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Chapter Author(s): Arnoud Visser

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How Harvey used his Augustine*

Arnoud Visser

In a rich, slightly meandering annotation at the beginning of his copy of Livy, Gabriel Harvey explains what it takes to study history. ‘One reads history’, he explains, ‘in order to learn what is most brilliant in human actions in peace and war, at home and abroad’. Such study is not an aim in itself, however, but a way to improve one’s political and military skills. ‘One learns in order to act’, according to Harvey, and ‘one acts best not through a study of the outcomes, but through an intimate understanding of the causes’. All this requires an ‘eagle eye’ and ‘very sharp analysis’, for without these, ‘reading historical accounts is futile and pointless’. Harvey concludes his note by listing other useful Roman historians and modern commentators that helped him in this pursuit, ending, intriguingly, with Augustine’s *City of God*:

Finally, I carefully compared the city of men with the City of God: the comparison was wonderfully pleasing and the evaluation, both political and theological, was equally beneficial. Certainly a pairing worthy of imitation.¹

* This chapter is the result of a memorable lunch conversation with Lisa Jardine in Wassenaar in autumn 2008, which set in motion a chain of events, ultimately leading to a scholarly networking project funded by the Dutch Research Council NWO, ‘A Collaboratory for the Study of Reading and the Circulation of Ideas in Early Modern Europe’. The research for this chapter was supported by research grants from the Friends of Princeton University Library (2009) and the Mellon Foundation, through a subaward generously given by Anthony Grafton. I remain grateful to Lisa Jardine and Tony Grafton for help, encouragement and critical comments.

¹ Harvey’s Livy, sig. [a8v]: ‘Tandem curiose contuli Civitatem hominum, cum Civitate Dei: et mirifice placuit collatio, profuitque syncrisis, tam politica, quam theologica. Certe axiozelus parallelismus.’

This comment about Augustine is intriguing on several levels. As a report of a reading experience, it suggests a formidable exercise in comparison, in which Augustine's massive *City of God* is apparently systematically paired with Livy's monumental history of Rome. In regard to reading goals, moreover, Harvey's enthusiastic recommendation of Augustine also raises more fundamental questions about the self-declared action-oriented nature of his reading.

Since the first publication of Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton's "'Studied for Action': How Gabriel Harvey read his Livy" in 1990, Harvey's Livy has become emblematic of a dynamic understanding of early modern reading practices, in which the act of reading serves specific actions and concrete goals.² As Jardine and Grafton showed, Livy was read to prepare for immediate military and political action, going far beyond the respectably bookish learning that historians previously associated with humanist reading. The goal-oriented nature of Harvey's reading also implies that it could serve a variety of knowledge transactions. Harvey's detailed documentation of different reading occasions has amply illustrated how the scholar served as a professional reader, a 'facilitator' of ideas, who tailored his classically grounded advice to a small network of Elizabethan courtiers and diplomats. His marginal annotations evince how Harvey methodically mined the massive folio volume of Livy and his commentators for politically relevant lessons, linking the text to contemporary political theorists such as Niccolò Machiavelli and his discourse on Livy's first decade, or, in more critical ways, to George Buchanan, François Hotman and Lambert Daneau.

While this pragmatic approach is consistent with Harvey's use of other contemporary political writings, his reading of Augustine appeared more puzzling to Jardine and Grafton.³ How, they wondered, could Harvey pragmatically exploit Livy's stories of war and pagan virtues, and later in the same book support Augustine's rejection of pagan heroism? In this chapter, I hope to solve this paradox by assessing the nature and possible purposes of these marginal notes. I will argue that a closer look at Harvey's reading of Augustine reveals a highly versatile reading style, in which enriching Livy's text with useful references went hand in hand with demonstrating the opportunities and added value of his services as a skilled reader. As Harvey's references to Augustine suggest, his historical inquiry covered a wide range of interests and potential purposes, from

² Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, "'Studied for action': How Gabriel Harvey read his Livy," *Past & Present* 129, no. 1 (1990): 30–78.

³ For Harvey's political reading, see [Chapter 3](#) in this volume.

religious and ethical reflection on virtue to political questions of rule and conflict, and from chronology and historical parallels to a more antiquarian orientation on the ancient past.

Comparing the city of men with the *City of God*

Harvey's combined study of Livy and Augustine is one of the four separate readings of Livy distinguished by Jardine and Grafton. This reading appears to have been a solitary undertaking carried out before and around 1590, when Harvey was working in London as a lawyer in the Court of Arches, the ecclesiastical court of appeal for the province of Canterbury. The reading is documented in approximately 60 notes throughout the margins of Livy's *Histories*.

All these annotations refer to *City of God*, Augustine's formidably expansive work, packed with classical literature, history and philosophy. Written in the wake of the sack of Rome by the Visigoths in 410, the work was originally conceived to defend the Christian faith against its pagan opponents.⁴ According to these critics, the catastrophe that had happened to Rome, traditionally considered an eternal city, was a direct consequence of the adoption of Christianity as the empire's official religion and the subsequent prohibition of the traditional Roman gods. Augustine sought to counter this argument by showing that Rome had always experienced hardship and suffering, and that the pagan gods were actually evil spirits, promoters of immorality, who had never secured a happy life.

The resulting work went far beyond this apologetic agenda and presented a grand vision of the world and its destiny. According to Augustine, humanity, inherently sinful, was divided into two categories, termed 'communities' or 'cities': the secular community of the damned, consisting of those who love themselves and do not recognise God, and the spiritual community of God, formed by those who love God. In the earthly world the two groups live together, to be separated by the final judgement. The members of the community of God stay on earth only as travellers, in transit to the eternal heavenly kingdom. A result of this polarised perspective on the world is a critical view of secular power and its ability to ensure true justice. Indeed, in making the notion of justice

⁴ Augustine, preface to Marcellinus, *De civitate Dei*, ed. B. Dombart (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955). For English translations I have used R. W. Dyson's version (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998). See also Gerard O'Daly, *Augustine's City of God: A reader's guide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

conditional to worship of God, Augustine came to a view in which the secular state amounted to no more than 'great bands of robbers'.⁵

In terms of scope, argument and tone, then, *City of God* differs considerably from Livy's *Histories* and its chronicle of how Rome rose to prominence and power. Augustine did not mean to write history, as he himself emphasises, although historical accounts featured prominently as part of his argument.⁶ In its first half (Books 1–10) Augustine analysed the history of Roman civilisation and examined ancient philosophy to show the moral and political flaws of the pagan system. In the second part (Books 11–22) he aimed to present a positive counterexample explaining the origin, development and destiny of the Christian community as described in the Bible.

Proceeding from this integral, historically contextualised interpretation of *City of God*, it is understandable that Jardine and Grafton regarded Augustine as offering a perspective contrary to the military, moral and political lessons given by Livy. They suggested that Augustine enabled a more personal, contemplative form of reading that betrayed Harvey's own religious outlook:

At the end of twenty or more years of political reading, here at last we find a kind of reading which the modern student of humanism would recognize: the personal, moralized, ruminative reading to be adduced tellingly to defend a course of action, or to enhance a specifically Anglican point of view.⁷

The Augustinian reading, in other words, did not anticipate political or military 'action', as did the other readings, but seemed to serve for reflection on past actions. According to Jardine and Grafton, Harvey used *City of God* as both a historical encyclopaedia and a moral compass, resulting in interpretations of Livy that were 'genuinely Augustinian in tone and content'. Puzzled by this combination, Jardine and Grafton admitted they were 'currently undecided as to how Harvey reconciled it to his other readings'.⁸

To untie these Augustinian knots, it is helpful first to take into account the variety of ways in which *City of God* was read since its publication. The size, richness and complexity of the work enabled readers to use the text in many ways and for diverging, even contrasting

⁵ *City of God* 4.4, trans. Dyson, p. 147; on the definition of 'true justice' see 2.21 and 19.21.

