

HERESY AND SCHISM ACCORDING TO CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE

MODERN Christian thinking recognizes a clear theoretical distinction between heresy and schism. This is expressed, for example, with legal precision in the Roman Catholic Church in the 1983 Code of Canon Law.¹ Yet it is not a topic that attracts much scholarly attention.² Perhaps the development of an ecumenical consciousness and the heightened sensitivity to past injustices that had been brought about through an inquisitorial mindset may explain much of the current lack of interest.³ There is an effort today to focus on what unites Christians rather than what divides them. Part of the reason also may lie in the fact that these two terms actually may not be distinguished so easily in practice. In theory at least heresy is to orthodoxy as schism is to orthopraxy. However, as many a modern fundamental theologian would point out, the separation of *fides quae* from *fides qua* is not always possible. What one believes and how one acts are intricately interwoven.⁴

In contrast, there was a marked degree of interest in heresy and schism in early Christianity. These topics were frequently the subject of comment by early Christian authors.⁵ There is

¹ Canon 751: 'Heresy is the obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or it is likewise an obstinate doubt concerning the same...schism is the refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff or of communion with the members of the Church subject to him.' (Eng. trans. from James A. Coriden, Thomas J. Green, and Donald E. Heintschel [eds.], *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary* [New York: Paulist Press, 1985], p. 547.)

² In *Studia canonica* 23 (1989) we find a collection of articles devoted to book 3 of the 1983 Code on the teaching office in the Church (which consists of canons 747–833). There are articles covering every canon of book 3 with the exception of canon 751.

³ Christophe Dumont, 'Schism: I. Concept of Schism', in Karl Rahner (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Theology* (London: Burns and Oates, 1975), p. 1534.

⁴ Gerald O'Collins, *Fundamental Theology* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1981), pp. 145–52 and Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, trans. William V. Dych (New York: Crossroad, 1978 [Eng. edn.]), pp. 306–7.

⁵ See, for example, the collection of texts in Arland J. Hultgren and Steven A. Haggmark (eds.), *The Earliest Christian Heresies: Readings from their Opponents* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996).

also a degree of interest among modern scholars about heresy and schism in the early Church and what early Christian writers had to say about these issues.⁶ The re-evaluation offered by Walter Bauer in the 1930s of the traditional view that heresies developed in reaction to a prior orthodoxy (an orthodoxy which was recognized and accepted as being such) is at last well known in the English-reading world.⁷ If nothing else, his work has reminded scholars that labels like 'orthodox' and 'heretical' are very much a matter of perspective and reflect a decision only reached with later hindsight. His ground-breaking book has provoked a good deal of controversy.⁸

The question of the relationship or boundary between heresy and schism in early Christianity has not attracted much discussion. The point is usually made that '[i]n its earliest Christian use, the term "heresy" was not sharply distinguished from "schism"' and left at that.⁹ Sometimes the point is made that the meaning and distinctiveness of the two terms only emerged gradually:

In the second century parties and splits in the Church multiplied. As formal orthodoxy became clear and established by a world-wide organization, it became customary to regard any party as false: there was the Catholic Church, and there were parties, 'heresies' (Gk. *haireis*, 'party'). So heresy becomes the label for false doctrine. Other divisions in the churches, usually due to disputes over possession of office or over discipline, were called 'schisms' (from *schisma*, a 'split').¹⁰

We know that by the time of Basil of Caesarea and Augustine of Hippo in the second half of the fourth century, these two terms

⁶ E.g. Robert M. Grant, *Heresy and Criticism: The Search for Authenticity in Early Christian Literature* (Louisville, KY: Westminster Press, 1993); Everett Ferguson (ed.), *Orthodoxy, Heresy, and Schism in Early Christianity* (Studies in Early Christianity, 4; New York: Garland, 1993); Gerd Lüdemann, *Heretics: The Other Side of Early Christianity*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1986 [Eng. edn.]).

⁷ Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, ed. Robert A. Kraft and Gerhard Krodel (Mifflintown, Pa.: Sigler Press, 1996 [2nd Eng. edn.]).

⁸ E.g. Daniel J. Harrington, 'The Reception of Walter Bauer's *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* during the Last Decade', *Harvard Theological Review* 73 (1980), pp. 287-98; Robert L. Wilken, 'Diversity and Unity in Early Christianity', *The Second Century* 1 (1981), pp. 101-10; Michael Desjardins, 'Bauer and Beyond: On Recent Scholarly Discussion of Hairesis in the Early Christian Era', *The Second Century* 8 (1991), pp. 65-82.

⁹ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, vol. 1: *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), p. 69.

¹⁰ Stuart G. Hall, *Doctrine and Practice in the Early Church* (London: SPCK, 1991), p. 36.

were distinguished.¹¹ Yet Gerald Bonner argues that in the post-Constantinian Church the distinction between them blurred.¹² This is because bishops found it increasingly impossible to believe that schismatics could maintain orthodox belief, which itself was increasingly more tightly defined in synodal gatherings.¹³ Bonner offers Cyprian of Carthage as the source for this equation of heresy and schism.¹⁴ On the other hand, Rowan Williams suggests that Cyprian continued the older tradition of equating heresy with schism and that it was Stephen of Rome who recognized a distinction.¹⁵ Was Cyprian the source of the equation or did he continue an older tradition?

We find that this third-century African bishop used both *haeresis* and *schisma* as terms in his writings. In his *epistula* to Quintus, he referred to 'those who might appear to have received baptism among heretics and schismatics'.¹⁶ Are we to understand that Cyprian used the words in the sense they have today or were they more synonymous and interchangeable for him? Is there any development in his use of the terms over the decade of his episcopate? What factors influenced his use of these terms? What were the implications of his position on his pastoral practices?

This article aims at investigating Cyprian's understanding of the relationship between heresy and schism through an examination of his use of these terms. It is an important issue to consider in Cyprian because it may provide further insight into the baptismal controversy between him and Stephen of Rome in the mid-250s as well as explain later developments in Christian theology. Cyprian is an excellent choice also because his legacy,

¹¹ Augustine, *Fid. et symb.* 10.21 (CSEL 41, p. 27); id., *Haer.* pr. 7 (CCSL 46, p. 289); Basil, *Ep.* 188.1 (PG 32, col. 665).

¹² Gerald Bonner, 'Dic Christi Veritas Ubi Nunc Habitas: Ideas of Schism and Heresy in the Post-Nicene Age', in William E. Klingshirn and Mark Vessey (eds.), *The Limits of Ancient Christianity: Essays on Late Antique Thought and Culture in Honor of R. A. Markus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), p. 65. He makes the useful modern distinction that 'while schismatics leave the Church, heretics are eventually expelled from it'.

¹³ Ibid. pp. 66–72. See particularly Jerome, *In ep. ad Titum* 3.11 (PL 26, col. 598); Augustine, *Contra Cresc.* 2.7.9 (CSEL 52, p. 367).

¹⁴ Bonner, 'Dic Christi Veritas', p. 67.

¹⁵ Rowan Williams, 'Defining Heresy', in Alan Kreider (ed.), *The Origins of Christendom in the West* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2001), p. 328.

¹⁶ Cyprian, *Ep.* 71.1.1 (CCSL 3c, p. 516): *his quia apud haereticos et schismaticos baptismati uideantur* (Eng. trans. from G. W. Clarke, *The Letters of St. Cyprian of Carthage*, vol. 4: *Letters 67–82* [Ancient Christian Writers, 47; New York: Newman Press, 1989]).

preserved to an extent by the Donatists, would itself be seen as schismatic in the century after him.¹⁷

I begin by considering how these two terms had been used in North African Christianity prior to Cyprian and that means, of course, examining the works of the great innovator of Latin Christianity, Tertullian.

I. *HAERESIS* AND *SCHISMA* IN TERTULLIAN

References to *haereses* and *haeretici* are numerous in Tertullian.¹⁸ On the other hand, *schisma* occurs only in a handful of places. In instances where he offered some explanation of what *haeresis* was, Tertullian often linked it with terms such as *doctrina*, *fides*, or *veritas*.¹⁹ In a number of passages it is clear that he named theological opinions which he considered false as heresies.²⁰ For Tertullian, heresy was novelty of belief introduced later than truth.²¹ Marcion held the same faith as other Christians until he renounced it. Tertullian certainly believed that what we would call orthodox was what was held to be true from the beginning.

