

Cyprian's Early Career in the Church of Carthage

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Cyprian's baptism is usually placed in 245–6, two to four years before he became bishop. The early treatise Ad Donatum is thus taken as a witness to the neophyte's spiritual 'transition'. This article challenges this common biographical narrative. A date just before Cyprian's ordination in 248/9 fits the evidence better than 246. As comparison with Ad Quirinum suggests, the winsome portrait of Cyprian the true convert that Ad Donatum paints might have done more than exhort neophytes to zealous spirituality: it may also have been meant to silence the presbyters whom Pontius' Vita and Cyprian himself portray as critics of his ordination.

Modern accounts of Cyprian's career have been dominated by the momentous political and ecclesiastical events of his episcopate: the Decian persecution,¹ the controversies in Africa and Rome over the restoration of those who had compromised with Decius' edict and, later, over the rebaptism of heretics,² and the renewed persecution under Valerian in 257–8, during which Cyprian was martyred.³ The focus of modern scholarship reflects that of the ancient evidence. The chronological span of Cyprian's *oeuvre* corresponds closely to his tenure of the episcopate, to which he was elevated between May 248 and May

CCSL = Corpus Christianorum Series Latina; PL = Patrologia Latina; SC = Sources Chrétiennes

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¹ On which see James B. Rives, 'The decree of Decius and the religion of empire', *Journal of Roman Studies* lxxxix (1999), 135–54.

² A comprehensive study is provided in J. Patout Burns, *Cyprian the bishop*, London 2002. An alternative view is offered by Alan Brent in *Cyprian and Roman Carthage*, Cambridge 2010.

³ The best biography of Cyprian remains Michael M. Sage, *Cyprian*, Cambridge, MA 1975.

249.⁴ Most of Cyprian's epistles and treatises were written later, either during Decius' reign and its aftermath, or in the final years of his life.⁵ Cyprian's episcopate and eventual martyrdom likewise dominate the main contemporary narratives, the *Acta* of his martyrdom and the panegyric *vita* attributed by Jerome to the deacon Pontius.⁶ The Cyprian whom we see in his works, the letters of his contemporaries and the third-century hagiographical material is very much Cyprian the bishop, whose teaching so impressed his contemporaries that, even after his death, he could appear (or be imagined to have appeared) in a vision, to spur men steeped in his writings to martyrdom.⁷

Cyprian's career and personal development before he became bishop remain comparatively obscure. The main ancient source, Pontius' *vita*, sketches a narrative of rapid and total conversion. Abandoning his previous career as a rhetorician or advocate through the influence of a presbyter named Caecilianus, Cyprian read the Scriptures, embraced continence and chose to donate his wealth for the support of the poor.⁸ Perhaps because of his use of his property as an instrument of ecclesiastical patronage, he 'was elected' through a surge of popular support 'to the office of the priesthood and the rank of the episcopate while still a neophyte and, as he was reckoned, one new to the faith'.⁹

Pontius' narrative can be supplemented by brief references in Lactantius' *Divine institutes* and the works of Jerome, who used Pontius' account, but also had independent access to oral traditions on Cyprian through Paul of Concordia, an acquaintance who had known Cyprian's

⁴ The date of Cyprian's ordination is fixed by *ep. lix.6.1* ('plebi suae in episcopatu quadriennio iam probatus'), which dates sometime after 15 May 252: Sage, *Cyprian*, 138.

⁵ See Sage, *Cyprian*, 365–72, 377–83, and G. W. Clarke's chronological table in CCL, 3D, 706–9.

⁶ Jerome, *De viris illustribus* 68. On this text see Mario Ziegler, 'Die Vita et passio Cypriani: Aussageabsicht und historischer Hintergrund', *Klio* xci (2009), 458–71, and Hermann Dessau, 'Pontius, der Biograph Cyprians', *Hermes* li (1916), 65–72.

⁷ *Passio sanctorum Montani et Lucii* 11.2 (a letter from the martyrs that quotes Cyprian, *De dominica oratione* 36 immediately after, at 11.6; cf. François Dolbeau, 'La Passion des saints Lucius et Montanus: histoire et édition du texte', *Revue d'études augustiniennes et patristiques* xxix [1983], 39–82 at p. 74 nn. 30–1).

⁸ *Vita Cypriani* 2, 4. Pontius refers only to Cyprian's pursuit of 'studia et bonae artes' (2.2) as a pagan, but other sources, including Jerome and Lactantius (see n. 10 below), make it clear that he had been a teacher or practitioner of rhetoric. See further G. W. Clarke, 'The secular profession of St Cyprian of Carthage', *Latomus* xxiv (1965), 633–8, and Sage, *Cyprian*, 95–132.

⁹ 'iudicio Dei et plebis fauore ad officium sacerdotii et episcopatus gradum adhuc neophytus et ut putabatur nouellus electus est': Pontius, *Vita Cypriani* 5.1, with Charles A. Bobertz, 'Cyprian of Carthage as patron: a social historical study of the role of bishop in the ancient Christian community of North Africa', unpubl. PhD diss. Yale 1988, 119–29.

notarius in the latter's old age.¹⁰ Only one Cyprianic work, however, comments on the author's conversion. This is the scenic monologue *Ad Donatum*. The most mannered of Cyprian's works, *Ad Donatum* presents Cyprian sitting in a tranquil garden during the autumn vintage vacation and expounding the benefits of divine *gratia* to his addressee, who is figured, in keeping with the literary conceit, as the silent interlocutor of Cyprian's monologue. Cyprian recounts his moral and spiritual uncertainty prior to conversion, describes the spiritual transformation worked by the infusion of grace in his baptism, and contrasts the sins of the *saeculum* to the peaceful life of the *spiritualia castra*. He also contrasts the voluble boastfulness of secular oratory to the straightforward, factual exposition of the Christian truth: a rejection, most have assumed, of his own prior rhetorical career.

Ad Donatum is usually dated very close in time to Cyprian's entry into the Church. This has allowed historians to fit the work into a neat narrative of Cyprian's conversion and pre-episcopal career. His baptism is usually placed some two to four years before his ordination, in 245 or 246, probably during the Easter season, the ordinary time, according to Tertullian, for baptisms in the third-century African Church.¹¹ Marked by a stylistic ornateness that Cyprian's later works do not display, *Ad Donatum* was thus a neophyte's first attempt at Christian rhetoric, 'the work' (as one scholar has put it) 'which spontaneously pours forth from the heart of an ardent convert after baptism'.¹² Though Cyprian was not yet able to write in the simple, truly Christian style that he praises in the work's second section,¹³ he wished to make the depth of his conversion known to his secular peers through his account of his spiritual wanderings and liberation in baptism.¹⁴ *Ad Donatum* reflects Cyprian's state of mind

¹⁰ Lactantius, *Divinae institutiones* v.2.24; Jerome, *De viris illustribus* 53, 67–8; *Chronicon* 257 *post Christum*; and *In Ionam* 3.6–9.

