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John of Biclar and his "Chronicle"

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Rice University, 1990

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John of Biclar and His Chronicle

by

JOAN ROWE FERRY

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ABSTRACT

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by

Joan Rowe Ferry

John of Biclar, a Gothic abbot (later bishop) in sixth-century Spain, wrote a chronicle in Latin for the years A.D. 567 to 590 in the tradition of Christian chronicles begun by Eusebius of Caesarea. He records a period of political consolidation of the Spanish peninsula under the Arian Visigothic king, Leovigild, as well as events during the reigns of the contemporary Roman emperors. John's accomplishment is unusual for a Goth at this time, as is his education in Greek and Latin, received during a stay of seventeen years in Constantinople. John's Chronicle reflects ideas from his predecessors (Victor of Tunnuna and Prosper of Aquitaine) as well as Byzantine and Gothic influences. An English translation of the Chronicle is included in this study.
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INTRODUCTION

John of Biclar was a Gothic abbot (later bishop) in sixth century Spain, who wrote a chronicle in Latin for the years A.D. 567 to 590. He recorded events during the reigns of contemporary Roman emperors and of the Visigothic kings who ruled Spain during a period of political consolidation of the peninsula. The Chronicle is particularly useful in documenting the reign of Leovigild, the last Arian king in Spain, and the conversion of Leovigild's son, Reccared, and his Gothic subjects to catholicism.

But aside from the historical value of his Chronicle, John himself is notable for his education in Greek and Latin, for his distinction as the only sixth-century Goth in Spain who is known to have published books, and for his roles as abbot and later bishop which establish him within both the community of learning and the hierarchy of the church.

John's achievement, perhaps because it is unexpected, raises the unanswered (and probably unanswerable) question of the degree to which the Visigothic people by the sixth century had entered the Latin culture surrounding them. That John of Biclar did so is evident from what is known of his life, and from his deep interest in that Roman world.

which is conveyed so clearly in his Chronicle.

This study will first consider what is known about John's life and about the opportunities available which might have formed his thought and helped him enter the world of Roman learning and achievement. His Chronicle and its significance in the tradition of Christian chronicle writing will then be discussed, with translation following.
CHAPTER 1

John of Biclar

Isidore, bishop of Seville and some twenty years younger than John of Biclar, included John on his list of distinguished writers (De viris illustribus). This is the source for virtually all that is known of John's life. The pertinent passage² is given here, with translation following:

Ioannes, Gerundensis ecclesiae episcopus, natione Gothus provinciae Lusitaniae Scalabiniatus. hic cum esset adolescentis Constantinopolim perrexit ibique Graeca et Latina eruditione nutritus septimo decimo anno in Spanias reversus est eodem tempore, quo incitante Leovigildo rege Arriana fervebat insania. hunc supra dictus rex cum ad nefandae haeresis credulitatem compelleret et hic omnino resisteret, exilio trusus et Barcinonam relegatus per decem annos multas insidias et persecutiones ab Arrianis perpessus est. qui postea condidit monasterium quod nunc Biclarum dicitur: ubi congregata monachorum societate scripsit regulam ipsi monasterio profuturam, sed et cunctis deum timentibus satis necessariam. addidit in libro chronicorum ab anno primo Iustini iunioris principatus usque in annum octavum Maurici principis Romanorum et quartum Reccaredi regis annum historico compositoque sermone valde utilem historiam. et multa alia scribere dicitur, quod ad notitiam nostram non pervenit.

John, bishop of the church of Gerona, a Goth by birth, was born at Scallabis in the province of Lusitania. When he was a youth, he went to Constantinople, and after having been nourished there with Greek and Latin learning, he returned to Spain after seventeen years at the same time when, with the encouragement of Leovigild the king, the Arian madness was raging. When the above-mentioned king compelled him to believe in the impious heresy and he utterly resisted, he was thrust into exile and sent to Barcelona for ten years and endured many plots and persecutions from the Arians. He afterwards built a monastery which is now called Biclar, where after gathering a society of monks, he wrote a rule for the benefit of this monastery, but also quite sufficient for all together to fear God. He added a useful history in the book of chronicles from the first year of the reign of Justin the younger up to the eighth year of Maurice, emperor of the Romans, and the fourth year of Reccared the king, a vigorously composed history and discourse. And he is said to have written many other things, which we have not seen.
Isidore's biographical sketch provides a framework for the events of John's life. He was born around the year 540, during the reign of Theudis, a half century or so after the Visigothic people began settling in some numbers in the Spanish peninsula. The Visigoths at this period had experienced contact with Roman culture for perhaps three centuries as they moved from their earlier homelands near the Black Sea, but there is virtually no evidence that as conquerors and rulers of Spain they sought to become part of the culture of the Hispano-Roman people over whom they ruled.

A number of causes can be found for the early cultural separation of the two peoples. Until the rule of Leovigild, for example, the Visigoths and Romans lived under separate codes of law, the Visigoths under the Codex Euricianus (compiled during the reign of their king, Euric, around the year 476) and the native Roman population under the Lex

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5 Scott, Ulfilas, 11, who places the first appearance of the Goths at the edge of the Roman Empire in A.D. 238.
Romana Visigothorum, or Breviary, compiled at the direction of Alaric II in 506. Two systems of law-courts were in use, administered by two sets of judges. The laws prohibited intermarriage between Goth and Roman, and this ban continued until it was removed by Leovigild during his reign (569-586). Cases are known of such marriages during the sixth century, when they were still illegal, but there is no record of whether these unions were prosecuted or accepted. (In contrast, intermarriage was allowed in Gaul between Romans and Franks, although the two peoples retained separate legal identities; by the time of Gregory of Tours, who was a contemporary of John of Biclar, "... Catholic Romans such as Gregory were concerned far more about maintaining a pure religious orthodoxy than about preserving ethnic purity."

The Gothic language was a further reminder of cultural differences, as was the Gothic style of dress with its traditional brooches and buckles, known through later discoveries at Arian burial sites in Spain and Italy, where goods were customarily buried with the dead. These distinctive features served to emphasize the separation of

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7 Thompson, *Goths*, note 1, 59; 311.

the two peoples in a society where Romans greatly outnumbered Visigoths by perhaps fifty or one hundred to one.9

But the most divisive factor seems to have been the Arian Christianity of the Goths, adopted when they were converted from paganism in the late fourth century, which was to set them apart from the orthodox catholic population of Spain. Orthodox doctrine had been established at the church councils at Nicaea (325) and Chalcedon (451), and among its tenets Christ was declared to be of the same substance as God (consubstantial or homo-ousios) and Christ's nature was established as a unity of both divine and human. Arius, a priest of Alexandria, opposed this doctrine when he taught that Christ was of a different substance from God (heter-ousios),10 and Arianism was thus declared a heresy.

The depth of feeling which this doctrinal difference aroused can be understood from the Spanish cleric, Orosius, who expressed the orthodox point of view in his Seven Books of History against the Pagans, completed in 418. He saw Arianism as "another scheme by which to harass the Church of Christ." In his view, the emperor Constantius was wrong in

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9 King, Law and Society, 4, 6; Thompson, Goths, 3, who gives a ten-to-one figure for population but says it was perhaps far higher; 108, 147-151.

adopting this doctrine, for he had been misled by Arius and his disciples to believe "that there are certain gradations in God." Orosius believed that the emperor, "who had departed from the error of idolatry by the main door, was led back into its bosom by a side entrance, as it were, when he sought gods in God."

In contrast to the Visigoths, the Franks under Clovis had accepted the orthodox doctrine when they converted to Christianity in the early sixth century. This had made possible a gradual fusion of the Frankish people with the older Gallo-Roman population and had much to do with the ultimate triumph of catholic orthodoxy in Western Europe.

In Spain, condemnation of Arianism was perhaps combined with arrogance on the part of the Hispano-Romans toward their Visigothic conquerors. The situation evidently offered little possibility for an exchange of ideas between Arian and orthodox, and all of the writings which had been produced by Arian clerics were ordered destroyed by Reccared following his conversion in 587. Not a single Gothic or Arian text survived in Spain. The loss of these writings,

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with whatever record of Visigothic thought and culture they might have contained, serves to emphasize the seemingly unbridgeable gulf between the two traditions.

With such barriers in place between the two peoples, it is easy to see the Visigoths as "both powerful and unabsorbable" in a society "that was not strong enough to hold them at bay, but not flexible enough to 'lead their conquerors captive' by absorbing them into Roman life."\(^{14}\)

If this were so, one would not expect to find any Goths seeking entrance into the Roman community.

John of Biclar's life and work, however, suggest that there were at least some Visigoths who had adapted to Roman culture, learning the Latin language and acquiring sufficient Latin education to enable them to enter and succeed in the Roman world. Masona of Mérida is another Gothic orthodox bishop known for this period\(^{15}\) who provides further evidence for such a movement of Goths into the Roman world. What remains unknown from lack of evidence is just how many other Visigoths, given the desire to do so and the necessary social standing or opportunity, managed to cross

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that cultural threshold during this period. The problem of access to education would have been crucial for such individuals.

The question of initial attraction to Latin education is of central interest in the case of John of Biclar, and perhaps other Visigoths who remain unknown. Even more fundamental is the question of basic Gothic attitudes toward learning and culture in general, and there is very little evidence in this area from which to judge. Jordanes, in his version of Gothic history (De origine actibusque Getarum) written around 551, seems to have wished to show that the Goths were more than uncultured warriors. He tells of periods when the Goths in their early homelands near the Black Sea had "become more civilized and were more learned," and had not lacked for teachers of wisdom: "Wherefore, the Goths have ever been wiser than other barbarians and were nearly like the Greeks . . ."16

The early Goths left no writings or other proof of what their early inclinations toward learning might actually have been. Their history at this period was evidently preserved through oral tradition only.17 However, by the late fourth


century, John's ancestors were to enjoy at least the possibility for literate activity beyond their earlier limited use of runes. The Arian missionary Ulfila, by devising an alphabet partly from Greek and partly from runes, had made possible a translation of the Bible into the Gothic language; the Codex argenteus, probably dating from Theodoric's reign, is a surviving copy of Ulfila's Bible. Gothic scholars are known to have begun making changes in this text immediately, producing bilingual versions in both Greek and Latin. They later made use of Biblical commentaries in Greek and Latin, translating these into the Gothic language and showing in these early efforts a marked degree of skill in Roman techniques of scholarship. These bilingual texts are thought also to show evidence of scholarly exchanges between Arians and Catholics.

There are other early signs of attraction to Latin culture, at least among the nobility. The Visigothic king

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20 Thompson, Visigoths in the Time, 146-155.

Theodoric I (419-451) had his son schooled in Roman law and literature by the bishop Avitus,\textsuperscript{22} and the Visigothic court at Toulouse was known to be hospitable to scholars during the first half of the fifth century, as recorded in a letter of Sidonius Apollinaris.\textsuperscript{23} Roman traditions--roads, architectural décor, and administrative organization--were maintained during the period of protection under the Ostrogoths (507-531), as recorded in the \textit{Variae} of Cassiodorus and in Theodoric's letters to the counts administering affairs in Spain during this period.\textsuperscript{24} The presence of a medical school in Caesaraugusta (Saragossa) indicates the probable influence of Greek science in Spain during this period.\textsuperscript{25} In general, education and culture in Spain "may have held a higher place than in other Teutonic countries," and the Visigothic court at Toledo was "probably more cultured than that of any Merovingian kingdom."\textsuperscript{26} The daughters of aristocrats, as well as their sons, were sent to the Visigothic court, a practice which differed from that in other Germanic kingdoms. Fortunatus refers to this in


\textsuperscript{23} Riché, \textit{Education and Culture}, 53.

\textsuperscript{24} Riché, \textit{Education and Culture}, 36-37, n. 139, 37; 126.

\textsuperscript{25} Dalton, \textit{History of the Franks}, I, 417.

\textsuperscript{26} Dalton, \textit{History of the Franks}, I, 413.
describing the departure of the princess Galswintha for Gaul, mentioning the girls who accompanied her.\textsuperscript{27}

Other values, however, seem to have prevailed among the Visigoths for much of this time, and at the end of the fifth and beginning of the sixth century, no distinct trace of any interest in Latin literature can be found among the Visigoths or their rulers. A scarcity of sources makes it difficult to assess the culture of laymen in Spain; there are a few saints' \textit{Lives} and two collections of letters, but no history for the period such as Gregory of Tours provides for Gaul.\textsuperscript{28}

One reason given for the apparent lack of interest in classical culture among the Visigothic aristocracy is that they possessed their own culture and remained faithful to it.\textsuperscript{29} Their children were evidently educated with the values of a warrior society, a three-fold education which placed military training foremost. Moral training followed, based upon an oral tradition involving legends about early Gothic heroes, transmitted through songs which are mentioned by Cassiodorus, Jordanes, and Sidonius. Religious training in Arian doctrine completed the education.\textsuperscript{30} An educational


\textsuperscript{28} Riché, \textit{Education and Culture}, 255.

\textsuperscript{29} Riché, \textit{Education and Culture}, 62-64.

\textsuperscript{30} Riché, \textit{Education and Culture}, 65-67 and n. 78, 79, 80, citing Germanic educational practices found in Cassiodorus, \textit{Variae}, I; n. 82, 83 citing Procopius, \textit{Belli Gothorum} I and \textit{Belli Vandalorum} I; n. 85, citing Jordanes \textit{Getica} IV; n. 86, 87 p. 66, citing Sidonius, \textit{Carmen} XII.
system such as this is likely to have offered little possibility of contact with the Hispano-Roman society and would instead have served to maintain distance between the two peoples.

Everyday contact between Visigoths and Romans would have been the likeliest source for any attempt on the part of the Visigoths to learn the Latin language and seek an understanding of Hispano-Roman culture, yet there is no evidence for such association. With regard to the relationship between the two peoples, there seems to have been a willingness on the part of the Visigothic rulers to retain a strong Roman influence in administrative matters, making use of existing administrative machinery and following a policy of ruling both peoples with as little friction as possible.\(^3\) Legal sources for the period indicate a peaceful coexistence between the two peoples, living separately but without antagonism, so that "... in no sense could this system of separation be called a form of apartheid or segregation designed to enable one nationality to exploit and humiliate the other. They lived on equal terms ..." The same evidence indicates that "after the original Gothic settlement in Spain ... no Gothic king before Reccesuinth is known to have legislated against his

\(^3\) Drew, *Law and Society*, VII, 2.
Roman subjects."\textsuperscript{32}

The Goths' Arianism has been seen by one writer as creating "such an unbreakable obstacle between Roman and Visigothic families that there were no contacts between them."\textsuperscript{33} But this was surely not the case, despite the fact that no direct evidence for such contact has survived. Perhaps the Visigoths' situation itself can explain the presence in the Roman world of certain individuals such as John of Biclar. By the middle of the sixth century, after the passage of several generations in Spain, perhaps some Visigoths were becoming ambitious to rise in that Roman world, and a Latin education would become a necessary step toward advancement for those with the means and desire to attempt it. Possibly some families (John's among them) had begun to seek an education in Latin for their children, although the numbers of such youths were surely small.

It is not clear what schools were still available in Spain following the disruptions of the Germanic invasions and settlement. Elementary secular education, providing at least a minimum of literacy, seems to have been widely available during this period. Evidence for this can be found in frequent references in the Visigothic laws to \textit{scripturae} of various sorts and provisions for witnesses who

\textsuperscript{32} Thompson, \textit{Goths}, 312-13.

\textsuperscript{33} Riché, \textit{Education and Culture}, 255.
subscribed to these rather than making marks upon them.\textsuperscript{34}
In addition, the existence of widespread Visigothic inscriptions indicates that there were no regions in Spain where writing was completely absent, inscriptions being densest in areas where Roman civilization had penetrated more deeply and where towns were more numerous, such as Lusitania, where John of Biclar was born. By this account, such evidence of basic literacy gives at least some proof for the continued existence of elementary instruction in Spain.\textsuperscript{35}

Elementary instruction in letters (litteratio) might be given in the home, by parents or private masters. It is thought in addition that some clerics and monks were available for instruction in families where children were not directed toward religious careers.\textsuperscript{36} This was true in Gaul as well; as municipal schools disappeared there, young men were sometimes educated within their families.\textsuperscript{37}

Whether education at the highest level, by the sixth century, involved a full training in classical literature is unclear. The names of educated persons known in Spain for this period are very few; Leander, bishop of Seville, is one. He was "a respectable scholar," and brought up and

\textsuperscript{34} King, \textit{Law and Society}, 104.


