

Collectanea Augustiniana

The Life of Augustine of Hippo

PART TWO
The Donatist Controversy
(396–411)

Mémoire Ecclésiastique
Volume XIII

Louis Sébastien, Le Nain de Tillemont

Translation, Introduction, and Annotation by
Frederick Van Fleteren



PETER LANG

The seventeenth century was the century of Saint Augustine. In 1695, Louis Sébastien, Le Nain de Tillemont, finished volume 13 of his *Mémoires ecclésiastique*, entitled *La vie de saint Augustin*. The volume consisted of approximately 1200 pages wherein Louis Sébastien gathered from the works of Augustine and elsewhere all extant passages relevant to the biography of Augustine of Hippo. Completed in 1695, the biography was published posthumously in 1700. The work lies in the tradition of Jansenism from Port-Royal and the Leuven. Though an ascetic recluse on the family estate for the last twenty years of his life, he was in touch with important French scholars and the ecclesiastical movements of his time. Louis' work is the first modern biography of Augustine and the most comprehensive of all Augustinian biographies, even today. Modern authors consult him and frequently adopt his theories without citation. His method exercises influence on contemporary Parisian scholarship on Augustine. This English translation has been divided into three volumes covering three time periods: part 1: birth to episcopal consecration (354–396); part 2: the Donatist controversy (396–411); part 3: the Pelagian controversy (411–430).

"The seventeenth-century historian, Louis Sébastien, Le Nain de Tillemont's sixteen volumes of *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique* constitute a monument in the historiography of Christianity. The thirteenth volume of Tillemont's work offers the first modern biography of St. Augustine. Frederick Van Fleteren's second volume of a planned three-volume English translation of this biography renders Tillemont's French text into a smooth, easily intelligible prose that draws the English reader into a fascinating account of the life of Augustine, one constructed from primary sources taken most often from manuscripts. Tillemont's biography is still consulted today by scholars and biographers of Augustine for its rich collection of sources and meticulous effort at historical accuracy. Van Fleteren's translation will become a classic among resource works on Augustine in the English-speaking world."

Fr. Robert Dodaro, Director of the Augustinian Patristic Institute, Pontifical Lateran University



Frederick Van Fleteren is Professor of Philosophy at LaSalle University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Internationally respected for his scholarship on Augustine of Hippo, he is the general editor of the series *Collectanea Augustiniana*. The present volume is the tenth in that series. He has contributed several chapters to these books. Professor Van Fleteren has edited three volumes of *Anselm Studies* and has contributed to several other volumes in that series. He has edited a volume entitled *Columbus and the New World* and a biography of Prince Demetrius Gallitzin. For many years he has served as associate editor of *Augustinian Studies* and is co-editor of the critically acclaimed *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, which has been translated into Italian, French, and Spanish. He is the author of an ethics text, *Fundamental Principles of a Natural Law Ethic*. He has contributed countless articles to philosophical and theological journals in several languages and has served as a publisher and journal reviewer on Augustine of Hippo and Anselm of Canterbury. He is a Life Member of Clare Hall, Cambridge and has three times been a visiting fellow at Fondazione Bruno Kessler in Trento, Italy. A much sought-after speaker internationally, he has lectured at several universities and conferences in North America, Europe, and Asia.

Advance praise for
The Life of Augustine of Hippo

“Sébastien, Le Nain de Tillement (1637–1698) is one of the most interesting figures within the history of Jansenism. During his lifetime, he was constantly in contact with important people belonging to the movement of Port-Royal. He was in contact with P. Nicole, M. de Sacy, Th. du Fossé and ‘le grand’ A. Arnauld. Among the many valuable historical works he published, a central place is given to his *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire ecclésiastique*, an impressive series of particular studies, still a necessary reference work for contemporary historians. Among the many valuable studies, his life of Augustine is undoubtedly one of the most important. In this work, the author does not hide his Jansenist feelings, but at the same time shows that he is a first-class historian, writing in a simple but clear style, revealing a thorough knowledge of Augustine and his thought. Finally, this classic on the life of Augustine has received an English translation. One sincerely hopes that through this translation the work of a fascinating historian can become subject of research in the Anglo-Saxon world.”

*Mathijs Lamberechts, Professor of Theology,
Catholic Faculty of Theology, University of Leuven, Belgium*

The Life of Augustine of Hippo



PETER LANG

New York • Washington, D.C./Baltimore • Bern
Frankfurt • Berlin • Brussels • Vienna • Oxford

Louis Sébastien, Le Nain de Tillemont

The Life of Augustine of Hippo

PART TWO
The Donatist Controversy
(396–411)

Mémoire Ecclésiastique
Volume XIII

Translation, Introduction, and Annotation by
Frederick Van Fleteren



PETER LANG

New York • Washington, D.C./Baltimore • Bern
Frankfurt • Berlin • Brussels • Vienna • Oxford

The Library of Congress has catalogued the multivolume set as follows:

Le Nain de Tillemont, Louis Sébastien, 1637–1698.

[Vie de saint Augustin. English]

The life of Augustine / Louis Sébastien; translated by Frederick Van Fleteren.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

1. Augustine, Saint, Bishop of Hippo. 2. Christian saints—Algeria—Hippo (Extinct city)—Biography. 3. Christian saints—Hippo. I. Van Fleteren, Frederick. II. Title.

BR1720.A9.L42 270.2092—dc22 [B] 2010002935

ISBN 978-1-4331-0284-4 (Volume 1 hardcover)

ISBN 978-1-4331-0285-1 (Volume 2 hardcover)

ISBN 978-1-4539-0896-9 (Volume 2 e-book)

Bibliographic information published by **Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek**.

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the “Deutsche Nationalbibliografie”; detailed bibliographic data is available on the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de/>.

The paper in this book meets the guidelines for permanence and durability of the Committee on Production Guidelines for Book Longevity of the Council of Library Resources.



© 2012 Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., New York
29 Broadway, 18th floor, New York, NY 10006
www.peterlang.com

All rights reserved.

Reprint or reproduction, even partially, in all forms such as microfilm, xerography, microfiche, microcard, and offset strictly prohibited.

Printed in Germany

Contents

Dedication	ix
Preface	xiii
Introduction	xv

Articles

Article 108: Letters to Paulinus, Romanianus, and Licentius	1
Article 109: Unsuccessful Attempts to Confer with Proculianus	3
Article 110: Acceptance of Irregular Catholics	6
Article 111: <i>Ad Simplicianum</i>	9
Article 112: <i>De agone christiana; De doctrina christiana</i>	13
Article 113: <i>Confessiones; Contra Faustum</i>	16
Article 114: <i>De catechizandis rudibus</i>	19
Article 115: <i>De trinitate</i>	22
Article 116: Possidius of Calama	26
Article 117: Council of Carthage (397)	30
Article 118: Canons of the Council of Carthage (397)	34
Article 119: Fortunatus and Fortunius	38
Article 120: Conferences with Donatists	42
Article 121: Celicoles	45
Article 122: Sermons against Idolatry	49
Article 123: Fourth Council of Carthage (398)	52
Article 124: Council of Carthage (399)	55
Article 125: <i>De consensu euangelistarum</i>	58
Article 126: Severinus and Generosus	61
Article 127: Refutation of Petilianus	64
Article 128: <i>Contra epistulam Parmeniani</i>	67
Article 129: <i>De bono coniugali; De opere monachorum</i>	70
Article 130: <i>De Genesi ad litteram</i>	75
Article 131: Council of Carthage (401)	80
Article 132: Reception of Donatist Clerics	84