⁶ *City of God* 3.18.

⁷ Jardine and Grafton, "Studied for action", 45, above p. 28.

⁸ Jardine and Grafton, "Studied for action", 53–4, above p. 47.

purposes. As Bonnie Kent has recently shown, medieval theologians such as Peter Lombard and Aquinas do not seem to have read the work comprehensively, indicating that it did not yet have the canonical status it would acquire later, as a key work in the history of Western moral thought.⁹ Peter, in fact, had no direct access to the text. His *Sentences*, published in 1159, which became the standard scholastic textbook for theology students, makes relatively little use of the work, with fewer than 20 citations. Aquinas's interest in *City of God* in his *Summa theologiae* focuses on particular sections, especially Book 14, leaving large parts unmentioned. Indeed, the rise of the work's status in the fourteenth century, Kent argues, is partly due to a renewed appreciation for its richness as a source of knowledge of ancient history.¹⁰

A recent collection of studies tracing how Italian humanists read *City of God* has partly confirmed, but also complicated, Kent's argument.¹¹ Case studies of Petrarch, Boccaccio and Flavio Biondo have illuminated how they pursued an encyclopaedic approach to Augustine's work, mining it as a treasure house of information about the ancient world.¹² Other cases, such as Lorenzo Valla, reveal a critical, revisionist reading strategy aimed at emancipating Augustine's work from traditional, scholastic interpretations, for example regarding his argument on just war.¹³ The case of Coluccio Salutati, moreover, shows how the Florentine chancellor both promoted knowledge of the work through sponsoring public readings in the *Studium* by the Augustinians Luigi Marsili in 1391 and Grazia Castellani in 1392, and engaged critically with the church father's views, for example on Lucretia's suicide.¹⁴ Shifting attention to the heuristic problem of tracing and assessing direct reading, Eric Saak even provocatively argues that apart from Petrarch, 'the Italian humanists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries did *not* read *De civitate Dei* consistently in any scholarly or academic way'.¹⁵

⁹ Bonnie Kent, 'Reinventing Augustine's ethics: The afterlife of City of God,' in *Augustine's City of God: A critical guide*, ed. James Wetzel (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 225–44, at 230–1.

¹⁰ Kent, 'Reinventing Augustine's ethics', 229–34.

¹¹ Guy Claessens and Fabio Della Schiava, eds, *Augustine and the Humanists: Reading the City of God from Petrarch to Poliziano* (Ghent: Lysa, 2021).

¹² See the chapters by Marco Petoletti (Petrarch), Carlo Delcorno (Boccaccio) and Fabio Della Schiava (Biondo), respectively, in *Augustine and the Humanists*, ed. Claessens and Della Schiava, 43–72, 73–97 and 139–75.

¹³ Clementina Marsico, 'Lorenzo Valla', in *Augustine and the Humanists*, 321–48.

¹⁴ Sam Urlings, 'Coluccio Salutati', in *Augustine and the Humanists*, 99–123.

¹⁵ Eric Saak, 'De civitate Dei in the Renaissance: The ignoring of Augustine?', in *Augustine and the Humanists*, 19–42, at 35.

Scattered evidence suggests that for sixteenth-century humanists it was not uncommon to distinguish between the theological import of the work and its rich learning about the classical world. Thomas More, for example, is known to have given a series of public lectures about *City of God* in London in 1501 as a young barrister. Among his audience were his own teacher William Grocyn and, according to his biographer William Roper, ‘all the cheif learned of the City of London’.¹⁶ His later hagiographer Thomas Stapleton claims, however, that these lectures focused on the philosophical and historical subject matter of its earlier books and ‘not on the theological contents of the work’.¹⁷ Even if Stapleton’s evidence for this claim cannot be checked, it shows at least that the Jesuit biographer believed such a distinction to be credible. A similar distinction can in fact be found in the extensive commentary to *City of God* by the Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives (1522), prepared for the edition of Augustine’s collected works initiated by Erasmus. In Vives’s eyes, his commentary would be especially interesting for humanists. This becomes clear in a letter to Erasmus, in which Vives asked him to take care to make *City of God* available in a separate edition, and not only as part of the collected works. ‘For you know’, Vives wrote, ‘that those devoted to the more elegant fields of study generally do not read any other work of this author except this one’.¹⁸ For the same reason, in his commentary Vives showed a preference for ancient history and classical philosophy over theological analysis. Indeed, emancipating Augustine from the institutional theological world was an important aim for him, which he sought to achieve by focusing his comments on the historical contexts and avoiding theological controversy.¹⁹

¹⁶ Dominic Baker-Smith, ‘Who went to Thomas More’s lectures on St Augustine’s *De civitate Dei?*’, *Church History and Religious Culture* 87 (2007): 145–60, at 146.

¹⁷ On More’s reception of Augustine see Ralph Keen, ‘More, Thomas’, in *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, ed. Karla Pollmann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), vol. 3, 1420–3; Thomas Stapleton, *Tres Thomae seu de S. Thomae apostoli rebus gestis* (Douai: Ex officina Ioannis Bogardi, 1588), 17: ‘Eodem etiam tempore Londini in Ecclesia D. Laurentij Augustinum de Ciuitate Dei publice docuit, non quidem eius operis Theologica discutens, sed Philosophica tantum atque Historica, qualia sunt priorum eius operis librorum sola fere argumenta.’

¹⁸ Letter from Vives to Erasmus, 19 January 1522, in *Opus epistolarum Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami*, ed. P. S. Allen et al., vol. 5 (Oxford: In Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1924), vol. 12, Ep. 1256, lines 137–42: ‘Cura, rogo te, ut excudantur aliquot centena exemplarium istius operis a reliquo Augustini corpore separata: nam multi erunt studiosi homines, qui Augustinum totum emere vel nolent vel non poterunt, quia non egebunt, seu quia tantum pecuniae non habebunt. Scis enim fere a deditis studiis istis elegantioribus praeter hoc Augustini opus nullum fere aliud legi eiusdem authoris.’

¹⁹ Arnoud Visser, ‘Juan Luis Vives and the organisation of patristic knowledge’, in *Confessionalisation and Erudition in Early Modern Europe: An episode in the history of the humanities*, ed. Nicholas Hardy and Dmitri Levitin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 95–115.

A final, particularly remarkable example of the varied ways in which *City of God* was read can be found in the poet and preacher John Donne, a contemporary of Harvey, who felt a strong attachment to the Bishop of Hippo. 'I am loath to part from this father', he declared in one of his sermons, 'and he is loath to be parted from'.²⁰ Donne's reading practices confirm his deep, sustained, theological engagement with the church father's work. As Katrin Ettenhuber has shown, Donne studied Augustine's writings more intensely and with greater care than those of any other theological authority, consulting them not so much for 'technical details of patristic theology' as for 'global principles and interpretive fundamentals'.²¹ Donne had strong views about proper forms of reading and citing, criticising readers who displayed 'others wits fruits' as their own and comparing it to human 'excrement' produced by ill-digested food.²² And still, his own knowledge of Augustine was based not only on a direct, attentive reading of the original sources, but also on a variety of intertexts and reference tools, such as medieval and early modern anthologies, indexes and commonplace books. Moreover, while he showed intimate knowledge of *City of God*, Donne did not hesitate to criticise and even misrepresent Augustine's argument when his views clashed with his own, as can be seen in Donne's treatise on suicide, *Biathanatos*.²³ In a remarkable attack on Augustine's character, he accuses the church father of compensating 'his former Licentiousnes, as it falls out often in such Convertites, to be extremely zealous' with an overly strict moralism. Although Augustine had shown 'sharp insight, and conclusiue Iudgement' in his biblical exegesis, for moral guidance, he believed, 'St. Hierome, and some others may be thought sometymes fitter to adhere unto'.²⁴

These varied examples illustrate how Harvey's systematic reading of Augustine's *City of God*, if patterned after those of his contemporaries, could reflect a wide range of interests. Indeed, if we take a closer look at Harvey's annotations, there are several indications that his approach is not confined to an 'Augustinian' evaluation of Livy, despite Harvey's own claims to offer a divine perspective next to the secular one. Firstly, a systematic analysis of the annotations reveals the prominence of

²⁰ *The Sermons of John Donne*, ed. George Potter and Evelyn M. Simpson, 10 vols (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953–62), vol. 9, 102. Cited by Katrin Ettenhuber, *Donne's Augustine: Renaissance cultures of interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1 and 226.