¹⁷ R. A. Markus, 'Christianity and Dissent in Roman North Africa: Changing Perspectives in Recent Work', in Derek Baker (ed.), *Schism, Heresy and Religious Protest* (Studies in Church History, 9; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 29: 'the Donatists could claim the heritage of Cyprian at least as readily as the Catholics: the Donatists had Cyprian's theology... Looked at from the point of view of theological continuity, or of continuity of consciousness of what constituted being the Church in the world, Donatism was, quite simply, the continuation of the old African Christian tradition in the post-Constantinian world.' For Augustine's response to this Donatist claim see Éric Rebillard, 'A New Style of Argument in Christian Polemic: Augustine and the Use of Patristic Citations', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 8 (2000), pp. 564-6.

¹⁸ Gösta Claesson, *Index Tertullianus F-P* (Collection des Études Augustiniennes Serie Antiquité, 63; Paris: Institut des études augustiniennes, 1975), pp. 657-8.

¹⁹ E.g. Tertullian, *Adu. Marc.* 4.4.3 (CCSL 1, p. 550); 4.17.11 (p. 587); *De Praescr.* 4.5, 7 (CCSL 1, p. 190); 13.6 (p. 198); 18.1 (p. 200); 29.4-5 (p. 210); 35.2 (p. 216); *Adu. Prax.* 1.1 (CCSL 2, p. 1159); 3.1 (p. 1161); 8.1 (p. 1167); *De Virg.* 1.2 (CCSL 2, p. 1209); *Adu. Val.* 4.3-4 (CCSL 2, p. 756); *Scorp.* 1.10 (CCSL 2, p. 1070); *Adu. Herm.* 1.1 (CCSL 1, p. 397); *De Bapt.* 1.2 (CCSL 1, p. 277). See Eric Osborn, *Tertullian: First Theologian of the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 41-4.

²⁰ E.g. *Adu. Herm.* 23.3 (CCSL 1, p. 417); *Adu. Marc.* 1.81. (CCSL 1, p. 449); 1.19.4 (p. 460); 1.21.6 (p. 463); 1.24.5 (p. 467); *Adu. Prax.* 1.5 (CCSL 2, pp. 1159-60); *De Res.* 11.5 (CCSL 2, p. 934); *De An.* 3.1 (CCSL 2, p. 785).

²¹ *Adu. Marc.* 1.1.6-7 (CCSL 1, p. 442); *Adu. Herm.* 1.1 (CCSL 1, p. 397); *De Praescr.* 38.5-6 (CCSL 1, p. 218); *De Iei.* 1.5 (CCSL 2, p. 1257). This was precisely the opinion about the temporal priority of orthodoxy against which Bauer argued.

Heretics were those who misinterpreted the Scriptures; hence they should not have access to them.²²

Just as there was a *regula fidei* there was also a *regula disciplinae*.²³ There are some passages in Tertullian where *haeresis* seems to be applied not merely to theological opinion but to the practices of particular groups. The Montanist founders (with whose movement Tertullian came more and more to identify) were not accused by other Christians of overturning any *regula fidei*, but they did teach about such things as fasting and marrying in a way different from others in the Church.²⁴ The response of these others (the 'psychics') was that Montanism was a heresy because it introduced novelty with regard to human practices offered to God or pseudo-prophecy with regard to claims about God's demands on humankind.²⁵ Such practices included stricter fasting and the rejection of second marriages. Tertullian's response, which takes us away from the concerns of this article, was to demonstrate the venerable antiquity of such practices. In *De Monogamia* the charge of heresy against the discipline of monogamy (meaning, of course, the practice of only ever having one spouse) was challenged.²⁶ The actions of Adam in the garden were also described as heresy by Tertullian.²⁷

So, for Tertullian, *haeresis* could be used to refer to both unacceptable beliefs and practices. In one sense this should not be surprising. Tertullian's usage reflects the lack of precision that we find in Paul in 1 Cor. 11:18-19 and Gal. 5:20 where *αἰρέσεις* was used in conjunction with *σχίσματα* and *διχοστασίαι* without there being clear differences in meaning. It would seem that for Tertullian any division in the community, whether created by divergent beliefs or practices, could be called *haeresis*. As Heinrich von Staden observes from his investigation into *haireseis* in Greek medical literature, a term that originally meant

²² *De Praescr.* 15.3-4 (CCSL 1, p. 199); 19.2-3 (p. 203). See Peter Ivan Kaufman, 'Tertullian on Heresy, and the Reappropriation of Revelation', *Church History* 60 (1991), pp. 167-79.

²³ Tertullian, *De Pud.* 19.3 (CCSL 2, p. 1320): *Bene autem quod apostolis et fidei et disciplinae regulis conuenit*. On Tertullian's concept of the *regula fidei* see L. W. Countryman, 'Tertullian and the Regula Fidei', *The Second Century* 2 (1982), pp. 208-27.

²⁴ Tertullian, *De Iei.* 1.3 (CCSL 2, p. 1257).

²⁵ *Ibid.* 1.5 (pp. 1257-8); 11.2-4 (pp. 1269-70).

²⁶ *De Mon.* 2.1 (CCSL 2, p. 1229); 15.1 (p. 1250).

²⁷ *Adu. Marc.* 2.2.7 (CCSL 1, p. 477).

simply a school of thought became, in Christian literature, a term to refer to deviant belief.²⁸

Yet at the same time, precisely on the basis of what Paul wrote, Tertullian acknowledged that *haereses* and *schismata* (and *dissensiones* for that matter) must somehow be different.²⁹ *Haereses* were *graviora mala*,³⁰ but like *schismata* and *dissensiones* they too led to a breakdown of unity.³¹ In the previous chapter of *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, as I noted above, *haeresis* was used in terms of belief (*doctrinarum peruersitate* and *haeresin fidem demutant*).³² Precisely what schism was he did not say. Towards the very end of this treatise Tertullian responded to the opinion that there are seldom schisms among heretics.³³ His argument was that heresies were built on dissent and therefore one ought to expect that the followers of a heresy would dissent even from their founder, thereby splintering the heretical group.³⁴ There is a sense that *schisma* is a different term than *haeresis* in this instance. It would seem that he used the word *schisma* as equivalent to a *regulis suis variant inter se*,³⁵ but he did not specify whether this was a *regula fidei* or a *regula disciplinae*. In *De Baptismo* we find *schisma* used in a way that would be familiar to later theologians when Tertullian wrote that even though lay people could administer baptism they ought to refrain from imitating bishops, for such a thing was the mother of schism.³⁶

Elsewhere *schisma* was applied to the tribes of Israel that separated from Judah after the death of Solomon.³⁷ *Schismata* are mentioned together with *aemulationes* and *dissensiones* in *De Pudicitia*, though without any reference to *haeresis* and without

²⁸ Heinrich von Staden, 'Hairesis and Heresy: The Case of the *haireseis iatrikai*', in Ben F. Meyer and E. P. Sanders (eds.), *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, vol. 3: *Self-Definition in the Greco-Roman World* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), pp. 96–8.

²⁹ *De Praescr.* 5.1 (CCSL 1, p. 190): *Porro si dissensiones et scismata increpat quae sine dubio mala sunt, et in continenti haereses subiungit.*

³⁰ *Ibid.* 5.3 (p. 190).

³¹ *Ibid.* 5.4 (p. 191).

³² *Ibid.* 4.5, 7 (p. 190).

³³ *Ibid.* 42.6 (p. 222): *scismata apud haereticos.*

³⁴ *Ibid.* 42.7–10 (p. 222). See P. A. Gramaglia, 'Il linguaggio eresiologico in Tertulliano: L'approccio cattolico all'eresia', *Augustinianum* 25 (1975), p. 676, n. 15: 'gli gnostici si scindono continuamente in gruppi separati non appena scoprono punti dottrinali diversi dai loro maestri e tra loro non esistono scismi proprio perché ad ogni dissenso nasce un nuovo gruppo'.

³⁵ *De Praescr.* 42.7 (CCSL 1, p. 222).

³⁶ *De Bapt.* 17.2 (CCSL 1, p. 291): *Episcopatus aemulatio scismatum mater est.*

³⁷ *Adu. Marc.* 4.35.9 (CCSL 1, p. 641).

any explanation as to a more precise meaning.³⁸ In *De Baptismo*, *schismata* and *dissensiones* are mentioned as occurring within the Pauline Corinthian community, but again with no explanation as to what exactly Tertullian understood these terms to mean.³⁹

Of course, the question of whether Tertullian in his Montanist years, or even New Prophecy itself in Carthage, was judged to be schismatic, in the modern sense of the word, is relevant. The opinion of an increasing number of scholars is that although Tertullian joined a group whose Christian living was extreme as far as most other Christians were concerned, they had not left the Church or had not been forced out of the Church by setting themselves up as a separate social institution.⁴⁰

So, a generation or two before Cyprian we find Tertullian employing both terms under consideration. The most we can say is that *haeresis* was used to refer to deviations in both belief and practice, and that *schisma* was a much less frequently used term which was not clearly defined and which, although it overlapped with *haeresis*, was distinguishable somehow. It contained the idea of splintering groups.

