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Religion and Policy in the Coexistence of Romans and Barbarians in Hispania (409-589)
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When the Germanic peoples crossed the Pyrenees in the autumn of 409 CE, Hispania was one more diocese of an Empire which was assuming and consolidating the Nicene version of Christianity as its only, exclusive religion, forbidding, with increasing severity, the other Christian doctrines as well as the rest of the religions. Since the edicts of 380 and 391, political orthodoxy had implied religious orthodoxy, Catholicism had become a fundamental element of Roman identity under the aegis of imperial power. We aim to see through an examination of the extant documents almost always written by Nicene clergymen –, how the link

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2 Cod. Theod. XVI 1, 2 (380); ibid. XVI 10, 10 (391); ibid. XVI 10, 11 (391). See L. Cracco Ruggini, Ambrogio e le opposizioni anticattoliche fra il 383 e il 390, «Augustinianum» 14, 1974, pp. 409-449.

between religion and politics in Hispania worked when Roman order was altered by the arrival of barbarians. That fact gave rise to a coexistence – not only ethnic – ending in 589 with the celebration of the third Council of Toledo: the creation of a new Hispanic unity, the end-point of the political and religious conflicts brought about by interaction between Roman and Germanic elements. During this time and through the shifting scene from the Empire to the Germanic Kingdoms, religion – rather than religiosity – remained organically connected to politics; this connection we consider one of the most relevant points of the historical phenomena of this age.

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In 409, Gerontius⁴ rose against his Emperor the usurper Constantine III⁵ and to reinforce his position he allied himself with Germanic peoples in Southern Gaul⁶. So, Alanic, Suevic, and Vandalic gentes, grouped around their King, came into the Iberian Peninsula initiating a period of frequently traumatic coexistence for wide sectors of Roman Hispanics, specially for the aristocracy⁷. The Hispanic noble class⁸ was contrary to the decadence

⁸ K. F. Strohcker, Spanische Senatoren der spätromischen und westgotischen Zeit, «MDAI(M)» 4, 1963, pp. 107-132, begins the study of aristo-
of the order represented by the Empire, for its prosperity depended on it. Moreover, the great possessores who totally or partially had their inheritance in Hispania were related to the imperial family; such was the case of the brothers Dydimus and Verenianus, who gave their lives in defence of the prevailing imperial legality. Besides, this aristocracy was mainly Catholic in the early fifth century.

...ocracy documented in Hispania during Late Antiquity. Though his is a pioneering work, still valid in its broad outline, Stroheker does emphasise the Hispanity of this aristocracy. Also worthy, A. Chastagnol, Les espagnols dans l'aristocratie gouvernementale à l'époque de Théodose, in Les empereurs romains d'Espagne, Paris 1965, pp. 269-290, centred on the presence of «Spaniards» in the imperial administration in the Theodosian period. Another relevant work is A. Bâili, Aspectos sociales del Bajo Imperio, «Latomus» 24, 1965, pp. 886-904. The publication of the first volume of PLRE [A. H. M. Jones – J. R. Martindale – J. Morris, The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire I. A.D. 260-395, Cambridge 1971] represented a giant step forward with regard to knowledge of socio-political aspects of the fourth century, giving rise to a number of studies, among which we must mention that of J. Matthews, Western..., which pays special attention to the family of Theodose and contemporary senators linked to Hispania. In this field, see also L. A. García Moreno, España y el Imperio en época teodosiana. A la espera del bárbaro, in I Concilio Caesaraugustano, Zaragoza 1980, pp. 34-63. For our part, we have studied this aristocracy in: J. Vilèlla, Las cartas del epistolario de Q. Aurelio Símaco enviadas a Hispania, «Cassiodorus» 2, 1996, pp. 51-72; Id., El ordo senatorius en la Hispania de Teodosio, in La Hispania de Teodosio, Salamanca 1998, pp. 293-306.

9 See J. Matthews, Western..., pp. 93-96.

10 See: PLRE II, p. 358, Didymus 1; ibid., p. 1155, Verenianus. Orosius indicates that to defend Hispania from barbarians and the usurper Constantine III, Dydimus and Verenianus guarded Pyrenean passes with private troops – slaves – until they were defeated and killed by the soldiers of the usurper. One may assume from Isidore, who follows Orosius's account, that, from 406, they managed to stop Alans, Sueves, and Vandals, who stayed in Gaul three years: Oros. hist. VII 40, 5-8; Isid. Vand. LXXI. Nonetheless, Orosius's account does not coincide with information given by Sozomenus and Zosimus, for they do not locate the military conflict in the Pyrenees. Sozomenus even says that the first battle took place in Lusitania, a province from which undoubtedly the soldiers led by the two brothers came: Sozom. hist. IX 11, 4; Zos. hist. VI 4. In our opinion, it must be taken for granted that Orosius is the only narrator in Hispania when the events happened. On the other hand, if we accept Isidore's veracity, the setting-up of private forces in the Pyrenees could be in relation to the edict published - 17 April 406 - by Honorius before the imminent crossing of the Rhine by Germanic peoples: cod. Theod. VII 13, 16. Prompted by this invasion, the law allowed slaves to fight in exchange for their freedom and two solidi.
One of these Hispano-Romans, Ydatius\textsuperscript{11}, born to a highclass family\textsuperscript{12}, constitutes an excellent paradigm of the symbiosis between Romanness and Catholicism in the Hispanic aristocracy. Bishop in 427\textsuperscript{13} – probably of Chaves\textsuperscript{14} – Ydatius wrote a continuation to the text of the *Chronicon* of Eusebius and Jerome to which he had access\textsuperscript{15}, ranging from 379 – the beginning of Theodosius's reign – to 468\textsuperscript{16}. In this chronicle, he chronologically records facts concerning the political and military history of the Roman Empire and of the Germanic peoples, the Church and ecclesiastics as well as natural phenomena and prodigies, paying special attention to the difficulties of coexistence with Germans, particularly in his *Gallaecia*.

Along with his political Romanness – he established, for example, a parallel between the arrival of the barbarians in *Hispania* and in Rome, mentioned together\textsuperscript{17} – Ydatius, in his chronicle – addressed to «all those who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ and serve Him in the truth»\textsuperscript{18} – repeatedly defends orthodoxy, i.e. Catholicism, against the barbarians and the heresies of his homeland, specially, as we will see, Priscillianism\textsuperscript{19}. His constant effort to describe the evolution of the Theodosian dynasty\textsuperscript{20}


\textsuperscript{12} One may gather this from the trip he made to the East in his childhood, probably in 407: Ydat. *chron.* a. 407, 33; *ibid. praef.*, 4.

\textsuperscript{13} Ydatius says he became Bishop in the third year of the reign of Valentinian III: Ydat. *chron. praef.*, 6. Valentinian III was proclaimed Augustus on 23 October 425, see PLRE II, pp. 1138-1139, *Placidus Valentinianus* 4.

\textsuperscript{14} Ydatius only states that he was at Chaves in 460 when he was captured by Frumarius; he returned to the city after three months in captivity: Ydat. *chron.* a. 460, 196; *ibid.* a. 460, 202.

\textsuperscript{15} Ydat. *chron.* introd.; *ibid. praef.*, 1; *ibid. praef.*, 5. Cf.: *ibid. praef.*, 2-3; *ibid. praef.*, 6.


\textsuperscript{17} Ydat. *chron.* a. 409, 34; *ibid.* a. 409, 35.

\textsuperscript{18} *Ibid. praef.*, directo. It is relevant that Ydatius refers to Christ, showing thus his Catholic faith in the face of, for example, Arianism.

\textsuperscript{19} Ydat. *chron. praef.*, 6; *ibid.* a. 386, 13; *ibid.* a. 387, 16; *ibid.* a. 400, 25; *ibid.* a. 405, 30; *ibid.* a. 445, 122; *ibid.* a. 445, 125; *ibid.* a. 447, 127; *ibid.* a. 448, 130; *ibid.* a. 449, 137; *ibid.* a. 465/466, 228.

\textsuperscript{20} *Ibid.* a. 379, 1-2; *ibid.* a. 380, 4; *ibid.* a. 387, 14; *ibid.* a. 389, 19; *ibid.* a. 395, 22-24; *ibid.* a. 402, 28; *ibid.* a. 409, 36; *ibid.* a. 414, 49; *ibid.*
representative of imperial legitimateness — the succession in the Roman episcopate, news about the great western defenders of Catholicism, and his interest in knowing what was happening in the East he had visited — specially its religious development — is proof of this political and religious symbiosis. It should not surprise us that he uses apocalyptic expressions to illustrate his *lacrimabile tempus*. Using Biblical analogies to describe the devastation brought by barbarians hordes, he said that *Hispania* was punished by the four plagues prophesied by Ezekiel: iron, famine, plagues, and beasts. In the preface of his chronicle, Ydatius reproduces — though not literally — the well-known final sentence of Jerome’s introduction remarking on the general confusion brought about by the excesses committed by the barbarians in Roman territory.

Even when Ydatius says generically that before the coming of the barbarians the Hispanics had resigned themselves to servitude, we also document escapes from *Hispania* as we do in other parts of the Empire, particularly in Rome. Apart from Lagodius and Theodosius — brothers of Dydimus and Vere- nianus who went to Ravenna and Constantinople — the trip to Ravenna of the family of the *uir specabilis* Flavius Merobaudes.

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a. 416, 54; *ibid.* a. 419, 64; *ibid.* a. 421, 68; *ibid.* a. 424, 71; *ibid.* a. 424, 73; *ibid.* a. 425, 75-76; *ibid.* a. 450, 138; *ibid.* a. 451, 140; *ibid.* a. 455, 154; *ibid.* a. 455, 157.

21 *Ibid.* a. 387, 15; *ibid.* a. 401, 27; *ibid.* a. 412, 44; *ibid.* a. 417, 57; *ibid.* a. 426, 78; *ibid.* a. 434, 96; *ibid.* a. 447, 127; *ibid.* a. 463, 217; *ibid.* a. 468, 242.

