

- 359: Imperial Council of Seleucia and Ariminum → ‘Homoean’ Confession of Constantinople (supported by Constantius II)
- c. 360: Marius Victorinus composes antiarian writings in Rome → Nicene doctrine of the Trinity
- 361-63: Emperor Julian → new religious policy (no promotion of Christianity, attempt to revive paganism).
- 362: Synod of Alexandria → understanding between Athanasius and the new followers of the Nicene party
- 364-375/78: Valentinian I (West → tolerant religious policy), Valens (East → enforcement of the Homoean imperial dogma)
- 374-97: Ambrose bishop of Milan
- 372-75: Usurpation of the Berber prince Firmus
- 375-83/92: Gratian/Valentinian II (West → promotion of Nicene Christianity, collaboration with Ambrose)
- 379-95: Theodosius I (East) → Nicene Christianity as Imperial religion (380: edict *Cunctos Populos*), enforcement of anti-pagan legislation
- 378: battle of Adrianople → settlement of the Visigoths in the Empire
- 381: Council of Constantinople → Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed
- 382: cessation of state support for pagan cults in Rome and removal of the statute of Victoria from the Senate chamber by Gratian
- 382-84: Jerome in Rome; beginning of the revision of the Bible → in the following decades, the *Vulgate* is created, replacing the *Vetus Latina*

- 383-88: rebellion Magnus Maximus → co-emperor in the western part of the Roman Empire
- 385: Jerome moves to Palestine

Roman North Africa

- regions from west to east: Mauretania Tingitana, Mauretania Caesariensis, Mauretania Sitifensis, Numidia, Africa Proconsularis, Byzacena, Tripolitana
- geography: narrow coastal strip, fertile highlands, steppe belt
- population: coastal cities and urbanized agricultural regions with mixed Punic-Roman population (agricultural land in the hands of a few large landowners), in Mauritania and Numidia semi-nomadic Berber tribes, in the steppe belt nomadic tribes
- basic political constellation: Roman rule, significant for the Empire because of grain supplies, constant threat from uprisings and attacks by nomadic tribes, recurrent regional military rulers

- 388-91: Theodosius resides in Milan → contact with Ambrose
- 389: baptism of Paulinus of Nola
- 391: prohibition of all pagan cults by Theodosius I
- 391: Aurelius bishop of Carthage
- 392-95: Theodosius I sole ruler → 395: renewed division of empire among Theodosius’ sons (Honorius, Arcadius) → policy of Christianizing the empire
- 397/98: usurpation of the Berber prince Gildo
- 408-50: Theodosius II (East) → further Christianization of the empire, *Codex Theodosianus*
- 410: Visigoths under Alaric sack Rome
- 419: foundation of the Tolosan Visigoth reign
- 428-31: ‘theotokos’ controversy (Nestorius against Cyril) → Synod of Ephesus
- 429/30: Vandals establish their rule in Roman North Africa

354-71 Childhood and youth

- born Nov. 13, 354 in Thagaste (Numidia), father Patricius heathen, mother Monnica Christian, religious influence by mother
- classical school education in Thagaste and Madaura

371-83 Carthage

- 371-75: study of rhetoric and literature in Carthage, distancing himself from the Christian influence of his mother
- since 372 concubinage (the son Adeodatus born around 372/73 dies 388/90)
- 373: turning to philosophy by reading Cicero’s *Hortensius* (pursuit of the knowledge of truth and true happiness)
- 373-83/84: affiliation with the Manichaeian Church
- 375/76: teacher of rhetoric in Thagaste
- 376-83: teacher of rhetoric in Carthage

383-88 Italy

- 383/84: teacher of rhetoric in Rome
- 384-86: teacher of rhetoric in Milan, encounter with the philosophically reflected and rhetorically presented Christianity of the circles around bishop Ambrose of Milan (allegorical exegesis of the Bible, Neoplatonic ontology, theology of Paul, asceticism)
- 386: decision for celibacy
- 387: baptism in Milan
- 386/87: Ascetic community life in Cassiciacum, early philosophical writings
- 387/88: stay in Ostia and Rome, death of mother in Ostia

388-430 North Africa

- 388-91: ascetic community life in Thagaste
- 391-95/96: presbyter in Hippo Regius; ‘Garden Monastery’
- mid-390s: theological reorientation from Neoplatonism to Paulinism (396: *De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum*).
- 396-430: bishop of Hippo Regius; monastic community in the bishop’s house (Augustine’s Rule), numerous journeys within North Africa (especially to Carthage)
- † Aug. 28, 430 in Hippo Regius

Four major ecclesiastical and theological controversies

- *Manichaeism*: from the end of the 380s to around 405
- *Donatism*: from the 390s to the 420s in two phases: 1. until 404/411 primarily theological disputes; 2. since 404/11 additionally support of imperial repression against the Donatists
- *Pelagianism*: 1. controversy with Pelagius and Caelestius (411-18); 2. controversy with Julian of Aeclanum (418-30); 3. controversy with traditional synergism of monastic circles (426/27)
- *Paganism*: *De civitate Dei* (413-26, theology of history, distinction between *civitas Dei* and *civitas terrena*, eschatological relativization of the inner-worldly order)