¹¹ So Sage, *Cyprian*, 131, following, with some hesitation, Edward White Benson, *Cyprian: his life, his times, his work*, London 1897, 13; Tertullian, *De baptismo* 19.

¹² 'L'*Ad Donatum* è l'opera che sgorga spontanea dal cuore di un ardente convertito dopo il battesimo': Antonio Quacquarelli, *La retorica antica al bivio (L'Ad Nigrinum e L'Ad Donatum)*, Rome 1956, 131. Similar (if less florid) characterisations appear in, for example, Jean Molager, *Cyprien de Carthage: A Donat et La Vertu de patience*, Paris 1982, SC ccxci. 30, and Pierre de Labriolle, *Histoire de la littérature latine chrétienne*, 3rd edn revised and expanded by Gustave Bardy, Paris 1947, i.227. For a more sober characterisation see M. F. Wiles, 'The theological legacy of St Cyprian', this JOURNAL xiv (1963), 139–49 at pp. 140–1.

¹³ There are particularly sophisticated statements of this view in Molager, *Cyprien*, 37–46, and Jacques Fontaine, *Aspects et problèmes de la prose d'art latine au IIIe siècle: la genèse des styles latins chrétiens*, Turin 1968, 149–76.

¹⁴ For *Ad Donatum* as an 'apology', see, for example, Clarke, 'Secular profession', 633, and Sage, *Cyprian*, 128; cf. also Jakob Engberg, 'The education and (self-)affirmation of (recent or potential) converts: the case of Cyprian and the *Ad Donatum*',

immediately after his baptism, not his development into the churchman who can be seen in his later works.

This article proposes an alternative reconstruction of Cyprian's early career and the place of *Ad Donatum* within it. First, building on modern revisions of Cyprian's pre-episcopal career, it will argue that the standard chronology of Cyprian's baptism is without sound foundation; it depends not on ancient evidence, but on a series of inferences, first laid down in seventeenth-century scholarship on Cyprian's career, that do not stand up to critical scrutiny. Second, the article will argue that the tendency to see *Ad Donatum* as the work of a new and inexperienced convert – which is encouraged by the standard dating and has not yet been systematically scrutinised even by those who question that chronology – misjudges Cyprian's self-presentation. *Ad Donatum* emphasises not its author's newness to the Christian faith, but, as comparison with the roughly contemporary *Ad Quirinum* shows with particular clarity, the profundity of his conversion and his ability and authority to proclaim his new beliefs. In the concluding section, a new position for *Ad Donatum* among the few fixed points in Cyprian's early career will be tentatively offered. The work of a man newly baptised, but not of the inexperienced convert imagined by most modern scholars, *Ad Donatum* may have been written shortly before Cyprian's elevation to the episcopate, in order to answer the concerns of his earliest critics.

The date of Cyprian's baptism and of Ad Donatum

No external evidence survives that would allow us to assign an absolute date to *Ad Donatum* or to Cyprian's baptism, on which it dwells so pointedly. The standard modern chronology was first laid out by John Pearson, bishop of Chester, in the 'Annales Cyprianici' that he wrote for John Fell's Oxford edition of Cyprian's works of 1682. Pearson inferred from Pontius' account that Cyprian had been a presbyter and probably also a deacon prior to his elevation to the bishopric of Carthage, and so conjectured that at least two years had elapsed between his baptism and his final ordination.¹⁵ In his chronological account, he placed *Ad Donatum* in 246, 'no very long time after [Cyprian's] baptism' at Easter of that year. The

Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum xvi (2012), 129–44 at p. 143. Engberg takes *Ad Donatum* as Cyprian's attempt to describe and explain his conversion to himself, Donatus, and 'other readers who where [*sic*] either recent or potential converts'.

¹⁵ 'Annales Cyprianici, sive Tredecim Annorum, quibus S. Cyprianus inter Christianos versatus est, brevis historia Chronologicè delineata', in *Sancti Cæcili Cypriani opera recognita et illustrata*, ed. John Fell, Oxford 1682 (Wing C.7711), 1–71 at pp. 6–9.

grounds were three-fold: that Cyprian foregrounded his baptism in *Ad Donatum*; that the work was written in uncharacteristically ornate rhetoric, such as Cyprian would probably have used in his secular profession; and that Augustine, in a brief comment in *De doctrina Christiana* iv.14.31, implied that *Ad Donatum* was the first of Cyprian's works.¹⁶

Pearson's chronology was generally accepted by later editors and church historians,¹⁷ and a date of 245 or 246 for Cyprian's conversion, and thus for the writing of *Ad Donatum*, remains widely accepted.¹⁸ Yet that date rests on slender evidence, as scholars have occasionally recognised. Pearson's insertion of a multi-year gap between Cyprian's baptism and episcopacy is especially open to challenge. In an article on Cyprian's teaching and practice of almsgiving, Geoffrey Dunn suggested, in passing, that Cyprian's baptism ought to be placed 'much closer to Cyprian's election as bishop than to 246'.¹⁹ The proposal, which is not entirely unprecedented, rests on a revision of Cyprian's pre-episcopal offices.²⁰ Modern biographers of Cyprian, such as Michael Sage, had already abandoned Pearson's inference that Cyprian held a diaconate, on which his ancient admirers are silent.²¹ In his 1988 Yale dissertation, Charles Bobertz proposed that Cyprian's presbyterate should be similarly elided. In his reconstruction, Cyprian was elevated straight from the laity to a single, episcopal office conceived as having a presbyteral aspect; Bobertz emphasised,

¹⁶ Ibid. 7.

¹⁷ Particularly influential examples include 'Vita Sancti Cypriani nunc primum adornata', in *Sancti Cæciliï Cypriani episcopi Carthaginensis et martyris opera*, ed. Étienne Baluze and [Prudent Maran], Venice 1728, cols vii–viii (the core of *PL* iv), and Adolf Harnack, *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius*, Leipzig 1897–1904, ii/2, 368.