22 *Ibid.* a. 382, 8; *ibid.* a. 412, 45; *ibid.* a. 424, 72; *ibid.* a. 432, 90.

23 Regarding Ydatius’s interest in eastern ecclesiastical matters, see: *Ydat. chron.* a. 380, 5; *ibid.* a. 388, 18; *ibid.* a. 404, 29; *ibid.* a. 406, 31-32; *ibid.* a. 407, 33; *ibid.* a. 414, 50; *ibid.* a. 415, 51; *ibid.* a. 416, 53; *ibid.* a. 417, 58; *ibid.* a. 435, 97; *ibid.* a. 436, 100; *ibid.* a. 442, 119; *ibid.* a. 450, 138; *ibid.* a. 462, 210.


28 See: *PLRE II*, p. 654, Lagodius; *ibid.*, p. 1099, Theodosius.

29 See *ibid.*, pp. 756-758, Fl. Merobaudes.
seems to have had to do with the events of 408-409. The career of the Catholic Merobaudes — author, among other works, of the orthodox poem De Christo, composed in thirty dactylic hexameters — was to entail a close relation to Aetius, magister utriusque militiae of Valentinian III. However, most Hispanic refugees fled to Africa and the Balearic Isles.

Another Hispanic of that age is the Galician Presbyter Orosius, who gives a notion of political and religious Romanness in his works. The central idea of his Historiarum adversus paganos libri is that the adoption of Christianity brought to an end the horrors and calamities which continuously marked human history; contemporary misfortunes — though less terrible — are due to a non-absolute acceptance of the Christian religion, decreasing as the Good News is accepted. He then tries to refute the pessimism resulting from the sack of Rome by Alaric, an event used by pagans to condemn the definitive abandonment of traditional cults in the late fourth century. Moreover, for the Christians, the fall of Rome shook their own political theology, which bound Romanness with Catholicism. Basically elaborated by Eusebius of Caesarea and wholly applied by Theodosius, this political theology — based on and justified by Christianity — established that there could only be one Empire, that of Rome, for its origin coincided with that of the Christian religion and embraced the worldly coordinates of the Kingdom of God, i.e. the Church. In this system, the Empire is ruled by an Emperor whose power emanates from God-Christ and whose task it is to maintain the Empire and ensure that it grows, as His representative.

30 Cf. Sidon. carm. IX 296-301.
31 See PLRE II, 21-29, Fl. Aetius 7.
33 Oros. hist. prol., 13-14.
The reaction to the fall of eternal Rome to the barbarians spurred Augustine’s reply to the pagans. In the ten first books of his *De ciuitate Dei*, Augustine retakes some of his old postulates, and attacks the pagans by separating the heavenly from the earthly city providing then a great vision of future. Orosius’s *Historiae*, undertaken, as the author says, by command of Augustine, are also a reply to the pagans. The justifying – and theological – effort of the Bishop of Hippo does not completely correspond to everyday attitudes, nor does Orosius seem to be very friendly to the barbarians if we consider the autobiographical and ideological data he provides. After vilifying them again and again as one of the principal agents of an interminable list of calamities, a providentialist Orosius tries to show an *ira non plena* when he writes about his own age without hiding his Romanness. Even when there is a notable difference in the dealings with barbarians before and after Jesus Christ’s coming – *ferocia* diminishing since Theodosius’s reign – the traditional opposition between Romanness and barbarity is still present.

Indeed, Orosius describes himself as a citizen of a Roman Empire whose Christian laws are the same everywhere. His patriotism leads him to lament the ruins caused by the barbarians, specially in Hispanic cities, in *Hispania*, a province which has given undefeated generals and never usurpers to the Roman State.

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36 Oros. *hist. prol.*, 1-2; *ibid.* VII 19-20. E. Corsini, *Introduzione alle “Storie” di Orosio*, Torino 1968, pp. 35-51, has justly pointed out that Orosius seems to have written his *Historiae* on his own initiative rather than by Augustine’s command. Even if we accept the assignment of a complementary dossier to the ten first books of *De ciuitate Dei*, the *Historiae* do not fit what the Bishop of Hippo stipulated. The account of a research undertaken by our chronicler make his work more than a simple enumeration of the evils accompanying humanity.

37 This appears clear from Augustine’s posture with regard to the Donatist schism, see: G. C. Willis, *St. Augustine and the Donatist Controversy*, London 1950; F. Paschoud, Roma..., pp. 236-239.


40 Oros. *hist.* V 2, 3-8.

41 *ibid.* VII 22, 7-8.

42 *ibid.* V 23, 16.
That makes him weep. He also weeps when he remembers the problems he experienced in *Hispania* because of the invaders and his dramatic escape. According to his account, Orosius, after evading them for some time, was taken prisoner or detained until he was able to escape during a moment of confusion\(^{43}\) and travelled to Africa, where he arrived before 415\(^{44}\). Although this story provides an excellent sample of contemporary Roman mentality, we cannot ascertain the truth of the facts related by the chronicler.

It is surprising that Orosius only relates the hardships and persecutions he suffered in his *Historiae*, composed after his return from Jerusalem\(^{45}\). When he first arrived in Africa, he told the Bishop of Hippo he had come to see him in order to learn how to fight doctrinal deviations in *Hispania*, heresies — basically Priscillianism — considered more pernicious to Christianity than the barbarians\(^{46}\). Augustine refers to Orosius in two letters dated 415, one addressed to Jerome, recommending him, and another to Euodius of Uzala. These, together with the *Commonitorium*\(^{47}\) — addressed to Augustine a little after his coming to Africa — seem to reveal Orosius’s silence about his detention and persecution before the writing of his *Historiae*. Probably his problems with the barbarians were real, but he may also be trying to justify himself to his readers and, moreover, Augustine strongly opposed churchmen’s abandoning their flocks.

When, before the imminent coming of the Vandals, Bishop Honoratus\(^{48}\) asked Augustine what attitude the clergy should adopt

\(^{43}\) Ibid. III 20, 6-7. Cf. *ibid.* V 2.

\(^{44}\) The first certain chronological data on Orosius is given by *ep.* 166 of Augustine, dated 415 — the year the Galician was making his way to Palestine —, in which the Bishop of Hippo introduces Orosius to Jerome. Of the same date is the *Ad Orosium contra Priscillianistas et Origenistas* of Augustine.

\(^{45}\) Orosius returned to Africa in 416. Aside from other evidence, Orosius brought the relics of Saint Stephen, found in December 415, on his way back from Palestine. See n. 68.

\(^{46}\) Oros. comm. 1; Aug. *ep.* 166, 2; Id. *ep.* 169, 13.


\(^{48}\) He is Bishop of Thiaba, an unidentified see of Numidia. See *PCBE* I, p. 570, *Honoratus* 16.
— whether to flee or not — the Bishop of Hippo answered, as he already had, in strict terms: no-one may abandon his church; everyone must stay with his own people. Only in three cases is escape accepted: when the churchman is directly menaced — although another clergyman must replace him in his absence —; when the people in his charge are safe; or when his parishioners are dead or dispersed. Giving some examples, Augustine says that most Hispanic bishops stayed at their sees, though some fled when their parishes were overrun or they felt afraid.

Orosius would not be the only Hispanic clergyman leaving Hispania for Africa, with or without a compelling reason. Augustine must have known as much and even some Hispanic bishops attending the Council of Carthage in 418 seem to be fugitives. Our chronicler also tells us that in 417/418 many Hispanics left the Peninsula; some of them, perhaps a considerable number, paid a small sum to the invaders for helping them to cross to the African coast. Though the barbarians had become mercenaries in the employ of those who fled, the escape of Orosius is absolutely different. His silence on one subject is, to say the least, surprising: that of his detention and, above all, his being pursued at sea, facts mentioned only vaguely in his Historiae without any indication of cause. As we have seen,

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51 Oros. hist. VII 41, 4. It is possible that some of the documented travels of Hispanics outside of the Peninsula in the first decades of the fifth century was motivated by the Germanic presence. Eucharius, an Hispanic Presbyter, lived in Calama (Numidia), where his presence is documented between 416 and 426/427, see PCBE I, p. 360, Eucharius. Another Hispanic Priest, Petrus, is documented in Mauretania Caesariensis before 418, see PCBE I, pp. 871-872, Petrus 4. A bishop, likely from Rosas, died in Sicily in the early fifth century, see A. Ferrua, Nuovi studi nelle catacombe di Siracusa, «RAC» 17, 1940, pp. 46-47.

52 Oros. hist. VII 41, 4-5.

53 Ibid.: mercennariis ministris ac defendoribus.

54 See n. 43.
the rest of the surviving documentation about Orosius does not mention these hardships; on the contrary, his departure is based on doctrinal reasons. Furthermore, he promises both Augustine \(^{55}\) and Auitus \(^{56}\) he will return, which he does not seem to have done.

The antagonism Orosius felt towards barbarians was not greater than that he felt towards heretics. Apart from the Pelagian controversies, he seems to have had a good knowledge of Priscillianist doctrines and practices, the main obstacle to religious unity in *Hispania*, which objective the imperial government was also pursuing in the first decades of the fifth century. Summing up the Priscillianist movement after the trial of Trier, Sulpicius Seuerus indicates that the bodies of the executed were brought to *Hispania* and that the heresy increased in importance as Priscillian was considered a martyr \(^{57}\). Ydatius also mentions the growth of Priscillianism in *Gallaecia* \(^{58}\), which originated conflicts among the Iberic bishoprics. After the pressure of Ambrose and Siricius and some attempts at reconciliation \(^{59}\), the first Council of Toledo was celebrated in the first week of September of 400 to reach ecclesiastical peace. However, this moderate and conciliating council was not as successful as expected \(^{60}\). Already there were divisions in the Galician episcopate between Catholics and Priscillianists. Besides, the bishops of the other Hispanic provinces were indeed suspicious of the Galicians \(^{61}\), whose Priscillianist conflict had divided the Hispanic church.

