

Ms. augustine in the united states: journey of the “heroic saint

[Experience](#), [Meaning of Life](#)



Ms. Augustine in the United States: Journey of the " Heroic Saint" The soul, using the " soul" purposely is something which begets meaning, self-worth and self-compromises in the quest for meaning in a subordinate society infiltrated by the imagination of death as a reality, war as a proprietor to that fact and capitalism as the omniscient being that decides oracles of our fate. In the midst of going through my journey from the fantastic hero, the tragic hero, the saint and secular saint I don't feel I can comply with the secular saint because of my hardships in accepting the society I live in and what part I possibly play in it. This is particularly evident because of my upbringing as a devoutly religious being- my religion and my God tells me that the meaning of life is to serve him. So, I find myself in the position of the saint following routes of the tragic hero to find the meaning in life as my inner dialogue with God. Sometimes I agree with him and at other times I wish to disown my firm belief in his theological propositions. In this paper, I hope to show my journey by re-introducing some of the people from all spans that have established the notion for me as a saint living in a secular world- Ms. Augustine visits the United States. Starting with the hero and the establishment of change in the cultural climate it has developed through , a new heroic profile begins to envelope. From pre-classical Greek culture 1500-700 B. C, we see a transition from a tribal and blood kinship oriented society which stood by the feudal class and decentralization into a very authentic culture based one. A key example of this is through the character of Orestis son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. The story says that Clytemnestra killed her husband Agamemnon because of many crimes that he committed leaving Orestis with the difficulty of either avenging his father's death which would mean spilling

kindred blood or leaving any hopes of justice to spare his mother. The transition begins with Athena establishes the first trial by Jury, breaking the cycle of guilt associated with blood relationships, taking a step towards civil society. This later births the creation of drama and the tragic hero. According to Aristotle "tragedy mustn't be a spectacle of a wholly good person...not must it be the case of a bad person moving away from adversity...nor the downfall of an utter villain" (Ambrosio, 2011). He says this because the tragic hero must be in additional value to normal citizens who can relate to his journey. This is someone with whom the average person can relate, he must procure the elements of pity and fear both elements which ornate the unpredictability of life to fall upon an encounter with tragedy. This is immensely close to me, being the average "joe" fear and tragedy are something I normally face but what defines these characteristics with a saint are the intermingling facts of being in tuned with the reality of tragedy and still making the "journey," the route of the journey and the question itself serving as critical envelopes. This is a similar Saintly-heroic journey followed by St. Augustine. Like the initial Mythical and Godly hero had the dilemma of facing the Gods- St. Augustine has the dilemma of facing his immortal God. In this way, ideals of the hero in Greek and Roman culture become integrated in the idea of the saint in the process of conversion and totalization by rooting the foundations of culture with the concept of divinity. St. Augustine through his childhood always wanted to go through the process of conversion which was almost deemed impossible by him because of the trials and tribulations of everyday life. Like with the tragic hero, dynamics of the changing cultural and personal life that lead to conversion in this life in

hopes of having a better afterlife; but even dynamics of religion procure intermingling with societal conflicts and constant searching before begetting the perfection of the afterlife. His life followed a struggle to gain a solid perspective in the ambitions and decisions that he took; he also held both the public life as a teacher and writer as well as bishop and acted upon the reformation for the new Roman culture that evolved from Constantine into a Holy Roman Empire. He began to pattern the tensions between heroism and Saintly hood in the Roman Empire and his attempt was the integration of uniting the powerful human dynamics. One of the best examples of this human aspiration for contemplating and diverging meaning from the contemplation was in his "Confessions" where in the opening passage he says "great are you oh lord and exceedingly worthy of praise your power is great...we humans long to praise you we who carry the evidence of our sins...yet these humans long to praise you...praising you brings us joy...you have made us and our hearts are in you" (Ambrosio, 2011). This is a dialogue between God and his Augustine's soul- a reflective manner of trying to make a connection with God which he does in his endeavor to do so. This poses the question of good and evil, initially influenced from Neo-Platonism which had both the views of dualism and fatalism. Looking through this notion he developed into the realm of personal responsibility this being parallel to the notion of heroic citizenship when it comes to the hero. Personal responsibility comes down to the notion of consequences and actions, key elements in involving the self in personal society while still having enough distance to view its outcomes and establish a correlation between what one person has to give to society, and how society intakes those actions and puts them out

