To my family and especially Sam
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<tr>
<td>Ep.</td>
<td>Epistle or Letter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not. Dig. Or.</td>
<td>Notitia Dignitatum in Partibus Occidentis</td>
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<td>PL</td>
<td>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina</td>
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Although prior to the legalization of Christianity in the early fourth century the influence of bishops was limited to guiding congregations on the margins of Roman society, by the early Middle Ages they acted as judges and diplomats, controlled large plots of land and managed substantial numbers of slaves. However, without an understanding of the social processes by which their influence expanded, we have an incomplete view of the nature and extent of episcopal leadership and how it affected the rest of the population. By employing an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates both written and material evidence, this dissertation puts the bishops of the northwestern Iberian Peninsula in their larger social contexts to explain how their roles within their local communities expanded. In particular, the archaeological evidence is used to create microhistories of specific clerical groups in the fourth and fifth centuries, which reveal the dynamic social processes by which episcopal influence developed and the inter-regional networks bishops used to establish connections between northwestern Hispania and the Mediterranean Basin. Through these case studies, this project serves to elucidate the scope and character of the episcopate’s function in late antique society, which lay the foundation for ecclesiastical developments in subsequent periods.
CHAPTER 1
THE CLERICAL COMMUNITIES OF GALLECIA

Introduction

In 460, a band of Sueves captured the bishop Hydatius and held him hostage for several months in his church in Gallaecia, the former Roman province in northwestern Hispania, modern Spain and Portugal (Figure 1-1).1 The Sueves were a Germanic group who had entered Hispania and settled in Gallaecia several decades before and Hydatius had acted as an ambassador between them and Roman authorities on numerous occasions.2 The bishop’s captivity in 460 served as a tool for negotiating a peace agreement. Prior to the legalization of Christianity in the early fourth century, the influence of bishops was limited to guiding congregations on the margins of Roman society, but by the early Middle Ages ecclesiastical leaders such as Hydatius had become important not only as spiritual advisors, but also as judges, diplomats and civic protectors.3

The fourth and fifth centuries were critical for the transformation of the episcopate. This period coincided with the political, social and economic changes that came with the collapse of the Western Roman Empire. Yet, the expansion of ecclesiastical influence was not a simple consequence of the legalization of Christianity and a power vacuum caused by the withdrawal of

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2 It is difficult to determine from the extant sources the exact origins of the Sueves. Ancient Roman sources used the identifier to refer to a non-Roman group from the eastern end of the upper Danube. However, it is not clear if the Sueves in Gallaecia represented continuity with this group, since the term “Sueve” does not appear in sources after the first century until it is used in the context of their movement into the Iberian Peninsula in the early fifth. The group that settled in Gallaecia may have been associated with the group called “Quadi” in fourth-century Roman sources. See Michael Kulikowski, “Suevi in Gallaecia, an introduction,” in Culture and Society in Medieval Galicia, a Cultural Crossroads at the Edge of Europe, ed. and trans. James D’Emilio (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 134; P.C. Díaz Martínez, El Reino Suevo (411-585) (Tres Cantos: Akal, 2011), 70-72.

imperial authority. Instead the development of the episcopate was the result of dynamic processes, which are best understood through close contextual and diachronic analysis. Accordingly, this dissertation focuses on the specific clerical community in Gallaecia in the fourth and fifth centuries. By employing an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates both written and material evidence, this investigation puts bishops such as Hydatius in their larger contexts to explain how their roles within their local communities expanded.

The significance of this project is evident in the way the Iberian Peninsula’s Roman and medieval past continues to be used in modern debates about Spanish and Portuguese cultural and political identity. Starting in the late fourth century, bishops from Gallaecia were censured for their alleged participation in a unique heresy, Priscillianism. Moreover, while the majority of Hispania was incorporated into the Visigothic Kingdom after the withdrawal of Roman authority in the fifth century, Gallaecia came to be ruled by the Sueves. Details such as these typically have been used to support arguments for historical exceptionalism, inform debates about regional and national allegiances, and have caused Gallaecia to be largely neglected in discussions of the late Roman and early medieval periods in Europe. This dissertation challenges this view of Gallaecia as unusual or marginal. Close readings of the available texts and analysis of new and existing archaeological evidence confirm that Gallaecia was part of larger social, political, religious and economic networks.

**Methodological and Theoretical Approaches to Community and Society**

Historians and archaeologists today commonly accept that the best way to understand the late Roman and early medieval period is in the context of particular historical circumstances and

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5 Díaz Martínez, *El Reino Suevo*. 
regional varieties. Accordingly, this dissertation focuses on the northwestern region of modern Spain and Portugal. In the late third century, the emperor Diocletian initiated a re-organization of the Roman Empire and the creation of new provinces, including Gallaecia, which had previously been part Tarraconensis (Figure 1-1). In 409, various tribes entered the Spanish peninsula, one of which, the Sueves, eventually set up a kingdom in roughly what was once Gallaecia. In geographical terms, then, the region under investigation will roughly correspond to the Roman province of Gallaecia and later the Suevic Kingdom, which consists of northern Portugal and, in Spain, modern Galicia, Asturias, León, Zamora and western Cantabria, Palencia and Valladolid. In most basic terms, the eastern border of the area under study will be the modern city of Santander and the southern border will be the mouth of the Duero River in Porto, Portugal.

Before moving on, it is useful to define my use of the terms community and society. There are many areas in which these two concepts overlap, but in general they refer to distinct types of relationships. Society and the social realm will denote the more institutional types of interactions that people had and the systems that facilitated them. All the men, women and children living in Gallaecia in the fourth and fifth centuries were part of a larger social system regardless of their status or personal and familiar loyalties. Therefore, to explain my use of the term society a third concept, the social system, must be introduced. Following Anthony Giddens, I treat the social system as one that is structured by rules and resources, but also assume that the structure and the actors are dual parts of it. In other words, all persons involved are aware of their

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6 For example, Rapp, 10-11; Clifford Ando, “Decline, Fall, and Transformation,” Journal of Late Antiquity 1 no. 1 (2008): 38; Chris Wickham suggests that pre-existing social and economic differences in various regions were more significant in terms of post-Roman trajectories than the culture and economy of incoming groups; he also warns against making broad generalizations based on analysis of one region or constructing narrowly-focused national narratives. His comprehensive study shows that although there was regional variety there were also points of comparison, but the foundation of this extensive comparative work is analysis at the regional level. Chris Wickham, Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400-800 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 4, 10-11.
actions and are situated in a time and place and draw upon rules and resources to produce and reproduce the social system. This process allows for continuity, but also for change and variety depending on the situation. For all practical purposes, this approach means that diverse members of society, regardless of rank or status, participate in the process of structuration and are therefore accessible to the historian to a certain degree in the written and the material evidence.

Although individuals have a degree of agency in creating and recreating the social system, membership in it is not necessary elective, but rather a de facto aspect of existence. My use of community, on the other hand, assumes that its members are motivated to a certain degree to preserve and sustain their relationships and the real and perceived manifestations of them. Although individuals may be inspired to participate in aspects of the social realm in order to improve personal or familiar status, there is a greater collective relevance of such acts for a community. For example, a trading community shares an interest in maintaining levels of production, access to supplies and connections to networks for distributing its goods because these things affect all of its members to some degree. This does not mean that membership in a community is necessarily discretionary, but there is a larger degree of mutual interest. Thus, although membership in a community is certainly dynamic and involves conflict, there are common goals and values among its members. Whether these commonalities owe to vocation, location or a shared cultural heritage, something connects the members. Finally, communities also have hierarchical elements, especially since they are intrinsic parts of the social system.

For the purposes of this project, the bishops are analyzed not only as members of the community of church leaders, who shared a vocation and interest in the maintenance of religious

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institutions, but also as participants in localized, geographically based communities. In both arenas they had public and private interests and thus were players in the social system. The Christian communities, comprised of clerical leaders and the laity, of the various regions under examination constitute the central focus of this study. However, not unlike today, individuals in the late Roman world could be active members of the Christian community while still identifying as participants in other groups. Éric Rebillard’s treatment of the relationship between Christians and pagans in late-antique North Africa as discursive rather than binary offers a useful perspective for approaching the multiple and overlapping groups to which the lay and leading members of the churches in Gallaecia belonged.

Several factors have guided the methodological approach to this project. First and foremost was my keen interest to avoid what Guy Halsall calls the “melting pot” approach to the study of the late Roman Empire and the early Middle Ages. There is a relative scarcity of source material for this period, which means frequently what is available is looked at in aggregate. However, this approach often compresses time and regional diversity and therefore leads to a homogenized view rather than one reflective of the dynamism behind the social and cultural changes that took place in the fourth and fifth centuries. For these reasons, this project has been organized into five vignettes or case studies focused on specific clerics and their communities at particular chronological points. This methodology allows a view of change and development over time.

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9 Rebillard, *Christians and Their Many Identities in Late Antiquity*, 1-8


continuity over time and while also avoiding essentialized and teleological conclusions based on our knowledge of the developments of the later medieval period.

In order to construct the most complete view of past social groups it is necessary to analyze all the data available without privileging a single source type.\textsuperscript{12} To be certain, the use of both material and written evidence requires a clear methodology so that one source type is not valued over the other. For example, efforts must be made to avoid using the archaeological evidence merely to support or illustrate conclusions based on the written sources. Roughly following a process proposed by Guy Halsall,\textsuperscript{13} I have evaluated the different categories of evidence—material, documentary and epigraphic—separately and according to their specific contexts. After I have made conclusions based on this level of analysis, I used these observations to arrive at higher-level explanations, which are presented here.

While the method described above coincides in some ways with processualist theory, my approach to the archeological evidence coincides most closely with post-processualism.\textsuperscript{14} This theoretical perspective assumes that material culture is actively and meaningfully constructed and used by people in their social relationships.\textsuperscript{15} Thus material culture is the product of social relations and reflects them while at the same time being an “active intervention” in their


\textsuperscript{14} Michelle Hegmon uses the term “processual-plus” to describe the growing field of archaeologists, especially in North America, who rather than associating with one particular theory draw on an array of theoretical approaches, even those that in other contexts may seem incompatible. Hegmon proposes that this more diverse approach is preferable and adds to more dynamic dialogue about the subjects being studied. For Hegmon’s proposal and her response to criticisms of it, see Michelle Hegmon, “No More Theory Wars: A Response to Moss,” \textit{American Antiquity}, 7 no. 3 (2005): 588-590; Michelle Hegmon, “Setting Theoretical Egos Aside: Issues and Theory in North American Archaeology,” \textit{American Antiquity}, 68 no. 2 (2003): 213-217, 233-234.

\textsuperscript{15} John Moreland, \textit{Archaeology, Theory, and the Middle Ages}, 3; Halsall, “Archaeology and Historiography,” 33.
creation. This is true of objects, such as jewelry and clothing, but also of buildings and settlement plans. However, in order to understand the meaning of material culture it needs to be examined within its context. John Moreland argues that scholars engaging in historical archaeology must not only utilize both written and material evidence, but also see each as more than a passive reflection of the past. Moreover, scholars must acknowledge that each participated in social practice and therefore analyze both the written and material evidence in detail and in their historical contexts. Furthermore, they must approach each evidence type critically and read them as text rather than mere sources of information. My use of case studies has allowed me to examine the evidence critically and in detail within specific contexts and periods.

Viewing settlements and buildings in their specific contexts can be difficult. The manner in which they are excavated often means that they are presented in terms of their stratigraphical levels, which tends to reduce the spaces that were inhabited by human actors into mere phases. A useful theoretical alternative is John C. Barrett’s approach to the transition from the more decentralized settlements of the British Bronze Age to the highly focused ones in the Iron Age. Barrett argues that monuments do not merely reflect certain social conditions; instead their construction gradually transforms those conditions. People encounter a place having accumulated their own biographical experiences. The place has its own traditions and conventions and those that arrive contribute their own practices. Therefore, “each generation can be regarded as having to confront its own archaeology as the material remains of its past piled up

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before it.”20 The act of inhabiting a place is meaningful to the inhabitants according to their own experiences and desires, but becomes socially meaningful when their actions are set into a widely accepted frame of reference, such as community norms or those of the social system.21 Using Barrett’s approach as a theoretical framework allows us to do more than compare end results. It helps us to see how different people confronted their landscapes and then accommodated them, thus providing insight into how inhabiting created and transformed communities. Furthermore, it facilitates analysis of each phase of a building or settlement in its own particular context.

Since this project focuses on the nature of episcopal leadership in the post-Constantine period, I have examined all of the available archaeological evidence associated with bishops, such as churches, episcopal palaces and baptisteries.22 To put bishops in their larger social context, I also analyze finds from rural and urban settlement archaeology. My use of settlement archaeology to provide social context models the work of several scholars. In her various studies of early medieval rural settlements, Helena Hamerow emphasizes the significant evidentiary value of settlement layout for understanding social relations. According to Hamerow, the spatial ordering of settlements reflects and regulates the social order.23 For example, by analyzing the arrangement of features such as buildings, public spaces, commercials centers and cemeteries of

21 Barrett, 259.
late Roman settlements, and how these things changed, we can gain insight into historical communities and the social relations within them. Although in the past, scholars concentrated on the monumental nature of these buildings, I emphasize the social groups that stimulated these dynamic processes. By incorporating those who built and served in these structures, I give much needed attention to status groups often overlooked despite their role in shaping the social system.

We also can study individual buildings to highlight aspects of social history. Kim Bowes, for example, analyzes the late Roman house as a “social artifact.”24 Her work is part of a larger historiographical trend that looks at spatial patterning and architectural features of rural villas and the urban *domus*, or house, to make conclusions about late antique society. Simon Ellis, for example, has emphasized the addition of large reception halls to late Roman houses, the use of apses and new layouts featuring complex, as well as restrictive circulation patterns. He suggests that these changes, which began to appear in the fourth century, reflect a shift in the concentration of wealth and power and a more personal and autocratic form of patronage, which was performed in the home.25 Kim Bowes, however, asserts that Ellis’ influential assessment has been too widely applied26 and argues that attention to chronology and social and cultural traditions in regard to late Roman houses suggests that these features are actually evidence of “hotspots of social competition” among newly appointed elites following the social and economic reforms of Diocletian and Constantine.27

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27 Bowes, *Houses and Society*, 17, 89.
Finally, Jean-Pierre Sodini argues that archaeology can be used for information about late antique “social structures” and the members of different status groups. Although the aristocracy is more readily detected from objects and according to Sodini, especially from houses, non-elite groups can also be discerned. Some aspects of the lives of members of the middle class, such as craftsmen and shopkeepers, are visible in the material remains of the shops, factories and workshops where they worked. Craftsmen also participated in building projects in both rural and urban settlements. Paying attention to these groups when examining shifts in urban and rural topography allows us to begin to incorporate them into our understanding of Gallaecian society in the fourth and fifth centuries. Their inclusion is essential to building an image of the larger social context of the ecclesiastical community in late antique Gallaecia. In my examination of changes to rural villas, for example, I consider not only what they meant for owners of rural estates but also for those who constructed and staffed them.

I have focused here on my approach to the archaeological evidence. This is not because my project primarily examines material sources. As stated above, my goal has been to use the textual, archaeological and epigraphic evidence without privileging one particular source type. However, as a historian writing largely for other historians, I thought it prudent to explain not only how I have read the archaeological material, but also why it is essential to a complete analysis of the period.

Below I will discuss in detail several important textual sources—the works of the fifth-century clerics Orosius of Braga and Hydatius of Aquae Flaviae—and my approach to them.

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29 Sodini, “Archaeology and Late Antique Social Structures,” 30-38.

30 Sodini, “Archaeology and Late Antique Social Structures,” 27, 42-44.
Another critical source for this period is the record of the church councils held in 
*Hispania* during the period under investigation. Frequently, scholars have relied the Spanish translation of 
these Latin documents published by José Vives in 1963, or later interpretations of the canons by 
other scholars.\(^3\) I have chosen to re-translate the councils, after an initial comparison of the 
Spanish translation to the Latin revealed discrepancies, additions and deletions, all of which 
changed the meaning. Although we often do not know more than the names of those who 
attended these councils, the canons were the result of a collaborative effort. Furthermore, while 
the results were presented in a unanimous and authoritative tone, the bishops and conciliar 
tradition emphasized the importance of debate in the process of reaching consensus.\(^4\) For these 
reasons, the canons from these councils provide important insights into the dynamics within the 
clerical community of *Hispania* and Gallaecia.\(^5\)

**Spanish and Gallaecian “Particularidades”**

The approaches outlined above primarily have been conducted outside of Spain. While an 
increasing number of Spanish and Portuguese scholars employ these more current, rigorous 
methodologies, certain interests or “particularities” have been dominant within Spanish 
historiography since at least the late nineteenth century. As will be discussed next, these 
enduring debates among scholars of Roman and Medieval Spain have created and perpetuated a 
view of the Iberian Peninsula and Gallaecia in these periods as exceptional. However, this

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\(^3\) José Vives, ed., *Concilios Visigóticos e Hispano-Romanos*.

\(^4\) In her book on Visigothic councils, Rachel Stocking argues that although there was a coherent vision of Christian 
order being maintained through religious, legal and political consensus, the Visigothic kingdom was plagued by 
rebellions, factionalism and disobedience to both secular and religious legislation throughout the seventh century. In 
his recent book on Frankish church councils, Gregory Halfond similarly reminds us that church councils were 
meetings of individuals with personal agendas and biases. See Rachel L. Stocking, *Bishops, Councils, and 

\(^5\) The specific relevance the councils have for our understanding of Gallaecia will be explained in more detail in 
Chapter 2 of this dissertation.
project aligns with historians and archaeologists in Spain and Portugal who have begun to move away from older assumptions and approaches, as well as the circular debates they have produced. By applying current approaches used to study other late and post-Roman regions of Europe, this project corrects long-held assumptions of historical exceptionalism in Gallaecia and incorporates this important region into the larger narrative of European late antique and medieval history.

Archaeological and historical writing on late Roman and medieval Spain since the late nineteenth and early twentieth century has been complicated by various factors, including intense regionalism, the legacies of the restrictive and longstanding policies of Franco, and prevailing attitudes in Spain about the Islamic period. Both before and during the Franco regime, the historiographical debates in Spain often supported political agendas, which were largely connected to a deep concern to define and understand “Spanishness” by means of study of the Middle Ages. The importance of this task and the intensity with which it was pursued has had an enduring legacy even in more recent scholarship, as historians and archaeologists continue to respond to and correct old ideas. This insular debate, which was focused on cultivating a Catholic national identity and the unique circumstances associated with centuries of Muslim rule,

contributed to an image of Spanish exceptionalism or particularism. More recent scholarship from historians and archaeologists has begun to recognize that the arguments made about the origins of the Spanish character are based on “subjective judgment” rather than evidence. My work seeks to align with these new data-driven approaches to the period.

Twentieth-century politics also affected archeological research agendas. Although Spain never officially entered the Second World War, Franco supported Hitler and the Germans, who had been his allies in the Spanish Civil War. In the 1930s and 1940s, Spanish archaeology was thus greatly influenced by German theories and practices. Therefore many of the excavations and much of the scholarship from this period reflected the cultural-historical approach that emphasized ethnicity and migration. Thomas Glick suggests that Franco willingly incorporated this “Germanisation of Spain” into his development of an ideology of “eternal Spain.” He thereby sought to demonstrate that a Spanish heritage extended back to a united and Catholic Visigothic Kingdom, which was preserved in the unconquered northern kingdom of Asturias, from which it expanded across the peninsula through the “Reconquest.” Of course, it eventually became more prudent for the Francoist regime to distance itself from this German association.


36 James L. Boone, Lost Civilization, the Contested Islamic Past in Spain and Portugal (London: Duckworth, 2009), 16.

37 See, for example, A. Chavarria Arnau, El Final De Las "villae" en "hispania" (siglos Iv-Viii) (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2007); Jorge López Quiroga, El Final de la Antigüedad en la Gallaecia: la Transformación de las Estructuras de Poblamiento entre Miño y Duero, Siglos V al X (La Coruña, Spain: Fundación Pedro Barrié de la Maza, 2004).


40 Thomas F. Glick, From Muslim Fortress to Christian Castle: Social and Cultural Change in Medieval Spain (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1995), XV.
Thereafter Spanish archaeological work emphasized what had been popular before such “philo-Germanic” studies, namely the assessment of monumental and artistic styles.41

As the field has opened, more recent scholars from a wide variety of backgrounds have worked to dispel this image and incorporate the peninsula’s history into broader discussions of Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages. Juan Antonio Quirós Castillo recently edited a collection of papers from the international conference, “Archaeology of the villages in the Early Middle Ages.” The aim of the conference and volume, which includes selections from Europe and Spain, was to encourage comparative studies and draw attention to the work being done in Spain within the field of early medieval villages.42 In another example, Michael Kulikowski’s examination of late Roman cities in Spain, has not only demonstrated the value of using both archaeological and written evidence, but also brought the Iberian Peninsula into the larger historiographical debate about decline and continuity in Late Antiquity.43

Strong regional or peripheral nationalist movements, as they are often called, in the eastern region of Catalonia, as well as in the northern Basque Country and Galicia, also have left their mark on the historiography of late Roman and medieval Spain. From at least the late nineteenth century the political stability of Spain has been threatened by regional identities, which Franco sought to suppress in order to promote the image of a cohesive Spain.44

41 Juan Antonio Quirós Castillo, ed. The Archaeology of Early Medieval Villages in Europe (Leioa, Biscay: Servicio Editorial Universidad del País Vasco, Euskal Herriko Unibertsitateko, Argitalpen Zerbitzua, 2009), 174-175.

42 Quirós Castillo, The Archaeology of Early Medieval Villages.


peripheral nationalists, however, asserted that they had never been fully incorporated into what would later become Castilian Spain. This meant that “nationalist” scholars in these regions cultivated a history and archaeological past that demonstrated their separateness from the rest of the peninsula. Particularly relevant to the project at hand, is the manner in which this approach affected how Gallaecia, and especially the Suevic kingdom, have been studied over the last two centuries. The Suevic kingdom and the scholarship that directly relates to Gallaecia will be discussed next.

Despite a fair amount of recent interest in Gallaecia, both archaeological and historical, there has been remarkably little work on the Suevic Kingdom. As Pablo C. Díaz explains in his recent monograph on the Sueves, there have been various ideological reasons for this lacuna in the historiography. Although they essentially established the first Germanic kingdom in the former Roman Empire, converted to Catholicism, and ruled the northwestern region of the peninsula for 165 years, the Sueves most frequently have been viewed as nothing more than a “false start.” We must contextualize this perception within the strong regional identities, or peripheral nationalisms, that threatened the political stability of Spain from at least the late nineteenth century. Franco suppressed these movements and worked to promote an image of a cohesive Spain. His regime encouraged studies of the Visigoths, who could be seen as the


46 James D’Emilio, ed. and trans., Culture and Society in Medieval Galicia, a Cultural Crossroads at the Edge of Europe (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 126. One area of continuing interest, which will not be discussed here, is Suevic coins and mints. They are often used to discuss the relative political power of the Sueves. Ferdando López Sánchez, for example, argues that the coins demonstrate that Sueves did not have real kings because they were connected to the Visigoths throughout the fifth century. López Sánchez, Ferdando. “Suevic Coins and Suevic Kings (418-456): The Visigothic Connection,” in Neglected Barbarians, ed. Florin Curta (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 503-538, 535-536.

47 Díaz Martínez, El Reino Suevo, 6-9.

founders of a united and Catholic “nation”, while it viewed the Sueves as a marginal phenomenon. In contrast, supporters of Galician autonomy have had an interest in demonstrating that the Sueves represented a “precedent” or “point of departure” for the common culture that survives in Galicia, thus proving that the region has long been separate from the rest of Spain.  

Pablo C. Díaz provides a valuable fresh perspective that “restores” Suevic history. He argues that the Sueves represented a political unity that was developed and recognized by outsiders, such as the Visigoths; he likewise avoids the more politically motivated perspectives found in the studies promoting a separate regional identity for Galicia. His detailed analysis of the political and administrative organization of the kingdom provides a nuanced assessment of the relationships the Suevic kings had with the local leaders of the region, including the bishops, and serves as a useful backdrop to the investigation of the various communities that lived within the kingdom.

One factor that has contributed to the image of Spanish exceptionalism and which is of particular interest for late antique Gallaecia is the controversy and seeming persistence of Priscillianism. Priscillian was a bishop from Ávila condemned to death for heresy in 385 by the imperial usurper Maximus; after his execution, many of his followers went to Gallaecia. Even as late as the seventh century, bishops expressed concern about these alleged heretics in the northwestern region. Much of the scholarship on Priscillian and those accused of adhering to


50 Díaz Martínez, El Reino Suevo, 33.


his teachings after his death has emphasized the fact that it represented a phenomenon unique to Spain. Many Spanish scholars have argued that although it represented a heretical movement, the rise of Priscillianism should be celebrated because it supported the image of exceptional religious unity associated with an essential and unique Spanish character.53 Especially since the nineteenth century, regional nationalists have embraced the peripheral image of Galicia and have used Priscillianism,54 and the fact that Gallaecia was part of the Suevic Kingdom, to demonstrate that the northwest was distinctive from the rest of the peninsula.55

More recent evaluations of Priscillianism have taken different approaches, which have downplayed such exceptionalism. Particularly convincing are the studies that look at the political and social reasons that motivated accusations of heresy in *Hispania* and in the Roman Empire more generally in the fourth and fifth centuries. For example, Victoria Escribano sees the issue of Priscillianism as a struggle for authority within the Spanish church, especially when a Spaniard, Theodosius, held imperial power.56 In the 380s, Theodosius made Nicene Christianity the official religion of the empire, in effect ending decades of debate over how the Holy Trinity should be understood. Escribano argues that Priscillian and his followers were anti-Arian rigorists who condemned bishops for changing their views in order to retain the patronage of the reigning emperor. These ultra-Nicenes demanded that those who had adopted alternative creeds

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53 Castillo Maldonado, “*Angelorum Participes,*” 154-5.

54 In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the image of Priscillian as a Galician apostle and martyr was developed and used to cultivate a view of the region as idiosyncratic when compared to the rest of the Iberian Peninsula. These arguments were used to support claims for both regional nationalism in Galicia and a unique Spanish character more generally. Andrés Olivares Guillem, *Prisciliano a Través Del Tiempo: Historia De Los Estudios Sobre El Priscilianismo* (La Coruña: Fundación Pedro Barrié de la Maza, 2004), 172, 176-177, 215-216, 220, 234-235.

55 D’Emilio, *Culture and Society in Medieval Galicia,* 126-127.

under Constantius and Valens do the penance required of heretics. This response resulted in a bitter rivalry with each side accusing the other of being heretical. Thus, like the rest of the empire, Spain was affected by changing imperial policy toward the fourth-century Trinitarian controversy, to which Priscillianism was linked.

In this view, Priscillianism does not represent a theological development particular to Spain and Gallaecia. In fact, some have argued that theology and doctrinal issues were not central to the conflict, but that it was largely a crisis of personal rivalries. Raymond Van Dam, for example, views the Priscillian controversy within the context of communal dynamics, in that condemning heretics was a way for “people and communities to act in the face of the tensions and implicit rivalries that had been generated by the structural and ideological inadequacies of their own religious system.” In another example, Kim Bowes analyzes Roman villas and rural churches and concludes that the so-called Priscillianists represented a powerful and semi-independent rural Christianity associated with the landowning aristocracy that posed a threat to the still growing episcopacy and were thus accused of heresy.


58 Michael Kulikowski suggests that it was Priscillian’s behavior and not his beliefs that upset his contemporaries. He argues that the accusations of sorcery and heresy that opponents used against him and his followers were “products of a burgeoning polemic, detected or invented only after the opposition to Priscillian had already arisen” and that the majority of the canons from the council of Zaragoza served to “censure actions that derogate from the authority of bishops.” See Michael Kulikowski, Late Roman Spain, 245. Virginia Burrus argues that both the Priscillianists’ incorporation of women into leadership roles and the authority the heretic attributed to exceptional ascetics, which undermined the official authority of bishops and the clergy, were at the heart of the Priscillian controversy. See Virginia Burrus, The Making of a Heretic: Gender, Authority, and the Priscillianist Controversy. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1995), 5, 13-14.

59 Raymond Van Dam, Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 106.

60 Kim Bowes, “…nec sedere in villam”: Villa churches, Rural Piety and the Priscillian Controversy,” in Urban Centers and Rural Contexts in Late Antiquity, ed. Thomas S. Burns and John W. Eadie (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001), 323-348. Michael Kulikowski proposes a similar view. See Late Roman Spain, 248-249.
Although Priscillian himself and his original opponents are not a central focus of this dissertation, accusations of Priscillianism were consistently made among the clerical communities of Gallaecia in the period under investigation. The new interpretations that de-emphasize the exceptionalism of the controversy by placing it in its larger historical context and view it in terms of communal rivalries provide a useful starting point for the current investigation. My analysis builds on the approaches defined by these scholars to show that although it was labeled as Priscillianism, political, social and economic concerns had a role in the conflict that played out among Gallaecian clerics in the late fourth through late fifth century.

**Famous Members of the Gallaecian Clerical Community**

Having discussed some general historiographical trends pertaining to Gallaecia, I will turn next to two ecclesiastical figures central to my project: Orosius and Hydatius. Although northwestern Hispania typically is not integrated into assessments of the late antique world, these two clerics from Gallaecia are well known to scholars of the period because they wrote historical accounts, which are important not only for the information they offer about Gallaecia, but also because they are among the few extant sources for the circumstances leading to the collapse of the Western Roman Empire. However, their works are often read without proper

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61 It should be noted that in the tractates attributed to him, Priscillian made every effort to demonstrate the orthodoxy of his beliefs and align himself with the other clerics in Spain in condemning heresy. For example, he began his first tractate by acknowledging they had confessed before and expressed opposition to heresy, but he and his colleagues did not mind doing so again. He condemned other heresies by name and schismatics, but called for efforts to educate them to bring them back into the fold the church. He also claimed that antagonisms within the clerical community were behind efforts to use religion as a way to slander opponents. Priscillian, *Tractate 1, Priscilliani Liber ad Damasum Episcopum*, 1-15, 28-50, 56-88, 346-354, 357-360, 370-419, 456-470, 560-565; *Tractate 2*, 81-103, translated and edited by Marco Conti, *Priscillian of Avila: The Complete Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 32-37, 52-57, 60-61, 66-67, 72-75.

62 Recent approaches to other late antique religious debates and controversies also provide useful methodological models. In his study of the fifth-century Christological debates among Egyptian and Syrian clerics, Adam Schor demonstrates the value of looking beyond the theological basis of religious rivalries, since the participants were social actors who were members of patronage and friendship networks that fostered particular attitudes and cultural practices. According to Schor, the social relationships of the bishops shaped doctrinal debates significantly. Adam M. Schor, *Theodoret’s People: Social Networks and Religious Conflict in Late Roman Syria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).
attention to the contexts of the authors and the communities in which they participated. This has led to skewed views of what they wrote, Gallaecia, and because their works are applied broadly, the history of empire in the fifth century.

First, Paulus Orosius, a presbyter from Braga in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, was commissioned to write the *Seven Books of History Against the Pagans* by Augustine while the bishop of Hippo was working on Book Eleven of the *City of God*, ca. 417-418 CE. Orosius’ work was intended to be a historical supplement to Augustine’s book and show that the turmoil of their times was not unprecedented.\(^6\) For this reason much scholarship on Orosius focuses on comparisons between the two texts and emphasizes Orosius’ shortcomings in relation to Augustine.\(^6\) Nevertheless, there has been excellent work in recent years on his histories that serves as a corrective to the image of Orosius as a naïve “stray dog” to his mentor Augustine, thus promoting a counter-argument to the assumption that his native Gallaecia was an exceptional backwater removed from Roman culture.\(^6\) These recent assessments also provide valuable insight into the cultural milieu in which the priest participated. Miguel Ángel Rábade Navarro, for example, has analyzed the various historians and poets from whom Orosius borrowed to construct his “polemical” text. According to Rábade Navarro, Orosius accepted the pagan authors as authoritative and therefore useful in his attempt to convince his pagan audience

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of his views. Furthermore, he situates Orosius among other Christian intellectuals who had to balance the use of the pagan cultural tradition without adhering to its ideology.

Peter Van Nuffelen also fits Orosius into his contemporary culture and argues against those scholars who have seen him as exceptional due to his intellectual ineptitude, optimism or because he wrote a theology of history. Instead, Van Nuffelen argues that applying a literary and rhetorical approach to the histories reveals that Orosius used specific literary and rhetorical tools to convince his audience—which according to Van Nuffelen, was educated but not necessarily pagan—to change their “rosy view of the classical past.” In this way, Van Nuffelen positions Orosius among other historians of Late Antiquity, such as Ammianus. Moreover, Van Nuffelen convincingly makes the case that Orosius was educated in the “culture of rhetoric” and was writing for others with the same background. Scholars such as Navarro and Van Nuffelen provide valuable insight into the cultural influences and likely educational opportunities available to Orosius and his peers, which can be used in constructing the ecclesiastical community of Gallaecia in the late fourth and early fifth centuries. Moreover, they demonstrate that Orosius and his community in Gallaecia were significant participants in late Roman society and culture and are therefore crucial to our understanding of this period.

Another important member of the Gallaecian ecclesiastical community was Hydatius, the fifth-century bishop of Aquae Flaviae or modern-day Chaves, Portugal. Hydatius wrote a chronicle that largely focused on the events of the peninsula and his own province of Gallaecia

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68 Van Nuffelen, *Orosius and the Rhetoric of History*, 1, 9-10, 16-18; 21; 120-122.


from the time of Theodosius until 468. This chronicle is in some cases our only contemporary source for the events of the fifth century and historians most often use it to develop a military and political timeline for this important transitional period.71 Scholars generally emphasize his seemingly overly pessimistic or catastrophic outlook, which until recently greatly influenced the way in which much of the material evidence from the region was understood.72 For example, fires or signs of abandonment in villas were automatically connected to the fifth century based on Hydatius.73 In his dissertation, Richard Burgess provides an excellent investigation of Hydatius and aspects of his life, which includes theories about his family’s background and education. Burgess also thoroughly analyzes the structure and likely sources for the chronicle, while placing it into the larger context of the historical genre.74 Burgess counters the traditional view that Hydatius was pessimistic due to the barbarian devastation and weakness of the empire; he instead asserts that Hydatius thought the world was going to end in 482 and saw the chaos and ruin as a warning from God and evidence of this prophecy.75 Although Burgess’ corrective is accurate, his apocalyptic reading of Hydatius and some aspects of his translation that support it are problematic. Hydatius certainly cited portents and described many horrible disasters and acts.


75 According to Burgess, Hydatius had read the apocryphal letter from Christ to Thomas, which revealed that the Final Judgment would come 450 years after Christ’s Ascension. Furthermore, Burgess contends that these beliefs motivated Hydatius to write his chronicle both to glorify God and to increase his chances of a favorable outcome at the Judgment. See Burgess, “Hydatius a Late Roman Chronicler,” 155-193. Burgess attributes to Hydatius a marginal note referring to the letter to Thomas next to the eighteenth year of Tiberius’ reign in one of the extant manuscripts. The note also claims that the letter was apocryphal, which Burgess contends was added at a later date. Burgess, The Chronicle of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana, 9-10, 31-32.
However, a careful reading of his self-presentation reveals that he saw himself as part of a larger cultural milieu that valued scholarship, orthodoxy and diplomatic negotiations. This perspective gives insight into the role bishops played in the fifth century as ambassadors and mediators for their communities.

The recent scholarship on both Orosius and Hydatius discussed above suggests that these men from the ecclesiastical community of Gallaecia did not represent exceptional characters on the fringes of the late Roman world, but were instead active participants in it. Building on the textual analysis done by scholars such as Navarro, Van Nuffelen and Burgess it is possible to begin to move beyond using their historical writing as mere sources, and answer questions about clerical communities in the late fourth and fifth centuries. This will contribute not only to our understanding of Gallaecia, but also facilitate more nuanced uses of their texts and understandings of the Roman world in the fifth century.

**Accessing Archaeological Sources and Material Culture**

Incorporating settlement archaeology into an assessment of the communities of Gallaecia in the fourth and fifth centuries was previously close to impossible. First, as discussed above, Visigothic rather than Suevic culture was the main target of investigation both before and during the Franco era. Furthermore, archaeologists primarily used an art historical approach. Consequently, they excavated monumental and church architecture to a much greater extent than other types of buildings and settlements more generally.\(^76\) While this work has made valuable contributions to our understanding of these important structures and has allowed for the development of typological chronologies based on styles, the emphasis on large impressive buildings and uncovering mosaics and other artistic forms, meant excavators regularly destroyed

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\(^76\) Quirós Castillo, “Medieval Archaeology in Spain,” 174-175.
other potentially informative components of the buildings. Likewise, in the past archaeologists often analyzed villas and other structures according to the known historical narrative, which resulted in many inaccurate assumptions about the chronology and meanings of the evidence. For example, they typically read evidence of a fire or abandonment in the context of the invasions of the third or fifth century, without any other contextual proof.77 However, new methodologies that analyze the material evidence independently of the historical record are now being applied to excavations. Moreover, due to modern development and public building projects such as railroads and gas pipelines, there has been an increase in the number of urban and rural rescue or contract excavations, which has expanded greatly the available evidence of settlements for this period.78

Another issue that has made it challenging to apply material culture to studies of this period is that the archaeological findings within Spain have often remained unpublished or with only a very limited distribution. Moreover, because much of the archaeological work is managed at the regional level, many archaeologists and historians focus on one discrete area.79 Even within northwestern Spain, there are numerous regions, such as Galicia, Asturias, and León, each with their own archaeological programs and archives. This has made it difficult for outsiders to gain access to the data. This decentralized approach to the administration of archaeological sites has stymied synthetic and comparative studies.