At the time of Suevic settlement, the ecclesiastical situation in *Gallaecia* was not very different from that in 400. The Com-

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\(^{55}\) Aug. ep. 166, 2. Orosius promised Augustine that he would come back to his land from Palestine after visiting Africa.

\(^{56}\) Auit. Brac. ad Palc. 5.

\(^{57}\) Sulp. Seu. chron. II 51, 7-8.

\(^{58}\) Ydat. chron. a. 387, 16.

\(^{59}\) Exemp. profes. pp. 236-237, 1. 74-82. See n. 60. We call *Exemplar professionum* the two assembled extracts of the sentences of Symposius, Dictinius and Comasius, and the final judgment of the council, texts not included in the *Colección Canónica Hispana* and edited by H. Chadwick, *Priscillian of Avila. The Occult and the Charismatic in the Early Church*, Oxford 1976, pp. 234-239.

\(^{60}\) Exemp. profes. p. 234-239.

\(^{61}\) Innocent. I ep. 3, 2-4.
monitorium de errore Priscillianistarum et Origenistarum that Orosius gave to Augustine provides evidence of the ecclesiastical controversies and posturing the heresy still caused. However, the main purpose of Orosius in this booklet\(^\text{62}\) was to expose the fact that Priscillianism contained heresy, thus achieving the support of Augustine\(^\text{63}\). He refers to its similarity to Manicheism by quoting, he says, a letter by Priscillian showing that the Priscillianists defended the notion that souls were trapped by an evil principle before being bound to their bodies, that they read apocryphal texts, that they denied the existence of the Trinity, etc.\(^\text{64}\). It was evident that the authority of Augustine could strengthen the anti-Priscillianist sector in Gallaecia, given its exclusion from the Empire because of the Suevic control which protected the heresy from imperial legislation, which provided for severe penalties in that age.\(^\text{65}\)

There is also reference to the coexistence of Romans and barbarians – Catholics and heretics – in the invaded Gallaecia in the letter given by Auitus\(^\text{66}\) to Orosius for him to bring to Bishop Balconius of Braga on his journey back to Hispania. Fugitive or not, Auitus had been in the East for some time when he met his compatriot Orosius, who was sent by Augustine to Palestine in 415.\(^\text{67}\). In this letter, Auitus tells Balconius and the clergy and people of Braga that he remembers them, is grieved by their afflictions, and sheds tears constantly over the division

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\(^{62}\) B. Vollmann, *Priscillianus*, in *RE suppl.* 14, 1974, coll. 531-534, has observed that Orosius relies on an anti-Priscillianist source on which the *Indiculus de haeresibus* also relies. The latter may be the apologetical book of Ithacius Clarus, the great enemy of Priscillian.

\(^{63}\) Augustine answers Orosius in his *Ad Orosium contra Priscillianistas et Origenistas*.


\(^{65}\) *Const. Sirmond. XII* (407); *cod. Theod. XVI* 5, 40 (407); *ibid. XVI* 5, 43 (408); *ibid. XVI* 5, 48 (410); *ibid. XVI* 5, 59 (423); *ibid. XVI* 5, 65 (428). See J. Vilella, *Priscillianismo galo y política antipriscillianista durante el siglo V*, «AnTard» 5, 1997, pp. 177-185.


\(^{67}\) See n. 44.
— discidium — existing in his country. And he does so in order that God should restore them to liberty or concede peace to whomever He permits to win. He also mentions his frequent intention of going to Braga, an impossible trip due to the widespread presence of the enemy all over Hispania. Moreover, through this letter, Auitus informs them about the recent find of the relics of Saint Stephen, in support of the authenticity of which he encloses the story of the Presbyter Lucian, their finder. Because of that, he managed to obtain a part to send to them with Orosius to Braga, as the saint, converted into their aduocatus et patronus, allowed them to live safely in peace.

But the relics of Saint Stephen proto-martyr would never reach Braga. In spite of what Orosius had assured Auitus, he did not travel to Gallaecia, leaving the relics in Minorca. Though it is difficult to know the real reasons that impelled Orosius to set off for the Balearic Islands when, after writing his Historiae, he left Africa, it would seem that the ambiguous Orosius wanted to prove — specially to Augustine — that he was keeping his promise to come back to Hispania without going to a Gallaecia infested with barbarians. Seuerus of Minorca states that Orosius stayed a short time in Mahón and left the relics in the city when, not being able to return to the Peninsula, he departed for Africa. Even if we accept the real impossibility of going from Minorca to Braga, it is significant that he took such a long route, far from the usual ones along the Atlantic coast, to return to Gallaecia.

The importance that political and religious orthodoxy had in the islands, whose geographical characteristics had kept it apart from the clades, is manifested in the intentions underlying the letter of Seuerus. This letter is a genuine libellus miraculorum which relates the conversion of the Jews of Mahón in 418 due

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68 Saint Stephen’s relics were found about 20 December 415, see E. Vanderlinden, Revelatio Sancti Stephani, «REByz» 4, 1946, pp. 178-217, especially 178-179.


70 Seu. Minor. ep. ad omnes ecclesias 4.

71 Ibid.

72 Seu. Minor. ep. ad omnes ecclesias 18, 4: Hispaniarum cladem.
to – or hastened by – the relics of the saint. Despite its genre and its hagiographic manipulation, this text gives relevant data about the symbiosis between Romanness and Catholicism in the Balearics, a matter about which Orosius was no doubt well informed. Seuverus narrates how the placing of the relics in the church of Mahón brought another discidium to an end. It is evident that the greater benefits could be reaped from the relics in zones under imperial rule than in those torn off from Roman authority.

As Seuverus affirms, Mahón was a city ruled by Roman laws, laws that had excluded Jews from civil and military offices since the early fifth century. It has already been pointed out that Seuverus's account shows the effectiveness of these measures against the Jews of Mahón in 418. In accord with previous legislation, on 10 March of that year it was established that Jews should be definitely expelled from militia, being allowed only to finish their service. In our opinion, it is in this situation, growing worse every day for Jews, that the picturesque conversions of Jewish noblemen described by Seuverus in his fashionably rhetorical style should be understood. The Bishop refers with some ingenuity to these men's reasons. According to Seuverus, Ruben, the first Jew to convert, used these arguments to convince Theodorus: «if you really want to be secure and feel respected and rich, believe in Christ as I do. You are now stand-

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74 Seu. Minor. ep. ad omnes ecclesias 12: in ciuitate romanis legibus subjicta.
75 When, in the fourth century, municipal honours were no longer attractive, legislation constantly tied Jews to civil functions, basically in the decurionate. During the fifth century, several laws were passed in the West maintaining the economical burden on Jews but excluding them both from civil and military services. In 404, they were excluded from the militia, which measure was an obstacle with regard to the cursus: cod. Theod. XVI 8, 16. Among the posts a Jew could not hold was that of defensor ciuitatis. See E. Demougeot, L'évêque Sèvere et les juifs de Minorque au Ve siècle, in LIII Congrès de la Fédération historique du Languedoc méditerranéen et du Roussillon, Montpellier 1982, pp. 13-34.
76 See E. Demougeot, L'évêque..., p. 22.
77 Cod. Theod. XVI 8, 24 (418).
ing while I sit among the bishops. If you believed, you would sit with them and I would stand before you.\(^78\) Theodorus had held all the civil offices in the municipality of Mahón; he had been \textit{defensor ciuitatis} and was \textit{patronus} when Seuerus's letter was written. Besides, he was a relative of Lectorius, a Jew who had recently been governor of the Balearic province\(^79\).

As episcopal authority grew stronger in city government, the relics of saints took on great importance in the protection and defence of Christians. As in the case of Saint Stephen, saints function as mediators between Christ and the members of the Church Militant, both collectively or individually, through their remains – or through objects in contact with them –\(^80\). There is an obvious relationship between this intercession and the needs of those who believe in and promote it. In consequence, the cooperation between the members of Christ and their earthly co-religionists documented by Catholic sources is historically explicit. Seuerus, relating the events in Mahón in a letter addressed to all the bishops, undoubtedly proposed a model to follow\(^81\).

The conversions of the Minorcan Jews are contemporary with the anti-Priscillianist activity that Consentius\(^82\), another anti-heretic expert, carried out in \textit{Tarraconensis} in the precise moment in which that province, in accord with the Visigoth settle-

\(^{78}\) \textit{Seu. Minor. ep. ad omnes ecclesias} 16.

\(^{79}\) See: \textit{PLRE II}, p. 1088, \textit{Theodorus} 13; \textit{ibid.}, p. 661, \textit{Lectorius}.


\(^{81}\) Seuerus's letter was read in Uzali: \textit{mirac. s. Steph.} 1, 2.

\(^{82}\) See J. Amengual, \textit{Els orígens...}, pp. 179-258, 264. As Amengual states, Consentius may have written Seuerus's letter.
ament in Aquitania in 418, was again placed under Roman rule. At the same time there took place, as we have documented, the anti-Priscillianist crusade of Fronto, presumably a monk, who followed the instructions of Consentius in the Tarrac. Consentius, well aware of the theological controversies, lived in the Balearics — probably on Minorca — at the time of Fronto’s intervention, where he seems to have arrived, perhaps from the Tarrac, seeking protection from the barbarians. So did Innocentius, a very rich Jew. Consentius, who must have had a very good knowledge of the ecclesiastical and doctrinal circles of the Tarrac, acted together with Patroclus, Bishop of Arles, a friend and relative

83 See n. 107.


85 Cons. ep. 11*, 2. 1, apud Aug.


87 See: Minor. ep. ad omnes ecclesias 18, 4.

of the magister urriusque militiae Constantius, ruler of the Western Mediterranean at the time.