¹⁸ Among recent authors see, for example, Michael A. G. Haykin, 'The Holy Spirit in Cyprian's *To Donatus*', *Evangelical Quarterly* lxxiii (2011), 321–9 at p. 322; David E. Wilhite, 'Cyprian's scriptural hermeneutic of identity: the Laxist "heresy"', *Horizons in Biblical Theology* xxxiv (2010), 58–98 at p. 65 n. 26; Jean-Claude Fredouille, 'L'Humanité vue d'en haut (Cyprien, *Ad Donatum*, 6–13)', *Vigiliae Christianae* lxiv (2010), 445–55 at p. 445; Engberg, 'Education', 134; Vincent Hunink, 'St Cyprian, a Christian and a Roman gentleman', in Henk Bakker, Paul van Geest and Hans van Loon (eds), *Cyprian of Carthage: studies in his life, language and thought*, Leuven 2010, 29–41 at p. 35; Brent, *Cyprian*, 44; Maria Veronese, 'In proprias laudes odiosa iactatio (Cypri., *Don.* 4): l'accezione cristiana di una sentenza classica', in *Interpretare e comunicare: tradizioni di scuola nella letteratura latina tra III e VI secolo*, Bari 2007, 181–9 at p. 182; and Burns, *Cyprian the bishop*, 1. See also Molager's influential commentary, *Cyprien*, at p. 12, and Sage's biography, *Cyprian*, at pp. 118, 130–1 n. 1.

¹⁹ Geoffrey D. Dunn, 'The white crown of works: Cyprian's early pastoral ministry of almsgiving in Carthage', *Church History* lxxiii (2004), 715–40 at p. 722 n. 28.

²⁰ Cf., for example, Sisto Colombo, 'S. Cipriano di Cartagine: l'uomo e lo scrittore', *Didaskaleion* vi (1928), 1–80 at p. 13, who argues for baptism in 247, and Quacquarelli, *La retorica*, 121, who suggests 248/9.

²¹ Sage, *Cyprian*, 135–6; cf. Harnack, *Chronologie*, 368, but contrast Benson, *Cyprian*, 17–19.

following Pontius, the rapidity of Cyprian's rise and rejected the idea that he had been a presbyter for many years between his conversion and his ordination, but did not explicitly revisit the date of Cyprian's baptism.²² From his argument, Dunn drew the natural chronological inference: if Cyprian had not actually held the intervening offices that most historians have supposed, there is no reason to put his baptism a full two, three or even four years before his ordination as bishop.

Bobertz's argument is not incontrovertible. Pontius mentions the 'many deeds' that Cyprian performed while 'still a layman' and 'now a presbyter', before he recounts Cyprian's ordination as bishop; the reference would thus seem to be to distinct periods of time spent in the laity and in a presbyteral office distinct from the episcopate.²³ Jerome, likewise, seems to distinguish Cyprian's episcopate from a preceding presbyterate;²⁴ though his account may well depend on Pontius', it shows, at the very least, that this ancient interpreter of the *vita* did not infer that Cyprian had been made bishop straightaway. Nevertheless, Bobertz's interpretation, and the new chronology that Dunn derives from it, reflect the tenor of the *vita* more accurately than does the multi-year progress through the ranks of the Church postulated by Pearson. No absolute lower bound can be placed on the length of Cyprian's tenure of his pre-episcopal offices, however many (or few) he may have held. Though nothing licenses us to think that he progressed through all his ranks in a single week, as Ambrose of Milan would more than a century later, the example of the later and similarly influential churchman is still instructive.²⁵ With sufficient pressure, a man could rise very swiftly indeed in the Church. Cyprian became a bishop after an exceptionally short time, and even a date as late as Easter 248 (or perhaps Easter 249, by which time G. W. Clarke suggests that he was active as bishop) would fit the ancient evidence better than does the gap of two to four years preferred by most historians.²⁶

However, *Ad Donatum* plays more than just a chronological role in narratives of Cyprian's early career. To scholars from Pearson to Dunn, *Ad Donatum* has seemed a remnant (perhaps the sole remnant) of what Dunn calls a period of 'pure religious idealism, if we may use such a term', prior to and distinct from Cyprian's later experience of 'the practical realities of life as bishop'.²⁷ Pontius' Cyprian became a bishop while still a neophyte; the Cyprian of most modern historiography was a new convert

²² Bobertz, 'Cyprian as patron', 93–119, esp. pp. 109–13.

²³ 'Multa sunt quae adhuc plebeius, multa quae iam presbyter fecerit': *Vita Cypriani*

3–4.

²⁴ *Pace* Bobertz, *Cyprian*, 118 n. 72; 'Cyprianus primum rhetor, deinde presbyter, ad extremum Carthaginensis episcopus martyrio coronatur': Jerome, *Chronicon* 257 *post Christum* (cf. *De uiris illustribus* 67).

²⁵ Paulinus of Milan, *Vita Ambrosii* 9.1.3.

²⁶ *The letters of St Cyprian of Carthage*, ed. G. W. Clarke, New York 1984, i. 127–8 n. 78.

²⁷ Dunn, 'White crown', 725–6.

first and only became a bishop after a process of maturation of unknown length. In this biographical scheme, *Ad Donatum* plays a key role, since it seems to testify to a period of 'transition', as Jacques Fontaine called it, during which Cyprian grappled both with the heady spiritual experience of his conversion and with the worldly stylistics that he had (it is assumed) previously employed as a rhetorician.²⁸ Chronology implies, and is implicated in, a particular narrative of Cyprian's personal development.

This biographical narrative rests on no firmer evidence than the chronology with which it is bound up. As E. W. Watson noted more than a century ago, neither the style of *Ad Donatum* nor its description of Cyprian's baptism shows Cyprian to have been an inexperienced neophyte when he wrote it.²⁹ Cyprian's praise for a 'simple' style in *Ad Donatum* 2 is not, as often assumed, a description of a rhetoric to which he has tried, but failed, to conform his own writing. An integral part of the work's argument, it introduces the theme of Christian moral and spiritual superiority to the world that will dominate the central sections of the monologue. In the course of his exhortations, Cyprian actually adopts multiple styles of varying complexity, as Michael Winterbottom has shown.³⁰ The work's technical virtuosity is not, therefore, an accidental leftover of a now-abandoned rhetorical career, but a proof of the care with which Cyprian composed his protreptic to serious Christian living.³¹ Cyprian's account of his baptism must, likewise, be read in the context of the work's wider argument. Though Cyprian does highlight the profound change worked in him by the grace of God, he neither says when that event occurred nor portrays himself as a new convert. It is Donatus, and not Cyprian, who is cast as the inexperienced new Christian, and it is from Cyprian, in fact, that he receives his instruction.

