

considered this expulsion as a sign to form their own Church and they therefore used this date as their founding. The Marcionite Churches spread throughout Italy, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Armenia and were still flourishing as late as the fifth century. This new Church possessed a clergy very similar to the mainstream Churches, yet made less distinction between clergy and laity. Some characteristics of the Marcionite Church were: equality between the sexes, acceptance of non-members to participate in the Eucharist and the use of a New Testament Canon organized by Marcion which included the Gospel of Luke (which Marcion believed to have been written by Paul) and ten Pauline letters. Marcionite Churches were also accredited as the first to widely utilize congregational singing and the composition of Christian Hymns.



Marcion

Mani. Mani, a Persian of royal parentage lived during the third century. His father was a member of the Elkasites, a sect of proto-Mandaeans. Mani himself left the Elkasite community at age 24, under the guidance of his heavenly “twin,” in order to found not only his own Church, but also a unique religion in itself. Mani’s guide or heavenly twin was also referred to as the “Living Paraclete,” and came down and spoke to Mani. Mani gives a report of this conversation in the Kephalaia:

He revealed to me the hidden mystery that was hidden from the worlds and the generations: the mystery of the Depth and the height: he revealed to me the mystery of the Light and the Darkness, the mystery of the