Other important writings

- sermons
- letters
- Bible commentaries (Gen., Psalms, Job, Sermon on the Mount, John, Rom., Gal.)
- *Confessiones* (397-401)
- *De doctrina christiana* (397/427)
- *De Trinitate* (399-426)
- *Enchiridion de fide, spe et caritate* (421-23)
- *Retractationes* (427)

## Augustine and Manichaeism

### Manichaeism

- Founder: Mani (216–77), influenced by Judeo-Christian tradition and Gnosticism; based on revelations formation of a new religion; enrichment with elements of Zoroastrianism and Buddhism; missionary journeys to Persia and India → emergence of a religious community spreading in the Near and Middle East as well as the Mediterranean region
- Manichaean Church: hierarchical organization; canon with Mani writings (plus numerous other doctrinal writings); distinction between *electi* and *auditores*; ethos (rigorism, asceticism, two-level ethics); worship (services, feasts, psalms/hymns).
- Manichaean myth: redemption from cosmic exile by realization of transcendent reality; metaphysical dualism as basic structure of reality; cosmic conflict of opposing basic principles with three phases (1. original separation of the realms, present intermingling and struggle of the principles against each other, future separation of the realms)
- Manichaeism in North Africa: documented since the early 3rd century; rapid spread; self-image as true form of Christianity; rationalization of religion

### Augustine and Manichaeism

- 373–83/84: Augustin belongs to the Manichaean Church as an auditor → recruitment of further followers
- 382/83: conversations with the Manichaean bishop Faustus of Mileve → beginning of the turn away from Manichaeism
- 388: beginning of the literary confrontation with Manichaeism
- 392: debate with the Manichaean Fortunatus
- 397: autobiographical review and theological controversy in the *Confessiones*
- 404: debate against the Manichean Felix
- anti-Manichaean writings: *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum* (388–90), *De libero arbitrio* (388, 394/95), *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus* (388–96), *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* (389), *De vera religione* (390), *De utilitate credendi* (391), *De duabus animabus* (391), *Acta contra Fortunatum Manichaeum* (392), *Contra Adimantum* (394), *Contra epistolam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* (396), *Confessiones* (397), *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* (397/98), *De natura boni* (399), *Contra Secundinum Manichaeum* (399), *Contra Felicem Manichaeum* (404), *De Haeresibus* (428/29).

### What does Augustine learn from the confrontation with Manichaeism?

- **ontology and doctrine of God:** no metaphysical dualism; God not as material but as spiritual reality; God as summum bonum without counterpart; evil as privatio boni and defectivus motus
- **hermeneutics:** connection of literal and spiritual exegesis of the Bible; unity of OT and NT; special significance of the Pauline epistles (contesting the Manichaean interpretation of Paul)
- **doctrine of sin:** free will as the cause of evil; all people are enslaved to sin
- **Christology:** no docetism
- **ethics:** charity; asceticism rightly understood and practiced

## Augustine and the Donatist controversy

### Donatism

- during the Diocletian persecution in North Africa (303–05), accusations of apostasy against Christian ministers; when one of these clerics is involved in the consecration of the bishop of Carthage in 311/12, the North African church splits into two parties (called “Caecilianism” and “Donatism” after the respective leaders); the Donatists advocate the ecclesiology and sacramental doctrine of Cyprian of Carthage: ordinations of ministers and sacraments are valid and effective only within the true church; the truth of the church is measured by theological and ethical criteria
- 313–21: Emperor Constantine strives in vain to eliminate the North African schism → support for the party in communion with the imperial church (Cecilianists), though toleration of the Donatists
- from about 320 to about 420: strong Donatist church in North Africa (in many places more numerous than the imperial church; fierce, sometimes violent conflicts between Donatists and Caecilianists); in the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century connection with the social-revolutionary movement of the Circumcellions; thereupon state repression against the Donatists; changing perception of Donatism at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century: not only *schismatic*, but now also *heretic* → increased state repression

### Augustine and Donatism

- controversy with the Donatists in Hippo Regius (Donatism as schism, not as heresy)
- leading participation in the resolutions of the regional councils of African bishops on Donatism → offers of understanding and efforts to integrate Donatist clergy and congregations
- 404/05: support of state coercive measures against the Donatists
- 411: conference with the Donatists in Carthage → confirmation of legislation against the Donatists
- antidonatist writings: *Psalmus contra partem Donati* (394), *Contra epistulam Parmeniani* (400), *De baptismo* (401), *Contra litteras Petiliani* (401–05), *ep. 93* (407/08), *Ad Cresconium grammaticum partis Donati* (405/06), *De unico baptismo* (412), *Breuiulus conlationis cum Donatistis* (411/12), *Contra Donatistas* (411), *ep. 185* (417), *Gesta cum Emerito Donatistarum episcopo* (418), *Sermo ad Caesariensis ecclesiae plebem* (418), *Contra Gaudentium Donatistarum episcopum* (419/20), *Ad catholicos fratres* (?)