Article 133: Reception of Donatists	87
Article 134: Council of Africa (401)	91
Article 135: Delegation to the Emperor	94
Article 136: Dispute on Numidian Episcopal Primacy	97
Article 137: Donatus' Exit from the Monastery	100
Article 138: Deposing of Abundantius	103
Article 139: Severus of Mileve and Timothy	106
Article 140: Severus and Timothy	109
Article 141: Response to Severus	113
Article 142: Refutation of Petilianus' Letter	116
Article 143: Petilianus' Response	119
Article 144: Response to Petilianus' Invective	122
Article 145: <i>Enarratio in Psalmum 36</i>	126
Article 146: First Council of Mileve (402)	130
Article 147: Maximian of Vagine	133
Article 148: Donatist Anger and Augustine's Preaching	135
Article 149: Bishops' Request to Donatists	139
Article 150: Donatist Attack on Possidius	143
Article 151: Request by the Council of Carthage (404)	148
Article 152: Donatist Barbarity against Maximian of Bagai	152
Article 153: Boniface and Spes	155
Article 154: Refutation and Conversion of Felix the Manichean	159
Article 155: Easing Tensions with Jerome	162
Article 156: Honorius' Laws against Donatists	165
Article 157: Anti-Donatist Laws	168
Article 158: Effects of Honorius' Laws	172
Article 159: Donatist Fury in Hippo	176
Article 160: Donatist Violence in Africa	179
Article 161: Donatist Delegation to the Imperial Court	184
Article 162: <i>Contra Cresconium</i>	187
Article 163: Paul, Bishop of Cataquas	190
Article 164: Count Pascentius	192
Article 165: Count Pascentius	195
Article 166: Emeritus	199
Article 167: Various Works	202
Article 168: Last Anti-Manichean Works	206
Article 169: Council of Carthage (407)	209
Article 170: <i>Defensores Ecclesiae</i> ; Honorius	214
Article 171: Melania the Elder in Africa	219
Article 172: Nectarius	222

Article 173: Paulinus and Memor	224
Article 174: Olympius	227
Article 175: Council of Carthage (408)	230
Article 176: Donatus, African Proconsul	233
Article 177: Italica	235
Article 178: Confirmation and Annulment of Laws	238
Article 179: Festus, and Vincent, the Rogatist	240
Article 180: Macrobius	243
Article 181: Faventius	246
Article 182: Victorianus	248
Article 183: Dioscorus	250
Article 184: Consentius	253
Article 185: Fall of Rome	256
Article 186: Extended Absence from Hippo	258
Article 187: Revocation of Liberty of Conscience	260
Article 188: Order for a Conference	262
Article 189: Marcellinus	265
Article 190: Pinianus and Melania	269
Article 191: Pinianus	271
Article 192: Pinianus	274
Article 193: Albina and Alypius	277
Article 194: Explanation to Albina	279
Article 195: Announcement of the Conference of Carthage	282
Article 196: Donatist Pomp Entering Carthage	285
Article 197: Catholic Bishops' Proposal	288
Article 198: Sermon on Peace	291
Article 199: Opening of the Conference	294
Article 200: Donatist Refusal to be Seated	297
Article 201: Second Session	300
Article 202: Third Session	303
Article 203: Heart of the Matter	306
Article 204: Refutation of Donatism on the Church	309
Article 205: Caecilian and the Schism	312
Article 206: Council of Cirta (305)	315
Article 207: Marcellinus' Pronouncement	318
Article 208: Augustine's Eminence	321
Article 209: Donatist Appeal to the Emperor	324
Article 210: Acts of the Conference	326
Article 211: Donatist Converts	329

Notes

Note 22: <i>Letter 84</i>	332
Note 23: Sermon on the Occasion of Valerius' Death	333
Note 24: <i>Ad Simplicianum</i>	335
Note 25: Council of Carthage, June, 397	338
Note 26: Council of Carthage, August, 397	340
Note 27: Conference with Fortunius; Fortunatus' Ordination as Bishop of Cirta	342
Note 28: Law of April 1, 409	345
Note 29: Council of Carthage (398)	346
Note 30: <i>Letter 101</i>	350
Note 31: <i>Contra litteras Petilianus I</i>	351
Note 32: <i>Contra epistolam Parmeniani</i>	353
Note 33: Fifth Council of Carthage (400)	355
Note 34: Council of Carthage (401)	358
Note 35: Canon 15, Council of Africa (401)	360
Note 36: <i>Contra litteras Petilianus II</i>	361
Note 37: <i>De unitate ecclesiae</i>	363
Note 38: Maximianus of Vagine	365
Note 39: Laws of 405	367
Note 40: Conference with Pascentius	369
Note 41: <i>Letter 20</i> (Supplement)	370
Note 42: Law of 407	374
Note 43: Death of Publicola; Affair at Calama	375
Note 44: <i>Letter 99</i>	377
Note 45: Italica	378
Note 46: <i>Letter to Macrobius</i>	379
Note 47: The Faventius Affair	381
Note 48: First Session: Conference of Carthage, June 1, 411	382
Note 49: Separate Publication of Each Session	384
 Louis Sébastein's Select Bibliography, Vol. 2	 385
Contemporary Select Bibliography, Vol. 2	387



Dedication

Geza Valentiny and his siblings took refuge in Austria after his father was executed by the Hungarian Marxists, two years before the official end of World War II. He came to Vienna. He studied theology at the Pazmaneum and Universität Wien. As a theology student he suffered a lung disease—one lung was surgically removed and his recovery lasted two years. Throughout the remainder of his life physical activity exhausted him. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1952. He first served as chaplain in five locales in Niederösterreich. He next spent seventeen years in the healthy air of Vorarlberg in the Austrian Alps. He was pastor of two parishes in Feldkirch. His wish was to remain there, perhaps as *Oberhirt*, but the Church decided otherwise. In 1971 he was asked to become the deputy of the Austrian sector of Europäische Hilfsfond of the Austrian and German bishops' Conferences and director of the Hungarian section. He carried out

his work during the persecution of Church behind the Iron Curtain. He was occupied there for twenty-five years until retiring from it in 1996. During that time, he was involved with the Hungarian school in Kastl and was *Seelsorger* for the Hungarian diaspora in Germany and Austria. He was also involved with the *Pfadfinders*, the Austrian version of the Boy Scouts. During his retirement, if such it may be called, he lived, as he had since 1973, with the Barmherzige Schwestern in Gumpendorf, Vienna. He directed a foundation for the support of the Hungarian Church.

As is often the case with men of stature, an outline of their various activities and accomplishments does not take the measure of the man. I first met Géza in the summer of 1973 at the residence in Gumpendorf. In our first *abendessen*, while he was trying to ascertain my capability in the German language, he asked me, as an American, what I thought of Kissinger's foreign policy. This took place during the *détente politique* of Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger, and Paul VI. A bit fearful perhaps, I mumbled something innocuous, incoherent I am sure, about talking with opponents never hurts. I then asked him what he thought. I remember his answer to this very day, "*Kissinger ist ein Abenteurer.*" Thus began a relationship spanning four decades in which we discussed civil and church politics, theology, Augustine of Hippo, and Lord knows what else at the evening meal. His first mentor in matters ecclesiastical and political was Josef Kardinal Mindszenty, the great Hungarian Churchman and patriot.

His work in behalf of the Hungarian church was enormously fruitful. He renovated churches. He delivered medical supplies when and where needed. He even built a retreat house in Leanfalu, on the outskirts of Budapest, an incomprehensible task at the time. People came to him from many countries behind the Iron Curtain to plead for surgical interventions to be found only in the West. He rarely turned them down—he found the funds somehow. He never took a *Groschen* for himself. He is almost certainly the greatest Churchman I have ever personally known

At times his work was dangerous. The Hungarian embassy in Vienna knew every movement in and out of his office complex in Boltzmanngasse, near the American Embassy. Whether the place was under electronic surveillance or a spy was on his staff, or both, he did not know. In 1976, an attempt was made by a Marxist to recruit me in this intelligence effort against him. It failed—I reported it to Géza. He took care of the rest. This event cemented an already fast friendship. Often we would sit at evening meal with a Hungarian cleric. Géza would try to determine if he was a "peace priest," working with the Communist government. If in doubt, however, he usually gave the requested help, saying "*Er muss auch leben.*"

He never set foot on his native Hungarian soil during the Communist times. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, his health permitting, he led an annual pilgrimage in and around August 20, the feast of St. Stephen, with Hungarian ex-patriots and friends, to Budapest to celebrate the feast of Stephen, first king of Hungary. This feast had been neglected during the Communist times for obvious reasons. In a small way Géza was demonstrating his participation in the victory over Marxism.

In his declining years at table one evening I asked him why the cause of beatification of Josef Kardinal Mindszenty was not proceeding as fast as some others. He was a man of asceticism and great loyalty to the Church. In times previous he would almost certainly have been considered a confessor. His answer: "*Vatikan Aussenministerium.*" I pressed him. He continued: "*Mindszenty war gegen Vatikan Politik (détente).*" I rejoined: "Yes, but certainly that policy changed under John Paul II." He replied: "*Es gibt duzende Vatikan Bürokraten die noch dort sind. Einmal gegen Vatikan, immer gegen Vatikan.*" The church honored Géza with its highest title short of bishop. Did his contribution merit consideration for a yet higher office? Was his comment about Josef Kardinal Mindszenty true of himself?