Fronto's conduct is documented by the epistolary narration — ep. 11* — that Consentius sent to Augustine, who answered him a year later in his Contra mendacium. According to this narration, the anti-Priscillianist activity of Fronto in the Tarracnonensis lasted one year. It began with the carrying out of the instructions received by Fronto from Consentius and ended with the celebration of a provincial council in 420. Commanded by Patroclus, Consentius composed some writings — among them some books — of Priscillianist content which, along with letters and instructions, he sent to Fronto for him to use as bait to

90 Cons. ep. 11*. Although most of the events described in ep. 11* do not pose serious problems of historical veracity, it is an exposition filled with scenic effects and is, to a great extent, hagiographic — see n. 84. Cf. Aug. c. mend. III 4.
91 As indicated at the beginning of Contra mendacium, Augustine wrote that work — in answer to the ep. 11* of Consentius — a year after receiving, together with other writings of Consentius, the ep. 11*, cf. Aug. c. mend. I 1.
92 Cons. ep. 11*, 1, 4.
93 In explaining Fronto's stay in the Tarracnonensis, the ep. 11* mentions the presence of comes Asterius — see PLRE II, p. 171, Asterius 4 — in Hispania — Cons. ep. 11*, 7-12 —, which was documented by Ydatius in 420 — Ydat. chron. a. 420, 66. — We must therefore conclude that ep. 11* of Consentius could not have been written before 420 and, consequently, the Contra mendacium — see n. 91 — cannot be from earlier than 421, probably being sent to Consentius in the spring of 422 — Aug. c. mend. I 1. Moreover, this chronology coincides with the place the Contra mendacium has in the Retractions of Augustine — Aug. retract. II, 86 — quoted immediately before the Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum that Augustine sent to Boniface II, who was buried on 4 September 422, see L. Duchesne, Le Liber Pontificialis. Texte, introduction et commentaire, I, Paris 1955, p. 229, n. 14. J. Divjak, Sancti Aurelii Augustini opera. Epistolae ex duobus codicibus nuper in lucem prolatae, CSEL 88, Wien 1981, pp. lvi-lxx, dates ep. 11* in 418/419 and Contra mendacium in 420; these chronologies are followed by, among other authors, Wankenne and Amengual — implying 419 for the celebration of the council —, see: J. Amengual, Informacions..., p. 324; J. Wankenne, La correspondence de Consentius avec saint Augustin, in Les lettres..., p. 227; J. Amengual, L'església..., p. 7; Id., Els orígens..., pp. 186-187.
94 Cons. ep. 11*, 2, 1; ibid. 10, 3-10. Cf. ibid. 27, 3.
95 Ibid. 1, 1-2; ibid. 1, 5; ibid. 2, 1; ibid. 27, 2.
96 Ibid. 2, 1; ibid. 10, 3.
fish out the supposed Priscillianists of the province. So, Fronto pretended to be a Priscillianist and inquired what had happened to some codices containing magical literature, stolen by barbarians from the Presbyter Seuerus and delivered to Sagittius, Bishop of Lérida. After discovering what had happened to the codices, Fronto began a trial that, because of the episcopal rank of some of the accused, led to a council celebrated in Tarragona.

This council, attended by seven bishops, exonerated those Fronto had accused and decided to destroy the codices as well as other incriminatory documents. Fronto then left for Arles to solicit the support of Patroclus, who summoned another council in Beziers at which the seven attending bishops and the absolved ecclesiastics were to participate. There is no proof, however, of the celebration of this council, and Consentius assures Augustine that the Hispanic bishops were not going to attend. Interested in having Augustine’s support for his cause, Consentius suggested to Patroclus – clearly supported by Pope Zosimus – that he asked the Emperor to intervene, together with other Gallic bishops, to eliminate Priscillianism.

The activity of Fronto manifests how factions closer to imperial orthodoxy profited from the recovery of Romano-Catholic power in Tarracoensis due to the collaboration of the Visigoths who, having arrived in that province in 415, made a pact...

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97 Ibid. 1, 3-5; ibid. 2, 2; ibid. 10, 3-6. Cf. ibid. 27, 3.
99 Ibid., pp. 272-273.
101 Cons. ep. 11*, 21.
102 Ibid. 23. The attitude of Patroclus manifests his aim of extending his jurisdiction towards Hispania.
103 See É. Griffe, La Gaule..., pp. 146-154.
104 Cons. ep. 11*, 24. See n. 65.
105 In Gallia, the Visigoths – who entered Southern Gaul at the beginning of 412 – collaborated with Constantius against Jovinus – chosen Emperor after the defeat of Constantine III, see PLRE II, pp. 621-622, Iouin 2 – to impose Honorius’s authority, which they achieved. The collaboration between Romans and Visigoths broke off when the barbarians did not receive promised wheat due to the rising of Heraclian in Africa – see PLRE II, pp. 539-540.
with Constantius the next year. This pact of 416 established that, in exchange for 600,000 modia of wheat, the Visigoths were to fight as federates against barbarians in Hispania and to deliver Galla Placidia, widow of Ataulf and sister of Honorius. When through a new foedus in 418, the Visigoths settled in Aquitania – the beginning of the Tolosian Kingdom – only Sueves and Asding Vandals, Germanic peoples in the North-West part of the Peninsula, were left in Hispania. It is relevant that Melania should have waited until 419 to sell the fundi she had in those regions free from Germanic peoples.

Moreover, from 419 to 429, the imperial government supported the Sueves against the Vandals. In 429, Geiseric’s Vandals defeated the Suevic King Hermigarius’s troops in Mérida when the former were heading for Africa. This is the first news of Suevic expansionism that Ydatius documents. The chronicler attributes the defeat and death of the Suevic King to his having insulted Eulalia, the martyr of Mérida. Ydatius calls Hermigarius a «thief» and those going with him «damned». In similar terms he explains the death of Gunderic, who died in Seville by God’s decree after confiscating the church of Saint Vincent from the Catholics to give it to the Arians. Heavenly intervention against two barbarian kings – in favour of the Hispano-

Heraclianus 3 –. That put an end the pact with Constantius, who initiated a maritime blockade against the Visigoths. Because of this, the Visigoths arrived in Hispania in 415, the year of the death of Ataulf – see PLRE II, pp. 176-178. Ataulfus – and that of the son he had had with Galla Placidia.


110 Ydat. chron. a. 429, 80. See: PLRE II, pp. 496-499, Geisericus; ibid., p. 546, Hermenegarius.

Romans — again manifests the new functions saints play in military and political events in the invaded Hispania. It was in this period that martyrs entered political life, gaining a new dimension, a new function as great and powerful allies of their co-religionists.\textsuperscript{112}

The harsh adjectives that Ydatius uses when referring to the Sueves in 429 are repeated the following year when further plundering occurred in Gallaecia. Apart from the events of 409 and 410, Ydatius — who generally records the main events of Hispania — says nothing about confrontations between Sueves and Hispanics until 430. In 430, the Sueves, the only Germanic people in Hispania, spread through the zone previously occupied by the Asding Vandals, which generated an open conflict with its inhabitants. These Hispano-Romans, who had taken refuge in castella, even succeeded in taking some Suevic prisoners. Because of this, according to Ydatius, the Sueves restored peace, which was probably in force when they fought against the Vandals.\textsuperscript{113} From this point on, we document frequent news of more or less lasting pacts between barbarians and Romans. When the peace broke in 431\textsuperscript{114}, Ydatius was chosen ambassador by the Hispano-Galicians before Aetius, who was in Gaul, in a suc-


\textsuperscript{113} Ydat. chron. a. 430, 81. See n. 114.

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid. a. 431, 86. Ydatius gives neither the nature of this peace nor the dates of the ratification of the pact nor those of when the previous peace was broken; he merely states that, in 430, the Sueves under Hermeric — see PLRE II, pp. 564-547, Hermericus — sacked the inland region of Gallaecia and restored peace with the Galicians in the same year. See n. 113.

\textsuperscript{115} Ydat. chron. a. 431, 86. Ydatius’s embassy is contemporary with that of Vetus, sent to the Sueves by Theoderic I — Ydat. chron. a. 431, 87. This highlights the Visigothic effort to be on good terms with the Sueves just after Aetius’s victory over the Goths, which the Galicians benefited from. Though the Visigoths were still, at least de iure, federates of the Empire — until Euric — they took advantage of any chance to expand into the Mediterranean.
cessful embassy. It was no doubt the warlord of the Western Empire who could best solve that problem.

There was another peace treaty between the Sueves and Romans in *Gallaecia* in 438, the year of the policy of expansion to the South of Rekhila, a Suevic King who was always bellicose towards the Empire. These actions provoked conflicts between the Sueves and southern Hispanics, led by their aristocracies. The occupation of Seville by Rekhila drove Bishop Sabinus from his see; he was exiled for seventeen years in Gaul before returning to *Hispania*. The Empire did not intervene in *Baetica* until 446, when the *magister utriusque militiae* Vitus was sent to the Peninsula only to end up fleeing from the Sueves. At this point, only the *Tarraconensis* escaped from Suevic incursions, but had trouble from the *bagaudae*, whom Asturians and Merobaudes fought. In contrast to what was happening in the South, the Empire still defended its aristocracy in the Hispanic North-West. The presence of imperial authority in this zone had been enforced with the renewal of the alliance between the Empire and Theoderic I in 439 after a problematic period. This Visigothic pro-Romanism was to continue into the forties and above all under Theoderic II.

115 The peace – though later broken – was reached after Ydatius’s returning to *Gallaecia* together with *comes* Censorius and after an episcopal intervention had taken place: *Ydat. chron.* a. 432, 88; *ibid.* a. 433, 91. Cf. Isid. *Sueb. LXXXV*. In relation to this peace, Hermeric sent Bishop Symphonus to Ravenna in 433: *Ydat. chron.* a. 433, 92.

117 Ydatius himself glosses the figure of Aetius and gives four items of news about him in a row before mentioning his embassy. See C. Molé, *Uno storico del V secolo: il vescovo Idazio*, «*SicGymn*» 27, 1974, pp. 279-351, especially 313-324.

118 *Ydat. chron.* a. 438, 105. This peace was reached after the coming of Censorius and Fretimundus to *Gallaecia*. See: *PLRE II*, p. 280. Censorius: *ibid.*, p. 485, Fretimundus.