II. HAERESIS AND SCHISMA IN CYPRIAN'S EARLY OUTPUT

In turning to Cyprian's literary output, I shall not consider quotations from the Scriptures contained in the collection of *testimonia* attributed to him (*Ad Quirinum*) nor such instances elsewhere, like *De Dominica Oratione* 16, where Cyprian quotes passages of Scripture (in this instance, Gal. 5:17-22). The only exception is one of the headings in *Ad Quirinum* where the editor mentions,⁴¹ in a way that seems entirely consistent with a modern understanding, schism as a withdrawing that could happen even if the person were to remain in one faith

³⁸ *De Pud.* 14.5 (CCSL 2, p. 1307).

³⁹ *De Bapt.* 14.2 (CCSL 1, p. 289).

⁴⁰ Douglas Powell, 'Tertullianists and Cataphrygians', *Vigiliae Christianae* 29 (1975), pp. 33-54; David I. Rankin, 'Was Tertullian a Schismatic?', *Prudentia* 18 (1986), pp. 73-9; id., *Tertullian and the Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Christine Trevett, *Montanism: Gender, Authority and the New Prophecy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 69; William Tabbernee, *Montanist Inscriptions and Testimonia: Epigraphic Sources Illustrating the History of Montanism* (North American Patristic Society Monograph Series, 16; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), pp. 54-5.

⁴¹ Charles Bobertz, 'An Analysis of *Vita Cypriani* 3.6-10 and the Attribution of *Ad Quirinum* to Cyprian of Carthage', *Vigiliae Christianae* 46 (1992), pp. 112-28, argues against Cyprianic authorship of this *testimonia* collection.

and in the same tradition.⁴² I shall proceed chronologically to see what changes occur in Cyprian's employment of these two terms and divide our consideration into the years prior to and the years involving the 'rebaptism' controversy.

We may begin with *De Unitate Ecclesiae*, written about the time of the post-Easter episcopal synod of 251.⁴³ In no other treatise from the years before the 'rebaptism' controversy do these terms appear.⁴⁴ This work has been the subject of intense scrutiny with regard to what it may or may not reveal about Cyprian's attitude towards the bishop of Rome's place in the Christian world.⁴⁵ There has been less interest in the ostensible topic under discussion—those who threaten the unity of the Christian community. What Cyprian set out to demonstrate was that there can be only one Church and that the rival communities set up in opposition to the one centred on the bishop are nothing more than splinter groups that do not possess a Christian identity.⁴⁶ The Christian is one who obeys the command of Jesus to abide by what he has taught, which includes the investing of authority in the local bishop.

The unity of the Church is a unity in practice and in belief:

We must therefore carry out His words: whatsoever He taught and did, that must we learn and do ourselves. Indeed how can a man say he believes in Christ if he does not do what Christ commanded him to

⁴² Cyprian, *Ad Quir.* 3.86 (CCSL 3, p. 164): *Scisma non faciendum, etiamsi in una fide et in eadem traditione permaneat qui recedit.*

⁴³ I am not terribly concerned with whether this treatise was written before (as a response to the Carthaginian laxist threat) or after (as a response to the Roman Novatianist threat) that synod. See Paul Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne depuis les origines jusqu'à l'invasion arabe*, vol. 2: *St Cyprien et son temps* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1902), pp. 298–303; Michael Sage, *Cyprian* (Patristic Monograph Series, 1; Cambridge, MA: Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, 1975), pp. 241–8; Maurice Bévenot, *St. Cyprian's De Unitate chap. 4 in the Light of the Manuscripts* (Analecta Gregoriana, 11; Rome, 1937), pp. 66–77; id., "Hi qui sacrificaverunt": A Significant Variant in Saint Cyprian's *De Unitate*, *JTS*, NS, 5 (1954), pp. 68–72; Charles A. Bobertz, 'The Historical Context of Cyprian's *De Unitate*', *JTS*, NS, 41 (1990), pp. 107–11; J. Patout Burns, *Cyprian the Bishop* (Routledge Early Church Monographs; London: Routledge, 2002), p. 60.

⁴⁴ *Viz.*, *Ad Dona.*, *De Hab.*, *De Laps.*, *De Domi.* (with the exception already noted), *Ad Deme.*, *De Mort.*, and *De Oper.*

⁴⁵ In particular see Maurice Bévenot, "'Primus Petro Datur': St. Cyprian on the Papacy", *JTS*, NS, 5 (1954), pp. 19–35; idem, 'St. Cyprian on the Papacy: Musings on an Old Problem', *Dublin Review* 456 (1954), pp. 161–8, 307–15. While many scholars accept his findings about the two editions of ch. 4, there are those who disagree.

⁴⁶ For an overview of this treatise and its modern applicability see Andrew Hamilton, 'Cyprian and Church Unity', *Pacifica* 8 (1995), pp. 9–21.

do? ... He who does not keep to the true way of salvation will inevitably falter and stray; caught up by some gust of error, he will be tossed about like windswept dust; walk as he may, he will make no advance towards his salvation.⁴⁷

There seems to be a temporal priority given to practice over belief, but also a refusal to separate them. What Cyprian seems to have written is that those who subscribe to alternative ideas soon become those who are members of alternative communities.

Do we find our contemporary distinction between schism as a practical concern and heresy as a doctrinal one lurking behind Cyprian's statement? A few sentences later, when he mentions them, Cyprian refers to *haeresis* and *schisma* without distinction as being responsible for the undermining of faith, the corrupting of truth, and the sundering of unity.⁴⁸ Later, he seems to suggest that *haeresis* is a problem that arises from quarrelsome minds or troublemakers not keeping unity.⁴⁹ The more pressing problem on Cyprian's mind was obviously that of those who set themselves up as rival bishops and created rival communities.⁵⁰ Yet the reason they established such rival communities was because of differing theological opinions about the possibility of reconciling those who had lapsed during the Decian persecution.⁵¹ Cyprian's comment in this work would seem to suggest that he could not imagine how rival theological opinions could not lead inevitably to a practical break with the wider ecclesial

⁴⁷ Cyprian, *De Unit.* 2 (CCSL 3, p. 250): *Verbis igitur eius insistere, quaecumque et docuit et fecit discere et facere debemus. Ceterum credere se in Christum quomodo dicit, qui non facit quod Christus facere praecepit? ... Nutet necesse est et uagetur et, spiritu erroris abreptus, uelut puluis quem uentus excutit, uentiletur; nec ambulando proficiet ad salutem, qui salutaris uiae non tenet ueritatem.* (Eng. trans. by Maurice Bévenot, *St. Cyprian: The Lapsed, The Unity of the Catholic Church* [Ancient Christian Writers, 25; New York: Newman Press, 1956].)

⁴⁸ *De Unit.* 3 (CCSL 3, p. 250): *Haeresis inuenit et schismata quibus subuerteret fidem, ueritatem corrumpet, scinderet unitatem.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 10 (p. 256): *Hinc haeresis et factae sunt frequenter et fiunt, dum peruersa mens non habet pacem, dum perfidia discordans non tenet unitatem.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* (pp. 256–7): *Hi sunt qui se ultra apud temerarios conuenas sine diuina dispositione praeficiunt, qui se praepositos sine ulla ordinationis lege constituunt, qui nemine episcopatum dante episcopi sibi nomen adsumunt.*

⁵¹ Burns, *Cyprian the Bishop*, pp. 27–9, 41–56; Joseph A. Fischer, 'Die Konzilien zu Karthago und Rom im Jahr 251', *Annuario Historiae Conciliorum* 11 (1979), pp. 263–86; Geoffrey D. Dunn, 'The Carthaginian Synod of 251: Cyprian's Model of Pastoral Ministry', in *I concili della cristianità occidentale secoli III–V (xxx incontro di studiosi dell'antichità cristiana, Roma 3–5 maggio 2001)* (Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum, 78; Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2002), pp. 235–57.

community. On another occasion in this treatise, he implied both that the establishment of a rival liturgical community and rebellion against the bishop, as well as the craving of strange doctrines, could be called both heresy and schism.⁵² Heresy and schism seem equally applicable terms for both situations.⁵³ What we find in Cyprian is a refusal to separate belief and practice: deviant belief would lead to a break in the unity and a break in unity would prevent any unity of belief.⁵⁴ In more modern terms, for Cyprian there could be no heresy without schism and no schism without heresy. When he referred to schism alone his comments were about those who had broken from the unity of communal life and practice.⁵⁵

At roughly the same time, Cyprian entered into an exchange of correspondence with the newly elected bishop of Rome, Cornelius, that concerned the validity of his election and the ongoing problems he faced from Novatian, a rigorist in the debate about the *lapsi* and a rival claimant to the Roman episcopacy, and his supporters.⁵⁶ Here again Cyprian had occasion to refer to heresy and schism.