²¹ Ettenhuber, *Donne's Augustine*, 230.

²² Satire 2, l. 30, cited in Ettenhuber, *Donne's Augustine*, 47.

²³ See Ettenhuber, *Donne's Augustine*, 137–62.

²⁴ Cited by Ettenhuber, *Donne's Augustine*, 149.

reference use. Almost all his notes to Augustine refer to the chapter headings that made manifest the structure of *City of God*.²⁵ For example, at the close of Livy's first book dealing with the end of royal rule, the historian recounts the anti-monarchical revolt following the rape of Lucretia by a son of King Tarquin the Proud. This prompts Harvey to add a reference to Augustine: 'How the Roman kings lived and died: see Augustine's memorable chapter 15, in Book 3 of *City of God*, including also the remarkable comments of [Juan] Luis Vives.'²⁶ Although in most of these cases Harvey does not reflect in detail on specific passages within these chapters, his annotations demonstrate thorough knowledge.²⁷

As Harvey indicates, he used a version of Augustine's text accompanied by Vives's commentary. We do not know precisely which edition he used; Harvey's copy is not known to be preserved.²⁸ In these editions the chapter headings were printed in the main body of the text and also as indexes at the start of individual books.²⁹ Of ancient origin, probably dating back to Augustine himself, these headings were originally designed to function as index entries at the beginning of the text.³⁰ In Harvey's notes they fulfil this role again, in this case by enriching Livy's text with links to and brief summaries of Augustine's argument. They suggest these chapters as helpful further reading.

And yet one may wonder: in what way, precisely, were these Augustinian references meant to be helpful to Harvey? In the annotation to Livy's passage about the anti-monarchical revolt discussed above, the reader looking up that particular chapter of Augustine would find historical information and analysis that complements Livy's account.

²⁵ In two exceptional cases, Harvey provides a summary or paraphrase of a chapter; see Harvey's Livy, 5, last sentence in the note at the bottom of the page, and 25, again the last sentence in the note at the bottom of the page.

²⁶ Harvey's Livy, 30, note on the top of the page: 'Qualis Romanorum regum vita, atque exitus fuerit: ecce memorabile Augustini caput 15. libro 3. de Civitate Dei. Cum insignibus etiam notis Lodovici Vivis.'

²⁷ See, for example, Harvey's Livy, 19, where Harvey connects Livy's description of Tarquin the Elder's reign with *City of God* 18.25. Apart from giving the chapter heading, summarising how Augustine synchronised Roman history with biblical and Greek history, Harvey also points out Augustine's reliance on Eusebius (in Jerome's Latin translation) and goes beyond Vives's explanations about Eusebius to refer directly to the *Chronicles*.

²⁸ Collation of the transcribed headings suggests it was not the 1522 edition. Cf. Virginia F. Stern, *Gabriel Harvey: His life, marginalia and library* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 264.

²⁹ Vives's edition of *City of God* was first published in 1522 separately by the Froben press in Basel. It was later included many times in editions of Augustine's collected works. See also Charles Fantazzi, 'Vives' text of Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*', *Neulateinisches Jahrbuch* 11 (2009): 19–33; and Visser, 'Juan Luis Vives and the organisation of patristic knowledge'.

³⁰ Michael M. Gorman, 'Chapter headings for Saint Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram*', *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 26 (1980): 88–104, 99n31, reprinted in Gorman, *The Manuscript Traditions of the Works of St Augustine* (Florence: SISMEL Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2001).

The chapter discusses the deaths of the Roman kings, historicising the deification of the legendary figures Romulus and Tullus Hostilius, summarising the horrific deaths of most of the other kings and criticising the criminal reign of Tarquin the Proud. Vives's commentary provides mostly textual and historical clarification. He offers some nuances, for example, with regard to Augustine's critical remark about the superstitious interpretations of solar eclipses by ignorant commoners, adding that these were shared by 'learned people, such as the lyric poets Stesichorus and Pindar'.³¹

All this information of Augustine and Vives supplements Livy's account of the demise of the monarchy with historical detail and critical references to later classical sources. Clearly Augustine intended to demonstrate the powerlessness of the Roman gods, in line with the overarching argument of *City of God*. Yet Harvey's prime concern in this case seems to have been the collection of relevant information about the subject of kings. This is confirmed when he continues this marginal note with another reference to the subject:

On this point see also the brief characterisation of the most distinguished kings by Aemilius Probus,³² especially those of the Persians, Macedonians, the friends of Alexander the Great, the people of Epeiros, and the Sicilians. For the Spartan Agesilaus, he says, was king only in name, not in terms of authority; [but he was] just as the other Spartans. Of this sort were also the many titular kings, about whom elsewhere.³³

After the reference to Augustine's Christian perspective on the Roman kings, Harvey here adduces the biographies of Nepos to complement the subject with examples of Greek and Asian monarchs. This puts the reference to Augustine in an illuminating context.

³¹ Vives's comment to *City of God* 3.15 (*Imperita nesciens multitudo*): 'Antequam oste[n]sa esset vulgo a philosophis ratio defectuum solis et lunae homines quum illa sydera deficere viderent, aut scelus aliquod ingens, aut mortem eorum metuebant. Hic pavor non in rudi solum erat plebe, sed in eruditis quoq[ue], velut Stesichoro et Pindaro lyricis vatibus' (Basel: Froben, 1522), 87.

³² In reality the author was Cornelius Nepos. Aemilius Probus, a scholar who lived in the fifth century CE, was long believed to be the author of Nepos's collection of biographies. See C. Huelsen, 'Aemilius Probus', *Hermes* 38 (1903): 155–8.

³³ Harvey's Livy, 30, note on the top of the page: 'Huc etiam Aemilii Probi de excellentissimis Regibus brevis notatio: praesertim Persaru[m]; Macedonu[m]; amicoru[m] Alexandri Magni; Epirotarum; Siculorum. Nam Lacedaemonius Agesilaus, inquit, nomine, non potestate fuit rex: sicut caeteri Spartani. [continues in left margin] Tales etiam multi titulares Reges: de quibus alias.'

Rather than a mark of theological contemplation, Harvey's reference to Augustine here reflects his desire to enrich Livy's account with additional historical information.

