A BRIEF LIFE OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Aurelius Augustinus, more commonly known as "St. Augustine of Hippo" and often simply known as Augustine. Aurelius Augustinus was born at Tagaste, a town of Numidia on the 13 November 354 A.D. His father, Patricius was a burgees of his town. He was a pagan. His mother Monica was not only a Christian but a woman of the most elevated, tender, and devoted piety. She early instructed her son in the faith and love of Jesus Christ. In the midst of all his youthful he was an earnest student. His father observing the early developing his talents.

The period of St. Augustine known as "decline of Roman Empire". This period was the period of social, political and theological transformation and also transformation of St. Augustine from Paganism to Christianity.

"His life also spanned one of the most important phases in the transition from Roman paganism to Christianity".

In this period most of the Roman pagan had been adopted Christianity, although paganism had not altogether end.

"Nevertheless, it was during this period that Roman state adopted Christianity as the official state religion".

His education began in his native town Tageste with the state language Latin and Arithmetic. He studied not only at his native town, but at Madura and Carthage. Latin and Greek literature has played very important role in his life. In his childhood he studied the latin poets such as Terrence, Horace, Catullas, Ovid, Juvenal Persius and Martial. His writing
bear many traces of his similarity with Latin poets which started from his school days. But his acquaintance with Greek literature was limited. He went on to study the Hortensius of Cicero. The study of Hortensius awakened in him an ardent love of philosophy. He engaged restlessly in philosophical study. After basic education, when he was eleven years old, his parents send him Madaurus to continue his education. In a continuation of his education at the age of 16, he went to Carthage. This period was the period of his profligacy or moral dissolute life. In that city he had a love affair. He took a concubine and give birth a son. The name of his son was Adeodatus. Meaning of Adeodatus is “gift of God”. But he referred his son as “child of my sin”. The pagan atmosphere of this city diverted from Christianity.

“In Carthage, Augustine’s education centered primarily on his becoming a rhetorician and lawyer – a field in which he become highly proficient”.

His materialistic mind could not found satisfactory answer in Christianity therefore he detached himself from Christianity. In this stage he came to contract with manichians and become the follower of this sect. Manichians sect based on two principles – (i) Ormuzd, (ii) Ahriman. Good principle is responsible for good and evil principle for the evil. Near about nine years Augustine was strongly attracted towards manichaeism. Manichaeism was dualistic religion. This religion had been founded by Mani (C. AD 215-76). According to this there are two eternal principle, light (spirit) and darkness (i.e. matter).

“For I was ignorant as to that which really is, and was, as it were, violently moved to give my support to foolish
deceivers, when they asked me "whence is evil come" — and "Is God limited by a bodily shape, and has He hairs and nails?" ... At which things I, in my ignorance, was much disturbed, and retreating from the truth I appeared to myself to be going towards it".5

"This cultural and its educational system were the two sources that supplied the initial impulse for Augustine’s thinking. His sureh for truth and wisdom with his reading at the age of 18 of now lost dialogue by Civero, the Hortensus".6

The work Cicero made great impact of St. Augustine. He could not forget this. He mentioned this in his later writings. He wrote in confessions, the work of Cicero changed my interest and gave me a new direction or purpose of my life.

"This book, in truth, changed my affections, and turned my prayers to thy self, O Lord, and made me have other hopes and desires".7

He appointed as a teacher in his native city and later in Milan. In Milan he devoted himself.

"Beginning with autumn of 373 A.D., saint Augustine embarked upon a career as a teacher. First in Tagaste, than in Carthage, and next in Rome he forged ahead with great success".8

When he could not find satisfactory answer in Manichaemism. There was again transformation from Manichaism to skepticism. He become sceptic. During the teaching he was altogether under the spell of Manichaism religion. The spell of Manichaean had finally broken through the influence of his new friend in Milan, Bishop ambrose and the Christian Neoplatonists around him,

"And to Milan I come, to Ambrose the bishop, known to the whole world as among the best of men".9
“And I began to love him, not at first, indeed, as a teacher of the truth which I entirely despaired of in thy church — but as a man friendly to myself”.

The study of Plato’s and Neoplatonist’s writing gave stability in his thought. In Milan he tried to search those questions that had worried him about Manichaean religion. He found more satisfactory answers of those questions in Christianity rather than Manichaean religion, which he already found in his mother Monica. He felt that at that time there was no great difference between Christianity and atmosphere of Neo-platonic thought of the time.

“Even in 400, when he wrote his confession he spoke of the teachings of the ‘Platonists’ as preparing his way to Christianity”.