It is nevertheless unnecessary to go so far as Watson did and suggest that *Ad Donatum* could have been written 'at any point during [Cyprian's] episcopate'.³² The external evidence, it is true, gives no definite indication. Augustine contrasted *Ad Donatum* to Cyprian's *consequentes litterae* in *De doctrina Christiana* iv.14.31, but (as Watson pointed out) he may only have meant 'that *Ad Don.* stood at the beginning of his copy', as in most manuscripts and in the ancient lists of Cyprian's works, including that in Pontius'

²⁸ 'Une telle oeuvre mérite le nom d'oeuvre de transition': Fontaine, *Aspects*, 159.

²⁹ E. W. Watson, 'The style and language of St Cyprian', *Studia Biblica et Ecclesiastica* iv (1896), 189–324 at pp. 199–200.

³⁰ Michael Winterbottom, 'Cyprian's *Ad Donatum*', in Simon Swain, Stephen Harrison and Jaś Elsner (eds), *Severan culture*, Cambridge 2007, 190–8.

³¹ The case is made at greater length in Mattias Gassman, 'The conversion of Cyprian's rhetoric? Towards a new reading of *Ad Donatum*', *Studia Patristica* xciv (2017), 247–57.

³² Watson, 'Style', 200.

vita.³³ The codicological priority of *Ad Donatum* might suggest that it was the first of Cyprian's works, but it can hardly be used to infer when, exactly, it was written, let alone in what mood. Nevertheless, the evidence internal to the work itself implies a particularly early date. Cyprian sets his monologue in a tranquil garden and consistently portrays the Christian life as a peaceful refuge from a storm-tossed world.³⁴ A similar metaphor appears in *De bono patientiae* (written in the mid-250s), but Cyprian gives no hint here, as he would there, that the Church is threatened by 'the persecutions of Jews or gentiles and heretics'.³⁵ A date before the Decian edict on sacrifices is therefore likely.

Other indications suggest that *Ad Donatum* was written even earlier, before Cyprian's ordination. Although *Ad Donatum* shows Cyprian teaching Donatus, it gives no hint that he has yet become bishop: the only churchly grade that he credits to himself is the first, baptism. Unlike in the more openly polemical epistles, Cyprian seldom appeals to his own episcopal office in his treatises, but he does not hesitate to assert his paternal, pastoral concern where appropriate.³⁶ Thus, for example, in the opening section of *De habitu uirginum*, which is likely of pre-Decian date,³⁷ he reminds his readers of his authority as an episcopal *sacerdos*, saying, 'brothers also, and priests most of all, do not hate but love those whom they chide in order to correct them'; later, he will bid the virgins 'listen, as if to a parent; listen, I ask you, to one who is at once afraid and giving you warning'.³⁸ Nothing like this can be found in *Ad Donatum*. The contrast with the post-Decian *Ad Fortunatum* is even more striking. Here, Cyprian expresses his desire, as the one who baptised the future martyrs in water, to prepare them for their second baptism in blood.³⁹ In *Ad Donatum*,

³³ Ibid. 200 n. 1; cf. Pontius, *Vita Cypriani* 7, the fourth-century Cheltenham list of Cyprian's works (Th. Mommsen, 'Zur lateinischen Stichometrie', *Hermes* xxi [1886], 142–56), and the discussion of the manuscripts in Hans Freiherr von Soden, *Die Cyprianische Briefsammlung: Geschichte ihrer Entstehung und Überlieferung*, Leipzig 1904, 198–203.

³⁴ *Ad Donatum* 1, 6, 14.
³⁵ 'si enim Christianus a furore et contentione carnali tamquam de maris turbinibus excessit et tranquillus ac lenis in portu Christi esse iam coepit ... in istis fluctuantibus mundi turbinibus et Iudaeorum siue gentilium et haereticorum quoque persecutionibus constituti': *De bono patientiae* 16, 21. For the date cf. *ep.* lxxiii.26.2, which was written during the rebaptism controversy and mentions *De bono patientiae* as a recent work; Molager suggests 'la première moitié de l'année 256, ou très peu de temps auparavant': *Cyprien*, 135.

³⁶ See, for example, *epp.* xxxiii.1, xli.2, xliii.2, xix.6. The pseudo-Cyprianic *De aleatoribus* 1–3 offers a striking counterpoint to Cyprian's regular practice in his treatises.

³⁷ Sage, *Cyprian*, 365–6, 380–1.

³⁸ 'fratres quoque et maxime sacerdotes non oderunt sed diligunt eos quos corripiunt ut emendent ... audite itaque uirgines, ut parentem: audite quaeso uos timentem pariter ac monentem': *De habitu uirginum* 1, 21. 'Sacerdos' means 'bishop' in Cyprian: Maurice Bévenot, "'Sacerdos" as understood by Cyprian', *JTS* n.s. xxx (1979), 413–29.

³⁹ *Ad Fortunatum*, praef. 2–5.

Cyprian refers to Donatus' baptism without the least hint that he was involved in its performance.⁴⁰ His instruction is spoken with authority, but it is the authority of a Christian who has experienced the transforming power of divine grace. The Cyprian of *Ad Donatum* is, it would seem, for once Cyprian the layman (or at most Cyprian the junior cleric), not Cyprian the bishop.

Ad Donatum therefore belongs roughly where most scholars have put it, relative to the key points of Cyprian's early career. Written, most likely, before his ordination, it must also date close in time to his baptism. However, the absolute chronology, as established in modern historiography, is sheer speculation. Nothing but the inertia of tradition secures a date for Cyprian's baptism, or the writing of *Ad Donatum*, as early as 246, and nothing, equally, excludes a date as late as the spring of 248 or even 249. More important, the standard narrative of Cyprian's psychological and spiritual development is largely invention. There is some evidence that Cyprian became a presbyter before becoming bishop, but there is none for the transitional period of post-baptismal maturation implied by Pearson's chronology and elaborated by modern scholars. As Pontius said of Cyprian, 'he, though coming from among the untutored gentiles, began with a faith so mature as few, perhaps, have finished with'.⁴¹ The *vita* is an unabashed panegyric, but its account cannot be dismissed in favour of speculations grounded in a conjectural chronology and reinforced by an inexact reading of *Ad Donatum*. *Ad Donatum* may well be the work of a new convert; if so, it must be the work of a new convert whose 'transition' to Christian thought and speech was already largely complete.