Another group of Augustinian marginalia links episodes in Livy's story to events in biblical, Judeo-Christian history. These references show Harvey's interest in placing the timelines of classical and Christian history side by side to detect meaningful parallels, or 'synchronisms'. Particularly suited for this practice was *City of God's* Book 18, where Augustine, after a separate treatment of biblical history, offered an account of pagan history to allow for a systematic comparison of the two epochs, making extensive use of the *Chronicle* by the 'father of church history', Eusebius of Caesarea.³⁴ As he announced in the opening paragraph of this book, his aim was to focus on the worldly city from the time of Abraham to that of the kings, 'so that those who read may compare both cities and observe the contrast between them'.³⁵ Harvey's keen interest is reflected in seven references to this book. For instance, Harvey marks with the keyword 'synchronism' Livy's account of the founding of Rome, noting chapters in *City of God* that aim to show 'That Rome was founded at the time when the kingdom of the Assyrians came to an end, and when Hezekiah reigned in Judah' (*City of God* 18.22), and 'That the Seven Sages lived during the reign of Romulus; and that, at the same time, the ten tribes called Israel were led away captive by the Chaldeans; and that the same Romulus was given divine honours at his death' (*City of God* 18.24).³⁶ In these chapters Augustine describes Rome's gradual rise as a world power, positioning Romulus's reign at the same time as those of the kings Ahaz and Hezekiah in Judah. He also places early Roman history in a wider cultural context by bringing in the example of the philosopher Thales of Milete, one of the Seven Sages, as another contemporary of Romulus. These marginalia thus connect Livy to an Augustinian narrative in which pagan history

³⁴ For Augustine's access to Eusebius's work, in Jerome's Latin translation, see Mark Vessey, 'Augustine among the writers of the Church', in *A Companion to Augustine*, ed. Mark Vessey and Shelley Reid (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 247. See also Matthew R. Crawford, 'The influence of Eusebius' *Chronicle* on the apologetic treatises of Cyril of Alexandria and Augustine of Hippo', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 71, no. 4 (2020): 693–711, esp. 701–3.

³⁵ *City of God* 18.1: 'Nunc ergo, quod inter miseram, uideo esse faciendum, ut ex Abrahæ temporibus quo modo etiam illa cucurrerit, quantum satis uidetur, adtingam, ut ambae inter se possint consideratione legentium comparari.' English translation Dyson, p. 821.

³⁶ Harvey's Livy, 4, note on the bottom of the page: 'Quod eo tempore Roma sit condita, quo regnum Assyriorum intercidit, quo Ezechias regnavit in Judæa. l. 18. c. 22. Quod regnante Romulo, septem Sapientes claruerint; quo tempore decem tribus, quæ Israel dicebantur, in captivitate[m] a Chaldaeis ductæ sunt: idemque Romulus mortuus divino honore donatus est. l. eod[em] c[apite] 24. Synchronismus.' For similar examples see Harvey's Livy, 2, bottom of the page, referring to *City of God* 18.19; and 33, note on the top of the page, referring to *City of God* 18.26.

is purposefully embedded in a Christian context. But their focus on chronology suggests that *City of God* is being used as a versatile reference work that offered useful knowledge about a variety of fields in ancient history, including chronology, politics and ethics.

Apart from such references, however, there are also several examples that engage with Augustine's perspective on pagan morality. The episode about the rape of Lucretia offers a striking case in point. In a separate annotation preceding his reference about kings Harvey approvingly cites Augustine's critical view of Lucretia's suicide:

This case is perceptively discussed by Augustine, bk. 1, c. 19 of the *City of God*: 'If she was an adulteress, why is she praised? If she was pure, why was she slain? ... In that case, when she slew herself because she had endured an adultery even though she was not an adulteress herself, she did this not from love of purity, but because of a weakness arising from shame.' Expertly and sharp.³⁷

In Livy's account Lucretia served as an exemplary Roman matron whose 'beauty and proven chastity' had made her a victim of Sextus Tarquin's 'wicked desire'.³⁸ To Augustine, however, suicide was a crime and should never be seen as a heroic action. To deconstruct Lucretia's heroic status he presented the moral problem of her case in the form of a dilemma, offering two opposing premises (Lucretia was either chaste or not) that both resulted in a damning conclusion. In questioning Lucretia's intentions, moreover, he sought to defend the choice of Christian women who had chosen not to commit suicide to defend their honour during the sack of Rome.

By citing Augustine's argument directly (rather than referring to the chapter heading) and by expressing his approval, Harvey marks his critical distance to Livy's account. This is an interesting gesture, for although Augustine's shadow looms large in the rich reception of the Lucretia story, his critical perspective was not always shared. Many later authors, including Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, de Pizan and Salutati, presented Lucretia as a tragic victim of rape and a model of chastity.³⁹

³⁷ Harvey's Livy, 29: 'Cuius casus argute disputatus ab Augustino, l. 1 de civitate Dei, c. 19. Si adultera, cur laudata? si pudica, cur occisa? Quod seipsam, quoniam adulterium pertulit, non adultera occidit; non est pudicitiae charitas, sed pudoris infirmitas. Scite et punctim.'

³⁸ Livy, 1.57.10 (Harvey's Livy, 29): 'ibi Sex. Tarquinium mala libido Lucretiae per vim stuprandae capit: cum forma, tum spectata castitas incitat.'

³⁹ There is a plethora of studies of the Lucretia motif. For helpful overviews and references to further literature see Ian Donaldson, *The Rapes of Lucretia: A myth and its transformations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); Eleanor Glendinning, 'Reinventing Lucretia: Rape, suicide and redemption from classical antiquity to the medieval era', *International*

Interestingly, Vives also repeatedly used Lucretia as a heroic model of female virtue in his other works, yet in his commentary to Augustine he kept his assessment limited to a note on the rhetorical form of the 'dilemma' that Augustine used.⁴⁰

Two other examples show how Harvey's annotations combine admiration for Augustine's critical assessment of classical heroism with an interest in assembling ancient examples of rule and conflict. The first concerns Livy's episode about the Horatii and the Curiatii (1.24–26), also discussed by Jardine and Grafton.⁴¹ In telling the story of the heroic battle between the three brothers of Rome against the three brothers of Alba Longa, and its dramatic aftermath, Livy's narrative provided rich information about political strategies, religious and legal procedures, as well as the intentions, virtues and flaws of the main protagonists. He explained how the battle was the result of a conscious decision of the rulers of both cities, the Roman king Tullus Hostilius and the Alban dictator Mettius Fufetius, to avoid open war, which would weaken their armies and benefit the neighbouring Etruscans. He presented the victorious Horatius as a fiercely courageous man driven by honour, noble ambition and patriotic pride. His subsequent killing of his own sister was an extreme act but was driven by anger for Horatia's lack of respect for her family and country. Harvey marked this episode with several annotations reflecting different interests. He identified the story on the top of the page by the names of the rivals and offered a political evaluation in another note, classifying it as a 'noble example of single combat' but also 'a rash, rather than a politically prudent way to reach a decision'. The fate of the state, he noted, should not depend on the virtue or fortune of a few individuals.⁴² The reference to Augustine follows in a separate marginal note on the bottom of the page, complemented by further historical examples of individual combat:

Journal of the Classical Tradition 20 (2013): 61–82; Paul Thoen and Gilbert Tournoy, 'Lucretia Lovaniensis: The Louvain humanists and the motif of Lucretia's suicide', *Humanistica lovaniensia* 56 (2007): 87–119.

⁴⁰ Thoen and Tournoy, 'Lucretia Lovaniensis,' 90–2. Vives's comment to *City of God* 1.19 (*Neque omnino invenitur exitus*), 21: 'Dilemma est hoc: Si adultera, cur laudata? si pudica, cur occisa? Hoc genus argumenti veteres qui de rhetorica praeceperunt arte, vel infirmatione alterius partis solvi dicunt, vel conversione, quam ἀντιστροφὴν vocant. Exempla sunt apud Ciceronem in Rhetoricis. neutrum inveniri posse huic conclusioni exitum Augustinus dicit.'

⁴¹ Jardine and Grafton, "'Studied for action'", 66–70, above pp. 62–7.

