

Nanopublication — Tension as Compositional Principle

by Arnaud Quercy [1] · The Two Cities - part II · 2021

Claim 3: Tension as Compositional Principle

The [3] three ascending triangular vectors, vertical lines, and diagonal cutting across the composition visualize the dynamic tension Augustine describes - both cities "struggle with each other as they both aspire to live in peace." These directional elements neither fully separate nor unite the celestial and terrestrial realms, but mark their intermingling.

CONTEXT

Augustine's formulation is not static but dynamic: the two cities "struggle with each other" even as both "aspire to live in peace." This paradox - conflict arising from shared aspiration - requires visual translation that captures movement, directionality, and unresolved tension rather than mere juxtaposition.

The three dark triangular forms pointing upward function as vectors of aspiration. Their uniformity suggests shared direction (the common aspiration toward peace), while their dark tonality and sharp geometry introduce an element of force or urgency. Rising from the compositional mass, they embody the striving that characterizes both cities' orientation - whether toward earthly peace through political order or heavenly peace through divine alignment.

The vertical lines ascending from a rectangular base reinforce this upward movement while anchoring it to the terrestrial plane. They suggest neither escape from nor capitulation to earthly existence, but rather the tension of being rooted yet aspiring - Augustine's vision of the celestial city "in exile on our land."

Most critically, the diagonal line cutting across the composition introduces a disruptive element that prevents resolution. Diagonals in geometric composition typically create dynamic instability; here,

the diagonal marks the interface between realms without establishing clear dominion. It visualizes the "intermingling" that defines the present age in Augustine's eschatology - the two cities share space and time, neither fully separated nor synthesized, their relationship characterized by ongoing tension rather than static coexistence.

REFERENCES

- [1] Quercy, A. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-2662-7790>
- [2] Quercy, A. (2021). The Two Cities - part II. AQC0217. Digital on Paper. Untamed Creations collection.
- [3] Augustine of Hippo. *De Civitate Dei* (The City of God), Book XIV, Chapter 28. c. 426 CE.

EPISTEMIC PROFILE

Claim type	artistic statement
Voice	first person
Epistemic status	practitioner testimony
Methodology	geometric abstraction
Certainty	high

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