79 Quirós Castillo, “Medieval Archaeology in Spain,” 176
Recently, however, there has been a great deal of interest and effort to make the archaeological data more readily available. For example, archaeologists have been publishing articles and monographs that synthesize findings, especially of specific aspects of settlement. Alexandra Chavarría Arnau, for example, has brought together and analyzed the available evidence on villas in Spain. Her book includes a catalogue of the known villas in each province, including Gallaecia, with an overview of their phases of occupation and invaluable bibliographies.80 Similarly, Alexis Oepen has recently published a catalogue with excavation histories, related textual references and site overviews of rural churches—including villas that are thought have been used for Christian worship— from late Roman and Visigothic Spain, including multiple examples in Gallaecia.81 José Carlos Sánchez Pardo has done similar work with churches and rural settlements in Galicia.82 His work on churches is particularly useful because he presents and analyzes the evidence from the disciplines of both art history and archaeology, which have usually remained separate. Carmen Fernández Ochoa Morillo, Ángel Cerdán, and Jorge López Quiroga have done comparable work on the cities and secondary settlements in northwestern Spain.83 These syntheses make it possible to look at the region of Gallaecia as a whole and analyze the manner in which relevant urban and rural settlements reveal change and continuity in relation to each other. Furthermore, the trend toward this type of synthesis

80 Chavarría, Arnau A. El Final De Las "villae".


83 See, for example, Carmen Fernández Ochoa, Ángel Morillo Cerdán, Jorge López Quiroga, “La dinámica urbana de las ciudades de la fachada Noratlántica y del cuadrante noroeste de Hispania durante el Bajo Imperio y la Antigüedad Tardía (siglos III-VII d.C.),” in VI Reunió D'arqueologia Cristiana Hispànica: Les Ciutats Tardoantigues D'Hispania: Cristianització I Topografia: València, 8, 9 I 10 De Maig De 2003, eds. Josep Maria Gurt Esparraguera and Albert Ribera Lacomba (Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 2005), 95-118.
demonstrates that a study, such as this one, which examines a variety of settlement types together, is an important next step for the scholarship. Nevertheless, in-depth analysis of Gallaecia still has primarily been limited to specific regions, sites or cities and has not focused on the transformative fourth and fifth centuries.84

The increase in the available and reliable archaeological evidence has inspired the re-evaluation of many older debates pertaining to Gallaecia. Scholars, for example, have re-examined the degree to which the province had been Romanized and sought to measure the social, cultural and economic impact of the Sueves, Vandals, Alans and Visigoths on the built environment of Gallaecia.85 There is also a great deal of interest in the current scholarship of the region to understand the “genesis” of the medieval village by looking at the settlement patterns during the long transition from the late Roman period to the formation of the kingdom of Asturias in the eighth through tenth centuries. In fact, this debate represents a reassessment of the once-dominant theory advocated by Sánchez-Albornoz that areas of what is modern Galicia and the Duero Basin were de-populated in the eighth century as Christians migrated into the northern regions of Galicia and the Cantabrian Mountains in response to the invasions of 711 and then repopulated these areas starting in ninth century as part of the Reconquest.86 Settlement

84 Jorge López Quiroga’s excellent study of Gallaecia is unique in that it examines multiple regions. However, even this comprehensive examination is limited to the southern area between the Minho and Duero Rivers. Its chronological focus also does not include the fourth century and extends to the tenth, which changes the questions he answers. López Quiroga, El Final de la Antigüedad en la Gallaecia.

85 See, for example, Fernández Ochoa, Morillo Cerdán, López Quiroga, “La dinámica urbana de las ciudades.” The authors argue that there was a continuity of urban habitation in Gallaecia until the sixth century. The previous centuries can be characterized as dynamic, but demonstrating a continuity in the topography that does not indicate de-urbanization. Further, they suggest that the period between the end of the third and beginning of the fifth century is characterized by a municipal interest in the cities.

86 All of these areas are within the territory of Gallaecia being studied here. See Margarita Fernández Mier, “La genesis de la aldea en las provincias de Asturias y León,” in The Archaeology of Early Medieval Villages in Europe, ed. Juan Antonio Quiros Castillo (Leioa, Biscay: Servicio Editorial Universidad del País Vasco, Euskal Herriko Unibertsitateko, Argitalpen Zerbitzua, 2009), 151; Wendy Davies, “The Early Middle Ages and Spanish Identity,” in Power and Identity in the Middle Ages: Essays in Memory of Rees Davies, eds. Huw Pryce, John Watts, and R. R. Davies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 70-71.
archaeology has helped to debunk this theory, which had no evidentiary basis, by demonstrating that while changes occurred, there was a general continuity of occupation in southern Gallaecia and no substantial increase in the northern regions through the tenth century. While these works are useful, they still represent responses to old theories. Moreover, their focus on proving the long-term occupancy of the region means that the critical fourth and fifth centuries are not examined in detail. Therefore, with its focus on this transformative period, this dissertation makes an important contribution to our understanding of late antique Gallaecia as a whole. Moreover, by bringing together the older and recent archaeological work in each of the sub-regions of northwestern Spain, as well as Portugal, this project serves as a crucial foundation for later studies of northwestern Hispania.

The “Fall” of Rome and Rise of the Church

As noted above, much scholarship on the expansion of the episcopate’s function in society has assumed that bishops filled a vacuum of leadership created by the fall of the Roman Empire. This dissertation builds on current trends in historical and archaeological inquiry that view the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, the expansion of Christianity and the emergence of medieval society as part of a long process of social, political and cultural

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87 For example, Fernández Mier, Martín Viso and Quirós Castillo use a landscape approach that assesses the rural settlement patterns in terms of scale change in order to see how networks and systems were modified and developed over long periods of time. These studies have been quite useful in identifying trends and in redressing theories of depopulation as well as emphasizing the role the peasantry had in shaping settlement patterns. Applying their observations of change on the macro-scale to specific communities, such as those linked to cemeteries or in castros, makes it possible to show how individual settlements and communal dynamics may have contributed to these conditions. Margarita Fernández Mier, “Changing Scales of Local Power in the Early Medieval Iberian North-West,” in *Scale and Scale Change in the Early Middle Ages: Exploring Landscape, Local Society, and the World Beyond*, eds. Julio Escalona and Andrew Reynolds (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 99-111; Fernández Mier, “La genesis de la aldea,” 151; Alfonso Vigil-Escalera Guirado and Juan Antonio Quiros Castillo, “Early Medieval Rural Societies in North-Western Spain: Archaeological Reflections of Fragmentation and Convergence,” in *Scale and Scale Change in the Early Middle Ages: Exploring Landscape, Local Society, and the World Beyond*, eds. Julio Escalona and Andrew Reynolds. Turnhout: Brepols, 2011, 58-60; Sánchez Pardo, “Arqueología de las iglesias tardoantiguas en Galicia,” 408.

transformation. While in the past the influx of Germanic groups into Western Europe starting in
the fifth century, such as the Sueves who set up a kingdom in Gallaecia in 410, was viewed in
catastrophic terms, new readings of the textual and material evidence have led to more nuanced
interpretations.89 Much recent scholarship not only re-evaluates the impact of the so-called
barbarians, but also emphasizes the effects that administrative changes in the late third and fourth
centuries had on Roman society.90

A component of the reassessment of the impact of the ‘barbarians’ in the provinces has
been increased attention to the so-called crisis of the third century and the economic, social and
administrative changes that took place within the empire in its aftermath. When Diocletian
reorganized the empire in the late third century, he created many additional provinces, which
increased the number of imperial courts and associated bureaucrats. Service within these new
positions, through which a man could gain senatorial rank, became another means by which one
could achieve elevated status and wealth 91 Of course, it was still possible to serve as a member
of the municipal elite and oversee the collection of taxes. As Peter Brown has shown, the second
half of the fourth century can be characterized by a “fluid and fragmented” elite.92 There were

89 Of course, arguments for continuity with the Roman period also have become prevalent. As Chris Wickham
points out, examinations of isolated aspects of the political, social and economic circumstances in the period of
transition can be used to support theories of both radical change and continuity. While Wickham argues that post-
Roman developments were largely dependent on differences that predated the successor kingdoms and were not the
direct result of catastrophes caused by the initial arrival the Germanic groups, he does emphasize that regional
divergences were the norm by the sixth century. Wickham acknowledges that variations existed within the Iberian
Peninsula before the Visigoths settled there (he does not devote much attention to the Sueves), but his categorization
of these differences as inland and coastal (by which he means the Mediterranean coast) is insufficient. This
dissertation makes it clear that there were important sub-regional differences within Gallaecia, which affected
political, social, economic and clerical dynamics as early as the late fourth century. See Wickham, 10-13, 225-226,
516, 586-597, 743-751, 829-831.

90 See for example, Kulikowski, Late Roman Spain.

91 Raymond Van Dam, "Bishops and society," 345-346.

92 Peter Brown, Through the Eye of a Needle, especially 196-197. Here Brown argues that the villas of the fourth
century were monuments used to demonstrate stability and wealth amid landowners engaged in fierce competition,
based on newer and older sources of power. These villas will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2.
now multiple and overlapping ways to establish status at local and imperial levels, which were further complicated due to the *ad hoc* manner in which they developed.⁹³

The significance of the Christianization of the empire and the degree to which Constantine’s conversion to Christianity in the early fourth century affected the position of the episcopate in society has also been a central question. After Constantine’s conversion, bishops received certain privileges, such as tax exemptions, and gained increasing authority in local matters; for example they had the power to free slaves or act as judges.⁹⁴ With these changes, service in the church offered another avenue to establish local standing and imperial connections.⁹⁵ Bishops and clerics were now part of the social world of competition for favor within the imperial bureaucracy, local municipal governance and the senatorial habitus of *otium et negotium*, or leisure time and business.⁹⁶

Much attention also has been given to the relationship between bishops and the erosion of the cities and municipal governments as the foundation of Roman society, centers of culture, administration and tax collection. These assessments range from giving the episcopate a direct role in the decline of cities to asserting that the bishop’s function evolved as the urban centers had been weakened due to other factors.⁹⁷ A recurring argument holds that the changes instituted by Diocletian and Constantine caused a vacuum of leadership at the municipal level because

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⁹³ Halsall, *Barbarian Migrations*, 77-78.


⁹⁵ Halsall, *Barbarian Migrations*, 100; Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity*, Chapters 6-8.

⁹⁶ This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

⁹⁷ Liebeschuetz, for example, argues that Roman cities never recovered after the third century and as the secular government weakened the bishop’s role evolved. J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). See also, Raymond Van Dam, "Bishops and society," 344-345, 349.
positions within the imperial bureaucracy became preferable to the obligations—especially tax collection—associated with decurial service.\textsuperscript{98} Moreover, bishops also were given immunity from decurial service and the associated tax burdens.\textsuperscript{99} Claudia Rapp offers an alternative to the long-held assumption that a decline in the \textit{curiales} caused a vacuum that the bishops filled. Instead she asserts that they did not fill this old role, but rather created a new one based on their status derived from their ecclesiastical rank.\textsuperscript{100} Others emphasize that clerical authority at the municipal level came about by a gradual process.\textsuperscript{101} Also highlighted is the importance of the spread of Christianity among the networks of the senatorial aristocracy and the way this group used the episcopate to maintain influence at the local level.\textsuperscript{102} With time the language and ideology of aristocratic life transferred to bishoprics and the title came to the hold same honor and dignity as a high office in imperial administration.\textsuperscript{103}

By focusing on the transformation of a single Roman province and the development of clerical influence within it over the course of the fourth and fifth centuries, this dissertation contributes to and expands on this recent scholarship. The integration of historical and archaeological sources allows me to place the bishops and clerics of Gallaecia within their economic, political and social contexts. This reveals that their increasing role in society was the culmination of a process that started in the later fourth century when ecclesiastical roles were not

\textsuperscript{98} Raymond Van Dam, "Bishops and society," 345-346.

\textsuperscript{99} Raymond Van Dam, "Bishops and society," 346.

\textsuperscript{100} She uses the Theodosian and Justinian Codes to trace a shift in how bishops were viewed, namely from model Christians to model citizens. Rapp, \textit{Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity}, 22 and Chapter 9.

\textsuperscript{101} Rebillard, \textit{Christians and Their Many Identities in Late Antiquity}, 62.


\textsuperscript{103} Raymond Van Dam, "Bishops and society," 346.
clearly defined. As will be discussed next, each chapter reveals the factors that contributed to the development of the episcopate, which was the result of much more than a vacuum of leadership caused by the absence of Roman officials and elites in the region after the establishment of the Suevic Kingdom in the fifth century.

**Overview of Chapters**

The first section of this dissertation consists of three studies of specific Gallaecian bishops who were tried at the First Council of Toledo in 400 for their involvement in problematic ordinations. This trial provides insight into the dynamics of the clerical community in Gallaecia in the late fourth century, which scholars often gloss over because the bishops at Toledo also accused the Gallaecians of adhering to the teachings of Priscillian of Avila. Analysis of the records of this meeting and the archaeology for each episcopal see reveals that the bishops represented congregations involved in various and conflicting imperial, commercial and patronage networks, which in this period extended to North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean. Moreover, for these ecclesiastical leaders the differences between secular obligations and customs and those associated with the church were not clearly defined and often overlapped. These factors contributed to the disagreements among the bishops and clerics more than Priscillian’s teachings.

Chapters 5 and 6 are devoted to the fifth-century clerics Orosius of Braga and Hydatius of Aquae Flaviae. Chapter 5 will show that Orosius, as a priest from the provincial capital Braga, was a part of an elite circle of clerics for whom involvement in theological study and debate became a way not only to demonstrate one’s piety but also defined religious alliances that

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overlapped with larger social, cultural, imperial and commercial networks, which connected Gallaecia to the Mediterranean Basin. Chapter 6 will demonstrate that the line between the sacred and secular duties of clerics continued to be unclear with the bishop Hydatius, who saw himself as part of a larger cultural milieu that valued scholarship, orthodoxy and diplomatic negotiations. Therefore, his role as an ambassador, captive and negotiator with the Sueves in the later fifth century fits within a larger progression. Analysis of the various clerical alliances within Gallaecia during Hydatius’ lifetime demonstrates that participation within extra-regional secular and ecclesiastical networks persisted to be a marker of status, which compelled bishops to discredit those who challenged their authority. Accusations of heresy became a way to assert prestige of one’s own alliance and limit the influence of another’s.

When analyzed together, these cases studies show that while bishops such as Hydatius of Aquae Flaviae did serve as protectors and negotiators on behalf of their communities in the later fifth century, the people’s choice to turn to episcopal leaders in periods of chaos and change had its roots in prior developments. In the later fourth century, the sacred and secular identities and duties overlapped for bishops as they attempted to serve the needs of their congregations and their communities. The interwoven nature of the earthly and spiritual spheres caused conflict among the clerical community of Gallaecia and the development of various competing alliances. The different coalitions arose out of the diverse social and economic contexts of each episcopal city; some cities and their suburban and rural hinterlands were thriving while others were in decline. Over time, the disputes and controversies that emerged due to these different factions and the methods members of the clerical communities used to define their orthodoxy and status contributed to the development of the image of bishops as a capable leaders with connections in larger secular, commercial and ecclesiastical networks.
Figure 1-1. Map of the Provinces of Hispania, ca. 400. Map courtesy of Rastrojo. Modified by author.
CHAPTER 2
SYMPHOSIUS AND HIS COMMUNITY: ASTURISCENIS IN THE LATE FOURTH CENTURY

Introduction

Around 400, clerics from all over Hispania, modern Spain and Portugal, met in Toledo for a church council. They discussed various issues, but their primary concern was governance of the church hierarchy. After the council proper, the bishops turned their interest to a situation that had occurred in the years before the meeting in the northwestern Roman province of Gallaecia (Figures 1-1 and 2-1). Symphosius, the bishop of Astorga, had ordained several men as presbyters and bishops within his conventus of Asturicensis and the other regions of Gallaecia (Figure 2-2). Among the men Symphosius had appointed to a bishopric was his son Dictinus. Symphosius claimed all of the ordinations were carried out with the approval of the people of Gallaecia, but the bishops in Toledo deemed them problematic. They investigated his actions and after reprimanding Symphosius, let many of his appointments stand. The bishop of Astorga was sent back to his see and tasked with making sure all members of the clergy under his supervision adhered to the tenets agreed upon at Toledo.

1 This analysis is based on my translation of the Latin record for First Council of Toledo from José Vives, ed., Concilios Visigóticos e Hispano-Romanos (Barcelona-Madrid: CSIC, Instituto Enrique Flórez, 1963), Incipiunt Exemplaria Professionum In Concilio Toletano Contra Sectam Prisciliani and Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis, 28-33. Subsequent references to canons from church councils will list an abbreviation of the council and canon numbers along with the page number from Vives.

2 He ordained Exuperantius in Aquis Celenis (conventus of Lucensis) and Paternus in Braga (conventus of Bracarensis). These ordinations and regions will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. I Tol, Exemplar definitivae sententiae, Vives, 31, 34.


5 I Tol, Exemplar definitivae sententiae, Vives, 33.
This trial provides insight into some of the dynamics of the clerical community in Gallaecia at the turn of the fifth century, which scholars often gloss over because the bishops at Toledo also accused Symphosius of adhering to the teachings of Priscillian, the bishop of Avila whom the Spanish usurper Magnus Maximus ordered to be executed in Trier on charges of sorcery in 385. Although Symphosius willingly denounced the teachings and writings associated with Priscillian, this trial and similar ones in subsequent centuries have contributed to the notion that Gallaecia was the hotbed of a unique heresy, Priscillianism. Scholars often have used the canons of the Council of Toledo and the proceedings that follow it to try to determine what Priscillian’s doctrines were, if he and his followers were in fact heretics and even if they were proto-Protestants. The result is a long historiography with many important works, but little consensus. The reality is we have few extant sources with which to make definitive claims regarding Priscillianist theology, if this even existed. Moreover, as Raymond Van Dam has argued, the Priscillian controversy was as much about communal dynamics, tensions and rivalries as it was about doctrine.

For this reason, rather than addressing the question of Priscillianism in depth, the next three chapters focus primarily on Symphosius and his contested ordinations. A micro-historical approach is applied to each conventus, or region, within Gallaecia in order to reveal the internal

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8 See the introduction to this dissertation for more details. Guillem provides an excellent and thorough discussion of this historiography from the Middle Ages to the present. See Andrés Olivares Guillem, *Prisciliano a Través Del Tiempo: Historia De Los Estudios Sobre El Priscilianismo* (La Coruña: Fundación Pedro Barrié de la Maza, 2004).

communal dynamics of each see involved in the trial in Toledo. Each chapter is a case study that uses both textual and archaeological sources to put specific bishops and priests involved in the disputed ordinations performed by Symphosius in their larger late-fourth-century social and economic contexts. In addition to adding to the general historiography of this period, since none of these clerics have been studied in detail previously, these case studies accomplish several goals. First, since an overall aim of this dissertation is to explain the expanding social role of bishops in Late Antiquity, the details from the microhistories establish the social composition of each episcopal see. This baseline is significant for later comparison and because the individuals living and working in these communities actively participated in the development of the episcopate’s increased influence in society. This analysis reveals that within each conventus in Gallaecia—Asturicensis, Lucensis and Bracarensis—there were socially variegated communities whose members were involved in larger imperial and commercial networks. Finally, the next three chapters demonstrate that the conflict among the bishops in Gallaecia arose within a complex milieu of overlapping political, social, economic and religious concerns on local, regional and imperial levels.

This chapter presents a case study of Symphosius and his clerical community in Asturicensis and the larger social, political and economic contexts in which they operated. The period under examination is roughly 380 to 400, or more generally the late fourth century. These dates represent two peninsula-wide church councils held first in Zaragoza and then in Toledo (Figure 1-1). Bishops from Gallaecia were present at both and each dealt with Priscillian and his followers to a certain degree. More importantly, Symphosius attended both councils and it is in the period between them that he performed the ordinations that came under censure at the First Council of Toledo.
This chapter argues that the bishops at Toledo were concerned about Symphosius’ ordinations because the bishop of Astorga had conflated the social and economic obligations of his elite status with his episcopal authority. The chapter begins by examining Symphosius’ participation in the larger clerical community of Hispania and then his own Christian community in Astorga to show that while Symphosius was not interested in being a schismatic, he thought it was the duty of the clergy to represent the interests of their congregations. Since the needs of the laity extended beyond spiritual concerns, the larger social, economic and political context of Symphosius’ see is analyzed. This analysis begins with a discussion of the territory within Symphosius’ bishopric, the region south of the Cantabrian Mountains, which included the urban centers of Astorga and León, as well as the rural settlements connected to them (Figure 2-1). If we step back to view the larger context in which Symphosius operated, it reveals that his see was going through a period of transition since the former sources of economic and social prosperity were in decline. Moreover, as a member of the elite, the differences between secular obligations and customs and those associated with the church were not clearly defined for Symphosius, and in this case they overlapped. In fact, his ordinations and the controversy that emerged because of them should be seen as an effort to extend patronage networks beyond his see to create beneficial alliances for himself and members of his community in southern Asturicensis. The chapter concludes with an investigation of the area north of the Cantabrian Mountains where the port of Gijón and nearby rural estates were beginning to experience marked economic vitality due to participation in emerging long-distance commercial exchange. It is suggested that Symphosius sought to use his clerical appointments to build connections between southern and northern Asturicensis so that both areas could profit from the new and valuable connections and products associated with the northern port of Gijón.
Symphosius and his Efforts to Maintain Unity within the Clerical Community of *Hispania*

Symphosius was deeply involved in the workings of ecclesiastical hierarchy in *Hispania* and the efforts by the bishops to achieve consensus in practice and theology in the later fourth century. To begin, he was one of twelve bishops who attended the Council of Zaragoza in 380.\(^\text{10}\) This was the first council at which the bishops and clergy of *Hispania* attempted to deal with their disagreements over Priscillian and his teachings. Neither the canons themselves nor the record from Zaragoza explicitly discuss Priscillian or his supporters. However, the decisions reflect the practices associated with this group.\(^\text{11}\) Moreover, Priscillian mentioned the council, which he did not attend, in the letter he wrote to Damasus of Rome shortly after it was held.\(^\text{12}\) Priscillian argued that his accusers, primarily Hydatius of Mérida, did not condemn him or his supporters for anything at the meeting in Zaragoza. He based his argument not on the specific canons of the council and the practices that were censured, but rather on the fact that none of the accused were in attendance. He referred to a letter Damasus wrote, which stated that the bishops could not be judged in *absentia* or without questioning.\(^\text{13}\)

Symphosius’ actions after the Council of Zaragoza suggest he was more interested in maintaining unity than promoting a particular faction. Although Symphosius was listed among the bishops in attendance at Zaragoza, he left the council after the first day. There is no prior evidence for why he left, but the bishops at the First Council of Toledo claimed his early

\(^\text{10}\) I Zaragoza, Introduction, Vives, 16.

\(^\text{11}\) I Zaragoza, I-VIII, Vives, 16-18. For why this is considered to be about Priscillian, see Chadwick, 14-20; Michael Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and its Cities* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 2004), 244-246.


departure could be blamed on his association with Priscillian and his followers.\textsuperscript{14} Certainly, Priscillian asserted that it was through Symphosius’ testimony that he learned that no one had been condemned officially at Zaragoza.\textsuperscript{15} Yet, shortly after the episcopal meeting in 380, Symphosius, along with Hyginus of Cordoba, brought a letter to Hydatius of Mérida on behalf of Priscillian. According to \textit{Tractate Two}, this letter was an attempt to negotiate a settlement between Hydatius and his supporters and those aligned with Priscillian.\textsuperscript{16} The choice to send Symphosius seems to have been based on his reputation as a pious man, since Priscillian used this descriptor for the bishop of Astorga as part of his self-defense to Damasus and as proof of the veracity of what he was writing. A more biased ambassador would have come under suspicion, but Symphosius’ reputation made him a neutral choice, whose opinion and account of the events could be trusted by both sides.\textsuperscript{17}

While in Mérida, Symphosius had to settle a controversy and his actions in this regard demonstrate his efforts to uphold unity within the church of \textit{Hispania} and his respect for the needs of the laity and the authority of church councils. Symphosius was asked to offer guidance to settle the conflict between Hydatius and the members of his congregation, since for reasons

\textsuperscript{14} I Zaragoza, Introduction and I Tol, \textit{Exemplar definitivae sententiae}, Vives, 16, 30.

\textsuperscript{15} Priscillian, \textit{Tractate 2}, 120-126, Conti, 74-75. See also Chadwick, 27.

\textsuperscript{16} Priscillian, \textit{Tractate 2}, 120-126, Conti, 74-75.

\textsuperscript{17} Henry Chadwick offers a different interpretation, suggesting that Symphosius was chosen because he was a Priscillian sympathizer and the goal of the delegation was to install a new bishop who also would support Priscillian. This view seems to be based on a backward reading of the accusations against Symphosius at the First Council of Toledo and an assumption that Priscillian and anyone accused of agreeing with him were in fact heretics or at the very least schismatics. It is not the purpose of this chapter to judge the guilt or innocence of Priscillian or Symphosius on these charges based on the incomplete evidence. However, Symphosius did consistently express his interest in being part of and supporting the catholic majority. In the end, the various conflicts reveal the multiple dynamics at play within the church of \textit{Hispania} and how difficult it was to achieve unity. This situation was complicated further by the fact that the clerical communities and congregations they served consisted of a diverse and shifting social structure connected to multiple networks with varied interests. See Chadwick, 30-33.
that are not entirely clear each had excommunicated the other. ¹⁸ The delegation, however, initially had difficulty carrying out the mission. “Excited crowds” confronted Symphosius and Hyginus and not only blocked their entry into the inner sanctuary of the church, but also resorted to violence against the two bishops.¹⁹ Even with these hardships, Symphosius managed to hear from the different parties and offered a strategy to his fellow bishops that would maintain Catholic unity while serving the needs those involved. Symphosius advised that the laity could temporarily join other nearby churches, but only if they were willing to offer a Catholic profession of faith.²⁰ He emphasized that while other members of the clergy must perform consecrations,²¹ the people needed to make the choice itself.²² Symphosius also recommended that a council of bishops be called to resolve the conflict among the bishops, clergy and laity in Mérida.²³

Likewise, Symphosius’ integration in the larger community of bishops and clerics in Hispania and his interest in maintaining unity with them is evident in his movement both in the Iberian Peninsula and beyond. His involvement in ecclesiastical affairs and the various dynamics of the church meant that he travelled to all parts of the peninsula: to Zaragoza in the eastern province of Tarraconensis, to Mérida in the southern province of Lusitania and to the central city

¹⁸ Priscillian, *Tractate 2*, 113-127, Conti, 74-75, 271-272. According to Priscillian, his own presbyters and members of the laity publicly indicted Hydatus. However, the bishop had already excommunicated some of those who accused him. The sources do not discuss why Hydatus was impeached, but Chadwick suggests it was because he lived with his wife. See Chadwick, 31.

¹⁹ Priscillian, *Tractate 2*, 131-134, Conti, 74-75. Based on a now lost letter from Symphosius, Priscillian tells us that they were “hit by blows.”


²¹ “priests must consecrate priests”, Priscillian, *Tractate 2*, 139-141, Conti, 74-75.

²² Priscillian, *Tractate 2*, 139-141, Conti, 74-75.

²³ Priscillian, *Tractate 2*, 120-126, 139-141, Conti, 74-75.
of Toledo (Figure 1-1). Symphosius clearly had connections outside of *Hispania* as well, as Priscillian’s description of him to Damasus suggests. The bishop of Astorga also made a trip to Milan to discuss the disagreement in *Hispania*. Sometime between Zaragoza and the First Council of Toledo, Symphosius sought advice from the bishop Ambrose of Milan, who had already issued his judgment on the matter after Zaragoza. Shortly after the council, Ambrose had written a letter to the bishops in *Hispania*, in which he agreed with the stance of Siricius of Rome and suggested that those who were convicted of violating the canons of Zaragoza could be reconciled. When Symphosius went to visit Ambrose, Priscillian had already been tried and executed at Trier. Apparently, some Christians in Gallaecia and perhaps elsewhere, treated Priscillian as a martyr. In his communication to Symphosius, Ambrose commanded that they desist in this type of veneration, which Symphosius willingly did. As Henry Chadwick asserts, Symphosius was not interested in creating a schism or a separate community in Gallaecia. His visit with Ambrose also demonstrated his desire to keep his see and province connected and in line with the larger church in the West.

Similarly, Symphosius’ actions at the trial after the Council of Toledo indicate that he desired unity within the church of *Hispania*. The bishops in Toledo asked Symphosius to state his position on certain heretics and their doctrines. In particular they asked him about his stance

25 Burrus, 105-106.
28 Chadwick, 153.
on Priscillian and whether he agreed with teachings attributed to him.\textsuperscript{29} The bishops were most concerned with the claim that Christ was unborn. They also disapproved of Priscillian’s veneration as a martyr.\textsuperscript{30} Martin of Tours had condemned Emperor Maximus’ trial and subsequent execution of Priscillian.\textsuperscript{31} The fact that some Christians, especially those that knew him personally as Symphosius did, considered Priscillian a martyr was thus not unreasonable. Priscillian had not received the appropriate trial by a council of bishops and it was a secular authority that had put him to death. Furthermore, Symphosius did not think that Priscillian, his supporters or their teachings had formally been condemned at Zaragoza. Indeed, the issue was still up for debate at the time of Priscillian’s death, which is why he was at Trier in the first place. Given that his execution was condemned by someone as important as Martin of Tours and carried out by a secular authority, that of an usurper, we may assume that some contemporaries thought that Priscillian’s death was not definitive proof that he was condemned as a heretic. Thus in viewing Priscillian as a martyr Symphosius was not necessarily contradicting orthodoxy. In any case, when so instructed, the bishop from Astorga willingly condemned the books of Priscillian, the man himself, and all of his teachings, particularly those that said Christ was unborn. He asked the bishops at Toledo to bring him the charter, which stated all of their complaints, and he condemned everything in it again. He agreed to stop any association with the men who previously had been considered martyrs.\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{29} I Tol, \textit{Incipiunt Exemplaria Professionum}, Vives, 29.


In sum, although Symphosius did have an association with Priscillian, his actions before and at the First Council of Toledo indicate that he worked to build unity within the Church of Hispania. The bishop of Astorga was considered pious and he made efforts to maintain good relationships with the clergy in Gallaecia, Hispania and the western church. It follows that his ordinations, although censured by his colleagues, were not intended to cause schism or promote a particular faction at the expense of the ecclesiastical harmony. In order to begin to understand Symphosius’ motivations for making these problematic clerical appointments, we must begin by looking at the bishop’s relationship with his own congregation in southern Asturicensis.

Symphosius and the Christian Community of southern Asturicensis

Symphosius was the bishop of Astorga, the capital of the conventus of Asturicensis, which occupied the northeastern region of the Roman province of Gallaecia. Astorga was in the southern half of Asturicensis, separated from the northern coast by the Cantabrian Mountains (Figure 2-1). By the time he was questioned by his peers at the First Council of Toledo in 400 CE, Symphosius had been bishop of Astorga for multiple decades and was respected for his piety. It is reasonable to presume that Symphosius had assumed his episcopal office in Astorga in the 360s or early 370s. No record of Symphosius’ ordination exists, but the bishops in Toledo called him an “old religious man.” Domitianus is the closest known contemporary bishop of Astorga and he held the office around the middle of the fourth century. Symphosius already

33 Although his episcopal see is never directly stated in the sources, the consensus among historians is Symphosius was the bishop of Astorga in the later fourth century. See Diego Piay Augusto, "Astúrica Augusta: un posible destino para las reliquias de Priscilliano," Astórica: revista de estudios, documentación, creación y divulgación de temas astorganos 27, no. 29 (2010): 77; Chadwick, 13.

34 senex religiosus. I Tol, Exemplar definitivae sententiae, Vives, 32.

35 Domitianus of Astorga was one of five bishops from Hispania to attend the Council of Serdica held sometime between 343 and 347. María Ángeles Sevillano Fuertes, “Arqueología del entorno de la Catedral de Astorga: La primitiva Iglesia de Santa Marta como testimonio de la configuración de un área sacra,” in La Cathedral de Astorga (Actas del Simposio sobre la Catedral) (Astorga: Centro Estudios Astorganos Marcelo Macías, 2001), 28.
represented Astorga at the Council of Zaragoza in 380. Even at this time, Symphosius was a recognized and respected religious figure. As discussed above, other bishops in *Hispania* sought his advice and even Damasus, the bishop of Rome, knew of his life and piety.

Christians had been living in Astorga for over a hundred years by the time Symphosius became bishop of the city. Symphosius’ numerous ordinations of presbyters and bishops in the years before the First Council of Toledo suggest that the Christian community in Asturicensis was growing in the later fourth century. Unfortunately, we have very little information about these specific Christian communities and their leaders, since the sees of these various bishops and presbyters are not stated and the archaeological record is sparse. Isolated examples of funerary art and sarcophagi with early Christian iconography found in suburban locations suggest that some Christians buried their dead outside of Astorga. However, as Éric Rebillard

36 I Zaragoza, Introduction, Vives, 16.

37 In his letter to Damasus, Priscillian refers to Symphosius as pious, but does not elaborate since he assumed the bishop of Rome already knew about his life. Priscillian, *Tractate 2*, 120-131, Conti, 74-75.


40 Examples of funerary art with early Christian symbols such as the Chi-Rho and several sarcophagi with Biblical scenes have been dated to the fourth century. However, it is difficult to determine their provenance with certainty because many were found before the development of more scientific archaeological methods or were moved from their original locations and re-used elsewhere. See Sevillano Fuertes, “Arqueología del entorno de la Catedral de Astorga,” 28-29, 31-32; Ladislao Castro Pérez, *Sondeos en la Arqueología de la Religión en Galicia y Norte de Portugal: Trocado de Bande Y el Culto Jacobeo* (Vigo: Universidad de Vigo, Servicio de Publicaciones, 2001), 127; Carmen Fernández Ochoa, “La ciudad en la Antigüedad Tardía en la cornisa Cantábrica,” in *Acta Antigua Complevtensia I: Computum y las Ciudades Hispánicas en La Antigüedad Tardía* eds. Luis García Moreno, Sebastián Rascón Marqués (Universidade de Alcalá: Alcalá de Henares, 1999), 76; Jose María Luengo Martínez, *Estudios Arqueológicos: Homenaje del Exmo. Ayuntamiento* (Astorga: Ayuntamiento de Astorga, 1990): 47; Quintana Prieto, 99; Helmut Schlunk, “Los monumentos paleocristianos de “Gallaecia”, especialmente los de la provincia de Lugo,” in *Actas Del Coloquio Internacional Sobre El Bimilenario De Lugo*, ed. Juan Maluquer de Motes y Nicolau (Lugo: Patronato del Bimilenario de Lugo, 1977), 193; Pedro Palol, *The Christian Monuments of Roman and Visigothic Hispania* (New York: Classical Folia, 1969), 73, see map IV.
has shown, even if this represents burials by individual Christians it does not necessarily indicate communal practice nor does it signify that a bishop such as Symphosius had control over the burial rites. In fact, according to the archaeological record, Symphosius did not have a distinctly Christian space in which to carry out his duties as Astorga’s ecclesiastical leader, such as an episcopal palace, church or baptistery. Of course, future excavations may change this picture, but the situation in Symphosius’ see is not unusual when compared to other cities in Hispania or the Roman Empire in the later fourth century. Lugo, located in the conventus to the west of Asturicensis, is the only city in Gallaecia for which we have archaeological evidence reflective of episcopal activity in the late fourth century. However, as will be discussed in


42 None of these elements typically associated with episcopal leadership has been discovered in Astorga or any other urban center in Asturicensis for the time when Symphosius was bishop. Often, churches from this period have been found under modern cathedrals and archaeologists note the trend for continual use of the space for Christian structures, making it difficult to locate finds. For discussion on archaeological evidence of episcopal leadership see, Maureen C. Miller, The Bishop's Palace: Architecture and Authority in Medieval Italy (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2000), especially Chapters 1-2. For a discussion of the continual use of Christian structures and how this affects archaeological work, see Carmen Fernández Ochoa, Angel Morillo Cerdán, Jorge López Quiroga, “La dinámica urbana de las ciudades de la fachada Noratlántica y del cuadrante noroeste de Hispania durante el Bajo Imperio y la Antigüedad Tardía (siglos III-VII d.C.),” in VI Reunió D'arqueologia Cristiana Hispànica: Les Ciutats Tardoantigues D'Hispania: Cristianització I Topografía: València, 8, 9 i 10 De Maig De 2003, eds. José María Gurt Esparraguera and Albert Ribera Lacomba (Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 2005), 99. On such excavations in Asturicensis, see J. Avelino Gutiérrez González, Emilio Campomanes Alvaredo, Fernando Miguel Hernández, Carmen Benéitez González, Pilar Martín del Otero, Fernando A. Muñoz Villarejo, Felipe San Román Fernández, “Legio (León) en época Visigoda: la ciudad Y su territorio” in Espacios Urbanos En El Occidente Mediterráneo (s. VI-VIII), ed. Alfonso García (Toledo: Toletvm Visigodo, 2010): 93-94; María Angles Sevilla Fuertes, “Arqueología del entorno de la Catedral de Astorga,” 31-42.

43 Of course, there may have been earlier episcopal buildings, which are not preserved in the archaeological record. Michael Kulikowski argues that Christian leadership in Spanish cities was “on the physical margins” until at least the mid-fifth century. The empire-wide trend of ecclesiastical architecture does not become prevalent until the fifth century. See Kulikowski, Late Roman Spain and its Cities, 39, 215-232, 243-254; Neil Christie, The Fall of the Western Roman Empire, an Archaeological and Historical Perspective, (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011), 173-178.

Chapter 3, the relevant remains in Lugo are limited and questionable in terms of their Christian function.

Although we cannot determine the exact number of Christians in Symphosius’ see or details about their religious practices, it is clear that the bishop of Astorga encouraged lay participation in clerical appointments. Traditionally, members of the laity played a role in electing their bishops in the West.45 For example, sometime before 254, the congregation of Astorga and León decided that the presbyter Felix should replace Basilides as their episcopal leader.46 Apparently, Basilides had lapsed during the imperial persecutions of Decian.47 In the letter Cyprian of Carthage wrote to this Christian community, he confirmed the validity of Felix’s election to serve as bishop of Astorga and León.48 Cyprian also emphasized the essential role of the congregation in assessing the character and worthiness of both the presbyters and bishops who would serve as their spiritual leaders.49 This tradition of lay involvement in clerical elections continued in Hispania in the late fourth century.50 On the peninsular level, the bishops Instantius and Salvianus elected and consecrated Priscillian of Avila, but they only were able to achieve this with the approval of the local laity.51 Priscillian had many enemies within the church of Hispania. However, objections to his ordination were not due to the laity’s involvement, but

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45 Peter Norton, Episcopal Elections 250-600, Hierarchy and Popular Will in Late Antiquity (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1-17.

46 Technically the military camp, Legio, modern León, located just over 30 miles east of Astorga.

47 See Chadwick, 1; Kulikowski, Late Roman Spain and its Cities, 216-217; Sevillano Fuertes, “Arqueología del entorno de la Catedral de Astorga,” 31; Quintana Prieto, 91-97.


49 Cyprian of Carthage, Ep. 67.4-5.

50 Some scholars assert that episcopal authority had usurped this tradition by the fourth century, but Peter Norton has shown the continued importance of lay involvement, especially in the West. See Norton, 6-17.

51 Chadwick, 33; Burrus, 54.
because the bishops who consecrated him had been accused of heresy.\textsuperscript{52} Finally, as discussed above, when Symphosius intervened in 380 to settle the conflict between Hydatius of Mérida and his congregation, the bishop of Astorga emphasized the importance of allowing the people to choose their own bishop.\textsuperscript{53}

As we have seen, it is difficult to construct a clear picture of individual Christians or the specifically Christian community living in Symphosius’ see in the later fourth century. As is discussed more fully below, this is at least partially due to the fact that the differentiation among the Christian, secular and pagan spheres was not fully defined at this time in southern Asturicensis. Even if they had been, people in Christian congregations were part of the same social, political and economic networks as their pagan counterparts. The value Symphosius placed on lay involvement in clerical elections makes the context created by these overlapping networks quite relevant for our understanding of his trial at Toledo. In 400, Symphosius was at the center of a controversy because he performed several questionable ordinations within and beyond his conventus. However, he ordained these men because they were popular choices; he was convinced that the majority of the people in each congregation agreed that there was a demand for clerical leadership and that in each case he had chosen the right man for the job.\textsuperscript{54} He also saw himself as the representative of the members of his own congregation and since their needs extended beyond the spiritual, it is critical to examine the entire community within his see

\textsuperscript{52} The validity of these claims, which have already been examined in great depth, will not be discussed here. See Conti 271-272; Burrus, 52-54; Chadwick 33-34.