\textsuperscript{36} Riché, \textit{Education and Culture}, 252.

\textsuperscript{37} Van Dam, \textit{Leadership and Community}, 221.
educated his younger brother, Isidore.\textsuperscript{38} The names of other bishops, such as Licinimanus of Cartagena and Masona of Mérida, are also known, but not the extent of their education. For comparison, literary ability in Gaul had by the late fifth century become concentrated among a narrow elite whose erudition seems in a sense to have become "a literary culture cut off from reality." Yet aristocrats, many of them churchmen, attempted to keep the classical tradition alive, for classical education served "to create a common language and a self-consciously elite culture with which to differentiate Gallic aristocrats, whether lay or clerical, from their new barbarian rulers," and in addition "its traditions could be used to integrate barbarians into Gallic society."\textsuperscript{39} By the early sixth century, knowledge of the classical heritage "had become, so to speak, a true 'relic' in early Merovingian society, worthy of admiration when available but otherwise irrelevant and unnecessary."\textsuperscript{40}

In Spain, perhaps fluency in the Latin language and at least some knowledge of the classical Latin writers were considered sufficient for ambitious Gothic youths such as John of Biclar. After early training in Latin letters, the next critical step was access to the school of a grammaticus


\textsuperscript{39} Van Dam, \textit{Leadership and Community}, 163-65.

\textsuperscript{40} Van Dam, \textit{Leadership and Community}, 221 and n. 101, where he acknowledges Riché's survey as the basis for further research in the area of literary culture in early medieval Europe.
or grammarian, for the grammarian's school provided "the one experience that all members of the elite would share." His training was directed toward mastery of correct language, command of a fairly small number of classical texts, and ability in composition and speech. His school was a source of continuity and stability "which laid the foundation for a coherent way of life." When following the usual sequence toward a literary education, the student went from the grammarian's school to the rhetorician's.

Acquisition of a classical literary education had long signified for Romans a certain social standing. It indicated "... that one possessed discipline, an appetite for toil, and the other ethical qualities that marked a man fit to share the burden of government." An ambitious Goth would become aware that: "Doctrina assumed mores; to be a scholar presumed that one was the right sort, a gentleman." If one mastered the art of oratory, according to the Spanish rhetorician Quintilian, one could expect "power, honors, friendships, and glory in the present life and in that to come." The ambitious (perhaps John among them) would surely be attracted to these possibilities.

If secular education such as that described above was

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41 Robert A Kaster, Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), ix, 11, citing Quintilian, Institutes, 19. No names are recorded for grammarians in sixth-century Spain (see Appendix 5, Geographical-Chronological List of Teachers, 467).

42 Kaster, Guardians of Language, 27; Quintilian, Institutio oratorio, XII, II, cited in Riché, Education and Culture, 6 and n. 13, 6.
not available, church schools were appearing which might have served youths such as John. Isidore's brief sketch of John's life gives no hint of what his earlier schooling might have been, or whether his family were converts to orthodox catholicism and thus might have had access to religious schools. But it is known that at this period the church was already much involved with education, a function assumed as learning declined after the Germanic invasions. There is a continuing debate about the relationship which had developed during the Patristic period between Christianity and classical culture, and a considerable amount of literature is available on this subject.43 One point of view is that Christianity depended upon the schools, and the church had thus reacted as Roman schools began to disappear: "Each time the secular institutions were found wanting, the church was led to take their place . . . Christianity was a learned religion; it could not dispense with a certain level of culture, of knowledge and of literature . . . ."44

The need for a literate clergy to evangelize and provide religious instruction for the people throughout the

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43 Other works which deal with this subject include Charles Norris Cochrane, Christianity and Classical Culture: A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940); and R. A. Markus, Christianity in the Roman World (New York: Scribners, 1974).
countryside coincided with the rise of monasteries in Spain, and monastic training was one way for a child to become literate. Monasteries in the West, differing from those of the East, are known to have stressed literacy as part of the monastic life. This was true also for young girls in their religious establishments, reflected in Regla such as that of Caesarius of Arles (534), who provided that girls admitted from the age of six or seven years, and capable of learning letters, should all learn to read, dedicating two hours each day to this pursuit. "The lectio divina, the reading of holy scripture and at first the office, appears inseparable from full exercise of the monastic life."45

In addition, the bishop's or episcopal school was developing at this time. The council of Toledo in 527, with Bishop Montanus presiding, had established an episcopal school at Toledo, perhaps influenced by the work of Caesarius of Arles, under whose tenure as bishop (503-542) such schools had appeared in Gaul. Young tonsured clerics were to be trained by a specially appointed teacher in a community with the bishop (domus ecclesiae).46


46 Marrou, First Six Hundred, 442; Riché, Education and Culture, 126-27 and n. 179, citing the canons of the Council of Toledo in Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio, ed. J. Mansi (Florence and Venice, 1759-98), 8, 785. See the maps, Bishoprics of the Visigothic Kingdom c. 600 A.D. and Centers of Ecclesiastical Culture in Seventh-Century Spain in Appendix for possible locations of episcopal schools.
Parish schools were also appearing during this period, similar to those established earlier in the Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy. Caesarius of Arles, concerned with the training of rural priests in Gaul, is thought to have been instrumental in the enactment by the Council of Vaison in 529 of a directive which has been called "the birth certificate of our free country school." It provided that each parish priest was to take in lectors and teach them the Psalter, the holy texts, and divine law as a way to ensure a source for a literate clergy. These parish schools were soon admitting children not intended for the clerical life, a development which can be seen as resulting from the disappearance of the Roman elementary schools.\(^{47}\)

The rise of these new schools was of great significance, for with them a type of Christian education came about which has continued to the present. These sixth century schools, by making available to the lay world an education obtained earlier only within the church, had another important result: they "effected a synthesis between the schoolmaster and the spiritual director, a synthesis unknown to antiquity and still unknown to Byzantium."\(^{48}\) This is of interest when considering John of Biclar's later


\(^{48}\) Marrou, *First Six Hundred*, 443.
roles as abbot and bishop, which could well have included responsibilities for education within the community.

Even with the evidence for availability of education in Spain, there still remains the problem of connecting John of Biclar to his known achievements. It should be noted that his birthplace, Scallabis (the present-day Santarem, in Portugal) was an important port on the Tagus River, known to attract Byzantine ships during this period.\textsuperscript{49} It is possible that his family was involved in trade with the East or in some other pursuit which might have led them to have their son schooled in Latin or even rudimentary Greek. Or perhaps while a youth John simply signed on with a ship bound for the East and through some fortunate encounter there entered into the world of Byzantine culture; seventeen years in Constantinople would seem a sufficient time for acquiring the education noted by Isidore.

But whatever chance of fortune took John from Scallabis to Constantinople, and whatever his background in learning, his years in the East were sure to have influenced his life and work, for it was during this time that he encountered fully the intellectual heritage of Byzantium. If he arrived as a romanized Goth, he is sure to have left a hellenized one, for this was the period in which he was "nourished in Greek and Latin learning," as Isidore records in \textit{De viris...}

\textsuperscript{49} Riché, \textit{Education and Culture}, 248. See the map, \textit{Visigothic Spain at the End of the Sixth Century}, in Appendix.
illustrious.

John is thought to have remained in the East for seventeen years, from about 558 until 575, and he would thus have witnessed the last years of Justinian's reign (527-565) and nearly all of that of Justin II (565-578). He probably had direct knowledge of many events recorded in the early years of his Chronicle, including an assassination attempt by poisoning on the life of the emperor Justin II, the serious mental illness of the emperor five years later, and an outbreak of the plague in Constantinople in the same year. He was present in the capital during a period which witnessed a number of disturbances among the restless peoples on the fringes of the Empire as well as renewed fighting with Persia, and these events appear frequently in the early years of his Chronicle.

John was perhaps witness to a change in the imperial style of governing which occurred during the second half of the sixth century. The emperors after Justinian patronized developments in religion which saw a great increase in devotion to icons, and these icons became associated with

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50 According to Campos, an error in the copying of an early manuscript has led some to say seven years; Campos, Juan de Biclar, 18. Among other writers, Laistner says six (Thought and Letters, 119); Herrin, seven (Formation, n. 84, 81); Mommsen, seventeen (MGH, AA, II, 207); Fontaine, both! (Culture et Spiritualité, seventeen in IV, 158; seven in V, 106).

51 Johannis Abbatis Biclaensis Chronica, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores Antiquissimi, Chronica Minora, Saecl. IV. V. VI. VII. ed. Theodor Mommsen (Berlin: Weidmann, 1894), 11, 211-20; 568, 1; 573, 3, 4.
imperial ceremony. A regularized calendar of progresses was emerging, in which the emperor "took possession of his city" by means of imperial processions. These ceremonial progressions made use of the public areas which linked the palace and St. Sophia and opened out into the main thoroughfare leading to the Forum of Constantine, areas which had been rebuilt by Justinian following the Nika revolt of 532.\textsuperscript{52} The adventus of the emperor was "splendid theatre," suggesting to the spectator imagery from ancient times which found expression in art and literature as well. The imperial presence in Constantinople was celebrated at St. Sophia and the hippodrome, and spectators had a sense of participation as they joined in acclamation.\textsuperscript{53}

While in Constantinople, John is likely to have seen a number of royal processions as well as ceremonial arrivals of foreign dignitaries. He probably witnessed the arrival of envoys from the Maccuritas (an African people) as they came with gifts for the Emperor: they brought ivory (dentes elephantinos—surely enormous tusks carried in procession)


and a giraffe (*cameloparda*).\(^{54}\)

Perhaps John was also present to see the arrival in the capital of the treasure of the Gepids, a people who had recently suffered defeat by the Lombards and were thereafter eliminated as a national entity.\(^{55}\) Three years later, he probably witnessed a triumph staged after the defeat of the Persians: "... Justinian, appointed by Tiberius as commander of the Roman soldiers... ravaged the territory of the Persian provinces and arranged spoils from them for a triumph to Constantinople, twenty-four elephants among the rest, which produced a great spectacle for the Romans in the royal city."\(^{56}\)

Byzantine experience of a different sort was available at the *thermae*, the public baths, nine of which are known to have existed in the city, built largely by imperial initiative. As centers for relaxation and social life, these were often elaborately designed and decorated so that they were described as museums of art.\(^{57}\) (One wonders if

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\(^{54}\) John of Biclar, *Chronicle*, 573, 6. The Barberini Diptych captures the traditional imagery of *adventus*, showing subjects in procession, one carrying an elephant tusk; reproduced in MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, Plate 22.


John visited the bath called Heleniana and saw there the illustration of the miraculous punishment of the Arian Olmypius, who because of his blasphemy was said to have been struck down in the cold water pool by the fiery javelins of an invisible angel, meeting his death "impiously and at the same time marvelously."58) Members of the clergy were known to attend the baths as regularly as other individuals in the city's society; a bishop is recorded in the Ecclesiastical Histories of both Socrates and Sozomen as bathing twice a day "because, he said, he could not do so three times a day."59

There is evidence for the survival of at least four theaters in Constantinople in the sixth century, and John perhaps attended these during his years in Byzantium. In addition, various races and imperial ceremonials are known to have been held in the hippodrome during this period. Corippus's poem on the accession of Justin II captures the excitement at the hippodrome, where the practice of the ancients as they worshiped the sun as a god had become a Christian ceremonial: "... and when God took the shape of human kind from a virgin, then the games of the sun were abolished, and honours and games were offered to the Roman


emperors, and the pleasant amusements of the circus to New Rome . . . the crowds applauded . . . all had one voice, one mind . . . "60

Apart from these diversions, John presumably spent much of his time in study, acquiring the education in Greek and Latin which was noted by Isidore. It seems likely that he studied at the imperial university at Constantinople, for the other major center of learning, the Patriarchal school, was evidently not established until the seventh century.61 The university had been founded by Theodosius II in 425 and offered a full education along classical lines in the liberal arts--profane literature, both Greek and Latin, grammar and rhetoric, philosophy and law. During the thousand years of its existence (425 to 1453), the university experienced periods of decline and even momentary disappearance, yet it was always "redeemed by brilliant renewals" and remained true to its classical and secular origins.62


61 Marrou, Histoire, 450 and n. 4, 571, citing testimony of Ananias of Schirag (600-650).

62 Marrou, First Six Hundred, 386-87; Marrou, Histoire, 448-49. A parallel is found in the fate of the four major Athenian philosophic schools. Literature on the subject includes: John Patrick Lynch, Aristotle’s School: A Study of a Greek Educational Institution (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972); John Glucker, Antiochus and the Late Academy (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978); Alan Cameron, "The Last Days of the Academy at Athens," Proceedings of the Cambridge
At the imperial university, the great historical texts were favorites for teaching proper grammar and style and for conveying moral philosophy through exemplary character, perhaps an influence upon the later work of a chronicler such as John. The student in the rhetor's class read the classics and studied the six parts of speech in preparation for learning how to speak "affectedly and elegantly." He discovered the uses of meter, studied dialectic, and practiced these skills by performing classic exercises, the suasoria and the controversia. In addition, he investigated obscure areas of scholarship: "The educated man of the sixth century, like his predecessors of previous centuries, sought not only to be eloquentissimus, but also to be doctissimus. His curiosity knew no bounds. He collected everything from his extensive reading that could enrich him."^64

Recent scholarship has addressed the question of whether or not a classical education was a requirement for

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high office in the Byzantine empire. The university did supply many members of the new civilian governing class of the empire, and this has been seen as part of a "silent revolution" in which scholarship and letters became allied with statecraft. The idea of a fusion of the educated community with the powers of the state was a Byzantine concept which in a sense found similar expression in Spain after Reccared's conversion. A special relationship developed between the bishops and the Visigothic kings at this time, of interest in the case of John of Biclar. In his role as bishop of Gerona, John would be in a position to share with other high ecclesiastics in an alliance between learned, influential churchmen and their rulers. Material in the Chronicle indicates that John was knowledgeable in Roman law, and this would have added to his usefulness in the Visigothic kingdom. (Legal terms, found primarily in the writings of jurisconsults or in the Theodosian Code, appear in a number of Chronicle entries; these will be discussed in the following chapter and noted in the translation.) John's education was perhaps enriched by visits to the

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66 Brown, World, 139.
new St. Sophia, reconstructed in 562 and rededicated by the aged Emperor Justinian for a second time. The great church was sumptuously decorated with marble, pavements, and mosaics on walls and vaults, arts which contributed to the drama of the Byzantine liturgy.\(^67\) John, as bishop of Gerona, perhaps introduced Byzantine liturgical elements into his churches, for the Visigothic liturgy is thought to have been influenced by the Eastern in certain features such as the chant.\(^68\) The king Reccared, at the Third Council of Toledo, proposed to introduce within the newly-united churches the Oriental custom in which the congregation recited in unison the creed of Constantinople before the Lord's Prayer on every occasion when communion was celebrated; it was felt that in so doing "(t)he people would readily incline to believe what they often repeated . . ."\(^69\) (John refers to the emperor Justin's introduction of this practice in his *Chronicle* entry for the year 567.)

In considering what John took back with him to Spain, Isidore's special emphasis on John's mastery of Greek is of interest, for this ability appears to have become quite rare in the West by this period. (Isidore himself is thought to

\(^{67}\) Marrou, *First Six Hundred*, 393-96.

\(^{68}\) Riché, *Education and Culture*, 492.

\(^{69}\) Thompson, *Goths*, 97, citing Mansi, *Sacrarium Conciliorum*. 
have known little or no Greek.\textsuperscript{70}) In Spain during John of Biclar's lifetime, the only other churchman known for certain to have a thorough knowledge of Greek was Martin of Braga. (Two other bishops, Leander of Seville and Licinianus of Carthage spent time in Constantinople, but neither is known to have acquired a knowledge of Greek.\textsuperscript{71}) Martin had come from the East to Galicia around the year 550 and founded a monastery at Dumio, where he taught Greek to his monks.\textsuperscript{72}

John of Biclar's return to Spain raises the question of what he might have contributed to the educational system there. His education and his years in Constantinople would seem to place him in a unique position for understanding and transmitting the legacy of Byzantium. "With hindsight, we can see that he was one of the last Westerners of Late Antiquity who understood the rich depth of its culture."\textsuperscript{73} More important than the question of John's educational contribution, however, is a larger and more perplexing issue, that of the extent to which his Byzantine experience influenced his thought and found expression in his

\textsuperscript{70} Thompson, \textit{Goths}, 25; Riché, \textit{Education and Culture}, 301.