either creating a change or being stoic towards it. This applies to my own personal beliefs as well; I take myself as a citizen and try my best to put out my best. I then often look back to see how it has reflected back to me. We can take the analogy of a mad scientist- either he'll put out into the world a Frankenstein, or put out an invention that makes it better. In both cases, the putting out is an initial try- the facets and elements of what might happen with already lingering predictability. But like with St. Augustine, he wills to engage in society as a teacher and master hoping it will bring some change. On the other hand, with the elements of evil on side, One of the means is leaving arsenal feelings like sexual desires (like Aneas left Ditto) for the sake of a higher calling. He also soon found St. Ambrose to be his Christian model of a religious way of living, the journey of his Heroic struggle ended and he merged into a complete convergence when he says " I stemmed the flood of tears and rose to my feet believing that this couldn't be nothing other than to open the book and read the first passage I chanced upon. " The true " heroic-saint" is cautious to be in level with the integral physical world and the realm without time and space. He found atonement only through giving up carnal desires. Like current society, there is always the notion that some religious prospects have a negative effect and lead into the downfall of it. The accusation that Christianity led to the downfall of the Roman Empire was a bias based on Augustine's notion that both the Roman Empire integrated with Christianity helped him dream of a Holy Roman Empire. Of course, there is more than one conversion and more than one pathway to God and the meaning of life. Some do this through citizenship and devout devotion and others expel their citizenship through their convergence into

love. The Troubadour movement is essential to this fact, furnishing the ideals of the personal identity with the composition of the individual who lives through their experience with the "erotic" elevating it to the understanding of the process of conversion. Here one is able to see the shift from the perception of the Hero and Saint as an individual. Though it's not noted for St. Augustine, the process of conversion is very self-consuming and personal and the output is always dynamically plural. The powerful conversion is a reformation of the common man's connection with the physical realm and adjoining the spirituality of God with the dense core of culture- making him easier to "grasp." An example of this is St. Frances who was early on exposed to the ideals and importance of the connection between two people. When he was imprisoned at an early age he fell into depression and went into an inward discovery, a journey where he found God in the imaginary figure of "Lady Poverty" whom he said was the fleshly embodiment of God on earth. . The image of Lady Poverty shows a self-giving love which can be paralleled to the foundational roots of the three monotheistic religions as voluntarily giving oneself to God both mentally and physically by holding on to the restraints that came with being "holy" or chaste. His God was a loving God, and he reaffirmed this after his experience with stigmata, again illustrating the manifestation of the spiritual God and his presence in the physical world. For me, this is essential in discovering the meaning of life. At times I have lost touch with God because of the hardships of this century- and the lingering prospects of having relationships with friends and family make God's presence real. In doing this, I am constantly keeping my journey alive, because the number one rule for being a Saint in the current United

States is not forgetting the journey and being enveloped into the evils of terrorism and capitalism. Saint Frances served as a foundation of "Christian Humanism" and changed the convergence ideals of his contemporaries from God as an indirect manifestation and the thing for which one must strive to love as being the foundation of human connection as a means of connection to God and a way to service and unite a total. Like him, Dante also found this romanticized movement of expansive conversion as being rooted from servicing as a mortal one's life to another mortal. Like St. Frances and Lady Poverty, Dante saw Beatrice as the image of God. He was a saint in the sense that he too looked back at St. Augustine and trembled when thinking of death and sin, he started to have the desire to get forgiveness for his since, however, he saw that the root of life and death were both at the center in one place, I will further explore this intermingling of death and life and how to cope with both as a Saint in our progression towards modern society. This progression is was apprehends "hollow moralism." there are three main historical developments that lead to these changes, "Europe's discovery of new territories, Empirical science leading to technological innovations that we now refer to as the industrial revolution and Colonialism which sharpened differences between social and cultural identities." All of these changes also question the concepts of competition and how life is lived with it, merging the ideals of Capitalism as being reflective in the views of the Roman Empire and Greek cultures as well. All of these changes of course bring skepticism and transgression. So the question appears, how do we keep and inhabit the "saintly identity?" well, either we can return to Kierkegaard's assembly of radical return to the transcendent through the

covenant founded by God like with the story of Abraham or we can look at society today as the child Abraham went to sacrifice, ultimately was saved by putting his trust in God. I do this by looking through society as a whole as the covenant of God- though it sounds radical, it's the common ground between keeping my search for meaning by holding tight my moral and religious ideals while accepting the changes in society not by each era and what metamorphosis they make but by binding virtues of scientific and psychological discovery and looking at change itself as ever changing and evolving, while viewing society as the element that experiences those changes- keeping my search while staying true to the changes. I am the "heroic saint" because of my chivalric approach to saving myself from societies changes while initiating changes in how I approach my journey. This freedom of choice of mines along with binding self-evaluation since saintly identity starts with the journey in self-evaluation and putting it outwards, we come to Dostoevsky, a critical character in duality between science and religion. In tying him to the 20th century and the scientific revolution we link him with the mirror of foreseeing the destructive forces of the 20th century and the world of the dangerous incapacity to imagine human imagination as being alive in the crises of possibilities; the crises of impairs possibilities of human existence in the world-the notion that it can exist at all. His foundations were rudimentary in the first progression towards individual identity in the sense that the blame of the effect of evil can only be given to the person in charge of that consciousness; the ultimate ruling factor of personal choice tied with the freedom of deliverance. In the latter years, Dostoevsky again returns, in the metaphorical sense, that some of his