His loyalty was unquestioned. Because of several personal misfortunes, mostly self-inflicted, an eight year interlude in my summer study trips to Vienna occurred. Upon my return with some angst I looked him up. Never a question asked, he treated me like the returned prodigal I was. He practiced the *Gemütlichkeit* of his adopted city with unsurpassable grace. His *Gastfreundschaft* was a matter of legend.

For some time he lived in the same complex as Franz Kardinal König, the much respected former *ordinarius* of Vienna. Table conversation with this eminent man several times a week gradually mellowed Géza's political views.

On June 15, 2011 in the small parish church of St. Ägyd in the Gumpendorf section of Vienna, princes of the Hungarian and Viennese Churches, together with a standing room only group of colleagues and friends, assembled to celebrate a liturgical farewell, a mass of the resurrection in his behalf. At his express request, he was laid to rest in Laab im Walde, in the *friedhof* of the Barmherzige Schwestern with whom he lived and served for forty years.

In the academic life the coin of the realm is wisdom and honor. May these few lines stand as a paltry tribute to a stalwart Hungarian patriot and a loyal son of Holy Mother the Church. *In paradisum eum deducant angeli. Diuinum auxilium maneat semper nobiscum. Anima eius et animae omnium fidelium defunctorum per misericordiam Dei requiescant in pace.*

Preface

In presenting the translation, commentary, and annotation of *La vie de saint Augustin* written by Louis Sebastián, le Nain de Tillemont, the work has been divided into three parts according to the natural divisions of Augustine's life. In this second volume, we deal with the years 396–411. This phase of Augustine's life was productive. Louis gathers together the works, letters and the more important sermons from this period. He dates the writings, gives their background, and renders his historical interpretation. In addition, he presents the annual African councils with a thorough discussion of their dating, participants, and canons. The effects of various councils and their canons are analyzed. Since Louis Sebastián had manuscripts available to him which are no longer extant, his analysis presents a valuable hermeneutical tool in the interpretation of Augustine's literary output. Through Louis' work, Augustine's life in its many and varied aspects can be more fully appreciated.

In the preface to the first volume, we discussed many philosophical issues of translation and interpretation. We refer the reader to this first preface. Though we have continued to learn through the encounter with Louis Sebastián, much of what is written there remains valid. Our philosophy of translation and presentation of the text is the same. Since tracking down Louis' every reference would take us too far afield, we have looked up many, but have left the remaining references as they stand in his text, insofar as we have ascertained and understood them. We leave it to those more capable to ferret out the more esoteric aspects of Louis' prodigious accomplishments.

Mr. Peter Fisch has furnished me with the use of an apartment in Vienna during the summer, 2011. John Hymers, assistant professor of philosophy at LaSalle University, has graciously consented to read the text and recommend improvements. I have missed the support of Mr. Steven Fabiani, who has moved elsewhere. No other additions or subtractions from the credits in the preface of the first volume need be made. However, special mention should be given Rosemary Convery, secretary to the

philosophy department at LaSalle University. Her attention to my every request has made life so much easier during the production of this volume.

I have taken—some might say stolen—the modern names of ancient African cities, towns, and provinces from A. Mandouze, *Prosopographie de l'Afrique chrétienne*. Anyone even vaguely familiar with Augustinian studies over the past century knows his prodigious and detailed work. I stand on the shoulders of a giant.

Mention must somewhere be made of Louis Sébastien's treatment of the African councils. Even such a remarkable scholar as James O'Donnell has shied away from treating them. No scholar to my knowledge has surpassed Tillemont in this subject. If for no other reason—and there are other reasons—Tillemont's work on Augustine should be highly regarded. He provides the background against which Augustine should be read. Augustine's influence can to no small extent be measured by his contribution to these councils (see Art. 117, n. 1).

The dedication of this volume to the late Apostolicus Protonotarius Géza Valentiny needs more explanation. The dedication appears under his picture near the beginning of the volume. I am deeply indebted to Rev. Prof. Antonio Autiero, ordinarius professor für Moralthologie seminar in Universität Münster, for his help and support in composing this dedication. He has been Géza's friend and mine for over thirty-five years. We decided on this dedication circa four years before Géza's untimely passing. I last saw Géza the Friday before his death. I had intended to visit him again the succeeding Friday to tell him of the dedication. He died before I could visit.

Mention should also be made of Schwestern Klara and Paula of the Barmherzige Schwestern in Gumpendorf, Vienna. They gathered materials for the composition of the dedication. Schwester Klara's unfailing and loyal commitment to Géza and his work over thirty-five years was remarkable.

To the countless men and women who have helped me in this work, but whose names go unmentioned, may the very production of this work itself stand as testimony to their efforts.

Prof. Frederick Van Fleteren, Ph. D.
Feast of St. Peter and Paul, 2011
Vienna, Austria

Introduction

Augustine's work are usefully divided into three periods the anti-Manichean period (386-400); the anti-Donatist period (400-411); the anti-Pelagian period (411-430). There is overlap between the various periods. However, thematic characterization of the three periods aids us in understanding Augustine's thought. This present volume is concerned principally, though not exclusively, with his anti-Donatist work. The third period shall be left to the third volume; first two periods shall be dealt with here.

The anti-Manichean period: In the years after his conversion until 400, Augustine's writings deal often with various anti-Manichean topics. Three are pre-eminent: the relation of faith to reason, the problem of evil, and scriptural exegesis. Augustine's project throughout his life, but especially in his earlier years, is best described as *intellectus fidei*. This frequently used but often misunderstood phrase indicates the unity Augustine saw between the best of ancient thought, as he interpreted it, and Scripture. Augustine's purpose was to understand the biblical faith. Ancient philosophy helped in this project. Scripture and ancient thought, correctly interpreted, were of a piece. Modern philological methods have largely ferreted out the Neoplatonic (read Plotinian and Porphyrian), Ciceronian, and Stoic elements in Augustine's text. This philological work has been invaluable—we now know Augustine's background much more precisely than previously. An unfortunate consequence of the philological methodology has been to separate Augustine's thought into philosophical and theological elements. Such a division occurs even in those desiring to follow in Augustine's footsteps. This separation is not Augustine's. He sought truth—he regarded the whole. Christianity is *philosophia uerissima*. Though Maurice Blondel can not be followed in his every meandering, his writings are perhaps the best twentieth-century example of Augustine's methodology.

Manicheanism is gnostic. Nevertheless, Augustine frequently accuses Manicheans of rationalism. It offered belief in an esoteric revelation given an elite group. On its face, such revelation is difficult to square with Augustine's allegation of rationalism. Evidently, Manicheans believed that,

once given, the tenets of their revelation could be completely understood. By comparison, many tenets of the Christian revelation can never be fully understood in this earthly pilgrimage. We call God three persons in one nature in order that "we may say something rather than nothing." The Manicheans promised rational understanding, but delivered only a demand to believe in an incredible mythology. Obviously Manichean rationalism is of another sort than French and German Enlightenment rationalism of the seventeenth to the nineteenth century.

In face of this Manichean offer of reason without faith, Augustine proposes *crede ut intelligas*. This oft-repeated dictum has two distinct, but inseparable meanings. The maxim can be understood anthropologically. The human being first believes and later finds reason for that belief. A child is told not to steal. Later he finds this prohibition reasonable. A child is told to eat nutritious food. He later finds reasons for this authoritative directive. Faith is temporally prior to reason. *Crede ut intelligas* can also be understood methodologically. The purpose of reasoning is to give rational support to truths believed. In *De trinitate*, for example, Augustine attempts to give some faint understanding of the triune God. In his anti-Pelagian works, he tries to understand salvation by grace. In both instances, Augustine is attempting to understand the truths of faith, *intellectus fidei*. In essence, *crede ut intelligas* in both senses has been programmatic for Catholic Christian education throughout the centuries. Efforts to bring faith back into rational philosophical discourse should be encouraged.