\textsuperscript{71} Thompson, \textit{Goths}, 21; Riché, \textit{Education and Culture}, 301.


\textsuperscript{73} Herrin, \textit{Formation}, 82.
Chronicle. This will be considered later, in a discussion of various interpretations of the Chronicle found in the writings of several scholars.

John's return from the East, in around 575, coincided with an apparent increase in hostility on the part of the Arian king, Leovigild, toward catholics. Whether this was the main reason for John's banishment to Barcelona is unknown, but it is likely that political causes were involved as well. Leovigild had early in his reign begun his campaigns to expel the Byzantine forces who had been brought in during the conflict between Agila and Athanagild in 551 and were established in the southeastern coastal areas of Spain; they would not be finally expelled until 624, under Suinthila.\(^4\) John's prolonged stay in the East and contacts there possibly aroused Leovigild's suspicions concerning possible interference with his policy in this area.\(^5\)

Furthermore, Arianism was fast disappearing in other areas of the empire, and the Visigoths in Spain were becoming isolated in their Arianism as a result. The Vandal and Ostrogothic kingdoms in Africa and Italy had been overthrown by Justinian's forces; the Sueves in the

\(^4\) Collins, *Early Medieval Spain*, 38, 109-110; *Chronicle* of John of Biclar, 570, 2. For an idea of Byzantine holdings, see the map, *Visigothic Spain at the End of the Sixth Century*, in the Appendix.

northwest of Spain had by mid-century converted to
catholicism (partly, it is thought, from the efforts of
Martin of Braga); and the newly created Lombard realm in
Italy was the only other Arian state at this period.\textsuperscript{76}
Moreover, a gradual "drift towards Catholicism" had very
likely been occurring among the Goths for some time, perhaps
further inciting Leovigild toward a policy of persecution,
particularly toward Goths who had abandoned Arianism. (Of
the bishops who signed at the Third Council of Toledo of
589, possibly four were Goths, indicating that some five per
cent of the catholic sees were occupied by Visigoths
immediately preceding the council; the conversion of 589 may
therefore be seen as the culmination of a process that had
been underway for some time.\textsuperscript{77})

The ten-year period of John's exile in Barcelona is of
interest, for Barcelona had long been a site of Visigothic
settlement and was very likely a center for Arianism at this
time.\textsuperscript{78} John was thus in the midst of fellow Goths, and
surely at times the object of curiosity and perhaps
admiration for his achievements. Isidore says that he

\textsuperscript{76} Campos, \textit{Juan de Rícim}, 19-20; Collins, \textit{Early Medieval Spain}, 50,
82-83.

\textsuperscript{77} Thompson, \textit{Goths}, 37-39.

\textsuperscript{78} David Nirenberg, "The Arian Bishops after Reccared's Conversion:
Ministers without Portfolios?," unpublished paper, Princeton University,
7, 13, citing J. M. Piel and D. Kremer, \textit{Hispano-getisches Namenbuch}
(Heidelberg, 1976), 19-29. (The author gratefully acknowledges the
generosity of David Nirenberg in sharing this material.)
suffered persecutions at the hands of the Arians, yet no resentment is evident in his *Chronicle* entries for this period; he "succeeds in being impartial where we should least expect it. He fully admits the greatness of Leovigild's achievements and omits all reference to the religious persecution of which he was himself a victim."  

It seems likely that during this ten-year period a group was forming which would later follow John when he founded his monastery at Biclar. This probably took place following the death of Leovigild in 586, when Reccared's conversion to catholicism put an end to the persecutions. The monastery John founded was possibly one of those endowed by Reccared and noted in the *Chronicle*.  

The site of Biclar is unknown, but there have been a number of attempts to establish its location. One of the more interesting ones is that of Jerónimo Pujades, an historian of Catalonia, who recorded one possibility in his *Coronica Universal del Principat de Cathalunya* of 1609. He tells of a small town named Vallclara, of perhaps one hundred fifty houses, at the foot of the mountain of Prades, two leagues from the town of Montblanch, where according to the natives a church standing next to a castle above the town had once been a monastery. There is no proof, however,  

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80 *Chronicle* of John of Biclar, 587, 7; Campos, *Juan de Biclar*, 21–22.
for this site, which is some twenty miles north of Tarragona in present-day Catalonia. Campos thinks, however, that Vallclara is the likeliest site; Collins places the monastery more generally in the vicinity of Tarragona.\textsuperscript{81}

In founding his monastery, John's experience in the East perhaps led him to incorporate features from eastern monasticism, with its ideals of asceticism and withdrawal from the world, ideals which inspired many of the monasteries founded in the West during this period. An example is the monastery of Asan, established in Spain at an earlier period by Emilian or Victorianus under the guiding principles of Antony and Martin and thought by some to have had much the same impact as Lérins as "a nursery for bishops."\textsuperscript{82}

It was evidently not until the seventh and eighth centuries that the "learned, civilising monasticism" developed which would characterize the medieval West.\textsuperscript{83} However, given John's long experience in the East devoted to furthering his education, it is possible that he regarded his monastery not only as a retreat but as a school, an idea shared by monks of the sixth century which also appears in

\textsuperscript{81} Campos, \textit{Juan de Biclär}, 22, 24; Collins, \textit{Early Medieval Spain}, 42.

\textsuperscript{82} Riché, \textit{Education and Culture}, 108; Collins, \textit{Early}, 82. (See the map, \textit{Centers of Ecclesiastical Culture in Seventh-Century Spain}, in the Appendix.)

\textsuperscript{83} Marrou, \textit{First Six Hundred}, 429.
the Rule of Benedict of Nursia. The Prologue to Benedict's Rule calls for the establishment of "a school of the Lord's service" (Dominici schola servitii). Among their many purposes, monasteries served as "a focus of civilization" where classical literature was preserved:
"Thus they naturally became centres of education, alongside the cathedral school . . ." The Rule mentioned by Isidore, which John wrote for his monks, has not survived, but possibly it provided for the intellectual as well as spiritual training of his monks.

If John was involved in establishing a school at Biclar, perhaps he did so at Gerona as well after he became bishop. An incentive for the educational efforts of the clergy was provided by Reccared's opening address at the Third Council of Toledo, in which the king emphasized the need for accurate teaching of the orthodox faith by the clergy. While little is known of Gerona in the following centuries, it emerges in the late tenth century as a seat of learning in Catalonia, where the monk Gerbert of Aurillac, later Pope Sylvester II (999-1003) studied under the Bishops Atto of Vich and Miro Bonfil of Gerona.

64 Riché, Education and Culture, 108-110.
66 Thompson, Goths, 97, citing Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum.
67 Collins, Early, 262.
knowledgeable in Roman law, as elements in the Chronicle indicate, he perhaps established a tradition in this area of learning which continued after his time.

A period of vibrancy and growth is evident in the Spanish church in the late sixth century. Contacts with Christian Africa had continued throughout the period of the Germanic invasions, and African monks fleeing Berber devastations and persecutions of the Byzantines had come to Spain. One of these immigrants, the abbot Donatus, established a monastery at Servitanum and with the large number of books which came with him, made this monastery an important center for education. Also, Spanish influence made itself felt elsewhere. A number of Biblical commentaries and grammatical texts very probably written in Ireland during the seventh century make use of Isidore's writings, an indication that works from Spain began as early as the late sixth century to find their way to scholars outside the peninsula.

John became bishop of Gerona around 590 or 591, serving in that capacity until his death, in perhaps 621. His later activities can be traced only through his signature on various documents. He signed the acts of several councils, II Zaragoza in 592, the Synod of Toledo in 597, and II

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Barcelona in 599 (Joannes peccator de Gerunda). He signed a
decretal for King Gundemar confirming the action of the
Council of 610 (Ego Ioannes Gerundensis Ecclesiae Episcopus
subscrips). He apparently signed also at the Council of
Egara in 614 (Joannes subscrips). John's signature also
appears on a document of November 592, confirming the rates
for taxation in the fisc of Barcelona, evidence of the
bishops' role in civil affairs by this time. It would be interesting to know more about the
qualities which guided John of Biclar in his work as a
churchman, particularly after the conversion of the Gothic
people to the orthodox faith. As bishop, John was no doubt
involved with the adjustment of his people to the new
situation. The process of conversion is likely to have
brought about a loss of distinction between Goth and Roman
and the loss of traditional customs as well. Archaeology
has revealed that the Gothic form of dress was abandoned
after the conversion, and the Gothic language is likely to
have declined in use, eventually disappearing. Perhaps
former Arians also lost some elements of their privileged
position in Spain; this was surely true for the Arian
bishops after their conversion, who unless reassigned were

90 Campos, Juan de Biclar, 25-28, citing Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum;
Collins, Early Medieval Spain, 42-43.

91 Thompson, Goths, 99-100.
likely to be "ministers without portfolios."\textsuperscript{92} John's role during the conversion process was likely to have required a particular sensitivity and understanding.

In attempting to assess John of Biclar's significance for his time, one fact somehow remains the most essential: he was a Goth by birth, heir to his people's history, however that had been transmitted to him, and carrying that identity with him as he became part of the Roman world around him. Through all of the steps he took this heritage would seem always to place him at a certain frontier, the newcomer who arrives and makes a place for himself.

John stands as one who through his education and experience had the ability to convey a "genuine sense of shared background" between the East and West.\textsuperscript{93} Perhaps as a Goth he also had a special insight. His Chronicle is a small view of the Roman world, both East and West, in which he felt so much at home.

\textsuperscript{92} Thompson, Goths, 108-109; David Nirenberg, paper previously cited, "The Arian Bishops after Reccared's Conversion: Ministers without Portfolios?"

\textsuperscript{93} Herrin, Formation, 88-89.
CHAPTER 2
The Chronicle of John of Biclar

John of Biclar's only surviving work is his Chronicle, which extends from A.D. 567 to 590. It is a continuation of a chronicle by Victor of Tunnuna, who in turn had continued Prosper of Aquitaine, Jerome, and Eusebius.

It is possible that John began this work while he was still in Constantinople, for Victor of Tunnuna was also present for a short time in the capital during the same period. Victor, who was bishop of Tunnuna in Africa, had been imprisoned in the Balearics by Justinian and exiled to Egypt in 555 for his defense of the "Three Chapters," a theological dispute which began at the time of the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Justin II had summoned Victor to Constantinople in 565 for questioning, and after his refusal to recant, he was confined to a monastery there, where he completed his Chronicle to the year 567 before he died.94

John, in continuing Victor's Chronicle, became part of a tradition of Christian chroniclers whose work can be

94 Isidore, De vir. ill., c. 38, in Migne 83, 1101; Mommsen, Victoris Episcopi Tonnennensis Chronica, MGH, AA II, 178-79; New Catholic Encyclopedia 14, 149.
traced to that of Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 260-c. 339).\textsuperscript{95} The recognition of Christianity by Constantine in 313 had provided the encouragement needed for the church to develop its growing interest in historiography, and Eusebius, working almost all his life at Caesarea in Palestine, had the use there of the foremost Christian library in the Roman world.\textsuperscript{96} He began his Chronicle at the birth of Abraham and continued it to 324 A.D., using the Chronicle as a basis for his later work, the Ecclesiastical History. Jerome later translated Eusebius's Chronicle from Greek to Latin and extended it to 378. (Armenian and Syriac translations were discovered in the nineteenth century.)\textsuperscript{97}

The work of Eusebius itself fits within a larger framework of writing which came about as the Christian church began recording its own history. In one view of this process, Christianity early caught the spirit of the Greek world into which it had spread, finding there an atmosphere which thrived upon writing and publication.\textsuperscript{98} From the


\textsuperscript{96} James Westfall Thompson, A History of Historical Writing, 2 vols. (New York: MacMillan, 1942), vol. 1, 127-28, where Thompson adds: "Fortunately for later generations, Eusebius made copious extracts from the sources he used, many of which no longer exist."

\textsuperscript{97} Thompson, History, 128 and n. 17, 128.

\textsuperscript{98} E. J. Goodspeed, "The Original Language of the Gospels," Atlantic Monthly CLIV (1934): 475-76, in Thompson, History, 123, illustrating this spirit by the Greek proverb: "If you find a saying of a certain
Greek East came another contribution to the development of Christian historiography, that of devising a scheme of history which avoided placing Rome at the center of things. By seeing a unity in the world other than that imposed by the Romans, various histories of peoples of the Mediterranean basin could be composed, without Roman achievements as the basis. The most influential of these was the Chronicle of Castor of Rhodes, based on the work of Erastosthanes and Apollodorus, in which synchronistic tables of Oriental, Greek, and Roman history were lined up side by side and augmented by lists of kings, priests, and archons. Castor's encyclopedic format, similar to a textbook, was later used by Varro, Sextus Julius Africanus, and Eusebius.99

Others preceding Eusebius had contributed to the development of the Christian chronicle. Tatian, in the second century A.D., in his "Address to the Greeks" was the first to prefix ancient Hebrew history to the Graeco-Roman concept of the "succession of empires." This double tradition and fusion of ideas is thought to have given the form to Sextus Julius Africanus, from whom the concept passed to Eusebius, then to Jerome, Augustine, and so on.100

philosopher and have no paper, write it upon your garments!"


100 Thompson, History, 124.
Christian concern for purity of Scriptural text involved early Christian historians in textual criticism to establish the great age of the Judeo-Christian tradition, which eventually promoted Christian interest in chronology. For Eusebius, the exact date for Moses became the key to the whole apologetic tradition. Through intricate calculations, Eusebius determined that Moses was earlier than the gods and heroes of Greek mythology. Justin Martyr carried this further: not only was Moses older than Homer, but Justin suspected that Homer had borrowed from Moses.\footnote{Breisach, \textit{Historiography}, 78; Brian Croke, "The Origins of the Christian World Chronicle," in \textit{History and Historians in Late Antiquity}, ed. Brian Croke and Alanna M. Emmett (Sydney, Australia: Pergamon Press, 1983), 124.}

Eusebius in his \textit{Chronicle} combined the writing of a universal history with his own invention of a universal time scale, arranged so that the whole of human history could be laid out end-to-end. To this useful grid he added a variety of events—battles, treaties, natural disasters, and lives of famous men. By this technique, his \textit{Chronicle} "had made it possible to fit local history into the context of God's time."\footnote{Croke, "Origin," 126-27.} In parallel columns Eusebius synchronized the important events for all earlier people with Jewish history, calculated according to the chronology of the Bible. "In these dry chronological tables history for the first time is considered as a single entity and grouped around a unique
center." Through Eusebius's achievement, Christianity is given the credit for "the establishment of chronology as an auxiliary science to the study of history."103

Traditions arising from the continuing of Eusebius's Chronicle differed between East and West; in the Western, or Latin tradition, continuators such as John of Biclar were content to continue Jerome's version or one of those who had continued him. In the East, chroniclers usually chose to recopy or modify all of the world history available in Eusebius's Chronicle, rather than merely continue it. From the early fifth century, moreover, continuators began with Adam rather than Abraham.104

The rise of the Christian chronicle tradition coincided with what has been seen as a rapid simplification of culture. The boundary between aristocratic and popular culture which had characterized the ancient and late antique worlds was virtually gone, as was the cultivated leisure which had made possible the pursuit of classical culture. Basic literacy was now the most pressing need of the elite, which included the bishops.105

In the emerging Christian culture of the West, the declining popularity of rhetoric produced a less elaborate kind of literary language (sermo humilis) directed toward a

103 Thompson, History, 128-29.


105 Brown, World of Late Antiquity, 174-75.
wider and less-educated audience. Annalistic chronicles, making use of this relative simplicity of expression, became the most popular form of history-writing in the West at this time. Further, they met a demand for shorter works which summarized basic facts of Roman history and were useful for new officials beginning their imperial careers. Chronicles were a novel form also because they were not meant to be read aloud as were earlier histories.\textsuperscript{106}

The \textit{Chronicle} of John of Biclar thus takes its place as one of many which began with Eusebius. In the preface to his work, John establishes himself as a continuator of Eusebius, Jerome, Prosper, and Victor. He expresses a desire to continue as they had done in constructing "with utmost brevity and diligence the history of almost all peoples . . ." His purpose is "to transmit in brief style to posterity those occurrences of our time which should be known . . ."\textsuperscript{107} His intention seems similar in a sense to that of the Greeks, who saw a public purpose in historical knowledge and felt that history should be written to inspire and teach.\textsuperscript{108}

John's own sense of history was no doubt developing

\textsuperscript{106} Brian Croke and Alanna M. Emmett, "Historiography in Late Antiquity: An Overview," in \textit{History and Historians in Late Antiquity}, 2-4.