\textsuperscript{53} Priscillian, \textit{Tractate 2}, 139-141, Conti, 74-75.

in order to understand the motivations for Symphosius’ actions. Therefore, the larger social, economic and political context in which Symphosius, the clerics and laity of Astorga and southern Asturicensis operated are examined next.

**Astorga: the Decline and Transformation of an Administrative Center**

The discussion of the larger context of Symphosius and his congregation must begin with the city identified with his bishopric, Astorga. Strategically located on a hill between the Jerga and Tuerto Rivers in the extreme northwest of the Meseta, Astorga was originally founded as a Roman military camp with a connection to the Roman road number XVIII. However, the military function of the settlement was short-lived and early in the first century CE, urbanization connected to large-scale gold mining in the region began. Shortly after this, the Flavian emperors made it the capital of the conventus after which the city flourished with public and private building activity. The numerous very productive mines made the region significant to the emperors and meant that Astorga prospered as an administrative and redistribution center.

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55 Peter Brown has shown, in the late fourth century, people looked to their bishops for than more spiritual guidance. Instead they served a variety of functions similar to those of municipal leaders and often represented the community within the imperial courts. See Peter Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity, Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 34, 76-85.

56 It should be noted that I use the word city even though, as will be come clear, Astorga may have lost many of the characteristics that are used to define cities in this period. I use the term here and in other cases, due to their previous roles as such and, as in the case of Astorga, the continuing administrative and tax-collecting function.


58 Fernández Ochoa, I Morillo Cerdán, López Quiroga, 100.

This role was facilitated by its location at the confluence of several roads, which connected the area to the western Gallaecian capitals, Braga and Lugo; to the northern port of Gijón via the Ruta de la Plata; to the southern Iberian Peninsula and eastward to Gaul and the rest of the Empire (Figure 2-1). The importance of Astorga continued into the third century when Caracalla established a new province, *Hispania Nova Citerior Antoniniana*, and made Astorga its capital.

By the time Symphosius was bishop in the later fourth century Astorga had changed significantly. The output of the mines slowed during the third century and by the fourth they were no longer producing gold. Although it did not happen all at once, the economic focus and social composition of the city shifted over the course of the third and fourth centuries. As a child, Symphosius may have witnessed or at least heard about the great senatorial families who once lived throughout the city in their luxurious domi with typical Roman peristyles, grand rooms elaborately decorated with mosaics and painted walls, and private baths. However, by

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62 Fernández Rodríguez, 142; García Marcos, Burón Álvarez, “Las termas menores de Astorga,” 213.


64 Many grand domi have been excavated in Astorga, which generally were constructed and remodeled in the first and second centuries and progressively abandoned starting in the mid-third century. Examples include: Domus de las Pinturas Pompeyanas, Casa del Gran Peristilo, Casa de la Muralla, Casa de las Columnas Pintadas, La Casa del Mosaico del Oso y los Pájaros, and Casa del Pavimento de Opus Signinum. See Milagros Burón Álvarez, “El trazado urbano de Asturica Augusta,” 300-305; Julio M. Vidal Encinas, “León” *Numantia* 5 (1994): 264-266; J.M.V.E. and V.G.M, “Investigaciones arqueológicas en Castilla y León,” *Numantia* 3 (1990): 260-263.
the time he was bishop of the city, most of these urban homes had been abandoned. Of course the buildings themselves, which once bustled with the activity of their owners, guests and servants, were still visible in the later fourth century. However, the senatorial and municipal families who had controlled the movement of the precious mining output no longer inhabited them. In fact, many of these elite homes were being used as dumps in the years prior to the First Council of Toledo.

Like other cities in northwestern Hispania and Roman Empire, a wall was built around the city in the late third or early fourth century. Some scholars suggest that the building of the wall itself indicates that the city was still considered significant as late as the early fourth century and that Astorga likely continued to maintain certain administrative functions and operate as nucleus for the surrounding populations. For example, rather than merely serving as a fortification against attacks from invaders, the wall with its Roman gates in combination with the road network, allowed officials to secure the collection of the annona militaris and cereal tax from the surrounding rural estates and its movement to the northern Cantabrian ports. From ports

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67 Due to the similarity between the various fortifications built around the cities in this time period, many scholars have suggested they are part of a larger imperial building project. For details on the Astorgan wall and theories about wall-building in this period see Fernández Ochoa, Morillo Cerdán, López Quiroga, 101; Victorino García Marcos, Ángel Morillo Cerdán, Emilio Campomanes, “Nuevos planamientos sobre la cronología del recinto defensivo de Asturica Augusta,” in Congreso Internacional La Hispania De Teodosio Volume 2, eds. Ramón Teja and Cesáreo Pérez (Burgos, Spain: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1997), 515-528; Burón Álvarez, “La Intervención Arqueología en la “Puerta Romana,”” 101-102, 104, 121-122. Michael Kulikowski argues that wall building in this period can be interpreted as one form of social display that supports the notion of urban continuity into the fourth century. See, Kulikowski, Late Roman Spain, 101-109.

68 Fernández Rodríguez, 142.
like Gijón, authorities could ship grain to troops at the frontiers in Germany and Britain.\textsuperscript{69} However, it is not clear if Astorga continued to serve this new imperial function into the later fourth century. There is very little material evidence to support the theory or to confirm its chronological limits. A possible \textit{horreum} for storing grain related to the \textit{annona} collection was used as a dump after the third century.\textsuperscript{70} By contrast, the northern gate of the city still was utilized through the later fourth century and the road that passed through it was repaired in this period.\textsuperscript{71} Yet, the guard station was dismantled and may have been repurposed, along with some of the granite from the walls, to form the new pavement.\textsuperscript{72} The gate and area where the guards were once stationed was reduced to a simple arch, which suggests a decreased imperial presence in the area and less supervision over the products moving in and out of the city.\textsuperscript{73}

In late fourth century, Astorga was in the middle of a period of decline that affected both the private and public spheres.\textsuperscript{74} After the collapse of mining activity in the region during the third century, construction was greatly reduced. For the most part, rather than building or remodeling public and domestic buildings, the inhabitants of Astorga chose to occupy already existing spaces or make minor changes to older homes in order to accommodate their new living situations. In order to do this they reused a variety of materials from diverse public and private


\textsuperscript{70} Julio M. Vidal Encinas, “León,” 266-267.


\textsuperscript{74} For a discussion of the characterization of decline in this period see Carmen Fernández Ochoa, Ángel Morillo Cerdán, Jorge López Quiroga, 101; Carlos Fernández Rodríguez, “Ganadería, caza y animales de compañía en la Galicia Romana,” 142; Victorino García Marcos, Milagros Burón Álvarez “Las termas menores de Astorga,” 213; Fernández Ochoa, “La ciudad en la antigüedad Tardía en la cornisa Cantábrica,” 76.
constructions that had been built in earlier, more prosperous times. During its height in the second and third centuries, cosmopolitan life in Astorga centered on a forum of typical configuration in the southern and most elevated part of the city. Many grand urban houses were located near this cultural, political, religious and commercial hub. It was lined with monumental porticoes for commercial activities and more elaborate chambers for temples. Artisans and merchants also had shops in the northwestern part of the city. However, with the closing of the mines, these men and women no longer had the same market and appear to have closed their shops, which were largely abandoned and used as dumps by the time of Symphosius’ installation as bishop of the city in the later fourth century. Life also changed for the patrons and workers of the public baths. While residents of Astorga had a choice between two bath complexes in the early imperial period, after the mid-third century one of these monumental spaces ceased to be used for bathing and instead was looted as a source of building materials.

As has been mentioned already, many of the once lavish urban homes had been transformed into dumps by the later fourth century. People did continue to live in some of the houses, but for the most part in a very different manner than when Astorga was at its height.

75 Fernández Ochoa, Morillo Cerdán, López Quiroga, 101; García Marcos, Burón Álvarez, “Las termas menores de Astorga,” 213.


For example, they dismantled and restructured several homes and compartmentalized them with new walls. The style of the houses built and remodeled in the previous years and imperial interest in the area suggests that active members of the senatorial and municipal class owned them. The manner in which these once single-family homes were divided and the fact that they were now also occupied and reoccupied after periods of abandonment in a more sporadic manner suggests that the elite associated with imperial affairs no longer resided in the city with their families. Servants may have maintained the houses, at least for a period, or members of another social group make have taken over the spaces and utilized them in different ways.

Generally then by the later fourth century, the wealthy families that had once been the local leaders and employers no longer lived in the city. They no longer employed carpenters and architects to build and remodel their homes or artisans to install mosaics or paint murals. Only one of the many houses known from the early imperial period shows signs of being occupied by a wealthier family or group that acted as patrons to such skilled laborers. Known as the Casa del Pavimento de Opus Signinum, the home was located very close to what had been the forum. Like many of the other domestic spaces, it was abandoned with some parts of the early imperial

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83 For a discussion of similar changes to urban homes elsewhere in Hispania, but during the fifth and sixth centuries, see Javier Arce, Alexandra Chavarria, Gisela Ripoll, “The Urban Domus in Late Antique Hispania: Examples from Ererita, Barcino and Complutum” in Housing in Late Antiquity: From Palaces to Shops, eds. Luke Lavan, Lale Özgenel and Alexander C. Sarantis (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 305-336.

84 Fernández Ochoa, Morillo Cerdán, López Quiroga, 101. This is the only house with signs of constructive phases in the later fourth or early fifth century. For a complete discussion of its earlier constructive phases, see Milagros Burón Álvarez, El Trazado Urbano en las proximidades del Foro en Asturica Augusta: la Casa del Pavimento de Opus Signinum (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1997).
construction collapsing in the third or fourth century.\(^8^5\) In this period, inhabitants of the city removed some of the constructive materials from the house, presumably to be used in other buildings.\(^8^6\) However, after this period of seeming desertion, someone decided to revitalize the space with new walls and a pavement of *opus signinum*, a common sturdy and waterproof Roman flooring made of crushed stone, tile or brick fragments and mortar.\(^8^7\) Whoever was responsible for these modifications, which were made with higher quality materials than what was used to subdivide the other homes in the city, likely commissioned skilled laborers and perhaps an architect to actualize them. This patron also hired artisans to install a red and white geometric mosaic in the space, which based on the stratigraphy and style, has been dated to the later fourth or early fifth century.\(^8^8\) In fact, the mosaic is very similar in design and color scheme to one found in the nearby villa of Navatejera, which will be discussed more fully below.\(^8^9\) The similarity suggests that the same artisan or workshop created the two mosaics. It is possible that a single patron employed these artisans or, that there was some relationship, perhaps in the form of aristocratic competition, between the inhabitants of the rural and urban spaces.\(^9^0\)

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\(^8^6\) Sevillano Fuertes, *Excavaciones Arqueológicas previas*, 12.

\(^8^7\) Sevillano Fuertes, *Excavaciones Arqueológicas previas*, 10-12.


\(^9^0\) Kimberly Bowes argues that homes in this period were the loci of competition among the old senatorial elite and new members of the imperial bureaucracy. Certain features and design choices demonstrated one’s participation in elite culture and in the local “competitive discourse.” See Kimberly Bowes, *Houses and Society in the Later Roman Empire* (London: Duckworth, 2010), especially 95-96.
By the time of the First Council of Toledo in 400, the social structure along with the vocations and daily activities of the population of Astorga had undergone a long process of transformation. Although the late Roman city of Astorga was clearly less prosperous than it had been in the early empire, it was not abandoned completely. One of the public bath complexes was remodeled around the same time that the other one closed down, in the later third century.\textsuperscript{91} In fact, the inhabitants of Astorga continued to use this larger public building throughout the fourth century and may have added a mosaic in this period.\textsuperscript{92} Moreover, the fact that some buildings, such as the baths and once elaborate homes, were used as dumps and sources of supplies shows that people still lived in or at least marginally inhabited and used the city. It is impossible to know who among these men and women were Christians and therefore members of Symphosius’ congregation. However, at the least they were all part of the larger community with whom the bishop and the lay members of his church interacted and did business. Symphosius’ concern for his congregants’ needs, therefore, necessarily included consideration for the population that still inhabited Astorga. As the next section shows, Symphosius’ see also likely included the military camp at León, which also was affected by the collapse in mining activity.

**León: from Military Camp to Civil Settlement**

Before his multiple ordinations in the later fourth century, Symphosius’ see may have extended beyond Astorga to include León. Located between the Bernesga and Torío Rivers and about 30 miles east of Astorga, León began as a Roman military camp.\textsuperscript{93} Like Astorga, León

\textsuperscript{91} García Marcos, Burón Álvarez “Las termas menores de Astorga,” 204; Burón Álvarez, “El trazado urbano de Asturica Augusta,” 296.

\textsuperscript{92} García Marcos, Burón Álvarez, “Las termas menores de Astorga,” 199, 203-205.

\textsuperscript{93} The *Legio VI Victrix*, probably resided there from the time of Augustus, and was replaced in the first century by the *Legio VII Gemina*. Isabel Cano Gómez and Rosa Corral Díaz, “Resumen de los trabajos arqueológicos efectuados en el Solar Puerta de Castillo N° 2 de la ciudad de León. (Mayo-Junio 2006),” *Lancia* 6 (2004-2005): 270.
developed in the context of the region’s mining, serving as a site from which the Roman military could oversee the movement of the gold on the network of nearby roads. Although the output of the mines slowed in the third century, the *Notitia Dignitatum* mentions the camp at León, which indicates that it was still occupied at the time of the First Council of Toledo. The similar topography of the region, ease of travel via Roman roads on the relatively flat plateau between the camp and the administrative center at Astorga, and the fact that both oversaw the mining industry, suggest that they functioned as a territorial unit. As we have seen in the mid-third century Cyprian described Felix as the bishop of both Astorga and León. In the early fourth century, Decentius of León was among the nineteen bishops who attended the Council of Elvira. However, since no bishop from Astorga is mentioned in the records of this church council, it is possible that the two sees still were combined and that Decentius served both León and Astorga. At the end of the century, Symphosius certainly acted as though his episcopal authority extended beyond the confines of the city of Astorga when he appointed clergers

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throughout the region. It is reasonable to assume that those living and working in León were part of the larger social context of the community that Symphosius served.  

In many ways, the military camp at León resembled Astorga in the later fourth century. The fact that a wall was built around it in the late third or early fourth century shows that, like Astorga, the settlement was still important enough for the imperial authorities to want to protect it and control the movement of the goods that flowed in and out of it. However, the function that León served in the Empire changed in the decades after the wall was built. By the time Symphosius became bishop in the later fourth century, the settlement no longer had a purely military character. Fewer soldiers occupied the camp and the civilians, which may have included veterans, who also lived in León had begun to transform it into a civic nucleus. Although the settlement took on a more urban character, many areas went into disuse and some buildings were dismantled. However, like we saw in Astorga, people continued to live in León and to maintain some of its public spaces, and construct new places to live. These activities reflected a new economic and social focus for the population center.

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99 Scholars have argued that the wall was built in the Flavian period; however, the current consensus is that it was a later Roman project. Victorino García Marcos, Ángel Morillo Cerdán, “El campamento de la Legio VII Gemina en León. Novedades sobre su planta y sistema defensivo,” Lancia 4 (2000-2001): 108, 115.


The public and domestic spheres of León point to activity within a changing social context. The extra-mural amphitheater, which had been built and used when León was a military camp, was no longer maintained in the later fourth century.\textsuperscript{103} It is not clear if the inhabitants of León continued to upkeep and enjoy the public baths located near the \textit{porta principalis sinistra}, or the southeastern gate that led to the \textit{via principalis}. The structures certainly survived into Late Antiquity,\textsuperscript{104} and some building materials, such as \textit{tegulae}, inscribed with honorifics to specific emperors, shows that the baths had patrons into at least the second half of the third century.\textsuperscript{105} There were also some repairs and maybe even the addition of a mosaic and some murals in the later third or early fourth century, or around the time when the wall was built nearby.\textsuperscript{106} The latrines and sanitation systems connected to the bath complex remained in good condition and were possibly even renovated in this period, while some of the construction materials from them were removed and re-used elsewhere in León.\textsuperscript{107} However, by the later fourth century some parts of this sanitation system were neglected or re-used in new ways.\textsuperscript{108}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Several excavations at the site have yielded no evidence of use in the later Roman period. See Gutiérrez González, Campomanes Alvaredo, Hernández, Benéitez González, Martín del Otero, Muñoz Villarejo, San Román Fernández, 91-92.
\item The baths are located under the Cathedral of León and so interventions have been limited. See Fernández Ochoa, Morillo Cerdán, López Quiroga, 106.
\item Martín Hernández, 204; Carmen Fernández Ochoa, “La ciudad en la Antigüedad Tardía en la cornisa Cantábrica,” 77.
\item García Marcos, Morillo Cerdán, “La arqueología en León,” 75-76. The latrines remained in good condition and were presumably used through to the Middle Ages. They were converted into a royal palace in the ninth and then donated to the Church by Ordoño II in the early tenth. See Gutiérrez González, Campomanes Alvaredo, Hernández, Benéitez González, Martín del Otero, Muñoz Villarejo, San Román Fernández, 93.
\item The Late Antique ceramics, TSGGT, iTSGGT, have been found among the fill layers in such a way that indicates some parts were used while others were not. See Gutiérrez González, Campomanes Alvaredo, Hernández, Benéitez González, Martín del Otero, Muñoz Villarejo, San Román Fernández, 93.
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Local patrons or imperial representatives also made repairs and changes to the roads and gates. For example, when the late Roman wall was built, the workers made alterations to the porta principalis sinistra and partially dismantled the corresponding guard station. The builders incorporated the exterior tower into the new wall, closing the north vein and solidifying the new street with medium-sized pebbles and pavement. Additional changes were made to this gate at the end of the fourth century. The main streets were still important to the daily lives of the inhabitants, and were repaved in several locations in the period after the wall was built. In fact, the level of circulation was raised by over three feet with the construction of the new roadways. This change to the level of circulation may be attributed to the fact that the authorities took on the larger scale-building project of sealing the previously aboveground aqueduct under the street.

Over the course of the fourth century, the inhabitants of León transformed many of the buildings formerly associated with the military into domestic spaces. For example, they made changes to what had been the military barracks and perhaps the residence of the one of the

109 Gutiérrez González, Miguel Hernández, “La cerámica altomedieval en León,” 446. Reforms were made and new pavements added at other gates as well. See García Marcos, Morillo Cerdán, “El campamento de la Legio VII Gemina en León,” 106.

110 Gutiérrez González, Miguel Hernández, 447.

111 Fernández Ochoa, Morillo Cerdán, López Quiroga, 105.

112 García Marcos, Morillo Cerdán, “La arqueología en León,” 75-76.

113 Gutiérrez González, Campomanes Alvaredo, Hernández, Benítez González, Martín del Otero, Muñoz Villarejo, San Román Fernández, 92.

114 Fernández Ochoa, Morillo Cerdán, López Quiroga, 105.

115 García Marcos, Morillo Cerdán, “La Arqueología en León,” 73.

116 Fernández Ochoa, Morillo Cerdán, López Quiroga, 105.
centurions in the late Empire. Located in the heart of the walled settlement, these buildings were still occupied in the later fourth century, but the alterations suggest that soldiers and their commanding officers no longer used them exclusively. The various common ceramics, storage vessels and kitchenwares show that the space retained its domestic function. Other spaces continued to be used without any clear evidence of renovations, such as a pavilion built in the early imperial period and located close to the eastern perimeter of the wall. The inhabitants of León did not use all of the old military structures; in fact, a pavilion close to the one discussed above was abandoned after the third century.

The context provided by this examination of Astorga and León demonstrates that these major population centers were in the process of social and economic transformation. The elite were no longer responsible for the oversight of the valuable imperial mines. While they may still have had a role in the collection of the *annona*, the extent of this endeavor within the urban setting was limited. The changes witnessed by the community living in Symphosius’ see fit within the framework that Michael Kulikowski lays out for the cities in *Hispania* in the post-Diocletian period. Diocletian reorganized the empire, doubling the number of provinces—such as Gallaecia, which was created at this time—and established new levels of oversight. He grouped provinces into dioceses under *vicarii*. Provincial capitals became local imperial centers,

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117 Gutiérrez González, Campomanes Alvaredo, Hernández, Benéitez González, Martín del Otero, Muñoz Villarejo, San Román Fernández, 93.

118 Gutiérrez González, Campomanes Alvaredo, Hernández, Benéitez González, Martín del Otero, Muñoz Villarejo, San Román Fernández, 93.

119 Gutiérrez González, Campomanes Alvaredo, Hernández, Benéitez González, Martín del Otero, Muñoz Villarejo, San Román Fernández, 93.

120 Gutiérrez González, Campomanes Alvaredo, Hernández, Benéitez González, Martín del Otero, Muñoz Villarejo, San Román Fernández, 93.

121 Gutiérrez González, Campomanes Alvaredo, Hernández, Benéitez González, Martín del Otero, Muñoz Villarejo, San Román Fernández, 93.
which offered up to a hundred of its citizens the opportunity to hold offices within the bureaucracy associated with the governors stationed there. While these capitals in *Hispania* were generally prosperous in the fourth century, those cities that did not benefit from imperial favor—such as Astorga and León—tended to fall into relative decline. Of course, people were still living and working in Astorga and León in the later fourth century and as bishop, Symphosius served their needs. Moreover, the population he represented included those from groups other than the urban and military elite and their dependents. Artisans, merchants and other working men and women were equally affected by the depressed economy in his see and for their benefit the bishop would have been motivated to find new opportunities.

Although they had lost their previous administrative and military functions, the local elites of Symphosius’ time still oversaw some general maintenance, such as with the roads, sanitation and water supply and public baths in Astorga and León. However, in comparison to the previous decades, their avenues for advancement had greatly diminished. Without the immediate imperial connections available through a provincial governor, since the capital of Gallaecia was in Braga, those living in the region of Astorga and León had to develop other economic and social opportunities, which, as we will see, corresponded to the establishment of links through new patronage associations. The next section reveals the importance of these connections for those living in Symphosius’ see and argues that as a member of the elite, the bishop of Astorga saw it as his duty as the episcopal representative to extend patronage networks, which would benefit the various social groups in his see.

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122 Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and its Cities*, 70-72, 83, 109-120. Kulikowski did not include Braga in his assessment since sufficient material evidence was not available at the time he was writing. The situation has improved and my analysis of the current archaeological evidence for Braga is discussed in Chapter 4.

123 Michael Kulikowski argues that municipal office holding remained important into the fifth century with curial supervision of the infrastructure of the city, such as the roads, drainage systems and baths. See Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and its Cities*, 83, 97.
Symphosius and the Educated Elite of Asturicensis

Although we have no concrete details about his social standing, Symphosius was likely part of a larger circle of municipal or senatorial elites living in Gallaecia. A characteristic of this social group was shared values, or paideia, which had its foundation in a common education acquired through grammarians and rhetoricians.\(^{124}\) There is evidence that there were grammarians and possibly rhetoricians in Gallaecia in the later fourth century. For example, Marinianus was a native of Gallaecia who taught law in Rome and later came back to Hispania as part of the imperial bureaucracy.\(^{125}\) We know of Marinianus through the letters he exchanged with the prominent Roman senator Symmachus in 382 and 383. The style of the letters and the concerns expressed, otium, or leisure, and friendship, are typical of the Roman elite at the time and the efforts made to establish and maintain patronage networks.\(^{126}\) Marinianus likely was educated in Gallaecia at least to a certain level before going to Rome to teach law.

Similarly, Symphosius and his peers within the clergy of Gallaecia had the opportunity to be trained not only with grammarians but also to do advanced work with a rhetorician. Caterius, a bishop in Gallaecia in the later fourth century, provides evidence that at least some members of the clergy received similar levels of education as Marinianus. While Caterius’ exact see in not known, like Symphosius he attended the Council of Zaragoza in 380, but was not listed among

\(^{124}\) For paideia, see Brown, Power and Persuasion, 34, 37-47, 61; Edward J. Watts, City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 5-6, 12-16, 152-154.


\(^{126}\) For example, in one letter Symmachus wrote about his days of leisure in the country where he enjoyed the fruits of autumn. The only thing that could have made this experience more pleasurable, according to Symmachus, was if his friend Marinianus were there with him. Symmachvs Mariano III.XXIII.1-2, Callu, 35-36.
the bishops at Toledo. Carterius was a source of concern for Oceanus, a nobleman in Rome, who complained to Jerome because the Gallaecian bishop had remarried after his first wife died. In 397, Jerome wrote to Oceanus in defense of Carterius, particularly because the first marriage had taken place before the bishop was even baptized. Jerome used an interesting example when discussing the case of Carterius. He wrote, “Rhetoricians define an orator as a good man able to speak. To be worthy of so high an honor he must be blameless in life and lip. For a teacher loses all his influence whose words are rendered null by his deeds.” Although Jerome was not necessarily calling Carterius an orator, this example suggests that there was a perceived relationship between the roles and therefore the desired moral character and behavior of bishops and public speakers. Moreover, Jerome’s comparison emphasized a specific function of the bishop, to speak eloquently, a skill gained through instruction with a rhetorician. The fact that Carterius’ actions and marriage concerned a member of the Roman nobility indicates that the bishop shared a similar status as Oceanus, which would have included proper training. Finally, although he was writing almost three centuries later, Braulio of Zaragoza described Carterius as a bishop of laudable old age and holy erudition and referred to Gallaecia as a place associated with letters and learning. Of course, relying on such a late source is problematic. Nevertheless, the fact that a member of the clergy in seventh-century Hispania thought of Caterius and Gallaecia in this manner suggests that there had been a continuous tradition of education in the


129 Jerome, Letter 69.8.

province from at least the later fourth century, in which Carterius, Marinianus and Symphosius all had the opportunity to participate.

Whether he took advantage of the instruction available in Gallaecia or travelled outside of the province for it, Symphosius also likely shared the values and training of the Roman elite. Although none of his writing is extant, Symphosius’ education is confirmed by the fact that he wrote letters to and received them from his fellow bishops in Hispania and Italy and was trusted to act as an ambassador to deliver correspondence to Hydatius in Mérida. The example of Carterius highlights another important point about Symphosius and the bishops in Gallaecia at this time, which is that some were married and had children.\(^\text{131}\) Of course, Symphosius had a son named Dictinus, who also had to defend himself at the trial after the First Council of Toledo. We have no information about the mother of his child; however, as is discussed below, Symphosius did honor his familiar bonds. In particular, he upheld his obligation to provide his son with an education. At the trial in Toledo, Dictinus admitted to saying and writing ideas associated with Priscillian.\(^\text{132}\) The specific theological point he referred to concerned whether or not God and man shared a nature.\(^\text{133}\) He willingly and repeatedly rebuked his mistaken assumption that they

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The fact that he would write about this type of theological issue suggests his education may have included philosophical training, which typically followed work with grammarians and rhetoricians.

**The Elite in the Countryside: *Otium, Negotium and Patronage***

We have seen that while they did make moderate investments to improve some public facilities in Astorga and León, for the most part there is little evidence that Symphosius and the other elite of his see lived in these urban centers in the later fourth century. They did, however, actively enhance and significantly remodel their villas, or rural estates, in the years leading up to council of Toledo. This section argues that the monumental scale of these changes suggests that Symphosius and the other members of the elite used these spaces to demonstrate their prestige to their dependents and other members of their own social group, as well as to conduct *negotium*, or business, with both groups. The consistency among the villas confirms that these landowners were part of an active and interconnected elite engaged in a shared culture and system of values associated with *paideia*: properly enjoying *otium*, or leisure time; building connections through friendship and using both for *negotium*. Of course, not all of the villas from this period have been fully excavated, but those that have serve as a model for understanding this group of elite landowners. Two such examples, La Olmeda and Navatejera, will be discussed next.

Like the other villas in the southern Asturicensis region, Navatejera and Olmeda were at least partially dedicated to agriculture in the later fourth century. It is difficult, however, to

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determine the scale of this agrarian enterprise based on the archaeological evidence.\textsuperscript{135} Navatejera’s ideal location near both a river and a creek added to its fertility and productivity. Although no pollen analysis has been conducted for the fourth-century remains, quern-stones used to mill wheat and containers to store large quantities of grains and other foodstuffs suggest that the rural estate was used for farming various crops, including the cultivation of cereal.\textsuperscript{136} The faunal remains are primarily from bovines, and so raising livestock was likely an area of specialization for the landowner and his dependents (Figure 2-3).\textsuperscript{137} Similarly, Olmeda was well situated in a fertile river valley, near a forest with many pine trees to be used as building materials.\textsuperscript{138} The location for these villas may have been chosen for its fecundity, but what is most noticeable about the rural estates is the manner in which the\textit{ domini}, or owners, changed the residential sectors in the years before the First Council of Toledo.

Located about two miles north of León, the villa at Navatejera was remodeled significantly over the course of the fourth century. The rural estate was originally built in the early imperial period, probably in the first century.\textsuperscript{139} Sometime around or just after the middle of the fourth century the owners of the villa decided to expand the\textit{ balnea}, or domestic bath complex. They employed skilled carpenters and artisans to add an\textit{ apodyterium}, or room for

\textsuperscript{135} Such evaluations are difficult since excavations of the landscape around villas are very rare. See Carmen Fernández Ochoa, Fernando Gil Sendino, Almudena Orejas Saco del Valle, “La villa romana de Veranes el complejo rural Tardorromana y a de estudio del territorio,” \textit{AEspA} 77 (2004): 211.

\textsuperscript{136} Gutiérrez González, Campomanes Alvaredo, Hernández, Benéitez González, Martín del Otero, Muñoz Villarejo, San Román Fernández, 94; Miguel Hernández, Benéitez González, 117-119; Miguel Hernández, Benéitez González, 103.

\textsuperscript{137} Miguel Hernández, Benéitez González, 121.


\textsuperscript{139} Miguel Hernández, Benéitez González, 123; Alexandra Chavarria, \textit{El Final De Las "Villae" En Hispania" (Siglos IV-VIII)} (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2007), 220.
changing in, with a præfurnium, or furnace to heat it, along with additional rooms with an exedra and a mosaic. These types of alterations would have enhanced the bathing experience of the family who lived in the villa, but also would have made the space more comfortable and impressive for any guests they entertained for both business and leisure. Of course, the household’s servants would have had extra work to maintain the baths, keep the rooms heated and to serve the guests. The dominus, or owner, and his family were still enjoying the improved balnea when they decided transform the eastern wing of their country home. In the later fourth or early fifth century, around the time of the First Council of Toledo, they demolished this entire section of the house and rebuilt it on a more monumental scale. Many new rooms were added, including a grand hall.

The decorative choices for the villa at Navatejera show that the owners were part of a larger elite circle patronizing at least some local artisans. Over the course of the second half of the fourth century, the domini commissioned several mosaics in the villa and had others repaired. Stylistically, these mosaics resemble those found in other villas in the Roman West from this period. As mentioned previously, one of the mosaics at Navatejera, was very similar in design and color scheme to the tiled pavement mosaic added to the Casa del Pavimento de Opus Signinum in Astorga at around the same time. This suggests that there was a connection between the two residences. For example, the same family may have owned both houses, or two families may have employed the same artisans. It is impossible to know which scenario explains

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140 Hernández, Benéitez González, 123; Chavarria, El Final De Las "Villae", 221.
141 Miguel Hernández, Benéitez González, “Relectura arqueológica de la villa Romana de Navatejera (León),” 110-116, 123.
142 Hernández, Benéitez González, 110-116, 123.
143 Hernández, Benéitez González, 107.
144 Sevillano Fuertes, Excavaciones Arqueológicas previas, 8-9.
the stylistic parallel, but in either case the same workshop likely installed the decorative flooring. If different families owned the two homes, their shared taste indicates a setting in which elites influenced each other and perhaps engaged in competition.

At the same time, about 55 miles to the east, the owners of the villa known as Olmeda also added to their residential building, but on an even grander scale. Although there had been a rural estate at the site since the second or third century, the residents of Olmeda chose to build a completely new home in the second half of the fourth century.145 This monumental new living area surrounded a large rectangular peristyle, which was separated from the main rooms by brick archways and galleries covered in mosaics (Figure 2-4).146 They installed seventeen mosaic portraits in these galleries, which some have interpreted as depicting the family who lived in the villa. Others have suggested that the mosaics are from the later fourth century and represent the female members of Theodosian family, Roman emperors and mythological heroes.147 Even the outside view of the residential sector was impressive: large circular towers marked the four exterior corners of the villa.148 At least eight wells were located throughout the villa to provide

145 Chavarría, El Final De Las "Villae", 218-219. The new building was constructed sometime after mid-century and changes, repairs and additions were made in the last quarter of the century. See Miguel Nozal, Javier Cortés, José Antonio Abásolo, “Intervenciones arqueológicas en los baños de la Villa de la Olmeda (Pedrosa de la Vega, Palencia),” in Termas Romanas en el Occidente del Imperio, II Coloquio Internacional de Arqueología en Gijón, ed. C. Fernández Ochoa, V. García Entero (Gijón: Ayuntamiento de Gijón, 2000), 316.

146 Chavarría, El Final De Las "Villae", 216.


all areas with fresh water.\textsuperscript{149} The more private rooms on the second floor of the home, including
the owner’s library, could be reached by one of its two staircases.\textsuperscript{150}

Like the owners of Navatejera, the \textit{dominus} of Olmeda used the villa as more than a
home for his family; it was also a public space.\textsuperscript{151} In the middle of the fourth century, around the
same time the owners of Navatejera remodeled their \textit{balnea}, the residents at Olmeda added an
elaborate bath complex of their own.\textsuperscript{152} Its location in the southeastern wing of the villa was
ideal for special guests to enter and enjoy. The family also could entertain in the \textit{triclinum}, or
large dining room.\textsuperscript{153} In addition to the clearly private rooms and service areas for preparing and
storing food, the new building had multiple halls adorned with more mosaics, which were
presumably used for hearing the requests of audiences (Figure 2-5).\textsuperscript{154} For example, a large
quadrangular room on the eastern side of the peristyle would have been used as a reception hall.
It had a mosaic on the floor with the only figurative scenes in the villa. One depicted Achilles
being discovered by Ulysses in the Gynaeceum of Lycomedes of Scyros.\textsuperscript{155} The representation
of this myth in which Achilles dressed as a woman to avoid the Trojan War would have been a
light-hearted way for the \textit{dominus} to demonstrate his own education to and build connections

\textsuperscript{149} Domiciano Ríos, 121-126.
\textsuperscript{150} Gutiérrez de Castro, 109-110.
\textsuperscript{151} For a discussion of how homes in this period served both public and private functions see, Bowes, \textit{Houses and
Society}, 42-54: Kimberly Bowes, \textit{Private Worship, Public Values, and Religious Change in Late Antiquity}
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 4-5, 128-129; Simon P. Ellis, "The end of the Roman house,"
\textsuperscript{152} Miguel Nozal, Javier Cortés, José Antonio Abásolo, 311-315.
\textsuperscript{153} Chavarría, \textit{El Final De Las "Villae"}, 216-219.
\textsuperscript{154} Chavarría, \textit{El Final De Las "Villae"}, 216-219.
\textsuperscript{155} Chavarría, \textit{El Final De Las "Villae"}, 216-219.
with his peers when they visited his lavish home, whether it be for business or leisure.\footnote{For a discussion of the patron’s role in determining the subject matter and design that the artists created in mosaics and other floor and wall decorations, see Birte Poulsen, “Patrons and Viewers: Reading Mosaics in Late Antiquity,” in \textit{Patrons and Viewers in Late Antiquity}, eds. Stine Birk and Birte Poulsen (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2012), 167-168, 177, 183-184. Poulsen suggests that the depiction of Achilles in this mosaic may have been a representation of the patron. Depictions of such myths allowed the \textit{domini} in homes such as Olmeda to demonstrate they possessed the \textit{paideia} of the educated elite. See also in the same volume, Sarah Scott, “Fourth-Century Villas in the Coln Valley, Gloucestershire. Identifying Patrons and Viewers,” 191, 209-210.} The entrance to the hall had a large rectangular area showing scenes from the hunt, a type of iconography that had become popular in this period as a way to demonstrate the valor of the patron.\footnote{Jaime Gutiérrez Pérez, “Decoración faunística en T.S.H.T. de la villa Romana “La Olmeda,”” in \textit{In Durii regione romanitas: estudios sobre la Presencia Romana en el valle del Duero en Homenaje a Javier Cortes Alvarez de Miranda}, eds. Carmelo Fernández Ibáñez, Ramón Bohigas Roldán (Palencia/Santander: Diputación Provincial de Palencia y Instituto de Prehistoria y Arqueología Sautuola, 2012), 131-132; Poulsen, 176.} Surrounding this hall were several smaller rooms, one of which had a semicircle apse. The arrangement of the various rooms and their sizes suggests that they were used as antechambers to the larger reception area.\footnote{Chavarria, \textit{El Final De Las "Villae"}, 216-219.} Such a design would allow the \textit{dominus} to control who would have direct access to him and when such a meeting would take place.

Overall, the new building was perfectly suited for a family of the imperial or senatorial elite to enjoy \textit{otium} and conduct \textit{negotium} and build connections with peers.\footnote{Javier Arce suggests that the residents of Olmeda were part of the Theodosian family or members of the senatorial elite. See Javier Arce, “Los retratos de los medallones del mosaico de Aquiles,” 90.} Of course, the \textit{dominus} also likely used the space at Olmeda in his capacity as a patron to various dependents. The initial construction of the villa and subsequent additions and repairs required many builders and artisans. There also were smiths on site.\footnote{José María Gómez de Salazar, María Isabel Barrena Pérez, Alicia Soria Muñoz, “Estudio microestructural de piezas de hierro. Tecnología Romana en la Olmeda,”” in \textit{In Durii regione romanitas: estudios sobre la Presencia Romana en el valle del Duero en Homenaje a Javier Cortes Alvarez de Miranda}, eds. Carmelo Fernández Ibáñez, Ramón Bohigas Roldán (Palencia/Santander: Diputación Provincial de Palencia and Instituto de Prehistoria y Arqueología Sautuola, 2012), 141-146.} In addition, servants, freedmen and slaves, must have worked to upkeep the public and private areas of the house and helped whenever the family
was entertaining guests. Finally, the two nearby cemeteries used in the later fourth century, suggest a substantial associated population, which may have included dependents not directly related to the day-to-day operations of the villa itself.161

Scholars offer varying interpretations of the monumentalization of villas such as Navatejera and Olmeda. The empire-wide trend began in the later third century, and may have been connected to the social, political and fiscal changes put into effect after Diocletian’s administrative reforms. Many scholars argue that some landowners enriched their estates and combined their smaller properties to create larger ones, which were likely associated with the new imperial bureaucracy and tax collection.162 However, the villa culture of the Roman Empire in this period was characterized not only by its connection to the imperial administration, but also by its emphasis on cultivating culture and connections through *otium*.163 Constructing and entertaining in elaborate rural estates was a way for the elite, whether they were members of the old senatorial class or new members of the imperial bureaucracy, to demonstrate their status to their peers and their dependents. As Kim Bowes points out, they used a common architectural

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161 These two cemeteries are located 700 meters and 400 meters from the villa. There is a third cemetery, 200 meters away, but it is dated to the sixth century. Altogether 700 inhumations have been found in these cemeteries and a large number are dated to the period of the later fourth and early fifth centuries. See Francisco Javier Marcos Herrán, Oliva V. Reyes Hernando, “Análisis espacial de la necrópolis norte de la Olmeda (Pedrosa de la Vega, Palencia),” in *In Durii regione romanitas: estudios sobre la Presencia Romana en el valle del Duero en Homenaje a Javier Cortes Álvarez de Miranda*, eds. Carmelo Fernández Ibáñez, Ramón Bohigas Roldán (Palencia/Santander: Diputación Provincial de Palencia and Instituto de Prehistoria y Arqueología Sautuola, 2012), 156-157; and in the same volume, Francisco Etxeberria Gabilondo, Lourdes Herrasti, “Los restos humanos de la necrópolis norte de la Olmeda (Palencia),” 161-163; Chavarría, *El Final De Las "Villae"*, 118-120, 218-219.


discourse to display their *paideia* and build bonds of friendship and patronage.\(^{164}\) The owners of Navatejera and Olmeda and other similar villas in southern Asturicensis were part of a larger community for whom patronage networks had great social and economic significance. As a member of the elite in the region, Symphosius certainly understood the importance of patronage connections. Moreover, as the next sections shows, his obligations due to his social status and as an episcopal representative were not distinct for the bishop.