119 *Ydat. chron.* a. 438, 106; *ibid.* a. 439, 111; *ibid.* a. 440, 113; *ibid.* a. 441, 115. Concerning Rechila, see *PLRE II*, pp. 935-936, Rechila.

120 *Ydat. chron.* a. 441, 115-116; *ibid.* a. 458, 187.


125 See *PLRE II*, pp. 1071-1073, *Theodericus* 3.
It was in the forties that Turibius carried out his anti-Priscillianist policy in the Suevic zone. Many years had passed since Turibius, zealously anti-heretical, had departed from Gallaecia, to which he came back before 445. Then, as Bishop of Astorga, he devoted himself to drawing up detailed investigations about apocryphal texts used by Priscillianists and to refuting them. He then sent his findings to Bishop Ydatius and Bishop Coeponius — whose see is unknown — in a letter in which he also refers to the continuous growth of Priscillianism in his land, comparing it with the other provinces under imperial rule. Turibius says that, in contrast to what was happening in Gallaecia, in the provinces where there was only one faith, heretics were forced to correct their positions or were driven from the Church. He also tells them that misfortunes had prevented the celebration of councils and the diffusion of ecclesiastical decrees, enabling, for instance, heretics to teach the contents of apocryphal texts in public. And Turibius concludes his letter by showing the need for celebrating a council to put an end to such things. We do not know Ydatius and Coeponius's reaction to this petition.

The activism of Turibius is also attested to by the research against Manicheans he carried out, undoubtedly following instructions given by Leo the Great to the provinces and received by Ydatius that very year. Turibius arrested some Manicheans whom he interrogated together with Ydatius; he sent the results to Antoninus, Bishop of Mérida. Besides, the instructions from Rome should have encouraged Turibius to keep on prosecuting Priscillianism. This heresy, already considered close to Manicheism in the time of Priscillianus, is compared to it by Turibius — as

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126 Turib. ep. 1-2. On the date, see n. 132.
127 Ibid. 2-7.
128 Ibid. 2.
129 Ibid. 1-2. As has been shown, both the military campaigns in Hispania and the pillaging in the province would have contributed to the isolation of Gallaecia, see E. A. Thompson, The End of Roman Spain. I, «NMS» 20, 1976, pp. 3-28, especially 9-17.
130 Turib. ep. 4.
131 Ibid. 7.
132 Ydat. chron. a. 445, 125; nouell. Valent. XVIII (445); Prosp. chron. a. 443.
133 Ydat. chron. a. 445, 122.
other ecclesiastical writers such as Orosius had done — in his letter to the Galician bishops\textsuperscript{134}.

Following his anti-Priscillianist crusade, Turibius wrote a letter — which has not survived — to Leo, the content of which is very similar to that of the earlier letter addressed to Ydatius and Coeponius. As the Pope’s answer states\textsuperscript{135}, Turibius expound Priscillianism’s vitality — which reached the bishopric —\textsuperscript{136} and attributes it to the lack of co-operation between civil and ecclesiastical power in his Suevic \textit{Gallaecia}\textsuperscript{137}. With his letter he enclosed some accounts and booklets\textsuperscript{138} resulting from his research into and refutations of arguments on doctrine and conduct of Priscillianism\textsuperscript{139}; no doubt the same arguments he pointed out in his letter to the Galician bishops, also mentioned in the epistle addressed to Rome. Leo answers Turibius in a letter dated 21 July 447\textsuperscript{140} in which he congratulated him for his zeal\textsuperscript{141} and ratified, described, and justified his refutations\textsuperscript{142}. Insisting on the similarity between Priscillianists and Manicheans, Leo probably identified himself with Turibius’s police activity. A short time before, the Pope had undertaken a great campaign against Manicheans in Rome and so he tells Turibius, expounding the details of his inquiries in a text he encloses\textsuperscript{143}.

Answering Turibius’s petition, Leo entrusted him with celebrating a council in \textit{Gallaecia} attended by bishops both from Gallaecian and neighbouring provinces, and sent him letters for all these bishops\textsuperscript{144}. However, both Leo and Turibius were well

\textsuperscript{134} Turib. \textit{ep. 5}.
\textsuperscript{135} Leo M. \textit{ep. 15}.
\textsuperscript{136} \textit{Ibid. praefer.}, 1-2.
\textsuperscript{137} \textit{Ibid. praefer.}, 9-10.
\textsuperscript{138} \textit{Ibid. praefer.}, 1-2; \textit{ibid.} 11-12; \textit{ibid.} 16, 11; Montan. \textit{ep. 1}; Ildefons. \textit{uir. ill. II}.
\textsuperscript{139} In relation to the contents of these texts, cf. Leo M. \textit{ep. 15}, 1-16.
\textsuperscript{140} The date is indicated, at the end of the letter, through the mention of the consulate of Calepius and Ardabur, see: \textit{PLRE II}, p. 250, \textit{Calepius; ibid.}, pp. 135-137, \textit{Ardabur 1}.
\textsuperscript{141} Leo M. \textit{ep. 15, praefer.}, 1.
\textsuperscript{142} \textit{Ibid.}, 1, 16.
\textsuperscript{144} Leo M. \textit{ep. 15, 17, 6}; \textit{ibid.} 17, 11-13.
aware that it was not in the least easy, in Suevic territory, to summon bishops from several Hispanic provinces in the mid fifth century, which made it somewhat like the first Council of Toledo. In his answer, Leo himself refers to the ominous consequences that the lack of protection of the Church on the part of civil power had had for orthodoxy in some regions. It is not surprising that the prudent Leo considered it frankly impossible to hold such a general council and that he stipulated, as a lesser alternative, a Galician council in which Turibius’s, Ydatius’s, and Coeponius’s position would be imposed. Though we cannot be sure either way, it seems that none of the stipulated councils was celebrated. Whatever the case may be, the Hispanic intervention of Pope Leo stands as an example of his policy: an effort to maintain Catholic orthodoxy and ecclesiastical discipline, emphasising the unity in the faith, and supporting citizens under barbarian dominion.

Suevic expansionism continued in the reign of Rechiarius, who strengthened relations with the Visigoths, probably in order to have freedom of movement. At this time, the allies – at least theoretically – of the Empire, progressively stronger in the West, were the only real menace for the Sueves. Ydatius gives no details about the negotiations that led to the marriage of Rechiarius and a daughter of Theodoric I. That treaty may have permitted Suevic actions in the South and Tarracconensis itself, where the Sueves sacked the mid-Ebro zone in collaboration with the bagaudae. Also in relation to a pact, this time with the

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145 Ibid. praef., 7-10.
146 Ibid. 17, 13.
147 See J. Villegas, La correspondencia entre los obispos hispanos y el papado durante el siglo V, in Cristianesimo e specificita regionali nel Mediterraneo latino (sec. IV-VI), Roma 1994, pp. 457-481, especially 460-461 n. 14 and 470-471.
149 See PLRE II, p. 935, Rechiarius.
151 Ibid. a. 448, 129; ibid. a. 449, 134.
local population, the King, personally, was to convert to Catholicism, which Ydatius does not detail, mentioning the opposition of the royal genus\textsuperscript{152}.

Theoderic II strengthened pro-Roman policy from the very beginning of his reign, two years after the Visigothic and imperial victory over Attila. The new monarch’s determined attitude forced Rechiarius to deliver \textit{Carthaginiensis} to the Empire and to promise not to come into the \textit{Tarraconensis}. Nevertheless, the Suevic withdrawal was not to last. The assassination of Aetius and Valentinian III, and the proclamation of Auitus by Theoderic II, compelled the Suevic King to plunder those peninsular regions still dependencies of the Empire\textsuperscript{153}. Rechiarius very probably followed the Emperor of Constantinople in not recognising Auitus, and this selfish Suevic attitude made Theoderic II intervene in \textit{Hispania} in the name of Rome. Also in 455, the year of Auitus’s proclamation, the Visigoth army entered the Peninsula and defeated Rechiarius\textsuperscript{154}. From this point on, Suevic power diminished and Hispanic subjection to Goths increased.

Theoderic II, however, seems to have carried out in the western part of the Peninsula the same actions he had to prevent the Sueves from undertaking. Ydatius tells us that, during the Visigoth sack of Braga, many Romans were taken prisoners, churches were overrun and used as stables and their altars thrown to the ground and broken, nuns were kidnapped and clergymen denuded, and people sheltering in the churches were expelled\textsuperscript{155}. Ydatius’s interpretation, based on Biblical texts, is one of divine punishment. Yet in Mérida, as Ydatius states, miracles of Saint Eulalia drove Theoderic II to decide to respect the city when it was about to be ravaged\textsuperscript{156}. Our chronicler says that Astorga and Palencia were sacked as well: population was massacred; churches broken into; religious objects and ornaments robbed;

\textsuperscript{152} \textit{Ibid.} a. 448, 129.
\textsuperscript{153} \textit{Ibid.} a. 452-453, 147; \textit{ibid.} a. 455, 161; \textit{ibid.} a. 456, 163; \textit{ibid.} a. 456-457, 165.
\textsuperscript{154} \textit{Ibid.} a. 456-457, 166.
\textsuperscript{155} \textit{Ibid.} a. 456-457, 167.
\textsuperscript{156} \textit{Ibid.} a. 456-457, 175.
bishops and clerics, men and women captured; fires set, etc. Given Ydatius's narration, we may think that Hispano-Galician cities—probably never under complete Suevic rule—experienced the actions of Theoderic II in his homeland as an authentic invasion. Peace treaties between the Sueves and Romans meant nothing to the Visigoths, who were considered Suevic collaborationists by much of the Hispano-Roman population.

The Gothic intervention sparked a long civil conflict (456-465) among the Sueves of which the Visigoths and Vandals tried to take advantage. Although it is difficult to appreciate the Hispanics' attitude, Ydatius does not even pretend that he prefers Framtan to Maldras. Suevic instability continued during the open confrontations between Maldras and Rechimund—during which some Hispanics, mostly aristocrats were killed—, between Rechimund and Frumarius—who jailed Ydatius—and between Frumarius and Remismund. In this period of anarchy, the Visigoths, pursuing a hostile policy against the Sueves, subdued the south-western part of Hispania. Finally, in 461, the Goths imposed Remismund as Suevic King, thus putting to an end these internal conflicts.