He mentioned in his book confessions, Neoplatonism as containing the distinguish Christian doctrine about God and his word, the creation of the world and so on. At Milan the conflict of his mind in search of truth still continued. Ambrose was bishop of Milan, although he had a weak voice, yet Augustine was attracted by his reputation and went to hear the famous Christian preacher in order. St. Augustine said that, the bishop’s eloquence was more full of knowledge, yet in manner less pleasurable and soothing, than that of Faustus. Ambrose had no leisure for philosophic discussion. He continued to hear Ambrose preach, and gradually the gospel of divine truth and grace was received into his heart. First Plato and then St. Paul opened his mind to higher thought. On day he was busy with his friend, Alypius in studying the Pauline epistles. His struggle of mind became intolerable. The thought of divine purity fighting in his heart with the love of the world and the flesh. He brust into an incontrollable flood of tears and rushed out into
his garden and he might allow his tears to have full vent, and pour out his heart to God. Suddenly he seemed to hear a voice calling upon him to consult the divine oracle, “Take up and read, take up and read”. He stopped off weeping, rose up, and sought the volume where Alypius was sitting, and opening it read the following passage. He saw Alypius read the passage of Rom viii 13-14 "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Rom VIII 1314) St. Augustine said, I had neither desire nor need to read farther and said that the light of peace had been poured into my heart. All the shadows of doubt dispersed.

After his conversion in 386 A.D. Augustine gave up his profession as a teacher of rhetoric, he returned to Rome for a short time and then returned to his native city. He lived according to monastic rules and under popular pressure, he became bishop of Hippo as a priest. Now the work of St. Augustine was served to church such as preaching administration travel and so on.

During his Bishophood he had to face many opponents of manichaeanism, Donatists and Pelagians. In spite of these objection he never ceased to be a thinker and scholar. According to St. Augustine the status and role of the bishop is not only as administrator but a teacher interpreter and defender of pure doctrine. According to him a priest is responsible for determining orthodoxy, through use of the pronouncement of council as well as scripture and for eradicating heresies. As a church
father and theologian Augustine was the person who defined Christian heresy. He defined most three prominent heresy (1) Donatism, (2) Polagianism, (3) Manichaeanism. When he became priest of hippo, he did not wait to attack on his moral enemies.

"The ponatists accused the Catholics of having a blamished priesthood and thus no true sacraments".\(^\text{12}\)

Augustine gave his view against to Donaticism. He clearly argued that the efficacy or the quality of sacraments does not depends upon the worthness of the priest. At the end of sixth century north African church had divided. Donaticism is the name of that sachism. The reason behind this schism were both theological and non-theological issues. The members of Donaticism believed in holy spirit not to authority of priest or to be under the continuous guidance of holy spirit. They does not believe in authority of priesthood.

"Under cyprian's guidance, the church had decided that a valid sacrament could not be administered by a cleric in a state of sin or to one who was outside the church".\(^\text{13}\)

They hold that priest could not governed the state because he also a sinner. So people should separate themselves from a priest who is sinner. Again Donaticism Augustine gave his view.

"The efficacy of the sacraments does not depends upon the worthness of the priest".\(^\text{14}\)

That means according to St. Augustine the validity or authority of sacraments does not depends upon the priest. According to St. Augustine, my root is Christ, he claimed which I was born is the word of God. He further said I don’t believed in authority of priesthood or priest by whom I
was baptized, but I believed in Christ who justifies the sinner and he can forgive sin of human being. According to St. Augustine church is not found in personal character, but in the Union of whole church with Christ. He holds —

"The church is not made up of saints as the donatists hold but of a mixed body of saints and more or less repentant sinners. Augustine insisted that weak members must be patiently born by the church — as in the parable of the wheat and tares".  

Hence Augustine asks the question how can there be a full separation of saints and sinners prior to final judgement?

Next heresy which have to face Augustine was pelagianism. Pelagius was Christian layman. According to him, man has in their own power to avoid sin and achieve righteousness. He criticized on this point is that, he derogate grace of God. Although he did not deny this fact. That the power to avoid sin is given by God. But he denied the need for cooperative grace or divine assistance to avoid sin and achieve righteous action.

"Pelagius claimed that what one does, either laudable or blameworthy, depends upon individual".

That means man has inherent capacity for avoidance or achievement. St. Augustine does not accept this view he insisted that God’s grace alone enables fallen humanity to achieve anything worthy. According to him freedom of will does not linked with the humanity nature, but links with God’s grace. *In De Gratia et Libero Arbitro* (On grace and Free will).

"Augustine asserts, "No man,... when he sins, can in his heart blame God for it, but everyman must impute the fault to himself... Nor does it detract from man’s own
freedom of will when he performs any act in accordance with the will of God”.17

According to saint Augustine man cannot save himself and salvation can be got with the grace of God or in other words salvation is God’s doing not human being. Next heresy which he has to face is Manichaeism. The founder of Manichaeism is the Mani, was born in southern Babylonia about AD 216. The Manichaeism myth based on two principles light and darkness.