**Symphosius: Member of the Elite and Bishop of Astorga**

The shared cultural values of the elite of the late Roman Empire blurred the distinctions between Christian and non-Christians.\(^{165}\) As discussed above, this is perhaps why it is difficult to find specifically Christian buildings in the archaeological record. A large rectangular hall with a horseshoe apse built at Marialba de la Ribera, located about four miles southeast of León, reveals the intersection of Christian and secular cultural practices for the elite in Symphosius’ see. The free-standing hall was built sometime in the fourth century and seems to have been left unfinished for awhile; initially the floors were not covered and no painting was added to the walls.\(^{166}\) Around the time Symphosius was tried at the First Council of Toledo in 400, the proprietors at Marialba began to transform the hall. Based on the features added at this time, archaeologists assume that it was used as a form of Christian basilica starting in the late fourth or

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\(^{165}\) Peter Brown, *Power and Persuasion*, 125.

\(^{166}\) According to a personal conversation with an archaeologist at the site, Raquel Martínez Peñín, despite thorough surveys no residential remains have been found at the site, but there was a villa nearby. Raquel Martínez Peñín, conversation with author, July 30, 2015. See also Artemio Martínez Tejera, “Marialba de la Ribera (Villaturiel, León),” in *El Tiempo De Los Bárbaros: Pervivencia Y Transformación en Galia e Hispania (ss. V-VI)*, eds. Jorge Morín de Pablos, Jorge López Quiroga, Artemio Manuel Martínez Tejera (Alcalá de Henares: Museo Arqueológico Regional, 2010), 574; Theodor Hauschild, "La iglesia martirial de Marialba (León)," *Tierras de León: Revista de la Diputación Provincial* 8.9 (1968): 25.
early fifth century.  

However, when analyzed within the context of elite building trends, this Christian use is not as apparent. For example, the owners added an atrium to the wall opposite the apse, which has been interpreted to be a narthex or vestibule. However, such anterooms also were common in audience halls of secular estates as a way to control the flow of guests and clients into the main room. The decorative elements added to Marialba at this time, such as pilasters and niches, also were consistent with patterns found in elite rural and urban homes in this period. Around the same time that they made these changes to the hall, the people associated with the basilica began burying some of their dead there. They placed several graves in the hall; in particular, they used the area near the main entrance and the apse. Some scholars have suggested that this indicates that the owners converted the space into a martyrrium, or burial place for Christian martyrs. However, there is no proof that the dead buried here were important Christians and the site never became known as a location for martyrs. The basilica was transformed into a church and cemetery in subsequent centuries, but the use of the space in the later fourth and early fifth century is not as clear. Even if it did have a Christian function, such as a private chapel and mausoleum, the similarity between Marialba and elite estates at the time points to overlapping cultural and social idioms between the Christian and secular spheres. 

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168 Martínez Tejera, 574; Rollán Ortiz, 140; Hauschild, 25.

169 Martínez Peñín, “La secuencia altomedieval,” 53; Martínez Tejera, 574; Hauschild, 25.

170 Martínez Tejera, 574.

171 Martínez Peñín, conversation with author, July, 30, 2015.

172 A hall built at Navatejera, considered to be a Christian basilica, offers another possible parallel although it is more clearly Christian given its cruciform shape. However, its chronology has recently been re-evaluated and rather than the later fourth century, archaeologists now think it was built in the fifth and thus it will be discussed in Chapter 6. For Marialba see Raquel Martínez Peñín, "La secuencia altomedieval de la iglesia peleocristiana de Marialba,”
Symphosius’ social and familiar relationships also reveal the overlapping networks and customs within secular and ecclesiastical communities in the later fourth century. His relationship with his son indicates that the bishop experienced at least some conflation of the secular and ecclesiastical spheres, particularly when it came to familiar bonds and obligations. While clerical celibacy was not universally mandated at the time, it had been regulated in *Hispania* since the early fourth century.\(^{173}\) In 306, the bishops at the Council of Elvira ruled that all clerics should abstain from their wives and have no children.\(^{174}\) The bishops at the meeting in Toledo in 400 also discussed the issue and their decisions suggest that they may have been particularly concerned about preventing the secular familiar tradition of establishing a legacy between father and son from being extended to hereditary bishoprics. The very first tenet they decided on at the council ruled against priests and deacons having children after their ordinations. Deacons were to live continent lives, even if they were already married. If they had relations with their wives after becoming deacons, they were not allowed to become presbyters. Furthermore, if they were presbyters at the time of the ruling and were already fathers, they could not become bishops.\(^{175}\) We do not know if Symphosius violated this canon or the Elvira decision since it is not clear if Dictinus was born before or after his father entered the clergy.


\(^{173}\) The canons from the Council of Elvira, ca. 306 CE, are the earliest known ecclesiastical rulings on clerical marriage and celibacy. However, this was a regional ruling; clerical celibacy was not universally mandated until early in the twelfth century. See Rebecca A. Devlin, “Boniface and Heresy in Eighth-century Frankia,” *Ex Post Facto* 18 (2009): 56-57; Charles A. Frazee, “The Origins of Clerical Celibacy in the Western Church,” *Church History* 41, no. 2 (June 1972): 149-167.


\(^{175}\) I Tol, I, Vives, 20.
Perhaps even more troubling for the bishops at Toledo than the fact that Symphosius had a son, was that the bishop of Astorga also used his authority to ordain him into the church hierarchy. In fact, the ordination of clerics and bishops was a central concern of the bishops at Toledo. In his opening speech, Patruinus, the bishop of Toledo who presided over the meeting expressed concern over the fact that there were scandals in the church that were threatening to cause schism. The main problem was inconsistent ordination practices; Patruinus put rectifying this on the main agenda for the council.\footnote{I Tol, Introduction, Vives, 19.} Four of the eighteen canons decided at the council concerned ordination and three of the first four topics debated focused on this issue.\footnote{I Tol, I, II, IV, X, Vives, 20-21, 22.} Moreover, as has been discussed, the issue was central to the trial after the council, specifically as it pertained to Symphosius’ actions in Gallaecia.\footnote{I Tol, Exemplar definitiae sententiae, Vives, 30-33.}

The growing authority of Symphosius and the strong network he was creating through his ordinations in the northwestern province were a cause for concern for the other bishops in Hispania. This situation was magnified by the fact that Symphosius seems to have viewed the episcopacy as an office that could be bestowed upon family members, similar to how family connections might help someone advance within secular networks. Apparently, even before the First Council of Toledo, Symphosius’ fellow bishops criticized the favor he showed Dictinus. Indeed, when Symphosius met with Ambrose of Milan, he also asked him about the legitimacy of his son’s ordination. Ambrose upheld Dictinus’ ordination as presbyter, but declared that Symphosius’ son deserved no greater honor.\footnote{I Tol, Exemplar definitiae sententiae, Vives, 31.} In other words, Dictinus should not be made a
bishop. Yet, in the record of the Council of Toledo he is referred to several times as *episcopus*. Since Dictinus’ see is not specified, it is possible that he served as a co-bishop with his father or had his own bishopric nearby. In this case, Symphosius defied the recommendation offered by Ambrose and followed actions dictated by loyalty to his family and his commitment to honor the opinions of the laity. In fact, despite his desire to remain in unity with the church, Symphosius also decided to make his son a bishop due to Dictinus’ popularity with the people. The other bishops at Toledo, nonetheless, understandably remained concerned about corrupting the church hierarchy with the nepotism associated with hereditary offices.

Symphosius’ conflation of secular elite customs with the duties of a bishop likely made his other ordinations problematic as well. As we have seen, display, status and extending patronage networks were an important component of the social world of Symphosius and his community. Villas with their private baths and audience halls adorned with ornate mosaics and raised areas for the *dominus* to sit on while hearing the requests of dependents and forming bonds with clients are found throughout southern Asturicensis. Symphosius, his son and other bishops in Gallaecia were part of the educated elite that participated in this villa culture. In fact, when read in light of this social context, the record of the Council of Toledo reveals that the men who he ordained did view Symphosius as their patron. Their willingness to agree to the orthodox creeds put forth by the bishops in Toledo had much to do with their allegiance to Symphosius. One presbyter named Comasus proclaimed, “I believe with my master, the bishop, and condemn all which has been condemned” and later, “whatever my bishop said, I say, and whatever he

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condemned, I condemn.” He added, “I follow the authority of my bishop Symphosius; I follow the wisdom of the old man.” The language suggests a strong bond between the presbyter and his superior based on loyalty and deference. Similarly, when Dictinus condemned the writings of Priscillian, he did so by saying, “I follow the decree of my lord and my father and my generator in faith and my teacher Symphosius.” Isonius also accepted the confession of the council by pledging his allegiance to the bishop of Astorga. All of these men seemed to consider themselves tied to Symphosius by bonds of patronage. In fact, one of the issues discussed at the council proper had to do with whether or not a cleric could be ordained if he was linked by patronage to a domini. Evidently then, there was concern among the bishops about conflicting patronage networks, since a cleric’s obligation should be to the church; however, it also suggests that the boundaries between traditional and church patronage ties were not clear and that for some at least, there was still overlap.

The concern the bishops at Toledo had for the blurred distinction between the secular and sacred spheres extended to the activities taking place in the private residences of the elite. Apparently some lay individuals were carrying out certain Christian rituals and readings in their villas without a member of the clergy present. The bishops at Toledo ruled that some actions should only take place in a church, but if they had to be done in a rural estate, a bishop, presbyter

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182 Comasius presbyter dixit: Nemo dubitet, me cum domino meo episcopo sentire et omnia damnare, quae damnavit… ac proinde quomodo dixit episcopus meus, quem sequor, quicquid ille damnavit et ego damno. I Tol, Incipiunt Exemplaria Proefessionum, Vives, 29-30.


185 Item Isonius, nuper baptizatum se a Symphosio et episcopum factum, hoc se tenere, quod in praesenti concilio Symphosius professaus est, respondit. I Tol, Exemplar definitivae sententiae, Vives, 31.


187 The ruling mentioned widows in particular. I Tol, IX, Vives, 23.
or deacon needed to be present. They also mandated that consecrated members of the lower clergy had to attend their churches daily even if they were in rural locations or villas.\textsuperscript{188} Although this ruling does suggest that some villas in \textit{Hispania} had churches within them, it also indicates that the bishops at Toledo worried that sometimes these spaces were not regarded with the respect warranted for ecclesiastical buildings.\textsuperscript{189} Both examples show that the activities in rural estates of the elite prompted regulation because the landowners and clergy connected to them were not separating the secular and sacred spheres properly. Similar concerns were voiced at the Council of Zaragoza (380) at which the bishops debated the practices and teachings associated with Priscillian. At that meeting, they rebuked anyone who chose to remain in their villas rather than attend church on Sundays or holidays.\textsuperscript{190} In fact, Priscillian’s primary offense may have been the threat his status as a member of the rural elite posed to the still emerging urban-based church hierarchy.\textsuperscript{191} Similarly, Symphosius’ conflation of the values connected to the elite living in the villas of southern Asturicensis and his duties as a bishop worried his episcopal colleagues and prompted the investigation into his ordinations.

In summary, Symphosius was a well-respected bishop who worked within the clerical community of \textit{Hispania} to promote consensus and catholic unity. He may have mistakenly thought of Priscillian as a martyr at some point, but the circumstances of the bishop of Avila’s death were questionable and Symphosius quickly and enthusiastically pledged his allegiance to

\textsuperscript{188} I Tol, V, Vives, 22.
\textsuperscript{189} For estate-based clergy see Bowes, \textit{Private Worship, Public Values}, 157-158. According to Bowes, this ruling “was intended to castigate lazy clerics and likewise implies that clergy were attached to rural estates in Hispania.”
\textsuperscript{190} Zar, II and IV, Vives, 17-18.
the rest of peninsular church. More problematic was Symphosius’ conflation of the secular and ecclesiastical spheres. The bishop of Astorga’s concern for the needs of his congregation may have motivated him to expand his clerical network. The villa culture of southern Asturicensis provides evidence of an elite class that viewed patronage as an important component of their social world. As a member of the elite, Symphosius participated this world, and many of the men that he ordained seemed to view him as their patron.

Although we do not know the sees of the newly ordained men, it is quite probable that they were outside the region of Astorga and León, where Symphosius and his son already were bishops. Prior to the late fourth century, there were no episcopal sees in Asturicensis north of the Cantabrian Mountains, but some elite there shared the values of *paideia* and patronage that were vital to the social relations of Symphosius and his community. As is explained in the next section, the important distinction is that the owners of the rural estates in northern Asturicensis were connected to the port of Gijón, which unlike the relative decline in Astorga and León, was experiencing marked vitality due to its incorporation into long-distance exchange networks.192 Extending patronage ties—even if through clerical offices—to the elite north of the Cantabrian Mountains would have provided lucrative opportunities for everyone living in Symphosius’ see.

**Using the Episcopate to Re-establish Connections with Northern Asturicensis**

**Gijón: Transformation and the Emergence of New Networks**

About 185 kilometers north of Astorga on the Bay of Biscay, Roman authorities established the important fishing settlement and commercial port Gijón on the Cimadevilla

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192 This also fits within the framework that Michael Kulikowski suggests for later Roman Spanish cities. He argues that cities connected to Late Antique trade networks, like provincial capitals, prospered while all other cities became increasingly dilapidated. See Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and its Cities*, 109-110, 121-123.
Peninsula in the early imperial period.\textsuperscript{193} Although the formidable Cantabrian Mountains separated Gijón and Astorga, the two cities were connected by a series of Roman settlements and \textit{mansiones}, or Roman stopping places, along the Ruta de la Plata.\textsuperscript{194} During the heyday of gold mining in the region, when military and senatorial oversight was vigilant, communication between the capital, Astorga, and the port was regular and Gijón served as the center of exchange for goods going in and out of the region.\textsuperscript{195} Like Astorga and León, Gijón underwent a transition after mining decreased. The social and economic focus of the northern port changed as the imperial and senatorial presence waned. However, unlike the relative decline witnessed in Astorga and León, those living and working in Gijón created a new social and economic through participation in emerging networks of long-distance exchange.\textsuperscript{196}


\textsuperscript{195} Fernández Ochoa, Morillo Cerdán, López Quiroga, 106.

The significance of Gijón and its incorporation into regional and imperial networks is evidenced by the fact that it benefitted from various investments during the early and later imperial periods. For example, the people who lived in and around Gijón enjoyed the advantages of Roman infrastructure, such as canalization and a cistern to supply water. They likewise had access to roads to travel along the coast, from Brigantium in the west, possibly all of the way to Aquitaine in the east, and south to larger settlements, such as Astorga. As part of their effort to establish a Roman port at Gijón in the late first and early second centuries, authorities constructed a bath complex on the eastern side of the Cimadevilla Peninsula, overlooking the Ría de los Vagones. As acts of public munificence, patrons in subsequent years continued to renovate and expand the original building, making it even more monumental. Finally, because Gijón’s strategic position on the northern coast made it a valuable port and excellent place from which to ship the *annona* to troops at the northern frontiers, the city was fortified during the late Roman wall-building project in the late third or early fourth century.

While Astorga did not recover after the end of the mining in the region, the inhabitants of Gijón took advantage of their natural resources to become involved with new enterprises. Even

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199 The exact dates for all of the modifications are not known although it is known that changes continued to be made after the first third of the second century and the complex ceased to be used for bathing in the later fourth century. See Fernández-Ochoa, “The Roman City of Gijón,” 91-94.

after mining stopped in the region, coastal and northern inland roads and important northern settlements along them were maintained. This infrastructure would have facilitated the movement of grains from the Meseta and Lusitania to the frontier.\textsuperscript{201} During the third century the inhabitants of Gijón also began producing salted fish on a scale that necessitated the construction of a factory in the southwestern area of the peninsula.\textsuperscript{202} Since no evidence of the amphorae used for transport has been found, this “salting factory” likely never became a major supplier for the Roman Empire.\textsuperscript{203} Nevertheless, the evidence suggests it was sufficiently productive to serve as a manufacturing center for the region and may have supplied the \textit{annona militaris}.\textsuperscript{204} The jars and barrels that held its products have been found at nearby villas and cities, including Astorga, León and \textit{Lucus Asturum}.\textsuperscript{205} Although the factory was not included within the wall built in the late third or early fourth century, its workers continued to produce salted fish for distribution throughout the fourth century when Symphosius was ordaining clerics throughout the region.\textsuperscript{206}

The late fourth century and very early fifth century, the time of the First Council of Toledo, brought social and economic change in Gijón. During this period, the local community transformed the bath complex from a public monument into several different types of buildings,

\textsuperscript{201} Fernández Ochoa, “La ciudad en la Antigüedad Tardía en la cornisa Cantábrica,” 82.

\textsuperscript{202} Fernández Ochoa, “La ciudad en la Antigüedad Tardía en la cornisa Cantábrica,” 78.

\textsuperscript{203} Carmen Fernández Ochoa, \textit{Una Industria de Salazones de Epoca Romana en la Plaza de Marques} (Gijón: Excavaciones Arqueologicas en la Cuidad de Gijón, 1994); Paul Reynolds argues that factories such as the one in Gijón emerged in northwestern \textit{Hispania} as the previous Baetican and Lusitanian sources of fish sauce for the region decreased. Baetican and Lusitanian factories began supplying other markets at this time. See Paul Reynolds, \textit{Hispania and the Roman Mediterranean, AD 100-700: Ceramics and Trade} (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co, 2010), 40-47.

\textsuperscript{204} Fernández Ochoa, García Díaz, Gil Sendino, “Gijón, enclave marítimo,” 106.

\textsuperscript{205} Fernández Ochoa, \textit{Una Industria de Salazones}, 151.

both domestic and industrial. Metal workers set up shop on its northeastern edge by constructing large rectangular hearths from old brick and tile construction materials. Smiths performed all stages and aspects of the metallurgical process and focused primarily on converting iron into objects for everyday use for those living in the area. In the northern area of the bath complex, inhabitants converted several of the rooms into simple homes. For example, they filled and leveled off the cold pool or frigidarium with bricks, tegulae and re-used tiles, to transform it into living spaces. The inhabitants used the southern area of the baths, where the tepidarium and caldarium were located, as a dump.

Despite the seeming decline of elite culture that the abandonment of the public baths suggests, Gijón was actually thriving in the later fourth century. The port was no longer primarily a rest stop for those responsible for moving precious minerals around the empire. Instead it had become a manufacturing center. Artisans were producing metal objects in the new

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209 These characterizations are based on analysis of the escorias or slag found in the hearths. Fernández Ochoa, “La ciudad en la Antigüedad Tardía en la cornisa Cantábrica,” 78; Fernández Ochoa, “Algunas consideraciones sobre la historia y la arqueología de Gijón,” 145.

210 The baths may have gone into disuse for a few years before being converted in this way. The exact chronology is not clear, but the transformation took place in the later fourth or early fifth century. Fernández Ochoa, “La ciudad en la Antigüedad Tardía en la cornisa Cantábrica,” 78.


213 Cármen Fernández Ochoa argues that Gijón emerged as an important commercial center in the third century, when it experience a economic boom and continued to grow and thrive throughout the fourth. See Fernández Ochoa, García Díaz, o Gil Sendino, “Gijón, enclave marítimo,” 110; Fernández Ochoa, “Algunas consideraciones sobre la historia y la arqueología de Gijón,”144; Fernandez Ochoa, Morillo Cerdan, “Implantación romana y tráfico marítimo,” 256.
workshops. Workers and their supervisors continued to salt fish in the factory and ship it throughout the region and perhaps to the soldiers on the British and German frontiers.

While the coastal settlement of Gijón had always served an important center of regional interchange, storage and distribution, the changes of the later fourth century made Gijón the local hub of long distance exchange.\textsuperscript{214} Even the common ceramics that have been found in the vicinity suggest Gijón’s importance as a port during the time Symphosius served as the head bishop of the region. Merchants transported solids and semi-liquids in jars with markings, such as for weights.\textsuperscript{215} The containers were not locally made and so they were not likely used to carry the products from the fish factory.\textsuperscript{216} Of course, ceramics made in regional workshops were commonly used and imported through Gijón.\textsuperscript{217} In addition to these ceramics made in nearby workshops, merchants began to bring in fine wares from North Africa, Gaul and the Eastern Mediterranean.\textsuperscript{218} They also imported amphorae, carrying unknown products, from Antioch.\textsuperscript{219} Although the scale of this long-distance exchange was still limited in the late fourth century, it continued to grow and lasted throughout the sixth, and possibly the seventh, century and thus


\textsuperscript{216} They have been found in various locations in Gallaecia and Tarraconensis. It is believed they were from the Ebro Valley. See Fernández Ochoa, García Díaz, o Gil Sendino, “Gijón, enclave marítimo,” 109; Fernández Ochoa, “Algunas consideraciones sobre la historia y la arqueología de Gijón,” 151.

\textsuperscript{217} Known has TSHT or Terra Sigillata Hispánica Tardía. Fernández Ochoa, “Algunas consideraciones sobre la historia y la arqueología de Gijón,” 151.

\textsuperscript{218} Fernández Ochoa, “La ciudad en la Antigüedad Tardía en la cornisa Cantábrica,” 78.

will be discussed in later chapters.\textsuperscript{220} Moreover, it shows the continued vitality of Gijón in this period and highlights the transformations the city was undergoing, when Astorga was clearly in a period of marked decline.

The introduction of these new products from and connections to markets in North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean marked an important moment of change for the northern port of Gijón. It was not coincidental that the goods and the networks that it took to move them between northern Asturicensis and the Mediterranean Basin were emerging at the same time that Symphosius began to expand his own networks through his episcopal office. The ceramics and other merchandise being brought into Gijón were desirable for the landowners and patrons living in the rural estates of Asturicensis, but those living in Symphosius’ southern see were not able to enjoy the items because they did have the connections necessary to broker their transport to their estates. However, as we will see next, Symphosius could forge profitable alliances with landowners near the port of Gijón who like the elite of his see south of the Cantabrian Mountains, placed enormous value on \textit{otium et negotium} and building bonds of friendship and patronage.

\textbf{Networks in the North: The Elite of Northern Asturicensis}

Like Symphosius and his community around Astorga and León, many of the elite living north of the Cantabria Mountains also transformed their rural homes into monumental estates

over the course of the fourth century. One example, Veranes, was located on the top of a well-
protected hill just off the Ruta de la Plata, which connected the villa to the northern port of
Gijón, the various settlements along the Roman road and to Astorga, about 100 miles to the
south. Like both Navatejera and Olmeda, the site was occupied during the early imperial
period, from as early as the first century. Starting in the late third and throughout the fourth
century, the domini of Veranes remodeled and expanded the rural estate. Although they
consistently made changes to the private and service sectors of the villa, their building projects in
the eastern wing demonstrate an interest in creating an impressive more public area separate
from the domestic spaces. More specifically, in the late third and early fourth century, the
dominus built a grand room with an apse on the lowest terrace in the eastern zone. This was
likely a triclinium. At the same time and connected to this grand dining area, the landowner
built a balnea (Figure 2-6). During the first half of the fourth century, the owners completely
restructured the lower terraces in order to separate the private living spaces from the more public
areas of the eastern wing. The general layout of the space was changed so that many of the living
spaces were defined and galleries and corridors were created that changed the flow of the

221 Some examples include: Santa María Hito, Murias de Beloño, Murias de Paraxuga and Veranes, which will be
discussed here. See Chavarría, El Final De Las "Villae," 114, 287-290; Luis Ramón Menéndez Bueyes, Reflexiones
Críticas Sobre El Origen Del Reino De Asturias (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2001), 176;
Manuel Encinas and Amanda García Carillo, “Aportaciones al conocimiento de la transición del mundo Romano
medieval en Asturias: las cerámicas de Murias de Beloño y de Paraxuga,” in III Congreso de Arqueología Medieval
Española, Oviedo, 27 Marzo-1 Abril 1989, Actas, II Comunicaciones (Oviedo: Asociación Española de Arqueología
Medieval/Universidad de Oviedo, 1989), 131-139; and in the same volume, Otilia Requejo Pagués, “Cerámicas
Tardorromanas de la “villa” de Murias de Paraxuga (Oviedo),” 140-146; F. Jordá Cerdá, Las Murias De Beloño,

222 Fernández Ochoa, Fernando Gil Sendino, Salido Dominguez, Zarzalejos Prieto, 16.

223 Fernández Ochoa, Gil Sendino, Salido Domínguez, Zarzalejos Prieto, 17; Fernández Ochoa, Gil Sendino, Orejas
Saco del Valle, 198-201.

224 Fernández Ochoa, Fernando Gil Sendino, Salido Domínguez, Zarzalejos Prieto, 18-19; Fernández Ochoa, Gil
Sendino, Orejas Saco del Valle, 205.

225 Fernández Ochoa, Gil Sendino, Orejas Saco del Valle, 205.
space. For example, a large interior patio was added to divide the domestic and service area from the *triclinium* and baths. The owners also worked to improve the first impression of guests, both by refurbishing the entrance to the villa several times and adding a long gallery with porticoes to connect the entrance to the baths and *triclinium*. This gallery was on the south side of the villa and offered a magnificent hilltop view of the surrounding countryside (Figure 2-7).

The owners of the villa at Veranes continued to remodel their estate in the later fourth century and it is in this period that they made their most monumental additions. Sometime around the middle of the fourth century, they closed off the northern entrance and constructed stairs to connect the first and second terraces. This improvement provided access to a series of new rooms that enlarged the northeastern part of the villa. The first was a “spectacular” rectangular corridor with a staircase at its far end (Figure 2-8). This space offered a dramatic entrance to the new reception hall, which was a quadrangle room situated at the top of the stairs and embellished with mosaic floors with a geometric motif. With this elaborate set up, the *dominus* was able to control who had access to him and to reinforce his elevated status. Shortly after these modifications were complete, a heated room, which was connected to another small

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228 Fernández Ochoa, Gil Sendino, Salido Domínguez, Zarzalejos Prieto, 19; Fernández Ochoa, Gil Sendino, 133-148; Fernández Ochoa, Gil Sendino, Orejas Saco del Valle, 205.


room, was added to the southeastern corner of the new grand hall. The *dominus* likely used these two rooms for private conversations when larger groups were present.\(^{231}\) Finally, as we saw with Navatejera and Olmeda, the owners at Veranes allotted considerable resources to make their private bath complex impressive and comfortable. Shortly after the major renovations described above, they added a large *frigidarium* and made repairs to the pool.\(^{232}\)

Many of the changes that the owners of Veranes and other villas in the northern Asturicensis made to their rural estates in the fourth century reflect their efforts to create spaces in which to enjoy leisure activities associated with the elite and to demonstrate their prestige to their dependents. Like the *domini* at Olmeda and Navatejera, the elite living in the villas in northern Asturicensis established patronage ties through both of these activities. The long audience halls with elevated platforms for the owners and spectacular mosaics separated them from and demonstrated authority over their dependents but created a cultural connection with their peers in other parts of the Empire. The private baths and elaborate dining areas were used for entertaining other members of the elite and for discussing business and creating alliances. The similarities among the monumental features in the villas north and south of the Cantabrian Mountains suggest Symphosius and his elite community operated within the same circle as those living at Veranes and the other northern rural estates. However, there is an important distinction between the rural estates to the north and south of the Cantabrian Mountains. The elite living in the northern region enjoyed a variety of products imported from North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean, while those living around Symphosius’ see in southern Asturicensis did not. These products included fine ceramics and wine, which were imported through the northern port


of Gijón. Using patronage networks to establish connections with the elite north of the Cantabrian Mountains would have given the people living within Symphosius’ see access to these products and the opportunity to participate in the lucrative long-distance exchange networks developing in Gijón.

**Conclusion**

It is not possible to definitively prove that Symphosius’ ordinations were part of an effort to establish patronage networks between southern and northern Asturicensis. However, examining the larger social and economic context of the conventus does allow for a more nuanced understanding of the trial after the First Council of Toledo. Symphosius gave the laity an active role in determining who should serve them. Although it would be wrong to presume that he or his congregation made their decisions based on purely social and economic concerns, the evidence suggests the religious and secular spheres were not clearly separated. Moreover, the members of his congregation and those living in the other sees within Asturicensis were part of larger communities, which were affected by the political and economic developments of the time. Symphosius’ own immediate community had never recovered after the collapse of the mining industry in the third century and by the later fourth century Astorga and León lacked sources for economic prosperity. In contrast, the northern port of Gijón continued to flourish and was becoming an important center for long-distance exchange within emerging networks. The evidence suggests that Symphosius participated in the elite culture that spanned the northern and southern regions of Asturicensis and invested heavily in cultivating bonds of friendship and patronage and that many of the men that Symphosius ordained viewed him in these terms. Although Symphosius’ ordinations were criticized because they overstepped the bounds of ecclesiastical authority and were seen as part of his secular desire to extend patronage, the bishop of Astorga was motivated by the needs of his congregation. By connecting his community south
of the Cantabrian Mountains to the developing markets entering the northern port of Gijón, the bishop of Astorga could offer new products, employment prospects and opportunities associated with commercial networks, to the benefit of all the social groups he represented. As Chapters 3 and 4 will show, similar social and economic factors prompted the bishop of Astorga to perform other problematic ordinations.

Figure 2-1. Map of Gallaecia with roads from Astorga, ca. 400. Map courtesy of author.
Figure 2-2. Map of Gallaecia showing conventus, ca. 293. Map courtesy of Alexandre Vigo.

Figure 2-3. Modern rural landscape near Astorga and León. Photograph courtesy of author.
Figure 2-4. Villa Olmeda showing corridor around peristyle with mosaic pavement and rooms (right) and one of the apsed rooms off of it with hypocaust for heating the floor (left). Photograph courtesy of author.

Figure 2-5. Villa Olmeda showing an apsed hall (top) and mosaic pavements (bottom). Photograph courtesy of author.
Figure 2-6. Villa Veranes showing the monumental *balnea* that was added in the late third or early fourth century. Photograph courtesy of author.

Figure 2-7. Villa Veranes showing view of surrounding landscape from perspective of a room located next to the new gallery. Photograph courtesy of author.
Figure 2-8. Villa Veranes showing *triclinium* (bottom left) and use of slope of hill for the rectangular corridor (right) leading to the staircase and new audience hall built in the later fourth century. Photograph courtesy of author.
CHAPTER 3
EXUPERANTIUS, ORTIGIUS AND THE CLERICAL COMMUNITY OF LUCENSIS IN THE LATE FOURTH CENTURY

Introduction: Exuperantius and Ortigius at the First Council of Toledo

As we saw in Chapter 2, the First Council of Toledo (ca. 400) was followed by a trial during which the bishops in attendance investigated some problematic ordinations Symphosius of Astorga had performed. Ultimately, most of Symphosius’ actions were upheld. However, the episcopal leadership in Toledo made a final ruling not discussed in Chapter 2: they ordered that a fellow bishop named Ortigius be restored to his see.\(^1\) Apparently, Symphosius had expelled Ortigius from his church and installed Exuperantius in his place. This aggressive action by Bishop Symphosius is particularly noteworthy because it affected more than those living in his own conventus of Asturicensis. The probable location of the contested see was Aquis Celenis, a small coastal town in the conventus of Lucensis, 165 miles from Astorga (Figure 3-1).

Symphosius claimed that all of his appointments under scrutiny had been carried out according to the wishes of the people. Yet, what might have compelled the bishop of Astorga to become involved in the affairs of a small congregation so far away?

The circumstances of the contested see of Aquis Celenis provide more testimony for the factions within the clerical communities in Gallaecia and the role that social, political and economic concerns had in creating and shaping them. Yet, although there is no evidentiary basis to support it, the limited scholarship on the subject has focused on defining the participants within a continuum of Christian beliefs and practices related to potential associations with the former Bishop Priscillian of Avila.\(^2\) For example, one argument is that Exuperantius and Ortigius

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\(^1\) Tol I, Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis, Vives, 33.

\(^2\) The Spanish usurper Magnus Maximus ordered Priscillian to be executed in Trier on charges of sorcery in 385. See Chapters 1 and 2 for more information about Priscillian and the controversy surrounding his life, beliefs, death and followers.
were both orthodox, but Ortigius was more radically against the Priscillianists; while Exuperantius was more neutral, at least until he arrived at the meeting in Toledo. In another scenario, Ortigius was associated with the Priscillianists, but for an unknown reason Symphosius exiled him in order to replace him with Exuperantius. Finally, some scholars have suggested that they each represented a different faction, Priscillianist or Catholic. Some have assumed that Ortigius was in communion with the majority party in Hispania while Exuperantius was associated with the Priscillianists. In this explanation, Exuperantius was the “more popular” bishop that Symphosius ordained when Ortigius was deposed. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, the limited nature of the sources precludes efforts to define Priscillianism or categorize its potential adherents. Both Ortigius and Exuperantius signed the canons of the First Council of

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3 Purificación Ubric Rabaneda, *La Iglesia En La Hispania Del Siglo V* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2004), 177; Henry Chadwick, *Priscillian of Avila: The Occult and the Charismatic in the Early Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 157, 171, 185. Cardelle de Hartmann uses the situation to demonstrate that the Priscillianists were primarily tolerant. He argues that since Exuperantius was never forced to confirm his own orthodoxy at the council, he was likely aligned with the majority of the bishops of Hispania, much like Ortigius. However, Symphosius ousted Ortigius because he was combative in his opposition to Priscillian being a martyr, while Exuperantius was less so. Moreover, Exuperantius was able to serve as a mediator between the Priscillianists and the rest of the Spanish bishops. See Carmen Cardelle de Hartmann, “El Priscilianismo tras Prisciliano, ¿un movimiento Galaico?,” *Habis*, 29 (1998): 276.

4 José Filgueira Valverde, dir., “Caldas sede episcopal entre las primeras de Galicia,” in *El Museo de Pontevedra, XXXVIII* (Pontevedra: Diputación Provincial de Pontevedra, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas y Fundación “Pedro Barrié de la Maza”, 1984), 109. M.C. Díaz y Díaz proposes a scenario in which Ortigius was a convert to the catholic faith after he had been ordained in Aquis Celenis, presumably as a Priscillianist sympathizer. His conversion created tension with those who ordained him, and ultimately led to his exile and replacement by Exuperantius. He was at the council trying to reconcile with the majority, orthodox party of Hispania. So in this case he was a Priscillianist as was Exuperantius. This theory also suggests that Díaz y Díaz assumes that the entire region of Gallaecia was Priscillianist and under the leadership of Symphosius. See Manuel Cecilio Díaz y Díaz, “Notas sobre el distrito de Lugo en la época Sueba,” *Helmantica: Revista de filología clásica y hebrea* 46, no. 139 (1995): 233.


6 See, for example, Rodríguez Colmenero, *Lucus Augusti, Urbs Romana*, 130.
Toledo, which shows they participated in the discussion and agreed to the collective decisions made. Like Symphosius, each wanted to remain within the catholic unity.

This chapter proposes that examining the social and economic factors affecting the inhabitants of Aquis Celenis is essential for understanding the Christian community and clerical dynamics of the see in the late fourth century. It argues that the people of Aquis Celenis had recently begun a period of new economic vitality, which propelled them to question who would best represent them. Moreover, Symphosius replaced Ortigius in order to install a bishop through whom he could extend patronage to the community living in a favorably located episcopal see. The chapter begins with an examination of the Christian community of Lucensis and its leadership to show the value of Aquis Celenis for forging alliances through ecclesiastical networks at the time of Symphosius’ intervention, since it was the sole episcopal see in the conventus and its jurisdiction was regional. Next, the social and economic contexts of the regional see of Aquis Celenis and the nearby port of Vigo are analyzed in order to highlight the new industries, commerce and patronage networks that emerged in the years before the First Council of Toledo, which motivated the community to seek new leadership. The chapter ends with a discussion of the capital of the conventus, Lugo. Unlike Astorga, Lugo experienced economic vitality in the late fourth century due to its incorporation into imperial and regional commercial networks. Due to its proximity to Aquis Celenis, the capital city and its prosperity represented another reason Symphosius attempted to use an episcopal election to establish an alliance with the only bishop in the region.