In religion, during the reign of Remismund—directly tied, as we have seen, to Tolosa—the implantation of Arianism among the Sueves as professed by the Goths got underway. This would tend to give the Sueves the same Germanic mark of identity—not uniquely religious—in the face of the Catholic Romans. Ydatius mentions this as a plague wiping out religious life in the

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157 Ibid. a. 457, 179.
161 Ydat. chron. a. 460, 196; ibid. a. 460, 202.
162 See PLRE II, p. 938, Remismundus.
163 Ydat. chron. a. 458, 185; ibid. a. 459, 188; ibid. a. 460, 196; ibid. a. 460, 201. It was at this point that Majorian went to Hispania on his failed expedition against the Vandals.
shrinking percentage of Goths as compared to Hispanics. A fruit of this policy was the publication of the Codex unius, circa 476, forbidding mixed marriages.\textsuperscript{173} Then, after having taken hold of the south-western and central part of Hispania, the Visigoths occupied the Tarraconensis in 472-474, as the troops confronted the provincial aristocracy and besieged the capital.\textsuperscript{174} One may compare this active resistance to the case of the disintegration taking place in this area in the sixties of the fifth century. The Metropolitan Ascanius, supported by the episcopate and aristocracy, did not succeed in making his authority prevail over the Bishop of Calahorra, supported by honorati assessoris of the upper and middle Ebro as well. Ecclesiastical secession is a direct consequence of political disintegration; thus Pope Synesius justified his leniency towards the dissident Bishop\textsuperscript{176} Alaric II continued to pursue the segregationist policy; there were documented during his reign some conflicts with the 10-Romans, whose episcopate openly agreed with the Franking Clovis, a recent convert to Catholicism. In the last part of the fifth century, struggles between these two kings of the Visigothic Kingdom. Cam-1972, pp. 1-9; M. Rouche, L'Aquitaine..., pp. 161-171 and 387-401. There is no evidence of the prohibition of mixed marriages in Euric's reign which is extant, the fact that it is observed in the Breuiarium of Alaric suggests it also formed part of Gothic legislation. Chron. Gall. p. 651, 664. This siege coincides with that of Clermont, of Sidonius Apollinaris. See J. Vilella, La correspondencia..., pp. 471-479. Hilarus ep. 16, 1; Id. ep. 17, 2. See: G. Tessier, La conversion de Clovis et la christianisation des Francs, in La conversion de Clovis et la christianisation des Francs, nante di studio del Centro It. di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo» 14, Spoleto pp. 149-189; M. Rouche, L'Aquitaine..., pp. 43-50; F. Monfrin, La conduits du roi et des siens, in Clovis, histoire et mémoire. Le baptême de Clovis, Paris 1997, pp. 289-320; PLRE II, pp. 288-290, Chlodovechus.
caused a considerable number of Visigoths to enter the Peninsula. When, in 496, Burdunelus, likely a great landowner of the Tarracnonensis, rose against Tolosa, it seemed to be in connection with Frankish pressure on the Gothic Kingdom. Moreover, the aristocrats of the Tarracnonensis seem to have paid much attention to what was happening North of the Pyrenees, and they took advantage of the more propitious conditions to rise against Alaric II, as Peter of Tortosa was to do in 506, one year before Vouillé. Aside from Frankish and Burgundian danger, there was internal hostility against Alaric II, who tried to defuse that situation by promulgating a series of imperial laws – favouring Roman interests – and celebrating, also in 506, the Council of Agde, presided over by Caesarius of Arles, who had recently returned from exile.

The defeat of Vouillé caused the Visigoths to loose most of their Gallic territories, but the intervention of the Ostrogothic monarch Theoderic I saved Southern Provence and the Narbonensis and restored Amalaric, the legitimate son of Alaric II, to the throne. The Visigoth Kingdom had not disappeared but its centre shifted now to Hispania and it was ruled from Ravenna by Amalaric’s grandfather. During the regency of Theoderic I, there were no documented conflicts between Hispano-Romans

178 Maxim. Caesar. chron. a. 494.
179 Ibid. a. 496, 497. See PLRE II, p. 243, Burdunelus. It may be of significance that the revolt of Burdunelus was underway when Clous undertook his first actions against the Visigoths.
181 See P. D. King, Law..., pp. 9-11.
182 Maxim. Caesar. chron. a. 507. The dichotomy between Goths and Romans contributed notably to the fall of the Tolosian Kingdom as is manifest in the political use of religious differences in the Gothic-Frankish conflict. Greg. Tur. hist. II 37, reports Clous as saying: "ulde molestum fero, quod hi Arrianii paritem teneant Galliarum. Auit. Vien. ep. 46 l. 7, answers Clous: "uestra fides nostra victoria est. Afer Vouillé, Clous received consulate codicils from Anastase and celebrated his triumph in the Church of Saint Martin of Tours by dressing a purple gown, chlamys, and diadem, and by being acclaimed August by the people. Clous was the first barbarian to assume Romanness through Catholicism, as Orosius, Augustine and Leo the Great had previously remarked.
and Germans in Visigothic Hispamia – the Tarragonensis and parts of the Carthaginiensis and Lusitania. The restoration of Roman civilitas made Arles the see of both the prefecture of the Praetorium and the ecclesiastical vicarship of the Hispano-Gallic Visigothic zone, allowing for doctrinal and organisational activity, as is attested to by the councils of Tarragonensis.

Three years after Pope Symmachus gave the vicarship to Caesarius, Hormisdas, Symmachus’s successor, named another Vicar for Hispamia. This was John of Elche who, in a letter which has not survived, had asked Rome for precise instructions about what attitude to take towards the Easterners coming to the Peninsula. Thus, John of Elche relates, in addition to a number of disciplinary matters, the Acacian schism which had produced the break between Rome and Constantinople after the publication of the Henoticon in 482. On 2 April 517, Hormisdas answered John, congratulating him on his unconditional alignment.

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185 In charge of the prefecture of Arles we found clarissimus Felix Liberus – see PLRE II, pp. 677-681, Petrus Marcellinus Felix Liberus 3 –, whose significant career began under Odoacer and gained in importance under Theoderic I and who, because of the events after Atalaric’s death, went to Constantinople, after which he took orders from Justinian. In 552 he led imperial troops disembarking in the Iberian Peninsula.


188 The contents of John’s letter to Hormisdas may be partially reconstructed from the Pope’s answer, see n. 189. Regarding the Acacian conflict, see: W. T. Townsend, The Henotikon Schism and the Roman Church, «JR» 16, 1936, pp. 78-86; W. H. C. Frend, The Rise of the Monophysite Movement,
with Rome, sending him relevant instructions and decrees, and, finally, naming him – undoubtedly for his zeal – his Vicar\(^{189}\). Besides, due to John’s appeal, the Pope wrote two general epistles to the Hispanic bishops in which he repeated these arguments and insisted on loyalty to Roman positions\(^{190}\). Hormisdas wrote John again in 519 to announce the re-established communion between Rome and Constantinople, sending him the writings of Justin I and John the Patriarch – corroborating that fact – for he communicates it to all the Hispanic bishops\(^{191}\). Aware of the end of this conflict, Bishop Sallust of Seville addressed, together with the Baetic bishops, the Pontiff in a non-extant letter expressing his happiness for the re-establishment of ecclesiastical unity\(^{192}\). In April 521, the Pope sent one letter to the Baetic prelates and another to Sallust – who had informed the Roman pontiff of the autonomy the Baetics had – naming him Vicar of Baetica and Lusitania\(^{193}\).

Hormisdas’s conduct demonstrates the division existing in Hispania. Two vicars were needed – we know nothing about Suevic Gallaecia at this time – to subordinate Hispanic churches to Rome and keep them from being affected by centrifugal tendencies caused by political fragmentation in the Peninsula. Vicars based in Visigothic areas would have found it quite difficult to go about their work effectively in those zones in the South of the Peninsula not subdued by any Germanic people. Moreover, there existed in these areas compartmentalisations which, in as much as they were based on the provinces, gave a strong, cohesive structure to the episcopal sees.

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\(^{189}\) Hormisd. ep. 24.

\(^{190}\) Id. ep. 25-26.

\(^{191}\) Id. ep. 88.

\(^{192}\) Deduced from Hormisdas’s answers, see n. 193.

This provincial organisation – both civil and ecclesiastical – was also notably altered by the actions of the Germanic peoples. When, in the last years of his reign, Alaric II changed his position with regard to the Catholic Church, he initiated a policy tending towards integration, i.e., against discrepancies between traditional ecclesiastical districts and current territorial limits. At the beginning of the sixth century, the Visigoths, who controlled only the metropolitan sees of Tarragona and Mérida, made Toledo the ecclesiastical metropolis – and likely the civilian one too – of their extended possessions in the *Carthaginiensis* and *Gallaecia*, whose borders must have varied from year to year. As in Gaul, we note territorial conflicts in *Hispania* among the metropolitan sees due to the modelling of ecclesiastical frontiers on their political counterparts, which was not reason enough to create new provinces. Certainly, the existence of the Toledan metropolis would cause tension with the bishops – and metropolitanans – of the non-Visigothic zones of *Gallaecia* and *Carthaginiensis*. In the twenties – or early thirties – of the sixth century, Montanus, Bishop of Toledo, found it difficult to consolidate his see’s links to the zone of Palencia, then Visigothic. For their part, the Galicians would not agree to set aside any part of their province, an opinion surely shared and supported by Suevic power. Moreover, Toledo encountered opposition from Cartagena, the traditional provincial capital, still maintaining its primacy in southern and eastern parts of *Carthaginiensis* outside Visigothic control. Great division in that zone might explain why


196 Though the name of the province – over which it was desired that Toledo should have jurisdiction – it is not attested to in the time of Montanus, there is some evidence which seems to corroborate both the Gothic intention of making Toledo the metropolis of the *Carthaginiensis*, and the opposition provoked in the southern and eastern parts of that province. Ector, Bishop of Cartagena, signed the minutes of the Council of Tarragona in 516 as Metropolitan of his province: *conc. Tarrac. (516)*, pp. 280, l. 144. On the other hand, the minutes of the second Council of Toledo – presided over by Montanus in 531 – allude to the absent provincial prelates, binding them to the decisions subscribed with unchallengeable authority. This state of affairs is manifest in
Hormisdas never mentioned *Carthaginiensis*, while he explicitly referred to the rest of the southern provinces.