Secondly, reconciliation of a good God with the existence of evil in the world has presented a perennial problem. The Manichean solution was metaphysical with cosmic and moral dimensions. Since the beginning of time, the universe is composed of two substantial material principles, one good and the other evil, one the principle of light, the other the principle of darkness. The state of the universe is explained as a constant fight between these two principles. In the beginning, the evil principle triumphed and imprisoned the good within the world. Moral evil is one consequence of this metaphysical cleft, physical evil another. Both are examples of determinism, the former on the individual plane, the second on the cosmic stage.

On the moral plane Augustine develops a teaching on free will. Moral evil does not result from an evil principle within the human being. Rather man is placed in the universe between higher and lower goods, the median place of the soul in the Neoplatonic universe. By his free will, man continually chooses one or the other. Choice is not merely intellectual preference, but a distinct power of the spiritual (immaterial) soul. Augustine develops a doctrine of free will, incipiently present in Christian writers before him and

implicitly present in the human responsibility for sin and good works as found in Scripture. Whether an incipient doctrine of free will is present in Plotinus is a *quaestio disputata*. Whether Augustine read any such texts in Plotinus is doubtful. The Epistle to the Romans, especially Romans 7, is a major influence. Free will is a power of the intellectual, as distinct from the sensitive, soul. Gradually, Augustine develops a doctrine of grace. Based on Paul, this teaching of grace and free will dominate Augustine's later writings. The Christian tradition until the present struggles with this problem,

Augustine responds to Manichean cosmological metaphysics with Plotinian and Porphyrian metaphysics. Since Plato's *Republic* evil had been viewed as a deviation from the ideal. Plotinus and Porphyry develop this thinking into a notion of evil as non-being. The extended mythology of fall and return to the ideal enlarges upon this negative metaphysics. Perfect being truly exists. All other beings except the One are composed of being and non-being. Absolute evil would be total non-being. Augustine develops a metaphysics of being (*esse*) and non-being (*non esse*) in this tradition. There is no material principle of evil.

Thirdly, the Manicheans rejected the Jewish Scripture as incoherent. They accepted a bowdlerized version of the New Testament. Passages in the gospels and epistles in which the Jewish Scripture was cited were excised—under a claim of corruption of the text. Augustine's responds with a theory of allegorical exegesis, first found in Philo Judaeus, developed by Origen, and preached by Ambrose in his Milanese pulpit. The Old Testament is symbolically interpreted as prefiguring the New. Circumcision, for example, prefigures purification through baptism. The Seder meal prefigures the Eucharist. The human mind on its earthly pilgrimage in its post-lapsarian state can not attain truth in its fullness directly. So Christ taught in parables, figures, and analogies. Augustine realized various literary genres in the Bible—the Psalms were poems, the Song of Songs was symbolic. These genres and figures needed interpretation. Augustine's scriptural hermeneutic is profoundly influenced by Paul (Gal 4: 22-24; 1 Cor 13: 12). His hermeneutic may be found in its scientific fullness in *De doctrina christiana*, but is present throughout his preaching. An aspect to Manichean rejection of the Old Testament was the extirpation of Old Testament citation in the New Testament. They claimed the New Testament texts had been corrupted by Judaizers. Augustine, always the rhetor, requested the true texts. These texts could, of course, not be produced.

Today we are witnessing a realization of the limits nineteenth-century form-critical exegesis. We now see it as but one stage in the evolution of scriptural interpretation. A renewed realization of the richness of allegorical

exegesis as representing a true meaning of the scriptural text is perhaps in the offering.

In his lifetime and ours, Augustine has been accused of crypto-Manicheanism. The Donatists did so for polemical reasons, Julian of Eclanum for purported theological reasons. Augustine was not a gnostic—in fact he spent a lifetime refuting it. Almost single-handedly he is responsible for halting the spread of Manicheanism in the West. Some eight centuries later, his works against Manicheanism influence Thomas Aquinas' *Summa contra Gentiles*. Albigensianism and Catharism, both renewals of Manicheanism, existed in southern France and Spain in the thirteenth century. Dualism is a much used, and abused, term. Manicheans explicitly claim metaphysical dualism. Augustine did so neither explicitly nor implicitly. He maintains the existence of body and soul, but he is no dualist; he teaches free will and grace, but he is no dualist; he teaches the city of God and the city of man, but he is no dualist. The accusation of Manichean dualism in Augustine is at best a simplification and at worst an error.

The anti-Donatist period: In Augustine's anti-Donatist writings, three new themes arise: the unity and universality of the Church; the relation between the minister and the sacrament; the proper use of secular authority. The Donatist schism began during the last Roman persecution of Christians under Diocletian. Caecilian of Carthage and Felix of Abthungi, his ordaining bishop, were accused of handing over the Christian Scriptures to the secular authorities, a traitorous activity. They were condemned, later exonerated several times, but to no avail. Christians were still very much a minority, and allegedly dangerous—they did not practice the state religion. In the eyes of many Christians, handing over the Scriptures had corrupted the Church. A splinter group arose, taking its name from a dissident bishop Donatus. They thought of themselves as the true believers, but were not in communion with other Christian churches. These Donatists gradually became numerous, in various places more numerous than the orthodox Church itself. Hippo was one such place. Augustine strongly believed in the instantiation of the Church in the individual community. However, he equally well believed communion with other churches brought about the universality of the members of Christ foretold in Scripture. The church was not merely an African affair. The bond of unity between Christian communities over the then known world was a mark of the true Church.

Some began to think the baptism of *traditores*, those who had handed over the Scripture, was invalid. The purity of the minister affected the validity of the sacrament. Baptism or re-baptism by a minister not involved in handing over Scripture was prescribed for entry into the Donatist church.

In face of this doctrine, Augustine repeatedly shows that one individual's sin does not carry guilt over to another. The sin of the minister does not void the efficacy of the sacrament. Christ is the true minister. In accepting the baptism of schismatics and heretics, Augustine broke new ground. Cyprian, the mid-third-century martyred bishop of Carthage and hero of the African church, had accepted neither. Optatus of Mileve had accepted baptism of schismatics, but not heretics. Augustine accepted all three. The sacramental question aside, acceptance of baptism only by a sinless minister would have led to complete chaos within the Church. No one could possibly know who was validly baptized.

Augustine attempted to deal with Donatism as he had with Manicheanism, by preaching, writing, and debating. His discussion with Fortunius, Donatist bishop of Cirta, in 398 is an example. He had tried to engage Proculianus and later Macrobius, the two Donatist bishops of Hippo during Augustine's episcopate, in public discussion, but without success. They were not interested in engaging the renowned rhetor and dialectician publicly. In the early fifth century, activity of the terrorist wing of the Donatist party, the Circumcelliones, increased. What once may have been a merely agrarian movement became decisively more aggressive, partially due no doubt to Augustine's successful preaching. Such violence was instigated at times by the lower Donatist clergy and at least tacitly approved by some, though certainly not all, Donatist bishops. Attempts on the lives of Augustine and Possidius were made.

In face of this terror, what were the African bishops to do? Appeal to secular authority, especially the highest authority, was neigh on inevitable. There were various episcopal reactions? The African bishops gathered in council sent delegations to the emperor. Their purpose was to obtain imperial laws against Donatism. After long discussion, Augustine became cautiously in favor. Several bishops, however, appealed to the imperial court directly. They sought protection for themselves and their parishioners—the councils issued orders that bishops and clergy not go, but to little avail. The outstanding example was Maximianus, bishop of Bagai. He had been ferociously attacked by Circumcelliones and left for dead. Upon sight of him and others in Rome, Emperor Honorius was appalled. He renewed laws against heretics from the time of Constantine and issued new and stronger orders against Donatists, even enjoining capital punishment. Augustine had sought in council to mitigate the tone and purpose of the appeals to Rome. Though he thought capital punishment theoretically justifiable, he was against its use in the case of Donatists, and this for several reasons. He desired reconciliation. He wanted to unite Donatists to

the Church, bishops with their whole flocks when possible; strong edicts and use of force militated against this. Redemption was always a possibility. Further there was a clergy crisis in North Africa. The solution was to recognize Donatist clerical orders, bring them as pastors into the church, and encourage their pastoral activity. As a realist, Augustine recognized that use of force against Donatists, even *Circumcelliones*, had not infrequently led to sincere conversions. Whether the sixteenth-century Spanish Inquisition is justifiable in itself is a question best left on the ash-heap of history. It certainly finds no confirmation in Augustine's cautious support of the use of imperial power against Donatism.