The first time⁵⁷ either of these terms appears in Cyprian's correspondence (and quite likely the first time in any of his

⁵² *De Unit.* 16–19 (CCSL 3, pp. 261–3). The two terms appear in chs. 16 and 19 while the discussion between them again suggests that it was deviant practices that would lead to deviant beliefs.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 12 (p. 258): *cum haeresis et schismata postmodum nata sint dum conuenientia sibi diuersa constituunt, ueritatis caput adque originem reliquerunt.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* (p. 258): *Quomodo autem potest ei cum aliquo conuenire, cui cum corpore ipsius ecclesiae et cum uniuersa fraternitate non conuenit?*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 23 (p. 266).

⁵⁶ See Pio Grattarola, 'Il problema dei *Lapsi* fra Roma e Cartagine', *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia* 38 (1984), pp. 1–26; *id.*, 'Gli scismi di Felicissimo e di Novaziano', *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia* 38 (1984), pp. 367–90; Hugo Montgomery, 'Subordination or Collegiality? St. Cyprian and the Roman See', in Sven-Tage Teodorsson (ed.), *Greek and Latin Studies in Memory of Cajus Fabricius* (Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia, 54; Göttingburg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1990), pp. 41–54; J. Patout Burns, 'The Role of Social Structures in Cyprian's Response to the Decian Persecution', in Elizabeth A. Livingstone (ed.), *Studia Patristica* 31 (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), pp. 260–7; and *id.*, 'Confessing the Church: Cyprian on Penance', in M. F. Wiles and E. J. Yarnold (eds.), *Studia Patristica* 36 (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), pp. 338–48, for helpful reflections on these years.

⁵⁷ In the undatable *Ep.* 3, Cyprian writes to his episcopal colleague Rogatianus about the latter's trouble with a deacon. The Carthaginian bishop notes that a deacon's disregard for his bishop is the origin of heretics as well as the source for schismatics (*Ep.* 3.3.2 [CCSL 3B, p. 15]: *Haec sunt enim initia haeticorum et ortus atque conatus schismaticorum male cogitantium*). The appearance of these terms would lead me to support G. W. Clarke, *The Letters of St. Cyprian of Carthage*,

surviving writings at all) is in *Epistula* 43, dated to mid-March 251,⁵⁸ which was sent from hiding to the people of Carthage to inform them that the laxist deacon Felicissimus and the five presbyters who supported him were now outside the communion of the Church. Although a synod of bishops was soon to meet to discuss the issue of how to deal with those who had lapsed during the persecution, Cyprian warns his laity that those who wish to receive reconciliation without penance from Felicissimus' group will be joining a heretical faction, from which reconciliation with the Church will not be possible.⁵⁹ Clarke thinks that the faction was 'generally orthodox' in doctrine but was labelled by Cyprian with the 'more pejorative term *haeretica*' in that they had cut themselves off from the Church by their actions.⁶⁰ Certainly Cyprian's patience with the laxist policy of advocating easy reconciliation for the *lapsi* (which he was prepared to tolerate as a proposal—even though it was not one he favoured—until the synod could meet) ran out when they took the step of denying communion to Cyprian's supporters, not to mention other immoral or criminal activity with which he charges them.⁶¹

In his next letter, written after the episcopal synod of 251, Cyprian informs Cornelius that Novatian's agents, who had come to Carthage to secure the synod's recognition of Novatian rather than Cornelius as legitimately elected bishop, had engaged in scheming that resulted in *haeresis*.⁶² By this point Novatian was already what we today would describe as schismatic. A little later, in what appears to be a reference to exactly the same activity, Cyprian writes of schismatic factions and errors.⁶³ In the following letter to Cornelius, sent to mollify the Roman bishop's anxiety over what he believed was the tardy African recognition of his election, Cyprian defends his actions in the name of the unity of the Church, which bishops sought to

vol. 1: *Letters 1–27* (Ancient Christian Writers, 43; New York: Newman Press, 1984), p. 164, who suggests this would indicate a post-251 date. Here the two terms are used interchangeably. On this letter see Stefano Cavallotto, 'Il magistero episcopale di Cipriano di Cartagine: Aspetti metodologici', *Divus Thomas* 91 (1989), pp. 383–4.

⁵⁸ G. W. Clarke, *The Letters of St. Cyprian of Carthage*, vol. 2: *Letters 28–54* (Ancient Christian Writers, 44; New York: Newman Press, 1984), p. 211.

⁵⁹ Cyprian, *Ep.* 43.7.2 (CCSL 3B, p. 210): *et se haereticae factioni coniunxerit.*

⁶⁰ Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 2, p. 222.

⁶¹ Cyprian, *Ep.* 41.2.1 (CCSL 3B, pp. 197–8).

⁶² *Ibid.* 44.2.2 (CCSL 3B, p. 213).

⁶³ *Ibid.* 44.3.1 (pp. 213–14).

maintain through rescuing those who had become separated from their church through heretical factions.⁶⁴

In a further twist, Cyprian later has to explain why Cornelius had received first one letter from Hadrumetum recognizing his election as bishop and then another reversing that recognition.⁶⁵ Cyprian confesses that the local church of Hadrumetum, in the absence of their bishop and not knowing the synod's resolution to await a report back about the episcopal elections in Rome from two of their own, Caldonius and Fortunatus, before offering any recognition, had written to Cornelius. News of the *schisma* at Rome was suppressed in Africa until the report was received.⁶⁶

In *Epistula* 50, from Cornelius to Cyprian about July 251,⁶⁷ the African bishop is warned that Novatianist supporters were heading to Carthage from Rome. One of them, the former bishop Evaristus, is described as one of the leaders of the *schismata*.⁶⁸ In the very next letter, quite likely sent at the same time as *Epistula* 50, Cornelius informed Cyprian that some Roman confessors and martyrs who 'had been guilty of becoming adherents of a schism and founders of a heresy' had returned to the Church.⁶⁹ Is Cornelius merely engaging in some kind of rhetorical parallelism (*interpretatio* or *expositio*)⁷⁰ or in antithesis (*contentio/contrapositum*)?⁷¹ In other words, is he merely repeating himself using different words or is he making a distinction? Clarke believes there is some distinction here because of the cumulative effect, yet does not admit that there were here any doctrinal differences between the Novatianists and the supporters of Cornelius.⁷² I doubt that Cornelius was making any distinction, for both terms are applied to the one reality—the involvement of these confessors in securing Novatian's induction as a rival bishop. I am also sure that the

⁶⁴ Ibid. 45.3.2 (CCSL 3B, p. 221).

⁶⁵ See Maurice Bévenot, 'Cyprian and his Recognition of Cornelius', *JTS*, NS, 28 (1977), pp. 346–59.

⁶⁶ Cyprian, *Ep.* 48.3.2 (CCSL 3B, p. 229): *ne in urbe schisma factum absentium animos incerta opinione confunderet*. On some of the difficulties with Cyprian's statement see Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 2, pp. 259–61, n. 17; Dunn, 'The Carthaginian Synod of 251', p. 245, n. 65.

⁶⁷ Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 2, pp. 263, 277.

⁶⁸ [Cyprian], *Ep.* 50.1.2 (CCSL 3B, p. 239): *Euaristum uero cum auctor schismatis fuisset*.

⁶⁹ [Cyprian], *Ep.* 49.1.4 (CCSL 3B, p. 233): *se commisisse quoque schismati et haeresis auctores fuisse* (Eng. trans. in Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 2).

⁷⁰ *Rhet. Her.* 4.28.39; 4.42.54; Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.3.45.

⁷¹ *Rhet. Her.* 4.45.58; Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.3.81–86.

⁷² Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 2, p. 269, n. 10.

doctrinal or theological differences about God's mercy did lie at the heart of the differing policies about the possibility of the reconciliation of the *lapsi*. Novatian himself is twice described as *schismaticus* and *haereticus*.⁷³ Could it be that he is called the first because of his action in having himself made a pseudo-bishop and the second because of his rigorist position on the reconciliation issue? While this is a possible interpretation, the evidence is not detailed enough to be conclusive.

