2019) search for a destituent form of life that can resist the constituent power of sovereignty. This recognises the necessity (as Lefebvre, Foucault, and Mouffe stress) of conscientisation to discern the sedimented archaeology of space, if we are not to continue unconsciously to reproduce it in our social relations. It also offers a radical critique which strips the idea of the nation-state of its hegemony, opening the way to seeing like a city.

I have not majored on the subject of 'church', but in Chapter 6 I attempted to restore its originary political impulse as kenarchic ekklesiality, in a way that might go some way towards Cavanaugh's desire to restore it to the church.[271] Kenarchic ekklesiality, in faithfulness to the kenarchic Jesus-Pentecost event, continues to empty out sovereignty/kyriarchy from the human-divine horizon and so opens kenarchic space in the city under a sovereignty-free sky. Kenarchic ekklesiality eludes definition outside of its kenarchic relation to the particularity of the city, and of each city; kenarchic time is kairotic, kenarchic space choratic (Westhelle). With my fungal ekklesial metaphor[272] I aimed to articulate the interpenetration of city spaces and the spatial ecology of cities: eschatological/third space leavens the whole city. I argued that the crisis of the nation-state is also the crisis of the church and that the neo-Augustinian political theology that arrogates truly public space for the church is insufficiently self-critical, particularly where it retains a sovereigntist theology. Theological critique of the state must also be self-critical because of the interpellation of church, its theology, and the state. Cavanaugh's recent disavowal of his over-emphasis on the church, and Ward's recognition that theology cannot be done solely from the standpoint of the church, suggest new directions are afoot for the neo-Augustinian political theology I have critiqued in this thesis. In the throes of what appears to be an inexorable decline in UK church attendance, and with falling adherence to even nominal Christian faith in the wider population, the many and various attempts of the church to find a purpose and role in a rapidly changing UK context persist in starting from the church itself. My suggestion is that, by starting from the city, the church could discover, or rather *re*cover its role and purpose *for* the city.

In recent and current discourse on political friendship (whether theological or not) there has been little or no application to cities. This, I believe, would be a rewarding area for future research.

[271] p.54.
[272] p.234.

In a time of culture wars, erosion of trust in politics, and a further erosion of public space by increasingly toxic social media, cities are where we can rediscover politics as we share common ground. Instead of trying to promote and manage 'community cohesion', cities can be the political space in which a radically democratic politics of plurality can be developed (as per Arendt). As Lefebvre recommends, we can look for and learn from where there are already improvisation and emerging models.[273] For example, as I wrote in Chapter 1, the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities network offers this kind of opportunity to exchange learning between cities globally. The idea of there being multiple forms and foci of ekklesiae in the city allows for improvisation and experimentation towards developing a *practice* of radically democratic and pluralist politics and at a scale appropriate to context. The idea of ekklesial work points to the support needed to promote and support ekklesial practice amongst disparate and disempowered groups. Christian ekklesial work will look for the evidence of the Spirit in what Schüssler Fiorenza calls the "multi-faceted gifts of Divine Wisdom-Spirit"[274] and for the opening of eschatological space where newness can come.

Ekklesiality offers sight of political forms whereby citizens exercise their right to the city, other than through normalised political channels. In accordance with Thomist integrity and freedom under God of intermediate political forms, ekklesiae need no legitimation 'from above' and should always maintain a quasi-Augustinian critical distance from the powers-that-be in the city and beyond.
I have offered the Poverty Truth Commission as an example; another is how citizens' juries and assemblies are being used to contribute to policy making. Ekklesiality lends itself to anything that brings people together to solve problems, pursue interests, share resources or take action; as Magnusson says, nothing is *not political* (Magnusson, 2011, 2015).

[273] p.131.
[274] p.168.

My thesis was born of and encourages a cyclical reflexive theological praxis in the city. Kenarchic theology listens and learns, is embedded and embodied. Because each city is unique any application of my hermeneutic would have to be attuned to its particular rhythms and attentive to where there are openings of eschatological space. I have generally not made explicit my own experience except in my discussion of the Leeds Poverty Truth Commission, which exemplifies much of this learning and praxis. The PTC approach has been proven to be applicable in many different settings and so I returned to it at the end as a way of testing my hermeneutic.

Recognising the political effects of our everyday interactions—that we are all making the city all the time—gives significance to our lives and our ways of relating to others. At a time when we can feel overwhelmed by the various global crises, and doubt that national and international institutions are up to the task, my hermeneutic puts political power and agency, and the possibility of change, within reach. It has the potential to reawaken political subjectivity by acting locally with others for the flourishing of all. To act locally in the city as *polis* is, *ipso facto*, to act with eschatological (temporal and spatial) significance in the global cosmopolis; we can change the world by changing our cities. Change does not come from the 'top' but from the 'bottom', or as the motto of the Poverty Truth Commission declares: "nothing about us, without us, is for us". My thesis is a counterpolitical approach to change: change comes not via the usual levers of power or by campaigning directed at them, but by recognising how power is systemic and change is complex. It calls for an engagement with the city that recognises and undoes the sovereigntist political theology that has a normative view of power and therefore of how change happens.

Instead, the city as complex system invites an embodied and experimental approach to change. It is impossible to predict when eschatological space may open or what will happen when it does; what unique ekklesiality may form when a diverse group of citizens come together; or where life may

appear in the interconnectivity and openness of the Charismatic City. Rosemary Carbine's idea of ekklesial work expresses this healthy and humble relationship between human and divine agency. It also offers to the growing number of Christians who no longer regularly attend church an alternative faithful imaginary for being citizens beyond the institutional forms of church, in both continuity and discontinuity with the UK's Christian heritage. The city offers the best opportunity for developing friendships with people who are not like us. To recognise the political latency of such friendships and how fundamental they are to the city is to invest with political value the most natural and life enhancing of human relationships. A city which benefits from these kinds of friendships will, to the same degree, promote and exhibit human and ecological flourishing.

Kenarchy is not just a subject for theological study, it is a way of doing theology and ekklesiality. What might it mean for theology and Christian ekklesiae to embrace the kenosis of their own way of being for the sake of the city? Scott Cowan says we could think of kenosis as a 'fully becoming', rather than a self-restriction or limitation (Cowan, 2013). We do not study the city for the sake of theology but for the city's sake, in the same way that a Christian ekklesiality is for the sake of the city. The eschatological *telos* is a city not a church, a city which is the full becoming of the ekklesia birthed in the Jesus-Pentecost event. What is needed is a theology that looks beyond itself, beyond the church, beyond faith communities, beyond the space afforded to it by the post-secular, a theology that is a way of loving the city for itself, and not as a subject of study.

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