

## General Conclusions

This work has followed Augustine's appropriation of Cyprian, a process that ran through the entirety of his career. Events that started with his ordination as a priest in 391, and carried on until his death in 430, were recapitulated in these pages, with consideration also given to Cyprian's ongoing appeal to North African Christians in the centuries thereafter.

The beginning of the book was concerned with the earliest years of Augustine's ordained ministry. Through a careful analysis of selected works, such as *Ep.* 19, 20, 21, 23, 29, and *Conf.* Chapter 10, I recaptured the vocational crisis Augustine underwent at the start, which I surmise to have been his reaction to a perceived lack of interest from his fellow North Africans in his passion for the Catholic truth. Eventually this frustration manifested itself in increasing criticisms of the Donatists by way of themes that he would deploy throughout his career. Works that were closely examined were *Ep.* 22, 23, 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 43, 44, 49, 51, 52, 53. The most important themes to come out of this period of the 390s were the pride (*superbia*) of the Donatists; the provincialism of 'Africa' and its desired separation from the world (in opposition to Augustine's biblical exegesis); the notion that schism is worse than heresy; the idea that public sinners are to be tolerated for the sake of Church unity; and an early critique of the Donatist leadership's actions in the course of the Maximianist schism (390s).

Up to this point no surviving records show that Augustine had as yet stumbled upon Cyprian as an authority against the Donatists. But he was heading in that direction. As the year 400 approached, the anti-Donatist campaign intensified, with an increase in polemical language and themes appearing in Augustine's letters and sermons. A look at s. 37, 252, 271, 292, 313E, *En. in Ps.* 54, *Ex.* 2 of 21, *Ex.* 2 of Ps. 33, *En. in Ps.* 54, *En. in Ps.* 57 revealed that he continued aggressively criticising the Donatists for being influenced by concupiscence, arrogance, and pride, and for therefore rejecting Christ because of their insistence on the exclusive integrity of their own, local and African Church. As these polemically-charged trends developed, it was possible to carefully retrace the seminal moments of Cyprian's influence in the surviving accounts. This was done through an assessment of an array of works written between 394–400: *Doct. Chr.* (where the first direct mention/appeal to Cyprian was made), *Conf.* and *C. Faust.* But establishing the precise moment of appropriation was a difficult task, since this was based on a collection of sermons that are difficult to date precisely: i.e., s. 37, 305A, 313A, 313B, 313C, 313E. Each of

these sermons contains language clearly aimed at appropriating Cyprian's authority. Of the many sermons that are believed to have been delivered in this period, this group presents the most promising primary examples of Augustine's use of Cyprian against the Donatists; though they are obviously not the first specifically anti-Donatist works, an honour which falls to *Ps. c. part. Don.* (393), *C. ep. Donati heretici* (393/94), and *C. partem Donati* (397). A special analysis was made of s. 37 and 313E, which showed that if the dating of both could be clarified, a picture would emerge of Augustine becoming capable of using Cyprian's authority early on, earlier than the surviving anti-Donatist treatises in fact. All of this is remarkable, given that Augustine launched into his effort of appropriating Cyprian with virtually no precedent, since Optatus of Milevis (from whom he borrowed much of his scheme for the anti-Donatist campaign) had not tried to do so himself.

The final instalment of part one was a consideration of the impact that the intra-Donatist Maximianist schism (390s) had upon Augustine's efforts overall. At the heart of this matter was the outrage surrounding the election of Primian to replace the beloved Donatist primate Parmenian of Carthage (in 392/93). When a Carthaginian deacon, Maximian, became the figurehead of a protest movement, this outrage was manifest in regional councils and mutual excommunications. But Augustine seized the moment when Primian and his allies were reconciled with the Maximianists without requiring rebaptism, the cause of the original Donatist-Catholic split. Augustine launched into his attack on this seeming hypocrisy, which was only instigated when the Donatists attempted to curry the favour of the Roman administration in Africa by asking them to step in and end the Maximianist debacle. The polemical gold-mine this request opened up for Augustine was further enriched when, in 398/99, Roman joint-forces pursued and executed Count Gildo and the Donatist bishop, Optatus of Thamugadi, two individuals who were later personified by Augustine as the consummate Donatist leaders.

The second segment of this book covered Augustine's appropriation of Cyprian once he had entered into his full-blown anti-Donatist campaign. This began in 400/01 when he started producing his anti-Donatist trilogy: *C. ep. Parm.*, *De bapt.*, and *C. litt. Pet.* With these works, Augustine began a sustained appropriation of Cyprian that would only end with his death. He used a combination of flattering accolades such as *beatus*, *sanctus*, *martyr*, *exemplum*, *auctoritas*, most graced and tolerant, along with anti-Donatist themes he had already firmly established by then, including examples such as Donatist concupiscence, stubbornness, pride, and arrogance. Going beyond this, Augustine moved to pull Cyprian's legacy away from the claims of the Donatist leadership, saying that their rejection of unity was a rejection of all that Cyprian had