### Church and sacraments in Augustine

- **church:** double concept of church → invisible / visible church
  - love as the unifying bond of the communio sanctorum
  - visible church as a corpus permixtum
- development of a general doctrine of the **sacraments:**
  - distinction between res and signum → species corporalis as vehicle of the fructus spiritualis named in the sacramental liturgy
  - validity of the sacraments through their outward performance, inward efficacy of the sacraments only within the true church.
  - baptism: dominicus character

## The Pelagian controversy

### Pelagianism

- Pelagius (c. 350–c. 418/20): ascetic from Britain; in the 380s active in Rome as a teacher and biblical commentator (Pauline exegesis); representative of church reform through asceticism (criticizing church and society); formation of a circle of disciples (Caelestius, Julian of Aeclanum); criticism of Augustine's doctrine of grace, especially of his doctrine of original sin and of the bondage of the will (anti-Gnostic and anti-Manichaean interest in the freedom and personal responsibility of man).
- basic theological ideas of Pelagianism:
  - **nature:** man is bound by divine law and, thanks to the divine gifts of reason and free will (grace of creation), is actually also capable of becoming like God through his actions
  - **sin:** man is hindered in this by sin, which, as a wrong habit influencing all men since Adam, weakens the flesh; however, sin only affects action, not being; there is no original sin
  - **law:** as a help of grace against the influence of sin, God has given the law, but it cannot by itself overcome human weakness
  - **Christ:** as a help of grace to overcome human weakness and to obey the law, Christ came as an example and teacher; in union with Christ, justification occurs as a condition of sanctification to be accomplished by one's own actions
  - **baptism:** in baptism, the forgiveness of the sins previously committed by the baptized and the gracious justification through union with Christ take place
  - **sanctification:** through deliverance from the habit of sin and union with Christ, the Christian can become like God in righteousness and holiness by virtue of his free will and the divine law that guides him

### Augustine and Pelagianism

- **411–18:** against the criticism of Pelagius and his disciples (among others Caelestius) of infant baptism and the doctrine of original sin and against their emphasis on the freedom of will and moral capacity of man, Augustine emphasizes the original sin that determines man's being and actions, which can be overcome only by God's grace granted in baptism, and the necessity of permanent help of grace for the Christian life; the theological debate is intertwined with power struggles in church and politics
- **418:** Council of Carthage (dogmatization of Augustinian doctrine of original sin and mercy: DS 222–30) → recognition by Emperor Honorius and the bishop of Rome (anti-Pelagian consensus in the West).
- **418–30:** After the death of Pelagius, Julian of Aeclanum systematizes Pelagian theology, to which Augustine responds with further controversial writings
- **426–29:** Augustine has to defend himself against criticism of his doctrine of grace and predestination from monastic and ascetic circles (John Cassian, 'Semipelagianism'), which, while not representing Pelagian ideas, emphasize human freedom and responsibility in the interest of realizing the ascetic ideal of perfection
- **529:** Synod of Arouisio → after Augustine's doctrine of grace was disputed in the 5th century and representatives of the traditional synergistic doctrine of grace repeatedly criticized Augustinianism, a synod in Arouisio (Orange) condemns synergism and confirms Augustine's doctrine of grace (without reference to the doctrine of predestination).

### Important anti-Pelagian writings of Augustine

- **phase 1 (411–18):** *De peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo parvulorum* (412), *De spiritu et littera* (412), *De natura et gratia* (413–15), *De perfectione iustitiae hominis* (415?), *ep. 176–177* (416), *De gestis Pelagii* (417), *ep. 186* (417), *De gratia Christi et de peccato originali* (418), *ep. 194* (418)
- **phase 2 (418–30):** *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* (418/19), *De anima et eius origine* (419), *Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum* (419/20), *Contra Iulianum* (421), *De gratia et libero arbitrio* (425), *ep. 217* (426), *De correptione et gratia* (426), *De praedestinatione sanctorum* (428), *De dono perseverantiae* (429), *Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* (428–30)

### Augustine's doctrine of grace

- **understanding of God and man:** voluntaristic conception of God and man; sole efficacy of God; man before the fall has *posse peccare* thanks to liberum arbitrium
- **sin:** original sin as an imprint that determines the being and actions of every human being since the fall of Adam (*non posse non peccare*); amor sui instead of amor Dei
- **grace:** grace as comprehensive forgiveness of sins; permanent necessity of grace as adiutorium (help of grace) → grace first of all establishes the freedom of the will; under the conditions of this worldly existence still threat by sin, but *posse non peccare* made possible by grace; in the hereafter *non posse peccare*
- **predestination:** post-Adamite humanity is a massa perditionis; particularity of grace election (but no doctrine of double predestination)