predictions and philosophies adhere to be persistent throughout history. One of his predictions is that people will eventually come to be in a society that is overwhelmed by the loss of identity and the maculation of death. To better explain his predictions we must look at Nietche and Marx. Marx mostly speaks about the concept of alienation as the effect of capitalism caused by the industrial revolution. In the heed of transformation from the laborer and the productiveness they provide which rotates and distorts the relationship between laborers as the means of productiveness chaining them in the heedless shackles of static hierarchies where they are stuck as the lowest class; a forsaking of economic and spiritual loss. He says that genuine human existence is the product of human existence as a whole and that culture is producing not only people, but living commodities. In terms of religion; though he didn't seek to bash the institute of a specific religion he attacked it because of the slow social-progress it formulated. This can be best seen in his introduction to "A contribution of critique of Hegel's philosophy" where he says "religious suffering is at one at the same the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering...religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature...soul of soulless conditions...it is the opium of the people" (Ambrosio, 2011). Now, for a Saint, the loss of identity and the inability to imagine are all problematic, adding to the concepts of good and evil. We can say then, that in order to face these rising dilemma's one must constantly grow in combining interpersonal relationships and heroic citizenship to make a change. because the horizons of death began to expand as looking into WWI, WWII as the dynamic relationship of totalitarianism as the crisis of the inability to imagine the possibility of

human nature as existing at all. It proposed the manifestation of the physical reality of death and its clause on human value as having a meaning, as death having a plausible meaning through war with heroism; not dying in vain. Wilfred Owen in his poem "Dulce et Decorum Est" talks about the impotence and pointlessness of WWI. The dynamics of Nietzsche's philosophy also show during the Great Depression as the world being a monster of energy- where war sucks everyone into it. Finally, the scientific revolution gives a sense of clarity to all of this. It serves as a symbol of the dynamics of human history that can be translated through a period of 50 years. An example of this is the Paradigm Shift because it offers a smooth and clear transition of progression established through the validation of all theories as being possibly genuine in their objective world view. All of the people and their philosophies come into play during this era because of the unification of the impersonal into objectivity of communities as being responsible for the choices they make which makes their cultural and economic history. As mentioned, the prospects of looking at life and death as two intermingling forces play their stakes when we look at a particular instance in history, the holocaust. When delving into this, we were given a chance to look at three various people and their response to the event, Buber, Levinas and Weisel. Perhaps the person I was most able to identify with was Weisel because there wasn't a great sense of the "positive outlook" that the other two had, but he was still able to deliver a steadfast approach to the search for meaning in death and human warfare. When the SS attacked his father he recalled it as such, "I remained deaf to his sighs and remained flat on my back asking God to make him stop calling my

name...I was angry with him for probing the wrath of the SS.... I shall never forgive myself or forgive the world for turning me into a stranger" (Ambrosio, 2011). Weisel made the choice to reject conservative ideologies because of his experience; what we do with each experience and how we mold it dynamically creates who we are. This is a tough process that parallels Buber and Levinas since freedom for them was the knowing, the responsibility they have to other because of God- it's not a choice, it's a demand which extends from Abrahams covenant with God. Another interesting fact is the theory of " Logotheray-meaning-therapy. " He said he differed from Frued because Frued neglected human suffering, " thus far we have shown that meaning of life changes but it never changes to be, according to logotherapy we can discover meaning in 3 different ways, by creating a work or doing a deed, by experiencing something or encountering someone and by the attitude we take towards unavoidable suffer" (Ambrosio, 2011). Unavoidable suffering is the suffering which happens to us and how we deal with it. When I say I don't identify with the secular saint I mean I don't identify with people like King or Mother Teresa. They are the ultimate hallmarks of using Capitalism to their advantage by using the monopolizing forces of attaining the people's attentions and aiming to reconfigure the status of society. They are living secular saints in the sense that we can recognize their characteristics through religious monotheism, Greek heroism and philosophical endeavors for change such as those made by Simone Weil. Dr. King sought to utilize the bigot world of Capitalism to draw attention to him for the sake of others. A secular saint in modern society sacrifices themselves putting everything on the line for the sake of

others, the Saint strives to live and dies for himself in the hopes that he has left a mark after his death- his death is a recurrence and not a heroic Pathmark. The reality of unavoidable suffering triggers the intermingling of the hero and the saint-when referring to myself as the "heroic Saint" I mean just this. Bonded by the rules of the heroic citizenship with self-evaluation as a Saint I am able to comply with, justify and continue my search for meaning while rejecting some of God's commandments. While some may argue this doesn't make me a saint, looking at Augustine and Frances and other who weren't mentioned one can arguably see that they too re-created their analysis of what God had to say and founded their own method of strengthening their covenant despite the changes in society. No matter what happens in society or what evolution is sparked, the heroic-saint is always able to see that the journey itself is worth taking.