Article 108

Letters to Paulinus, Romanianus, and Licentius

396 A. D.

Paulinus had sent Romanus and Agilus to Africa. He had written Augustine a second letter and sent it through them. Apparently they arrived in Africa some time prior to Augustine's consecration as bishop and may well have been present at it. Surely they did not return home during winter, but rather at the earliest in early spring, 396. In any case, they returned earlier than Augustine had expected. He let them leave with regret. They were rushing to return to Paulinus. Augustine writes: "The more eager they are to obey you, the more promptly we are obliged to let them go. Their eagerness keenly awakens the picture they gave of you, because it made us see how dear you are to them. The more they urged us to allow them to go, the more we hoped to keep them here."¹

Augustine sent *Letter 31*, addressed to Paulinus and Therasia, with them. This letter is Augustine's reply to Paulinus' second letter. He reveals no less tenderness toward Paulinus and no less desire to see him than was evident in the letter Romanianus had brought. Augustine apprizes him of his promotion to the episcopate, but can not dream of going to Italy. He asks Paulinus, because Paulinus is less occupied with church affairs—he was still a priest—to come to Africa. This visit would console Augustine and others who admired the divine gifts in Paulinus. Such a trip would instruct those who could not or would not believe their intentions unless they could see the couple. Augustine goes so far as to say he does not know if Paulinus can exert a greater love toward his neighbor than in making known what he is and what he is becoming. Augustine recommends a young man named

¹*Letter 31.*

Vetustinus to him, who apparently was an unfortunate sinner. He also recommends Romanianus and his son Licentius.

Augustine sends Paulinus *De libero arbitrio*, and asks Paulinus to send him a book he was said to be writing against the pagans, along with Ambrose's *De philosophia*, a work no longer extant. Augustine asks Paulinus to accept a loaf of bread he is sending along. He greets him in behalf of Valerius and all the servants of God in Hippo. He calls Valerius his father who desires to see Paulinus as much as he. Augustine also sends the regards of Severus, bishop of Mileve. The brothers who brought Augustine's letter and news of his episcopal consecration to Paulinus also brought letters from Aurelius of Carthage, Alypius of Tagaste, Profuturus of Cirta, and Severus.² This is likely the same Severus who at first wanted simply to send his regards to Paulinus through Augustine, but had since some reason to write him himself.

Paulinus was waiting for Agilus and Romanus when Romanianus was still with him; they did not arrive until after his departure. On the day after their arrival Paulinus wrote Romanianus to apprise him that Augustine had been consecrated bishop. He shows appropriate joy. Paulinus exhorts Licentius to speak on behalf of his father and himself in both prose and verse to satisfy Augustine's earnest prayer noted in his recent letter. Paulinus wishes the ears of his heart might be open to the sound of the trumpet God had sounded through Augustine's mouth. He hopes through the confidence he has in divine providence Licentius' thoroughly carnal desires will give way to Augustine's wishes and faith. Augustine had no greater desire than to make Licentius worthy for being his son in Christ by virtue as he was worthy for learning and literature.³ Paulinus had not yet replied to Augustine's letter by the end of the summer, 397, or, if he had written, his letters had not yet reached Augustine.

²Letter 32.

³Letter 42; Letter 45. Editor's note: At the time of Tillemont writing, the Maurists had recently published these two previously unedited letters.

Article 109

Unsuccessful Attempts to Confer with Proculianus

The church of Hippo was split by the Donatist schism. Proculianus, or Proculeianus, was the Donatist bishop of Hippo. Augustine respected him because of his duty to human society and Proculianus' inclination to peace. Many praised Proculianus' civility and humility. Nevertheless, Augustine postponed writing him after becoming bishop. He did not believe it easy to confer with him.

One day Evodius found himself by chance in a house with Proculianus. The conversation turned to the hope of the faithful and the heritage of Christ's church. Evodius did not intend to flatter him but to defend truth. He was perhaps more ardent or enthusiastic than Proculianus wished. Proculianus complained Evodius had offended him. Nevertheless, he indicated a willingness to confer with Augustine before a few honorable men. Evodius gladly reported this news to Augustine; Augustine on his part joyfully received it. He took advantage of the occasion offered by Proculianus to shed light on the cause and origin of the baneful schism dividing families, close relatives, and friends.

Augustine wrote to Proculianus and apologized for Evodius' ardor.⁴ He assured Proculianus Evodius would not have intentionally offended him. Augustine promised he was available to meet with him with people of his own choosing. The sole condition was the conversation would be written down. They could converse personally, if he preferred, or by letter. The proceedings of the conference or the letters would then be read to both congregations, with a view to making them one people and one church. Augustine assures Proculianus of Valerius' consent. In the remainder of the

⁴Letter 33.

letter he implores Proculianus to prefer peace to considerations of honor and rank. Augustine may have written this preference since the African Church had not yet agreed to receive Donatist bishops in rank.

Whether Augustine was a priest or bishop at the time of *Letter 33* is unclear. More probably he was a bishop, since he speaks of honor received from those in need his help in hearing cases in juridical proceedings. Simple priests had no obligation or power of juridical process. At the latest this letter was written at the beginning of his episcopate, since Valerius was still alive. He wrote it before *Letter 34* where he says he was a new bishop.

What happened after that letter is unknown. In general Donatists avoided meeting Augustine.⁵ The letters he wrote to leading Donatist bishops were not letters of communion, since their schism rendered them unworthy. Rather, they were letters written as to pagans, with civility appropriate to bring peace. He invited them to confer to examine causes of the schism and similar matters. The Donatists rejected his letters, sometimes after reading them, often without. They never replied, either from contempt or impotence.⁶ As for Proculianus himself, he had recognized through experience he did not want to receive Augustine's letters.⁷ Augustine wrote Proculianus at least four times,⁸ although today only the letter about which we have been speaking is extant.

If *Letter 34* refers to lack of personal response, Proculianus may have replied through Victor, a Donatist priest. Victor spoke to public officers sent to receive Proculianus' reply. These officers, themselves Donatists, wrote an official document. This reply was probably similar to what Proculianus had said to Evodius and apparently committed him to a public conference. However, Proculianus may have replied (to a complaint by Augustine). "If you are Christian, deliver this up to divine judgment."⁹ Whatever be the case, from then on they believed Proculianus had never said what was reported in the officers' document. Additionally if Augustine were anxious to debate he should have gone to Cirta, where several Donatists were present, or to Mileve, where a council was soon to be held.

Eusebius, a citizen of Hippo and a man of some eminence, serious, wise, and moderate, was a Donatist friend of Proculianus.¹⁰ Augustine did not want to write Proculianus, because his letters had not been accepted.

⁵*Letter 43. Contra litteras Petiliani* I, 1.

⁶*Letter 43; Vita Augustini* 9; *Letter 35*.

⁷*Letter 34*.

⁸*Indiculum* 3; *Vita Augustini* 9.

⁹*Letter 35*.

¹⁰*Letter 34; Letter 35*.

Augustine turned to Eusebius and asked him to ascertain from Proculianus through honorable men whether he had spoken to Victor, what Victor had said to the officers, or whether the officers had made a false declaration of Victor's statements. He wrote Eusebius on this subject, and asked him in general what Proculianus thought concerning discussion of the schism. Augustine was ready to enter into discussion and examine the matter calmly with Proculianus' consent. Augustine hoped he would accept on the basis of what had been reported: they must seek truth together on the authority of Scripture; each would have ten honorable men present. They were not leaving themselves open to the problems the presence of others often brings.

Proculianus may have found conferring with Augustine difficult because he was less skilled in humane letters. Augustine assured him dialectic was not necessary on a question to be decided on the basis of Scripture or public documents. Proculianus could bring a colleague or Augustine could ask Samsucius, the Catholic bishop of Turra,¹¹ then at Hippo, to take his place.

Samsucius wrote a letter with Augustine to Severus and signed after him.¹² He was selected in 407 with Augustine and others as judge in a judicial matter. He is not mentioned at the conference of Carthage. Posidius mentions a letter of Augustine to Samsucius.¹³ At times Augustine consulted him in cases of doubt and found him to be incisive where Augustine himself was hesitant.¹⁴ Samsucius was eloquent and well instructed in the true faith. Thus Augustine did not fear him facing Proculianus and hoped God would assist him in debate.¹⁵ Concerning a trip to Mileve, Augustine replied this belongs properly to Proculianus. Since Augustine was consecrated only for the church of Hippo, he had no right to involve himself in other cities.

