

MEANING OF THE CONCEPT "CONCORDIA" IN ST. AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE

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Abstract. We study the meaning of the term Concordia in the doctrine of St. Augustine. The public life as the thinker treats is a certain level of concordia between the Creator and creation, between the Ancient and New Testaments, which however was broken by Adam's Sin. This space demerit should be overcome through individual and collective affairs that will present the castle of the earth to the highest level of Concordia – absolute unanimity and love of creation to the Creator. This can happen through humble submission to God's laws, which consistently return harmony to the inner and outer worlds of man, confirm the universal norms of interaction, humanistic and tolerant principles of mutual civic life. While St. Augustine faithfully repeated the view that the state of understanding starts to be approved at the level of the individual – on his personal reflection and moral requirements to oneself. The training of the mind and the practice of virtue in obtaining concordia has its own social levels, the beginning of which is the understanding of the language and approval of love and unanimity in the family circle. Thus, a key content of concordia, in St. Augustine's understanding, is the state of love proportionality between the ideal and desired with the actual, finding out the sacred meanings and ways to collective salvation and perfection of the soul in the earth through the faithful adherence to the absolute.

Keywords: concordia, st. Augustine, social status, individual, collective, transcendent.

1. Introduction

For a long time political vision of St. Augustine was the center of gravity of Western intellectual thought. One of the factors for this phenomenon is the father's of the church interpretation of ancient heritage and inclusion of its social and political ideas and concepts in Christian thought and political practice. However, with the modern secular period St. Augustine's doctrine loses its appeal and is treated as a reactionary, pessimistic, primitive teaching. This reduced the interest in studying of political legacy of the theologian and led to clichéd interpretations of medieval theories. Modern-instrumental approach to political realm led to the abandonment of the concept of improving of the reality by means of ideal abstractions and to the triumph of behavioral method in the transformation of society. This, in its turn, is one of the causes of the present crisis of Western civilization, which induces to modern interpretations of the idealistic doctrines of the middle Ages. Thus, St. Augustine's political legacy as a reference point of modern civilization has its future prospects for further study, as it was indicated even by John. East [1].

2. Materials and methods

Modern understanding of St. Augustine's doctrine and its influence on the development of political thought in the West involves exploration defining concepts, content and copyright of their historical continuity. One of the key terms of St. Augustine's doctrine is the concept concordia, the contents of which the author seeks to uncover.

3. Results

It should be noted that in Latin and Roman mythology, the goddess personified Concordia consent cult which,

in the opinion of Cicero, was equal to the gods of Honor, Abundance, Victory and Liberty (De nat. deor. II. XXIII, 61) [2]. St. Augustin was known with this cult and its contents (De civ. Dei. IV; 24) [3] and knowingly drew attention to the fact that according to Sallustis, consent is the foundation of the Roman republic (De civ. Dei. II, 21) [3].

According to the belief of the Romans, consent and cooperation (concordia ordinum) ensured mind of the different social strata of society, starting with finding of unanimity in the family circle, towards the establishment of the political consensus between individuals, the people and the Senate, to achievement of harmony of power between the Emperor and his co – ruler, i.e. consent was comprehended as supernatural basis of statehood. Concordia was an epithet of imperial power and the implementation of an agreement in a war between the provinces and Rome [4]. Thus the cult Concordia was the epitome of Roman ideal of harmony with the human common space, in order to achieve some consolidation of society, which constantly needs to be maintained with virtues (Pietas, Virtus, Honos).

The concordia concept is a sample and the ambition to the ideal – to gain compatibility of various strata of society, to combine their interests. This concept formed the Roman political tradition of reaching of a certain level of consensus and solidarity of the people and government. In this sense, P. Rosanvallon notes that to Take an active part in the lives of these different worlds meant primarily to be approved as a member of a certain community, as well as to identify certain identity and to express unity with certain institutions. This is the sense of the famous Roman formula SPQR – Senatus populusque romanus. It means that people and the Senate are united, and does not provide for the existence of

anything similar to the mandate of the delegation. If there is a "representation" but only in the sense of assumption of certain identity. Because of this one can be only the part of some whole, of some set [5].

Thus, we have to admit that the content *concordia* was comprehended by the Romans as a perfect example of the underworld and predetermination, which can unite the polar interests of social classes. However, a state of consent should be yet obtained by virtuous efforts and recognized procedure, which approves the political institutions and legitimizes the right of power to rule.

Christianity has strengthened the desire for harmony by calling to love our neighbor, by the concept of a joint life in the world created by God for man. *Concordia* becomes a term through to which was defined socio-political ideal of the earthly life of Christians, which required not only a systematic and collective action, but the theological justification of the concept. St. Augustine provided his solution to this problem without organizing.