One of the points Montanus uses to strengthen Toledo’s authority in the *conuentus* of Palencia is Priscillianism, which no doubt characterised north-western churches. However, the main ecclesiastical division in *Hispania* in the early sixth century consisted in being or not being under Germanic rule. While the discrepancies between the Pope and the Emperor worried the South-East of the Peninsula, continuous coexistence with barbarians was the main, urgent problem for Hispanics in the Germanic kingdoms. So explains Profuturus, Bishop of Braga and Metropolitan of *Gallaecia*, in the letter – or letters – he sent to Rome, about which we know from the answer Pope Vigilius addressed to him on 29 June 538\(^1\). We can assume from Vigilius’s words that Profuturus required Rome’s advice and support in order to deal with the main worries – briefly recorded in his appeal – of the Galician bishops. Aside from some liturgical and disciplinary questions, Profuturus inquires about and denounces Priscillianist abstinence and asks what is to be done with apostates who desire to become Catholic again. With regard to this, Vigilius tells him that bishops must judge each case on its own, due to the variety of reasons which caused that evil\(^2\). He also gave Profuturus the relics of martyrs and saints he had asked for\(^3\).

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The Visigothic Kingdom became independent from Ravenna at the death of Theoderic I in 526. This separation seems to have been in accord with the desires of wide Visigothic sectors, for with it the royal treasure returned and the sending of wheat to Italy came to an end. Despite scarce and syncopated documentation, it is evident that independence weakened Amalaric, whose authority was questioned by some powerful Gothic sectors. And, probably to strengthen his position, he married the daughter of Clous, the Merovingian King who had forced the end of the Tolosian Kingdom and killed his father. But he failed to reap any benefit from this rapprochement with the Franks and Childebert, his wife Clotild's brother, fought and defeated him in 531 without being Amalaric helped by Theudis, a noble Goth who was married to a rich Hispanic woman and possessed a great number of troops. According to Gregory of Tours, the conflict between Childebert and Amalaric arose from the ill treatment given to Clotild when she refused the Arian creed. Whatever the case may be, this account not only depicts the political use of religious difference but also gives evidence of the strengthening of the anti-Roman – also anti-Ostrogotic – Gothic group, which was necessarily inactive under Theoderic II.

Defeated in Narbonne, Amalaric was finally assassinated in Barcelona; Theudis was then proclaimed King. The new monarch's policy consisted in the peaceful coexistence of Hispano-Romans and barbarians, and so Isidore says that Theudis, though a heretic, had granted peace to the Church, as could be corroborated by the councils celebrated during his reign. To what extent Theudis acted out of self-interest we do not know; his policy appears to have been necessary for the cohe-

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203 Isid. Goth. XLI. The councils celebrated during Theudis's reign which we have noted are those of Barcelona (before 546), Lérida (546) and Valencia (546).
sion and independence of the Visigothic State in the face of the threat of Justinian's expansion in the West, which coincided with Theudis's reign (531-548). Belisarius took over the Vandalic Kingdom in 533-534, Sicily in 535, and the following year he led his soldiers to Italy.

Visigothic control having been re-established over Septimania, Theudis extended his domains to the South. The borders of the Narbonensis, as well as Baetica, came under threat: the former from the Franks, the latter from the Byzantines, mostly after the defeat of the Vandals. One of the missions of the Byzantine garrison established at Ceuta in 534 was the surveillance of the Iberian Peninsula. This state of affairs would explain why Theudis went to the South, as the Ostrogoths were reinforcing Southern Italy. Furthermore, there existed a wealthy, independent aristocracy in Southern Hispania – free from Germanic presence – who may have sympathised with imperial re-conquest. As is made clear by contemporary documents, Justinian's renouatio Imperii was meant to achieve imperial unity by re-conquering the western provinces, and therefore to restore unity and integrity to the faith. It is a single project in which religion cannot be set apart from politics. The Empire and Christian ecumenism are again identified. In order to restore that Empire, the custodian of the one true faith, Justinian's offensive had a double objective: barbarians and heretics, his intervention being even more necessary where they coincided. Besides, the political theology of Eusebius of Caesarea reached its apex with Justinian: the earthly Kingdom is an image of the heavenly Kingdom, as the Emperor is of God. Legislation, for instance, reflected such ideology in interpreting conquests as divine intervention through God's representative, the Emperor.

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205 In relation to this aristocracy, see K. F. Strohecker, Spanische..., pp. 125-128.

206 Among other works, see E. Stein, Histoire du Bas-Empire, II. Paris 1968, pp. 311-368 and 547-622. In relation to imperial legislation, R. Bonini,
However, the Empire did not only count on its army for this mission of redemption; at least theoretically, everyone who still considered himself a Roman citizen would take part, and the best example of symbiosis between Roman patriotism and Catholic faith was the episcopate, which was developing its highly significant – even decisive – authority in the cities. In these genuinely key centres of the State’s scheme, the model elaborated by Ambrose in his De officiis ministrorum was still to be used, though adapted to the times. The model is that of a bishop – in whose election the people normally took part – active in the needs of his community, which he instructs, and not only doctrinally. In the Hispanic regions where Germanic government was purely nominal or non-existent, above all in the South, episcopal actions were confined to their parishes, such was not the case under Germanic Arian power – whether Suevic or Gothic – in which bishops would attempt to address to Germanic population, specially after the conversion of Clovis.

One great activist was Martin of Braga, a Panonian like his namesake Saint Martin of Tours, whom he emulated. After staying for some time in the East, Martin reached Gallaecia, where he was consecrated Bishop, about 550. According to


207 See n. 80 and P. Maymó, El obispo como autoridad ciudadana y las irrupciones germánicas en el Occidente latino durante el siglo V, in Vescovi e pastori..., pp. 551-558.


210 Greg. Tur. hist. V 37; Id. Mart. I 11; Isid. uir. ill. XXII. We deduce from these sources that Martin had been in Gallaecia for some time when he was ordained Bishop.

Gregory of Tours, Martin’s episcopal ordination took place when relics of Saint Martin—whose cult was promoted by the Gallic historian out of self-interest—came to Gallaecia. In this narration, the Bishop charged with keeping Martin’s sanctuary is visited by men sent by the Suevic King Chararic in order that Martin should heal his leper son. According to Gregory, these legates had to travel twice to Tours because the monarch had not yet embraced Catholicism, a sine qua non condition if a miracle was to be worked by Martin. Thus, the Suevic King converted to Catholicism, built a church in honour of Saint Martin, and sent his messengers again to bring the relics back. Besides, Isidorus states that it was the Suevic King Theodemir who, assisted by Martin of Braga, converted, along with his people, to Catholicism.

The character of Gregory’s account, the fact that Chararic is not documented elsewhere, and what Isidore tells us about Theodemir, certainly make us doubt the historicity of Chararic’s conversion, yet it is impossible to affirm either the existence or the conversion—which not all the Sueves had undergone—of this monarch. Though the brief and syncopated documentation of this period does not enable us to be precise about the events leading to the Suevic conversion, this process must have been slow and gradual. Moreover, Isidore and Gregory agree on the important role played by Martin of Braga—who was later to hold the metropolitan see—in that conversion, without its being exclusively attributable to him. The Sueves, as well as the Galician episcopate, would have been keen to reach an accord to their mutual benefit. The Sueves then brought a long—often conflictive—coexistence to an end and strengthened their own position—probably with Frankish support—in the face of the

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213 Id. Mart. I 11
expansionism of the Arian Visigoths. The actions of Chararic and Theodemir may be assigned to the opening and closing of this process, in which we must place the summoning of the first Council of Braga by Ariamir, the predecessor of Theodemir. This gradually forming alliance would be hastened by Martin of Braga.

Along with political and religious unity, Priscillianism in the Suevic Kingdom came to an end at the first Council of Braga. Celebrated by royal command, this synod was the paradigm of the very smooth relationship between ecclesiastical orthodoxy and civil power in Gallaecia. The repression of Priscillianism was its first result, as attested to in the minutes of the Galician council. Finally, the aims of Turibius and Leo were achieved and are so regarded in the council of 561, showing the importance of secular collaboration.

The situation in the Southern Peninsula, the area of Visigothic expansion, was quite different in the middle of the sixth century. After the murder of Theudis, a conspiracy of nobles in Seville brought the short reign of Theudegisel, the last monarch of Ostrogothic ascendancy, to an end. The new King Agila had to face, at the very beginning of his reign, the revolt of Cordova, an urban revolt reminiscent of previous Hispanic opposition to the Goths in Tarracconensis. Again, political and religious matters seem to be the direct cause of this insurrection. In referring to these facts, Isidore explains that, apart from besieging Cordova, Agila had defiled the tomb of the martyr Acisclus, who finally

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218 See PLRE III, p. 114, Ariamir. E. A. Thompson, The Conversion..., pp. 89-91, defends the thesis that Ariamir began the process – which Theodemir was to conclude – leading to the generalised conversion of the Sueves. In the first Council of Braga, Roman liturgy – based on Roman practices given by Vigilius to Profuturus, see n. 197 – replaced the local Hispanic one: conc. Brac. I (561), cc. 5-7. This constitutes another diacritical sign of the Church in the Suevic Kingdom in the face of the rest of Hispania. These Roman practices would still be in use in Gallaecia at the time of the fourth Council of Toledo – celebrated in 633 – when liturgical unification was imposed in the whole Visigothic Kingdom: conc. Tolet. IV (633), c. 2.
219 Conc. Brac. I (561), passim.
220 Ibid. c. 2.
221 Isid. Goth. XLIV. See PLRE III, p. 1234, Theudegiselus.
punished Agila for despising the Catholic faith (in contemptu Catholicae religionis). Taking advantage of this situation—the revolt lasting a year—, Athanagild rose against Agila in 551 and signed an alliance with Justinian that could provide him with power as well as the support of the Baetic aristocracies. Thus, the Byzantine Emperor succeeded in retaking a part of Hispania—the South-East—as the Empire benefited again from internal conflicts in the Germanic kingdoms.