“Mani taught the existence of two principles of things, both eternal and perpetually in opposition, namely Light and Darkness. Light is identical in essence with God, while Darkness is evil and the world’s history is merely the history of the struggle between these two principles”.18

Manichaeism used to explain the problem of evil through two ultimate principle (i) Ormuzd (ii) Ahriman. Good principle is responsible for good evil principle for evil.

“He denounced the manichaen cosmology, the view of man and man’s sin, and especially the concept of God as having human attributes and anatomical features”.19

He does not accept manichain’s view that the attribution of evil to deity. He reject the dualistic manichaun’s claimed that good and evil had their origin in two distinct deities. According to Augustine there is only one true God. Now I twin towards the discussion of St. Augustine’s morality or free will. Morality lies at the centre of Augustine’s thought.

The modern concept of the will is often said to originate with Augustine. Certainly the idea of will is central to his philosophy of mind, as well as to his account of sin and the origin of evil.
Man is the God’s creation and free will is the gift of God. That means he has capacity to choose. But this gift of God of free will to the man is not only the capacity to do good but also evil. So, is God is responsible for evil what man does? That means evil would not be in this world if God did not give free will. Augustine in his book tried to himself to answer this question.

Augustine holds that man has the freedom to choose between good and evil, so he is responsible for their good and evil actions. Hence their actions deserve praise and blame, reward and punishment. Although man has capacity to choose good action never the less he does not do right, without God’s grace. Another question arises, Is this does not derogate man’s freedom. That means man’s freedom and God’s grace are compatible.

These are some of the questions which St. Augustine try to set out in his book *De Libero Arbitrio*.

Hence we see that there are lot of changes come in his life. After three years spent in retirement he took a journey to Hippo, to see a Christian friend. There Christian community has a bishop, but they want presbyter Augustine being chooses as a presbyter by the people. He would fail have escaped, but the cureh could not give up his services. He become a presbyter and finally become bishop of Hippo. He served the catholic church until his death 28th of August 430 AD. When he was receiving the pertial parlam.
A BRIEF LIFE OF AL-GHAZALI

Abu Haid Mohammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Mohammad ibn Taus Ahmad al Taus al-Shafi was known as al-Ghazali. He was born in 450/1058 at Tabran. His father was pious dervish. Unfortunately he was illiterate. His father died in his early life. Al-Ghazali and his brother became orphan. At the time of his death he said to his sufi friend, “unfortunately I could not get education, so its my great wish my both children become literate”. Then Ghazali and his brother brought up and educated by a pious sufi friend. At the young age Ghazali began the study of theology and law first in his native town from Shaikh Ahmad ibn Muhammad al Radhkhani al-Tusi and then at Jurjan under the Imam abu Nasr al Isma’ili. When he was about twenty years where he started study under al-Juwaini known as Imam al Haramain. He was Ash’arite theologian of the day. In this academy there were various subjects such as, theology, Sufism, canon law, philosophy, logic, dialectics, natural sciences etc. Imam al-Haramain gave full freedom to his peoples for the discussion and freedom for expression of their ideas. He encouraged to his puple for all kind of discussion. Al-Ghazali gave proof his philosophical understanding and learning.

“Imam al-Haramain described him as a plenteous ocean to be drowned”.

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After sometime he started to give lecture his fellow students. When he was in Nizamiyyah Academy he become restless or impatient about dogmatic teaching and here he showed the sign of skepticism. During this period he became disciple of the sufi Abu ‘Ali al-Fadl ibn Mohammad ibn ‘Ali al-Famadhi al Tusi. He practiced of sufistic exercises under his guidance but his desire could not be satisfied. As he himself said, “he could not attain that stage where the mystics begin to receive pure inspiration from “high above”. “So he did not feel quite settled down in his mind”.²

Al-Ghazali was on the one hand dissatisfied with speculative systems of the scholastic theologians on the other he could not satisfied with sufistic experience. Nizam al-Mulk was very inspired of his knowledge of Muslim law, theology, and philosophy. So he appointed him chair person of theology in the Nizamiyyah Academy at Baghdad in 484/1091. Al-Ghazali got complete success as professor. He is known as the greatest theologian in the Ash’arite traditional that time. But old doubt arised him again. He became again sceptic. The quest search for truth increases more and more. He says that from the period of my young age when I was fiftieth year old I have ventured into this vast ocean. I have searched out all the faith and believe of every sects, and tried to remove error from truth. He says that there was no philosopher whose system remain from me in order to understanding nor theologian whose doctrine I did not followed out. Further he says that no secrets are remain which I have not penetrated. He says that quest for truth was insight me from the early age. I broken the traditional belief and freed myself from heresy. He started search for truth from the
sense perception. He says that may be our sight is the source of knowledge. He observed movement of the shadow.