Despite the "internal" orientation – calls to find God within himself St. Augustine's doctrine involves finding of a path to grace through the external world, the formation of an ideal community – *Respublica Christiana*. Life in a spiritual society makes possible the desire to achieve harmony between individual and collective salvation, between the God's Law and political system public communities. The word "live" for the father of the Church is a social, political and theological concept which requires constant spiritual cooperation. According to H. Arendt's opinion, Latin has helped the Theologian to reveal this viewpoint, where the word "live" always coincide with the value of the expression "enter homines esse", «be in human society», so eternal life in the Roman interpretation could mean only that no person can never be separated from human society, even after death when she would have to leave the ground. Thus, the plurality of people, one of the fundamental prerequisites of political life, limits the human "nature" even in terms of individual immortality and does not belong to those characteristics which the "nature" acquired after the fall of Adam and which made policy in purely secular understanding the need of the sinful earthly life [6].

Live in harmony of the community by St. Augustine's opinion, starts from the act of recognition of one of the *lex aeterna* incarnations of God's law. Father of the Church points out (*De civ. Dei. X; 13*) [3] that the adoption of the law of God is an act of public – where the people (along with those chosen by Creator) is entitled to participate in the formation of community. The presence of people is an essential procedure of "entry into force" of the God's law and the approval of the religious and moral norms of living together. In the framework of the new Testament tradition, the act of public law adoption is a "ritual of consensus", which asserted the principle of solidarity of believers and forms a right to decide general business together. Thus, St. Augustine believed that the formation of spiritual community begins with a public *concordia* act – collective recognition of the universal longing for the beyond current maxim, the act of understanding of human plurality.

Volition of the second-tier law of St. Augustine's doctrine – *lex naturalis*, also requires collective understanding. As a synthesis of the ideal norms of human relations and the general laws of nature, *lex naturalis*, requires compliance with the state of peace and security, to ensure the continuation of the human race and consent to receive individual happiness. For definite parameters *lex naturalis* is hidden desire of people to be a single entity, gaining about unanimity and love with all elements of the Universe.

One of the manifestations and factor of validity of *lex naturalis* is the language of the people. Doctor Gratiae notes that one of the conditions of obtaining *concordia* is understanding of the language, which is a prerequisite for the formation of any society or nation – shape of its identity. It makes a strong natural right of the people to determine the internal order of language and the right to protect linguistic integrity, because it is the heritage of ancestors, without which its unity and free development are not possible. Explaining the importance of consolidating value of the language the philosopher says: You know, when two people come together, and any urgent matter causes them not to miss and make company, then if none of them know the language of another, it is easier to talk to dumb animals, though of equal species than these two men, though both of them are the people. Because if people can not express their thoughts to each other, and due to a mere difference of languages, all the similarity of their common human nature will be unable to make them companions (*De civ. Dei. XIX; 7*) [3].

Thus, linguistic understanding gives everyone the opportunity to manifest his nature, while communicating with the other to find the "inner truth" and compare it with the general criteria of equity and only through such a procedure to achieve *concordia*. At the same time St. Augustine emphasizes that it can not be imposed on other nations by force, because it not only creates evil, but violates the internal harmony of the national union, destroys the free will of a man and is in contradiction to *lex naturalis*. Therefore language consolidates the human community, private and public realms and has an ultimate goal – finding out of the meanings of compatibility with heavens. Its free existence is a historical achievement of compatibility of individual and collective.

However, for St. Augustine criteria of belonging of any language to *concordia* is bringing it closer to the Word. For him confessional letter of Scripture is satisfied with the chaos of the mind, foreseeing its order and consistency, and through this, the order in the immanent world of the person and harmony with the external. Therefore, the development of language, as well as the individual, must take place within the framework of the purpose and requirements of the wills of God's law. This is what gives hope to save extracted by *concordia* language and will determine the true people's path to perform imperatives of the *lex aeterna* and *lex naturalis*.

The latter condition, according to St. Augustine, is realized in the form of lower laws of the *lex temporalis*. In a narrow sense, *lex temporalis* identical to the current understanding of positive law, and in a wide – partially combined with the natural laws, that is a social regulator,

which historically acts in people's being, its traditions and political institutions. Temporary law archetypally forms the identity of the socio-political order and determines the development of the people – defines the purpose of life on earth. Moreover, for the theologian *lex temporalis* is a meaningful norm, the limit of social elements that can destroy the concordia won by people. Thus, *lex temporalis* maintains integrity of the social order (be it though pagan) and creates the institutional framework of justice and dignity owing to power of coercion. Within it the companies and individuals are personalized – their activity becomes true.