In Cyprian's reply to Cornelius' first letter, which warned of the departure of the Novatianists for Carthage, he comments that he has no need to be warned about Novatus, who had been a presbyter in Carthage before he had gone to Rome, since he had been excommunicated in Africa already, by the bishops at the synod of 251 it would seem, because of his activity in destroying the unity of the Church, for which Cyprian labels him a 'traitorous heretic'.⁷⁴ This is spelled out when he is mentioned as having separated some Christians from their bishops in 'the first flames of discord'.⁷⁵ To be separated from the bishop was to enter 'the demented company of schismatics and heretics'.⁷⁶ In Rome Novatus was responsible to some extent for persuading Novatian to set himself up as bishop instead of Cornelius.⁷⁷

In his reply to the second letter, Cyprian expressed his joy that the Roman confessors had rejoined the Church, which was never allowed to suffer *haeresis* for long. 'They had cast aside their folly; they had rejected their schismatic—or should I say, their heretical—madness.'⁷⁸ Here it is clear that Cyprian distinguishes between the two. Clarke says that he sees *haeresis* as more extreme than *schisma*.⁷⁹ It is certainly their association with Novatian that they repudiate,⁸⁰ and that Cyprian refers to this as heretical rather than schismatic means that if Cornelius had any notion of the distinction between *haeresis* and *schisma* that approached our contemporary notion, it was not shared

⁷³ [Cyprian], *Ep.* 49.2.4 (CCSL 3B, p. 235); 49.3.3 (p. 237).

⁷⁴ Cyprian, *Ep.* 52.2.1 (CCSL 3B, p. 245): *quasi haereticus... et perfidus*.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 52.2.2 (p. 246): *primum discordiae et schismatis incendium*.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 52.4.2 (p. 249): *derelictus cum schismaticis et haereticis*.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 52.2.3 (p. 247). He did this despite the fact, as Sage, *Cyprian*, p. 251, points out, that he was a laxist and Novatian a rigorist.

⁷⁸ Cyprian, *Ep.* 51.1.1 (CCSL 3B, p. 240): *errore deposito et schismatico immo haeretico furore deserto*.

⁷⁹ Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 2, pp. 283–4, n. 3.

⁸⁰ *Ep.* 49.2.4 (CCSL 3B, p. 235). Interestingly enough, nothing is mentioned about any change to their thinking or their action with regard to the reconciliation of the *lapsi*.

by Cyprian, for whom it seems *haeresis* encapsulated both the setting up of a rival episcopate as well as differing theories and policies about reconciliation. Could it be that both terms refer to breakdowns in a church's unity, on both a theological and a practical level, with one being more extreme than the other? Yet when he writes directly to the Roman confessors, all Cyprian mentions is that they have been in 'schismatic and heretical error'.⁸¹

Epistula 55 from Cyprian to bishop Antonianus is one of the most important in the corpus, summarizing and informing us as it does of many of the events of 251. Here Cyprian offers some clarification about what he means by *haeresis*. In response to Antonianus' query about what *haeresis* Novatian had introduced, Cyprian makes the point 'that it is not right for us even to want to know what he is teaching, since he is teaching *outside*'.⁸² It had something to do with the content of teaching, but what it tells us is that even more important than Novatian's teaching was his action in breaking the unity of the Church by having himself made a rival bishop in Rome and in creating alternative bishops in other churches. This is termed the action of a *schismaticus*.⁸³ Cyprian refers to those who continue to exclude repentant *lapsi* from communion as *haeretici*.⁸⁴ Unlike his letters in reply to Cornelius, here Cyprian seems to apply *schisma* to the more serious offence of creating a church unattached to the college of bishops and *haeresis* to the less serious offence of practising a rigorist policy within the Church with regard to reconciliation.

In another important letter, this time from Cyprian to Cornelius from summer 252,⁸⁵ references to *haeresis* and *schisma* abound. The laxist leaders in Carthage had appointed Fortunatus, one of

⁸¹ Cyprian, *Ep.* 54.2.2 (CCSL 3B, p. 253): *schismaticus et haereticus error*.

⁸² Ibid. 55.24.1 (CCSL 3B, p. 285): *scias nos primo in loco nec curiosos esse debere quid ille doceat, cum foris doceat*. See also 55.28.1 (p. 291). As Cavallo, 'Il magistero episcopale', p. 389 points out, the practical break in ecclesial communion results from a prior disagreement in thinking: 'La condanna da parte di Cipriano...compagni poggia quindi su due motivazioni fondamentali: la rottura dell'unità della Chiesa, consumata con l'elezione di uno pseudo vescovo in contrapposizione al legittimo, e la negazione della riconciliazione con la Chiesa dei lapsi penitenti. Ambedue gli atteggiamenti vanno contro la disposizione divina e l'insegnamento della Scrittura.'

⁸³ Cyprian, *Ep.* 55.24.3 (CCSL 3B, p. 286).

⁸⁴ Ibid. 55.27.1 (p. 289).

⁸⁵ G. W. Clarke, *The Letters of St. Cyprian of Carthage*, vol. 3: *Letters 55-66* (Ancient Christian Writers, 46; New York: Newman Press, 1986), pp. 235-6. On what this letter reveals about the episcopal synod of 252 see Joseph A. Fischer,

the five presbyters Cyprian had excommunicated the year before, as an alternative bishop to Cyprian, while the deacon Felicissimus, the laxist ringleader, and many of his supporters had gone to Rome. He is described by Cyprian as the 'instigator of schism and division'.⁸⁶ Then presumably it was he to whom Cyprian refers when he mentions *haeretici*.⁸⁷ We find a statement typical of him when he writes that both *haeresis* and *schisma* are found where people do not obey their bishop.⁸⁸ He writes also of *haeresis* being established outside the Church.⁸⁹ Fortunatus has been made a pseudo-bishop by a handful of *haeretici*.⁹⁰ It would seem that when Felicissimus and his supporters went to Rome they carried letters of introduction from these deposed bishops, who were also called *schismatici*.⁹¹ Privatus, the deposed bishop of Lambaesis, is described as a veteran *haeticus* because of his sins.⁹² Clarke suggests that the reason he is so described is that he persisted in claiming to be a bishop.⁹³ One of the things Privatus had done was to set up other churches 'in his heresy outside the church'.⁹⁴ Cyprian writes also of the pastoral problems he faces from the rest of his own church in welcoming back those who abandoned *schisma*.⁹⁵ In this letter there can be no neat distinction made between the two terms.

In the next year, in *Epistula* 61, the only surviving correspondence with Cornelius' successor Lucius, Cyprian explained why Cornelius had been killed and Lucius exiled: it was in order for the *haeretici* to be exposed.⁹⁶

In 254 Cyprian's brief references to both terms remain the same. Both *haeresis* and *schisma* arise when the bishop is held in contempt.⁹⁷ Writing to Stephen, the third bishop in Rome

'Das Konzil zu Karthago im Mai 252', *Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum* 13 (1981), pp. 1-11; Geoffrey D. Dunn, 'Cyprian and His *Collegae*: Patronage and the Episcopal Synod of 252', *Journal of Religious History* 27 (2003), pp. 1-13.

⁸⁶ Cyprian, *Ep.* 59.1.2 (CCSL 3C, p. 337): *schismaticis et discidium auctor*.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 59.2.3 (p. 338). See also 59.9.2 (p. 351); 59.9.3 (p. 352); 59.17.1 (p. 368); 59.18.2 (p. 370); 59.20.2 (p. 372).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 59.5.1 (p. 344). See also 59.9.2 (p. 351).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 59.5.2 (p. 345): *nemo sibi placens ac tumens seorsum foris haeresim nouam conderet*. See also 59.18.1 (p. 369).

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* 59.9.1 (p. 350); 59.14.1 (p. 361); 59.15.1 (p. 363).

⁹¹ *Ibid.* 59.14.1 (p. 361).

⁹² *Ibid.* 59.10.1 (p. 353); 59.11.1 (p. 354); 59.11.3 (p. 355).

⁹³ Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 3, p. 252, n. 47.

⁹⁴ Cyprian, *Ep.* 59.10.2 (CCSL 3C, p. 353): *extra ecclesiam in haeresi*. It is not at all clear exactly why Privatus had been deposed originally.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* 59.15.3 (p. 364).

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* 61.3.1 (CCSL 3C, p. 382).

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 66.5.1 (CCSL 3C, p. 439).

with whom he corresponded, Cyprian mentions Marcianus, a Novatianist supporter in Gaul, who 'has departed from the truth of the catholic Church and from the harmony of our corporate body of bishops by espousing the perverse and pitiless tenets of that presumptuous heresy'.⁹⁸ A heretical sect⁹⁹ was one where differences of attitude led to the formation of a splinter group. This seems typical of Cyprian's position: one cannot make too much of a distinction between holding and putting into practice false beliefs on the one hand and creating a rival community separated from the local bishop on the other, because one would invariably lead to the other.