\textsuperscript{107} \textit{Iohannis Abbatis Biclaresensis Chonicarum, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores Antiquissimi, Chronica Minora, Saeclorum IV, V, VI, VII.} ed. Theodor Mommsen (Berlin: Weidmann, 1894), 11, 211.

\textsuperscript{108} Breisach, \textit{Historiography}, 18.
during his years in the East. As a Goth observing the workings of imperial government in the capital, he perhaps came to see the history of his own people in a new light, as that of one people among many who had entered the Empire and become part of it. Furthermore, the timing of John's stay in the East is of interest in relation to the work of two near-contemporaries involved with Gothic history, Cassiodorus and Jordanes. Cassiodorus, who wrote his *History of the Goths* in the 520s and 530s, is known to have been in Constantinople in 550, according to a letter of Pope Vigilius. He is thought to have brought his twelve books of Gothic history with him, and it is possible that Jordanes borrowed this work while he was himself in Constantinople, basing his own history upon it (*De origine actibusque Getarum*), which appeared in 551. These works were perhaps available or became known to John.

Procopius, also writing during this period, had completed his *History of the Wars* by 554. He recorded in these volumes the defeat by Justinian's forces of the Vandals in Africa and the Ostrogoths in Italy. Procopius conveyed a sense of the costs of these wars, which while perhaps successful in promoting Justinian's policy against

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the heretic Arians, had caused great damage and depopulation.\textsuperscript{111} John would later note a similar situation in Italy caused by the "lamentable war" of the Byzantine forces against the Lombards.\textsuperscript{112}

Others in the East were writing histories or chronicles at about this time. Among these were Evagrius, an eminent jurisconsult who continued Eusebius's church history from the council of Ephesus in 431 to the twelfth year of the reign of the Emperor Maurice in 594; Agathius, a lawyer whose Histories extended from 532 to 558 and dealt with Justinian's Persian war; John Malalas (the Rhetor), whose Chronicle began with Adam and continued through the reign of Justinian; and Count Marcellinus, a chancellor of Justinian, whose Chronicle extended Eusebius and Jerome from 379 to 534.\textsuperscript{113}

More directly, John was influenced by the work of his immediate predecessors, Victor of Tunnuna and Prosper of Aquitaine. The Chronicle of Victor, an African bishop, was in some ways an appropriate choice for John to continue, for the church in Africa had had considerable influence in Spain and had perhaps introduced Christianity into the peninsula.


\textsuperscript{112} Chronicle of John of Biclar, 578, 3.

\textsuperscript{113} Thompson, History, 130, 133, 300, 303; The Chronicle of John Malalas, tr. Elizabeth Jeffreys et al (Melbourne: Australism Association for Byzantine Studies, 1986), xxi.
A number of writings of Africans were known in Spain and were later found in the episcopal library in Seville, including those of Fulgentius of Ruspe (d. c. 525), a defender of orthodoxy against the Arian Vandals, and Facundus of Hermiane, the leading opponent of Justinian's religious policies.  

Victor's *Chronicle* begins with the year 441 and concludes with the death of Justinian, which he records in the year 567. Victor is much concerned with the quarrels within the church and the persecutions resulting from the Council of Chalcedon (451), and his *Chronicle* conveys the sense of an emperor at war with religious dissenters as well as with political opponents. Victor names many victims of Justinian's religious policies, which by the end of his reign had sent numerous churchmen into exile (entries for 562, 563, 565, and 566 all record such action). He notes the results of the Second Council of Constantinople, held in 553, which ended in the exile of two participants who refused to agree on the issue of the Three Chapters. John in his *Chronicle* shows awareness of the conflicts still unresolved from Chalcedon, recording in 567 the action taken by Justin to restore the enactments of that council.  

Victor includes himself as a victim of Justinian's persecutions, recording in 555 a series of confinements and

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115 *Chronicle* of John of Biclar, 567, 2.
exiles to which he is subjected. Ten years later, in his entry for the year 565, he writes that he and four other bishops from Africa are called to the royal city at the command of the emperor. After resisting the "new superstition" of Justinian's theology, the five are separated from each other and sent into the custody of different monasteries in the city. (John, sent into exile by the Visigothic king Leovigild after returning to Spain, does not follow Victor's example; nothing appears in John's Chronicle concerning his own exile.)

Supernatural causes and a sense of the miraculous are evident throughout Victor's Chronicle. An earthquake occurs after the Council of Constantinople in 553, shattering many buildings and porticos; Victor sees this as a direct result of Justinian's treatment of dissenters (His ita gestis terrae motus urbem regiam . . . prostravit). Unclean spirits seize the people of Alexandria and all of Egypt so that, deprived of normal human speech, they bark like dogs and begin to devour one another's hands and arms, a foretelling of the anathema which will come from the Chalcedon synod. Victor sees religious strife as the cause of the inguinal plague which strikes around the world and devours the greater part of the population. He also implies that the empress Theodora died an unnatural death from a

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pervasive cancer because she was hostile to the Synod of Chalcedon."\textsuperscript{117}

John's writing, in comparison, seems to be governed by a certain objectivity. He notes two possibilities which are being discussed as the cause of Justin II's mental illness, withholding his own opinion. After Tiberius is named Caesar by Justin, John reports that the plague is allayed in Constantinople on the first day Tiberius takes office; again John makes no comment about the connection but merely states what has seemed to happen.\textsuperscript{118} He has rather the tone of a jurist in many entries, presenting information but avoiding accusation or speculation. He makes use of legal terms in several of his entries which are not commonly found except in legal writings, and this would seem to indicate that John had knowledge of Roman law.\textsuperscript{119} He may have acquired this during his years in Constantinople, where Justinian's codification of Roman law in the Corpus Iuris Civilis (Body of Civil Law) had been accomplished by 534. More significantly, John had access to the Roman law contained in the Lex Romana Visigothorum (known more commonly as Alaric's Breviary) issued by the Gothic king Alaric II in 506, which

\textsuperscript{117} Chronicle of Victor of Tunnuna, 553, 2; 507; 542, 2; 549, 2.

\textsuperscript{118} Chronicle of John of Biclar, 573, 3; 574, 4.

\textsuperscript{119} Campos's study, Juan de Biclar, includes a Philological Commentary (Comentario Filologico, 151-177), and his findings are the basis for this material and for notes appearing in this translation.
continued in use in Spain until the mid-seventh century.\textsuperscript{120} Perhaps the juridical tone of John's writing comes not only from knowledge of the law, but also from possible involvement in legal matters through his role as bishop of Gerona.

The exceptions to this objective approach in John's writing appear in the years 587, 589, and 590, when Reccared's conversion and the Council of Toledo produce a different sort of writing. John the Bishop seems to be in evidence here, and his sense of celebration over recent events may have dictated his style for these entries.

As a matter of historical interest, it should be pointed out that notes were added in the margins of both Victor's and John's \textit{Chronicles} at a later date, possibly by Maximus, bishop of Saragossa (c. 599-621), additions which are concerned mostly with events in Gothic history. (The only such addition to John's \textit{Chronicle} appears at the year 568 and describes Athanagild's attacks upon Seville and Córdoba.) These additions have been compiled into a separate short chronicle, \textit{Chronicorum Caesaraugustanorum Reliquiae}, which appears with those of Victor's and John's in Mommsen's edition.\textsuperscript{121}

Prosper of Aquitaine, whose \textit{Chronicle} Victor continued,


\textsuperscript{121} Mommsen, \textit{MGH, AA}, 11, 221-23.
was another whose work John recognized as an inspiration for his own. ("Post Eusebium . . . Hieronymum . . . nec non et Prosperum virum religiosum . . ."\(^{122}\)) Prosper was born around 390, apparently at Limoges. As a lay theologian he was associated with Pope Leo I and is thought to have helped with papal correspondence and theological writings against the Nestorians. His *Epitoma chronicorum* is a synthesis of the chronicles of Jerome (to 378), Sulpicious Severus, and Orosius (to 433), but the last section, from 433 to 455, appears to reflect his own experience. Cassiodorus and Paul the Deacon are also known to have re-edited and extended Prosper's *Chronicle*.\(^{123}\) (Marius, bishop of Avenches-Lausanne, who lived from about 530 until 594, also continued Prosper, bringing the years in his version to 581.)\(^{124}\)

Prosper's *Chronicle* is in two sections, the first beginning with Adam and concluding with the death of Valens, and the second ending after the Council of Chalcedon (451) and death of Aetius (454). Prosper's *Chronicle* provided John with yet another view of the various barbarian peoples, for the Visigoths, Huns, Lombards, and Vandals all appear

\(^{122}\) *Chronicle* of John of Biclar, Preface.

\(^{123}\) F. X. Murphy, "Prosper of Aquitaine (St.)," *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 11, 878.

within his entries.\textsuperscript{125}

Prosper's greatest concern, however, is the progress of the orthodox church as it contends with a number of heresies which have prevented Christian unity. In these various struggles, Arius "allies many to his impiety;" Donatus causes controversy within the African church; Julian falls into apostasy; Priscillian, Pelagius, and Nestorius are troublesome in their turn. Prosper also discusses the conflicts resulting from the Council of Chalcedon, a theme which Victor continues and John also mentions.

Augustine was likely one source of inspiration for Prosper as he wrote his \textit{Chronicle}, which was his only historical work. Augustine's sense of history as "the theatre of God's hidden purposes" and as a way to draw men's minds to God possibly influenced the author.\textsuperscript{126} Perhaps Pope Leo more directly influenced Prosper through his call for a universal Christian church, which Leo expressed in his sermons and writings. Prosper is likely reflecting Leo's thoughts when he includes in \textit{The Calling of All Nations} the idea that the church, first growing in nations gathered under the authority of the Roman Empire, is no longer contained by the Empire but has spread in such a way that it


has "submitted to the sceptre of Christ's cross many peoples whom Rome could not subject with its arms . . ." For Prosper, Rome has become a spiritual leader in a way never possible as a political one.\textsuperscript{127}

These ideas, available to John through Prosper's writings, may well have influenced his thought, particularly in \textit{Chronicle} entries for the later years, which he is likely to have written after becoming bishop of Gerona. A passage similar in spirit to Prosper's universalism is found in John's account of the Third Council of Toledo, at which the conversion of the Gothic people to orthodoxy is celebrated. The king Reccared, by leading his subjects into the universal orthodox church, is bringing about a unity in Spain not possible through purely political means. John portrays Reccared as a new Constantine, acting in the capacity of religious leader as well as \textit{princeps}: "Indeed, the . . . king Reccared . . . took part in the holy council, renewing for our times the example of the illustrious emperor Constantine the Great, who illuminated the holy Nicene synod by his presence . . ."\textsuperscript{128}

Related to this is the idea which John develops of a universal catholic peace now available to all. John praises the action of the king at the Third Council of Toledo in cutting off the heresy of Arianism at its roots "so that it

\textsuperscript{127} Markus, "Chronicle and Theology," 37-39.

\textsuperscript{128} \textit{Chronicle} of John of Biclar, 590, 1.
should not sprout further after the catholic peace had been
given to the churches everywhere."¹²⁹ The drive toward
universalism would be reinforced during John's time by a new
authority of the church in Spain, through which the bishops
participated in civil affairs and supported royal
legislation at the church councils. Unity of the church was
a powerful force which in turn favored unity of law;
Reccared issued several laws binding upon all the
inhabitants of the kingdom, and the universal character of
the provisions coming from the general councils began to
have the character of territorial law. The church's
disciplinary powers also became universal, through sanctions
which could now be applied to all, "for the church saw, not
Goths and Romans, but Catholics alone."¹³⁰ John's evident
knowledge of law would be useful to both the monarchy and
the church under these new circumstances.

Prosper in his time had seen a church still spiritually
centered in Rome, but this is not true for John. Although
he records the elections of popes (Benedict in 573, Pelagius
in 576, and Gregory the Great in 587), his real interest
with regard to church affairs is clearly concentrated on
Spain. He notes the names of churchmen around the peninsula
who are famous or distinguished, such as Donatus, considered
a worker of miracles, and Masona of Mérida (a Goth),

¹²⁹ Chronicle of John of Biclar, 590, 1.

¹³⁰ King, Law and Society, 16-17.
distinguished in the orthodox doctrine. Several other Spanish bishops or priests are noted, always added at the last of an entry for the year, almost as though John was at a later date reviewing church records and remembering churchmen who stood out from the rest over the course of time.

John's concentration on the Spanish church rather than on Rome seems to reflect the attitude prevalent in Spain at this time. There is evidence that after the conversion in 589, relations between the church in Spain and Rome were quite distant. Gregory the Great's extensive correspondence contains only ten letters concerned with Spanish affairs, yet this is more than all of his successors combined between 604 and 711. A remoteness from Rome continued into the seventh century, during which an isolationist spirit seemed to prevail within the Spanish church. (In a more general sense, East and West have been seen as beginning "to close in on themselves" by the late sixth century, although the Byzantine government still thought of the Western provinces as part of the Empire.)

Within John's Chronicle can be found a number of themes which connect him to the thought of his time. The sixth

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131 Chronicle of John of Biclar, 571, 4; 573, 8.

132 King, Law and Society, 122-23.

century was a period of extensive missionary activity among the pagan tribes on the borders of the Empire, and under Justinian this was pursued with much zeal, resulting in the conversion of peoples of the Caucasus, North Africa, and the Nile valley.\textsuperscript{134} Two African tribes, the Garamantes and the Macuritas, were among these converts, and John notes this fact in an entry for the year 569.\textsuperscript{135} The West also witnessed much missionary activity during this same period; the Celtic missionary Columba left Ireland in 565 to establish a monastery on the island of Iona to instruct the Picts; Columbanus also left Ireland, traveling to Gaul where he established three monasteries in Burgundy, including Luxeuil, and later founded Bobbio in Italy; and Gregory the Great, pope from 589 to 603, sent the bishop Augustine to England in 596 to convert the English.\textsuperscript{136}

Another theme apparent throughout John's Chronicle is a sense of the power of the Visigothic kingship, which beginning with Leovigild reflected a Byzantine style of rulership. Byzantine society "sought, celebrated and glorified military success," and from this came the imperial

\textsuperscript{134} Campos, Juan de Biclar, 111, citing A. A. Vasiliev, Histoire de l'Empire byzantine I, 203, who makes use of the Christian Topography or Cosmography by Cosmas Indico pleustes.

\textsuperscript{135} Chronicle of John of Biclar, 569, 1, 3.

model of early medieval kingship.¹³⁷ According to one recent view, the West discovered a substitute for Roman rule in "the local dominant tribe, Franks or Visigoths, as God's instrument," and the tribal ruler thereby assumed "the aura of Constantine, a little dimmed perhaps but still visible." The process was in a sense a transferring of "the Providential mantle with which Eusebius had invested Rome and Constantine to lesser shoulders," and in Spain Leovigild provided the leadership needed for this role.¹³⁸

The Roman myth of eternal victory becomes part of a triumphal style of Visigothic rulership in another writer's view; court ceremonial and royal appearances at church councils contributed to an imperial kingship developing under Leovigild and continued by the kings who followed him.¹³⁹ There are problems with interpretations of John's Chronicle, however, which rely on these indications of Byzantine influence in Visigothic society, for while there is evidence for such influence within the kingdom, it becomes more difficult to determine to what extent John was directly influenced by Byzantine ideas in writing his Chronicle. His portrayal of Leovigild is one area where


¹³⁹ McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, 3-5, 301-03.
arguments can be made for influences other than Byzantine in his writing.