Baptism and Scripture: Cyprian as teacher in Ad Donatum and Ad Quirinum

If Pearson's reconstruction of Cyprian's early career is to be rejected, in what context was *Ad Donatum* actually written? Though sparse, the contemporary evidence is not unhelpful. Two other works credited to Cyprian have sometimes been put before his ordination as bishop. One, the brief apologetic tract *Quod idola dii non sint* (sometimes called *De idolorum uanitate*), is probably not his, as it appears to depend on Lactantius.⁴² Though the

⁴⁰ *Ad Donatum* 15.

⁴¹ 'de imperitis gentibus ueniens tam matura fide coepit, quanta pauci fortasse perferint': *Vita Cypriani* 3.3.

⁴² So, most recently, Eberhard Heck, 'Pseudo-Cyprian, Quod idola dii non sint und Lactanz, Epitome Divinarum Institutionum', in Manfred Wacht (ed.), *Panchaia: Festschrift für Klaus Thraede*, Münster 1995, 148–55. The defence of the work's authenticity by Hans Van Loon is not convincing: 'Cyprian's Christology and the authenticity

parallels might conceivably reflect borrowing by rather than from Lactantius, the fourth-century apologist cannot have known *Quod idola* as a Cyprianic work, since he faults Cyprian for failing to use Classical authorities to refute the worship of the gods in *Ad Demetrianum*; if *Quod idola* were Cyprianic, its Classical learning would have vitiated his complaints.⁴³ The other early Cyprianic work is the three-volume scriptural handbook *Ad Quirinum*, whose attribution to Cyprian, sometimes questioned on stylistic grounds and because the work is absent from the brief list of Cyprian's treatises in Pontius, *Vita* 7.3–11, has been vindicated in recent scholarship.⁴⁴

A collection of biblical *testimonia* grouped under thematic headings, *Ad Quirinum* was written, as the work's two prefaces, to the first and third books, imply, in two stages. To the first two volumes, which present a tightly organised system of anti-Judaic and Messianic passages, Cyprian later added a third that lays out Christian moral precepts in a looser array.⁴⁵ All three books are typically placed early in Cyprian's career.⁴⁶ As with *Ad Donatum*, direct evidence is lacking, but the supposition is not improbable. The third book's prescriptions cover topics from women's dress (36) to usury (48). The pressing issues of church politics in the 250s – persecution and martyrdom (3.15–18, 29), schism and heresy (3.78, 86), and the forgiveness, by the Church, of those who 'sin against God' (28) – are treated at some length, but play no special role. *Ad Quirinum* is, it would appear, a general compendium of doctrine and practice aimed at a Church in a state of relative peace; only later, under the threat of persecution, would Cyprian devote another, briefer collection, *Ad Fortunatum*, specifically to the problem of idolatry and martyrdom.

Cyprian modestly states, in the preface to *Ad Quirinum* i, that he 'has not so much written a treatise as supplied material for writers'.⁴⁷ Nevertheless,

of *Quod idola dii non sint*, in Bakker, van Geest and van Loon, *Cyprian of Carthage*, 127–42.

⁴³ Heck, 'Pseudo-Cyprian', 155; *Diuinae institutiones* v.1.24–8, 4.
⁴⁴ Edwina Murphy, "As far as my poor memory suggested": Cyprian's compilation of *Ad Quirinum*', *Vigiliae Christianae* lxxiii (2014), 533–50; Rolf Noormann, *Ad salutem consulere: die Paränese Cyprians im Kontext antiken und frühchristlichen Denkens*, Göttingen 2009, 41–4 (with summary of earlier opinions); cf. also Simone Deléani, 'Quelques Observations sur la syntaxe des titres dans les florilèges scripturaires de saint Cyprien', *Studia Patristica* xxxi (1995), 281–6, and Sage, *Cyprian*, 395–7. Even R. P. C. Hanson and Charles Bobertz, who contend that *Ad Quirinum* was based on one or more earlier *florilegia*, concede that Cyprian produced the compendium as we have it: *Tradition in the Early Church*, London 1962, 261–4; 'An analysis of *Vita Cypriani* 3.6–10 and the attribution of *Ad Quirinum* to Cyprian of Carthage', *Vigiliae Christianae* xli (1992), 112–28 at p. 125 n. 20.

⁴⁵ For an attempt to discern an order in *Ad Quirinum* iii see Andy Alexis-Baker, 'Ad *Quirinum* book three and Cyprian's catechumenate', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* xvii (2009), 357–80.

⁴⁶ For example, Sage, *Cyprian*, 382–3.
⁴⁷ 'quibus non tam tractasse quam tractantibus materiam praebuisse uideamur': *Ad Quirinum* i, praef.

the authority with which he states the Church's precepts in the headings to book 3 imply that it, at least, was the work of a holder of ecclesiastical office. He addresses Quirinus as *filius*, adopting a fatherly stance that he employs in only two of the letters, those to Eucratius (himself probably a bishop: *ep.* ii.2.3) and Magnus (*ep.* lxxix). The word, used in ancient letters to address 'a much younger friend', does not unambiguously mark Cyprian out as a bishop, but might seem out of place in the mouth of a layman who was writing a work on Christian teaching.⁴⁸ *Ad Quirinum* was most likely a product of the early, pre-Decian phase of Cyprian's episcopate, but it is not impossible that it was written even earlier.⁴⁹ Either way, it is probably a little earlier than *De habitu uirginum*, which draws on a body of scriptural texts that overlaps extensively with the relevant sections of *Ad Quirinum* iii and takes a similarly paternal approach to its addressees,⁵⁰ and only a little later than *Ad Donatum*.

Written not long (it seems) after Cyprian's ordination, and thus after his baptism, *Ad Quirinum* may help to locate *Ad Donatum* within Cyprian's very early career. Despite their profound formal differences, the two works, each of which seems to have been written in response to a request for instruction from a less-experienced Christian friend, share the same aim: to provide 'understanding of heart' ('*intellectus cordis*' in the preface to *Ad Quirinum* i; '*conscientia pectoris*' in *Ad Donatum* 1) to Cyprian's reader by educating him on the divine *disciplina*. Other indications suggest an even closer link between the two works. Near the end of *Ad Donatum*, Cyprian bids the newly baptised Donatus make a habit of prayer and Scripture-reading. As he puts it, 'Pray or read continuously. Now you will speak with God, now he with you. Let him instruct you in his precepts; let him set you in order.'⁵¹ However, though Cyprian bids Donatus sing a Psalm at the close of his monologue, he neither recommends passages with which to begin his *lectio*, nor gives instruction on the meaning of Scripture. *Ad Quirinum* supplies both.