¹¹ Editor's note: Turra is a see within the confines of Hippo. Roman political divisions were not necessarily identical to the ecclesiastical divisions

¹² *Letter 62.*

¹³ *Indiculum 7.*

¹⁴ *Letter 83.*

¹⁵ *Letter 34.*

Article 110

Acceptance of Irregular Catholics

Augustine had another reason to write Eusebius. A Catholic adolescent in Hippo had often beaten his mother without fearing reprisal. She was a poor elderly widow. His fury was so wicked he did not stop beating her even on days when the severity of the laws are not applied to the worst criminals, like Sundays and the Easter fortnight. The bishop (that is, apparently, Augustine himself) rebuked him. The Catholic Church did not permit him the satisfaction of his wickedness, so he said to his mother, evidently in these precise words: "I am going to join the Donatists, and then I am going to drink your blood."¹⁶

He carried out the first part of his threat. Donatists accepted and re-baptized him, even though he was mad. They clothed in white a man stained with his mother's blood, and set him in front of the choir benches to be seen by all as a man renewed by the Holy Spirit. All the while he was thinking of killing his mother. Those re-baptizing him in this condition themselves urged him to carry out his detestable vow within the baptismal octave.

Other Donatists bemoaned this action, Augustine suggests. He was deeply touched by this damnable action. He believed the least he could do was to speak about it, no matter how terrible Donatist anger might become. He commissioned official documents concerning this sacrilege. Wherever he judged it proper to serve these complaints, in Hippo or elsewhere, he could not be accused of lying. He wrote Eusebius before the Easter octave was concluded concerning this matter, in the hope that he would himself disapprove of that action. Augustine protested, as he loved peace and

¹⁶*Letter 34.*

desired to reunite schismatics not by force but by truth, that he was still an enemy of their schismatic sacrileges.

Eusebius responded by saying he could not approve of admitting this son who beat his mother to the Donatist communion; if Proculianus knew about it, he would separate. As for the rest, he was astonished Augustine wanted to make him a judge over bishops. Augustine told him in writing a second time he had merely asked, and repeated now, to know from Proculianus the truth about his reply through Victor concerning his attitude toward a conference. As for the young man, if Proculianus was ready to excommunicate him upon knowledge of the facts, Augustine should know immediately.

Augustine warned Eusebius of another man whom Proculianus was obliged to separate from his communion.¹⁷ Primus was a former Catholic subdeacon of the church of Spagnana, apparently in the diocese of Hippo. Primus was associating too closely with virgins. He was often reproached. He did not correct himself and was deposed. This rebuke caused him to embrace the Donatist party, who re-baptized him along with two virgins who followed him. From then on he led an altogether licentious life with bands of dissolute women, and in the detestable drunken orgies of the Circumcelliones. Augustine adds, Proculianus and he should agree not to receive, except through penance, any leaving the church to flee its discipline. Augustine asks Eusebius to inform him. Otherwise he will go through judicial processes, since he resolved not to be silent when God commands him to speak. If violence is threatened, God well knows how to defend his church.

Augustine mentions yet another complaint. A farmer and member of the church had a daughter who was a catechumen. She had been duped by Donatists, received baptism, and later wore a habit and was blessed as a virgin. Her father wanted to assert his authority to bring her back to the Catholic communion. He even beat her. Augustine forbade violence, and did not wish to receive her unless she came on her own volition. In spite of this gentile policy, as Augustine was passing through Spagnana one day, one of Proculianus' priests happened to be on the property of the religious Catholic lady. He began shouting against him and this same lady, calling them traitors and persecutors. Augustine did not respond, nor did he permit those in his company to answer. Rather he asked Eusebius to advise Proculianus to repress the insolence of his Donatist ecclesiastics.

¹⁷Letter 35.

Augustine wrote these two letters recently after his consecration. Valerius was still alive when he wrote to Proculianus, but apparently died soon after.¹⁸ He does not appear in Augustine's letters and other works. In a sermon Augustine pictures himself and the entire city of Hippo in extreme grief over his death,¹⁹ but strong reason exists to doubt the authenticity of this composition.

¹⁸*Letter 33.*

¹⁹*PL Supplement II, 318.*

Article 111

Ad Simplicianum

397 A. D.

Ambrose died April 4, 397 and Simplicianus replaced him soon thereafter.²⁰ Augustine had known Simplicianus in Milan before his conversion, and had recourse to his understanding and advice in breaking the chains still binding him.²¹ From then on Augustine's heart was filled with affection for him as a spiritual father.²² Some of Augustine's writings had fallen into Simplicianus' hands and he had read them with satisfaction and pleasure. He had written Augustine to assure him of his love. He still remembered Augustine and joyfully saw the divine gifts bestowed upon him. He requested Augustine to explain certain difficulties and asked Augustine to write him a small book.²³

Augustine knew this man's worth and joyfully received his marks of affection and approval.²⁴ Augustine believed God wanted to console him through Simplicianus in his continual fear of erring in scriptural exegesis through ignorance or negligence. Like a good father, Simplicianus occupied Augustine with questions, not to learn anything new but to ascertain Augustine's progress and apprise him of his errors.²⁵ Augustine could not omit satisfying him without the guilt of disobedience and ingratitude. These questions were partly on the Epistle to the Romans, partly on the Books of Kings. Augustine wrote two books, the first, *Quaestiones in Paulum*, which

²⁰*Vita Ambrosii* 94.

²¹*Confessiones* VIII, 1.

²²*Ad Simplicianum, praefatio*.

²³*Ad Simplicianum* II, 5.

²⁴*Ad Simplicianum, praefatio*.

²⁵*Ad Simplicianum* II, 12.

dealt with only two questions, and the second on many others. Simplicianus wanted to know the prophetic sense.²⁶

Augustine had already explained the two questions on Paul in *Ad Romanos inchoata expositio*.²⁷ Augustine believed Simplicianus would not have proposed questions to him unless they were difficult. Augustine examined them anew, but feared he had not examined them the first time with sufficient care and attention.²⁸ His reflection on the second question on these words of Paul, "What do you have that you have not received?"²⁹ caused him to change his mind from his previous opinion that faith came from man, and that man, after hearing the truth, determined himself to believe or not.³⁰ He mentioned this sentiment, later known as Semi-Pelagianism, in some of his works written as a priest.³¹ He took advantage of writing and further study to recognize more fully than previously, through revelation and divine light, that the beginning of faith (*initium fidei*) was no less a gift of grace than the entire series of good works which follow.³²

In this work Augustine examined difficult principles concerning grace. He presents a balanced view. He struggles mightily on behalf of free will, but grace remains victorious in the end.³³ In the second part of *Ad Simplicianum* I, Augustine establishes as indubitable that grace is not given according to merit. He proves even the beginning of faith is God's gift. He lays down principles from which it is easy to conclude, though he does not mention it here, we can not persevere to the end of life unless it is given by the one who predestined us to his kingdom and his glory. Thus he asks Prosper and Hilary to have this work read to those in Marseilles to those challenging these truths, if they had not already read it.³⁴

Augustine received the reward of his humble faith. Assuredly, if he did not have sufficient intelligence to find the truth on the questions proposed, Simplicianus' merits would assist him in discovering it.³⁵ In beginning the second question, he treated an obscure point because of his confidence in the assistance of Simplicianus' prayers. Simplicianus would not have asked him to develop these secrets unless he had requested God to obtain the

²⁶ *Retractationes* II, 1; *Ad Simplicianum* II, *praefatio*.

²⁷ *Ad Simplicianum*, *praefatio*.

²⁸ *De praedestinatione sanctorum* I, 4.

²⁹ Editor's note: 1Co 4: 7.

³⁰ *De praedestinatione sanctorum* I, 3.

³¹ *De praedestinatione sanctorum* I, 4.

³² *De praedestinatione sanctorum* II, 20; I, 4.

³³ *Retractationes* II, 1; *De praedestinatione sanctorum* II, 21.

³⁴ *De praedestinatione sanctorum* I, 4.