John clearly approves of Leovigild's rulership as he follows the king's actions in the Chronicle. Leovigild "astonishingly brings back to its former borders the province of the Goths," campaigning against the Byzantines, restoring the cities of Medina-Sidonia, Córdoba, and Seville to Gothic authority, and overthrowing usurpers in the mountainous areas. 140 Hints of royal "triumphs" in the Roman sense appear in the Chronicle after Leovigild's successful attacks on the Byzantine possessions in the Southeast, and again when Reccared is victorious over the Franks and "returns a victor to his father and country." 141

But there is a difference between Leovigild's leadership and that of the Roman emperors, and John brings this out clearly in the Chronicle. Leovigild is a fighting king, leading his men in person (or so it appears in John's account) in contrast to the Roman emperors, who wage their wars through their generals. 142 John chooses verbs which leave no doubt about Leovigild's vigor: the king lays waste

140 Chronicle of John of Biclar, 569, 4; 570, 2; 571, 3; 572, 2; 584, 2; 573, 5; 574, 2; 575, 2.

141 Chronicle of John of Biclar, 570, 2; 585, 4; McCormick, Eternal Victory, 306.

142 Sabine MacCormack points out that the Eastern emperors rarely left Constantinople in the fifth and sixth centuries; Justinian did not travel in the empire and fought only one campaign, against the Huns in 559. MacCormack, Art and Ceremony, 73, n. 289, 306.
(vastat), reclaims (revocat), drives back (redigit), destroys (interficit), penetrates (pervadit), seizes (occupat), throws into confusion (conturbat), besieges (obsidet) and captures (capit). The emperors, in contrast, are portrayed as being remote from the fighting in their wars. Justin wages war against the Avars through Tiberius, commander of the guards; Tiberius after becoming emperor sends Justinian, master of the army in the East, to fight against the Persians; Maurice, master of the army in the East, launches another war against the Persians in 580 on behalf of the emperor. John makes the contrast particularly obvious in his entries for the year 585: in the first entry, the emperor Maurice brings war against the Persians through his generals (per duces); the next entry finds Leovigild ravaging in Galicia, capturing the king, Audeca, and depriving him of his kingship, and restoring Gothic authority over the Suevic people and their wealth.\footnote{Chronicle of John of Biclar, 570, 3; 575, 1; 580, 1; 585, 1, 2.}

Two entries, for the years 578 and 579, give information about Leovigild that shows him in a different light than that of an imperial ruler. John presents him in simple human terms in the period following his campaigns, for after years of destroying tyrants and overcoming usurpers, Leovigild, "having chosen to rest, settles with his own people." The next year, the king's "quiet peace" is disturbed by the rebellion of his older son, Hermenegild.
It is a portrayal that captures the human element without a need to embellish or deify; it cannot be seen as Byzantine but rather as a clear recounting of a dilemma of leadership.

John's Chronicle has been used by several writers to support ideas about John or about the nature of society in early medieval Spain. One Spanish writer believes that John as a Goth gives a new perspective to the history of Visigothic Spain, in contrast to the "purely Roman spirits" of his predecessors, Orosius and Idatius.\textsuperscript{144} Another writer has seen John's work as the first to express the idea of a Spanish nation, "the first European nation to be born," following the rapid unification of Spain by Leovigild and the conversion of Reccared and "his nation" to catholicism.

In this view, a national history makes its appearance in the traditional body of John's Chronicle, "in the literary genre of a universal and Christian history."\textsuperscript{145} However, it can be argued as reasonably that if John portrays a "nation" at all in his Chronicle, it is more an entity formed by a powerful monarch than a national community with any awareness of itself as such. It is difficult to imagine that the Cantabrians, the Sueves, and the inhabitants of the areas newly-restored to Gothic control described by John had any sense of being bound together as a nation.

\textsuperscript{144} Alvarez, "La Crónica de Juan Biclarense," 7.

Hillgarth's study presents another point of view, in which John's writing is considered to be a sort of propagandizing or glorification of the kingship. This view holds that as historians, John of Biclar, and later Isidore and Julian of Toledo, were all "doing essentially the same work as architects, sculptors, jewellers and designers of coins in Visigothic Spain. They were promoting the glory of the Visigothic Crown, using Byzantine models to assist in the creation of what was almost a rival Byzantium in the West." Hillgarth emphasizes the "essentially militant and propagandistic nature" of the three historians. In particular, John's Chronicle is seen as portraying "the Byzantinisation of the Visigothic realm stage by stage."¹⁴⁶

This is a perplexing interpretation, for evidence present in Visigothic society itself cannot be seen as the sole determinant of a writer's point of view, and Hillgarth's position is difficult to support from evidence in the Chronicle itself. There is no sense of John as a worshipful subject as he discusses Leovigild's actions; he admires but he does not write a panegyric in any sense. His later treatment of Reccared, on the other hand, reflects Eusebian ideas of a political ruler who assumes religious leadership as well. John presumably wrote the material concerning the Third Council when he was already a bishop, and his use of Byzantine themes can be seen as a reflection

¹⁴⁶ Hillgarth, Visigothic Spain, III, 266-67, 308-09.
of the orthodox church's celebration of its new unity, but not as the only approach he uses in the remainder of his Chronicle.

In the end John's particular vision seems to go beyond all attempts at interpretation, perhaps because he cannot be adequately understood from our limited sources. His years in Constantinople exposed him to Byzantine ideas; he praises Reccared as the new Constantine and sees the unified church in Spain as part of a universal authority. Yet his appreciation of Leovigild's leadership seems somehow more Germanic, an acknowledgement of the king as a warrior, chosen by his nobles and frequently challenged by them. (There are problems, however, in trying to distinguish the 'Roman' and 'Germanic' character of certain institutions and customs of the Germanic kingdoms, as one writer has pointed out. He gives as an example the controversy over the character of the spear as a symbol of authority.147) In sum, John seems to escape easy definitions of his thought and work.

Regardless then of themes or points of view which can be found in John's Chronicle, it remains the work of one whose particular vision cannot be entirely understood. John's writing reflects the combined influences of his Gothic birth, his education and experience in the East, and his position in the catholic church, and of these we have

147 McCormick, Eternal Victory, 6; n. 17, 6.
very little knowledge. He left a record of these twenty-three years in order "to transmit in brief style to posterity those occurrences of our time which should be known . . ." He has provided a useful source for our understanding of both the period in which he lived and the beginnings of the new order which would follow.

The following translation is based upon the Latin version edited by Theodor Mommsen and found in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica.* Alternate manuscript readings have been used in two instances (in 579, 3 and 580, 2) which are noted in the text. Question marks appearing beside the dates have been retained from Mommsen's edition as an indication of the inaccuracy which began with Victor, whose addition of imperial regnal dates in 563 did not coincide precisely with dates of consulships and indictions. In preparing the translation from the Latin, the Spanish translation of John of Biclar's *Chronicle* by Pablo Alvarez Rubiano was consulted, as was a study by Julio Campos Ruiz, *Juan de Biclar, Obispo de Gerona: Su Vida y Su Obra.* Professor Helen Eaker of Rice University helped with a number of difficult passages.

The various Latin manuscripts of the *Chronicle* of John of Biclar come from two eighth-century copies of the

148 MGH, AA, 11, 211-20.
original. The first of these is known as the Soriensis, dating from around 743, and named for a certain Don Jorge de Veteta, cavallero de Soria. The second manuscript is known as the Alcobacense and is thought to date from the end of the eighth century. Detailed discussions of the sources are available in Campos's study and in the introduction to Mommsen's edition. Campos also provides complete historical and philological commentaries.

Notes have been added to this translation of the Chronicle in order to clarify or draw attention to events of particular interest, as well as to present some of the theories of various scholars who have made use of the Chronicle. The events which John included, as well as his style in narration, make it possible to read his Chronicle both for its historical value and for an indication of what he thought important in his world, both East and West.

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149 Campos, Juan de Biclar, 43; Mommsen, MGH, AA, 11, 165.

CHAPTER 3

Translation of Chronicle

Huc usque Victor Tunnennensis ecclesiae episcopus Africanae provinciae ordinem praecedentium digestit annorum: nos quae consecuta sunt adicere curavimus.

Victor, bishop of the church at Tunnuna in the province of Africa, set out the order of the preceding years up to this point; we have taken care to add those which followed.

Post Eusebium Caesariensis ecclesiae episcopum, Hieronymum toto orbe notum presbyterum nec non et Prosperum virum religiosum atque Victorem Tunnennensis ecclesiae Africanae episcopum, qui historiam omnium paene gentium summa brevitate et diligentia contextere visi sunt et usque ad nostram aetatem congeriem perduxerunt annorum et quae acta sunt in mundo ad agnitionem nostram transmiserunt, nos ergo in adiutorio domini nostri Iesu Christi quae temporibus nostris acta sunt ex parte quod oculata fide pervidimus et ex parte quae ex relatu fidelium didicimus, studuimus ad posteros notescenda brevi stilo transmittere.

After Eusebius, bishop of the church of Caesarea, Jerome, priest known throughout the world, and certainly the religious man Prosper, and Victor, bishop of the church of Tunnuna in Africa, who seemed to construct with utmost brevity and diligence the history of almost all peoples and brought the accumulation of years up to our time and transmitted for our knowledge things which happened in the world, we therefore with the help of our lord Jesus Christ have desired to transmit in brief style to posterity those
occurrences of our time which should be known, which we have perceived partly by reliance on our own eyes, and which we have learned partly from accounts of the faithful.

1. Quinta decima ergo indictione, ut dictum est, Iustiniano mortuo Iustinus iunior nepos eius Romanorum efficitur imperator.

[567?] 2. Romanorum LIII regnavit IVSTINVS iunior annis XI. qui Iustinus anno primo regni sui ea, quae contra synodum Calchedonensem fuerant commentata, destruxit symbolumque sanctorum CL patrum Constanti-nopolis congregatorum et in synodo Calchedonensi laudabiler receptum in omni catholica ecclesia a populo concinendum intromisit, priusquam dominica dicatur oratio.

3. Armeniorum gens et Hiberorum, qui a praedicatione apostolorum Christi susceperunt fidem, dum a Cosdroe Persarum imperatore ad culturas idolorum compellerentur, renuentes tam impiam iussionem Romanis se cum provinciis suis tradiderunt: quae res inter Romanos et Persas pacis foedera rumpit.

[567?] 1. Therefore in the fifteenth indiction,\(^ {151}\) as was said, at the death of Justinian his nephew Justin the younger is made emperor of the Romans.

2. Justin the younger ruled eleven years as the fifty-third of the Romans. In the first year of his reign, Justin destroyed those things which had been considered against the synod of Chalcedon,\(^ {152}\) and admitted the symbol\(^ {153}\)

\(^{151}\) A fifteen-year cycle for taxation, originated by Constantine, and used as a chronological unit in some ancient and medieval systems.

\(^{152}\) Synod of Chalcedon, convened in 451 by the emperor Marcian; the belief held by Pope Leo, supporting the orthodox doctrine that Christ combined a divine and human nature, prevailed over the Eastern (monophysite) view that Christ had a single nature; the controversy continued for many years. (New Catholic Encyclopedia 3, 423.)
of the one hundred fifty holy fathers assembled at Constantinople, which having also been commendably received at the synod of Chalcedon must be said in unison by the people in every catholic church before the Lord's prayer is said.

3. The Armenian and Hiberian peoples, who from the preaching of the apostles had taken up the faith of Christ, when compelled by Chosroes, emperor of the Persians, to worship idols, refused such an impious command and surrendered themselves with their provinces to the Romans, an action which broke the treaties of peace between the Romans and the Persians.

[568?] ANNO II MEMORATI PRINCIPIS.

1. In regia urbe Aetherius et Addaeus patricii, dum Iustino mortem vellent veneno potius quam ferro per medicos inferre, detecti capitali sententia puniri iussi prior a feris devoratus, secundus incendio concrematus interiit.

2. Iustinus filius Germani patricii consobrinus Iustini imperatoris factione Sophiae Augustae in Alexandria occiditur.

3. His temporibus154 AthanaILDus rex Gothorum in Hispania vitae finem suscepit et Livva pro eo in regnum provehitur.

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153 Symbol apparently refers to the creed affirming the orthodox doctrine, which Justin II ordered to be recited during the mass. (Herrin, The Formation of Christendom, n. 41, 231.)

154 A later addition appears in the manuscript here, added perhaps by Maximus, bishop of Saragossa, concerning attacks by Athanagild on Seville and Cordoba (Chronicon Caesaraugustanorum Reliquiae, MGH, AA, 11, 223).
YEAR II OF THE SAID EMPEROR

1. In the royal city the patricians Aetherius and Addaeus, when they wished to cause death to Justin by poison through physicians rather than by the sword, after they were detected and ordered to be punished by capital sentence, the first perished devoured by wild beasts, the second burned by fire.

2. Justin, son of the patrician Germanus and cousin of the emperor Justin, is killed by a faction of the Empress Sophia in Alexandria.

3. At this time Athanagild, king of the Goths, suffered the end of life in Spain, and Liuva is advanced in his place in the kingdom.

ANNO III IVSTINI IMP.

1. Garamantes per legatos paci Romanae rei publicae et fidei Christianae sociari desiderantes poscunt, qui statim utrumque inpetrant.

2. Theodorus praefectus Africae a Mauris interfectus est.

3. Maccurritarum gens his temporibus Christi fidem recepit.


YEAR III OF THE EMPEROR JUSTIN.
1. The Garamantes,\textsuperscript{155} desiring to be united to the peace of the Roman government and to the Christian faith, ask this through ambassadors and immediately obtain both.

2. Theodorus, prefect of Africa, is killed by Moors.

3. The Macuritas people\textsuperscript{156} received the faith of Christ at this time.

4. In the third year of this reign, Leovigild, brother of Liuva the king (who was still living) is placed in authority in nearer Spain, marries Gosuintha, widow of Athanagild, and astonishingly brings back to its former borders the province of the Goths, which had hitherto been diminished because of the rebellion of various people.

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\textbf{ANNO IV IVSTINI IMP. QVI EST LEOVEGILDI REGIS SECVNDVS ANNVS.}

1. Theoctistus magister militum provinciae Africanae a Mauris bello superatus interiit.

2. Leovegilus rex loca Bastetaniae et Malacitanae urbis repulsionis militibus vastat et victor solio reddit.

3. Iustinus imp. per Tiberium excubitorum comitem in Thracia bellum genti Avarum ingerit et victor Tiberius Constantinopolim redit.

4. In provincia Gallaeciae Miro post

\textsuperscript{155} The Garamantes were a north African tribe.

\textsuperscript{156} The Macuritas were also an African people, possibly from the region of the upper Nile (Campos, Juan de Biclar, 111, noting that John of Biclar never gives geographical facts, assuming them to be known by his contemporaries, but the History of John of Ephesus provides information in this case); in 573 John records the visit of envoys from the Macuritas to Constantinople.
Theudemirum Suevorum rex efficitur.

[570?] YEAR IV OF THE EMPEROR JUSTIN WHICH IS THE SECOND YEAR OF KING LEOVIGILD.

1. Theoctistus, master of the army in the province of Africa, perishes after being overcome in war by the Moors.

2. Leovigild the king ravages the regions of Bastetania and of the city of Málaga after driving back the soldiers, and returns a victor to the throne.

3. The emperor Justin through Tiberius, commander of the guards, wages war against the nation of the Avars in Thrace, and Tiberius returns a victor to Constantinople.

4. In the province of Galicia Miro becomes king of the Sueves after Theudemirus.

[571?] ANNO V IVSTINI IMP. QVI EST III LEOVEGILDI REGIS ANNVS.

1. Justinus imperator Armeniam et Hiberiam repulsis Persis Romanas provincias facit et bellum Persarum imperator per duces parat.

2. Amabilis magister militiae Africae a Mauris occiditur.

3. Leovegildus rex Asidonam fortissimam civitatem proditioe cuiusdam Framidani nocte occupat et militibus interfectis memoratam urbem ad Gothorum revocat iura.

4. Donatus abbas monasterii Servitani mirabilium operator clarus habetur.

157 The soldiers here are Byzantine forces brought in originally by Athanagild against Agila in 551, who were occupying Bastetania (an area of Baetica), Málaga, Medina Sidonia, and other regions in south-eastern Spain. (Campos, Juan de Biclar, 113; Collins, Early, 43-44.)
YEAR V OF THE EMPEROR JUSTIN WHICH IS
YEAR III OF KING LEOVIGILD.

1. The emperor Justin after rejecting the Persians\textsuperscript{158} makes Armenia and Hiberia\textsuperscript{159} Roman provinces, and the emperor of the Persians prepares war through his generals.

2. Amabilis, master of the army in Africa, is killed by the Moors.

3. Leovigild the king occupies by night the very strong city of Assidonia through the betrayal of a certain Framdaneus,\textsuperscript{160} and after destroying the army reclaims the above-named city to the jurisdiction of the Goths.