⁴² Translation from Jardine and Grafton, "'Studied for action'", 68, above pp. 64–5. Harvey's *Livy*, 13: 'Monomachiae exemplum nobile. sed decisio praeceps magis, qua[m] politica. Nec vero politicum est, rei Universae summam committere tam paucorum Virtuti, aut Fortunae. Sed hic usus manavit a paucoru[m] Antiquoru[m] Heroica virtute: qua omnia magna videbantur decernenda.'

Of the impiety of the war which the Romans waged against the Albans, and of the victories gained through their lust for mastery: Augustine, *City of God*, bk. 3, c. 14, where [he writes] expertly about the Horatians and Curiatians. Consider the biblical duel between Goliath and David, and also the heroic one of Hercules and Cygnus in Hesiod, between Achilles and Hector in Homer, and between Aeneas and Turnus in Vergil.⁴³

With his positive mention of Augustine's treatment Harvey acknowledged the church father's critical perspective. In the chapter to which Harvey refers Augustine did not consider the battle a 'noble example' of a duel. On the contrary, he described the drama of the fight, the slaying of Horatia and Horatius's eventual acquittal in particularly damning terms, as part of a catalogue of violent episodes in Roman history. In this way Augustine sought to expose the honourable, heroic image of Rome's early history for what he believed it really was: a period marked by violent conflicts 'worse than civil war', and atrocious, evil deeds that were driven by a 'lust for mastery'.⁴⁴ Still, as Jardine and Grafton also noted, Augustine's judgement did not discourage Harvey in the same annotation from associating the episode with other historical and heroic examples of 'monomachia', including the biblical instance of David and Goliath.⁴⁵

The second example deals with Livy's discussion of Romulus's killing of his brother Remus as part of the story of the foundation of Rome (1.7). Livy described, with subtle scepticism, the mythical story of the twins' divine descent and situates their miraculous survival in a rustic setting. Growing up, the boys become skilled hunters whose catch includes bands of robbers, illustrating their physical strength and fearless determination. With these same qualities Romulus manages to liberate Remus, when his brother is held in captivity, and subsequently to kill the tyrannical king Amulius. To the Roman historian the later conflict between the two brothers started when they conceived the plan to found a new city. At that point competition triggered by the 'ancestral evil of their desire for kingly rule' caused a rift between them, culminating in

⁴³ Harvey's Livy, 13: 'De impietate belli, quod Albanis Romani intulerunt; et de victoria dominandi libidine adepta. August. l. 3. c. 14. de Civit. ubi de Horatiis, et Curiatiis scite. Ecce biblica Goliae, et Davidis monomachia. Heroica etiam Herculis, et Cygni apud Hesiodum: Achilles, et Hectoris apud Homerum: Aeneae, et Turni apud Virgilium.'

⁴⁴ Augustine, *City of God* 3.14, trans. Dyson, 110–11.

⁴⁵ Jardine and Grafton, "Studied for action", 70, above p. 67.

Romulus's killing of Remus.⁴⁶ Harvey filled the margins of this section with abundant annotations, including observations on the fairness of tyrannicide and the origins of looting, the political uses of augury and the importance of fortification in building a city. He also provided the following cluster of references to passages in Augustine, which offer a much bleaker perspective on Romulus's supposed heroism:

Of the fratricide of Romulus, which the gods did not avenge, Augustine, *City of God* bk. 3, c. 6. Of the first founder of the earthly city, Cain: the fratricide whose impiety was mirrored in the founder of Rome, who slew his own brother, *idem*, bk. 15, c. 5. That the Romans made Romulus a god because they loved him; whereas the Church loves Christ because she believes that He is God, *idem* bk. 22, c. 6 and 7. That Rome was founded at the time when the kingdom of the Assyrians came to an end, and when Hezekiah reigned in Judah. Bk. 18, c. 22. That the Seven Sages lived during the reign of Romulus; and that, at the same time, the ten tribes called Israel were led away captive by the Chaldeans; and that the same Romulus was given divine honours at his death. The same book, c. 24. Synchronism. Of the times of the prophets, who many times foretold the calling of the Gentiles at the time when the Roman Empire began and that of the Assyrians fell. The same book, c. 27.⁴⁷

To Augustine the episode was a striking example of the failure of the pagan gods to prevent or punish immoral human behaviour. In the first chapter mentioned by Harvey (3.6) the church father drew a parallel with the sack of Troy. If, on the one hand, the gods had allowed this to happen out of anger for Paris's adultery, surely they ought to have prevented Romulus's even more outrageous crime. If, on the other hand, they had simply been unable to stop it, it shows their incompetence

⁴⁶ Livy 1.6, Harvey's Livy, 4: 'Intervenit deinde his cogitationibus avitum malum, regni cupido ...'.

⁴⁷ Harvey's Livy, 4: 'De parricidio Romuli, quod Dii non vindicarunt, Augustinus l. 3. c. 6. de Civitate Dei. De primo terranae Civitatis auctore fratricida Cain: cuius impietati, Romanae urbis conditor germani caede responderit. *Idem* l. 15. c. 5. Quod Roma conditorem suum Romulum diligendo Deum fecerit: Ecclesia autem Christum, deum credendo, dilexerit. l. 22. c. 6 et 7. Quod eo tempore Roma sit condita, quo regnum Assyriorum intercidit, quo Ezechias regnavit in Judaea. l. 18. c. 22. Quod regnante Romulo, septem Sapientes claruerint; quo tempore decem tribus, quae Israel dicebantur, in captivitate[m] a Chaldaeis ductae sunt: idemque Romulus mortuus divino honore donatus est. l. eod. c. 24. Synchronismus. De temporibus prophetaru[m], qui tunc de vocatione gentium multa cecinerunt, quando Romanorum regnum coepit, Assyriorumque defecit. l. eod. c. 27.'

as protectors. Apart from the gods, the city itself should have avenged Remus's death, Augustine argued, and by neglecting to do so they were in effect complicit in the killing of one of their founders, which amounted to parricide, a crime even worse than fratricide.

The second Augustinian reference on Harvey's list refers to a chapter (15.5) where the church father argued that Romulus's crime mirrored what he termed 'the archetype' of crime, the biblical story of Cain's slaying of his brother Abel. Thus, to Augustine Romulus was paradigmatic of Roman politics and indeed of the earthly city in general. Citing Lucan's *Pharsalia*, he noted how in Rome 'the first walls were wet with a brother's blood', a phrase that Harvey copied in a separate marginal note.⁴⁸ Yet, in Augustine's view, there was also an important difference between the two stories. While the Roman brothers were both representatives of the earthly city, whose search for glory had triggered envy and conflict, the biblical brothers represented the tensions between the city of men (Cain) and the city of God (Abel).

Turning to Romulus's later deification, the third Augustinian reference in Harvey's list (22.6–7) leads to two chapters where Augustine contrasts the religious cult of Romulus with Christianity. According to the Bishop of Hippo, only the small community of Rome in its early history had actually believed its founder to be a god. The later cult in the empire did not reflect widespread belief but arose out of respect for ancestral traditions by the Romans. As such, it represented a form of looking back, in contrast to the faith in Christ which was driven by real belief and hope for the heavenly city. In response to Cicero's argument that Romulus's deification was remarkable for its late date, at a time of relative cultural sophistication, suggesting that it was therefore more credible, Augustine argued that such a historical perspective actually revealed even more powerfully the truth of Christ's divinity. His resurrection and ascension had taken place in much more recent and enlightened times, and still they had met with the solid belief of many, despite opposition and violent persecutions. In this way, then, Harvey adds Augustine's sharply critical assessment to Livy's account, complementing his previous, political notes with a pointedly Christian perspective on ancient history. Yet, also in this case, Harvey does not stop with these references but adds three more to Augustine's synchronising perspective on history, as discussed above, based on Book 18 of *City of God*. In this way, his Augustinian reading once more shows a multifaceted interest.

