

Gaumer, Matthew Alan, *Augustine's Cyprian: authority in Roman Africa*, (Brill's series in church history and religious culture 73), Brill, Leiden/Boston 2016, ISBN 978-90-04-31263-0, 372 p.

Among Augustine's predecessors in the church of North Africa, the figure of Cyprian towers above all the others. Both as a bishop having to act in difficult circumstances, and as a prolific writer, he must have been a major source of inspiration for Augustine. In addition, Cyprian's wide popularity in North Africa (notably on account of his martyrdom) made him a suitable and convenient model to follow. Numerous references to Cyprian by Augustine testify to both these aspects, and there is even a body of twelve sermons (ss. 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 313a, 313b, 313c, 313d, 313e, 313f, 313g) specifically dealing with Cyprian, delivered by Augustine throughout the years on the occasion of the saint's annual feast.

Meanwhile, systematic studies on the relation between Cyprian and Augustine are scarce indeed. It is therefore fortunate that a new book on this subject by Matthew Alan Gaumer has become available. *Augustine's Cyprian: authority in Roman Africa*, a revised dissertation (defended at Leuven University in 2012), specifically targets Augustine's manner of appropriating Cyprian's legacy to add authority to his own doctrinal positions, notably in his polemics against Donatists and Pelagians. It is, therefore, of broader significance for our understanding of Augustine in general. In fact, Gaumer's approach to the subject is so all-embracing that in some sections of the book, the figure of Cyprian somewhat recedes into the background.

The study is divided into three main parts. The first part deals with Augustine's early years as a church leader and his initial reactions to Donatist Christianity. These reactions were, generally speaking, relatively mild. Only gradually, he seems to have become aware that he needed special methods to really fight the Donatists. Interestingly, the Donatists claimed to belong to the side of Cyprian, and used the example of the early African bishop to articulate their local, 'African' identity. Augustine, on his part, increasingly sought to reinforce his positions by referring to various authorities: scripture, the Church, important Christian authors. In the end, Cyprian became one of the latter. That is, Augustine took pains to make the authority of Cyprian work for him rather than for the Donatists.

Notably the second main part of the book, dealing with 'the maturation of the anti-Donatist campaign', zooms in on Augustine's conscious efforts to bring in the weight of Cyprian's authority for his, the Catholic, cause, against the Donatists. It does so by a detailed

analysis of *De baptismo* and *Contra epistulam Parmeniani* (ch. 4), as well as an even more detailed survey of key words and names discussed by Augustine: *veritas, caro/carnis, concupiscentia, superbia, gratia, ignorantia, pertinacia, rebaptizare, martyr, Africa, mundus/orbis, novitas, auctoritas, Maximianus, Primianus* (ch. 5), and the more general theme of coercion (ch. 6).

The closing, third part of the study moves to the final phase of Augustine's life, discussing the Pelagian controversy, as exemplified in such works as *Contra Iulianum*. Some 95 explicit references to Cyprian in Augustine's anti-Pelagian works (p. 254) show that Cyprian is quite important in this phase too, although in a different way. No longer is there any need for Augustine to dispute the claim that Cyprian would support his opponents, as in the case of the Donatists. In his debate against the Italian theologian Julian, Augustine proudly presents himself *and* Cyprian as representatives of the *African* church. Cyprian thus becomes 'the pre-eminent authority for the African Augustine' (p. 268). A useful list of Cyprian's works used by Augustine throughout his oeuvre concludes the main body of the book (pp. 314-318). A brief conclusion (pp. 321-328), large bibliography (pp. 329-365), and index conclude the volume.

This is probably not a book for the general reader interested in Augustine. It will be most useful for scholars working in such fields as Donatism, Pelagianism, and early African Christianity. The often detailed discussions will be mostly relevant mostly to specialists. Gaumer has adopted a style of arguing and writing that approaches its subject matter in a fairly indirect way, involving numerous minor issues and debates, and adding loads of references to texts and scholarly literature, thus often needing many pages to come to clear conclusions on what is, in the end, a fairly modest topic. But this is, of course, perfectly legitimate in a large scale scientific study.

A rather serious issue, however, concerns the use of Latin texts. The book incorporates a great number of references to Augustine's texts, and very many of them are actually quoted. There is some inconsistency as to the presentation of texts: mostly an English translation is given in the main body of text, and the Latin original text in footnotes; or both are combined in footnotes, while I have also encountered notes with just English or just Latin, or notes where English precedes Latin (e.g. p. 53, n. 172). Still, this does not yet pose a real problem. The use of Latin, however, does. On many occasions where I read both Latin and English quotations, I found them to be inaccurate. Latin quotations often do not closely correspond to English translations. I found many variants here: Latin texts that are longer at

the start or at the end, English translations that are longer at the start or at the end, Latin texts with sentences omitted that do still appear in the translation, translations skipping over words actually presented in Latin, and so forth. In addition, there is a surprising amount of printing errors (or scanning errors) in the Latin, and unfortunately not merely there. To make matters worse, Latin quotations are sometimes clearly misinterpreted.