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7 Tol I, XX, Vives, 25.
The Christian Community of Lucensis and its leadership

It is difficult to measure the extent of the specifically Christian community in Lucensis in the later fourth century. The congregation of Aquis Celenis certainly was affected by the conflict between Ortigius and Exuperantius and the members of this church seem to have played a role in these events and in choosing their bishop. However, to date there is no textual or material evidence to clarify who these lay Christians were or how they expressed their religious identity in the later fourth century. The sparse evidence we do have for individual Christians in Lucensis in the fourth century consists of primarily isolated archaeological finds located in the vicinity of the capital city of Lugo about 80 miles east of Aquis Celenis (Figure 3-1). For example, a sarcophagus with Christian symbolism dated to the fourth century was discovered at the rural church, Santa María de Temes, which is located at Carballedo, just over 40 miles south of Lugo. Scenes of Jonas, the adoration of the magi, as well as Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden are carved into the front piece. The style and design are similar to those found in Barcelona and Rome and have been dated to the Constantinian era. At the site there also are various Corinthian capitals with columns and pilasters. At first these were dated to the late Roman period

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8 There is evidence for the fifth century and after, which will be discussed in Chapter 6.


and thus it was suggested that this was the site of a villa with associated burials.\footnote{Schlunk, “Los monumentos paleocristianos,” 196.} However, now it is believed that the columns are likely from a later date, perhaps even as late as the ninth century.\footnote{Sánchez Pardo suggests that it was a funerary monument in the early fourth century and became a church in the beginning of the ninth. Sánchez Pardo, "Arqueología de las iglesias tardoantiguas," 401-402.} Ultimately, these finds tell us little more than that there may have been a Christian living in this region in the early fourth century whose loved ones decided to inter in a tomb with religious symbolism; it does not necessarily point to a community practicing a form of Christian burial.\footnote{This assessment is based on the recent analysis of burial customs in Late Antiquity by Éric Rebillard. Rebillard has shown that social rather than religious connections dictated collective burial choices. See Éric Rebillard, The Care of the Dead in Late Antiquity, translated by Elizabeth Trapnell Rawlings and Jeanine Routier-Pucci (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2009), Chapter 3 and especially 56.}

The evidence for a more developed Christian community in the later fourth century at present-day church of Saint Eulalia de Bóveda is also problematic. Located fourteen miles west of Lugo, the structure with its large pool for collecting spring water was built in the third century as a pagan temple likely dedicated to nymphs.\footnote{Another hypothesis is that it was a mausoleum for a wealthy family. See Rodríguez Colmenero, Lvcvs Avgvstii: La Ciudad Romano-Germánica, 206; Lorena Vidal Caéiro and Anastasio Santos Iglesias, III Premio De Investigación Manuel Vazquez Seijas (Lugo: Deputación Provincial, 2006), 90; “El Mausoleo de Santa Eulalia de Bóveda,” El Progreso (December 17, 1989), 8-9.} At some point, possibly in the later fourth century, this nymphaeum was remodeled, and according to many scholars, converted into a small three-naved church with smaller a smaller pool.\footnote{Colmenero Rodríguez, Lvcvs Avgvstii: La Ciudad Romano-Germánica, 206; Rebeca Blanco Rotea, Sonia García-Rodríguez, Patricia Mañana-Borrazás, Alberto Rodríguez-Costas, Anxo Rodríguez Paz, “Levantamento planimétrico e lectura de Alzados en Santa Olaia Bóveda (Lugo),” Actuacións Arqueolóxicas (2007): 103; Lorena Vidal Caéiro, “Posibilidades de la aplicación de la arqueología de la arquitectura en Santa Eulalia de Bóveda (Lugo),” Arqueología de la Arquitectura 2 (2003): 275; Monica R. Lovelle, Jorge L. Quiroga, “El poblamiento rural en torno A Lugo en la transición de la antigüedad al feudalismo (ss. V-X),” Cuadernos De Estudios Gallegos Tomo XLVII (2000): 57; “El mausoleo de Santa Eulalia de Bóveda,” El Progreso, 9; Manuel Chamoso Lamas, “Sobre el origen del monumento soterrado de Santa Eulalia de Bóveda (Lugo),” Cuadernos de Estudios Gallegos Tomo VII, (1952): 239; Sánchez Pardo, "Arqueología de las iglesias tardoantiguas," 401.} The exact dates for the various stages of this temple are difficult to establish definitively as is the early Christian use of the site, which could
have begun any time between the later fourth and sixth centuries. The division of the space into three aisles and the modifications to the pool are not sufficient proof that the small basilica was used for Christian purposes. Interpretation of the evidence is complicated by preservation issues, since, subsequent Christian use of the space, both in modern times and possibly in the Suevic and Visigothic periods, has influenced readings of the changes. Like the similar structures we saw in Asturicensis, such as Marialba, it cannot be assumed that Christians used the space in the years before the First Council of Toledo.

Some scholars’ assumption that the San Roque necropolis outside of Lugo provides evidence for Christian community within the city also is difficult to support. The extra-mural necropolis at San Roque certainly was being used in the later fourth and early fifth centuries. It was located beyond the southern gate of the city and on the Roman roads, XX and XIX, which connected the city to the coast and to Astorga. Although the necropolis was established in the early imperial period, there was a shift away from cremation in the third century and by the later

16 Although new stratigraphic analysis of elevations within the temple and High Definition Topography scanning has helped to define the different constructive phases, but establishing the exact date when the changes were made is difficult. The decorative elements, such as the paintings on the walls are used both to develop the chronology of the constructive phases and to determine how the temple was used. Originally the frescoes were interpreted as Romanesque and attributed to the ninth-century Asturian Kingdom. More recent evaluations suggest strong parallels with Roman and early Christian styles and symbolism found elsewhere in Spain, North Africa and Italy. In particular, it has been suggested that the iconography in the frescoes, such as of fish and birds, have a Eucharistic character and thus should be dated to Late Antiquity. Colmenero Rodríguez, *Lucus Avgvsti: La Ciudad Romano-Germánica*, 206; Blanco Rotea, García-Rodriguez, Mañana-Borrazás, Rodríguez-Costías, Rodríguez Paz, 101-103; Vidal Caeiro, Santos Iglesias, 57-59, 82-96; Vidal Caeiro, “Posibilidades de la aplicación de la arqueología,” 278-281; Francisco Singul “La pintura de Santa Eulalia de Bóveda (Lugo), ortodoxia y clasicismo en la pintura paleocristiana del Noroeste Hispánico,” *Boletín Avriense* XVII (1997): 176-177; “El Mausoleo de Santa Eulalia de Bóveda,” *El Progreso*, 9.

17 This is based on stratigraphic layers, but also the ceramic evidence. See Rodríguez Colmenero, *Lucus Augusti, Urbs Romana*, 127-128; Enrique González Fernández, “Escavación arqueológica de urxencia na Rúa San Roque, no. 31-33 (Lugo)” *Arqueología Informes* 3 (Campana 1989): 150-151.

fourth inhumation burial had become the norm.\textsuperscript{19} The citizens of Lugo used various methods to bury their dead at San Roque, from simple rectangular pits to more elaborate graves with \textit{tegulae} carefully placed as a bottom lining and with niches for offerings.\textsuperscript{20} Not only were the deceased placed in different types of tombs, there also was no consistent orientation for the graves.\textsuperscript{21} Some scholars have claimed that Christian burial practices were adopted over the course of the fourth century because the majority of the later graves were placed East to West.\textsuperscript{22} However, neither the shift to inhumation burial nor the East-West orientation is definitive proof that Christians utilized the necropolis.\textsuperscript{23} The use of Christian symbolism in some of the mortuary finds is more convincing, but unfortunately, very few graves have any materials in them.\textsuperscript{24} Thus, it is difficult to assess exactly who was burying their dead at San Roque since we should not be biased by subsequent use of the site in the Visigothic period, when an oratory was built at the site, or the

\textsuperscript{19} This is based on the superposition of inhumation burials, which cut or broke those of cremation, and the ceramic evidence. See Rodríguez Colmenero, \textit{Lucus Augusti, Urbs Romana}, 126-128; González Fernández, “Escavación arqueológica de urxencia,” 150-151.

\textsuperscript{20} Over 40 inhumation burials from the later Roman period have been excavated, and very few have surviving grave goods. Rodríguez Colmenero, \textit{Lucus Augusti, Urbs Romana}, 127-128; González Fernández, “Escavación arqueológica de urxencia,” 150-151.

\textsuperscript{21} González Fernández, “Escavación arqueológica de urxencia,” 150.

\textsuperscript{22} Rodríguez Colmenero, \textit{Lucus Augusti, Urbs Romana}, 126-127. Earlier reports suggested that the majority were West to East, see Enrique González Fernández above.

\textsuperscript{23} A fountain dedicated to eastern gods was replaced with a workshop for making burial supplies, such as the bricks used in the graves, does show that practices and perhaps religious associations were changing, but not necessarily that the necropolis became Christian. It is difficult to date this change and since it seems to be associated with the fifth and sixth centuries, it will not be discussed here. See Rodríguez Colmenero, \textit{Lvcvs Avgvsti: La Ciudad Romano-Germánica}, 247-249; Ma. Covadonga Carreño Gascón, “Crónica das escavacións de urxencia Feitas na cidade de Lugo durante o ano 1989 polos Servicios Municipais de Arqueoloxía” \textit{Larouco I} (1991): 111-112; González Fernández, “Escavación arqueológica de urxencia,” 151.

fact that it continues to be the location of a church today.\textsuperscript{25} Moreover, as Éric Rebillard has shown, even if the burials at San Roque represented actions by individual Christians it does not necessarily indicate communal practice nor does it signify that a bishop or priest had control over the burial rites.\textsuperscript{26} In fact, as will be discussed next, the capital city was not likely an episcopal see at the time of the conflict involving Exuperantius and Ortigius.

Although there is evidence of some individual Christians in and around Lugo, the city does not seem to have been a bishopric in the years before the Council of Toledo. In fact, Aquis Celenis is the only known episcopal see in the conventus in the later fourth century. Prior to the First Council of Toledo, there is no written evidence for bishops or clergy in all of Lucensis. No bishop from the conventus attended the clerical meeting in Elvira at the beginning of the century and it is impossible to confirm if the there was a representative at the Council of Zaragoza in 380.\textsuperscript{27} Exuperantius is the only bishop of the nineteen listed in the preamble of the First Council of Toledo to have his see specified. While the names alone are given for the other eighteen bishops, the phrase, “\textit{Lucensis conventus, municipius Celenis}” follows Exuperantius’ introduction.\textsuperscript{28} Of course, it is possible that one of the other attendees with no such designation represented another congregation in the conventus.\textsuperscript{29} The next known bishop from Lucensis was Agrestius of Lugo. However, Hydatius, the late fifth-century chronicler from Gallaecia, tells us

\begin{footnotes}
\item Rebillard, \textit{The Care of the Dead}, especially ix-x, 176-178 and Chapters 3 and 6.
\item Elvira, Preamble, Vives, 1. It is more difficult to assess if Lucensis was represented at the council of Zaragoza in 380 because the sees of the 12 attendees are not specified. I Zaragoza, Preamble, Vives, 16.
\item I Tol, Introduction, Vives, 19.
\item I Tol, Preamble and Epilogue, Vives, 19, 24
\end{footnotes}
that Agrestius was bishop in 433 and thus he was not likely involved in the conflict between Exuperantius and Ortigius or their congregation’s decision to replace their bishop.\textsuperscript{30}

The archaeological evidence does not offer any clarification for episcopal leadership in Lucensis. The only evidence of structures possibly associated with Christian leadership for the later fourth century has been found in Lugo and is questionable.\textsuperscript{31} Many scholars assume that a rectangular pool with apses immediately east of the current Cathedral de Santa Maria in Lugo was an early baptistery.\textsuperscript{32} This pool and a few miscellaneous late fourth or early fifth century finds in the precinct, including a pillar of a capital and a granite sarcophagus, have been used to support the assertion that this area in the southwestern extreme of the city was an elaborate episcopal complex, with a baptistery, episcopal palace and important burials.\textsuperscript{33} However, this characterization has largely been based on a backward projection of the current use of the space and the assumption that the area has had enduring religious significance. The apsed pool is the


\textsuperscript{31} Thus far, none of the excavations in the various towns and rural areas in the region, including Aquis Celenis, have revealed signs of episcopal leadership, such as baptisteries, episcopal palaces or Christian basilica. There is either a complete absence of evidence or it is dated to after the later fourth century. For some examples see Fermin Pérez Losada. \textit{Brigantium: Boletín do Museu Arqueolóxico e Histórico da Coruña, Entre a Cidade e a Aldea: Estudio Arqueohistórico Dos "aglomerados Secundarios" Romanos En Galicia} 13 (2002): 93-95, 142, 266; Carmen Fernández Ochoa, Ángel Morillo Cerdán, Jorge López Quiroga, “La dinámica urbana de las ciudades de la fachada Noratlántica y del cuadrante Noroeste de Hispania durante el Bajo Imperio y la Antigüedad Tardía (siglos III-VII d.C.),,” in \textit{VI Reunió D'arqueologia Cristiana Hispànica: Les Ciutats Tardoantigues D'Hispania: Cristianització I Topografia: València, 8, 9 i 10 De Maig De 2003}, eds. José María Gurt Esparraguera and Albert Ribera Lacomba (Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 2005), 112. For discussion on archaeological evidence of episcopal leadership see, Maureen C. Miller, \textit{The Bishop's Palace: Architecture and Authority in Medieval Italy} (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2000), especially Chapters 1-2.

\textsuperscript{32} At the time of the excavation in the 1960s, Manuel Vázques Seijas noted that the only other pool of its kind in Spain for the period was found in Huesca, which was also near a current church. However, since then other pools have been found not only in Lugo, but also in other cities on the Iberian Peninsula and the West. Manuel Vázques Seijas, “Piscina Romana: Plaza de Santa María de Lugo,” \textit{Boletín de la Comisión Provincial de Monumentos Históricos y Artísticos de Lugo} VII (1960-64): 272-273.

\textsuperscript{33} Fernández Ochoa, Morillo Cerdán, López Quiroga, “La dinámica urbana de las ciudades,” 99; López Quiroga, Rodríguez Lovelle, “El mundo urbano en la “Gallaecia,” 47
only find that is definitively dated to the fourth century, but its characteristics do not conclusively identify it as a baptistery. In fact, as will be discussed below, pools and baths were constructed throughout Lugo at this time and might be more correctly interpreted as public munificence carried out when the new drainage and sewage systems were installed.34

In the late fourth century, the only known bishopric in Lucensis was the contested see of Aquis Celenis. Ortigius’ association with Aquis Celenis technically was not specified anywhere in the record for the Council of Toledo.35 The bishops at Toledo did rule that Ortigius should return to his see, but they do not say where it was located.36 A bishop named Ortigius is listed among the bishops in attendance in the introduction of the council record. He also signed the original canons at the end of the meeting, but the see was not identified in either case.37 The fifth-century chronicler Hydatius wrote that Ortigius participated in the council in which Symphosius, Dictinus and the bishops of Gallaecia associated with them agreed to condemn Priscillian and his teachings.38 According to Hydatius, Ortigius was a bishop in Aquis Celenis

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37 Technically Orticius is the bishop who signed his name in the introduction and Ortigius signed the canons after the council. However, analysis of the full list of names shows that they are the same person, Ortigius. See Tol I, Intro and XX, Vives 19, 25.

38 Hydatius, *Chron.* 25, Burgess, 79.
when Priscillianists forced him into exile due to his “pro fide catholica.”

Although Hydatius did not name Exuperantius, there is evidence to support that he was the bishop who replaced Ortigius. Exuperantius was the last bishop to sign the council record. This may indicate that he was the most recently ordained bishop. Moreover, the fact that his see and conventus were listed, while no information was given for any of the other bishops, indicates that either Exuperantius or the other representatives at the council felt that this information needed to be clarified and even asserted. Although Exuperantius and Ortigius are not a frequent topic in the scholarship, consensus exists that Ortigius was the original bishop of Aquis Celenis, who was then replaced by Exuperantius before being restored to his see at the Council of Toledo.

The congregation that Exuperantius and Ortigius represented during their tenures as the bishop of Aquis Celenis likely included members from a larger geographical region than the town itself. Aquis Celenis was the central point of a group of coastal towns, which developed as mansiones or stops on the Roman road XIX in the early imperial period. The episcopal see also was on various secondary or local roads and was the first stop listed in the Antonine Itinerary for the Via XX, or per loca maritime, which was an alternate coastal route to the northern settlement.

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39 Hydatius, Chron. 25, Burgess, 79.


41 When Exuperantius and Ortigius are discussed it is usually in the context of how these bishops and the Council of Toledo can be used to measure the extent and form of Christianization in Gallaecia. However, there also is an interest in assessing the development of bishoprics and territorial units of Gallaecia and how the province relates to the rest of Hispania and the potential influence of Priscillianism on this process. See for example, Rodríguez Colmenero, Lycvs Avgvsti: La Ciudad Romano-Germánica, 203-204; M. C. Díaz y Díaz, “Orígenes cristianos de Lugo,” 241.

at Brigantium, modern A Coruña.\textsuperscript{43} A Constantinian-era milestone for Aquis Celenis shows that it still functioned in this capacity in the fourth century.\textsuperscript{44} Situated less than ten miles from the Atlantic coast, Aquis Celenis was part of the area known today as the Rías Baixas, which extends from Ría de Muros y Noia in the northern province of A Coruña to Ría de Vigo in Pontevedra. This region is comprised of a series of peninsulas with inlets all of which are estuaries connecting to rivers. The rivers facilitated communication between the coast and its rich marine life and the arable inland locations. Its location at the intersection of the Bermaña and Umia Rivers and near the Río Chain enabled fluvial transportation in and out of Aquis Celenis in all four cardinal directions.\textsuperscript{45}

At the turn of the fifth century, Aquis Celenis likely served as a political and administrative center of the region. In the introduction to the First Council of Toledo, Aquis Celenis was described as a \textit{municipium} in the conventus or district of Lucensis.\textsuperscript{46} Since no other see is listed, it is difficult to define this particular designation via comparison to the other bishoprics in \textit{Hispania} at the time. It does indicate that Aquis Celenis functioned as the central place for the governance of a community of citizens, but it does not necessarily mean that it was a city. The fact that the status of Aquis Celenis as a \textit{municipium} is specifically mentioned suggests that Exuperantius asserted himself to the other bishops in Toledo as the representative of the inhabitants of the territory. Of course, this may have been the bishop of Aquis Celenis’ way of affirming his own validity in light of the controversial nature of his ordination. However, he also was staking a claim to a specific region and demonstrating that he was acting in his

\textsuperscript{43} Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 141, 151.

\textsuperscript{44} Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 144-146.


\textsuperscript{46} I Tol, Introduction, Vives, 19.
capacity as the ambassador for its citizens. Epigraphic evidence supports the claim that Aquis Celenis was an important central location for the region, and may have served as a local capital.47

Whether Exuperantius or Ortigius, it is conceivable that the bishop of Aquis Celenis was the head of a regional see that extended beyond the single town and its hinterland. At the very least, the lives and livelihoods of those living in and around Aquis Celenis, who made up Ortigius and Exuperantius’ congregation, were connected to two other nearby mansiones, Iria Flavia and Turoqua (Figure 3-1).48 As bishop of the region Exuperantius or Ortigius could easily travel from Aquis Celenis to reach Iria Flavia, which was only 10 miles to the north and Turoqua, which was 13 miles south.49 The similarities in historical development and ongoing functions of these coastal towns support the notion that they were interconnected to a certain degree and formed a somewhat cohesive region or community. Although there were differences, their close proximity to each other and role as mansiones warrant treating them together. In total, they were less than thirty miles apart, which means travelers passing through did not likely have to stop at all three and in this sense the towns would have shared responsibilities and may have been overseen by the same imperial authority. In addition, they all were connected to coastal settlements, such as Adro Vello, which in the fourth century comprised a fish-salting factory and modest villa (Figure 3-1).50

47 Pérez Losada suggests that Aquis Celenis was the territorial capital. See Pérez Losada, Brigantium 13, 141.
48 Modern Caldas de Reis, Padrón and Pontevedra.
49 This is based on the estimates given by Benet Salway, Colin Adams and Ray Laurence that travelers in imperial Rome easily travelled at least 20 miles per day and typically travelled an average of up to 32 miles daily. See Travel & Geography in the Roman Empire, ed. Colin Adams and Ray Laurence (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 32, 160, 172.
50 Alexandra Chavarría, El Final De Las "Villae" En Hispania" (Siglos IV-VIII) (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2007), 28; L. X. Carballo Arceo, Arqueología De Galicia: Itinerarios Polo Pasado (Vigo: NigraTrea, 2006), 143.
The Regional See of Aquis Celenis

As a mansio, Aquis Celenis served as a resting station or stop for official and private travelers; the town itself, however, was not particularly developed. The topography was primarily limited to a longitudinal axis and not a traditional urban layout of roads crossing to form right angles.\textsuperscript{51} Its role as a point along the Roman roads is clear in the linear distribution of the settlement primarily along the XIX.\textsuperscript{52} As the ancient name for the settlement suggests, water was an important characteristic of Aquis Celenis.\textsuperscript{53} Not only was the settlement located on or near multiple rivers, but springs were also a dominant feature of Aquis Celenis.\textsuperscript{54} However, these springs were not necessarily incorporated into a typical monumental bath structure. Instead the residents and those who made it a stop as they were passing through the town enjoyed them in a more natural setting, which was likely covered by a single construction with open-air areas on the northern end of the town.\textsuperscript{55}

Around the time that Symphosius decided to install Exuperantius as the bishop of Aquis Celenis, the community was experiencing new economic vitality. In the late fourth century, patrons transformed a private residence in the extreme south of the mansio into a factory for producing building supplies.\textsuperscript{56} This factory seems to have been relatively significant perhaps owing to its location on both the XIX and the XX. It supplied a variety of products and offered

\textsuperscript{51} Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 148.

\textsuperscript{52} Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 144.


\textsuperscript{54} Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 143 150.

\textsuperscript{55} Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 144.

\textsuperscript{56} Ceramics and course cooking wares provide evidence of its prior domestic character. The presence of a few coins, one of which is partially ruined, but seems to have been from the fourth century suggests that it was still being lived in during the first half of the century, before being converted into a factory. See “Ecavaciones en Santa Maria de Caldas, 1972,” \textit{El Museo de Pontevedra}, XXVII (1973): 70; Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 146-147.
choices in terms of style to its customers. The industrial-sized kiln was specifically designed for producing *tegulae* and *imbrices*, or tiles for building roofs, and bricks that would be used to construct hypocausts and other walls.\(^57\) The *tegulae* in particular were made with care and with an eye to offering a way to make one’s home or other building reflective of a personal style. Factory workers and artisans used their fingers to etch at least eight different designs on to these roof tiles.\(^58\) The level of variety in the products and the industrial nature of the kiln indicate that they were making products for more customers than those living in Aquis Celenis.

The establishment of this factory coincided with an increased demand for building materials in other settlements of the Rías Baixas. It was at this time that people throughout *Hispania* began to bury their dead in graves made from *tegulae* or that incorporated them in some way. Since the custom also began in the Rías Baixas region as the factory was being built in Aquis Celenis, it is not unreasonable to assume that it supplied at least a portion of the *tegulae*.\(^59\) More importantly, however, it was in the late fourth century that the nearby port of Vigo became an entry point and major redistribution center for luxury items from North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean.\(^60\) The emergence of this long-distance commercial activity injected new markets into the region and spurred construction projects. For example, another town that likely was included in the regional see of Aquis Celenis was the nearby *mansio*, Iria


\(^59\) Many people in Gallaecia chose to use *tegulae* to line burial pits or to create various types of coverings for graves throughout the fourth to seventh centuries. It is difficult to determine if this practice represents the re-use of bricks and tiles originally produced and utilized as construction materials or if some were in fact made for the primary purpose of burial. As mentioned, it must be emphasized that this style of tomb is not limited to the region surrounding Aquis Celenis. Examples are founded in other parts of *Hispania* for this period. However, the proximity of this factory to the locations where they are found in the Rías Baixas suggests a connection. A full study that compares the *tegulae* made in Aquis Celenis to those found in the region, especially with attention to the etchings, would help to confirm this theory.

\(^60\) This will be discussed in detail below.
Flavia. Iria Flavia and its port on the Sar and Ulla Rivers had operated as a thriving entrepôt for goods from Italy, Gaul and parts of Hispania during the early imperial period. However, foreign imports had dropped off in the third century and by the mid-fourth century, Iria Flavia no longer served as a major commercial center for the region. Yet, in the years before the First Council of Toledo, local retailers began to sell new imported products, such as fine ceramics from North Africa and other goods from the Eastern Mediterranean. This new mercantile activity benefited the elite living in Iria Flavia, who made improvements to their homes, as well as the local artisans who sold their wares in shops attached to their modest dwellings.

The market in Iria Flavia and the factory in Aquis Celenis provide valuable insight into the people who composed the community of the contested regional see and what they may have looked for in a leader. We know that the commercial activity in Iria supported both high status individuals who likely were responsible for bringing the North African and Eastern Mediterranean products to the town from the port of Vigo, and more humble retailers and artisans who may have sold the imported products in their shops or taken advantage of the new market to peddle their own wares.

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61 The port is modern Cesuris, which in the Roman period served as a point of communication with the Atlantic Ocean, where the Ulla empties into the Ría de Arousa. A suburban settlement extending from Iria Flavia to the port of Cesuris linked the two areas in the early imperial period. Some scholars suggest that due to its size and roughly urban layout, Iria Flavia should be considered a city and not a dependent secondary enclave or town. See Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 99, 105, 108.


63 Although no new high-status homes were constructed in the years before the First Council of Toledo, members of the local elite continued to live in the houses that had been constructed in the early imperial period, which included the typical features of homes associated with the Roman elite, such as peristyle layouts, mosaics and well-made walls, granite ashlars and columns. Coins from the time of Constantine, Gratian and Valentinian II, along with late Roman ceramics confirm the late-fourth century occupation. See Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 95; 105.

64 A domestic complex consisting of several separate rooms and a portico to connect them to the road has been discovered. Individual families may have lived in each of these modest quarters, making use of the hearths, fireplaces and cooking wares. A circular well located just outside the walls of the complex would have provided a shared water source to be used for domestic, commercial and artisanal activities. Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 96-98, 105-106, 108.
At Aquis Celenis, production of construction materials in the factory on the scale sufficient for regional trade required a significant number of people to perform a variety of jobs. Laborers were necessary to acquire the supplies and transport them to the factory. If the finished products were sold to a market outside of Aquis Celenis, then carters may have provided this service as well, perhaps with additional help from laborers to load the manufactured building materials. If the goods were transported by river, the heavy bricks and roofing tiles would have been transported to dock workers to load them onto boats. Factory workers would have been needed to keep the kilns going, but artisans likely were responsible for the decoration and careful production. Both free men and women as well as slaves could have performed this range of tasks. Of course, one or more managers oversaw operations and accountants or clerks handled the finances and any contracts negotiated. Finally, there was likely a patron or merchant of elevated status who owned the industry or at least supplied the capital necessary to start and run it. All told, this speaks to a dynamic community comprised of great social variety and a period of economic development.

A local resident may have been responsible for overseeing the economic vitality of Aquis Celenis in the later fourth century. Several caches of fourth-century coins have been found in different areas of the settlement. For example, in the later fourth century someone buried 63 coins near a necropolis of unknown date beyond the northern limits of Aquis Celenis.65 A large number of coins also were found in a domestic space in the northern half of the mansio near the open-air baths that made use of natural springs and the southern bank of the Umia River and just

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65 The coins were primarily from the Constantinian period, but seem to have been interred in the later fourth century. See Pérez Losada, Brigantium 13, 144-146.
off the Roman road XIX. This home had been lived in since the first century, but in this earlier period it was rather rustic. After being abandoned for a while, a new resident decided to build a different structure on the space sometime just before the early fourth century. This new home had more durable walls than the previous one. Someone was still living in the domus when Exuperantius replaced Ortigius as bishop of Aquis Celenis. These residents and perhaps their servants or slaves used a mill and sharpening stone, along with Roman cooking ware and imitation Pompeian red slip pottery to prepare and serve meals. They acquired and stored various imported food products in amphorae and dolia, which also may indicate that the owners participated in the commercial exchange of goods. The coins stored in the domicile show that the homeowner had some wealth. The location of this domus near the important Roman thoroughfare and the baths, the only known public building in the town, supports the argument for a dominus of elevated status, such as a merchant or imperial representative associated with the Aquis Celenis’ role as a mansio. This type of wealthy local elite could have acted as a patron for the new industry producing constructive materials that began in the southern region of the city in the late fourth century.

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66 29 coins were found, one from the emperor Maxentius (r. 306-312) but most of them were from Constantine I (r. 306-337). See Núria Calo Ramos, “Proxecto de escavación en area e control arqueolóxico no solar n° 59 da rúa Ferrería, Caldas de Reis,” Actuacións Arqueolóxicas (2007): 180.

67 The first tenant used posts to construct the humble house and covered it with perishable materials. Calo Ramos, “Proxecto de escavación en area e control arqueolóxico,” 179.

68 Chronology is based on the 29 coins found, one from the emperor Maxentius (r. 306-312) but most of them were from Constantine I (r. 306-337). See Calo Ramos, “Proxecto de escavación en Area e Control Arqueolóxico,” 180.

69 Calo Ramos, “Proxecto de escavación en area e control arqueolóxico,” 179-180.

70 Calo Ramos, “Proxecto de escavación en area e control arqueolóxico,” 180.

71 Calo Ramos, “Proxecto de escavación en area e control arqueolóxico,” 180.

72 The provenance of these amphora and dolia is unclear. Calo Ramos, “Proxecto de escavación en area e control arqueolóxico,” 180.
It is perhaps not coincidental that a dispute over leadership arose in Aquis Celenis at the same time that the patrons and workers in the small town responded to a new demand for building materials by constructing a factory and merchants in Iria Flavia began to sell new imported and locally made products. It is not unreasonable to assume that the new economic developments in Aquis Celenis and Iria Flavia motivated the people living and working within the regional see to question who would best represent them, Ortigius or Exuperantius. Symphosius’ involvement in the dispute and his decision to appoint Exuperantius could have been linked with his desire to establish a connection to the commercial activities in Vigo, which as will be discussed next, were similar to those that had prompted him to extend patronage ties to northern Asturicensis and the port of Gijón.

**Commercial Growth and Emerging Networks in Late Roman Vigo**

The commercial and industrial developments affecting the members of Ortigius and Exuperantius’ regional see in the late fourth century were the result of the transformation that was taking place in Vigo, a port 31 miles to the south of Aquis Celenis (Figure 3-1). As will be discussed below, starting in the late fourth century materials of considerable volume, variety and quality were imported through Vigo. As we saw in the northern port of Gijón, these included

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73 Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 239. Note: because there is no clear documentation pertaining to the Roman name for Vigo, the modern one will be used in this discussion.

74 Until very recently, little was known about Roman Vigo or its fourth-century economic expansion. The famous Castro of Vigo, which towers above the current city, was the primary focus of archaeological inquiry and this fortress was largely abandoned over the course of the second century. Fortunately, in the last twenty years modern urban building projects have allowed archaeologists to carry out rescue excavations at different locations in the city and in the process to completely transform our understanding of Roman Vigo. Previously the apparent lack of amphorae in Vigo, especially in comparison to the northern ports in A Coruña, led to the view that Vigo had fallen victim to the hypothesized later Roman crisis of commerce, which lasted into the Middle Ages. This older conception of the period envisioned a rise in autarkic settlements, such as rural villa and villages, which only engaged in limited trade for the few luxury items that could not be produced independently. See Hidalgo Cuñarro, José Manuel and Ricardo Viñas Cué, “Vigo del siglo I al IV después de JesuCristo. Aspectos de la Romanización: castros y villas Romanas,” *Castreslos* 12 (1995): 82-83. For an example of the older conception of Vigo, see Miguel X Gonzalez Fernandez, “O comércio Romano na Ría de Vigo,” *Brigantium* 4, (1983): 79.
countless *amphorae* and various ceramics associated with North Africa, Constantinople, Turkey, Antioch, southern Gaul and Britain. Vigo not only was a significant commercial port starting in the later fourth century, but it also served as a storage and redistribution center.\(^7^5\) This was a major transformation that had trickle-down effects for the inhabitants of the regional see of Aquis Celenis. The products imported through Vigo, were transported to other locations, such as the markets in Iria Flavia. Previously, Vigo had been a small settlement comprised largely of fishermen and workers associated with the salinas, or salt mines. In order to accommodate the new commercial enterprise of the port, warehouses were built. In addition, the social landscape changed since the movement of goods required a variety of new workers, as well as patrons, merchants and managers to oversee them. The higher status individuals involved with the new market built and remodeled their homes. The construction of new domestic and industrial spaces required building materials, which factories such as the one in Aquis Celenis could supply.

Prior to the fourth century, Vigo was a small coastal settlement with communication networks connecting the port to important location throughout Lucensis. The Roman nucleus of Vigo hugged the coast of the Ría de Vigo in the Areal neighborhood in the northeastern edge of the modern city.\(^7^6\) The settlement seems to have followed the shoreline for over a third of a mile with an additional area for the salinas at the eastern end. Roman Vigo was not planned according to a traditional densely organized urban layout. Instead the settlement was more dispersed with open spaces between the various structures.\(^7^7\) Unlike Aquis Celenis, Vigo was not a stop on any of the main Roman roads in Gallaecia, such as the XIX or the XX *per loca maritime*, but the XIX did pass within six miles of the southern limit of the settlement. Smaller, commercial roads

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\(^7^5\) Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 266.

\(^7^6\) Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 244.

\(^7^7\) Of course, future archaeological interventions may counter this assessment. Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 262.
also likely linked the settlement to these Roman roads and perhaps all the way to Aquis Celenis, Iria Flavia then north to Brigantium, modern A Coruña, and east to the capital of the conventus, Lugo (Figure 3-1).78

Vigo’s emergence as a commercial port and redistribution center is especially evident in the warehouse complex the community built over the course of the fourth and fifth centuries. Located just onshore on the western end of the Roman settlement, they constructed a series of buildings each with several walls dividing it into separate compartments.79 The residents of Vigo did not live in these spaces, instead local commercial agents used them to receive and store various imported products.80 Starting in the later fourth century, ships began to bring various ceramics from North Africa, Constantinople, Turkey, Antioch, southern Gaul and Britain.81 Imported materials also came from Lusitania and other parts of Spain, but an increasing number were brought to Vigo from North Africa and the East.82 In addition to an abundance of *amphorae*, late fourth-century merchants also began to trade in fine cooking wares from Africa and other locations throughout the Empire, which were then stored for redistribution.83

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78 Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 265.

79 Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 249.

80 There is practically no evidence of domestic practices in this space. For example, there does not seem to have been a hearth and no containers for the storage of food products have been found. Only a minimal number of pieces of common table cooking ware were uncovered. None of the ceramics have evidence of being used for domestic purposes, such as cooking. Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 249.

81 The chronology given to these finds suggests that they were imported into Vigo from the fourth through seventh centuries. Based on an assessment of the various ceramic pieces, Adolfo Fernández Fernández and Purficación Soto Arias suggest that trade in Vigo began to increase in the later fourth century and became very strong in the fifth. Adolfo Fernández Fernández and Purficación Soto Arias, “Cerámicas finas tardorromanas orixinarias de África e de Medio Oriente atopadas na intervención da rúa Rosalía de Castro 1992 (Vigo),” *Castrelos* 13 (2007): 31-47.

82 Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 247-249.

83 Again, the fact that none of these ceramics found seem to have been used for domestic purposes at the site provides evidence that this area was used for importing goods and as a warehouse for future redistribution. Fernández Fernández, Soto Arias, “Cerámicas Finas Tardorromanas orixinarias de África,” 47.
The high volume of goods, especially commodities, being exchanged through Vigo, justified the significant investment merchants and local leaders made to build this new warehouse and related docks. In fact, the warehouse was part of a larger port complex that included the docks on the water.84 A road was installed to connect the warehouse to the shore, so that the workers could unload the large quantities of *amphorae* and other the imported goods from the ships and more easily transport them to the storage facilities for future sale and redistribution.85 Managers would have overseen this process and the preparation of the goods for redistribution and market. Of course, the patrons hired architects and laborers to build this complex and obtain the proper construction materials, which included various types of stone, gravel and clay and *tegulae* for both the flooring and the roofs.86 Many of the supplies had to be manufactured in industrial kilns like those found in Aquis Celenis, which indicates that residents in Vigo were involved in local trade and likely had connections to members of the regional see headed by Ortigius or Exuperantius.

The development of this port complex and the community’s transition into an entrepôt for extended networks marked a significant shift for Vigo. Prior to the later fourth century, the economic focus of Vigo was providing salt for regional salting factories. Starting in the first century, salt pans or salinas were constructed to take advantage of the salt marshes located along the coastline.87 By the fourth century, salt production was a well-established component of the life and the economy of Vigo. The considerable size of the salinas suggests that they were part of

84 In the modern era, the shoreline has been filled in to create a more stable waterfront. This means that the warehouse would have been closer to the shore in Roman Vigo. Fernández Fernández, Soto Arias, “Cerámicas finas Tardorromanas orixinarias de África,” 27.
86 Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 247-249.
87 Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 252.
a bigger industry than those found elsewhere on the Gallaecian coast.\textsuperscript{88} However, the salinas located east of the warehouse complex were gradually abandoned during the fourth century.\textsuperscript{89} As early as the third century parts of the mining area had been used for cremation burials.\textsuperscript{90} Starting in the fourth century, people began burying their dead in the area more frequently and by the fifth century it was used primarily as a necropolis for inhumation interments.\textsuperscript{91}

The gradual occupation of the salinas with a necropolis in the fourth century provides powerful evidence for the transformation Vigo underwent at this time in conjunction with the growth of imports from North Africa, the eastern Mediterranean and other regions in \textit{Hispania} and the construction of the port complex. People had already begun to forget or at least minimalize the days of producing salt as they buried their dead on the shore. Although it had been used in the third century for some cremation burials, it was during the fourth that the area’s meaning as a salinas and center of an important industry for the community was gradually changed.\textsuperscript{92} The later fourth century was a moment of transition. Local patrons and merchants took steps to become involved in long-distance commodities exchange and the consequent marketing and redistribution of the goods presented themselves. The choices of these local leaders provided opportunities for the entire community living and working in Vigo and the southern Rías Baixas region, including Aquis Celenis.

\textsuperscript{88} Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 261-264.

\textsuperscript{89} Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 266.

\textsuperscript{90} Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 254.

\textsuperscript{91} The space was used for burial until at least the sixth century. Fifty burials with constructed tombs have been found and there were also other graves that were simple pits and some that were presumably ossuaries. The entire necropolis was fairly regular in terms of orientation; all but four of the tombs were arranged along a northwest to southeast line of axis. There also was a great deal of homogeneity in terms of the style of the tombs. The majority of them were constructed into a prismatic-rectangular shape and made of a mix of slabs of stones, \textit{tegulae}, bricks and sometimes pieces of \textit{amphorae} and \textit{dolia}. Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 251-254; Resino, \textit{Del Imperio Romano a La Alta Edad Media Arqueología}, 72.

\textsuperscript{92} Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 253.
As will be discussed next, the changes made in Vigo’s domestic sphere shows that in the years before the First Council of Toledo old patrons were taking on new responsibilities and new patrons were emerging. It was within the context of these transitions and economic developments that the members of Ortigius’ congregation determined that they needed new representation. Symphosius’ involvement in their decision and support of Exuperantius allowed the bishop of Astorga to uphold the popular consensus while also creating potential ties to the people facilitating the emerging commercial networks in the region. Just as he had been motivated to use ordinations to extend patronage to northern Asturicensis when Gijón became involved in trade with North Africa, the eastern Mediterranean and other markets, Symphosius could use his connection to Exuperantius and Aquis Celenis to establish the necessary links for members of his own congregation to become involved in lucrative long-distance commercial ventures. As will be discussed next, the shift toward monumentalization of homes in the vicinity of Vigo resembled the modifications that had taken place in the rural estates in Asturicensis, which suggests the people who made these alterations participated in similar friendship and patronage alliances.

**The Patrons of Vigo’s New Networks and Industry**

The changes the locals made to their residences provide additional proof that the late fourth century represented the beginning of a period of dramatic growth and transition for those living and working in and around Vigo. Patrons, artisans and laborers were busy building new homes or remodeling old ones. Around the time of the First Council of Toledo, people were living throughout the area south of the warehouse and the docks, both to the east and the west. For example, in the fourth century, someone built a home on top of an older domestic space,

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93 General finds of tegulae, cooking ware, amphorae and glass demonstrate that one area of domestic habitation stretched the equivalent of several city blocks south of the warehouse and the docks, both to the east and the west. These finds go as far west as the Plaza de Constitución. Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 256-258.
which had been abandoned since the third century. This house was located quite close to the warehouse complex and based on the large number Byzantine and Lusitanian amphorae they possessed, its residents had a connection to the facility either as workers, managers or customers.