III. *HAERESIS* AND *SCHISMA* IN THE 'REBAPTISM' CONTROVERSY

With *Epistula* 69 we come to the last phase of Cyprian's episcopal career, which, from about the beginning of 255, was dominated by the so-called 'rebaptism' controversy.¹⁰⁰ Once again, we find mention of both *haeresis* and *schisma* without any indication that these terms are anything other than synonyms.¹⁰¹ It is clear that Novatian had established what we would today term a schismatic church in that he founded a rival church that had its own initiation rituals with himself as bishop. For this he was called *haereticus* by Cyprian.¹⁰² Indeed, here Cyprian defines a *haereticus* as one who is not cast out of the Church by a bishop but who deserts the Church of his own free will.¹⁰³ This runs counter to the modern distinction between heresy and schism as Bonner describes it. Interestingly, in the middle of this letter, Cyprian switches from using the term *haeresis* to using

⁹⁸ Ibid. 68.1.1 (CCSL 3C, p. 463): *a catholicae ecclesiae unitate atque a corporis nostri et sacerdotii consensione discesserit, tenens haereticae praesumptionis durissimam prauitatem* (Eng. trans. in Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 4). Although I have no problems with dating *Ep.* 68 prior to *Ep.* 67, I disagree with Clarke's dating of *Ep.* 67 to autumn 256. I would place that letter in autumn 254. See Geoffrey D. Dunn, 'Cyprian of Carthage and the Episcopal Synod of 254', *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 48 (2002), pp. 229–47. See also Joseph A. Fischer, 'Das Konzil zu Karthago im Herbst 254', *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 93 (1982), p. 223.

⁹⁹ Cyprian, *Ep.* 68.3.2 (CCSL 3C, p. 465).

¹⁰⁰ For an outline of this controversy in the context of unfolding events see J. Patout Burns, 'On Rebaptism: Social Organization in the Third-Century Church', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 1 (1993), pp. 367–403. Id., *Cyprian the Bishop*, pp. 109–12, wants to date *Ep.* 69 to after the spring synod of 256.

¹⁰¹ Cyprian, *Ep.* 69.1.1 (CCSL 3C, p. 470); 69.1.3 (p. 470); 69.11.2 (p. 485); 69.11.3 (p. 486).

¹⁰² Ibid. 69.1.1 (p. 469).

¹⁰³ Ibid. 69.4.2 (p. 475).

schisma.¹⁰⁴ This is the most sustained use of the term throughout his writings and yet we come no closer to resolving what distinction he held between the two terms. Certainly *schisma* meant for him going outside the Church.¹⁰⁵ In this it is identical to the modern understanding of schism, but it is no different from what Cyprian understood here by *haeresis*. Indeed, Novatian, in addition to having been called *haereticus*, is called *schismaticus* as well.¹⁰⁶

Epistula 70 records the decision of the African episcopal synod of spring 255 with regard to the issue of 'rebaptism',¹⁰⁷ while *Epistula* 71 is the cover letter about the same synod from Cyprian to Quintus, a Mauretanian bishop. Relevant references are few. Twice in each letter *haeretici* and *schismatici* are mentioned together.¹⁰⁸ The other references concern the baptism of *haeretici*.¹⁰⁹ They are described as being outside the Church, as sinful and as sacrilegious because they have forsaken the community.¹¹⁰ Those involved in *haeresis* are described as 'those who were seeking to leave the Church'.¹¹¹ In neither letter is *schisma* mentioned on its own. The same pattern appears in the letter Cyprian sent to Stephen of Rome: there is an opening mention of *haeretici* and *schismatici*¹¹² and then the further references (there are only two in this letter) are to *haeretici* who are considered to be such because they have attempted to create their own ecclesial community.¹¹³

Between the next synod after Easter in 256 and that held in September that year, Cyprian wrote at some length to Iubaianus, a fellow bishop from somewhere in the African provinces. In that letter *haeresis* or *haeretici* are mentioned 43 times.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 69.6.1 (p. 477); 69.6.2 (pp. 478–9) (two); 69.6.3 (p. 479) (two); 69.7.1 (p. 480); 69.8.3 (p. 482) (two); 69.9.2 (p. 483).

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. 69.8.3 (p. 482).

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. In 69.7.1 it seems that the followers of Novatian are called *schismatici*.

¹⁰⁷ For the date see Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 4, p. 192; Joseph A. Fischer, 'Das Konzil zu Karthago im Jahr 255', *Annuario Historiae Conciliorum* 14 (1982), pp. 227–40; Geoffrey D. Dunn, 'Sententiam nostram non nouam promimus: Cyprian and the Episcopal Synod of 255', *Annuario Historiae Conciliorum* (forthcoming).

¹⁰⁸ Cyprian, *Epp.* 70.1.1 (CCSL 3C, p. 501); 70.3.1 (p. 511); 71.1.1 (p. 516); 71.2.1 (p. 518).

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. 70.2.1 (p. 507); 70.2.2 (pp. 507–9); 71.1.2 (p. 516–17); 71.1.3 (p. 517); 71.2.1 (p. 518); 71.2.2 (p. 518); 71.2.3 (p. 519).

¹¹⁰ Ibid. 70.3.2 (p. 513), based on Matt. 12:30/Luke 11:23; 1 John 2:18–19.

¹¹¹ Ibid. 71.2.1 (p. 518): *qui de ecclesia recedebant*.

¹¹² Ibid. 72.1.1. (CCSL 3C, p. 524).

¹¹³ Ibid. 72.1.3 (p. 525); 72.2.1 (p. 525).

¹¹⁴ Ibid. 73.1.1 (CCSL 3C, p. 529); 73.2.1 (p. 531); 73.2.2 (p. 531); 73.3.1 (p. 532) (two); 73.3.2 (p. 533) (two); 73.4.2 (pp. 533–4) (two); 73.5.1 (p. 534);

Schisma does not receive a single mention. It is clear that *haeresis* refers both to different theological schools of thought and deviant beliefs¹¹⁵ as well as to the unacceptable practices of setting up bishops who have no apostolic succession and communion with the one Church.¹¹⁶ In fact, at the beginning of the letter Cyprian stated *de haereticorum baptismo* that it was a baptism performed by people outside the Church.¹¹⁷

The letter Cyprian sent to bishop Pompeius was probably sent after that to Iubaianus, for in *Epistula* 74 we read of Cyprian's reaction to Stephen's response to the information sent to him after the post-Easter 256 synod.¹¹⁸ In it *haeresis* and *haeretici* are mentioned some 31 times,¹¹⁹ while *schisma* is mentioned only twice.¹²⁰ There is some sense in the first of these instances that *schisma* can be somehow different from *haeresis*, but as both are mentioned as being outside the Church, we cannot tell what the difference was understood to be.

In *De Bono Patientiae*, written shortly before *Epistula* 73, Cyprian refers to the impatience of *haeretici* that drives them against the peace and unity of the Church as rebels.¹²¹ Later he mentions the persecution Christians suffer from Jews, Gentiles, and *haeretici*.¹²² In *De Zelo et Livore* it is jealousy which is blamed for *haeresis* and *schisma*. Peace, charity, and truth are violated by them when individuals set themselves up as bishops because they do not respect the authority of legitimate bishops.¹²³

73.5.3 (p. 535); 73.8.2 (p. 538); 73.10.1 (p. 540); 73.11.1 (p. 541); 73.11.3 (p. 542); 73.12.1 (p. 542); 73.12.2 (p. 542); 73.13.3 (p. 544) (two); 73.14.1 (p. 544) (two); 73.14.2 (p. 544); 73.14.3 (pp. 545-6) (two); 73.15.1 (p. 546); 73.17.1 (p. 549); 73.18.3 (p. 551); 73.20.1 (p. 554); 73.21.1 (p. 554) (two); 73.21.2 (p. 555); 73.21.3 (p. 555) (two); 73.22.2 (p. 556); 73.23.1 (p. 557); 73.23.2 (p. 558); 73.24.1 (p. 558); 73.24.2 (p. 558); 73.24.3 (p. 559); 73.25.1 (p. 559); 73.25.2 (p. 560) (two); 73.26.2 (p. 561).

¹¹⁵ Ibid. 73.4.2 - 73.5.3 (pp. 533-6).

¹¹⁶ Ibid. 73.8.2 (p. 538); 73.14.3 (p. 545).