³⁵ *Ad Simplicianum praefatio*.

strength for him. He begs Simplicianus not to be satisfied with reading this work and others possibly falling into his hands, but to point out defects with precise criticism. After requesting prayers for his imperfections, Augustine asks him to tell in a few words, but without gloss, what he thinks of this work.³⁶ He assures Simplicianus, provided his judgment is sincere and genuine, it will not appear too severe.

Another question proposed by Simplicianus concerned the witch who conjured up Samuel's soul for Saul.³⁷ Dulcitius later consulted him on the same difficulty. Augustine simply repeated what he had written to Simplicianus, but added at the end he had since recognized in Ecclesiasticus that it was Samuel himself who appeared to Saul.³⁸ Cassiodorus mentions this work.³⁹ Gennadius says he addressed to Simplicianus various questions on Scripture and explained them.⁴⁰

The divine light in this work on the mysteries of grace was affected not only by Simplicianus' prayers, but by his episcopal consecration. *Ad Simplicianum* is the first work he wrote as bishop; he says he wrote it at the beginning of his episcopate.⁴¹ This gives us reason to believe he wrote it in 396. On the other hand it is difficult not to believe Simplicianus was already a bishop. He could have been consecrated only after April 4, 397.⁴²

It is striking in writing to Simplicianus, who lived in Milan, Augustine did not say a word about Ambrose, if he were still alive or had recently died. This lacuna is a mystery of history, teaching us not to condemn rashly that for which we can find no reason. If we can believe Gennadius, Simplicianus often wrote Augustine while still a priest, to stimulate him to exercise his mind and to occupy himself in scriptural exegesis.⁴³ Simplicianus was for Augustine a new Ambrose, playing the role of stimulator, much as Origen did for Ambrose. However, no trace of this relationship in Augustine's works exists apart from the above. It is difficult to believe that, before his episcopate, Augustine had received many letters from Simplicianus. In addressing two works to him when he was a bishop,⁴⁴ Augustine indicates clearly

³⁶ *Ad Simplicianum* II, 5.

³⁷ *Ad Simplicianum* II, 3.

³⁸ *Epistula ad Dulcitium* 6.

³⁹ *Institutiones* 2.

⁴⁰ Gennadius 36.

⁴¹ *Retractationes* II, 1.

⁴² On the dating of *Ad Simplicianum*, see Complementary Note 24.

⁴³ Gennadius 36.

⁴⁴ *Ad Simplicianum*, *praefatio*.

enough the letter he was answering was the only one he had received from Simplicianus since he had begun writing on church doctrine.⁴⁵

⁴⁵*Ad Simplicianum* is customarily received as the last decisive turning point in Augustine's thought. See P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo "The Lost Future"*. Nevertheless, Augustine gradually develops his notions on grace over the entire course of his writing career. Augustine's writings are voluminous, but a relatively few themes develop and persist. C. Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology: An Argument for Continuity* (Oxford 2006) has recently contested *Ad Simplicianum* as a turning point in Augustine's thought. Though overstated, her thesis has at least the merit of emphasizing the gradual development of Augustine's thought.

Article 112

De agone christiana; De doctrina christiana

Augustine places his refutation of the Manichean letter *Epistula quam uocant Fundamentum* after *Ad Simplicianum*.⁴⁶ In fact this work contains almost all the articles of the Manichean creed.⁴⁷ We possess this work, or what would have been the first part of a work which remained unfinished. Augustine refuted only the beginning of Mani's letter. As for rest, he made notes which contained the necessary refutation. These notes were to serve as an outline for finishing the work.⁴⁸ These notes are no longer extant.

Augustine begins the work asking for divine peace, to make him love conversion and salvation for Manichean opponents, not their confusion and downfall.⁴⁹ He has compassion, not animosity, for those involved in errors he himself had so much trouble shedding. He mentions several reasons and predispositions which ought to maintain simple people in the Catholic Church without long discussion of dogma.⁵⁰ Augustine then enters fully into the subject and indicates not only does Mani not prove his claims, as he should in principle do, but makes statements contrary to good sense and reason.⁵¹

Augustine mentions *De agone christiana*, or *De christiana* next.⁵² In it he teaches Christians to fight both the devil and themselves. He gives an abridgement of the rule of faith and moral principles. He briefly mentions

⁴⁶*Retractationes* II, 2.

⁴⁷*Epistula quam Manichaei uocant Fundamenti* 3; 43.

⁴⁸*Retractationes* II, 3.

⁴⁹*Epistula quam Manichaei uocant Fundamenti* 1.

⁵⁰*Ibid* 4.

⁵¹*Du Pin* 3, 764.

⁵²*Retractationes* II, 3.

the principal heresies, among which he lists the Donatists and Luciferians.⁵³ However, he evidently had Manicheans particularly in mind. He mentions the Donatists had splintered into various schisms. He takes no benefit from the fact that Donatists had accepted the Maximinianist bishops Praetextatus and Felician back into their communion, after having driven them out. This reception, which overturned the very foundation of their schism, occurred toward the beginning of 397. Thus Augustine could well have written to Simplicianus as early as 396. Augustine remarks he had written *De agone christiana* in a simple style well accorded to the understanding of the brethren not instructed in Latin.⁵⁴ He may mean monks. Cassiodorus says this book is intended principally for those rejecting secular pomp and training for combat against it.⁵⁵

The order Augustine gives to his works obliges placing *De doctrina christiana* I-III next.⁵⁶ In the first three books, he gives rules for understanding Scripture,⁵⁷ in *De doctrina christiana* IV he shows how to teach others what has been learned. He had several of these oratorical principles already in mind.⁵⁸ He had hoped that, in communicating these God-given insights to others, he would not refuse other necessary intuitions. He did not complete the work at that time. He stopped at *De doctrina christiana* III, 25.⁵⁹ He cites

⁵³ *De agone christiana* 13-32.

⁵⁴ *Retractationes* II, 3.

⁵⁵ *Institutiones* 15.

⁵⁶ *Retractationes* II, 4.

⁵⁷ Editor's note. Throughout history and into the present day, there has been discussion of whether Augustine presents a complete theory of signs, what moderns call semiotics. Augustine's purpose was not to give a complete semiotic theory, but to assemble some semiotic principles necessary for scriptural exegesis.

⁵⁸ *De doctrina christiana* I, 1. Editor's note: Augustine accepts many principles of Ciceronian textual exegesis. He also thinks Scripture has its own method of expression. He recognizes the difference between Hebrew and Latin (and Greek) modes of expression. In the sense that he is giving rules for Christian orators, he is writing a Christian *De oratore*. See A. Primmer "The Function of *genera dicendi* in *De doctrina Christiana* 4," *De doctrina christiana: A Classic of Western Culture?*, (eds.) D. Arnold and P. Bright (Notre Dame 1995) where there is an extensive bibliography on this question. See *Le doctrine chrétienne* BA 11, 2.

⁵⁹ *Retractationes* II, 4. Editor's note: There has been considerable speculation on the reasons why Augustine stopped writing the work abruptly in the middle of Book III. Augustine was about to comment on Tyconius's seven rules for biblical exegesis. Some have opined that it was "politically incorrect" for a Catholic to accept scriptural exegesis from a Donatist in 397, but not so in 426. The usual reason a respectable author stops writing is that he does not know what to say. This is probably true in this case. Nevertheless, Augustine, against his usual custom, sent an incomplete copy of *De doctrina christiana* to Simplicianus in 398. We may conclude then (1) that the work was complete enough for some of Augustine's purposes at that point and (2) that he wanted to inform the "Milanese circle" of the completion and

this work in *Contra Faustum*.⁶⁰ When reviewing his writings, Augustine discovered this work unfinished.⁶¹ He completed it before reviewing the remainder of his works, that is, he finished book three and added book four. Augustine finished this work circa eight years or more after his journey to Cherchel in September, 418, thus in 426 or 427.⁶² In *De doctrinachristiana* II, he cites Ambrose's *De sacramentis*.⁶³ He had requested this work from Paulinus in early 396. He calls him "our Ambrose," but from this text nothing can be concluded concerning Ambrose's death.