Some brief examples from the first part may illustrate these points (three dots indicate dots given by Gaumer; three dots between brackets indicate that I break off what is a longer quotation given by Gaumer):

p. 23: '...I suffered violence because of the merits of my sins... But I think (...)'; note 18: '...rito peccatorum meorum... Sed arbitror (...)'

p. 25: 'we garner' (for 'we gather').

p. 29: 'Proculiean' (twice for Proculeian).

pp. 32-33: *Doct. Chr.* 4,56 quoted for the notion that eloquence 'is to be used in a way that is subordinate and evocative of the truth. Writing in 396, he adds that this is even the case if one's writing or speaking is necessarily subdued and without flourish.' Augustine's point however, is rather different: every speaker who tells something wishes to be believed, even if his style is modest. And this very modest style is often not merely effective, but also naturally beautiful, even as to raise applause. Gaumer starts the translation with 'And who would be willing to listen to him, unless he also held the hearer's attention with some pleasantness of style', which is absent in the Latin. The Latin by contrast starts with 'Quid enim quaerit nisi credi, qui aliquid, licet submisso eloquio, discentibus narrat', absent in the translation. Equally absent in the translation are the printed Latin words referring to 'numerositas clausularum', whereas the English 'convicting his opponent of error' does not correspond to words in the printed Latin.

p. 35: *ep.* 23,4 quoted with the image of the Church 'offering her breast to all the nations for their rebirth', where the Latin in the note rightly reads 'regenerandis praebet sinum et regeneratis ubera infundit' clearly referring to two separate groups.

p. 53: *s.* 252,4 '(...) Wasn't the ship almost sunk, along with us its crew, by the rowdy behavior, the rioting of worldly people? Again it also says (...)'

corresponding to the Latin in the note: 'Nonne seditione carnalium paene mergebatur nobiscum navis? unde hoc, nisi de illo numero piscium innumerabili? deinde etiam illud ibi dictum est (...)', where, at best, an important sentence has been left untranslated without a mark in the translation.

p. 60: (text by Optatus) 'Cyprian, Lucian, and others' corresponding to the Latin names in the note 'Cyprianus, Carpofofius, Lucilianus et ceteri'.

p. 63: *De ordine* 2,26 referred to for the notion that 'eruditi and the uneducated masses can be moved to right knowledge through a combination of *ratio*, *gratia*, and the attestation of sound *auctoritas*', where Augustine's

Latin words show that he is advocating the primacy of *auctoritas*. (n15 'apitor' is misspelled for 'aptior', 'tamen' for 'tamen'. The online text at www.augustinus.it has neither error).

p. 68: s. 313b,1 quoted, with, again, a confusing lack of correspondence between Latin and English at the beginning.

p. 64: s. 313b,2 the Latin in the footnote breaks off a sentence in the middle of a word: '(...) quali uenatione Babylon impia laet...Saeuierint, persecuti fuerint'.

p. 70: s. 313a,3 referred to for the notion that 'a Christian should be "crazy about Cyprian"', without Latin words in the note. The Latin text appears to refer to insanity only in relation to visitors of a theatre. Christians, by contrast, should love Cyprian (verbs such as 'amare' are used).

This list of errors, inconsistencies, and misinterpretations of the Latin could be extended.

All of this seems rather disturbing in a study of such detail. The defective Latinity seriously detracts from the merits of Gaumer's study. Theologians and historians of religion may perhaps give a shrug here and rather concentrate on the general ideas of the book. But surely the very words on which, in the end, everything we know about Augustine is based, deserve the most scrupulous and meticulous approach by scholars.

Vincent Hunink

González, Justo L., *The Mestizo Augustine: A Theologian Between Two Cultures*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Ill. 2016, ISBN 9780830851508, 176 p.

Isidore of Seville opined that it would take a life time to read the entire corpus of writings from the Bishop of Hippo. It might take two more life times to read all the secondary literature devoted to the Doctor of Grace. Despite all that has been written, Justo Gonzalez has found a new angle on the continuing legacy of the thought and writings of St Augustine in the *Mestizo Augustine: A Theologian Between Two Cultures*.

In his introduction to the thought of Augustine, Gonzalez alerts his readers that he will focus only on primary literature from the saint, although he consulted the secondary literature to improve his own knowledge of the field of study on Augustine. The stated goal of Gonzalez's book is that by considering Augustine "through Latino lenses he may become more relevant to our present-day context and