4. Donatus,\textsuperscript{161} abbot of the monastery at Servitanum, is famous for being a worker of miracles.

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ANNO VI IVSTINI IMP. QUI EST LEOVIGILDI REGIS III ANNVS.

1. Gepidorum regnum finem accepit, qui a Longobardis proelio superati: Cuniemundus rex campo occubuit et thesauri eius per Trasaricum

\textsuperscript{158} Campos, citing Menander's account, understands this to be rejection in a diplomatic sense rather than military, in which the emperor Justin refuses Persian demands for restoring the Armenians and Hiberians to Persian control. (Campos, \textit{Juan de Biclar}, 114.)

\textsuperscript{159} Hiberia (Iberia, but not the Spanish Iberia) was a country of Asia, bounded on the west by Colchis, on the east by Albania, on the south by Armenia, and on the north by the Caucasus Mountains. It is now the area called Georgia. (Harper's Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities, New York: American Book Company, 1896.)

\textsuperscript{160} Asidona (Medina Sidonia) was the most westerly of the Byzantine fortresses and was betrayed to Leovigild by one of its Gothic inhabitants. (Collins, \textit{Early Medieval Spain}, 44.)

\textsuperscript{161} Donatus was one of the African monks who fled to Spain, probably to escape Justinian's religious policies. (Collins, \textit{Early}, 80-81.)
Arrianae sectae episcopum et Reptilane
Cunienundi nepotem Justino imperatori Constantinopolim ad integrum perducti sunt.

2. Leovegildus rex Cordubam civitatem diu
Gothis rebellem nocte occupat et caesis hostibus
propriam facit multasque urbes et castella
interfecta rusticorum multitudine in Gothorum
dominium revocat.


4. Domninus Helenensis ecclesiae episcopus clarus
habetur.

[572?] YEAR VI OF THE EMPEROR JUSTIN WHICH IS
YEAR III OF KING LEOVIGILD.

1. The kingdom of the Gepids suffers its end after
being overcome by the Lombards in battle; Cunimund the king
lies dead on the field and his treasure is brought intact to
the emperor Justin at Constantinople by Trasaricus, bishop
of the Arian sect, and Reptilanis, grandson of Cunimund.

2. Leovigild the king seizes by night the city of
Córdoba, long rebellious against the Goths, and after
vanquishing the enemy makes the city his own and reclaims
into Gothic authority many cities and fortresses which had
been destroyed by a multitude of the countrymen.

3. Miro, king of the Sueves, sets in motion a war
against the Runcones.163

162 Ad integrum was a term used in notarial instruments during the
Middle Ages (Campos, Juan de Biclar, 163); it also appears in Benedict’s
Rule, c. 18 (J. F. Niermeyer, Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus, Leiden:
Brill, 1976).
163 The Runcones probably occupied an area south of Salamanca.
(Campos, Juan de Biclar, 116.)
4. Domninus is a famous bishop of the church at Helna.

[573?] ANNO VII IVSTINI IMP. QVI EST LEOVEGILDI V ANNVS.

1. Aluinus Longobardorum rex factione coniugis suae a suis nocte interficitur: thesauri vero eius cum ipsa regina in rei publicae Romanae dicionem obveniunt et Longobardi sine rege et thesauro remansere.

2. His diebus Livva rex vitae finem accepit et Hispania omnis Galliaque Narbonensis in regno et potestate Leovegildi concurrir.

3. Iustinus imperator gravi infirmitate concutitur, quae infirmitas ab aliis quidem cerebri motio, ab aliis daemonum vexatio putabatur.

4. In regia urbe mortalitas inguinalis plagae exardescit, in qua multa milia hominum vidimus defecisse.

5. Leovegildus rex Sabarium ingressus Sappos vastat et provinciam ipsam in suam redigit dicionem duosque filios suos ex amissa coniuge Hermenegildum et Reccaredum consortes regni facit.


7. Post Iohannem Romanae ecclesiae Benedictus ordinatur episcopus: praefuit annis IIII.

8. Mauzona Emeritensis ecclesiae episcopus in nostro dogmate clarus habetur.

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164 In regno et potestate Leovegildi concurrir: This construction is characteristic of usages found in the writings of classical Roman jurisconsults such as Gaius and Ulpian (Campos, Juan de Bical, 164).

[573?] YEAR VII OF THE EMPEROR JUSTIN WHICH IS YEAR V OF LEOVIGILD.

1. Alboin, king of the Lombards, is killed at night by his men through a plot of his wife;¹⁶⁵ but in fact his treasure along with the queen herself come by chance under the authority of the Roman government, and the Lombards remain without king and treasure.

2. In these days Liuva the king suffers the end of life and all of Spain and Gallia Narbonensis comes together under the kingship and power of Leovigild.

3. The emperor Justin is stricken with a grave infirmity, which was thought by some to be in fact a disturbance of the brain, and by others a troubling by demons.

4. In the royal city a mortal disease of inguinal plague breaks out, in which we know that many thousands of people perished.

5. After entering Sabaria,¹⁶⁶ Leovigild the king

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¹⁶⁵ Alboin's wife was Rosamund, daughter of the Gepid king Cunimund who was slain in battle by Alboin; the story is that she has Alboin assassinated for forcing her to drink from her late father's skull. William L. Langer, An Encyclopedia of World History, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980), 164.

¹⁶⁶ The location of Sabaria is uncertain, but thought to be west of Zamora. (Campos, Juan de Biclar, 118-119.)
ravages the Sabi and brings back the province itself to his authority, and he makes Hermenegild and Recarred, his sons from his deceased wife, co-heirs of the kingdom.

6. Ambassadors of the Macuritas people come to Constantinople offering ivory and a giraffe to the emperor Justin as gifts to him when they establish friendship with the Romans.

7. After John, Benedict is ordained bishop of the church at Rome; he presides for four years.

8. MASONA, bishop of the church at Mérida, is regarded as distinguished in our doctrine.

[574?] ANNO VIII IVSTINI, QVI EST LEOVEGILDI VI ANNVS.

1. Persi cum Romanis pacis foederam rumpunt et congressione facta Daras civitatem fortissimam bello superant et caesa multitudine militum Romanorum memoratam urbem ingressi depopulati sunt.

2. His diebus Leovegildus rex Cantabriam ingressus provinciae pervasores interficit, Amaian occupat, opes eorum pervadit et provinciam in suam revocat dicionem.

3. Iustinus imperator Tiberium, quem superius excubitorum comitem diximus, Caesarem facit et non multo post imperiali fastigio provehit et rei publicae principem designat.

4. Huius Tiberii Caesaris die prima in regia urbe inguinalis plaga sedata est.

167 MASONA is the only other Visigothic orthodox bishop known for this period besides John of Biclar.
YEAR VIII OF JUSTIN, WHICH IS
YEAR VI OF LEOVIGILD.

1. The Persians break the peace treaties with the
Romans, and after launching an attack they overcome the very
strong city of Dara in battle, and having killed a great
number of the Roman soldiers, they enter the said city and
ravage it.

2. In these days Leovigild the king, after entering
Cantabria,\(^{168}\) destroys the usurpers in the province, occupies
Amaia, seizing their wealth, and recalls the province into
his authority.

3. The emperor Justin makes Tiberius (whom we
mentioned earlier as commander of the guard) a Caesar and
not much later promotes him to the imperial dignity and
designates him emperor of the republic.

4. On the first day of this Caesar Tiberius, the
inguinal plague is allayed in the royal city.

ANNO VIII IVSTINI IMPERATORIS, QVI EST
LEOVEGILDI REGIS VII ANNVS.

1. Cosdroes Persarum imperator cum nimia
multitudine exercitus ad vastandos Romanorum
terminos promovet. cui Iustinianus dux Romanae
militiae et magister militum Orientis a Tiberio
destinatus bellum parat et in campis, qui inter
Daras et Nizivios ponuntur, fortì pugna congressus,

\(^{168}\) A mountainous region in northern Spain, whose peoples had absorbed
little of Roman civilization and who retained some features of their Iron
Age culture until as late as the eighth century. (Collins, Early Medieval
Spain, 7.)
habens secum gentes fortissimas, quae barbaro
sermone Herinam nuncupantur, memoratum imperatorem
bello superat. quo cum suo exercitu in fugam verso
castra eius pervadit et provinciae Persidae fines
victor Justinianus vastat exuviasque eorum pro
triumpho Constantinopolim dirigit, XXIII elephanto
inter cetera, qui magnum spectaculum Romanis in
regia urbe exhibuerunt. praeda vero de manubii
Romanorum Persarum multitudo ad nimiam utilitatem
nummo publico venundatae sunt.

2. Leovegildus rex Aregenses montes ingreditur,
Aspidium loci seniorem cum uxore et filiis captivos
ducit opesque eius et loca in suam redivit
potestatem.

3. Aramundarus Sarracenorum rex Constantinopolim
venit et cum stemmate suo Tiberio principi cum donis
barbariae occurrit. qui a Tiberio benigno susceps
et donis optimis adornatus ad patriam abire permissus
est.

[575?]

YEAR VIII OF THE EMPEROR JUSTIN, WHICH IS
YEAR VII OF KING LEOVIGILD.

1. Chosroes, emperor of the Persians, advances with a
great multitude of troops to destroy the boundaries of the
Romans. Justinian, appointed by Tiberius as commander of
the Roman soldiers and master of the army in the East,
prepares war against Chosroes, and after fighting a vigorous
battle in the plains which lie between Dara and Nisibis,
having with him the most fearless tribes, which in the
barbarian discourse are called Herina, he overcomes the
above-mentioned emperor in battle. When Chosroes's army had
turned to flight, the victor Justinian seized their camp and
laid waste the territory of the Persian provinces and
twenty-four elephants among the rest, which produced a great spectacle for the Romans in the royal city. In fact as a prize of war of the Romans, a great number of Persians were put up for sale to the great advantage of the public treasury.

2. Leovigild the king goes into the Aregenses mountains,\textsuperscript{170} leads out captive Aspidius, the eminent person of the region, with his wife and children and brings back their wealth and territories into his power.

3. Aramundarus, king of the Saracens, comes to Constantinople and with his relatives meets with the emperor Tiberius with gifts from his country. After being received courteously by Tiberius and provided with excellent gifts, he is allowed to depart for his native land.

[576?] ANNO X IVSTINI IMP. QVI EST LEOVEGILDI REGIS VIII ANNVS.

1. Baduarius gener Iustini principis in Italia a Longobardis proelio vincitur et non multo plus post inibi vitae finem accipit.

2. Romanus filius Anagasti Patricii magister militiae gentis Suanorum regem vivum cepit, quem cum suo thesauro, uxore et filiis Constantinopolim adducit et provinciam eius in Romanorum dominium redigit.

3. Leovegildus rex in Gallaecia Suevorum fines

\textsuperscript{170} Northern mountains on the borders of Galicia.
conturbat\textsuperscript{171} et a rege Mirone per legatos rogatus pacem eis pro parvo tempore tribuit.

4. Sclavini in Thracia multas urbes Romanorum pervadunt, quas depopulatas vacuas reliquere.

5. Avaræs litora maris captiose obsident et navibus litora Thraciae navigantibus satis infesti sunt.

6. Post Benedictum Romanæ ecclesiae Pelagius iunior ordinatur episcopus: præest ann. XI.

[576?] YEAR X OF THE EMPEROR JUSTIN WHICH IS YEAR VIII OF KING LEOVIGILD.

1. Baduarius\textsuperscript{172} the son-in-law of the emperor Justin is conquered in battle by the Lombards in Italy, and not much later suffers the end of his life there.

2. Romanus, son of the patrician Anagastus and master of the army, captures alive the king of the nation of Suania,\textsuperscript{173} whom with his treasure, wife and sons he brings to Constantinople and forces his province back into Roman authority.

3. Leovigild the king throws into confusion the borders of the Sueves in Galicia, and after a request by Miro the king through legates, he concedes peace to them for

\textsuperscript{171} \textit{Conturbat}: a military term denoting a disordering or dispersing, but used by John of Biclar in the stronger sense of devastating, similar to usage in jurisprudence, where it occurs in the writings of Ulpian (Campos, \textit{Juan de Biclar}, 167-68).

\textsuperscript{172} Baduarius was possibly the exarch in Ravenna; John of Biclar is the only source for this event. (Campos, \textit{Juan de Biclar}, 124.)

\textsuperscript{173} Believed to be the Colquida of the ancient Greeks (Campos, \textit{Juan de Biclar}, 124).
a short time.

4. The Sclavaniōns spread through many Roman cities in Thrace, which they leave ravaged and deserted.

5. The Avars deceitfully blockade the coastline and are a great threat to ships sailing along the coast of Thrace.

6. After Benedict, Pelagius the younger is ordained bishop of the church at Rome; he presides for eleven years.

[577?] 1. Anno XI regni sui Iustinus diem clausit extremum, et Tiberius singulare obtinuit imperium.

2. Romanorum LIV TIBERIVS regnat annis VI.

ANNO ERGO I IMPERII TIBERII, QVI EST LEOVEGILDII IX REGNI ANNVS.

1. Avarae Thracias vastant et regiam urbem a muro longo obsident.

2. Leovegildus Rex Orospedam ingreditur et civitates atque castella eiusdem provinciae occupat et suam provinciam facit. et non multo post inibi rustici rebellantes a Gothis opprimuntur et post haec integra a Gothis possidetur Orospeda.

[577?] 1. In the eleventh year of his reign, Justin ended his last day, and Tiberius possessed the power alone.

2. Tiberius, fifty-fourth of the Romans, rules for six years.

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174 Sclavania was a province of Germania, an area east of the Rhine. (Oxford Classical Dictionary.)
THEREFORE YEAR I OF THE EMPEROR TIBERIUS
WHICH IS YEAR IX OF THE REIGN OF LEOVIGILD

1. The Avars ravage Thrace and besiege the royal city
at the long wall.  

2. Leovigild the king advances into Orospeda\footnote{An unknown location, possibly in Galicia, and evidently the last area to be restored by Leovigild to Visigothic authority. \cite{Collins}} and
occupies the cities and fortresses of that province and
makes the province his own. And not much later the
countrymen rebelling there are overpowered by the Goths, and
after this Orospeda is occupied in its entirety by the
Goths.

\[578?\]

ANNO II TIBERII IMPERATORIS, QVI EST
LEOVEGILDI REGIS ANNVS X.

1. Gennadius magister militum in Africa
Mauros vastat, Garmulem fortissimum regem,
qui iam tres duces superius nominatos Romani
exercitus interfecerat, bello superat et ipsum
regem gladio interficit.

2. Tiberius Mauricium excubitorum comitem
magistrum militiae Orientis instituit et ad
repugnandum Persis direxit.

3. Romani contra Longobardos in Italia
lacrimabile bellum gerunt.

4. Leovegildus rex extinctis undique
tyrannis et pervasoribus Hispaniae superatis
sortitus requiem propria cum plebe resedit et
civitatem in Celtiberia ex nomine filii

\footnote{Built by the emperor Anastasius earlier in the century; Evagrius
in his \textit{History} described the wall, which crossed the isthmus, as making
Constantinople an island within a peninsula. \cite{Campos}}
lacrimabile bellum gerunt.

4. Leovegildus rex extinctis undique tyrannis et pervasoribus Hispaniae superatis sortitus requiem propria cum plebe resedit et civitatem in Celtiberia ex nomine filii condidit, quae Recopolis nuncupator: quam miro opere in moenibus et suburbanis adornans privilegia populo novae urbis instituit.

5. Iohannes presbyter ecclesiae Emeritensis clarus habetur.

[578?] YEAR II OF THE EMPEROR TIBERIUS, WHICH IS YEAR X OF LEOVIGILD THE KING.

1. Gennadius, master of the army, ravages the Moors in Africa, overcomes in battle the very strong king Garmule, who had already killed three generals, named earlier, of the Roman army, and kills the king himself with his sword.

2. Tiberius appoints Maurice, commander of the guard, as master of the army in the East and sends him to fight against the Persians.

3. The Romans wage a lamentable war against the Lombards in Italy. 177

4. Leovigild the king, with the tyrants everywhere destroyed and the usurpers of Spain overcome, having chosen

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177 The emperor Tiberius was sending forces against the Lombards during this period, at the same time attempting to buy allies among them (the Lombards were still without a king after Alboin's death in 572 and were split under thirty-some dukes). War alternated with truces, and by 584, when the Franks allied with the Byzantines against the Lombards, the country had suffered considerably. (Katherine Fischer Drew, The Lombard Laws (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1973), 15: A. H. M. Jones, The Decline of the Ancient World (London: Longman, 1966), 117-118.)
to rest, settles with his own people and founds a city in Celtiberia named for his son, which is called Recopolis; providing it with marvelous workmanship in walls and suburban villas, he establishes charters for the people of the new city.