⁴⁸ Harvey's Livy, 4: 'Fraterno primi maduerunt sanguine muri. Lucanus l. 1.' English translation of Lucan's verse taken from Dyson, p. 640.

That Harvey himself did not regard Augustine's views as irreconcilable with Livy is also clear from several programmatic notes at the end of the book which confirm his statement at the beginning about the benefits of a comparative reading. In one comment on how to study the history of the Roman Republic, Harvey reports that 'finally' he came to believe it useful to consult Augustine, providing subsequently his longest continuous list of references to *City of God* in the volume, which comprised a recommendation of 15 chapters that he thought 'should be excerpted'. At the end of this list, Harvey notes in particular the breadth of Augustine's work:

After I had read in Sigonius, and other polyhistorians of this class, about the noblest commonwealths in the world, of the Romans, Athenians, Spartans and Israelites, I remember that a subsequent reading of Augustine shed a remarkably great light on the constitutions and achievements of not only the Romans, but also the Greeks and the Hebrews, especially the Hebrews. I greatly liked the extremely perceptive judgement of this Doctor [of the Church] about these and other great empires and kingdoms of the world. One will never regret in addition to so many outstanding and famous Republics, especially those of Aristotle, Plato, Xenophon, Plutarch, Cicero – whatever remains –, also of Contarini, More, Patrizi, Bodin, and finally, Althusius, and an indefinite number of more recent political theorists, at last to have included also Augustine's Republic, that is, the City of God.⁴⁹

Harvey thus places Augustine squarely in the field of political history. In this vein the most elaborate and specific example, however, is a note, signed and dated 1590, in which Harvey expresses his appreciation for Augustine:

I haue seene few, or none fitter obseruations, or pithier discourses upon diuers notable particulars in Liuie, then sum special chapters

⁴⁹ Harvey's Livy, sig. AAA8v: 'Cumque apud Sigonium, et caeteros polyhistoros id genus, nobilissimas mundi Respublicas, Romanorum, Atheniensium, Lacedaemoniorum, Hebraeorum legissem: memini, lectum postmodo Augustinum, non modo Romanorum, sed etiam Graecorum, et Hebraeorum statibus, rebusque gestis mirificam lucem affudisse: praesertim Hebraeorum. Valdeque placuit, in illis, aliisque maximis mundi imperiis, atque regnis, acutissimi Doctoris iudicium. Nec unquam poenitebit, ad tot excellentes, celeberrimasque Respublicas, praesertim Aristotelis, Platonis, Xenophontis, Plutarchi, Ciceronis, quantum extat; Contareni etiam, Mori, Patritii, Bodini, postremo Althusii, et nescio quot recentium politicorum; tandem etiam Augustini Rempublicam aggregasse, id est Civitatem Dei.'

in Augustines excellent bookes De Ciuitate Dei. Where he examines, & resolues manie famous actions of the Romans, with as sharp witt, deep iudgment, & pregnant application, as anie of those politicians, discoursers, or other notaries, which I haue read vpon Livie, Halicarnasseus, Plutarch, or other of the worthiest Romane historians. Therefore I still saye: [*continues in Latin*] Hand me Augustine in those cases which Augustine discusses and settles perceptively and reliably. I know no theologian or dialectician or philosopher or politician, or even scholar, philologist or critic who is more acute than he. So great is Augustine, to my mind, in divine and secular literature. I acknowledge him as easily the most learned of Greek and Latin theologians, perhaps with the sole exception of Jerome, who is judged by the sharpest critics to beat all theologians with his varied, very rich teaching. I believe, however, that just as Livy's thought is sharper and livelier than Plutarch's, so Augustine's is generally sharper than that of Jerome, without detriment to the proper talent and dignity of either and of other most eminent theologians. Certainly here for observations on Livy I prefer Augustine to any other theologian of the highest quality. This is one reader's opinion, that there is hardly a competent judge of Roman history who did not previously have knowledge of Augustine's wise doctrine on the City of God. I am delighted that I have added this at last to the political philosophy of Aristotle and Plato. And I confess that the ideal state of philosophers or heroes is as a shadow by comparison with the City of God.⁵⁰

Harvey's enthusiasm is typical of his style of praise for many classical authors. These range widely, from inevitable names such as Caesar,

⁵⁰ Harvey's Livy, sig. Z5r (the part in Latin): 'Da mihi Augustinum in illis casibus, quos acute solideq[ue] disputat, et decidit Augustinus. Quo nullum theologum novi, vel dialecticum, vel philosophum, vel politicum, vel etiam polyhistorem, philologum, criticum acriorem. Tantus apud me in divinis, humanisque literis Augustinus. Quem agnosco Graecorum, Latinorumq[ue] theologorum facile doctissimu[m]: excepto fortassis uno Hieronymo. Qui a peritissimis Censoribus existimatus est varia, uberrimaque doctrina omnes theologos superare. Mihi tamen, ut Livii, quam Plutarchi acrior, argutior, vividior sententia: sic Augustini fere, quam Hierononymi: salva utriusque aliorumque praestantissimorum Theologorum propria, in sua cuiusque dote, dignitate. Certe hic pro Livianis animadversionibus Augustinum malim, quam ullum alium de selectissima nota Theologum. Uniusq[ue] haec opinio lectoris est, vix quenquam esse Romanae historiae competentem iudicem, cui non penitus fuerit praecognita Augustini de civitate Dei sapientia. Quam me tandem Aristotelicae, Platonicaeq[ue] Politeiae addidisse, vehementer gaudeo. Fateorque, umbram esse philosophorum, aut heroum optimam Rempubicam, prae Civitate Dei. Gabriel harvejus, 1590.' I followed and supplemented the translation of the Latin by Jardine and Grafton, "Studied for action", 44-5, above pp. 37-8.

Cicero and Virgil, to the more unexpected figures given plaudits such as Eutropius and Tertullian. Yet in his enthusiastic review of Augustine's talents Harvey also shows an awareness of centuries-old humanist controversy over the relative merits of Augustine and Jerome, contrasting the philosophical intelligence and dialectical sophistication of the former with the linguistic talents and eloquence of the latter. Illustrious predecessors had chosen opposite sides: Petrarch and Filelfo had defended the superiority of Augustine, whereas Erasmus had passionately preferred Jerome. In the wake of the Reformation, confessional agendas increasingly affected such sympathies, with some of the Protestant reformers expressing strong reservations towards Jerome.⁵¹

Together, these retrospective descriptions point to two characteristics of Harvey's Augustinian reading. Firstly, Harvey situates such reading in his programme of studying Roman history. *City of God* enhances the understanding of the historical world described by Livy, as it provides additional information, not just about ancient Rome, but also about Greek and biblical history. Although its scope and perspective are different from other sources recommended by Harvey, reading *City of God* is not incompatible with the idea of learning about the past 'in order to act'. Even though he characterises Augustine as a theologian and suggests that he compared him with Livy from both a political and a theological perspective, Harvey does not specify Augustine's theological scope apart from noting his general distinction between pagan and Christian antiquity. For this reason, it is problematic to interpret Harvey's references to *City of God* as readings that were 'genuinely Augustinian in tone and content'. In fact, Harvey's use of Augustine is light on theology. Reflecting the interests of a historically oriented humanist, rather than a confessionalised theologian, he betrays no knowledge of the church father beyond *City of God*. This is precisely in line with the type of reading that the editor Vives had anticipated some 60 years before.

In addition, Harvey's programmatic notes present his reading of Augustine as an exercise in comparison. They suggest he is reading for reference, as confirmed by his practice of citing chapter headings. The terminology Harvey uses ('collatio', 'synchrisis', 'parallelismus') implies a systematic effort to place Livy and Augustine side by side by methodically excerpting *City of God* with the aim of finding passages useful for understanding Livy. In fact, however, the complete list of references shows that Harvey was rather selective in his execution in covering both

⁵¹ For this see Eugene F. Rice, Jr, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 137–72.