"Observation and experience, however, show subsequently that a shadow moves not suddenly, it is true, but gradually and imperceptibly, so that it is never really motionless".3

Further he observed our eye perceive a star, it is large same as piece of gold. But mathematically star is more time larger than piece of gold. So, from this, he says that this type of notion which senses declare true does not accepted as true by reason. These notions are contradicted. Then he could not trust on sense perception. He thought that this surety may be found in intellectual inquiry, which is based on fundamental principles, “such as: ten is greater than three; the same thing cannot simultaneously be affirmed and denied; nothing here below can be both created and eternal, existent and non-existent, necessary and impossible”.4

He said that a doubt arises insight me, what is guarantee reason is more reliable source of knowledge than of sense perception. He said, my senses claim that when you trusted me, but reason contradicted me, otherwise you trust me till now. So may be possible third thing come would be over and above of reason, who refuted reason as reason refuted us.

“Then the difficulty appeared to resemble the problem of sleep. I told myself that when one is asleep our believes all sorts of things and finds oneself in all sorts of sitations; one believes in them absolutely, without the slightest doubt. When one wakes up, one realizes the inconsistency and inanity of the phantasm of the imagination”.5
So, from this he conclude that reason also is not reliable source of knowledge. When you awake no guarantee of the motion which derive from senses and reason are real. This condition may be find in Sufism which sufi call “ecstasy”. In this state sufi claim that they reached in that state where they become totally absorbed in themselves. In that state they looses their consciousness, his mind does not agree with what is given by reason that state may be called death. As prophets says:

“Men are asleep; when they die, they wake”

From this Ghazali’ faith on reason may end.

“This unhappy state lasted about two months, during which I was not, it is true, explicitly or by profession but morally and essentially a thorough going sceptic”.

After two months God guided me and I come out this mental malady.

When I cured from this disease from the God’s mercy. I realized there are four categories of seeker of truth.

1. The scholastics (mutakallimun), who claim discernment and speculative capabilities.
2. The interiorists (batiniyya), who claim to be the masters of teaching (ta’lim) and are characterized by their belief in the need for an infalliable Imam.
3. The philosophers (Falasifah), who consider themselves exponents of logic and proof.
4. The mystics (sufiyya), who seek the privilege of Divine Presence (Ahl al-Hadra), vision and inspiration.

He said that, I realized truth does not hide from these four groups of seekers.

Further he says that if one does not find out truth, one should be give up hope for gaining truth.
"I soon set myself to follow these four paths and to examine what there groups hold, beginning with scholasticism, passing through philosophy and interiorism, and finishing with the mysticism of the sufis."

As Ghazali maintained that there are four category seeker of truth, similarly he divided philosophers into three categories. One is materialists, second one is naturalists and third one theists.

Materialists (dahriyyun) : This group had denied the existence of creator. They holds that this universe has existence eternally without creator. It is self subsisting system. This world developed by itself and by its own laws and can be understood by itself. These groups are atheist (zandiqa).

"In their view the world exists from all eternity and had no author. The animals comes from semen and semen from the animal; so it has always been and will always be; those who maintain this doctrines are atheists."

The Naturalist (taba'liyun) : The naturalists believed in wonder creation and admitted the existence of a wise creator, but they does not admitted the spirituality and immortality of the human soul. They deny heaven, hell, resurrection, and day of judgement.

"There also ought to be called atheists, for the true faith depends not only on the acknowledgement of God, but of His apostle and of the Day of Judgment. And they acknowledge God and His attributes, they deny a judgement to come."

The theists (ilahiyyun) : It is supposed Socrates who was the teacher of Plato and Plato who was the teacher of Aristotle consider as theists philosophers. This group explain the rules of logic for his pupils, illustrated what was formerly obscure. This group refuted the former two system i.e.
the materialists and naturalists, but they made argument which should not be make. Aristotle goes against the theories of Plato and Socrates. He separated himself from them. But he could not escape himself from the stain of infidelity and heresy. So Ghazali consider them as unbeliever. Ghazali holds that muslim philosopher i.e. Ibn Sina and Farabi who adopted their philosophy also unbeliever. After spending eleven year as a wandering dervish and scholar, finally he returned to his native town. Tus in 499/1105. After coming back Tus, he spended his life as retire person. He spended his time in meditation and contemplation. But very soon Fakh al-ulk, the son of Nizam al-Mulk, who as the vizier of Sultan Sanjar, requested him to accept the chair of theology at the Maimunah Nizamiyyah college at Nishapur. He accepted this offer after some hesitation. But he did not stay their long time. He come back his native town and established a madrasah. He teaches both theology and tasawwuf. He lived in Madrasah with some personal disciples. He spended his life with study and devotion till his death on the 19th of December 1111.