Members of local community in Vigo also were building and living in luxurious homes ideal for establishing and maintaining the long-distance alliances necessary to participate in the new commercial exchange networks that were developing in the years before the First Council of Toledo. For example, around the time when the congregation of Aquis Celenis decided to replace its bishop, a household of elevated status lived in a suburban villa of rather grand scale west and south of the main area of Roman occupation. They built this suburban villa sometime during the fourth century using fine stone masonry of opus vittatum, a style of laying bricks introduced to the Roman Empire in the fourth century, and other building materials, including tegulae, imbrices and bricks, such as those manufactured in Aquis Celenis. Columns, a large hall, canalization for a hypocaust to heat the villa or a possible private bath complex, and fine

94 Although we know very little about the layout and construction of this home, its domestic character is clear based on the significant number of common table and cooking wares, some of which had traces of fire exposure on them. See Pérez Losada, Brigantium 13, 251.

95 Pérez Losada, Brigantium 13, 251.

96 It was located between Rúa Torrecedeira and Rúa Marqués de Valterra where they cross with Juan Ramón Jiménez, which is just east and south of the modern Port of Vigo. Some archaeologists cast doubt on whether or not this was a suburban villa or a public building such as a bath complex. However, certain discoveries, such as canalization associated with a residential hypocaust, common and fine ceramics, and a possible oven suggest strongly that it was a domestic space. See Pérez Losada, Brigantium 13, 260; Soledad Prieto Robles, Juan C. Castro Carrera; Paula Paredes Ruano, “Achado dun “solidus” nunha intervención arqueolóxica no xacemento Romano das Rúas Juan Ramón Jimenez e Marqués de Valterra,” Castrelos 13 (2007): 53, 54, 57.

97 Based on all of the sedimentation levels and all of the materials recovered from the site, including a coin from the usurper Constantine III (r. 407-411), this villa was likely built in the fourth century and occupied during the fifth. Prieto Robles, Castro Carrera, Paredes Ruano, “Achado dun “solidus” nunha intervención arqueolóxica,” 57.

ceramics all attest to the elevated status of the *dominus* and the splendor of the home.\(^9^9\) The grandeur of a villa with its public and private components allowed the *dominus* to display his own prestige to his clients and confirm bonds of patronage with those who served him in various capacities. Of course, in such an estate servants with various skills and duties worked to maintain the public and private quarters, and perform tasks such as cooking for the *dominus*, his family and their guests; helping to care for the children; and supplying the fuel necessary for heating the baths. Moreover, the construction of this villa required the expertise of architects, masons, and other skilled builders as well as many laborers. Combined with the other building projects at the time, this undertaking indicates the presence of a significant industry revolved around construction. Such an industry required the manufacture of a large quantity of building materials, which may have been supplied by factories located outside of Vigo, such as the one constructed at this time in Aquis Celenis.

Various other villas were scattered along the coastline south of Vigo, almost all of which also functioned as factories for the production of salted fish and fish sauce.\(^1^0^0\) For the most part these estates seem to have been primarily focused on their industrial function and do not show signs of the grandeur seen in the suburban villa just discussed. Generally, they were occupied for manufacturing salted fish in the third through fourth centuries, and usually were abandoned from around the time of the First Council of Toledo. This chronology can be explained by the gradual deterioration of the salt industry in Vigo, which had an effect on the local fish salting factories. At the same time as these villa-factories were experiencing decline and abandonment, a new,

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much more monumental rural estate was being built on the shore of the Ría de Vigo near the island of Toralla, less than six miles south of Vigo (Figure 3-1). The owner of the villa at Toralla likely took over the salting industry from Vigo and the surrounding factories, and had a leading role in facilitating the long-distance commerce that was developing. Like Symphosius and his elite peers in Asturicensis, the *dominus* of Toralla valued friendship and patronage bonds. He was a patron to the many dependents living and working on his estate, as well as locals involved in the industries and commercial activities in the region.

The layout and monumental features of the villa at Toralla indicate that the *dominus* living there in the later fourth century was of elevated status and may have operated within the same milieu as the landowners in rural estates in Asturicensis, such as Olmeda, Navatejera and Veranes. Built in the fourth century, the *pars urbana* and the *pars rustica* of the villa were situated in close proximity to each other and were oriented so they formed an L-shape with the western façade pointed toward the Ría de Vigo.\footnote{All the buildings of the villa were built *ex novo* with a single phase of occupation, dated to the fourth through the first half of fifth century or roughly 320-430. This chronology is based on the imported fine ceramics and other materials found at the site, such as glass and coins, as well as some radiocarbon dating. The dates from radiocarbon dating ranged from 1 BCE-425 CE, although tests of the materials from the hypocaust fell within the later chronology. See F. Pérez Losada, A. Fernández Fernández, S. Vieito Covela, “Toralla y las villas marítimas de la Gallaecia atlántica. Emplazamiento, arquitectura y función,” in *Las "villae" tardorromanas en el Occidente del Imperio Arquitectura y función: IV Coloquio Internacional de Arqueología en Gijón* (Gijón: Trea, 2008), 503, especially note 19, which explains the radiocarbon tests. Some archaeologists have extended the chronology to the mid-sixth century and others have suggested that there was an initial phase of occupation in the third century, but that use of the villa peaked in the later fourth and into the fifth century. If the villa was occupied from the third century, the *dominus* decided to remodel the *pars urbana* in the later centuries was at its height during the late fourth and early fifth centuries. See Fermín E. Pérez Losada, “Excavación arqueológica en area na villa romana de Toralla, Vigo (Pontvedra),” *Actuacións Arqueolóxicas* (2007): 84; Carlos Fernández Rodríguez, “Gandaría, caza y animales de compañía en la Galicia Romana: estudio arqueozoológico,” *Brigantium* 15 (2003): 70; Hidalgo Cuñarro, José Manuel, “La villa Romana de Toralla (Vigo, España),” in *XIV Congreso Internacional de Arqueologia Clásica: La ciudad en el Mundo Romano* (Tarragona, 5-11 Septiembre 1993). Volume 2 (Tarragona: Comité Organizador del XIV C.I.A.C, 1994), 206-207.} The *pars urbana* was built in an elongated rectangular plan, which was characteristic of northern villas in the later Roman period.\footnote{Fermin Pérez Losada, Santiago Vioi Covela, Adolfo Fernández Fernández, “Resultados preliminares das escavacións arqueoloxicas na “villa” Romana de Toralla (Oia, Vigo),” *Castrelos* 13 (2007): 15-16.}
sector of the villa was organized along a longitudinal corridor and divided into nine main rooms and several connecting hallways, which allowed the *dominus* to keep the private quarters of his home separate from the more public spaces used to conduct business and to entertain guests.  

The more public sector of the *pars urbana* was designed to make an impression on visitors. The entire *pars urbana* was constructed according to a pre-planned Latin measurement, with a 3:1 ratio of length to width. The main room used for entertaining, the *triclinium*, was perfectly centered in the overall layout and the apse was the only part of the *pars urbana* that did not conform to the rectangular layout. Careful planning also is evident in the symmetry of various elements of the design, such as the length of the northern corridor that separated the *pars urbana* from the *pars rustica* and the length of the opposing, southern façade. All of these features indicate precise metrology and an overall plan conceived of by an architect familiar with popular Roman design aesthetics. As has already been mentioned, the placement of the apse at the far end of the *triclinium* made it the center of the villa. The entrance to the public sector of the *pars urbana* was directly opposite to this apse. This main door into the villa opened into a reception area from which one could pass to a grand *oecus* to the west or continue directly forward to the *triclinium*. The square apse itself jutted out beyond the southern wall and was likely elevated from the rest of the room. Since it did not have thick walls to separate it from the *triclinium*, this arrangement created a direct sightline from the main entrance and the reception

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103 The more public sector will be discussed below. A long corridor separated it from the private area, which was comprised of several bedrooms, a possible kitchen and an even more secluded set of rooms that may have been the apartment or master room for the *dominus*, his wife and their personal servants. Pérez Losada, Fernández Fernández, Vieto Covela, “Toralla y las villas,” 499, 502; Pérez Losada, Vieto Covela, Fernández Fernández, “Resultados preliminares,” 15-16, 19, 21.


area to the elevated apse at the other end of the villa. This would have produced an impressive visual for guests when the *dominus* was seated in this spot. The villa also included a private bath complex, which the *dominus* and his guests entered by passing through an especially large and monumental doorway, on the west side of the *triclinium*.

The owner of Toralla was a patron to a large number of people who lived and worked on his estate. The personal servants of the *dominus* and his family carried out many of their activities in the service area located in the western half of the villa. This area shared walls with the *pars urbana* but it was not accessible from any of its rooms. The entrance to the *praefurnium* or furnace for heating the baths was on the south of the villa. This subterranean room was fairly large because it also held the necessary combustibles. The only way for the servants to enter the kitchen was to go through this room and up two stairs. The household likely had several cooks who used the three hearths in this kitchen to prepare many and perhaps elaborate meals. The third room of the service area had many shelves and ceramics used for storage and so it was likely the pantry. Curiously, although it was next to it, this room could not be entered

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109 Typically the only part of a Roman villa to be excavated is the *pars urbana*. Toralla represents an exceptional example of a more complete excavation of the site, including the *pars rustica* and areas of production, using modern scientific methods. The site offers rare insight into the servants and other dependents tied to the villa, and for this reason the discussion will include details about their living and working conditions. Pérez Losada, Fernández Fernández, Vieito Covela, “Toralla y las villas,” 495.


through the kitchen. To get supplies to be used in the kitchen one would have to enter the pantry from the exterior of north side of the villa.\textsuperscript{114} This suggests that the \textit{dominus} or a trusted servant controlled access to the food supplies.

At least some dependents and servants lived in a building just to the south of this service area.\textsuperscript{115} Although these quarters were more rustic in character, like the \textit{pars urbana} the building was rectangular in design and followed a similar length to width ratio. It was comprised of a series of rooms, which shaded earth flooring and were organized in a row with a single vein of access on the northeast side, which was closest to the main building. These rooms were arranged in steps according to the natural slope of the land to the southeast.\textsuperscript{116} The villa’s personnel had its own kitchen, with supplies and a hearth made of bricks similar to the one found in the service area of the main house. Here the servants cooked meals that included at least some meat and were served on imitations of fine ceramics.\textsuperscript{117} The servants also used this space for weaving and milling grains.\textsuperscript{118}

The \textit{dominus} and his dependents were involved in a variety of economic ventures and networks. To this end, the choice of villa location was made carefully; this portion of the shore was on a well-protected anchorage, with ample visual control over the sea and the coastline in

\textsuperscript{114} Pérez Losada, Fernández Fernández, Vieito Covela, “Toralla y las villas,” 502.

\textsuperscript{115} Pérez Losada, Fernández Fernández, Vieito Covela, “Toralla y las villas,” 502. Of course, it is impossible to know the status of those living in these quarters. They could have been free dependents, slaves or freedmen and freedwomen. Moreover, at least some of those working for the \textit{dominus}, whether in the villa or the salinas, were likely independent and thus would have had separate housing with their families.

\textsuperscript{116} Pérez Losada, “Excavación arquelóxica en area na vila romana de Toralla,” 85.

\textsuperscript{117} Cooking supplies and animal bones give some indication of how the space was used and what was prepared on the hearth. See Pérez Losada, Vieito Covela, Fernández Fernández, “Resultados preliminares,” 22; Pérez Losada, “Excavación arquelóxica en area na vila romana de Toralla,” 85.

\textsuperscript{118} Pérez Losada, “Excavación arquelóxica en area na vila romana de Toralla,” 85.
the area\textsuperscript{119} and the proximity to the water supported fishing.\textsuperscript{120} The location also permitted the \textit{dominus} to construct an extensive industrial complex with at least six rectangular pans to evaporate salt, which suggests that the salinas was a crucial component of the economic life of the rural estate.\textsuperscript{121} We saw that the salt mines in Vigo were going into decline during this period and that many of the factories along the coast that produced salted fish and fish sauce were beginning to close. Perhaps the \textit{dominus} at Toralla was able to take over the remaining market as Vigo shifted its focus. The location of the villa at Toralla also was ideal for maintaining key commercial contacts with different points along the Atlantic.\textsuperscript{122} The coins found for the period were minted at a variety of locations such as Aquileia, Lugdunum and Rome, and especially Arles and Nicomeedia, which suggests the villa owner had connections with merchants and other patrons in these places.\textsuperscript{123} All of this indicates that the owner of Toralla played a leading role in the emerging commercial ventures of Vigo and likely acted as a new patron to many of those involved in the activities of the growing port. Like Symphosius and his elite peers in Asturicensis, the \textit{dominus} of Toralla and the other high-status individuals living in and around Vigo emphasized the importance of creating and maintaining alliances and patronage bonds.

To summarize, as bishops of Aquis Celenis in the later fourth century, Ortigius and Exuperantius oversaw a community that extended beyond their small town of Aquis Celenis to

\textsuperscript{119} Fernández Rodríguez, “Gandaría, caza y animales,” 69.

\textsuperscript{120} Pérez Losada, “Excavación arquelóxica en area na vila romana de Toralla,” 84.

\textsuperscript{121} This industrial area was located to the north of the \textit{pars rustica} and extended east under the current beach of del Vao. Pérez Losada, Fernández Fernández, Vieito Covela, “Toralla y las villas,” 502-503; Pérez Losada, Vieito Covela, Fernández Fernández, “Resultados preliminares,” 22.

\textsuperscript{122} Manuel Cuñarro, “La villa Romana de Toralla (Vigo, España)” 207.

include Iria Flavia and other coastal settlements. In the later fourth a new industry began to take shape in the town of Aquis Celenis, which involved people of varied social backgrounds and with different skills. This new economic focus and the people who participated in it created a socially and economically dynamic community, which I suggest was connected to the contemporaneous development of long distance exchange networks through the port of Vigo, located about 33 miles south of Aquis Celenis. The new circumstances in Aquis Celenis would have required capable representatives, which may have been a contributing factor in the community’s request for a new bishop. Moreover, the new social and economic vitality in the region and ties to larger commercial networks would have presented lucrative trading possibilities for Symphosius and the members of his congregation in Astorga. Although Ortigius and Exuperantius did not necessarily have a direct role as the bishop or representative of the community in and around Vigo, Aquis Celenis was the only see already established in the vicinity. Symphosius’ decision to become involved in the congregation’s dispute over its leadership may have been motivated by a desire to forge an alliance in the region.

As will be discussed next, long-distance commerce was not the only factor contributing to the social and economic vitality of Lucensis. The inhabitants of the capital of the conventus, Lugo, were involved in local industries and continued to have important imperial administrative roles. The central location of Aquis Celenis and that the fact that there was no episcopal representation in the capital city meant that having an alliance with Exuperantius would have linked Symphosius to these networks as well as those associated with the new commercial center in Vigo.

**Lugo: The Thriving Capital of the Conventus and an Urban Center at its Height**

As the following discussion shows, the residents of Lugo—from members of the elite to humble artisans—participated in a vibrant and dynamic economy. Significantly, Lugo provides
an example of a late Roman city in stark contrast to Symphosius’ see of Astorga. Unlike Astorga, where the elite had limited imperial or commercial opportunities other than carrying out traditional tax collection, Lugo’s residents played a vital role in producing ceramics and fish products and distributing these highly desirable commodities throughout the region. Moreover, in addition to collecting taxes from the local population, the elite leadership in Lugo likely facilitated the movement of the *annona militaris*. Participating in these local and imperial networks allowed the elite to continue to invest in their urban and rural homes, as well as the public sphere, and gave artisans and local retailers a market for their wares. The relative decline in Astorga in the same period was not simply the fate of all cities in late-fourth century Gallaecia. Symphosius and the members of his congregation might have been able to enjoy economic vitality comparable to those in Lugo, if they also had access to local, imperial and commercial networks, which is why the bishop of Astorga was motivated to create alliances with leaders within well-connected regions like Lucensis.

Lugo had its origins as a military camp in the early empire due to its strategic location on the top of a hill and at the confluence of three rivers: the Miño, Rato and Chanca. According to the *Notitia Dignitatum*, the late fourth- or early fifth-century register of Roman offices, the *cohors Lucense*, or military unit, was still stationed in Lugo around the time of the First Council of Toledo. Access to local natural resources, building materials and minerals as well as easy communication with inland and coastal communities via the rivers to the north, south and east made it a good location for overseeing the region and facilitated the growth of the city. Two

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major Roman roads, the XIX and the XX, connected Lugo to the northern coast and Aquis Celenis to the West and Astorga to the East (Figure 3-1).\textsuperscript{127}

The continued importance of Lugo in the later fourth century is evident in the investments made to its civic infrastructure. The city was organized according to an almost perfect, standard grid plan formed by the \textit{Cardo} and \textit{Decumanus Maximus} and numerous minor roads.\textsuperscript{128} As with other valued settlements in the West, such as Astorga, León, and Gijón, a wall was built around Lugo in late third or early fourth century.\textsuperscript{129} This fortification did produce some changes to the topography of the city and some of its structures, especially in the areas where new gates did not line up with the old roads.\textsuperscript{130} For example, the construction of the new gate connected to the Roman road XIX meant that the southwestern zone of the city was reorganized and a large portion of a \textit{domus} of considerable size was destroyed.\textsuperscript{131} Yet, the citizens of Lugo continued to use and improve the roads throughout the city\textsuperscript{132} and they reconstructed some buildings in order to incorporate them into the new routes that lead in or out of it.\textsuperscript{133} Sometime around the middle of the fourth century, resources were invested in completely reforming the water supply and drainage system. The old canalization and aqueducts were replaced with a

\textsuperscript{127} Rodríguez Colmenero, Covadonga Carreño, “Lucus Augusti, capital Romana de la finisterre Hispánico,” 129.


\textsuperscript{129} González Fernández, Carreño Gascón, “La capital del extremo Noroeste Hispánico,” 1179.


\textsuperscript{131} Domus do Mitreo (Xunta de Galicia, Santiago de Compostela, 2013), 16.


\textsuperscript{133} Rodríguez Colmenero, \textit{Lvcvs Avgvsti: La Ciudad Romano-Germánica Del Finisterre Ibérico}, 189.
subterranean network, which brought water to and from more homes and public areas. The local elite monitored these types of civic improvements and some scholars suggest they funded them as acts of euergetism. However, it must be kept in mind that these projects also may have been part of larger imperial works since there is evidence of similar public constructions in other cities in the western empire, especially those which had been fortified with walls in the late third and early fourth centuries. Nevertheless, small pools with mosaic pavements were installed throughout the city in conjunction with this new water infrastructure, and these were more clearly acts of public munificence by local high-status residents who wanted to beautify the city.

The social and economic diversity of the people living and working in Lugo demonstrates the vitality of the community in the later fourth century. Throughout the fortified city there were homes of different sizes and levels of craftsmanship. For the most part these residences were built in the early imperial period, but ceramic, numismatic and other material finds confirm that people still lived in them when the bishops met at the First Council of Toledo. However, this continuity does not suggest that the residences remained unaltered. In fact, as will be shown below, after the construction of the fortified enclosure around the city, architects and builders were busy installing new floors, constructing new interior and exterior walls, and in some cases,

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completely redesigning homes. They also built private bath complexes and hypocausts in several homes. For example, the owners of a modestly sized residence on the southern edge of the city, employed workers to remodel their façade and add new flooring.\textsuperscript{138} They also installed new baths complete with a hypocaust for heating and the necessary drainage system, which would have required more skilled laborers to construct, and possibly an engineer or architect.\textsuperscript{139} The home was located directly on a street with porticoes,\textsuperscript{140} which suggests that the neighborhood was the site of commercial activity and that the owners of the house may have operated a shop. If so, they would have had something in common with their neighbors, artisans, who produced glass products in their workshop.\textsuperscript{141}

In late third and fourth century, several families in Lugo invested considerable resources to beautify their homes and to make living in them more comfortable. These \textit{domus} were elaborate palace-like residences, which occupied considerable space in the most prominent section of the city. One such home, known today as the \textit{Domus Oceani}, extended over an entire block directly on the forum, so that the \textit{domini} and his family would have direct access to this commercial, social and cultural center. Its main entrance was on the forum, but the house was also located on the \textit{Decumanus Maximus} and had \textit{tabernae} or commercial establishments on the bottom floor along this major road.\textsuperscript{142} Although this house had been built in the second century it

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{138} González Fernández, Carreño Gascón, “La capital del extremo Noroeste Hispánico,” 1202.
  \item \textsuperscript{139} González Fernández, Carreño Gascón, “La capital del extremo Noroeste Hispánico,” 1202.
  \item \textsuperscript{140} González Fernández, Carreño Gascón, “La capital del extremo Noroeste Hispánico,” 1203.
  \item \textsuperscript{141} A small circular kiln, wells, tanks and glass remains suggest that the space was used as a workshop for making glass. See González Fernández, Carreño Gascón, “La capital del extremo Noroeste Hispánico,” 1203.
  \item \textsuperscript{142} E. González Fernández, \textit{Lugo Arqueolóxico: Casa Dos Mosaicos Batitales} (Santiago de Compostela: Consellería de Cultura e Deporte, 2005), 15; González Fernández, \textit{Domus Oceani}, 51, 79.
\end{itemize}
was in its state of maximum splendor during the third and fourth centuries.\textsuperscript{143} It had all the features of an elite roman home: a large peristyle to connect the forum entrance to the interior rooms,\textsuperscript{144} gardens,\textsuperscript{145} private baths\textsuperscript{146} and an \textit{oecus} or grand reception hall with an elaborate mosaic, which included the God Oceanus.\textsuperscript{147}

By the early fourth century, the \textit{dominus} of the home completed a remodel that changed the layout of the house. New corridors and galleries were added in order to change and control the flow between the public entrance and access to the \textit{oecus} and the private areas of the house.\textsuperscript{148} In fact, the owner seems to have been most interested in creating a more secluded area for his family perhaps due to increasing demands for public audiences in the \textit{oecus}. The private quarters, which included the bedrooms,\textsuperscript{149} were cut off from the public sector by adding a series of hallways and patios.\textsuperscript{150} Improvements also made the family’s living quarters more comfortable. For example, a hypocaust was added to heat the \textit{triclinium}, or dining room, so that the family could enjoy eating away from the demands of public life even in the winter.\textsuperscript{151} The new dining room may have been primarily reserved for the family, but it also offered a new space in which to entertain any guests deemed worthy of the privilege of eating within this

\textsuperscript{143} González Fernández, \textit{Casa Dos Mosaicos Batitales}, 9.
\textsuperscript{144} González Fernández, \textit{Domus Oceani}, 51.
\textsuperscript{145} González Fernández, \textit{Casa Dos Mosaicos Batitales}, 17.
\textsuperscript{146} González Fernández, \textit{Domus Oceani}, 77.
\textsuperscript{149} González Fernández, \textit{Domus Oceani}, 72.
\textsuperscript{150} González Fernández, \textit{Domus Oceani}, 73.
private setting. Servants could tend to the furnace and prepare the meals of the *dominus* and his family in the smaller rooms that were added around this dining room.

Artisans and laborers with skills associated with designing and installing mosaics and murals were active in fourth-century Lugo. The owners of the *Domus Oceani* employed them to add various new mosaic floors and colorful painted murals, which undoubtedly contributed to the sense of luxury and status for the residents and guests of the house. For example, one floor mosaic featured the head of the god Oceanus while another showed two horses. Images such as these of gods and animals used for hunting and military pursuits allowed the patron to associate himself with power, authority and strength. The proprietors of another *domus* located on the Decumanus Maximus and further west of the forum provide another example of improvements used to project prestige. They employed artisans and workers to install a mosaic floor, which depicted the myth of Daedalus and Pasiphae. The portrayal of this myth in which Daedalus built a hollow, wooden cow so that the enchanted Pasiphae could consummate her desire for the white bull her husband King Minos refused to sacrifice to Poseidon, would have been a provocative and entertaining way for the *dominus* to demonstrate his erudition and status to his guests.


154 González Fernández *Domus Oceani*, 59.

155 These mosaics are only preserved in fragments, so the entire scenes are not visible. González Fernández *Domus Oceani*, 19, 59, 64, 91-93, 96-97.

156 Sanne Lind Hansen, for example, points out that heroic hunting scenes in mosaics in the public areas of homes were a way for a dominus to project their own power and “semi-heroic” nature. Sanne Lind Hansen, “The Embellishment of Late-antique *Domus* in Ostia and Rome,” in *Patrons and Pavements in Late Antiquity*, eds. Signe Isager and Birte Poulsen (Odense, Denmark: Odense University Press, 1997), 119-120. See also, Birte Poulsen, “Patrons and Viewers: Reading Mosaics in Late Antiquity,” in *Patrons and Viewers in Late Antiquity*, eds. Stine Birk and Birte Poulsen (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2012), 175-176, 184.

It is impossible to determine definitively and specifically who they were, but there is no doubt that the local elite of Lugo lived in this cluster of homes near the forum. Archaeologists posit that these luxurious dwellings belonged to wealthy merchants, imperial fiscal representatives, members of the local Curia, or in the case of the Domus Oceani, even a provincial governor. Although they made most of the reforms prior to the later fourth century, the owners continued to utilize and maintain their homes through the time of the First Council of Toledo. For example, the residents of the Domus Oceani decorated and painted the main patio in the second half of the fourth century. Moreover, in the later fourth century the dominus hired someone to make repairs to various rooms of the house, including to the mosaic in the main reception hall. This suggests that the grand room retained its functional and representative importance and that the dominus continued to hold court there. Unlike in Astorga, the local elite of Lugo had opportunities to participate in imperial networks, which gave them the means to showcase their wealth and status in their homes and in the community through euergetism. Through the improvements to their homes and public benefactions, these high-status individuals provided employment to local artisans and created a market for retailers.

Craftsmen made another contribution to the local economic vitality in Lugo. Artisans produced pottery for those living in capital city and its vicinity. Ceramic workshops first appeared in the city during the second century and over the course of the second and third century neighborhoods dedicated to ceramic production emerged. For example, artisans worked

158 Rodríguez Colmenero, Lvcvs Avgvsti: La Ciudad Romano-Germánica Del Finisterre Ibérico, 161-165.
159 This chronology is based on stylistic consideration. González Fernández, Domus Oceani, 117-119.
160 González Fernández, Domus Oceani, 59.
in several ceramic workshops with over seven ovens in the outskirts of the northeastern area of
the city, close to the gate for the Roman road XX.\textsuperscript{162} However, during the construction of the
wall in the late third or early fourth century, these and several other workshops were
destroyed.\textsuperscript{163} Although ceramic production of common wares continued in Lugo, starting in the
mid-fourth century, there was a shift in the nature and quantity of pottery produced. At this point
artisans began to manufacture imitations of the wares that had been produced since the second
century, with a slight decrease in the quality of the pastes and finishes.\textsuperscript{164} They used new firing
techniques, which led to more irregularities in the contours and some imperfections.\textsuperscript{165} While
there were changes, the workshops were still active and the artisans continued to pass on their
skills, techniques and traditions in later fourth century.\textsuperscript{166} The wares from Lugo continued to be
exported to locations within the region, such as Iria Flavia.\textsuperscript{167} This local market was beneficial to
artisans and their patrons in Lugo.

In addition to the production of ceramics, the inhabitants of Lugo were involved in other
lucrative ventures. Although the available evidence makes it difficult to make definitive claims,
Lugo and its surrounding rural settlements seem to have been linked to one another through

\textsuperscript{162} Antonio Rodríguez Colmenero, \textit{Lucus Augusti. I. El Amanecer de una Ciudad: (Excavaciones Arqueológicas en

\textsuperscript{163} Alcorta Irastorza, \textit{Lucus Augusti 2}, 185, 443-444.

\textsuperscript{164} Particularly prevalent were new versions of TSHT. Alcorta Irastorza, \textit{Lucus Augusti 2}, 185-188.

\textsuperscript{165} Alcorta Irastorza, \textit{Lucus Augusti 2}, 186-188.

\textsuperscript{166} In the past pessimistic views of the period led some scholars to attribute these shifts to a general decadence of the
skills of potters and their inability to create the ceramics of the period before. However, detailed analysis of the
material evidence at the sites of the workshops proposes that decadence is not the proper description. Enrique J.
Alcorta Irastorza argues that the design and decoration changes do not necessarily represent lack of ability or
knowledge, but instead shows modifications made based on new circumstances. See Alcorta Irastorza, \textit{Lucus
Augusti 2}, 185-187.

\textsuperscript{167} There was a drop in the number of pieces exported to Iria Flavia, but Lugo continued to supply ceramics here and
in other towns in the region. Resino, \textit{Del Imperio Romano a La Alta Edad Media Arqueología}, 45-46; Pérez Losada,
\textit{Brigantium} 13, 96-98, 108.
imperial networks such as tax and *annonae* collection. Unlike the countryside around Astorga and León, the evidence for villas in the vicinity of Lugo is sparse. Isolated finds, such as remains of mosaics, show there were rural sites, but to date no excavations can confirm that the elite of the fourth century were constructing or extensively remodeling rural estates on the scale of Olmeda, Navatejera or Veranes in Asturicensis. Some archaeologists of the region point out that the area must have been relatively prosperous in terms of agriculture, and so there were likely associated villas. However, we have no direct data to substantiate this theory or to offer insight into the chronology or villa types, and thus do not know whether they were monumental and dedicated to establishing and maintaining patronage networks or primarily geared toward production. The apparent connection of potential villas and other rural sites to *mansio* and the Roman roads does suggest that they played a role in the collection and distribution of the *annona* and tax payments. And, at least until the third century, they enjoyed a role in administering the gold mines.

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168 Felipe Arias Vilas, "Materiales del Meditarráneo oriental en el castro de Viladonga (Lugo),” in *Congreso Internacional La Hispania De Teodosio*, eds. Ramón Teja, Cesáreo Pérez González (Burgos, Spain: Jnta. de Castilla y León, Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1997), 342-343.


170 Rodríguez Colmenero, *Lvcvs Avgvsti: La Ciudad Romano-Germánica Del Finisterre Ibérico*, 199; For mosaic finds, which are rather limited in vicinity of Lugo, see Alles León, “Mosaicos del convento Lucense,” 154-156; Lovelle, López Quiroga, “El poblamiento rural en torno a Lugo,” 53-55, 75-76.


Castra, or fortified settlements, also likely functioned as collection centers. Although only Viladonga has been fully excavated, there is evidence to suggest that other castros around Lugo were occupied or reoccupied during the later empire (Figure 3-1).\footnote{Rodríguez Colmenero, \textit{Lucus Avgvsti: La Ciudad Romano-Germánica Del Finisterre Ibérico}, 199; J.M. Caamaño Gesto; J.R. Lopez Rodriguez, “Sigillatas del castro de Viladonga (Lugo). I,” \textit{Gallaecia} 7/8 (1984): 167.} People were living in the community of Viladonga in the later fourth and early fifth centuries.\footnote{Felipe Arias Vilas, “Os últimos traballos arqueolóxicos no Castro de Viladonga (Castro de Rei, Lugo): 1988-1998,” \textit{Brigantium} 12 (2000): 189; Arias Vilas, “Materials del Mediterráneo oriental en el castro de Viladonga (Lugo),” 342; Felipe Arias Vilas, “Castro de Viladonga (Castro de Rei, Lugo),” \textit{Arqueoloxía Informes} 2 (1988): 74.} This fortified community was located 15 miles northeast of Lugo and the material culture of the site suggests the residents participated in Roman trade networks and that some of them even used ceramics from the East, likely imported through Lugo.\footnote{Ma. C. Durán Fuentes, P. Fernández Vázquez, M. Vila Martínez, “Grafitos na cerámica do castro de Viladonga (Lugo),” in \textit{Finis Terrae: Estudios en Lembranza do Prof. Dr. Alberto Balil}, ed. Fernando Acuña Castoviejo (Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, 1992), 316-317.} People of varied social status lived and worked at Viladonga, including those who were more elite and artisans working with metal and in other types of workshops.\footnote{Arias Vilas, “Materials del Mediterráneo oriental en el castro de Viladonga (Lugo),” 342.}

In the later fourth century, connections to trading settlements on the northern coast also contributed to Lugo’s prosperity.\footnote{For example, there have been a good number of marine shells found, which demonstrate a connection to the coastal trading settlements. See Rodríguez Colmenero, \textit{Lucus Augusti I. El Amanecer de una Ciudad}, 107-122.} The port of Brigantium, modern A Coruña, and the surrounding coastal sites continued to participate in older networks associated with supplying the \textit{annonae militaris} and salted fish to Lugo and other inland locations (Figure 3-1).\footnote{Brigantium continued to have a connection to Lugo, yet it did not participate in the commercial vitality that transformed Vigo and the southern Rías Baixas. There are very few amphorae or fine ceramics from North Africa and the East like those found in Vigo. See Ma. Catalina López Pérez and Victor Tomás Botella, “La vajilla fina de mesa de época Romana en los solares no. 10-12 de la Calle Tabernas (A Coruña),” \textit{Gallaecia} 29 (2010): 179-180, 188; Pérez Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 128-129, 135.} Much like
Aquis Celenis, Brigantium started as a *mansio* on the Roman road XX, which continued to Lugo about 60 miles away.\(^{179}\) It also was an important port offering coastal access to the capital of the conventus through the fourth century.\(^{180}\) The famous lighthouse at Brigantium functioned throughout the period before the First Council of Toledo.\(^{181}\) The coastal settlement had very little in terms of public planning or infrastructure, but some people inhabited domestic spaces in the fourth century and used local ceramics.\(^{182}\) Residents or an outside patron restored a cistern in the later empire, to allow water to be distributed to different locations in the area.\(^{183}\) There was also a thermal complex located near where the regional Roman road XIX passed through the settlement. Locals and those travelling through used this complex from the first century through our period and the inhabitants continually made reforms to it.\(^{184}\) As we have seen in other locations such as Aquis Celenis and Gijón, a bathhouse made perfect sense in the context of a Roman *mansio* and port settlement connected to the movement of the *annona*.

The rural estates on the northeastern Iberian coast provide additional evidence that members of the regional elite benefitted from participation in imperial networks. In fact, it is on the northern coast that we find the most extant evidence for villas, which the leading citizens in Lugo used as centers of production as well as for leisure.\(^{185}\) For example, in the fourth century


\(^{180}\) Archaeologists generally agree on the settlements role as a port, but structural evidence of the port itself have not been found despite extensive excavations of the area since the 1980s. See Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 109, 121-122.

\(^{181}\) This conclusion is based on both written and archaeological sources. See Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 139.

\(^{182}\) The majority of finds from this period are TSHT. See López Pérez, Tomás Botella, “La vajilla fina de mesa de época Romana,” 179-180, 188; Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 128-129.

\(^{183}\) Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 128.

\(^{184}\) Pérez Losada, *Brigantium* 13, 128, 130-131.

\(^{185}\) Pérez Losada, Fernández Fernández, Vieito Covela, “Toralla y las villas.”
someone of substantial means built or significantly remodeled a *villa del mare* at Noville, which was across the estuary from Brigantium (Figure 3-1).\(^{186}\) They chose to construct Noville in a U-shape with a patio or courtyard in its center to allow the owners and their guests to enjoy the coastal landscape and view, which was a typical arrangement for second homes of the Roman urban elite at the time,\(^{187}\) such as those living near the Forum in Lugo. The hypocausts, private baths and grand halls along with the gold necklace found *in situ* demonstrate that persons of elevated status used the villa.\(^{188}\) The *domini* imported some fine wares, although in the later fourth century most of the ceramics were domestic in nature and made locally or within the northern region of Spain.\(^{189}\) They also utilized some products, perhaps wine, from North Africa, and the Eastern Mediterranean and fish sauce from southern Spain.\(^{190}\) It appears as though the owners of the villa stopped importing fish sauce after the second century,\(^{191}\) which likely coincided with the increased local production of the product, which will be discussed next.

The villa at Noville operated as a center for producing fish-related goods in the years before the First Council of Toledo. Various people worked at the villa, including someone with medical knowledge, a skilled butcher and servants to fuel the furnaces, work the mills and

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189 There are TS finds from the North Africa and Eastern Mediterranean, but these are dated to the mid-fifth and sixth centuries. Most of the ceramics from the later fourth and early fifth are Spanish and regionally based in Galicia and the north. See Pérez Losada, “Sobre a villa Romana de Noville (Mugardos),” 96-99.

190 Based on the amphorae. See Pérez Losada, “Sobre a villa Romana de Noville (Mugardos),” 98.

191 Pérez Losada, “Sobre a Villa Romana de Noville (Mugardos),” 98.
operate the bread oven.\textsuperscript{192} Agricultural production and raising sheep were part of the life at the villa, but its economic base was focused on utilizing the resources offered by the sea, and thus fishing and clamming were vital.\textsuperscript{193} The material remains suggest that these endeavors produced more than would have been necessary for the inhabitants and workers of the villa alone.\textsuperscript{194} Moreover, Noville also was likely connected to nearby salting facilities. For example, a factory and warehouse across the Ría de Ferrol from Noville had tanks of various sizes that would have been capable of supplying salted fish well beyond local needs.\textsuperscript{195} Structural remains of a possible anchorage have been found at Noville, which archaeologists suggest may have been used for storing goods associated with the villa’s function as a port.\textsuperscript{196}

Noville and other nearby coastal estates served as locales from which the owners and their managers could oversee the production and distribution of products to be shipped to Lugo, along with those associated with tax collection and the \textit{annonae militaris}.\textsuperscript{197} Goods could be easily transported from Noville to the capital since the villa had a direct connection to Lugo via

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{192} Pérez Losada, “Sobre a villa Romana de Noville (Mugardos),” 100-103; Pérez Losada, “Xacemento de Noville: unha villa Romana costeira na Ría de Ferrol,” 222-225.

\textsuperscript{193} Fairly large quantities of domesticated sheep remains and quern stones were found. Pérez Losada, “Xacemento de Noville: unha villa Romana costeira na Ría de Ferrol,” 225; Carlos Fernández Rodríguez, “Villa Noville,” \textit{Brigantium} 15 \textit{Ganadería, Caza y Animales de Compañía en la Galicia Romana: Estudio Arqueozoológico} (2003): 139.

\textsuperscript{194} Pérez Losada, “Sobre a villa Romana de Noville (Mugardos),” 100; Pérez Losada, “Xacemento de Noville: unha villa Romana costeira na Ría de Ferrol,” 224-225.

\textsuperscript{195} Xoán L. Vázquez Gómez and Miguel San Claudio Santa Cruz, “Unha factoría Romana de salgadeira en Cariño (Ferrol),” \textit{Larouco} 2 (1996): 251-253.