Livy's and Augustine's texts. Almost half the total annotations referring to Augustine, for instance, occur in Book 1 of Livy, while one-quarter are included in the extensive list of references at the end of the volume, as mentioned above. More than three-quarters of the references are drawn from the first part of *City of God*, especially from the books dealing with Roman history. In view of Harvey's historical agenda, it comes as no surprise that he refers most frequently to Book 3, on the hardship and disorder of Rome before Christ, where Augustine draws most frequently on Livian episodes. Put bluntly, there are significant gaps in Harvey's references to Augustine's work.⁵² Absent are important books dealing with ancient theology (Book 6) and philosophy (Book 8). Nor does Harvey's scope extend to prominent Augustinian themes such as demons (Books 8 and 9), redemption (Book 10), creation and original sin (Books 11–14), or eschatology (Books 20–1).

Both in form and content, then, Harvey's Augustinian reading shows that he had no difficulty reconciling Livy's Roman history with a Christian perspective. Harvey could unapologetically describe Livy's *Histories* sweepingly as 'the bible of Roman virtue' ('together', he added generously, 'with Caesar and Sallust, Tacitus and Suetonius') and extol its qualities with superlatives, so long as he added that it took its place 'after the divine miracles of the Bible'.⁵³ And yet by solving the issue of the two authors' compatibility, we immediately encounter another obstacle.

Augustine for Action?

Compared with the actions that drove Harvey's readings of Livy with Thomas Smith, Philip Sidney and Thomas Preston, the practical aim of the Augustinian reading is less easy to discern. There is no mention of immediate application to imminent battles, embassies or other topical political matters. The silence about concrete goals makes sense,

⁵² Harvey's references cover Books 1–5, 7, 15, 17–19 and 22; some of these books are only referred to once (4, 17, 22) or twice (7, 15, 19).

⁵³ Harvey's Livy, sig. AAA8r: 'Ecce Romanae Virtutis Biblia, Livius; cum Caesare, et Salustio; Tacito, et Suetonio. Egnatius, et Pomp. Laetus prope Laconici, aut potius Romani, in vena Flori, et Eutropii; Suetonii, et Frontini; Val. Maximi, et Justinii'; and 123, as part of a list of the best authors: 'Post Homerum, Arma Virumq[ue] canit divinum ingenium Romanum; ex ipsius Julii, et Augusti vivida, praepotentiq[ue] praxe perpolitum. Post illud divinum, ecce Livius, tam profundus politicus, quam eloquens Historicus; et certe actionum humanarum in utroq[ue] genere, tam civili, quam militari singularis Auctor. ... Nullum efficacius, aut potentius magisterium; post divina Bibliorum miracula. Sed illa extraordinaria, et e caelo: haec ordinaria, et e mundo.'

considering that this reading was a solitary affair, but it does not imply that Harvey's Augustinian reading was not goal-oriented. The marginalia about collective reading sessions simply render Harvey's role as intelligencer or facilitator of interpretations more easily visible. It shows, however, that the concept of 'action' can sometimes be difficult to pinpoint.

In explaining 'the activity of reading', Jardine and Grafton emphasised purposefulness, the sense that reading was 'intended to give rise to something'. To this general idea they connected several characteristics: it was carried out 'with strenuous attentiveness', it made use of 'job-related equipment (both machinery and techniques)' that helped process the reading materials, and it was 'normally' a collective affair, 'carried out in the company of a colleague, or a student', making it 'a public performance, rather than private meditation in its aims and character'. 'Above all', they concluded, 'this "activity of reading" characteristically envisaged some other outcome of reading beyond accumulation of information, and that envisaged outcome then shaped the relationship between reader and text'.⁵⁴ Harvey's reading of Augustine would seem to be excluded from this definition.

And yet, after investigating the forms and functions of the Augustinian references, this is not a satisfying conclusion. It is clear that Harvey did not regard his comparative exercise as a mere accumulation of information. I would therefore like to slightly expand the notion of 'action', which could help us overcome what some have perceived as a limitation of the concept. Fred Schurink and Jennifer Richards, for example, adduced the example of the sixteenth-century physician Levinus Lemnius to show how a strictly utilitarian understanding of 'active reading' would obscure a very practical, if perhaps less tangible, purpose of contemplative reading: to serve the reader's well-being.⁵⁵ In the case of Harvey's Augustinian reading, another such aim could have been self-promotion, a more elusive goal. By displaying his erudition in the margins of his books, Harvey was advertising his skills as an expert reader.

This becomes evident when we examine more closely the communicative status of these notes. Although the annotations may appear straightforward and practical, on closer inspection they reveal traces of careful posing. Why, for example, would Harvey have devoted several

⁵⁴ Jardine and Grafton, "Studied for action", 30–1, above pp. 21–2.

⁵⁵ Jennifer Richards and Fred Schurink, "The textuality and materiality of reading in early modern England", *Huntington Library Quarterly* 73 (2010): 345–61, at 350–1.

notes to explaining the rationale of his reading of Augustine, if it had been a purely solitary affair, aimed at spiritual contemplation? Harvey's neat handwriting, too, suggests that his notes were carefully prepared. Certain slips and corrections suggest that he had made a rough draft of his notes, which he copied in the margins in a more presentable form.⁵⁶ In fact, Harvey's tidy handwriting would later be publicly ridiculed as one of the signs of his pedantry: Thomas Nashe sarcastically described how Harvey had learned 'to write a faire capitall Romane hand' to surpass '[m]any a copy-holder or magistrall scribe', suggesting that he had seen Harvey's handwriting or else knew about its particulars from someone who had.⁵⁷

Harvey actually tried to hide his meticulous care by adding pseudo-spontaneous outbursts of impatience in the margins of his Livy. These are both fascinating and telling, as they address the act of annotation itself. In Book 35 he interrupts his praise for Livy and Plutarch by exclaiming: 'But meanwhile, how many golden moments have I lost! Back now to Livy himself.'⁵⁸ There are more examples of this theatrical pose. 'Continue while the mind is passionate', he urges elsewhere, 'and rigorously link together the remaining, closely related issues'.⁵⁹ At some places this impatience serves to highlight a dramatic event in Livy's narrative. 'Let there be no delay at this point, and no rest', he writes on the page that describes how Hannibal was seriously wounded during the siege of Saguntum. 'No annotations can match the author himself, not even the sharpest aphorisms, or discussions.'⁶⁰ Paradoxically, Harvey even adds notes to criticise the very activity of annotation:

Why am I delaying so? Stop the urge to write, not even the least trifle, but only desire to read. ... This vulgar bad habit of writing often makes readers dilatory and usually makes actors cowardly.

⁵⁶ For a transcription error that suggests the use of a rough version, see Harvey's Livy, 6, note on the top of the page, with the crossed-out 'durat' repeating a previous part of the sentence: 'Ecce quoties et quomodo humanam Livii prudentiam, divina redarguit Augustini sapientia. Singularis parallelismus: et perinsigne discrimen inter cives Romanae, divinaeque Civitatis. Utriusque Politismus egregius, et plaurumque fortunatus: sed divinus tandem et firmior durat et foelicior ~~durat~~ quam humanus.' See also the unfinished annotation, on the bottom of the first page of Glareanus's commentary.

⁵⁷ Thomas Nashe, *Have with you to Saffron-walden, or Gabriell Harvey's Hunt is Up* (London, 1596); cited by Stern, *Gabriel Harvey*, 8–9.