5. John is a distinguished priest of the church at Mérida.

[579?] ANNO III TIBERII IMP. QVI EST LEOVEGILDI XI ANNVS.

1. Awares a finibus Thraciae pelluntur et partes Graeciae atque Pannoniae occupant.

2. Leovegildus rex Hermenegildo filio suo filiam Sisberti regis Francorum in matrimonium tradit et provinciae partem ad regnandum tribuit.

3. Leovegildo ergo quieta pace regnante adversariorum securitatem domestica rixa conturbat. nam eodem anno filius eius Hermenegildus factione Gosuinthae reginae tyrannidem assumens in Hispali civitate rebellione facta recluditur et alias civitates atque castella secum contra patrem rebellare facit. quae causa in provincia* Hispaniae tam Gothis quam Romanis maioris exitii quam adversariorum infestatio fuit.

(*Alternate reading used: in provincia for provincia.)


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178 Archaeological studies suggest that the site of this town is Zorita de los Canes, now in open country some thirty miles east of Madrid. (Collins, *Early Medieval Spain*, 45 and n. 29, 287.)
YEAR III OF THE EMPEROR TIBERIUS WHICH IS YEAR XI OF LEOVIGILD.

1. The Avars are driven from the borders of Thrace and occupy parts of Greece and Pannonia.

2. Leovigild the king marries to his son Hermenegild the daughter of Sisbert, king of the Franks, and bestows a part of the province for him to rule.

3. Then, with Leovigild ruling in quiet peace, a domestic quarrel disturbs his security from his opponents. For in the same year his son Hermenegild is revealed assuming a tyranny with the help of a faction of the queen Gosuintha, having created a rebellion in the city of Seville, and he causes other cities and fortresses to rebel with him against his father. This was the cause in the

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179 Ingundis, a Catholic, daughter of King Sigibert I of Austrasia and sister of the Austrasian king Childebert II (575-596), and granddaughter of Gosuintha, Leovigild's second wife, who according to the account given by Gregory of Tours tries to force the girl to convert to Arianism. (Thompson, Goths, 64-65; Collins, Early Medieval Spain, 45-46.)

180 Presumably Leovigild gave Hermenegild the province of Baetica, bordering on the Byzantine possessions, an indication of his confidence in his son's loyalty, in Thompson's view. Hermenegild and Ingundis settled in Seville. (Thompson, Goths, 65.)

181 Hermenegild, although a catholic at his death, had evidently not yet converted when he rebelled against his father; he was probably viewed by contemporaries as "never more than a failed usurper and certainly no martyr." (Collins, Early Medieval Spain, 46-47.) Isidore calls Hermenegild a tyrant: Leovigild "then besieged his son Hermenegild, who was acting as a tyrant in his empire..." (Isidore of Seville's History of the Goths, Vandals, and Suevi, tr. Guido Donini and Gordon B. Ford, Jr., 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 23.

182 Collins thinks it possible that Gosuintha urged Hermenegild to rebel so that an independent kingdom might be established for the heirs of Athanagild, her first husband. (Collins, Early Medieval Spain, 46.)
1. Mauricius magister militum Orientis contra Persas bellum movet et repulsa Persarum multitudine in Oriente hiemavit.

2. Leovigildus rex in urbem Toletanam synodum episcoporum sectae Arrianae congregat et antiquam haeresem novello errore emendet, dicens de Romana religione a nostra catholica fide venientes non debere baptizari, sed tantummodo per manus impositionem et communionis praeeptione ablui* et gloriam patri per filium in spiritu sancto dari.* per hanc ergo seductionem plurimi nostrorum cupiditate potius quam impulsione in Arrianum dogma declineant.

(Alternate readings: ablui for pollui; dari for dare.)

[580?]

YEAR IIII OF TIBERIUS, WHICH IS YEAR XII OF LEOVIGILD.

1. Maurice, master of the army in the East, sets in motion a war against the Persians, and after a multitude of the Persians have been driven back, he passes the winter in the East.

2. Leovigild the king assembles a synod\(^{183}\) of bishops of the Arian sect in the city of Toledo and corrects the ancient heresy with a new error, saying that concerning the Roman religion, those coming from our catholic faith should

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\(^{183}\) Thompson's theory about this synod is that Leovigild was trying to reach a compromise between Arian Visigoths and Catholic Visigoths (rather than convert Catholic Romans) and thus keep the Goths "a united entity over against the Romans." He was also concerned to keep Hermenegild's soldiers (nearly all of them Goths) from becoming Catholics. (Thompson, Goths in Spain, 107-108.)
not be baptized, but only purified by the laying on of the hands and the precept of communion, and also be given the glory of the father through the son in the holy spirit. Consequently through this deception, many of our people through desire rather than through force turn toward the Arian doctrine.

[581?] ANNO V TIBERII, QVI EST LEOVEGILDI XIII ANNVS.

1. Longobardi in Italia regem sibi ex suo genere eligunt vocabulo Autharic, cuius tempore et milites Romani omnino sunt caesi et terminos Italiae Longobardi sibi occupant.

2. Sclavinorum gens Illyricum et Thracias vastat.

3. Leovegildus rex partem Vasconiae occupat et civitatem, quae Victoriacum nuncupatur, condidit.

4. Tiberius imperator Mauricio magistro militum Orientis filiam suam in coniugium tradit.

[581?] YEAR V OF TIBERIUS, WHICH IS YEAR XIII OF LEOVIGILD.

1. The Lombards in Italy elect a king for themselves from their own people with the name Authari, in whose time not only were the Roman soldiers utterly destroyed but also the Lombards take possession of the boundaries of Italy for themselves.

2. The people of the Sclavians ravage Illyrica and Thrace.
not only were the Roman soldiers utterly destroyed but also the Lombards take possession of the boundaries of Italy for themselves.

2. The people of the Scslavians ravage Illyrica and Thrace.

3. Leovigild the king seizes part of Vasconia and founds a city, which is called Victoriaco (now Vitoria).

4. The emperor Tiberius gives his daughter in marriage to Maurice, master of the army in the East.

[582?] ANNO VI TIBERII, QVI EST LEOVEGILDI XIII ANNVS.

1. Tiberius vitae terminum dedit et Mauricius pro eo Romanorum imperator efficitur.

2. Romanorum LV MAVRICIVS [regnat annos XX].

3. Leovegildus rex exercitum ad expugnandum tyrannum filium colligit.

[582?] YEAR VI OF TIBERIUS, WHICH IS YEAR XIII OF LEOVIGILD.

1. Tiberius suffers the end of of his life and Maurice is made emperor of the Romans in his place.

2. MAURICE is fifty-fifth (emperor) of the Romans. [he reigns for twenty years].

3. Leovigild the king gathers an army for the purpose of attacking his son the tyrant.
ANNO ERGO I MAVRICII IMPERATORIS, QVI EST LEOVEGILDI REGIS XV ANNVS.

Leovegildus rex civitatem Hispalensem congregato exercitu obsidet et rebellem filium gravi obsidione concludit, in cuius solacium Miro Suevorum rex ad expugnandum Hispalim advenit ibique diem clausit extremum. cui Eboricus filius in provincia Gallaeciae in regnum succedit. interea Leovegildus rex supra dictam civitatem nunc fame, nunc ferro, nunc Baetis conclusione omnino conturbat.

YEAR I THEREFORE OF THE EMPEROR MAURICE, WHICH IS YEAR XV OF KING LEOVIGILD.

1. Leovegild the king after gathering an army besieges the city of Seville and by a severe siege confines his rebellious son, to whose relief Miro, king of the Sueves, approaches for the purpose of storming Seville, and there concludes his final day. His son Eboric succeeds into the kingship in the province of Galicia. Meanwhile Leovegild the king throws into general confusion the above-named city, at one time by famine, at another by the sword, at another by shutting up the river Baetis (Guadalquivir).

ANNO II MAVRICII IMP., QVI EST LEOVEGILDI XVI ANNVS.

1. Leovegildus muros Italicae antiquae civitatis restaurat, quae res maximum impedimentum Hispalensi populo exhibuit.

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184 It is unclear from the Latin whether Miro comes to help Hermenegild or Leovigild; Gregory of Tours says he is there for the former; among modern authors, Collins says Leovigild (Early Medieval Spain, 48); Campos says Hermenegild (Juan de Bisclav, 138).
memoratum filium in Cordubensi urbe comprehendit
et regno privatum in exilium Valentiam mittit.

4. Mauricius imperator contra Longobardos
Francos per conductelam\textsuperscript{185} movet, quae res
utrique genti non parva intulit damna.

5. Eutropius abbas monasterii Servitani
discipulus sancti Donati clarus habetur.

[584?] YEAR II OF THE EMPEROR MAURICE, WHICH IS
YEAR XVI OF LEOVIGILD.

1. Leovigild rebuilds the walls of the ancient city of
Italica, which accomplishment causes a very great obstacle
to the people of Seville.\textsuperscript{186}

2. At this time Audeca assumes rulership of the Sueves
in Galicia with tyranny and marries Sisegutia, widow of Miro
the king. He deprives Eboric of the kingship and makes him
a monk in a monastery.

3. Leovigild the king, while his son Hermenegild was
moving toward the Romans (Byzantines),\textsuperscript{187} enters Seville

\textsuperscript{185} \textit{Conductelam}: this word appears only in this passage in John's
\textit{Chronicle} and in one law of the \textit{Codex Theodosianus} (Campos, \textit{Juan de
Biclar}, 171); \textit{De Vectigalibus et Commissis, Theodosiani Libri XVI cum
Constitutionibus Sirmondianis}, ed. Th. Mommsen, 2 vols. (Berlin: Weidmann,
1905), v. 1 part 2, 191-92.

\textsuperscript{186} Italica was within sight of Seville, some five miles north-west
of the city, on the right bank of the Guadalquivir, and was renowned as
the birthplace of the emperors Trajan and Hadrian. Its capture caused
great hardship to the besieged citizens of Seville. (Thompson, \textit{Goths}, 71-
72.)

\textsuperscript{187} Hermenegild seems to have asked the Byzantines for help during
the siege of Seville; Leovigild paid the Byzantines no less than 30,000
solidi to withdraw their support, according to Gregory of Tours.
Hermenegild risked a battle against his father outside Seville, and his
allies having deserted him, he tried to make his way to the Byzantine
province. (Thompson, \textit{Goths}, 72.)
3. Leovigild the king, while his son Hermenegild was moving toward the Romans (Byzantines), enters Seville fighting, seizes the cities and castles which his son had occupied, and not much later apprehends the above-mentioned son in the city of Córdoba and sends him into exile to Valencia deprived of royal authority.

4. The emperor Maurice moves against the Lombards and Franks by means of a mercenary army, an action which causes not insignificant losses to both peoples.

5. Eutropius is famous as abbot of the monastery at Servitanum and follower of the holy Donatus.

[585?] ANNO III MAVRICII, QVI EST LEOVEGILDI XVII ANNVS.

1. Mauricius per duces bellum Persis infert.

2. Leovegildus rex Gallaecias vastat, Audcanem regem comprehensum regno privat, Suevorum gentem, thesaurum et patriam in suam redigit potestatem et Gothorum provinciam facit.

3. Hermenegildus in urbe Tarraconensi a Sisberto interficitur.

4. Franci Galliam Narbonensem occupare cupientes cum exercitu ingressi. in quorum congressionem Leovegildus Reccaredum filium obviam mittens et Francorum est ab eo repulsus exercitus et provincia Galliae ab eorum est

---

Hermenegild seems to have asked the Byzantines for help during the siege of Seville; Leovigild paid the Byzantines no less than 30,000 solidi to withdraw their support, according to Gregory of Tours. Hermenegild risked a battle against his father outside Seville, and his allies having deserted him, he tried to make his way to the Byzantine province. (Thompson, Goths, 72.)
infestatione liberata. castra vero duo cum nimia hominum multitudine unum pace, alium bello occupat. castrum vero qui Hodierno vocatur tutissimus valde in ripa Rhodani fluminis ponitur, quod Reccaredus rex fortissima pugna aggressus obtinuit et victor ad patrem patriamque redit.

5. Audeca vero regno privatus tondetur et honore presbyteri post regnum honoratus non dubium quod in Eborico regis filio rege suo fecerat, patitur et exilio Pacensi urbe relegatur.

6. Malaricus in Gallaecia tyrannidem assumens quasi regnare vult, qui statim a ducibus Leovegildi regis oppressus comprehenditur et Leovegildo vinctus praesentatur.\(^{188}\)

7. Leander Hispalensis ecclesiae episcopus clarus habetur.

\(^{188}\) Praesentatur: with the sense of "to place oneself in the presence of," appears in juridical usage in the Codex Theodosianus (Campos, Juan de Biclar, 171).
against their gathering, and not only is the army of the Franks driven back by him, but also the province of Gaul is liberated from their invasion. And in fact he seizes two forts with a very great number of men, one peacefully, the other by battle. Indeed, the fort which is called Hodierno is placed extremely securely on the bank of the Rhone river, and the leader Reccared gets possession of it after attacking in a most mighty battle, and he returns a victor to his father and country.

5. Now Audeca after being deprived of royal authority is tonsured\(^{189}\) and honored with priestly honor after his rule, no doubt as he had done during his kingship to Eboric, the son of the king; he submits to this and is sent away into exile to the city of Pax Iulia (Pax Augusta), now Beja.

6. Malacric, assuming a tyranny in Galicia as if he wishes to rule, having been overwhelmed immediately by the generals of Leovigild the king, is seized and placed in the presence of Leovigild in fetters.

7. Leander\(^{190}\) is famous as bishop of the church at

\(^{189}\) Tonsuring made one ineligible for the throne, as did decalvation, a shaving or perhaps more mutilating process which apparently removed scalp as well as hair. (King, *Law and Society*, n. 6, 46; n. 5, 90.)

\(^{190}\) Leander, bishop of Seville and the older brother of Isidore, spent several years in Constantinople, where he became acquainted with Gregory, the future pope, in 579; Isidore says that Leander influenced Hermenegild to convert to the orthodox faith. (Collins, *Early*, 47.) Thompson sees much greater significance in Leander's influence: "If the conversion of the Visigoths to Catholicism could be ascribed to any one man, that man was Leander." (Thompson, *Goths*, 65.)
2. Hoc anno Leovegildus Rex diem clausit extremum et filius eius Reccaredus cum tranquillitate regni eius sumit sceptrum.

[586?] YEAR III OF THE EMPEROR MAURICE, WHICH IS YEAR XVIII OF KING LEOVIGILD.

1. Authari, king of the Lombards, after fighting a battle with the Romans¹⁹¹ and killing a multitude of Roman soldiers, is victorious and takes possession of territories in Italy.

2. In this year King Leovigild ends his last day and his son Reccared takes up the rule of his kingdom with tranquillity.

[587?] ANNO V MAVRICII PRINCIPIS ROMANORVM, QVI EST RECCAREDI REGIS PRIMVS FELICITER ANNVS.

1. Mauricius Theodosium filium suum ex filia Tiberi imperatoris natum Caesarem facit.

2. Pelagio iuniori mortuo Romanae ecclesiae Gregorius in episcopatum succedit. [praeeest annis XV].

3. Romani per Francorum adiutorium Longobardos vastant et provinciae Italie partem in suam redigunt potestatem.

4. Sisbertus interfector Hermenegildi morte turpissima perimutur.

¹⁹¹ Districts still under Byzantine control at this time included enclaves surrounding Ravenna, Rome (where the popes actually exercised almost complete control), Genoa, Naples and Sicily; these areas were insecure, however, and communications between them intermittent. (Jones, Decline, 118; Hoyt and Chodorow, Europe in the Middle Ages, 76-77.)
5. Reccaredus primo regni sui anno mense X catholicus deo iuvante efficitur et sacerdotes sectae Arrianae sapienti colloquio aggressus ratione potius quam imperio converti ad catholicam fidem facit gentemque omnium Gothorum et Suevorum ad unitatem et pacem revocat Christianae ecclesiae. sectae Arrianae gratia divina in dogmate veniunt Christiano.