However, for St. Augustine *lex temporalis* does not negate the supremacy of calling of the eternal law in the human soul – her conscience and principle of the free solutions. Individual action, the theologian positions as the highest level of the hierarchy of the Universe. Through communication of the soul with God, obtaining the "higher truth" in the soul, the person receives free status – autonomous implementer of norms of the eternal and natural laws. Therefore the theologian raises the dignity of a man to the space of responsibility for the salvation of mankind. So the believer has no right for a minor violation of His laws, as it may cause disorder the concordia of the nation, society, family, and to disrupt the harmony of conscience, will and mind to heaven.

Using all the talent of mind, the Christian has to get concordia at all levels of life on earth. And despite the fact that the father of the Church was little hope for the mind and faith of the man, he outlines the importance of concordia in joint life and gives practical advice of use (*uti*) of the socio-political institutions for the sake of approaching to the *civitas Dei*.

The basis of social consolidation, according to the father of the Church is the family. It focused significant socio-cultural and religious values upon which is formed the continuity between the living and the dead. The basis of the Christian family is not only a natural law, but concept of timeless unity of family members, which should take place after Doomsday. Since, for the theologian, *domus* is a living part of the body of Christ – the focus on peace for obtaining spiritual perfection and social cohesion. A loving family is the beginning of a loving whole, the proportion of *civitas Dei*, which can be seen by human eye.

For St. Augustine any *domus* is a reasonable state of order and peace among people that have found agreement among themselves. In fact, the main role in the family philosopher puts on father. Head of the *Domus* is in two social spheres – in the private and public realms. He, in his business and life, combines two areas of social life. At his responsibility is to preserve concordia, keeping order between two social realms. As well as the duty to educate children in the strict norms of tradition, maintaining civil and divine laws. So head *domus* becomes a practical executor of the will of God. He must be a virtuous Christian – moral man who cares about his family, and through it influences public community – takes care of its friendly orderliness and harmony.

Identifying the dual obligation of the father to the family and social community, St. Augustine, emphasized that this duty is performed in a state of humble reconciliation with

others, with the human world as a whole. Achieving state-ordered agreement includes two moral guidelines: first, the requirement not to harm anyone, and secondly, to benefit to those who needs it (*De civ. Dei. XIX; 14*) [3]. A practical implementation of the gospel commandments makes of a father-Christian not only perfect helmsman *Domus*, but a virtuous citizen. With his life, the head of the family (all *domus*) becomes a full-fledged part of the social whole, which aims to get closer to the *civitas Dei* and the salvation of mankind. Thus St. Augustine gives an example of the ideal citizen and *Respublica Christiana*, for which in the long run there is no section on the private and public spheres of life, but rather they exist in interdependence, integrity. Explaining St. Augustine's theory of the relationship of private and public, D. Elshtayn notices that in it any beginning carries some part of the nature of the whole, in this case civil society (...this makes the value of the house [*domus*], and civil society [*civitas*] inevitably asymmetric). And, what is most important for St. Augustine, unlike Aristotle, family and city, public and private not diverge in different directions, as types or "flavors", but rather aspects of a whole are introduced in parts, and the integrity and part value are developing or becoming an integral part of the whole [7].

In contrast to the Christian family, pagan family stands as an atomized element of public life, alienated part of the whole. After all, there is no key principle of good arrangement – the love of God, moral and reasonable methods of obtaining concordia, and therefore, it is focused only on himself, on his pride and relies only on himself. Consequently, pagan or little faith family as distracted share is not a perfect arrangement of love, it requires purposeful transformation – the forced introduction to evangelical principles.

Another socio-political space where the plurality of people becomes consolidated is a city (*civitas*). The first in history the city of Enoch (*Gen. 4:17*), according to the philosopher, created not only by the will of Cain, but provided that the reproduction of people does not exceed the amount, when the Adamic race has not yet turned into the people. *Civitas* is formed by the will of the plurality of individuals and families with the purpose of the joint implementation of *lex naturalis* and is a contractual association (*De civ. Dei. XV; 8*) [3]. In St. Augustine's doctrine it is attributed to the word "private worlds" who found agreement among themselves and adopted it in the form of temporary laws (virtuous traditions and laws of the state).

Thus, in St. Augustine's doctrine the term "*civitas*" combines the notion of state, city, civic community – the people with a high degree of integrity and unanimity, which in a secular life is governed by a transcendent purpose and implements it in the political realm. Thanks to this opinion the theologian expresses the hope that not every city is transformed into Babylon, and with God's grace, is transformed into a "city of God" – Jerusalem. The presence of the City in the earthly life, as a defined Exemplar, encourages the Christians to political and moral perfection, aiming to create the perfect *Civitas* – civic community ruled by concordia between the heaven and the earth, the transcendent and the immanent, the individual and the collective.