\end{footnotes}
the Roman Road XX. Another villa del mare was built around the same time as Noville, on the Bay of Biscay, located 75 miles north of Lugo. Like Noville, this coastal villa on the beach of Bares, was clearly an elite home, with mosaics, a room with a pool and a gallery that faced the sea, offering a scenic view for the owners and their guests (Figure 3-1). However, the domini at Bares did not use the estate for otium alone. Instead residents of this villa also likely used it to oversee the production associated with the nearby salting factory. The ceramic finds at Bares were similar to those found at other sites in the vicinity, such as Noville and Cidalela, a military camp located about 50 miles southeast of Brigantium and 50 miles West of Lugo (Figure 3-1). Although the military unit at Cidalela officially was transferred in the

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198 Pérez Losada, “Sobre a villa Romana de Noville (Murgados),” 86-87.
200 Ramil González, “Villa Romana de Bares escavación arqueolóxica no xacemento,” 201-203; Emilio Ramil González, “I Campaña de Excavación Arqueolóxica na Eirexa Vella-Bares (Mañón),” Brigantium 12 (2000): 215-217. Some of the mosaics are very fragmented and subsequent burials over them make it difficult to interpret what scenes were depicted. One, however, has been reconstructed. It followed a repeating geometric motif of layers of orthogonal shapes within overlapping circles in white and gray-blue tiles. Ersi Brouscari points out that geometric motifs such as this one were popular in the eastern empire in Late Antiquity, especially in the first half of the fifth century. Ersi Brouscari, “The Tyche of Cos on a Mosaic from a Late Antique house in Cos,” in Patrons and Pavements in Late Antiquity, eds. Signe Isager and Birtne Poulser (Odense, Denmark: Odense University Press, 1997), 73-74. 202-203
201 Ramil González, “Villa Romana de Bares escavación arqueolóxica no xacemento,” 197.
202 Rodríguez Resino, Del Imperio Romano a La Alta Edad Media, 57; Ramil González, “Villa Romana de Bares escavación arqueolóxica no xacemento,” 201.
203 Rodríguez Resino, Del Imperio Romano a La Alta Edad Media, 57; Ramil González, “Villa Romana de Bares escavación arqueolóxica no xacemento,” 200, 223-224.
early fourth century, the camp continued to be occupied in the period before the First Council of Toledo. It is not clear if those who lived at the camp were still associated with the military or if they were civilians from the local population. Yet, it is possible that the patterns of annonae collection and distribution continued and that these coastal estates supplied whoever was living at Cidadela. Moreover, these coastal settlements also continued to act as a source of goods and port for Lugo, where the elite carried out the administrative functions and tax collections of a capital city.

To conclude, in the period before the First Council of Toledo, those living in Lugo benefitted from a period of vitality likely associated with the capital city’s responsibilities to collect taxes and supply the *annonae militaris*, along with its participation in the production of commodities for regional distribution. Significant investments were made in both the public and private spheres of the city and in coastal villas. Like the *domini* at Toralla, the owners of these northern rural estates participated in the salting industry. This vibrant community of Lugo and its vicinity may not have participated to a great extent in the new long-distance exchange networks being established in the Rías Baixas, but their continued involvement in imperial and regional networks provided ample opportunities for both clients and patrons.

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204 Thus far very few amphorae have been found at Bares, and the scarce fragments discovered are likely from Palestine and dated to the fifth or sixth century. There were more common ceramics for a variety of different uses including tableware, vessels designed for storage and personal hygiene. Notably absent were imported fine wares. Instead most of the plates, jars and other ceramic items were TSHT or varieties of gray wares, most of which were from the fifth century and after. See Rodríguez Resino, *Del Imperio Romano a La Alta Edad Media*, 57-58; López Pérez, *El comercio de Terra Sigillata*, 77; Fernández Rodríguez “V.A.6-Villa de Eirexa Vella (Bares),” 105; Ramil González, “Villa Romana de Bares escavación arqueológica no xacemento,” 205-206, 223; Ramil González, “I campaña de escavación arqueológica,” 218.


206 This based on TSHT and glass finds. See Costa García, “Estudo de paramentos e análise das estructuras exhuadas,” 195, 199; Caamaño Gesto, “Vidrios hallados en el campamento Romano de Cidadela,” 177-186.
Conclusion

In the later fourth century, the regional see of Aquis Celenis was undergoing a transition. The development of Vigo as a new center of long-distance commercial exchange affected the entire southern Rías Baixas. Throughout the region people of varied social backgrounds and with different skills became increasingly involved in new forms of trade and related industries, which included a building boom. Old and new patrons forged alliances and made decisions that shaped the trajectory of these economic developments. It is within the context of this period of transformation and commercial vitality that the congregation of Aquis Celenis attempted to replace Bishop Ortigius, perhaps in an attempt to secure a leader better suited to represent them and their changing needs. Symphosius’ decision to support their choice for a new bishop, Exuperantius, would have allowed him to extend his patronage and friendship ties to Aquis Celenis to the benefit of his own congregation and community in Asturicensis. Aquis Celenis’ central and accessible location meant that as the only bishop in the region, Exuperantius’ influence would have extended beyond the coastal settlement to include the new developments in the southern Rías Baixas and the thriving capital city of Lugo to the north. In late-fourth century Gallaecia, prosperity and status could be achieved through a variety of means, all of which involved participation in networks. The regional see of Aquis Celenis was connected to long-distance exchange networks centered in Vigo and the imperial and regional networks overseen by the elite in Lugo. Symphosius’ effort to build an ecclesiastical alliance between Aquis Celenis and Astorga would have helped increase the chances for members of his congregation to be linked into these lucrative commercial and imperial networks.

Of course, it cannot be definitively proven that these social and economic reasons drove Symphosius or the congregation in Aquis Celenis to expel Ortigius. However, examining the social context does suggest that they could have been contributing factors. In Chapter 4, we will
see that similar circumstances may have motivated Symphosius to ordain Paternus as bishop of Braga, which also helps to explain why this member of the elite chose to separate himself from any such attempts of domineering patronage.

Figure 3-1. Map of Gallaecia with roads in Lucensis, ca. 400. Map courtesy of author.
CHAPTER 4
PATERNUS AND HIS COMMUNITY: BRAGA IN THE LATE FOURTH CENTURY

Introduction: Paternus at the First Council of Toledo

Sometime before the First Council of Toledo in 400, Symphosius of Astorga ordained Paternus as the bishop of Braga in southwestern Gallaecia (Figure 4-1). As inhabitants of the provincial capital, the people living in Braga at the time participated in many political, economic and social networks. The city was thriving when Symphosius decided the Christian community there could not continue without its own leader. Paternus seemed an ideal choice, since the laity approved of him and he was part of Symphosius’ circle. Due to the overlapping networks and customs within secular and ecclesiastical communities in the later fourth century, Symphosius could use this appointment to provide the Christians of Braga with a guide and offer political and economic opportunities to members of his own community in Astorga through beneficial connections with the residents of the provincial capital. However, the second part of his plan never came to fruition. Shortly after becoming bishop, Paternus removed himself from Symphosius’ patronage and was rewarded with the support of other bishops in Hispania. While many of the other men Symphosius ordained prior to the First Council of Toledo used the trial to pledge their allegiance to the bishop of Astorga, Paternus interrupted the proceedings to declare he absolutely was not part of that group.1

This chapter presents the final case study connected to the trial that transpired after the First Council of Toledo in 400 and place Paternus in his larger social and economic context by examining the bishop and the community of Braga in the later fourth century, roughly 375-400. This assessment will provide a conclusion to the larger argument made in Chapters 2 and 3: it will demonstrate that in late-fourth-century Gallaecia, there was a relationship between

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1 I Tol, Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis, Vives, 31.
accusations of heresy and the internal dynamics of clerical communities. In order to understand
the correlation between the Priscillian controversy and clerical communities in this period, it is
necessary to consider the social and economic factors affecting the region and the people living
within it. In this case, Braga’s prosperity and strong elite were of central significance.

More specifically, it is argued that like Symphosius, Paternus was a member of the elite
of Gallaecia for whom secular and sacred obligations overlapped. Yet, unlike Astorga, which
was in the midst of a period of economic stagnation and decline, Braga was booming. Many
wealthy families actively contributed to the prosperity of the city to the benefit of its other
citizens. Moreover, just before Symphosius ordained Paternus to lead the Christian community
there, the elite of Braga had begun to express their status in a new way: through the importation
of luxury items from North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean. Therefore, through his
alliance with Paternus, Symphosius sought to offer the members of his community in Astorga
connections to the imperial bureaucracy and access to the same commercial networks that had
motivated him to extend patronage through ordinations in northern Asturicensis and Aquis
Celenis. However, with his ordination of Paternus, Symphosius not only created the episcopate
in Braga, but also a competing clerical alliance within Gallaecia. Ultimately neither Symphosius
nor his congregation benefitted from his efforts to create ties with the provincial capital.

**Paternus of Braga: a Member of the Gallaecian Elite**

The nature and size of the Christian community under Paternus’ leadership in Braga in
the late fourth century is unclear. We know of no presbyters, deacons or other members of the
clergy in the years leading up to the First Council of Toledo.² His appointment suggests that
there were enough Christians to warrant a bishop, but there is no evidence that they met in a

² The situation is quite different for the early fifth century, when we have evidence of a rather robust clerical
community, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.
basilica or that Paternus had a designated location from which to conduct his duties as the head of the see, such as an episcopal palace or baptistery. While it is possible that future excavations will change this picture, the extensive and careful archaeological work done in Braga since the late 1970s has revealed nothing to suggest firmly that there was an episcopal presence at the time of First Council of Toledo. There is also little evidence for the Christian laity. For example, virtually no objects used by the citizens of Braga, in the cemeteries or elsewhere, had Christian symbolism.  

As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, this is not unusual for the period. Yet, we do know there was a Christian community in Braga and according to Symphosius’ testimony they had a role in electing Paternus to lead them. The lack of material proof for this community points to a blurring of the distinctions between secular and sacred customs and traditions, similar to what we saw in Chapter 2 in the context of Symphosius. In fact, as will be argued next, like the bishop of Astorga, Paternus was a member of the elite who operated within overlapping networks of secular and ecclesiastical communities.

Like Symphosius, Paternus seems to have been a member of northwestern Hispania’s elite. Although we have no direct information about his life before becoming bishop, the epigraphy associated with his cognomen and its importance in Gallaecia, suggests that Paternus of Braga was part of a fairly prominent family with a long history in Hispania and the province. Paternus was one of the most well-known cognomina in northwestern Hispania during the

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5 The bishop of Astorga also made it clear that the majority of the people in Gallaecia approved of his appointments, including Paternus as bishop of Braga. I Tol, Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis. Vives, 31.

6 The lack of evidence makes it difficult to determine basic information about Paternus, such as his age or place of birth. We hear of him for the first time at the Council of Toledo. If, as argued above, he had been bishop for several years before this meeting, we might assume he was at least 40 years old in 400 and therefore born in 360 or before.
imperial period. Families had and passed on the name Paternus in *Hispania* and what would become Gallaecia since the first century. Frequently individuals with the name served in a military capacity and were of equestrian rank. At the same time, since it was such a common cognomen it is difficult to make any definitive connections to Paternus of Braga. However, by the time he became bishop, leading families in Gallaecia had used the name as an identifier for centuries.

Paternus undoubtedly enjoyed a traditional education common to the elite in the late Roman period. As discussed in Chapter 2, members of the clergy could train with grammarians and rhetoricians in Gallaecia. The political, economic and administrative significance of Braga and the large number of prominent families living in the provincial capital, which will be discussed more fully below, suggest that it was a center of learning. Marinianus, the friend of Symmachus who returned to his native Gallaecia after teaching in Rome, likely performed his duties within the imperial bureaucracy from Braga. Although it is impossible to know if Paternus was born in Braga, it is easy to imagine him and other young men in Gallaecia residing in the capital where they would have had better opportunities to study with rhetoricians and perhaps philosophers. Paternus drew on this education after he became bishop. Before breaking

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8 Dedications have been found in Aqua Flaviae, Lugo, Astorga, and León. See Francisco Diego Santos, *Inscripciones Romanas De La Provincia De León* (León: Institución Fray Bernardino de Sahagún de la Excma. Diputación Provincial de León, 1986), 178-179; Tomás Mañanes, *Inscripciones Latinas De Astorga* (Valladolid: Secretariado de Publicaciones e Intercambio Editorial, Universidad de Valladolid, 2000), 129-130.


with Symphosius, Paternus engaged in theological study. As will be discussed below, he made a
point of telling the bishops in Toledo that he read the books of Ambrose carefully. The bishop
of Braga was thus not only capable of a high level of contemplation and study, but he also placed
value on this type of intellectual activity. Although the focus here is on the dynamics among
clerical communities in Gallaecia, Paternus’ intellectual engagement after his elevation to the
episcopate shows that there was a relationship between theology and preferred alliances. The
blurred lines between sacred and secular customs and practices meant that Paternus could use his
ability to engage in rigorous study of Christian texts to demonstrate his participation in the
shared values of the elite and assert his own place within it.

For Symphosius, creating alliances that would be advantageous to members of his
congregation and the local community in which they participated in and around Astorga was part
of his duty as their leader. Paternus would have understood this obligation. He and Symphosius
were part of the same elite circle, and shared values gained through a common education. As
argued in Chapter 2, bonds of patronage were vital to the social relationships of men like
Symphosius and Paternus. And, as will be discussed next, there were many economic and
political reasons Symphosius would have sought to make a connection between his community
in Astorga, which was in a state of decline, and those living in the thriving capital of Braga.
Initially, Paternus seemed to recognize the value of this alliance because he chose to participate
within the bishop of Astorga’s network. However, he broke this association and we will see that
this had consequences for the clerical community in Gallaecia. First, however, we must examine

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12 This becomes even more pronounced in the early fifth century and will be discussed in Chapter 5.
Braga more closely in order to understand the potential benefits the provincial capital had to offer Symphosius and the community he represented.

**Braga: a Thriving Provincial Capital**

In late fourth century, Paternus and his congregation lived in a thriving city that had enjoyed imperial connections for hundreds of years before his elevation as bishop. The Romans founded *Bracara Augusta*, modern Braga, in the late first century BCE.13 Although they built the city *ex novo*, the location had long been a hub for the various indigenous tribes inhabiting the surrounding castros, and the home base of the powerful *Bracari*.14 Braga offered the Romans a centralized and elevated location from which to control the region interspersed with mountains, valleys and fertile plains. Over the course of the early imperial period, the local populations were incorporated into the Roman political and cultural sphere, and Braga became an important military, administrative and judicial base of power, as well as a commercial and productive center.15

Braga continued to be a thriving political, administrative and economic center throughout Paternus’ lifetime.16 When Diocletian reorganized *Hispania* in the later third century, he created the new province Gallaecia and made Braga its capital.17 This promotion presented the citizens

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17 Rui Morais, Jorge Ribeiro, “Produções de cerâmicas de *Bracara Augusta*,” in *Hornos, Talleres y Focos de Producción alfarera en Hispania, Monografías ex Officina Hispana 1 (Tomo II)*, eds. D. Bernal, L.C. Juan, M.
of the city new prospects for wealth and status through participation in the imperial bureaucracy in connection with the provincial governor. As Michael Kulikowski has shown, provincial capitals in Hispania became local imperial centers, which offered the opportunity for up to a hundred of its citizens to hold offices within the bureaucracy associated with the governors stationed there. As will be discussed below, this prosperity allowed the elite to invest in the public and private spheres and provided artisans, laborers and merchants a healthy market for their services and products. It also created demand for goods that could not be made in Braga or Hispania, such as fine tableware and other items shipped in amphorae from North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean.

Braga’s role as an imperial and commercial center was facilitated by ease of travel to and from the city. Located only about 20 miles from the Atlantic Ocean, people and goods could be transported to the city from the coast via the Cávado River, which passed along Braga’s northern limit. The provincial capital also was located at the intersection of five major Roman roads (Figure 4-1). Travelers heading north in Paternus’ day could take the Via XX “per loca maritima” or the coastal route for about 70 miles and reach Vigo in roughly two and half days or

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18 Kulikowski did not consider Braga in his assessment since sufficient material evidence was not available at the time he was writing. The situation has improved and my analysis includes current archaeological evidence for Braga. See Kulikowski, Late Roman Spain and its Cities, 70-72, 83, 109-120.


20 This will be discussed more fully below. Francisco Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império e na Antiguidade Tardia, uma Primeira Interpretação (Braga: Universidade do Minho, Unidade de Arqueologia, 2003), 109; 113.

21 Barreto Nunes, 36.
use the inland road, Via XIX, and arrive in Lugo in about five days or after 160 miles. They
could travel to Astorga to the northeast in about a week or 200 miles by two different routes,
either on the Via Nova or the Via XVII, which passed through Aquae Flaviae. All of these
roads would have made it easy for imperial officials working in Braga to stay connected to rest
of the province and for merchants to bring goods to them. In addition, Paternus and the larger
community he served could access the rest of Hispania through roads that led south to Porto and
Mérida. Braga served as the crossroad for the northwestern peninsula and only Mérida and
Zaragoza held comparable positions within their regions on the Iberian Peninsula.

As we saw with other cities in Gallaecia, and consistent with Braga’s military,
commercial, administrative and political significance, imperial authorities commissioned the
construction of a wall around the city. In the case of Braga, the fortification process took place
at the end of the third century shortly after the city was promoted to provincial capital. The
wall enclosed around 50 hectares and included gates and semi-circular towers. The
homogenous nature of the fortification suggests that the builders realized the task as one
continuous project, which would have been completed for at least a generation before Paternus

22 Sande Lemos, *Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império*, 107. Travel times are based on the estimates given by Benet
Salway, Colin Adams and Ray Laurence that travelers in imperial Rome easily travelled at least 20 miles per day
and typically travelled an average of up to 32 miles daily. See Colin Adams and Ray Laurence, eds., *Travel &


Contributo para o Estudo Económico da Cidade no Período Alto-Imperial* (Braga: Unidade de Arqueologia da


26 Francisco Sande Lemos, Manuela Martins, Luís Fontes, José Manuel Freitas Leite, Armandino Cunha, “A

27 Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 58; Sande Lemos, *Bracara
Augusta no Baixo Império*, 103; Sande Lemos, Martins, Fontes, Leite, Cunha, “A redescoberta da muralha
was born.\textsuperscript{28} The workers and their managers re-used many resources found in the city and its vicinity, including older Roman stones with funerary inscriptions carved on them.\textsuperscript{29} For Paternus and the community he represented in the later fourth century, the presence of these materials in the walls of the enclosure would have represented a visual link to the past, but also established a clear separation from some aspects of it.

The wall changed the topography of the city to a certain degree since a significant number of peripheral areas that had been within the city limits before its construction became extra-mural. However, the relationship between these zones did not cease due to their separation. In fact, many of the domestic and industrial spaces that were now located outside the wall continued to be used throughout Paternus’ early life and his time as bishop of Braga.\textsuperscript{30} Moreover, not all artisans were forced to run their workshops from outside the cities walls. As will be discussed more fully below, during Paternus’ lifetime there was an active community of craftsmen in Braga. Although their shops were often clustered in districts, customers would have found these industrial and commercials centers both inside and outside of the city’s wall.\textsuperscript{31} Not surprisingly, the numerous funerary spaces used by Braga’s inhabitants since the first century were located outside of the walls.\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{28} Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 58.

\textsuperscript{29} Construction workers also likely dismantled some houses and large public buildings such as the amphitheater on the outskirts of the city to harvest supplies for building the wall. Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 58.


\textsuperscript{31} Martins, “The Roman City of Bracara Augusta (Braga, Portugal),” 77; Martins, “Urbanização do Noroeste peninsular: o caso de Bracara Augusta,” 68

\textsuperscript{32} Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império, 107.
The investments local and imperial leaders made to upkeep the urban roads and communication networks passing through Braga provide additional proof for the continued importance of the provincial capital in the later fourth century. Braga was organized according to the typical orthogonal plan for Roman cities and which had been established during the Augustan period.33 Although officials and residents did alter the topography in some neighborhoods of the city in subsequent centuries when they added certain buildings, such as the baths, for they most part they maintained this basic alignment.34 Throughout his lifetime, Paternus would have been able to walk through the streets of Braga in much the same way as his ancestors had for centuries.35 Authorities and local elites invested not only in preserving the urban configuration, but also the streets themselves. In fact, in the years just after his ordination, Paternus and his colleagues and dependents would have enjoyed recently repaired roads.36 Likely as an act of public munificence, they employed workers to install new pavements over the streets, which would have improved travel within the city for local citizens and officials working in various capacities for the provincial governor.37 These new thoroughfares also would have facilitated the transport of goods and other types of travel in and out of Braga on any of the numerous roads that served the capital and its surrounding territory.

The baths and public buildings in Braga provide evidence for the prosperity the residents of the capital were experiencing when Symphosius decided to make Paternus their bishop. Local or imperial authorities built and then remodeled the bathing complex in the second and third

33 Martins, “The Roman City of Bracara Augusta (Braga, Portugal),” 76.
34 Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império, 101.
36 The roads were repaired in 354-375. Martins, “The Roman City of Bracara Augusta (Braga, Portugal),” 82.
37 Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império, 101.
centuries. Like other public and private buildings in the city, the baths were improved after Braga became a provincial capital. Apparently, the political and administrative leaders living in the city valued this important communal space, which had fallen into disrepair over the course of the third century. In the later third and early fourth centuries, they invested in a major renovation, which changed the general layout and circulation pattern of the complex, so that bathers moved along an angular progression rather than in a straight line. They also employed workers to alter the dimensions of the various rooms and change many of their functions. For example, they transformed a heated area into a cold zone and built a new warm pool and three new hot rooms in the western part of building. They also rearranged and enlarged the northern service area. Finally, artisans repaired the mosaics and restored them to their former splendor.

Members of the elite living in Braga continued to invest in the public bath complex throughout Paternus’ childhood and young adult life. Around the time Paternus was likely born

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39 Martins, *As Termas Romanas do Alto da Cidade*, XXII.

40 Martins, *As Termas Romanas do Alto da Cidade*, XXII.


44 Martins, *As Termas Romanas do Alto da Cidade*, 64.
in the mid-fourth century, they hired workers to reorganize the configuration of the baths again. Following a pattern that was common in the West for these facilities at the time, builders refashioned more hot rooms, so that ultimately there were a greater number of cold ones. Around the same time, one or more patrons financed the construction of a new palaestra in what had been a storage room in the northern service area. Bathers using this new exercise space now enjoyed the spectacular vista of the surrounding landscape from the top of the highest point in the city. Because the palaestra was contiguous with the city’s theater, their view also included this once magnificent monument.

Up until the end of the third century, the theater and baths complex along with the nearby forum and amphitheater formed an important civic center. The entrance to the theater was connected to the forum, through which city and imperial officials could make grand entrances at the public events held there. However, it is likely that the space was utilized very rarely, if ever, for such occasions during Paternus’ lifetime. Starting in the later third century and continuing

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45 Coins found show that this remodel took place after 341-346. Martins, As Termas Romanas do Alto da Cividade, 6-7, 60.

46 Martins, As Termas Romanas do Alto da Cividade, XXII-XXIII, 6-7, 60, 69-72; Martins, “The Roman City of Bracara Augusta (Braga, Portugal),” 80.

47 Previously the palaestra was on the western side of the bath complex. Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 59; Martins, As Termas Romanas do Alto da Cividade, 7.

48 Martins, “The Roman City of Bracara Augusta (Braga, Portugal),” 79.

49 Information on the amphitheater largely comes from earlier references to the structure, which was still visible in the nineteenth century and based on photogramma images of the area. Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 48; Martins, “The Roman City of Bracara Augusta (Braga, Portugal),” 78; Rui Morais, “Breve ensaio sobre o anfiteatro de Bracara Augusta, análise de fotogramas de 1964,” Forum 30 (Jul-Dec 2001): 65-68.

50 The theater likely progressively was used less starting in the later third or early fourth century and became a source of looting and then dumping over the course of the fourth and early fifth centuries. Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 59; Manuela Martins, Jorge Ribeiro, Fernanda Magalhães, Raquel Peñin, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity: the area of the Roman Theater,” (working paper, Unidade de Arqueologia da Universidade do Minho, July 2015), 1.
over the course of the fourth, looters and public officials dismantled the theatre.\textsuperscript{51} Some of those who visited the neighboring bath complex and forum might have remembered the theatre in its former glory, but for the young Paternus it would have been a relic of a bygone era.\textsuperscript{52}

Even with the abandonment of the theater, the bath complex continued to serve the community and the local elite partially renovated it in the later fourth century. Perhaps because the theater was increasingly used as a dump rather than a reminder of a glorious past, the patrons of the bath complex decided to shut down the areas where the two monuments were connected.\textsuperscript{53} The northern service area was increasingly used for unloading debris and eventually made non-operational.\textsuperscript{54} The patrons also invested in positive changes to the building. In particular, they hired workers to significantly alter its exterior.\textsuperscript{55} The palaestra on the western side of the complex was shut down and replaced with a new praefurnium or access to the furnace.\textsuperscript{56}

In summary, around the time that Symphosius decided to ordain Paternus as bishop of Braga, the city was a thriving provincial capital. For a over century, the inhabitants of Braga had been enjoying the rewards of living in a political hub within the empire. Although the majority of the large-scale renovations within the public sphere had been completed prior to the first half of the fourth century, in the years leading up to Paternus’ ordination, officials and the local elite continued to be active in the city and worked to maintain the roads and public baths. For all these

\textsuperscript{51} Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 59; Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñin, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” 1, 8.

\textsuperscript{52} Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñin, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” 3, 8.

\textsuperscript{53} Martins, \textit{As Termas Romanas do Alto da Cidade}, XXIII, 61.

\textsuperscript{54} Martins, \textit{As Termas Romanas do Alto da Cidade}, XXII, 6-7, 9, 60.

\textsuperscript{55} Martins, \textit{As Termas Romanas do Alto da Cidade}, 60.

\textsuperscript{56} Martins, \textit{As Termas Romanas do Alto da Cidade}, XXII-XXIII, 9; Martins, “The Roman City of Bracara Augusta (Braga, Portugal),” 80.
reasons, having an ally within Braga, such as Paternus, would have connected Symphosius to key players in the imperial bureaucracy, which would have benefited members of his congregation in southern Asturicensis and the larger community of which they were a part. Of course, the local elite living in Braga would have had to agree to such an alliance. As will be discussed next, although initially the bishop of Braga seems to have been willing to align himself with Symphosius, Paternus was only one of the many prominent people living in the provincial capital. The power and authority of the rest of the elite in Braga may have attracted Symphosius to Braga, but they also represented a challenge to his efforts to extend effective patronage ties there.

Private Sphere: The Elite of Braga Build Influence and Status in their Homes

Paternus likely was from one of the numerous affluent families living in grand homes throughout Braga in the late fourth century. The majority of these urban residences were built in the first century then remodeled in the second. However, when the city was promoted to be the capital of the newly created province of Gallaecia in the late third century, the owners began to make significant changes to their homes. This impulse to renovate continued in the early fourth century. Many of the alterations they made to their homes had an impact on public areas of the city as well. Although the majority of the remodeling was complete by the mid-fourth century, people lived in these elaborate homes in the years leading up to Paternus’ appointment and after he broke ties with Symphosius; many continued to employ craftsmen to make minor


repairs and adjustments to various rooms in their dwellings. The domestic architecture of the later fourth century, and the similarity in the design and monumental features, points to a sizeable group of high status citizens with a shared culture, who were likely part of the same ruling class in which Paternus participated. Many of the changes dated to the turn of fourth century suggest that the inhabitants of such houses held administrative, political or military positions associated with Braga’s role as provincial capital. This theory is supported by the fact that when the owners remodeled their homes, they frequently did so at the expense of public spaces. For example, in the later third or early fourth century, the inhabitants of what today is called the Domus da Escola Velha da Sé closed the portico that surrounded their home in order to make more space within it. The Domus da Escola Velha da Sé held a privileged position in the city north of the forum and on the east side of the cardo maximus. The closing of the portico decreased the amount of available public space and modified the relationship between the road and the inside of the house. The owners added a vestibulum, or enclosed entrance room or court, in order to control access to the interior of the house. The status and official position of the dominus living in the Domus da Escola Velha da Sé is reinforced by the fact that he made changes to such an important commercial and civic location.

Other elite families also remodeled their homes located near the forum and Braga’s major roads. The practice was to re-purpose the space occupied by shops and other public spaces to

make more room for the private residences. As in the case of the *Domus da Escola Velha da Sé*, a portion of the additional space afforded by these modifications often was used as an office near the home’s entrance for *dominus* to receive clients. In order to realize these types of changes in a civic and commercial center like the forum, the homeowners surely held significant status and authority in the provincial capital.

Private baths were an important feature of elite urban culture in fourth-century Braga. In the decades after the city became the provincial capital in the later third century, many homeowners made repairs to their already existing pools and associated rooms, while others built entirely new bathing complexes. For example, the residents at the *Domus da Escola Velha da Sé* had a private bath installed where the peristyle had been since the first century. They also employed artisans to create a geometric mosaic of black-and-white tiles for the corridor that connected the baths to the rest of the house. Another family living in the northern part of the city, close to a market and possible commercial center for imported goods, also added baths to their home in the later third or early fourth century. Although these private bathing facilities were installed early in the century, the people living in the houses continued to use them before Paternus became bishop in the late fourth century and after he broke his alliance with Symphosius.

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63 Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em *Bracara Augusta*,” 70, 73, 81-85.

64 Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em *Bracara Augusta*,” 82.

65 Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em *Bracara Augusta*,” 52.


67 This domus located on Rua Gualdim Pais was likely built in the first century and remodeled in the later third or fourth century. Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura Doméstica em *Bracara Augusta*,” 92-95.

68 The *Domus da Escola Velha da Sé* was occupied throughout the fifth century. The owners of the domus on Rua Gualdim Pais continued to live in this home and used ceramic imported from the Eastern Mediterranean throughout the fourth and into the fifth century. Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em *Bracara Augusta*,” 51, 93.
The various elite of Braga continued to live in and, to a certain degree, enhance their homes before and after Paternus became bishop. For example, the owners of the Domus da Escola Velha da Sé hired artisans and carpenters to repair some of the floors the mid-to-later fourth century. Workers also built new walls to create more rooms and expanded some areas to increase the available living space.\textsuperscript{69} In another example, the residents of the Domus de Santiago, located east of the forum on the decumanus maximus, had added monumental features to their early imperial home at the turn of fourth century.\textsuperscript{70} During Paternus’ reign they continued to enjoy elements added during this remodel, including the central patio with granite columns and a decorative pool adorned with a multi-colored mosaic depicting marine fauna, including eels, octopuses, sea urchins, fish, shells and water.\textsuperscript{71} The private bath they used in the later fourth century also was embellished with a warm room heated by a newly installed hypocaust.\textsuperscript{72}

The changes the owners of the domus known as the Casa das Carvalheiras made to their home over the course of the fourth century provide more evidence for the important role the elite continued have within the public sphere of Braga when Symphosius decided to make Paternus the bishop there.\textsuperscript{73} The Casa das Carvalheiras was located in the northwestern region of the

\textsuperscript{69} Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em Bracara Augusta,” 51, 55.

\textsuperscript{70} Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em Bracara Augusta,” 87, 90.

\textsuperscript{71} The pool is about 15 by 10 feet. Although it cannot be known for certain if the owners of this home were Christian, depictions of boneless sea animals may have an association with Lent. Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em Bracara Augusta,” 86-90.

\textsuperscript{72} The balnea was either installed or improved with a hypocaust in the later third or early fourth century. Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em Bracara Augusta,” 88-89.

\textsuperscript{73} Casa das Carvalheiras is the most fully excavated domus in Braga; the entire block has been excavated and studied in detail. Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em Bracara Augusta,” 21.
Roman city, near both the *cardo maximus* and the *decumanus maximus* and the forum.\(^74\) As we have seen in other cases in the city, the homeowners greatly remodeled the *Casa das Carvalheiras* in the later third and early fourth century.\(^75\) They hired carpenters to close off the porticoes on the street to make more living space, but they also installed heavy doors to separate part of the house from the original peristyle, which they transformed into numerous compartments that were likely used as commercial shops.\(^76\) In fact, although people continued to inhabit much of the house, a good deal of the domestic space was converted to serve commercial and public functions.\(^77\)

The economic importance of the converted areas of the *Casa das Carvalheiras* is demonstrated by the large number of coins that were buried under the floor in one the stores built over the old peristyle.\(^78\) In fact, throughout the fourth century, people left coins in other places within the area that had been the *domus*.\(^79\) The shops may have been used to sell imported goods.


\(^77\) The southern part of Casa das Carvalheiras continued to be used as a home as it had been previously. Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em *Bracara Augusta*,” 22; Martins, “A zona arqueológica das Carvalheiras,” 35.

\(^78\) 45,000 bronze coins, many from Constantine era were found under the old peristyle, which archaeologists think were buried in the mid fourth century. Martins, *Bracara Augusta Roteiros Arqueológicos*, 32; Martins, “A zona arqueológica das Carvalheiras,” 35.

\(^79\) A significant number of coins from the fourth century were found, including some from 378-394. It should be noted that they were often mixed with other materials, such as glass, which has led archaeologists to suggest the areas where they were found were used as dumps. Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em *Bracara Augusta*,” 39; Sande Lemos, *Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império*, 115.
In the early fourth century the merchants sold primarily fish sauce from Lusitania and Baetica, but in the years before Paternus became bishop in the later fourth century, they began to import products in amphorae from North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean. It seems that some sections of the old house were decommissioned in the later fourth century and used as a dump. This, however, did not detract from its utility as a public gathering place. The baths that had been part of the private dwelling since the second century were reformed around the turn of the fourth century. Workers and artisans repaired the pavements in some of the rooms and some of the space was reconfigured to create a public access to the baths. The considerable size of these once private baths and the new entrance indicates that at least a portion of the larger civic community enjoyed them throughout the fourth century. The example of the Casa das Carvalheiras also shows that in the later fourth century, artisans and commerce were an important component of the economy of Braga. We will now turn to a discussion of the value of these services and goods to the local community and the connections they offered to other regions.

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84 Delgado and Martins, “História e arqueologia de uma cidade romana,” 34.
85 Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em Bracara Augusta,” 44; Martins, Bracara Augusta Roteiros Arqueológicos, 32.
Craftsmen, Commerce and Connections

For Paternus and his congregation in Braga, having a thriving artisanal community offering a variety of services and products was typical part of urban life. Artisans living in Braga were active before and after Symphosius decided to ordain Paternus to be the bishop in the provincial capital.86 Craftsmen and specialists in wood, stone, and tiles had a fair amount of work carrying out the home-remodeling plans of the elite through the first half of the fourth century. These artisans also were crucial contributors to the completion of public projects, such as the various design changes made to the baths in the southeastern part of the city. In the years leading up to the First Council of Toledo, the efforts of skilled construction workers continued to be vital to the community in Braga, since they were needed to repair and maintain the practical and decorative components of elite homes and public baths.87

Local artisans also produced ceramic and glass items for the local community. They made these products in their workshops, which were primarily set up in the outskirts of the city.88 Glass and ceramic makers had been using these production centers since the first century.89 Although some workshops were closed down when the wall was built,90 many artisans continued to operate their businesses throughout the fourth century.91 For example, glassmakers created hand-crafted products for the citizens of Braga before and after Paternus became bishop. Many of their shops were located outside of the city wall, although they did have at least one

production center in an intramural space.\textsuperscript{92} Demand for such locally made glass was strong enough in the years before Symphosius ordained Paternus, that artisans had to open up a new shop outside the wall on the eastern part of the city, near the road that led to Aquae Flaviae and then Astorga.\textsuperscript{93}

Ceramic makers of various skill levels were a vital part of the thriving economy in which Paternus’ congregation operated. They had several workshops, used laborers and transporters, and sold products to residents on different levels of Bragan society.\textsuperscript{94} Clay for making common tableware was easily excavated from pits about four miles northwest of the city on the Roman road XIX.\textsuperscript{95} Laborers collected materials for making higher quality ceramics from other nearby locations and transported them along the many roads that ran through Braga.\textsuperscript{96} Local citizens bought many of the ceramics the artisans crafted and cooked in their workshops and ovens.\textsuperscript{97} The final products may have been moved to be sold in shops and markets located closer to the center of town, since the workshops and storage areas were often near the wall or in the same zone as the numerous necropolises.\textsuperscript{98} Some of the ceramic wares Braga’s artisans produced were shipped to other towns, such as Conímbriga and Aquae Flaviae, modern Chaves.\textsuperscript{99}

\textsuperscript{92} Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 60-61.

\textsuperscript{93} Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 60.

\textsuperscript{94} Martins, “Bracara Augusta: a memória de uma Cidade,” 180

\textsuperscript{95} In the vicinity of modern Prado. Martins, \textit{Bracara Augusta: Cidade Romana}, 21; Morais and Ribeiro, “Prod\'u\c{c}\~oes de cer\'amicas de Bracara Augusta,” 196.

\textsuperscript{96} For example, from the Roman camp Aquis Querquernis on axis of the Via Nova. Martins, \textit{Bracara Augusta: Cidade Romana}, 21.

\textsuperscript{97} Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 55.

\textsuperscript{98} Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 55; Sande Lemos, \textit{Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império}, 113.

\textsuperscript{99} Sande Lemos, \textit{Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império}, 112-113.
Although local artisans did provide many essential items and services to the citizens of Braga, there also was demand for products that could not be made in the provincial capital. Located between the Minho and Douro Rivers, Braga had been an integral part of commercial routes since the early imperial period.\footnote{Morais, \textit{Autarcia e Comércio em Bracara Augusta}, VII.} Merchants used these major rivers, the smaller ones that flowed to the city, and the five Roman roads that crossed through it to bring products to Braga from other provinces of \textit{Hispania} and from locations throughout the empire.\footnote{Morais, \textit{Autarcia e Comércio em Bracara Augusta}, VIII; Martins, \textit{Bracara Augusta: Cidade Romana}, 53.} \textit{Negotiatores} ensured that items not produced in the city, like fish sauce, oil, wine, and fine and common tableware, were available to the inhabitants of Braga.\footnote{The epigraphic evidence provides evidence for \textit{negotiatores} and the material culture, including ceramics and coins reveal the high level of commerce and what products were imported. Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 56-57.} This trade and the retail sale of the goods in the many shops located throughout Braga were an important component of the city’s economy.\footnote{Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 56.} Moreover, the city was well connected to the empire through this commerce, which was part of the Atlantic network.\footnote{Morais, \textit{Autarcia e Comércio em Bracara Augusta}, VII.}

When Symphosius decided to place Paternus at the head of its Christian community, Braga continued to be a vibrant commercial center.\footnote{Martins, \textit{Bracara Augusta: Cidade Romana}, 7.} After a moderate retraction in trade during the third century, with the promotion of the city to provincial capital merchants became active again in the fourth century.\footnote{Martins, \textit{Bracara Augusta: Cidade Romana}, 30.} They brought ceramics produced in the Ebro Valley in northeastern \textit{Hispania} to Braga, which indicates that travel along the road that ran through
Astorga continued. Local retailers sold this pottery and other imported items from their shops, and in some cases warehouses, to the numerous elite families and other residents of Braga who could afford these popular ceramic pieces.

Although many shops along Braga’s streets were closed or made smaller when local and imperial officials remodeled and expanded their homes in the late third and early fourth centuries, vendors continued to operate businesses and offer goods to the community before and after Paternus became bishop. For the most part, these retailers seem to have conducted their business on the outskirts of town, near the various Roman roads used to bring their wares to the city. For example, as discussed above, the owners of Casa das Carvalheiras transformed part of their home into shops at the turn of the fourth century. This market was near the wall in the northwestern area of the city and between the roads that traders would have used to transport goods from northern locations, such as Vigo and Lugo and from the southern peninsula. Another commercial zone in Braga also was located near the road leading to Lugo. This market near the gate at the northern edge of the city and only a few meters from the wall had been a macellum or indoor market in the early imperial period. The citizens also may have used the area for

107 Significant numbers of fragments of late Roman ceramic from Hispania, known as TSHT, produced in the Ebro Valley, were found throughout the city. Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império, 111.