The thematic overlap between *Ad Donatum* and *Ad Quirinum* suggests that they were intended as companion-pieces. *Ad Quirinum* likely had a

⁴⁸ 'Un ami plus jeune': Simone Deléani, 'Les Formules épistolaires dans la Correspondance de saint Cyprien: tradition et nouveauté', in Patrick Laurence and François Guillaumont (eds), *Epistulae antiquae IV: actes du IVe colloque international 'L'épistolaire antique et ses prolongements européens' (Université François-Rabelais, Tours, 1er-2-3 décembre 2004)*, Leuven 2006, 195-207 at pp. 199-200. A range of possible interpretations is canvassed in *Letters of St Cyprian*, i. 163 n. 13, with previous scholarship.

⁴⁹ So, for example, Benson, *Cyprian*, 22-4.

⁵⁰ For the biblical passages cf. Johannes Haussleiter, 'Cyprian-Studien', in *Commentationes Woelffliniana*, Leipzig 1891, 377-89.

⁵¹ 'Sit tibi uel oratio adsidua uel lectio. Nunc cum Deo loquere, nunc Deus tecum. Ille te praeceptis suis instruat, ille disponat': *Ad Donatum* 15.

catechetical purpose,⁵² but Cyprian nowhere indicates that it was aimed solely at the unbaptised. Quirinus has, he says, asked for ‘divine teachings by which the Lord has deigned to educate and instruct us through the holy Scriptures, that, led away from the shadows of error and illuminated by his pure and shining light, we might hold to the way of life through the salutary sacraments’.⁵³ The language is strongly reminiscent of the account of Cyprian’s baptism in *Ad Donatum*, where he calls his pre-baptismal self ‘a stranger to truth and light’, who ‘lay in shadows and in sightless night’, refers to the vivification ‘to new life by the washing of the salutary water’, and describes the ‘infusion’ of the ‘light from above’ into his heart upon his baptism.⁵⁴ It also leaves open the possibility that *Ad Quirinum* was meant for the baptised faithful, as well as for catechumens; as Cyprian makes clear in *Ad Donatum*, holding fast to the ‘way of innocence, the way of righteousness’, may begin with baptism, but divine grace continues to abound thereafter according to the strength of one’s faith.⁵⁵ *Ad Quirinum* presents a similar picture of increasing faith and sanctity. Cyprian’s aim is to provide selections ‘which ... will help you, when you read them, to form the first lineaments of faith’, but Quirinus will receive ‘greater vigour ... and understanding of the heart more and more’ if he turns to the Scriptures themselves, the ‘springs of divine plenitude’.⁵⁶

Cyprian seems to have meant *Ad Quirinum* as a primer for precisely the sort of Scripture-based piety that he exhorts Donatus to adopt. The subtle differences in authorial self-presentation between the two works may therefore help to determine in what setting *Ad Donatum* was composed. Though

⁵² So, for example, Everett Ferguson, ‘Catechesis and initiation’, in Alan Kreider (ed.), *The origins of Christendom in the West*, Edinburgh 2001, 229–68 at pp. 240–2, and Alexis-Baker, ‘*Ad Quirinum*’; cf. the more cautious comments of Antonio Quacquarelli, ‘Note retoriche sui *Testimonia* di Cipriano’, *Vetera Christianorum* viii (1971), 181–209 at p. 204.

⁵³ ‘Obtemperandum fuit, fili carissime, desiderio tuo ... diuina magisteria poscenti, quibus nos Dominus per scripturas sanctas erudire et instruere dignatus est, ut a tenebris erroris abducti et luce eius pura et candida luminati uiam uitae per salutaria sacramenta teneamus’: *Ad Quirinum* i, praef.

⁵⁴ ‘Ego cum in tenebris atque in nocte caeca iacerem ... ueritatis ac lucis alienus ... difficile prorsus ac durum pro illis tunc moribus opinabar ... ut quis renasci denuo posset utque in nouam uitam lauacro aquae salutaris animatus, quod prius fuerat, exponeret’: *Ad Donatum* 3; ‘sed postquam undae genitalis auxilio ... in expiatum pectus ac purum desuper se lumen infudit’: *Ad Donatum* 3–4.

⁵⁵ ‘Ceterum si tu innocentiae, si iustitiae uiam teneas inlapsa firmitate uestigii tui’: *ibid.* 5.

⁵⁶ ‘quae legenti tibi interim prosunt ad prima fidei liniamenta formanda. Plus roboris tibi dabitur et magis ac magis intellectus cordis operabitur scrutanti scripturas ueteres ac nouas plenius ... Bibere uberius et saturari copiosius poteris, si tu quoque ad eosdem diuinae plenitudinis fontes nobiscum pariter poturus accesseris’: *Ad Quirinum* i, praef.

Ad Quirinum includes nothing like Cyprian's account of his conversion in *Ad Donatum* 3–4, the preface to the first book does sketch a brief portrait of the author. As in *Ad Donatum* and some later works, he emphasises the mediocrity of his own abilities.⁵⁷ He also roots his teaching in the same divine illumination that he describes in *Ad Donatum*. Here, there is a small but important difference. In *Ad Quirinum* i, the divine illumination, imparted by Scripture and the sacraments, to which Cyprian appeals is a general illumination shared by all Christians. Though Cyprian is shown to be an authority on the Scriptures and is quite possibly already a bishop, he puts no stress on his own office or experience of conversion. In *Ad Donatum*, by contrast, Cyprian's personal experience of spiritual illumination is central not just to the work's form, as an extended monologue, but also to its content. Cyprian's account of baptism and its effects is emphatically autobiographical, as can be seen from the opening lines onward. 'I', Cyprian begins, 'when I was lying in shadows and in sightless darkness, and when I was tossing, staggering on the sea of the billowing world and doubtful on wandering steps, ignorant of my life, a stranger to truth and light.'⁵⁸ Cyprian's exposition of the effects of the sacrament mixes together singular and plural pronouns, encompassing Donatus within his experiences, but its reference to Cyprian himself is still clear. 'You certainly know', he says, 'and recognise with me what that death of crimes, that life of virtues, has taken from us or what it has bestowed upon us. You yourself know; I am not proclaiming it. Boasting in one's own praise is odious.'⁵⁹ Donatus has experienced the same grace that Cyprian has, but Cyprian is still his own primary example, of the evils of the pre-Christian life as of baptism's transformative power.