A further element in the secular world according to St. Augustine's doctrine is the people "...who are not a crowd, but a collection of people, united by the understanding the meaning of the definition of rights and mutual benefit" (De civ. Dei. II, 21) [3].

In his determination the thinker repeats almost literally the definition of Cicero (De rep. I, 25, 39) and confirms the view that a plurality of people in a certain historical time were consolidated into the whole – the people. It took place under the influence of the Earth's need to obtain peace, security, prosperity, conquest or domination over other nations. That is, each nation has won concordia basis of individual and collective, which is transformed into a permanent consolidation. The best principle of consolidating the nation is spiritual purpose – notes the Hippon's bishop.

In perfect shape people carries the will of God and internally has a positive meaning, as the found concordia and the current level of unanimity of the people in associations (cuneus) is a secular good. As a principle of order, the agreement in a latent form is a natural desire of people to be whole, to unite with those you love. That is, understanding is treated by the theologian as a loving attraction to the association, laid down by the Creator archetypically in the soul of each. In this sense, the theologian says that the people is one state, for which differences of opinion are extremely dangerous. What is differences of opinion, not as the lack of unanimity? Many warriors compose one army, and is not any army so invincible, the more it is combined into one? Hence the Association in one called cuneus, as if – couneus (unity). What is love if not a desire to be one with the one you love? (De. Ord. II, 18) [8].

Thus, the emergence of any nation is a manifestation of His will, and and at the same time is a realized desire of the human soul to love. Moreover, St. Augustine justifies the contractual concept of the formation of social institutions – families, cities, Nations, States. This concept, first take into account the position of the individual who chooses freely and is personally responsible for it. Secondly, every individual and community must constantly assert the atmosphere of friendly concordia – tolerant understanding in solving collective problems. Third, collectively won concordia – its part of understanding is based on defined and accepted by all the senses, philosophical values of the key concepts that have a tradition of continuity and common practice. And fourth, collective senses of concordia should be compatible with the individual models of the ideal, which is to get social space for the implementation. Furthermore, both levels of meaning – individual and collective, must be combined with compatibility with transcendent ideal that crowns the meaning of existence.

Implementation of common purpose allows people to create a state and to determine the form of government, to define the degree of participation in the common cause of a larger or smaller percentage of citizens in the management of community. Transcendent purpose is to determine the stability and integrity of the people in the complex twists and turns of history. Explaining this idea, the thinker says: if we talk, for example: the nation is the combination of reasonable

crowd united by some higher community that it loves, in this case, to see what is like this or another nation, you need to pay attention to what it loves. However, whatever he likes if the community is not a crowd of animals and consists of intelligent beings, and if they are combined with the generality of favorite things, it rightly bears the name of the people. No doubt, the nation will be so much better as far as it is unanimous in better and worse so how it is unanimous in the worst. The Roman people ... reaching violent disturbances, and from them to the alliance and civil wars, have shattered and thwarted this unanimity, which costed in some way the health of the nation, that the history demonstrates (De civ. Dei. XIX; 24) [3].

Thus St. Augustine asserts the view that the disappearance of any nation from historical maps, due to its inability to keep concordia with the transcendent, and loss of talent to comply with the law of love and peace.

4. Conclusions

Summing up, it should be noted that St. Augustine's concept of concordia encompasses all the levels of the Universe – heaven and earth, public and private, the transcendent and the immanent. Gaining consensus is a prerequisite and instrument of formation and existence of any earthly community, and especially in public life condition. The public life as the thinker treats is a certain level of concordia between the Creator and creation, between the Ancient and New Testaments, which however was broken by Adam's Sin. This space demerit should be overcome through individual and collective affairs that will present the castle of the earth to the highest level of Concordia – absolute unanimity and love of creation to the Creator. This can happen through humble submission to God's laws, which consistently return harmony to the inner and outer worlds of man, confirm the universal norms of interaction, humanistic and tolerant principles of mutual civic life. While St. Augustine faithfully repeated the view that the state of understanding starts to be approved at the level of the individual – on his personal reflection and moral requirements to oneself. The training of the mind and the practice of virtue in obtaining concordia has its own social levels, the beginning of which is the understanding of the language (rhetorical skill of a man, his tolerant communication skills) and approval of love and unanimity in the family circle. Thus, a key content of concordia, in St. Augustine's understanding, is the state of love proportionality between the ideal and desired with the actual, finding out the sacred meanings and ways to collective salvation and perfection of the soul in the earth through the faithful adherence to the absolute.

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