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 73.1.1 (p. 529).

¹¹⁸ See Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 4, p. 234.

¹¹⁹ Cyprian, *Ep.* 74.1.1 (CCSL 3C, p. 563-4) (two); 74.1.2 (p. 564) (two); 74.2.1 (pp. 564-5) (three); 74.2.3 (p. 566) (two); 74.2.4 (p. 566-7) (four); 74.3.1 (p. 567) (two); 74.4.1 (p. 568) (two); 74.4.2 (p. 569) (two); 74.5.3 (p. 570); 74.5.4 (p. 570); 74.6.2 (p. 571) (two); 74.7.3 (p. 572); 74.8.2 (p. 573) (two); 74.8.3 (p. 574); 74.8.4 (p. 574); 74.11.1 (p. 578); 74.12 (pp. 579-80) (two).

¹²⁰ Ibid. 74.7.3 (p. 572); 74.8.4 (p. 574).

¹²¹ Cyprian, *De Bono* 19 (CCSL 3A, p. 129).

¹²² Ibid. 21 (p. 130).

¹²³ Cyprian, *De Zelo* 6 (CCSL 3A, p. 78).

On a number of occasions Cyprian refers to the views of his opponents who argue that those baptized by *haeretici* need not be baptized when they join the Church. One of those points of view was to suggest that those who baptized using the same baptismal ritual in their group as was used by the Church, and whose only fault was to be in a community not in communion with the majority of Christians, did so validly.¹²⁴ Of course, this point of view was to become Christian dogma in later centuries as Cyprian's position was rejected by the Church. The related point of view was that the faith position of the person being baptized was what mattered, rather than the faith or communion-status of the minister of the sacrament.¹²⁵

IV. HAERESIS AND SCHISMA AS UNDERSTOOD BY OTHER BISHOPS

Firmilian of Caesarea wrote to Cyprian in autumn 256, about the time the great synod of 87 bishops was meeting in Africa, supporting his point of view in this controversy.¹²⁶ In his letter there is only one reference to *schismaticus*, a definition that a *schismaticus* 'is a person who has made himself an apostate from the communion and unity of the Church'.¹²⁷ At the same time there are 38 references to *haereses* or *haeretici*.¹²⁸ It is clear that for Firmilian *haeresis* meant unacceptable belief as well as breaking communion.¹²⁹ Certainly the establishment of a separate community would lead to differing theological opinions

¹²⁴ Cyprian, *Epp.* 69.7.1 (CCSL 3C, p. 480); 73.4.1 (CCSL 3C, p. 533); 74.5.1 (CCSL 3C, p. 569); 75.9.1 (CCSL 3C, pp. 589-90).

¹²⁵ *Ibid.* 73.4.1-2 (CCSL 3C, pp. 533-4). See especially Cyprian's comment: *quod quaerendum non sit quis baptizauerit, quando is qui baptizatus sit accipere remissam peccatorum potuerit secundum quod credit.*

¹²⁶ See Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 4, p. 248.

¹²⁷ [Cyprian], *Ep.* 75.24.2 (CCSL 3C, p. 602): *qui se a communione ecclesiasticae unitatis apostatam fecerit.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.* 75.5.2 (pp. 585-6) (two); 75.6.2 (p. 587) (two); 75.7.1 (p. 587); 75.7.2 (p. 587); 75.7.4 (p. 588) (two); 75.8.1 (p. 589); 75.8.2 (p. 589) (two); 75.11.1 (p. 593); 75.12 (p. 593) (two); 75.14.1 (p. 594) (two); 75.14.2 (pp. 594-5) (five); 75.16.1 (p. 596); 75.17.2 (p. 597); 75.17.3 (p. 597); 75.20 (p. 599) (two); 75.21.1 (p. 599); 75.23.1 (p. 600); 75.23.2 (pp. 600-1) (three); 75.25.3 (p. 603) (six); 75.25.4 (p. 603).

¹²⁹ In 7.2-3 Firmilian discussed those whom today we would classify as heretics: those with deviant beliefs. In 7.4 he considered those who cut themselves off from the Church, which we would term schismatics, but he described them as *haeretici*.

as there was no longer communication between communities.¹³⁰ Yet the breakdown in communion comes as a result of prior differing beliefs.¹³¹ The important point is that *haeresis* involved a rupture to the unity of the Church. On that criterion, could we assume that Firmilian was suggesting that because Stephen had broken off peace with Cyprian the bishop of Rome was to be understood as a *haereticus*?¹³² It is interesting in that Firmilian's one reference to a *schismaticus* refers precisely to Stephen himself as one who had cut himself off from communion with the rest of the Church. Could it be that this one use of the word in this letter is an indication that *schisma* was simply a milder term for *haeresis*? It is hard to tell because Stephen's action in breaking off communion with the Africans was because of differences in theological belief over the 'rebaptism' issue. Firmilian and other Asian bishops had gathered in synod at Iconium to consider the question of the baptism celebrated by those who had broken communion with the Church but who still seemed to profess the same faith as the majority of Christians. Even that baptism was regarded as invalid.¹³³

We know little of Stephen's own understanding of these terms as so little of his literary involvement in this debate has been preserved. In the extracts of a letter of Stephen to Cyprian, preserved in the latter's letter to Pompeius, in the space of a few lines, Stephen employed terms relating to *haeresis* three times.¹³⁴ It would seem that for him *haeresis* is a very broad and inclusive term, for he refers to those who seek admission (or readmission) to the Church who come *a quacumque haeresi*.¹³⁵ This is repeated in similar terms in Firmilian's reference to Stephen's letter.¹³⁶ In two other passages in Firmilian's letter, which may echo Stephen's own words, the reference is to *haeresis*.¹³⁷ From these very brief references it is impossible to tell whether Stephen employed the term *schisma* and whether or not he in any way

¹³⁰ Ibid. 75.2.2 (p. 583): *sed separatim et diuisim ab inuicem nec confabulatio iam possit esse aut sermo communis*.

¹³¹ Ibid. 75.3.3 (p. 584); 75.10.3 (p. 591).

¹³² Ibid. 75.6.2 (p. 587); 75.17.3 (p. 597); 75.23.1 (p. 600); 75.24.1 (p. 601); 75.25.2 (pp. 602-3).

¹³³ Ibid. 75.19.4 (p. 598).

¹³⁴ Cyprian, *Ep.* 74.1.2 (CCSL 3C, p. 564).

¹³⁵ Ibid. Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 4, pp. 237-8, does not translate *proprie* (in the following lines) in association with *haeretici*, as though Stephen was distinguishing *haeretici* from *schismatici*, but associates it, although with reservation it must be admitted, with *baptizent*.

¹³⁶ [Cyprian], *Ep.* 75.7.1 (p. 587).

¹³⁷ Ibid. 75.14.2 (pp. 594-5); 75.17.2-3 (p. 597).

distinguished between the two terms in a way that would be in line with modern thinking. It would seem that Stephen's words were addressed to the Novatianist situation in Rome in particular.¹³⁸ Cyprian's position seemed to be too similar to Novatian's rigorous one in denying the efficacy of episcopal hand-laying for the reconciliation of those seeking admission (or readmission) into Stephen's church.

To what extent was Firmilian (or Cyprian for that matter) influenced by Stephen's use of terms? I doubt that much can be made from the little evidence from Stephen that we have, but it would be fair to say that Cyprian's terms were well in place before he wrote to Stephen in 256. If Firmilian was influenced by anyone I would suggest it would be Cyprian, from whom he received much more correspondence.