Donatus, accordingly, sometimes appears as Cyprian's friend and spiritual equal, into whose mind the same 'Lord has flowed' in baptism,⁶⁰ while, at other times, the impartation of the Spirit gives Cyprian an authority that Donatus does not enjoy. This is particularly apparent at the beginning of Cyprian's account of the evils of the world, where he declares to Donatus that 'I will give you light for your understanding, I, having wiped away

⁵⁷ Compare *Ad Quirinum* i, praef. ('quantum mediocris memoria suggerebat, excerptis capitulis et adnexis necessaria quaeque colligerem'), to *Ad Donatum* 2 ('Ceterum quale uel quantum est, quod in pectus tuum ueniat ex nobis, exilis ingenii angusta mediocritas tenues admodum fruges parit'), *Ad Quirinum* iii, praef., and *Ad Fortunatum*, praef. 1. For further examples see Watson, 'Style', 273.

⁵⁸ 'Ego cum in tenebris atque in nocte caeca iacerem cumque in salo iactantis saeculi nutabundus ac dubius uestigiis oberrantibus fluctuarem uitae meae nescius, ueritatis ac lucis alienus': *Ad Donatum* 3.

⁵⁹ 'Scis profecto et mecum pariter recognoscis, quid detraxerit nobis quidue contulerit mors ista criminum, uita uirtutum. Scis ipse, nec praedico. In proprias laudes odiosa iactatio est': *ibid.* 4.

⁶⁰ 'Dominus influxit': *ibid.*

the gloom of its evils, will reveal the shadows of an age laid open'.⁶¹ Here, Cyprian is not pointing out to Donatus truths that both men have perceived in baptism, but instead doing for his friend the same thing that the Spirit did for him then: causing 'doubtful things to grow firm, hidden things to lie open, dark things to grow bright'.⁶² The validity of Cyprian's exposition of the world's ills depends not on the power of divine grace in general, but very specifically on his own experience of that grace, which has enabled him to perceive with special clarity the hidden shadows of the world and given him the power to speak correctly 'about the Lord, about God'.⁶³

Cyprian's account of his baptismal regeneration thus serves two purposes. It is an example of the Spirit's power, but, at the same time, it demonstrates that Cyprian himself has received from the same Spirit the insight necessary to show Donatus (and any other readers) the evils of the world and to expound God's commandments truthfully.⁶⁴ Accordingly, Cyprian explicitly adopts the pose of a teacher instructing his pupil. 'But you', he charges Donatus near the end of his monologue, 'whom the heavenly soldiery has now marked out for the spiritual camp, keep the discipline uncorrupted, keep it soberly with the religious virtues.'⁶⁵ Donatus appears here as a new recruit receiving instruction in the 'heavenly soldiery' in which he has 'now' been enlisted. Cyprian, by implication, is either the new soldier's captain or a veteran comrade-in-arms.

Ad Quirinum is, of course, a scriptural handbook, and one might not expect its preface to focus on Cyprian in the way that *Ad Donatum* does. However, the contrast between the two works shows a peculiar characteristic of *Ad Donatum* in particular relief. Some of Cyprian's later works, such as *De habitu uirginum* and *Ad Fortunatum* (another scriptural compendium, it should be noted), foreground Cyprian's authority and personal concern, as bishop, for his congregants. *Ad Donatum* conveys a similar concern for Donatus, and, implicitly, for other newly baptised readers, but without any suggestion that Cyprian holds an authoritative office. His claim to teach Donatus is purely charismatic, grounded in the transformation worked in him by divine grace. Though Cyprian disclaims any ability to boast in himself, *Ad Donatum* is not simply an exposition of the power of baptism and the glories of the Christian life; it is, by the same token, an exposition of Cyprian's new character as a Christian convert. The Cyprian portrayed in *Ad Donatum* is not just a mature Christian; he is,

⁶¹ 'lucem tibi ad cognitionem dabo, malorum caligine abstersa operi saeculi tenebras reuelabo': *ibid.* 6.

⁶² 'confirmare se dubia, patere clausa, lucere tenebrosa': *ibid.* 4.

⁶³ 'de Domino, de Deo': *ibid.* 2.

⁶⁴ Cf. T. L. Bryan, 'Spirituality and authority in Cyprian of Carthage', unpubl. ThD diss. Iliff School of Theology 1983, 59.

⁶⁵ 'Tu tantum, quem iam spiritualibus castris caelestis militia signauit, tene incorruptam, tene sobriam religiosi uirtutibus disciplinam': *Ad Donatum* 15.

though probably still a neophyte himself, already prepared to proclaim the precepts and the grace of God to his fellow Christians.

Ad Donatum: an answer to Cyprian's first critics?

Having set *Ad Donatum* alongside *Ad Quirinum*, we may begin to sketch a picture of its place within Cyprian's post-baptismal career. An exhortation to new converts, including his old friend Donatus, *Ad Donatum* may have been intended as a kind of companion-piece to the slightly later *Ad Quirinum*. Together, the two works provided a fervent protreptic to serious Christianity, a warning against backsliding, and a detailed account of scriptural teachings on Christ, the Church and, once the third book of *Ad Quirinum* was added, the moral expectations incumbent upon Christians. *Ad Donatum* may also, as scholars have long recognised, have had other audiences in addition to its primary readership, newly baptised persons of some education and substance. Alongside its exposition of public and private violence and lust (6–9), *Ad Donatum* rejects worldly rhetoric (2), political ambition and power (3, 11), the cruel jurisprudence of the forum (10) and the glory of personal wealth (12–13), specifically warning Donatus that he will lose interest in the opulence of his house as his piety grows (15). That Cyprian focuses on the concerns of wealthy Romans is evident, and has often been taken as a sign that the work was meant to defend his conversion to his peers in the Carthaginian elite.⁶⁶ This supposition may well hold true. However, when set alongside Cyprian's relentless emphasis on his own transformation and attendant power to teach, his focus on the sins of his own class suggests another audience: Christians, of whatever station, who doubted Cyprian's fitness for the episcopate.