⁵⁸ Harvey's Livy, 600, note at the bottom of the page: 'Sed quot interim perdidit momenta aurea? Nunc ad ipsum Livium.'

⁵⁹ Harvey's Livy, [831], note at the bottom of the page, in Florus's *Epitome*: 'Perge, dum fervet animus: et reliqua arcte cohaerentia, stricte connecte.'

⁶⁰ Harvey's Livy, 271: 'Nec mora hic: nec requies. Nullae notae ipsi auctori pares: ne aphorismi quidem, aut discursus acerrimi. Adeo est ipse acutior ad huc, atq[ue] profundior.'

The followers of Socrates were wiser: they preferred teachings that were unwritten, spoken, preserved by memorisation. ‘Take your hand from the picture,’ runs the old saying. ‘Take the pen from your hand,’ so runs my saying now. Now on to the Phoenician, but with the eye only.⁶¹

Not just the annotator but the reader, too, should avoid too many distractions, another note advises:

Let there be a limit to annotations, aphorisms and commentaries in some way. He who pays really close attention to Livy himself, generally has abundance of political, military, and ethical comments of any kind.⁶²

Still, Harvey decided to write these words down. In doing so, he was not encouraging his readers to take concrete political or military actions, or offering a specific interpretation. He was, however, advertising his own authority as a guide in reading, emphatically. And that may precisely have been Harvey’s goal.

At the time of his Augustinian reading, Harvey was not employed by a patron to offer scholarly services.⁶³ His previous patrons Sir Thomas Smith, Sir Walter Mildmay, Philip Sydney and Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, had died. In the late 1580s, Harvey had changed his career path by moving to London, where he had been practising in the Court of Arches since 1586. After the scholarly environment of the colleges, he found himself living in the political heart of the country, a bustling metropolis with a booming economy and a fast-growing population: a perfect place, in short, to develop a career in government.⁶⁴ Yet Harvey’s hopes to improve his position were soon disappointed. His legal practice

⁶¹ Harvey’s Livy, 149: ‘Oh quid moror? Hoc age: nihil scripturiens, ne gry quidem: sed tantummodo lecturiens: quanta potes tam solerti sagacitate, quam avida, alacriq[ue] apprehensione. Nam penitus singula eruenda, confestimq[ue] expedienda ex istis Romanarum antiquitatum monumentis. Sed scribendi hoc vulgare cacoethes, lectores facit saepe pigros, actores, plaerunq[ue] ignavos. Sapientiores Socratici, qui maluerunt agrapha, rëta, mnëmonika. Manum de tabula, inquit ille. Pennam de manu, inq[ue] ego. Iam ad Phoenicem: sed solis [sic, instead of solum] oculo.’ Cited by Jardine and Grafton, “‘Studied for action’”, 77 (slightly adapted and supplemented), above p. 75.

⁶² Harvey’s Livy, 829: ‘Modus sit in scholiis, aphorismis, discursibus, commentationibus ullo modo. Qui Livium ipsum intime animadvertit, plaerunq[ue] habet abunde politicarum, militarium, ethicarumq[ue] in omni genere animadversionum.’

⁶³ For Harvey’s London period see Stern, *Gabriel Harvey*, 80–129.

⁶⁴ For the impact of Harvey’s move to London on his ideas about useful knowledge combining bookish learning and technical skills, see Nick Popper’s contribution to this volume ([Chapter 4](#)), ‘The English *Polydaedali*: How Gabriel Harvey read late Tudor London’.

did not prove successful and to his own frustration he soon became involved in the lengthy, vicious and very public pamphlet war with Robert Greene and Thomas Nashe.

Harvey showed himself painfully aware of his misfortune. Yet he remained convinced that his scholarly skills and expertise were not only honourable but also politically useful assets and potential sources of patronage. He opens his pamphlet *Four letters, and certain sonnets*, meant to rebut the attacks of Greene and Nashe on him and his brother Richard, with a recommendation letter in which Harvey's friend and townsman Christopher Bird introduced him to the Dutch consul Emanuel van Meteren as 'a very excellent generall Scholler' who was not just interested in the Dutchman's 'antiquities & monuments' but also keen for a conversation 'touching the state of forraine countries'.⁶⁵ Van Meteren, whose renown rests mostly on his later success as a historian, was an active trader in diplomatic intelligence, as also reflected in Bird's grateful acknowledgement, in the same letter, of 'two letters of foreign news' that Van Meteren had sent him.⁶⁶ In his reply to Bird, the second letter in the pamphlet, Harvey ends by expressing his willingness to be of service to those in government.⁶⁷

In line with this ambition, Harvey could have regarded his Augustinian references as evidence of his skills in offering useful expert advice to potential patrons. Even though there is no mention of concrete political or military outcomes, as for instance in the pragmatic reading with Thomas Smith junior, Harvey's solitary Augustinian reading of Livy could have served at least two, connected goals. Firstly, it enriched Harvey's historical insight into Livy's history. As we have seen, Harvey was convinced that men of action would benefit from *City of God*, and that there was hardly any 'competent judge of Roman history' who did

⁶⁵ Harvey, *Four letters, and certaine Sonnets: Especially touching Robert Greene, and other parties, by him abused: But incidently of diuers excellent persons, and some matters of note* (London: John Wolfe, 1592), 3.

⁶⁶ Harvey, *Four letters*, 3. For Van Meteren as trader in intelligence see Helmer Helmers, 'History as diplomacy in early modern Europe: Emanuel van Meteren's *Historia Belgica* and international relations', *Renaissance Studies* 36, no. 1 (2022): 27–45, esp. 30–6.

⁶⁷ Harvey, *Four letters*, 14–15, where Harvey offers to collect and send political news to Bird: 'The next weeke, you may happily haue a letter of such French occurrences, and other intelligences, as the credible relation of inquisitiue frendes, or imployed straungers shall acquaint me withall' and imagines how honourable it would be to write a history himself: 'Were I of sufficient discourse, to record the valiauntest, and memorablist actes of the world; I would count it a felicity, to haue the oportunity of so egregious, and heroicall an argument: not pleaurably deuised in counterfaite names, but admirably represented to the eie of France, and the eare of the world, in the persons of royall, and most puissaunt knights: how singularlie worthy of most glorious, and immortal fame? Gallant wits, and braue pennes may honorably bethinke themselues: and euen ambitiouslye frame their stile to a noble emulation of Liuy, Homer, and the diuinest spirits of all ages: I returne to my priuate businesse.'

not rely on its wisdom.⁶⁸ His scholarly skills could thus also help others in gaining a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Secondly, the form of Harvey's reading, presented as a systematic comparison, using references, often ordered as lists, presented a model of a productive reading practice to approach Livy.⁶⁹ In this same way the Augustinian annotations could be regarded as a demonstration of his relevance as a versatile and conscientious facilitator. His comparative reading of Augustine and Livy was not just rewarding in itself but also useful and, to return to his own words, 'certainly worthy of imitation'.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Harvey's Livy, sig. Z5r: 'Vniusq[ue] haec opinio Lectoris est, vix quenq[uam] esse Romanae historiae competentem iudicem, cui non penitus fuerit praecognita Augustini de ciuitate Dei sapientia.' Jardine and Grafton, "Studied for action", 44–5, above pp. 37–8.

⁶⁹ On Harvey's use of lists of examples, authors, experts and books, see Jardine and Grafton, "Studied for action", 70–1, above pp. 67–8; Popper, "The English *Polydaedali*", 364–71, above pp. 128–36.

⁷⁰ Harvey's Livy, sig. [a8v] (as in fn. 2): 'Tandem curiose contuli Civitatem hominum, cum Civitate Dei: et mirifice placuit collatio, profuitque syncretis, tam politica, quam theologica. Certe axiozelus parallelismus.'