In September 256 a large synod of 87 bishops met to discuss this matter of 'rebaptism'. The opinions of those bishops have been preserved for us, making this a very valuable document for our knowledge of ecclesiology in action in ancient Christianity. Bishop after bishop employs the term *haeresis* in his *sententia*, most of which seem to paraphrase the thoughts already expressed in Cyprian's letters, which had been read to the gathering.¹³⁹ In one or two of them we find interesting pieces of information. Lucius of Thebeste speaks of *haeretici* who destroy

¹³⁸ Burns, 'On Rebaptism', pp. 399-400. S. G. Hall, 'Stephen I of Rome and the One Baptism', in Elizabeth A. Livingstone (ed.), *Studia Patristica* 17/2 (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1982), pp. 796-8, thinks that Stephen's use of *quacumque* is an indication that his policy was first worked out in relationship to Marcionite baptism (see Cyprian, *Ep.* 73.4.1 [CCSL 3C, p. 533]; [Cyprian], *Ep.* 75.18.1 [CCSL 3C, p. 597]), where baptism was administered not with a trinitarian formula but only in the name of Jesus, and then applied to the Novatianist position as well. On baptism in the name of Jesus see Alois Stenzel, 'Cyprian und die "Taufe im Namen Jesu"', *Scholastik* 30 (1955), pp. 372-87 and Hans Freiherr von Campenhausen, 'Taufen auf der Namen Jesu?', *Vigiliae Christianae* 25 (1971), pp. 1-16. Clarke, *Letters*, vol. 4, p. 226, n. 18, suggests on the basis of *Ep.* 73.5.2 (CCSL 3C, p. 535) that the Marcionites did use a trinitarian formula for baptism. While I am sympathetic to Hall's overall argument, I would question one of his supporting arguments. According to Hall, while Iubaianus indicated that the Novatianists were 'rebaptizing' (Cyprian, *Ep.* 73.2.1 [CCSL 3C, p. 530]), Stephen's point that *haeretici* did not (Cyprian, *Ep.* 74.1.2 [CCSL 3C, p. 564]) would indicate that Stephen was thinking primarily about the Marcionites. The question, though, is whether the Marcionites did rebaptize. See Dunn, '*Sententiam nostram*', n. 18, for my suggestion that the Novatianists in Rome did not rebaptize, while those in Africa did.

¹³⁹ I count at least 108 uses of this term in the bishops' statements. For a summary of this synod see E. Contreras, 'Sententiae Episcoporum Numero LXXXVII De Haereticis Baptizandis', *Augustinianum* 27 (1987), pp. 407-21.

the meaning of Scripture through the words they use.¹⁴⁰ Irenaeus of Ululi states that not baptizing one who had received heretical baptism was an even greater *haeresis*.¹⁴¹ Only a few bishops use *schisma*. What they reveal is that both *haeresis* and *schisma* can be spoken of in the same breath since they both cause division in the Church,¹⁴² yet *schisma* means something different from *haeresis*. Lucius of Castra Galbae seems to suggest that *haeretici* do not have a correct theological understanding about the sacrament of baptism while *schismatici* are those who have departed from the Church.¹⁴³ What is perhaps the most intriguing statement is made by Verulus of Rusiccada who states that *haeretici* cannot give what they do not have, while *schismatici* cannot give what they have lost.¹⁴⁴

In the anonymous treatise *De Rebaptismate*, written by someone sympathetic to Stephen's position, the term *haeresis* appears a number of times;¹⁴⁵ *schisma* appears only three times (one of those being scriptural).¹⁴⁶ Interestingly enough, from a modern perspective, the first reference of the author's own is in the context of a statement about doubtful, ambiguous, and differing opinions.¹⁴⁷ In the second reference, *schisma* appears as a worse kind of problem than *haeresis*.¹⁴⁸

CONCLUSION

A painstaking investigation into every reference to *haeresis* and *schisma* in Cyprian of Carthage, conducted from a chronological

¹⁴⁰ *Sent. Ep.* 31 (CCSL 3E, pp. 55-7): *Haereticos blasphemos atque iniquos uerbis uanis decerpentes sancta et adorabilia scripturarum uerba exsecrandos censeo et ideo exorcizandos et baptizandos.*

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.* 54 (p. 81): *Si ideo ecclesia haereticum non baptizat, quod dicatur iam baptizatus esse, haeresis maior est.*

¹⁴² *Ibid.* 4 (pp. 13-15); 5 (pp. 15-21); 8 (p. 27); 72 (p. 93).

¹⁴³ *Ibid.* 7 (p. 25)—the use of *item* to move from *haeretici* to *schismatici* would suggest that they can be viewed as distinct groups. The same thing appears to be the case in 33 (p. 57) with the use of *sed et*.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 70 (p. 91): *Homo haereticus dare non potest quod non habet: multo magis schismaticus quod habuit amisit.*

¹⁴⁵ Pseudo-Cyprian, *De Rebapt.* 1 (CSEL 3.3, pp. 69, 70) (two); 6 (p. 77); 8 (p. 78); 10 (p. 82); 11 (p. 83); 12 (pp. 84, 85) (two); 13 (pp. 85, 86); 14 (p. 86); 16 (p. 89) (two); 17 (p. 90).

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 1 (pp. 70, 71); 10 (p. 82).

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 1 (p. 70): *Namque omne quod et anceps et ambiguum et in diuersis sententiis... quodcumque est illud quod contra ecclesiarum quietem atque pacem in medium producat nihil praeter discordias et simultates et schismata allaturum.*

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 10 (p. 82): *quia spiritus sanctus extra ecclesiam non sit, fides quoque non solum apud haereticos, uerum etiam apud eos qui in schismate constituti sunt sana esse non possit.*

perspective, offers us new insight into the development of the Christian usage of these two terms. What we find in the North African context is, from the beginning of the third century until Cyprian's death at least, that the term *haeresis* and its derivatives was used much more commonly than *schisma*. While both Tertullian and Cyprian and other bishops recognized some distinction between the two, we are not given clear evidence as to what that was. The modern understanding that *haeresis* was for doctrinal deviation and *schisma* was for the setting up of rival communities seems certainly not to be the basis for any such distinction in Cyprian even though in one or two other bishops such a distinction seems to have been operating. If anything, it would seem that for Cyprian *haeresis* was a more extreme form of *schisma*. What I think we can say with certainty is that Cyprian did not believe that one could hold alternative views about theological matters like the reconciliation of sinners, the validity of baptism in Christian sects, or anything else for that matter, without leading to a break in communion with the Church. Nor did he believe that one would set up a rival community unless there were disagreements that involved theological dispute. There is an interconnectedness and interchangeability about these terms in Cyprian.

In fact, I do not support Bonner's notion that Cyprian introduced the equating of the two terms (which would presume that they were clearly distinct prior to Cyprian) and that over time the distinction became even more unclear. In North Africa we can certainly go back to our earlier evidence with Tertullian to find that the two terms still had the same overlapping in meaning as we find in the New Testament.¹⁴⁹ The sharp distinction between the two was a post-Cyprianic development not a pre-Cyprianic one.

What is the importance of this research? I think it challenges the notion put forward recently by Patout Burns that, while Agrippinus' synod in the 230s had addressed the question of heretical baptism, what Cyprian's synods in 255 and 256 had to address was the question of schismatic baptism.¹⁵⁰ To argue, as Burns does, that Cyprian's synods addressed questions left

¹⁴⁹ See, for example, the discussion of 1 Cor. 11:18–19 in William F. Orr and James Arthur Walther, *I Corinthians* (Anchor Bible, 32; New York: Doubleday, 1976), p. 266; Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, 'The First Letter to the Corinthians', in Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy (eds.), *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990), p. 809.

¹⁵⁰ Burns, *Cyprian the Bishop*, pp. 102–3.

unanswered by the one a generation earlier¹⁵¹ is to miss the point of Cyprian's appeal to Agrippinus: he wanted to convince others that he was not dealing with a new issue but following the precedent established by his predecessor in dealing with a repeat occurrence of the same type of rift.

While modern Christians may look to what they have in common, in the third century Christians like Cyprian were more concerned to highlight the differences. For Cyprian what one believed and how one related with the rest of the ecclesial community were not separable questions. The fact that he did not distinguish *haeresis* from *schisma* sharply meant that he could never arrive at the position Augustine would hold more than a hundred years later about the validity of sacramental celebrations presided over by schismatic ministers. Augustine could accept that a schismatic still possessed Christian faith.¹⁵² For Cyprian things were more all or nothing: the schismatic was also a heretic and those who did not hold the same faith as the Church and not did remain in communion with its bishops had nothing at all, and those who had nothing could not be agents through whom God's grace operated. Indeed, the fact that Cyprian did not make a distinction (I am loathe to describe this as an inability, a failure, or a reluctance), at a time when others may have begun to make such distinctions to some extent, may help to explain the course of the 'rebaptism' controversy. That Stephen of Rome did not hold Cyprian's all-or-nothing approach (even though we do not know if indeed he used these two terms to explain that distinction, which he seems to have grasped instinctively at least) meant that the latter would never appreciate the Roman bishop's stance. Changes in the meaning of theological terms and a lack of precision in their use contributed to one of the major ecclesiological disputes of early Latin Christianity. A realization of how Cyprian used the terms *haeresis* and *schisma* makes his uncompromising position in the 'rebaptism' controversy more understandable.

GEOFFREY D. DUNN

¹⁵¹ Ibid. p. 104.

¹⁵² Augustine, *De Bapt. con. Don.* 1.1.2 (NBA 15/1, p. 270): *In quo enim nobiscum sentiunt, in eo etiam nobiscum sunt: in eo autem a nobis recesserunt, in quo a nobis dissentiunt.*