Brief reports from both Pontius and Cyprian himself indicate that his ordination met with immediate opposition. Pontius' account is rosier, in keeping with his panegyric tone: some persons, he concedes, resisted Cyprian's elevation, but the charismatic bishop soon won over his rivals to lasting friendship.⁶⁷ A letter that Cyprian wrote to his congregation in 251 darkens the picture: the same five presbyters who were then challenging him over the question of apostasy, had, Cyprian says, also tried to prevent his elevation to the episcopate.⁶⁸ Why, Cyprian does not say, but

⁶⁶ Cf. n. 14, above.

⁶⁷ Pontius, *Vita Cypriani* 5.6.

⁶⁸ 'Hoc enim quorundam presbyterorum malignitas et perfidia perfecit ... dum conuersionis suae memores et antiqua illa contra episcopatum meum immo contra suffragium uestrum et dei iudicium, uenena retinentes instaurant ueterem contra nos inpugnationem suam ... Et quidem de dei prouidentia nobis hoc nec uolentibus nec optantibus ... poenas quas meruerant penderunt, ut a nobis non eieci ultro se

it is hardly surprising that better-established ecclesiastical officers did not welcome the swift rise of a rival endowed not just with great force of character, but also with considerable social advantages: a sophisticated education and profession, connections with the pagan Carthaginian upper-crust (still in evidence just before his death), and wealth, which he bestowed on local *pauperes*, among them, most likely, many from the local laity, the chief backers of his ordination.⁶⁹

It seems strange that Cyprian, who was so prolific a writer during later controversies, should have produced nothing in response to the presbyters' 'conspiracy', as he called it years later.⁷⁰ Granted, it is possible that Cyprian did write letters or treatises of which no record survives,⁷¹ but we should take seriously the possibility that we do have, in the extant Cyprianic *corpus*, a work intended to quieten the objections of those who opposed his ordination: *Ad Donatum*. The aspects of Cyprian's self-portrayal that set *Ad Donatum* apart from other works such as *Ad Quirinum* are well suited not only for establishing a rapport with neophyte readers, but also for reassuring Christians who doubted Cyprian's suitability for episcopal office. By rejecting the trappings of wealth, education and political power in favour of the life of grace, Cyprian emphasises the sincerity and thoroughness of his own break with the world that he formerly inhabited, from whose polluting temptations he has, he declares, been utterly and permanently freed by the Holy Spirit in baptism. Even as he exhorts Donatus to stand fast in the grace of God, he implicitly demonstrates his own humility, dependence on God and ability to proclaim the Christian message powerfully and eloquently to the wealthy and well-connected of his world: his own former peers.

Anyone reading *Ad Donatum* would find in it an exhortation to serious Christian living that is inextricably bound up with a vivid and appealing portrait of its author. The Cyprian whom *Ad Donatum* displays to the reader is a truly new man who depends in everything, even those things on which he might have cause to pride himself, on God alone. Nevertheless, he remains a product of the wealth and profession that he has now laid aside, as *Ad Donatum* makes very clear. Even the artfully balanced language in which Cyprian proclaims his transformation shows the educational advantages that he has enjoyed. Few churchmen of the day could have matched the stylistic refinement and grace that he displays

eicerent ... secundum uestra diuina suffragia coniurati et scelerati de ecclesia sponte se pellerent': *ep.* xliii.1.2–3; for commentary see *Letters of St Cyprian*, iii. 215–16.

⁶⁹ Connections: Pontius, *Vita Cypriani* 14.3; wealth: 2.7, 5.3–4, with Bobertz, 'Cyprian', 121–2.

⁷¹ Outside of the Cyprianic *corpus* itself, no ancient author cites a genuine work of Cyprian that does not survive to the present: Adolf Harnack, *Über verlorene Briefe und Actenstücke die sich aus der Cyprianischen Briefsammlung ermitteln lassen*, Leipzig 1902, 43–4.

throughout *Ad Donatum*, and his Christian readers, friendly or hostile, must have recognised this.⁷²

If Cyprian was not already a bishop when he penned his first treatise, *Ad Donatum* is a powerful, though wholly implicit, defence of his suitability for that position, inasmuch as it makes clear the reality and depth of his conversion, his commitment to the instruction of new Christians and his superior education, which he has now put at the service of God and of the Church. If he had already been ordained, it makes an equally powerful defence of his elevation to the episcopate, to which, Pontius says, he had been reluctant to ascend.⁷³ In his monologue on the spiritual life, Cyprian may be glancing from time to time past Donatus not just to other neophytes, but also to unsteady friends in the Church of Carthage, whose confidence he is trying to maintain, and to his opponents, whose favour he wishes to win. *Ad Donatum* may thus have been truly intended to serve as an 'apology' not (or not only), as some have assumed, 'for Cyprian's conversion and baptism',⁷⁴ but also for his further advancement in the Church, which followed so swiftly upon it.

This conclusion, and the dating of *Ad Donatum* to the days immediately before or after Cyprian's ordination as bishop that it implies, must remain tentative, as neither the precise grounds on which the five presbyters opposed Cyprian nor how *Ad Donatum* was distributed is known.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, the traditional narrative of its composition, with the gap of multiple years between Cyprian's baptism and ordination, must be decisively rejected, along with the reading of *Ad Donatum* as a (relatively) naïve work. The psychological and chronological gap between *Ad Donatum* and early, post-ordination works such as *De habitu uirginum* is a postulate of modern scholarship that runs contrary both to Pontius' account and the evidence of *Ad Donatum* itself, which consistently portrays Cyprian as a convinced Christian able to proclaim the faith with understanding and power. *Ad Donatum* is not the last work of an old rhetor in transition to Christianity; it is the first work of Cyprian, the pre-eminent churchman of his day.

⁷² Cf. Victor Saxer, 'Reflets de la culture des évêques africains dans l'œuvre de saint Cyprien', *Revue Bénédictine* xciv (1984), 257–84, with further comments in Hugo Montgomery, 'Saint Cyprian's secular heritage', in Aksel Damsgaard-Madsen, Erik Christiansen and Erik Hallager (eds), *Studies in ancient history and numismatics presented to Rudi Thomsen*, Aarhus 1988, 214–23 at p. 218. ⁷³ *Vita Cypriani* 5.2.

⁷⁴ Sage, *Cyprian*, 128.

⁷⁵ Cyprian refers to the writing and transmission of *De bono patientiae* at *ep.* lxxiii.26.2 and of *De lapsis* and *De ecclesiae catholicae unitate* at *ep.* liv.4, but there is a lack of explicit evidence regarding *Ad Donatum*.