Augustine reports at the beginning that reliable persons had recently informed him of a Christian barbarian slave, not knowing how to read and not having anyone to teach him how, obtaining the ability to read from God by a triduum of prayer.⁶⁴ When presented with a book, he read it easily to the surprise of those present. Cassiodorus cites this passage and another from book three.⁶⁵

alteration of his views concerning the purpose of the liberal arts. Apart from providing an *exercitatio animae* as found in *De ordine* and *De musica*, study of the liberal arts was helpful in interpretation of Scripture. See K. Pollmann, "To write by advancing in knowledge and to advance by writing," *Augustinian Studies*, 29 (1), 1998; F. Van Fleteren, "Toward an Understanding of Augustine's Hermeneutic," *Augustinian Studies*, 29 (1), 1998 1, B Studer, "Augustinus und Tyconius in Licht der patristischen Exegese," *Augustinian Studies* 29 (1), 1998.

⁶⁰ *Contra Faustum* XXII, 91.

⁶¹ *Retractationes* II, 4.

⁶² *De doctrina christiana* IV, 24.

⁶³ *De doctrina christiana* II, 28.

⁶⁴ *De doctrina christiana praefatio*. Editor's note: This passage could easily indicate that Augustine was writing in light of charismatic, that is intuitive, non-scientific exegesis of Scripture. While accepting this practice as at times coming from divine inspiration, he thinks it not to be the usual method. See C. Maier, *Die Zeichen in der geistige Entwicklung jugendlicher Theologie* 2 vols. (Würzburg 1969, 1974) K. Pollmann, *De doctrina christiana* (Freiburg 1996). F. Van Fleteren, *Principles of Augustine's Hermeneutic, Augustine: Biblical Exegete, Collectanea Augustiniana*, vol. 5 (New York, 2001).

⁶⁵ *In psalterium praefatio; In psalmum* 21 18.

Article 113

Confessiones; Contra Faustum

After *De doctrina christiana* Augustine mentions one work consisting two non-extant books entitled *Contra partem Donatistarum*.⁶⁶ Next he places *Confessiones*, where, in remembrance of his sins and recognition of the graces he received, he praises divine justice and mercy. He lifts the human mind and heart toward supreme good and infinite majesty. Augustine says that work affected him thus when he wrote it, and it still produces the same effect when he reads it now. He knows many religious men welcomed it warmly and still admire it greatly. Of all his works, there is none more read or more pleasing.⁶⁷ In the whole history of the church, it gives delight and gains the admiration to all spiritual men.⁶⁸

Augustine recognized, however, this work was not to everyone's taste. In fact, in Rome a bishop read these words: "Give me the grace to accomplish what you command, and then command me what you will."⁶⁹ Pelagius was present. He already had heresy in his heart and could not abide these words. He rose up against them heatedly and wrangled with the reader. There are several passages in this work from which Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians take offense. He opposed their errors even before they had arisen.⁷⁰ Petilianus falsely interpreted some words of the third book.⁷¹ He

⁶⁶ *Retractationes* II, 5.

⁶⁷ *De perfectione iustitiae* 10.

⁶⁸ Du Pin 3. 512–13.

⁶⁹ *De perfectione iustitiae* 20. See *Confessiones* X, xxix, 41. Editor's note: the bishop is thought to be Evodius who visited Rome in 405-406.

⁷⁰ Editor's note: In *Confessiones* Augustine interprets his own life in terms of his recent exegesis of Romans 9: 9-29. Salvation is completely the work of divine grace. From 411 onward, Augustine saw Pelagius as endangering a work of a lifetime. Nevertheless his theory of grace in all its detail is only gradually developed during the Pelagian controversy See J. Brachtendorf, *Confessiones* (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 2005).

criticized them, though these passages are clear *in se* and from the context. Some moderns claim to find too much eloquence in *Confessiones*, and other defects of style. These defects should not, they say, occur in so excellent and useful a work.⁷²

When Count Darius asked Augustine for a copy ⁷³ he sent it and wrote:

Look at me in this book, and learn what I am, if you do not want to praise me beyond what I deserve. You must refer to me and what I say of myself in this work rather than what others say of me. Consider well my portrait that you see in it, and what I was of myself and by myself. If there is at present anything in me that you pleases you, rather than praising me, join with me in praising the one who should be praised for what he did in me. When you have recognized me as I am, pray to God not to allow me to destroy what he has begun in me.⁷⁴

Augustine pictures himself both before and after receiving grace. His purpose was to prevent us misevaluating him, and thus having positive, but false sentiments. He gives a rarely found example of humility. Augustine did not want praise for the graces received, but praise for their author who had delivered him. He wished his brother Christians to ask other graces in his behalf which he lacked now, but for which he yearned.

Augustine cites *Confessions* XIII in *De Genesi ad litteram*.⁷⁵ The Benedictines summarize each book. Eucher quotes what Augustine used to say to himself to rouse and give himself wholly to God.⁷⁶ He assures us Cyprian, Ambrose, and other saints did the same in storming heaven. Fulgentius cites a passage from *Confessiones* XI.⁷⁷ Cassiodorus mentions Augustine's *Confessiones* and refers to his care in explaining the beginning of Genesis in the three final books of this work and many other writings.⁷⁸ Augustine recognized the difficulty in interpreting Genesis. In a beautiful passage from her autobiography, Teresa of Avila attributes her conversion to reading Augustine's *Confessiones*.⁷⁹

⁷¹ *Contra litteras Petiliani* III, 17.

⁷² Du Pin 3, 512f.

⁷³ Letter 230.

⁷⁴ Letter 231.

⁷⁵ *De Genesi ad litteram* II, 9.

⁷⁶ Eucher, *Ad Valerianum de contemptu mundi*. Editor's note. Eucher is a seventeenth-century bishop of Lyon.

⁷⁷ Fulgentius, Letter 5.

⁷⁸ Cassiodorus, *Institutiones* 22.

⁷⁹ *Vie de saint Therese* 9. Trans. D'Andilli (Paris 1670).

Contra Faustum follows *Confessiones* in Augustine's catalogue.⁸⁰ Faustus' *Capitula* had fallen into Augustine's hands.⁸¹ The faithful had read it and wanted Augustine's refutation. So intensely did they urge him he was forced to write the refutation by the right their charity had over him. He refuted it by first placing Faustus' text and then a solid and forceful refutation. As a result the book is quite long. He divided it into thirty-three books, though a few are quite brief. Others are long, especially *Contra Faustum* XXII, where he defends the patriarchs' lives against Faustus' calumny. He cites a passage from *Contra Faustum* XXII in *Quaestiones Dulcitii*.⁸² This is apparently the work he mentions there against Faustus on the life of the patriarchs.

He sent *Contra Faustum* to Jerome along with *Letter 82* circa 405. Augustine cites it rather frequently: In *De ciuitate dei*, in *De Genesi ad litteram*, *Quaestiones Exodi*, *Contra aduerserium legis et prophetarum*, *De consensu Euangelistarum*, and *De ueritate*.⁸³ Cassiodorus says that in these thirty-three books Augustine has refuted Faustus' godlessness with a clearly reasoned account, and has spoken admirably about Genesis.⁸⁴ Fulgentius quotes a passage on Noah's ark.⁸⁵

Few clues about dating these works are found. Augustine simply says he had written *Contra Faustum* a long time before he received *Letter 89* from Jerome, which he received in 405 at the earliest. We follow the chronological order of *Retractationes*, since Augustine did so in that work, as far as he could. He was not always exact.⁸⁶ Immediately after *Contra Faustum*, for example, he places the conference with Felix the Manichean, which is certainly from December, 404. After mentioning several other works, he places those against Petilian, though they were written under Pope Anastasius, that is, in 402 at the latest. He may have wanted to list in series after *Contra Faustum* his other anti-Manichean works. In fact after those he places here, no other works against this heresy are found. We shall follow this supposition and place here the other works pertaining to the Manicheans, until we find any work with a more precise date.

⁸⁰ *Retractationes* II, 7.

⁸¹ *Contra Faustum* I, 1.

⁸² *Quaestiones ad Dulcitium* I, 7; II, 2.

⁸³ *De ciuitate dei* XV, 7; 26; XVI, 19; *De Genesi ad litteram*; *Commentarium Exodi*; *contra aduersarium legis et prophetarum* II, 12; *De consensu euangelistarum* I, 5; *De ueritate* 15.

⁸⁴ *Institutiones* 22.

⁸⁵ *Letter 58*.

⁸⁶ Editor's note: In general Augustine lists his works in *Retractationes* in the order he started to write them, not in the order in which he finished them.