Nevertheless, when Athanagild became the sole King, he changed his attitude towards the Empire in order to preserve the independence of the weakened Visigothic Kingdom. Once he had assured Frankish non-intervention by marrying his daughters to Sigisbert I of Austrasia and Chilperic I of Neustria, he fought in Cordova—without taking control of it—and in Seville, at this point under imperial control, as were other important cities of the province. Athanagild died a natural death in 568 and the following year Liuva I was chosen King, promptly associating his brother Leovigild—who married Goiswintha, Athanagild’s widow and the leader of a prominent Gothic faction—to the throne. This diarchy was based upon a territorial division of a single kingdom: Liuva I ruled the Narbonensis and Leovigild the Iberian lands. This division did not last very long—Liuva I died in 571 or 572—but it seems to have responded to the two great dangers which threatened the Visigoths: the Franks and the Empire.

The main characteristic of Leovigild’s reign consists in the strengthening of Visigothic power both in external and internal affairs. The successful military actions he undertook in the

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222 Ibid. XLV; Ih. Bicl. chron. a. 572, 2. See PLRE III, pp. 26-27, Agila I.
225 Maxim. Caesar. chron. a. 568.
South and West of the Peninsula greatly increased the territory under Visigothic control\textsuperscript{228}, resulting in a significant reduction of the Byzantine zone in Hispafia. These campaigns were systematic and well thought out, in imitation of the imperial campaigns. They were based on the consolidation and restructuring of the State under a monarchy strong enough to prevent elements leading to its break-up\textsuperscript{229}. It appears clear that one of the perils for the independence and internal cohesion pursued by Leovigild was the traditional difference between the Germanic and Roman population in the political and religious sphere. Confessional differences were not only synonyms of political differences, but their best means of expression.

This bipolarity acquired a new dimension beginning in 579 when Hermenegild, Leovigild’s heir, married the Frankish Princess Ingundis, daughter of Sigebert I of Austrasia\textsuperscript{230}; their marriage is also to be interpreted in political terms. Gregory of Tours blames Goiswintha’s Arian intransigence for the fact that the Catholic Ingundis and her husband had left Toledo to go to Seville where Hermenegild was to act as consors to his father, who had associated his sons to the throne. Shortly after arriving in the city, Hermenegild abjured Arianism and embraced Catholicism. In this case, his wife and Leander, Bishop of Seville, were both decisive\textsuperscript{231}. Simultaneously, Hermenegild made the drastic

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\textsuperscript{228} Joh. Bicl. chron. a. 570, 2; ibid. a. 571, 3; ibid. a. 572, 2; ibid. a. 573, 5; ibid. a. 574, 2; ibid. a. 575, 2; ibid. a. 576, 3; ibid. a. 577, 2.

\textsuperscript{229} See P. D. King, Law..., pp. 12-13.


decision of heading an uprising against his father. Not only were Visigothic sectors opposed to Leovigild to participate in this rebellion, but also the aristocracy of Baetica – traditionally hostile to Gothic-Arian power –, the Empire, and the rest of Catholic kingdoms of the West – Franks and Sueves –, undoubtedly afraid of Leovigild’s expansionism.

Moreover, Hermenegild was sanctioned by the Catholic Church by means of a theocracy of divine origin as epigraphic and numismatic evidence attests. Thus, he imitated the Frankish – and probably also Suevic – model in which the monarch had obtained Romaness through his conversion. All this manifests once again the political semantics of religious difference – for instance, John of Biclarum, a contemporary of the events, describes Catholicism as Romana religio – and how the Hispanic aristocracy rejected Arian – and barbarian – power. For this reason, Leander was sent to Constantinople pro causis fidei Wisigothorum legatio to request an alliance with the Empire, which was waging war on Toledo. Before that, Leovigild adopted a conciliatory policy with an eye to improving the coexistence of the two peoples – though they were markedly differentiated – and to reinforce the identification of Germanism with Arianism, which he facilitated. Mixed marriages were permitted by legislation which seems to have been territorial in scope, and tolerance towards the

232 Greg. Tur. hist. V 38; ibid. IX 24; Ioh. Bicl. chron. a. 579, 3; ibid. a. 582, 3; Isid. Goth. XLIX. Gregory of Tours states that Fronimius, Bishop of Agde, advised Ingundis not to abjure Catholicism, which resulted in the hatred of Leovigild towards that Bishop. Regarding Hermenegild’s revolt and his time, see C. Godoy – J. Vilella, De la fides..., pp. 128-134.


Hispano-Catholics was adopted. Concerning the Arians, a council summoned in 580 facilitated the re-incorporation to the fides Gothica to the Visigoths who had converted to the Nicene creed by drawing the two doxologies closer.\(^{237}\)

The rebellion of Hermenegild was definitively crushed at the beginning of 584. Wise Leovigild’s conduct at the Merovingian courts – he won the support of Soissons – and bribes paid to the small number of imperial troops in Hispania made it easier for the Arian King to gain the upper hand and to go on to conquer the Suevic Kingdom, whose King had helped Hermenegild in Seville in 583, giving Leovigild a reason to attack the Sueves.\(^{238}\) But what had happened to Hermenegild was a dress rehearsal for the great, solemn pact that was to take place between the Catholic Church and the Visigothic monarchy at Leovigild’s death, bringing the old coexistence of Romans and barbarians in the Peninsula to an end. No doubt Leovigild foresaw how positive a pact with the Hispanics – led by the Church\(^{239}\) – would be, but it was only possible if the secessionist problem had disappeared. On the other side, the Hispanics – who never renounced the goal of a Catholic power – must have felt let down by Constantinople, as the Eastern Empire had not sent promised military help and differed in religious matters – mostly in relation to the Three Chapters\(^{240}\) – in that moment. Both


\(^{239}\) Despite its hagiographical characteristics, the Vitae patrum Emerentianum manifests the Catholic episcopal leadership in Mérida, a city supporting Hermenegild. Besides, saints played an important role in a conflict with which both an Arian and a Catholic King had to grapple at the same time.

\(^{240}\) As in the case of other western churches, the Hispanic episcopate would also dissent from the modifications to the Synod of Chalcedonia intro-
parties, Hispanics and Goths, knew there was considerable room to manoeuvre in order to achieve a really beneficial treaty.

There are enough data to think that Leovigild was behind the unity achieved by the third Council of Toledo of 589. Gregory of Tours states that he converted to Catholicism shortly before death. Gregory the Great even states that Leander was told to make of Recared a second Hermenegild\(^2\). Licinian of Cartagena seems to corroborate this\(^3\). It should not surprise us that authors in the Visigothic Kingdom writing after 589 pass over Leovigild’s sea change in order not to diminish his son\(^4\), who had summoned the council of peace. If we see Leovigild as the man behind the conversion of the Goths,


\(^{4}\) Licinian. *ep.* 1, 6, states that, when coming back from Constantinople, Leander *festinans pertransiit* probably going to the court of Leovigild, who would ask Leander to return. See J. Fontaine – P. Cazier, *Qui a chassé...*, p. 388 n. 93. The end of Masona’s exile is to be dated during Leovigild’s reign: *uitae s. patr.* *Emerit.* V 7.

\(^{4}\) See *PLRE* III, pp. 1079-1080, *Reccaredus I*. 
Recared’s conversion in the first year of his reign 244 — his father died in 586 — becomes much more comprehensible and we understand why his conversion and that of other Visigoths did not provoke widespread troubles 245. What had been done precariously under Hermenegild was solemnly proclaimed in the third Council of Toledo, but at this point the pact embraced the whole Visigothic Kingdom and safeguarded its independence from the Empire 246. The minutes of this council and John of Biclarum testify to that great example of Realpolitik, which carried with it both the abjuration of Arianism by Goths and the Hispanics’s renouncing of the Empire. The gentilice Flavius compares Recared to Constantine and Mar- cian, and the council itself is compared with those of Nicea and Chalcedonia. It should be stressed that the mention of the latter is distinctive of Western orthodoxy as opposed to that Byzantine 247.

As in the case of the Roman Empire, the definitive alliance of the Visigothic monarchy and the Hispanic episcopate meant that the Catholic Church became the only spiritual power backed by secular authority. For their part, through theocratic royal power, Gothic kings strengthened their position in the face of dissenting nobility and gained authority over the Church, i.e. over the majority of the Hispanic population, which was no longer a problem for the court. Unification fused the two aristocracies, giving rise to a new Hispanic noble class immersed in national isolation 248. The

244 Ioh. Bicl. chron. a. 587, 5.
245 Some sectors of the Gothic nobility staged revolts in Mérida, Narbona and Toledo: utale s. patr. Emerit. V 10-11; Ioh. Bicl. chron. a. 588, 1; ibid. a. 589, 1. Apart from religious implications their actions have, these sectors must have opposed the strengthening of the monarchy through Catholicism.
246 See C. Godoy – J. Vilella, De la fides..., p. 132.
248 M.C. Díaz y Díaz defines the new situation in this sense in his introduction to Isidore’s Etimologias [BAC 433, Madrid 1982, p. 8]. It is relevant that, in contrast to the cases of Italy and Gaul, there are no inscriptions of clarissimi in Baetica after the eighties of the sixth century. See J. Vilella, Gregorio..., pp. 171-172 and n. 17.
actions contra hostes barbaros carried out after the third Council of Toledo by the magister milium sent by Maurice are described as «Roman insolences» by Isidore of Seville, whose brother had addressed Constantinople to ask for imperial intervention in Hispania.

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