6. Desiderius Francorum dux Gothis satis infestus a ducibus Reccaredi regis superatur et caesa Francorum multitudine campo moritur.

7. Reccaredus rex aliena a praecessorisibus directa et fisco sociata\textsuperscript{192} placabiliter restituit. ecclesiarum et Monasteriorum conditor et ditator efficitur.

[587?] YEAR V OF MAURICE, WHICH IS HAPPILY THE FIRST YEAR OF KING RECCARED.

1. Maurice makes his son Theodosius, born of the daughter of the emperor Tiberius, a Caesar.

2. At the death of Pelagius the younger, Gregory\textsuperscript{193} succeeds in the episcopacy of the church at Rome. (He presides for fifteen years.)

3. The Romans by means of Frankish confederates\textsuperscript{194} ravage the Lombards and bring back part of the province of

\textsuperscript{192} Fisco sociata: a juridical formula appearing in the \textit{Codex Theodosianus}, indicating property to be included in the royal treasury (Campos, \textit{Juan de Biclar}, 173); a formula which occurred occasionally in ancient charters and deeds (Du Cange, \textit{Glossarium Mediae}).

\textsuperscript{193} Pope Gregory I (the Great) (590-604).

\textsuperscript{194} The Franks, under their king Childibert, were induced by the emperor Maurice to invade northern Italy in 584, 585. 588 and 590. (Jones, \textit{Decline}, 118.)
Italy into their authority.

4. Sisbert, the slayer of Hermenegild, is killed by the basest of deaths.

5. Reccared in the first year of his reign, in the tenth month, becomes a catholic with the help of God, and having approached the priests of the Arian sect with judicious discourse, he causes them to be converted to the catholic faith by reason rather than by force, and he recalls the people of all of the Goths and Sueves to the unity and peace of the Christian church. The Arian sects by divine grace enter within the Christian doctrine.

6. Desiderius, general of the Franks, being very hostile to the Goths, is overcome by the dukes of Reccared the king and dies on the field, after a multitude of the Franks have been slain.

7. Reccared the king restores conciliatorily those things belonging to others which had been seized by his predecessors and joined to the royal treasury. He becomes a founder and enricher of churches and monasteries.195

[588?] ANNO VI MAVRICII, QVI EST RECCAREDI II ANNVS.

1. Quidam ex Arrianis, id est Siuma episcopus et Segga, cum quibusdam tyrannidem assumere cupientes deteguntur; convicti Siuma exilio truditur et Segga manibus amputatis in Gallaeicam exul transmittetur.

195 John of Biclar's monastery was perhaps one of these.
2. Mauricius Theodosium filium, quem supra Caesaren diximus, Romanorum imperatorem facit.

[588?] YEAR VI OF MAURICE, WHICH IS YEAR II OF RECCARED.

1. Certain of the Arians, that is the bishop Sunna and Segga, with certain others, are revealed to be desirous of assuming tyranny; after both are convicted, Sunna is driven into exile, and Segga having had his hands amputated\textsuperscript{196} is sent into exile in Galicia.

2. Maurice appoints his son Theodosius, whom we said previously was Caesar, to be emperor of the Romans.

[589?] ANNO VII MAVRICII, QVI EST RECCAREDI REGIS TERTIVS ANNVS.

1. Uldida episcopus cum Gosuintha regina insidiantes Reccaredo manifestantur et fidei catholicae communionem, quam sub specie Christiana quasi sumentes proiciunt, publicantur.\textsuperscript{197} quod malum in cognitionem hominum deductum Uldida exilio condemnatur, Gosuintha vero catholicis semper infesta

\textsuperscript{196} Mutilating punishments and amputations (along with decalvation) were penalties thought to originate from the Roman \textit{infamia}, but King sees them as "an understandable amalgam of Roman and Germanic traditions." Such punishments were used against major criminals including killers, sorcerers, thieves, or poisoners, and also in cases of falsification of royal documents, coinage offences, or treason (as in this instance). (King, \textit{Law and Society}, 89 and n. 6; 90 and n. 1). McCormick notes that Visigothic rulers adopted punishments from those traditionally inflicted on enemies of the imperial throne (McCormick, \textit{Eternal Victory}, 303).

\textsuperscript{197} \textit{Publicantur}: a judicial meaning in this passage, with the sense of being accused or proscribed; appears in the \textit{Codex Theodosianus} (Campos, \textit{Juan de Biclay}, 174); Niermeyer, \textit{Mediae Latinitatis}, gives as one definition, "to denounce."
vitae tunc terminum dedit.

2. Francorum exercitus a Gonteramno rege transmissus Bosone duce in Galliam Narbonensem obveniunt et iuxta Carccassonomensem urbem castra metati sunt. cui Claudius Lusitaniae dux a Reccaredo rege directus obviam inibi occurrit. tunc congressione facta Franci in fugam vertuntur et direpta castra Francorum et exercitus a Gothis caeditur. in hoc ergo certamine gratia divina et fides catholica, quam Reccaredus rex cum Gothis fideliter adeptus est, esse cognoscitur operata, quoniam non est difficile deo nostro, si in paucis, una in multis detur victoria. nam Claudius dux vix cum CCC viris LX ferme milia Francorum noscitur infugassem et maximam eorum partem gladio trucidasse. non inmerito deus laudatur temporibus nostris in hoc proelio esse operatus. qui similiter ante multa temporum spatia per manum ducis Gedeonis in CCC viris multa milia Madianitarum dei populo infestantium noscitur extinxisse.

[589?] YEAR VII OF MAURICE, WHICH IS THE THIRD YEAR OF KING RECCARED.

1. The bishop Uldida with the queen Gosintha\(^{198}\) are shown to be plotting against Reccared, and they are accused of renouncing the communion of the catholic faith, which they had assumed under the pretense of being Christian. After this evil is brought to the knowledge of men, Uldida is condemned to exile, but Gosintha having always attacked catholics suffers the end of her life at that time.

\(^{198}\) Gosintha, widow of Athanagild and Leovigild's second wife, had earlier been an apparent instigator of Hermenegild's rebellion in 579 (see n. 28). She was by her first husband the mother of the Austrasian queen-dowager Brunehildis and grandmother of both Childebert II and Ingundis, wife of Hermenegild. (Collins, Early, 45-46.)
shown to be plotting against Reccared, and they are accused of renouncing the communion of the catholic faith, which they had assumed under the pretense of being Christian. After this evil is brought to the knowledge of men, Uldida is condemned to exile, but Gosuintha having always attacked catholics suffers the end of her life at that time.

2. The army of the Franks, sent by king Guntramn, goes to meet the general Boso in Gallia Narbonensis, and they lay out their camp next to the city of Carcassone. Claudius, duke of Lusitania, having been sent by Reccared the king, goes up against them there. After a battle is fought, the Franks are put to flight, and the camp of the Franks is plundered and their army is cut to pieces by the Goths. Therefore in this battle divine grace and the catholic faith, which the king Reccared had faithfully attained with the Goths, are seen to have been at work, since it is not difficult for our God that victory be given even with few together among many. For the duke Claudius with scarcely three hundred men is known to have put to flight almost sixty thousand Franks and to have slaughtered a great part of them with the sword. Not undeservedly is God praised in our times for having been at work in this battle. He similarly a long time before is known to have extinguished through the hand of the leader Gideon with three hundred men

wife of Hermenegild. (Collins, Early, 45-46.)
[590?] ANNO VIII MAVRICII IMPERATORIS, QVI EST RECCAREDI REGIS IIII ANNVS.

1. Sancta synodus episcoporum totius Hispaniae, Galliae et Gallaeciae in urbe Toletana praeccepto principis Reccaredi congregatur episcoporum numero LXXII, in qua synodo intererat memoratus christianissimus Reccaredus, ordinem conversionis suae et omnium sacerdotum vel gentis Gothicae confessionem tomo scriptam manu sua episcopis porrígens et omnia, quae ad professionem fidei orthodoxae pertinent, innotescens, cuius tomi ordinem decrevit sancta episcoporum synodus canoniciis applicare monimentis. summa tamen synodalis negotii penes sanctum Leandrum Hispalensis ecclesiae episcopum et beatissimum Eutropium monasterii Servitani abbatem fuit. memoratus vero Reccaredus rex, ut diximus, sancto intererat concilio, renovans temporibus nostris antiquum principem Constantinum Magnum sanctam synodum Nicaenam sua illustrasse praesentia, nec non et Marcianum Christianissimum imperatorem, cuius instantia\textsuperscript{200} Calchedonensis synodi decreta firmata sunt: siguidem in Nicaena urbe haeresis Arriana et initiun sumpsit et damnationem meruit radicibus non amputatis, Calchedona vero Nestorius et Eutyches una cum Dioscoro ipsorum patrono et haeresibus propriis condemnati sunt. in praesenti vero sancta Toletana synodo Arrii perfidia post longas catholicorum neces atque innocentium strages ita radicitus amputata insistentis principe memorato Reccarredo rege, ut ulterior non pullulet catholica ubique pace data ecclesiis. haec ergo nefanda haeresis, secundum quod scriptum est: 'de domo domini exiet temptatio', ab Alexandrina ecclesia detegente sancto Alexandro eiusdem urbis episcopo per Arrium presbyterum inolevit, qui in Nicaena synodo CCCXVIII episcoporum iudicio vicesimo imperii Constantinii senioris anno synodaliter damnationem cum proprio errore suscepit. quae post haec non solum Orientis et Occidentis partem maculavit, sed etiam meridianam et septentrionis plagam et

\textsuperscript{200} \textit{Instantia}: can have a sense of "diligent and assiduous persistence" as used in jurisprudence; found in the writings of the classical jurists Papinianus and Scaevola (Campos, \textit{Juan de Biclar}, 176).
ipsas insulas sua perfidia irretivit. a vicesimo ergo imperii Constantini principis anno, quo tempore haeresis Arriana initium sumpsit, usque in octavum annum Maurici principis Romanorum, qui est Reccaredi quartus regni annus, anni sunt CCLXXX, quibus ecclesia catholica huius haeresis infestatione laboravit; sed favente domino vicit, quoniam fundata est supra petram.

2. In his ergo temporibus, quibus omnipotens deus prostrato veteranose haeresis veneno pacem suae restituit ecclesiae, imperator Persarum Christi suscepit fidem et pacem cum Mauricio imperatore firmavit.

3. Reccaredo ergo orthodoxo quieta pace regnante domesticae insidiae praetenduntur. nam quidam ex cubiculo eius, etiam provinciae dux nomine Argimundus adversus Reccaredum regem tyrannidem assumere cupiens, ita ut, si posset, eum et regno privaret et vita. sed nefandi eius consilii detecta machinatione comprehensus et in vinculis ferreis reductus habita discussione socii eius impiam machinationem confessi condigna sunt ultione interfeci. ipse autem Argimundus, qui regnum assumere cupiebat, primum verberibus interrogatus, deinde turpiter decalvatus, post haec dextra amputata exemplum omnibus in Toletana urbe asino sedens pompizando dedit et docuit famulos dominis non esse superbos.

Colliguntur omnes anni
ab Adam usque ad diluvium anni ⅩⅠ hundred and XXXII.
a diluvio usque ad Abraham anni DCCCXLII.
ab Abraham vero usque ad nativitatem domini nostri Iesu Christi secundum carnem anni ⅩⅤ.
fiunt simul anni ⅩⅧ hundred and eighty.
porro a nativitate domini nostri Iesu Christi usque in annum VIII Mauricii principis Romanorum anni DXCII.
fiunt simul omnes anni ab Adam usque in annum VIII Mauricii principis Romanorum, qui est IIII annus Reccaredi Gothorum regis, anni ⅩⅠ hundred and CXXI.

[590?] YEAR VIII OF THE EMPEROR MAURICE, WHICH IS YEAR IIII OF KING RECCARED.
1. The holy synod of the bishops of all of Spain, Gaul, and Galicia is assembled in the city of Toledo by order of the ruler Reccared, with the number of bishops being seventy-two, at which synod the renowned and most Christian Reccared was present, extending to the bishops the arrangement of his conversion and the confession of all of the priests, or rather of the Gothic people, written in a book by his own hand, and making known all of those things which pertain to the profession of the orthodox faith, in which book the holy synod of bishops decreed the order to attach to the canonical records. The main part of synodal business, however, rested with the holy Leander, bishop of the church at Seville, and the most blessed Eutropius, abbot of the monastery at Servitanum. Indeed, the above-mentioned king Reccared, as we said, took part in the holy council, renewing for our times the example of the illustrious emperor Constantine the Great, who illuminated the holy Nicene synod by his presence, and certainly the most Christian emperor Marcian, by whose persistence the decrees of the synod of Chalcedon were strengthened; inasmuch as in the city of Nicaea the Arian sect both took up its beginning and earned condemnation, since its roots were not cut off, indeed at Chalcedon Nestorius and Eutyches together with their patron Dioscoro were also censured by their own sects. Indeed, at the present holy synod of Toledo the treachery of the Arians, after protracted murders of catholics and
massacres of the innocent, was accordingly cut off at the roots at the insistence of the above-mentioned ruler, the king Reccared, so that it should not sprout further after the catholic peace had been given to the churches everywhere. Therefore this impious heresy, following what was written: "from the house of the Lord shall temptation issue," grew from the church at Alexandria, as revealed by the holy Alexander, bishop of this same city, by means of the priest Arius, who at the Nicene synod in the judgment of the three hundred eighteen bishops received synodal condemnation resulting from his own error, in the twentieth year of the emperor Constantine the great. This heresy after these events defiled not only part of the East and West, but also entangled both the southerly and northerly regions and the islands themselves with its treachery. Therefore from the twentieth year of the rule of Constantine, at which time the Arian heresy took up its beginning, until the eighth year of Maurice, emperor of the Romans, which is the fourth year of the reign of Reccared, the years number two hundred eighty, during which the catholic church has been troubled with the infestation of this heresy; but by the favor of the Lord it has triumphed, since it was founded upon a rock.

2. Therefore in these times, during which almighty God restored peace to his church, which had been prostrated by the poison of the ancient heresy, the emperor of the
Persians took up the faith of Christ and strengthened the peace with the emperor Maurice.

3. Then while the orthodox Reccared was ruling in quiet peace, a household plot was alleged. For a certain member of his bed-chamber, actually a duke of the province named Argimundus, was desirous of taking up a tyranny against Reccared the king so that if he were able, he might deprive him of both kingdom and life. But after the treachery of his abominable plan was detected, he was seized and brought back in iron chains, and after an inquiry had been held and his associates had confessed the impious treachery, they were killed as a most worthy revenge. However Argimundus himself, who desired to take the kingship, after first being questioned while flogged, then shamefully shaved (or scalped), after this with his right hand cut off served as an example to everyone in the city of Toledo while led in procession seated on an ass, and taught servants not to be arrogant to their masters.

201 John was mistaken in this, although "there was some foundation for John's optimism," as Hillgarth notes; the Persian emperor while in exile was receiving instruction from the Bishop of Melitene in Armenia, but according to Pope Gregory (Registram iii, written in 593) the effort toward conversion failed. (Hillgarth, Visigothic Spain II, 491 and n. 37, 492.) Campos adds that Chosroes II had married a Christian and pretended conversion in order to gain the emperor Maurice's help in putting down a revolt (Campos, Juan de Biclar, 149).

202 Decalvation, in addition to its use in the punishment of major criminals, is thought also to have been a particular disgrace among the Germanic people, who considered hair a mark of free or noble birth. (Drew, Lombard Laws, n. 8, 252.)
Collected are all of the years
  from Adam up to the flood, 2,242 years.
  from the flood up to Abraham, 942 years.
  from Abraham indeed up to the nativity of our
    lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh,
    2,015 years.
They become together 5,199 years.
Next from the nativity of our lord Jesus Christ up to
  year VIII of Maurice, emperor of the Romans,
  is 592 years.
They become all together from Adam up to year VIII of
  Maurice, emperor of the Romans, which is year
  IIII of Reccared, king of the Goths, 5,791
  years.
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2. SECONDARY SOURCES


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W. S. Teuffels Geschichte Der Römischen Literatur. Sechste Auflage. Unter Mitwirkung von Erich Klostermann,


APPENDIX

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Bishoprics of the Visigothic Kingdom c. 600AD

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- Episcopal Sees
- Other major towns
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Map 5

Centers of Ecclesiastical Culture in Seventh-Century Spain