108 TSHT ceramics have been found throughout the city, but are concentrated in three areas: Fujacal, das Caravalheiras and Alto da Cividade. This suggests that heavy consumers or retailers with warehouses lived here, or that these spaces were used as dumps. Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império, 111.


110 Fontes, Luís; Lemos, Franscisco Saúde; Cruz, Mário. “Mais velho” que a Sé de Braga” 145

other public and religious functions during this time.\textsuperscript{112} When the wall was built around the turn of the fourth century, public officials, perhaps with the help of local vendors, remodeled the public market.\textsuperscript{113} Artisans, carpenters and laborers enlarged the commercial space and installed a new pavement of opus signinum.\textsuperscript{114} They also added pillars to suspend the roof and create partitions for the market.\textsuperscript{115} Inhabitants continued to acquire goods from this market in the years before the Council of Toledo in 400.\textsuperscript{116}

These shops provide evidence that Paternus’ congregation in Braga was part of a vibrant community with laborers, artisans and merchants who played an active role in the city’s economy. The elite living in the numerous elaborate homes in the city certainly created a demand for large quantities of locally manufactured items and various services. However, around the time that Symphosius decided to make Paternus bishop of the city, the leading citizens of Braga also began to acquire a taste for products that could not be made by the artisans living in the city or elsewhere in \textit{Hispania}. Although they continued to use tableware made in \textit{Hispania}, as will be discussed next, a transition occurred in the late fourth century and from this point the prominent families of Braga increasingly relied on networks extending far beyond the Iberian Peninsula to bring them the ceramics and commodities they desired.\textsuperscript{117}

\textsuperscript{112} Inscriptions found, including to Isis, indicate the public and religious significance of the area in the early imperial period. Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 51; Sande Lemos, \textit{Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império}, 104; Rodriguez Resino, \textit{Del Imperio Romano a La Alta Edad Media}, 152.


\textsuperscript{114} Martins, “Urbanização do Noroeste peninsular: o caso de Bracara Augusta,” 63.


\textsuperscript{116} Gaspar, 93-94.

\textsuperscript{117} Sande Lemos, \textit{Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império}, 110; 113.
Symphosius’ choice to place Paternus at the head of the Christian community in Braga coincided with a shift in how the members of the city’s upper echelons expressed their wealth and authority. In the later fourth century, the importation of certain luxury items was becoming the new way for the elite in Braga to display their status. By this time they were relying less and less on traditional acts of public munificence to assert their importance to the community. For example, although the baths were used and remodeled throughout Paternus’ life, just before he was ordained, their importance as a public space began to decline. Around the time of the First Council of Toledo, and perhaps just before the meeting in 400, the people of Braga were going to the main public complex less frequently and there was little reason for the elite to invest in major renovations of the site.\footnote{Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 48.} The prominent families of Braga also devoted less capital and energy to improving their homes. Of course, they still lived in their magnificent palace-like residences and employed numerous servants to make them, their families and guests comfortable and hired workers to make necessary repairs. However, in the years before the trial in Toledo, large-scale building projects had ceased to be a vehicle for displaying wealth or dominance in the local community.

In the later fourth century, the prominent families of Braga began to demonstrate status through their possession of luxury items produced in provinces outside of the Iberian Peninsula.\footnote{Raquel Martínez Peñín, Manuela Martins, “Characterization Of Late Antique And Early Medieval Pottery Production Of The City Of Braga And Its Territory” (working paper, Unidade de Arqueologia da Universidade do Minho, July 2015), 5-7; Sande Lemos, \textit{Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império}, 110, 113.} This was a shift in elite habits that coincided with similar trends among the wealthy living in the villas of northern Asturicensis, such as at Veranes. In fact, it was at this time that the leading citizens of Braga began to purchase the same wine and fine ceramics from North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean that were being imported to the ports of Vigo and
Gijón. For the elite living in Braga, their capacity to possess these desirable items became a way to demonstrate their wealth and authority. The ability to bring to the city wine, tableware and other products from places as far away as Tunisia, Antioch and Palestine required links within larger networks. They brokered new agreements with manufacturers and merchants in these distant locations in order to get the latest products. Moreover, the elite had to oversee many dependents in order to transport the items from their original locations in North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean to local coastal ports and then to the city. While previously they may have used their wealth, connections and authority to build within the public and private spheres, in the later fourth century, the elite of Braga invested in bringing prestigious merchandise to the provincial capital to be used in their luxurious homes.

The connections the elite in Braga had within new inter-regional commercial networks contributed to the vibrant economy enjoyed by the provincial capital’s inhabitants. Viewed within an economic and social context, it is not surprising that Symphosius chose to place someone within his own alliance to lead the Christian community there. The distinctions between the sacred and secular spheres were blurred for Symphosius and Paternus. As members of the elite, both understood the importance of patronage networks. Moreover, Symphosius’ concern for the needs of the laity in his see, which as we saw was suffering from recession in the later fourth century, motivated him to seek ways to provide opportunities for the people living in Astorga. His congregation and the greater community of Astorga of which they were a part would benefit from access to the imperial bureaucracy associated with the provincial capital and the lucrative new commercial networks that were the latest means for the elite to showcase and

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120 Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñin, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” 8; Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império, 109; Martins, Bracara Augusta Cidade Romana, 30; Rodríguez Resino, Del Imperio Romano a La Alta Edad Media, 152.

121 Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império, 110; 113.
maintain their status. In fact, Symphosius did more than appoint a new episcopal leader in Braga.

As will be argued next, in order to offer access to the opportunities available to Braga’s citizens and their networks, he established a bishopric in the city. Symphosius chose Paternus because he was a member of his alliance. However, once he became a leader among the local elite in Braga, Paternus chose to break ties with Symphosius. Perhaps because the leading citizens of Braga did not want patronage obligations tying them to the bishop and other elite in Astorga, Paternus asserted his own authority as a bishop and head of a separate alliance.

**Alliances and Authority within the Clerical Community of Gallaecia**

Prior to Paternus’ ordination in the late fourth century, we have no concrete evidence for ecclesiastical leadership in Braga. The priest named Luxurius who attended the Council of Elvira in the first decade of the fourth century may have been from Braga. His name is listed in the introduction to the canons for the meeting as Luxurius from Drona, which scholars such as Jose Vives have translated to Braga. Yet, this is a contentious assumption. It is more likely that Drona refers to Brana, a town Pliny mentions in his description of the province of Baetica. Even if Vives’ dubious translation is accepted, Luxurius would have had limited authority in Braga, since he was a presbyter and not a bishop. Decades later, in 385, the bishop of Rome, Siricius, wrote a letter to Himerius of Tarragona. Some scholars argue he referred to Braga thus it can be assumed the city had become a bishopric by the time Siricius sent the missive to

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Himerius. However, Siricius never mentioned Braga directly. Instead the bishop of Rome included Gallaecia in the list of the provinces of Hispania where he expected Himerius to spread the decrees laid out in the rest of the letter. Siricius may have had Braga in mind, since it was the provincial capital by that time, thus using Gallaecia could have been shorthand for the city. Yet, even if this were the case, we have no other information about this bishop, his congregation or the clerical community in Braga. Finally, the bishop Balconius of Braga is mentioned in the canons of Toledo; however, this was an interpolation from when the canons were redacted at a later date. Balconius was bishop of Braga in the early fifth century, and will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Paternus’ ordination may have coincided with the initial establishment of the bishopric of Braga. Paternus is the first clerical leader in Braga for whom we have definitive evidence. Moreover, the record of the Council of Toledo suggests that before Symphosius appointed him to the episcopal see in the provincial capital, Braga did not have a bishop. As discussed in Chapter 2, Symphosius told the council that he performed multiple ordinations in Gallaecia because the churches did not have leaders. The record from the trial states that Paternus was among these newly appointed bishops and priests whom Symphosius placed at the head of congregations that...

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125 Martins, “The Roman City of Bracara Augusta (Braga, Portugal),” 82.


had previously lacked them.\textsuperscript{128} Of course, the episcopal see in Braga may have been vacant only temporarily before Paternus was placed in the office. The locales for the other ordinations Symphosius performed are not given so it is difficult to compare the circumstances in these instances with Braga. Yet, the impression given is that Symphosius was forced to appoint so many ecclesiastical leaders due to the growth of the Christian community.\textsuperscript{129} If this is the case, and Braga was considered among this group of new offices, Symphosius did more than appoint a new bishop in Braga; he created an episcopate. In this context, Paternus’ separation from Symphosius and his group represented a significant rupture of a previous alliance.

Paternus’ reaction at the trial of after the First Council of Toledo provides evidence that those accused of Priscillianism were part of an alliance. According to his own confession, Paternus originally knew of a Priscillianist sect. However, the bishop of Braga never admitted to adhering to any of the beliefs or practices associated with Priscillian. Instead he only referred to the faction. He also claimed that after becoming bishop, he freed himself from this sect through his study of the books of Ambrose.\textsuperscript{130} This suggests that he was part of or at least aware of this faction before Symphosius ordained him. In fact, his participation in this group and seeming connection or commitment to its elder member, Symphosius, may have convinced the bishop of Astorga that Paternus was a suitable candidate for the episcopal see in Braga. As we have seen, Braga’s citizens participated in important imperial and economic networks, and having a loyal ally would have been beneficial to Symphosius and his congregation in Astorga. However, at the trial in Toledo, Paternus vehemently denied any current connection to Symphosius and his men. The fact that he jumped up to interrupt the proceedings and disassociate himself from the group

\textsuperscript{128} I Tol, \textit{Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis}. Vives, 31. See also Chadwick, 183.

\textsuperscript{129} I Tol, \textit{Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis}, Vives, 31-33.

\textsuperscript{130} I Tol. \textit{Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis}. Vives, 31.
but not necessarily their ideas indicates that it was more than a religious alliance. Their relationship had significant implications for him as a bishop, which extended beyond his personal religious beliefs and doctrines.\textsuperscript{131}

Paternus likely had served as bishop for several years before he traveled to Toledo to meet with the other ecclesiastical leaders of Hispania, sometime between 397 and 400 CE.\textsuperscript{132} It is not clear if he had been a presbyter or held another office within the church in Braga or elsewhere before Symphosius elevated him to the episcopal office. However, when he proclaimed to the council in Toledo that he was no longer part of the group associated with Symphosius, Paternus said it was due to a change in thinking that had happened after he had become bishop. The bishops in Toledo readily welcomed Paternus into their fold because like another bishop, Vegetinus, he had made a public profession of faith. Vegetinus had done this at the Council of Zaragoza.\textsuperscript{1} It is not clear when Paternus proclaimed his new alignment, but when he interrupted the proceedings in Toledo, he sought to remind the bishops that he had already left Symphosius’ sect and therefore should not be tried with the bishop of Astorga and his men. In fact, Vegetinus and Paternus were the only two at the trial who were not asked to explain their beliefs, or sign a confession. Instead they were admitted to communion and allowed to retain their sees without qualification.\textsuperscript{133} Due to their prior interactions with the bishops and public confessions, both were easily reconciled. Although it is not clear exactly how long he had led the congregation of Braga, it is safe to say at least some time had passed between Paternus’

\textsuperscript{131} I Tol. Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis. Vives, 31.

\textsuperscript{132} Paternus specific activities as bishop of Braga will be discussed more fully in Chapter 5.

\textsuperscript{133} I Tol Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis. Vives, 31, 32. Henry Chadwick notes that both Vegetinus and Paternus were restored without any qualifications. See Chadwick, 184.
ordination and the Council of Toledo. In this time, Paternus redefined his alliances within Gallaecia.

As the leaders of separate alliances, Paternus and Symphosius may have competed for authority within Gallaecia. Scholars often assume that because Braga was the provincial capital, the city served as the Metropolitan see of Gallaecia. According to the Council of Nicaea, all bishops within the province were supposed to participate in process of choosing who would fill a vacant episcopal see, but it was necessary for the Metropolitan bishop to confirm the ordination. Although the bishops in Toledo were concerned that Symphosius and his men and Paternus and those associated with him would confirm the profession of faith articulated at Nicaea, they did not refer to the council or its canons in their discussion of the ordinations Symphosius performed. In general, the episcopal ordination regulations set forth at Nicaea, were not immediately adopted in the West where many local communities continued to play a significant role in choosing their ecclesiastical leaders throughout the fourth century. Likewise, the authority of the Metropolitan and the criteria for assigning this designation varied among the provinces. In many places, especially within the eastern churches, the ecclesiastical structure was organized according to the civil hierarchy and the Metropolitan was the bishop of the provincial capital. However, frequently within western churches this schema was not

134 Some sources say he was bishop as early as 385 or 390.

135 See Quiroga, El Final de la Antigüedad en la Gallaecia, 31.


137 In some cases, community involvement lasted into the fifth and sixth centuries. See Peter Norton, Episcopal Elections 250-600. Hierarchy and Popular Will in Late Antiquity (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 25-45.
followed. Instead, the most senior bishop held ultimate ecclesiastical authority within the province.  

As discussed in Chapter 2, Symphosius had been the bishop of Astorga for multiple decades by the time he was put on trial in around 400. Moreover, the bishops in Toledo respected him as a pious, old man. Therefore, he certainly was senior to Paternus, whom he had ordained himself in the years before the trial. Moreover, Symphosius’ authority to carry out this appointment was not challenged. Finally, as discussed above, Paternus was likely the first bishop to serve the Christian community in Braga and so prior to his ordination, the provincial capital could not have been the Metropolitan see. After being appointed to the episcopate, however, Paternus may have chosen to assert the superior status of Braga by separating himself from Symphosius and his network.

The final decisions the council of bishops made at the trial in Toledo support the argument that around the time of the meeting, there were at least two competing networks within Gallaecia, one headed by Symphosius and the other by Paternus. Although Symphosius appointed him to the episcopal office in Braga, Paternus was seen as separate from the members of the clerical community in Gallaecia who were in “communion” with the bishop of Astorga. This division does not represent a classification based on those that adhered to Priscillian’s teaching and saw him as a martyr and those that rejected them. As explained in Chapter 2, the ecclesiastical leadership at Toledo had accepted Symphosius’ condemnation of the bishop of Avila and his efforts to reconcile himself with the church. Similarly, because Paternus had made a public proclamation denouncing Priscillian, he was deemed part of the catholic faith and

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138 Norton, 118-119, 130, 145.
139 senex religiosus. I Tol, Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis, Vives, 32.
permitted to retain his see.\textsuperscript{141} Contrariwise, other clerics and bishops—including Herenas, Donatus, Acurius and Emilius—chose to retract their professions of faith and declared Priscillian to be catholic and a holy martyr. The bishops at Toledo declared this group guilty, outside of the communion of the church and ordered them to be stripped of their offices.\textsuperscript{142} By contrast, Paternus and Symphosius each represented groups of priests and bishops that retained their standing. Certain clergymen, who pledged their orthodoxy, aligned themselves with Symphosius and the bishops in Toledo upheld this association.\textsuperscript{143} In addition, the council in Toledo charged the bishop of Astorga with overseeing those who were not at the trial, but would return to him in the future. Symphosius was told to be careful about whom he accepted into his communion, but he was given the authority to make the decision.\textsuperscript{144} Thus Symphosius was put in charge of specific group of clerics, some of whom pledged their allegiance to him at the council and others who had remained in Gallaecia. Paternus also was placed at the head of a group, albeit a smaller one. Vegetinus was the only member of the Gallaecian clerical community linked to Paternus explicitly. The bishops also decreed that Vegetinus should only be in communication with Paternus.\textsuperscript{145} This declaration was made directly after the bishops ruled that all those who came with Symphosius should always remain with him and before they charged the bishop of Astorga with overseeing the confessions of those who did not come to the trial in Toledo.\textsuperscript{146}

\textsuperscript{141} I Tol Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis. Vives, 32.
\textsuperscript{142} I Tol Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis. Vives, 31-32.
\textsuperscript{143} I Tol Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis. Vives, 32.
\textsuperscript{144} I Tol Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis. Vives, 32.
\textsuperscript{145} I Tol Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis. Vives, 32.
\textsuperscript{146} I Tol Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis. Vives, 32.
In summary, the period around the time of the First Council of Toledo, the later fourth and early fifth century, was one of transition within the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Gallaecia. In the late fourth century, as the longest-reigning bishop in Gallaecia, Symphosius acted as the province’s metropolitan. He ordained bishops and presbyters and through them established a loyal network within Gallaecia. Paternus was among those he appointed to episcopal office and in that moment the newly ordained bishop of Braga accepted Symphosius’ authority. However, Paternus was eager to separate himself from the bishop of Astorga’s network. Like Vegetinus, prior to the trial he had declared his orthodoxy and at the proceedings he had denied emphatically any continuing participation within Symphosius’ alliance. It is difficult to say with any certainty if the rest of the bishops of Hispania conferred higher status on either Symphosius or Paternus. If seniority or connection to the provincial capital was the determining factor, the lines were blurred. Ultimately both Paternus and Symphosius had some degree of authority and acted as leaders within their own alliances. This created a complicated dynamic within Gallaecia not only for the local clerical communities, but also for the all of residents of the various conventus within the province. We have already seen that for Symphosius, as a member of the elite, secular and sacred obligations and customs overlapped. The same seems to have held true for Paternus. As the leader of the congregation living and working in a prosperous city with important political, economic social, and new long-distance commercial connections, Paternus had a different set of goals than Symphosius and those within his waning see of Astorga. It follows, that the bishop of Braga, would have every reason to assert his independence from the patronage of Symphosius, and establish the ascendancy of his see in the provincial capital to protect himself and the members of his congregation and other members of the community and the networks in which they participated.
Conclusion

This final assessment of the clerical communities involved in the trial after the First Council Toledo demonstrates the importance of including analysis of the social and economic contexts of the bishops involved. As members of the Gallaecian elite, Paternus and Symphosius shared values and operated within similar overlapping secular and ecclesiastical networks. When Symphosius decided to create a bishopric in Braga, he and Paternus were part of the same alliance. Undoubtedly the bishop of Astorga hoped that his connection to Paternus would provide opportunities for his own congregation and the rest of the local population that formed their larger social and economic base in southern Asturicensis. The potential rewards for the people living in his declining see were great. Braga’s citizens were involved in the imperial bureaucracy and the elite used their prosperity to keep local artisans and merchants busy. Perhaps even more significantly, just before Symphosius ordained Paternus, the many prominent families living in Braga began to showcase their authority and status by brokering the shipment of luxury items from North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean to Gallaecia’s capital.

While Symphosius may have hoped to capitalize on this movement of goods by extending patronage through ordinations as he also tried to do in the context of Aquis Celenis and northern Asturicensis, Paternus ultimately blocked his efforts. Once he became bishop of Braga, Paternus changed his affiliations and established himself as the leader of his own separate alliance to the detriment of Symphosius and his see, which never returned to its formal prosperity and remained outside the sphere of the inter-regional commerce embraced by the elite in Braga.147 The other bishops in Hispania recognized and supported this new network, perhaps for

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147 Unlike Vigo, Gijón and Braga and the rural sites near them, the elite in Astorga and León and the villas nearby never were able to bring the popular luxury items from North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean to their local communities.
the potential benefits it might offer their own communities. Within the context of the blurred distinctions between secular and sacred customs and obligations, accusations of heresy in the late fourth century were as much about these types of alliances and the important social and economic benefits they offered as they were about doctrine. These circumstances persisted into the fifth century; however, as Chapter 5 will show, theological study was becoming increasingly important as a way to establish status. Nevertheless, connections within larger networks continued to matter and the social and religious spheres continued to be intertwined.

Figure 4-1. Map of Gallaecia with roads from Braga, ca. 400. Map courtesy of author.
CHAPTER 5
TRAVEL, TRADE AND THEOLOGICAL DEBATES: OROSIUS AND THE CLERICAL
AND LAY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY OF BRAGA

Introduction

In 417-418, the Spanish presbyter Orosius penned his *Seven Books of History against the Pagans*, which Augustine, the bishop of Hippo, had commissioned while he was finishing his own explanation of recent events affecting the empire, *The City of God*. By this time Orosius had been away from his hometown of Braga, in modern Portugal, for several years, having studied first with Augustine in North Africa and then with Jerome in Bethlehem. In the summer of 415, Bishop John of Jerusalem summoned Orosius to participate in a conference to assess the controversial teachings of the British-born ascetic named Pelagius. By the time the synod was convened in Jerusalem, a council of bishops had already condemned Pelagius’ companion Caelestius in Carthage and Augustine of Hippo had written a response to their ideas and was in the process of completing another. At the conference in Jerusalem, Orosius represented Augustine’s views on sin and grace and condemned Pelagius’ claim that a person could live a blameless life. Orosius was confident that his opposition to Pelagius was justified and thus was completely surprised and indeed outraged when many weeks later, as he tried to pay his respects to John at a public festival, the bishop of Jerusalem rebuked him and accused him of having

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1 Others suggest that he wrote his history in 416. For disagreements over the timeline of Orosius’ life, see Peter Van Nuffelen, *Orosius and the Rhetoric of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1, 3, 15.


committed blasphemy at the synod. In his spirited response to John’s accusation, preserved in his own tractate *Book in Defense against the Pelagians*, Orosius asserted his alliance with Augustine, Jerome and other members of his clerical community who were present at the synod. At the same time, the presbyter from Braga condemned both Pelagius and the bishop of Jerusalem in harsh and rather personal terms.

Orosius’ *Seven Books of History* is certainly his better-known work. Scholars frequently utilize the universal history since it is one of the few extant sources for the transformative fifth century, when Alaric and his men sacked Rome and groups such as the Sueves and Vandals crossed the Pyrenees Mountains and began to set up kingdoms in areas of the western provinces, including in *Hispania*. Much of the scholarship that relies on Orosius for these events is problematic because it fails to take into account the larger social, economic and religious context in which Orosius was writing. In fact, new archaeological work in Braga and new assessments of Orosius and other writers from this period necessitate a reevaluation of the presbyter from Braga, including his writing, the circumstances of his hometown and the networks within which he and his community operated. The focus of this chapter will be on Orosius and the larger social, economic and religious context that shaped him and his clerical community in Braga in the early

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7 His *Seven Books of History Against the Pagans* was widely used in the Middle Ages as both an example for writing universal histories and as an accessible, concise history. With the Enlightenment, however, it became less popular and has been largely dismissed in modern scholarship as inferior to Augustine’s *City of God*. The shadow of Augustine’s complicated and nuanced work has loomed large and thus it has made it difficult for many scholars to see past the seemingly unsophisticated message in Orosius’ work. He is regarded as someone who misunderstood Augustine’s theology and blindly saw his times as peaceful and who was erroneously optimistic about Rome’s future. See Van Nuffelen, *Orosius and the Rhetoric of History*, 1-9.

fifth century. Orosius’ detailed description of the synod in Jerusalem and his indignant reaction to the aftermath of the proceedings provide significant insight into the clerical community of Braga in the early fifth century. Moreover, when analyzed within their larger contexts, *In Defense* and his two other extant writings, show the continued role that local and long-distance alliances and efforts to preserve them had within doctrinal debates involving Braga’s clerical and lay Christians.

This chapter argues that Orosius was part of a thriving Christian community in Braga for whom religious and social standing was contingent upon participation in theological debates, the training for which often necessitated long-distance travel and alliances. The provincial capital continued to be a vibrant urban center in the early fifth century with political, economic and social connections that extended well beyond the city walls. Since the blurred distinctions between secular and ecclesiastical concerns that characterized the later fourth century persisted into the early fifth, the use of commercial and social networks for religiously motivated travel could bolster one’s status. For Orosius, his fellow clerics and certain elite lay Christians from Braga, theological study and debate not only demonstrated their piety but also defined their alliances within larger social and religious networks. The importance of maintaining one’s standing within these circles warranted assaults against dissenting ideas and the individuals who propagated them.

**Orosius and Braga in the Early Fifth Century**

Orosius was born around the time the Council of Zaragoza was held in 380. He was a presbyter when he began his theological education with Augustine of Hippo in 414, which

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9 *Seven Books of History Against the Pagans* and *Memorandum to Augustine on the Error of the Priscillianists and Origenists*. 
suggests that he was likely at least thirty years old by that time. He probably was not much older than that because according to Augustine, Orosius was a young man when he first arrived in North Africa from Hispania. The bishop of Hippo described Orosius as being like a son based on his age. When he wrote to Jerome about Orosius in 415, Augustine was in his early sixties. Based on all of these facts, general scholarly consensus is that the priest from Braga was between 30 and 40 years old when he began working with Augustine and was therefore born between 375 and 385. However, some scholars argue that Orosius was younger than 30 and may have been born as late as 390. Regardless of the exact year of his birth, Orosius grew up in Gallaecia within the context of the aftermath of Priscillian’s execution and the circumstances that led to the trial of Symphosius and his men after the First Council of Toledo.

10 According to Eugenio Corsini, his status as presbyter indicates that he was at least 30. Corsini bases this assessment on Siricius’ letter to Bishop Himerius of Tarragona, in which the bishop of Rome provides guidelines for clerical behavior and ordination processes for clerical offices. Siricius gives the procedures for those seeking the priesthood from infancy and those who choose a clerical career as adults. The age requirements for life-long devotees are more specific: a man could be initiated as a deacon at the age of 30 and after 5 years of service could be become a presbyter. For those who chose a clerical vocation later, no age requirements were given. Instead, the converts had to progress through the ranks and serve sufficient time within each—reader, acolyte, subdeacon, deacon—before being elected to the priesthood. “Letter of Pope Siricius to Bishop Himerius of Tarragona,” in Prefaces to Canon Law Books in Latin Christianity, trans. Robert Somerville and Bruce Brasington (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), accessed March 22, 2016, http://faculty.cua.edu/pennington/Canon%20Law/Decretals/SiriciusDecretal.htm; Eugenio Corsini Introduzione alle “Storie” di Orosio (Torino: G. Giappichelli, 1968), 17-18. Casimiro Torres Rodríguez has argued that Orosius could have been ordained as presbyter at the age of 30 and then left within two years for Hippo. According to Rodríguez, Orosius was most likely born in 383. See Paulus Orosius and Casimiro Torres Rodriguez, Paulo Orosio, Su Vida Y Sus Obras (La Coruña: Fundación "Pedro Barrié de la Maza Conde de Fenosa", 1985), 27-28.


12 Augustine, Ep. 166.1.2.


14 See Hanson, 97-98; Teske, 81-82.

15 See Chapters 2-4 of this dissertation.
Orosius was still a boy, perhaps on the edge of adolescence, when Paternus became bishop of Braga.\textsuperscript{16} We know very little about Orosius’ family or his upbringing other than the fact that he received the traditional education associated with the elite in the Western Roman Empire.\textsuperscript{17} He may have been the son of one of the many leading families living and working in Braga at the time.\textsuperscript{18} For such families, providing a son with proper grammatical and rhetorical training gave him more opportunities for a successful career at the local and imperial levels. We also have seen that service within the ecclesiastical hierarchy already was becoming a viable alternative to the typical professional tracks of the elite.\textsuperscript{19} In fact, Orosius’ parents may have chosen this path for him when he was still a very small child, in which case he would have been raised and educated within the clerical community of Braga. If Orosius had not already been dedicated to a life as a servant of the Church by his parents, he likely had decided on a clerical vocation by the time Paternus was ordained just before the Council of Toledo was held circa 400.\textsuperscript{20}

Orosius’ reputation among contemporary intellectuals confirms the presbyter’s advanced education. In a letter he wrote to Bishop Evodius of Uzalis, Augustine described Orosius as studious, which was a high compliment considering the bishop of Hippo’s own background and experience as a leading scholar in the western church.\textsuperscript{21} Augustine explained to Evodius that Orosius had come to him to seek answers concerning Priscillianist and Origenist ideas. Orosius

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\textsuperscript{16} The impact of this context will be discussed in this chapter’s section on the clerical community of Braga.

\textsuperscript{17} Orosius’ education will be discussed later in this chapter. For an explanation of the traditional education in the western provinces, see Chapter 2.

\textsuperscript{18} For more information on these families, see Chapter 4.

\textsuperscript{19} See Chapters 2-4 and below.

\textsuperscript{20} For a discussion of Paternus’ ordination, see Chapter 4.

\textsuperscript{21} Augustine, \textit{ep} 169.4.13.
remained with Augustine for some time and his capacity to engage with the bishop and those in his circle in Hippo testifies to Orosius’ intellect and training. These characteristics, along with his eagerness, prompted Augustine to recommend the young presbyter to Jerome. In his letter to Jerome, Augustine characterized Orosius as smart and quick to understand his teachings. 22 This suggests that the young priest was a good pupil and had learned a fair amount during the time he spent with Augustine. It also indicates that he had received significant preparation in the years before he made the trip to North Africa.

Augustine’s confidence in Orosius’ training and intellect also prompted the bishop of Hippo to commission him to write the companion text to his The City of God. 23 While modern interpretations of this text and Augustine’s supposed reaction have not always been favorable, 24 Augustine’s renown and connections would have allowed him to ask countless men to pen a response to the pagans that explained recent events in the empire within a larger historical context. Orosius likely had access to the libraries of Augustine and Jerome, and possibly the famous one in Alexandria, when he wrote his universal history. 25 However, he wrote his work in a relatively short time, likely in only one to two years. 26 To accomplish this task, Orosius would have relied on extensive training and knowledge of both pagan and Christian historical works.

22 Augustine, Ep. 166.1.2
23 Orosius, Seven Books, 1.Preface.1-16.
24 One such scholar, Glenn Chestnut, for example, calling the work a very bad history, complains that it in no way understood the City of God. Glenn F. Chestnut, “Eusebius, Augustine, Orosius, and the Later Patristic and Medieval Christian Historians,” in Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism, eds. Harold W. Attridge and Gohei Hata (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), 697. For recent scholarship that has begun to correct the image of Orosius as a naïve “stray dog” to his mentor Augustine, see Van Nuffelen, Orosius and the Rhetoric of History, 197-205; G.W. Trompf, Early Christian Historiography, Narratives of Retributive Justice (London and New York: Continuum, 2000), 293-294.
25 Hanson, 101.
26 There is some disagreement among scholars about when Orosius completed his history. Generally it is accepted that he finished the work in 417-418, but some historians argue for 416. Likewise, scholars disagree about when he began the history with some suggesting Augustine commissioned him to write the work before he left to study with
Orosius’ legacy among writers in Hispania and other western provinces within several generations after his life provides more evidence of his educational background. In the late fifth century, the priest Gennadius of Marseilles included Orosius in his De Scriptorius Ecclesiasticis, which was a continuation of Jerome’s De Viris Illustribus. Gennadius provided biographical information about important Christian writers and commentaries on their works. His inclusion of Orosius and his history demonstrates that in the 490s, when Gennadius was writing, the presbyter from Braga had retained a high level of respect for his historical writing and contributions to the Christian community. Gennadius described Orosius as an eloquent man. He also was impressed with the presbyter from Braga’s knowledge of history. Orosius maintained his reputation as an educated intellectual within Hispania for hundreds of years. Writing in the mid-seventh century, Bishop Braulio of Zaragoza included Orosius among the clerics he used to demonstrate that Gallaecia had long produced learned, eminent men.

The opportunity for residents of Braga to participate in the shared elite culture of the Western Empire, which included the typical Roman education available to the Symphosius and Paternus, persisted into the early fifth century. Numerous high status families resided in Braga

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28 Gennadius, De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis, Chapter 39, PL 42.1081.


30 Bishops in Astorga and Braga in the later fourth and turn of the fifth century, discussed in Chapters 2-4.
during the years that Orosius was preparing to become a presbyter. Although they did not invest heavily in remodeling their urban homes as they had done over the course of the fourth century, many did continue to live in and maintain their luxurious domus. For example, someone of elevated status still inhabited the elaborate home located north of the old forum and on the east side of the cardo maximus, now known as the Escola Velha de Sé. Throughout the fourth century, a member of the imperial bureaucracy or someone with another significant administrative or political role in the city lived in this urban house. Whoever lived there while Orosius was a teenager in the early fifth century made no major changes to the house.

Although there was a sizeable group of elite residents in early-fifth-century Braga, they did not invest their resources in the same acts of public munificence that had been typical for their ancestors for centuries. They no longer could display their status by hosting events in the theater or by taking their superior seats in it, since the once grand space was defunct in its original capacity. In addition, the public baths located on the hill next to the old Roman theater were no longer a cultural center in which Braga’s elite residents could converse and conduct

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31 The archaeological evidence shows that three elite urban homes still were occupied in the early fifth century (Cardoso da Saude, Rua Guadim Pais, Escola Velha de Sé). Two others may have continued to be used for domestic purposes (Carvalheiras and Casa Grande de Santo António das Travessas in the Ex Albergue Distrital). Of course, there may have been more that have not been discovered yet. See Fernanda Eugénia Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em Bracara Augusta,” (Master’s thesis, Universidade do Minho, Instituto de Ciencias Sociais, 2010), 22-23, 37, 39, 51, 70, 80-85, 93; Manuela Martins, Bracara Augusta Roteiros Arqueológicos 2: A Casa Romana das Carvalheiras (Braga: Unidade Arqueologia da Universidade do Minho, 2000), 7, 32; José Rui Coelho da Silva, “A insula das Carvalheiras, estudo de um exemplo de arquitectura privada em Bracara Augusta” (Master’s thesis, Universidade do Minho, Instituto de Ciências Sociais, 2000), 41.


33 See Chapter 4.


business while bathing. By the time Orosius was a young man, no one had sponsored any repairs of the building for decades and the space was abandoned for its original public purpose. Instead of investing in public spas, the elite of Braga chose to maintain the bathing facilities that many of them had in their homes. Having such important services within their homes allowed the owners to decide which of their clients and dependents could have access to them. The owners of the Casa das Carvalheiras had turned their private baths into a public facility early in the fourth century. They continued to live in the home throughout Orosius’ childhood and young adult years. Although it was located close to the northern wall of the city, people also still used the baths and nearby market place.


37 The building may have been converted into a private dwelling in the fifth century, but the details and chronology for this possible new use are not clear. Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñin, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” 2, 4; Manuela Martins, As Termas Romanas do Alto da Cividade, um Exemplo de Arquitectura pública de Bracara Augusta (Braga: Unidade de Arqueologia de Universidade do Minho, 2005), 6-7, 60; Francisco Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império e na Antiguidade Tardia, uma Primeira Interpretação (Braga: Universidade do Minho, Unidade de Arqueologia, 2003), 102; Martins and Silva, “As Termas Públicas de Bracara Augusta,” 73; Pereira da Silva, As termas romananas de Bracara Augusta, 63; Manuela Martins, Bracara Augusta Cidade Romana, 58; Maria Manuela Martins, “The Roman City of Bracara Augusta (Braga, Portugal)” in Los Baños Públicos como Símbolo de la Romanidad. Espacios de Ocio, Convivencia y Cultura en el Arco Atlántico, dir. Paloma García Díaz (Gijón: Ayuntamiento de Gijón, 2002), 80.

38 The majority of the known urban residences in Braga had balnea, private baths, which like the homes were occupied in the early fifth century. The details of these baths and when they were built are discussed in Chapter 4. Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em Bracara Augusta,” 50-51, 80-85, 93.

39 For a description of its conversion from private to public use, see Chapter 4. Puga de Magalhães, “Arquitectura doméstica em Bracara Augusta,” 44; Manuela Martins, Bracara Augusta Roteiros Arqueológicos, 32.


Orosius’ family also may have been among the elite who maintained rural homes within the vicinity of Braga. Generally these villas were located in areas with fertile soil and near the rivers and various Roman roads that connected the provincial capital to other cities in Gallaecia, such as Lugo and Astorga, and the coast. As was the pattern elsewhere in Gallaecia, these estates had been built in the early imperial period, usually in the first or second century, but families and their dependents continued to occupy them in the years before Orosius left to study with Augustine in North Africa. In some cases, the owners remodeled them in the third and fourth century in many of the same ways as the elite had upgraded their urban homes in Braga. For example, at Dume, located just over a mile north of Braga, the residents refurbished some walls to increase the size of their rural home and added a central patio with a surrounding portico in the later third or early fourth century. At the same time, artisans created a mosaic with geometric forms and black, white and brown tiles. The owners also had workers construct a

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42 For example, archaeological remains have been found at Dume, Palmeira, Merelim and Santo Estêvão and Velho. In some cases, the sites were smaller settlements or villages rather than rural estates of single families. See Luís Fontes, *A Basilica Sueva de Dume e o Túmulo Dito de São Martinho* (Braga: Núcleo de Arqueologia da Universidade do Minho, Junta de Freguesia de Dume, 2006), 14. In fact, it has been suggested that Orosius grew up within a rural background, but that he was from Braga, since it was an important cultural center and Orosius had the traditional Roman education. See Torres Rodríguez, *Paulo Orosio, Su Vida Y Sus Obras*, 21, 28.

43 Dume and the villa at the current chapel to Saint Fructuosus were located on the Roman road that connected Braga to Lugo and the villa at the current church of St. Vitor was on the road to Astorga. Sande Lemos, *Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império e na Antiguidade Tardia*, 115-116.


private bath complex to the east of the villa with an atrium, two pools and rooms that could be warmed with furnaces. During Orosius’ lifetime, the owners began to use the patio space as an agricultural courtyard and storage area with amphora and dolia. Although the evidence is not as strong as it is within the urban sphere, like the elite of Braga, those living at Dume also had a taste for goods acquired via long-distance commercial networks, particularly from North Africa.

In the early fifth century, Braga became the center of power for the Suevic Kingdom. In 409, bands of Sueves, Vandals and Alans crossed the Pyrenees Mountains into Hispania. Two years later they drew lots to divide the peninsula with each settling in a specified region. The fact that the Sueves and Vandals initially split Gallaecia between them indicates that the province had enduring significance within imperial, social and commercial networks of the early fifth century. For a short time the Hasdingi Vandals occupied the northern half of Gallaecia while the Sueves settled in the southern region. The Suevic leaders chose the thriving provincial capital of Braga as their headquarters. While the Vandals left Gallaecia and Hispania within


51 For a discussion of different views on this division see Fernando López Sánchez, “The Suevic Kingdom, Why Gallaecia?,” in Culture and Society in Medieval Galicia, a Cultural Crossroads at the Edge of Europe, ed. and trans. by James D’Emilio (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 177.

52 The Silingi Vandals settled in southern province of Baetica. Within a decade, the Hasdingi Vandals left Gallaecia and joined the Silingi in Baetica until they abandoned Hispania altogether and moved in to Mauritania in 429. Hydatius, Chron. 66, 80, Burgess, 87, 91.

53 Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñín, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” 3; Fernando López Sánchez suggests that Vandals were in Braga until they were defeated by the Sueves in 420. López Sánchez, “The Suevic Kingdom,” 186-189.
two decades, the Sueves established a kingdom centered in Braga for over 150 years. The Sueves did not take over the urban spaces within the walls of Braga. Instead they settled in a hilltop site known as Falperra that had been occupied since the Bronze Age. Located less than four miles from Braga, on a promontory near the top of a hill at an altitude of over 1800 feet, this strategic position would have allowed the Sueves to keep watch on all traffic going in and out of the city both by the roads and rivers (Figure 5-1).

The establishment of the Suevic Kingdom did not change life drastically for those living in and around Braga. Although scholars used to assume that their arrival caused a period of marked decline, archaeological work since the 1970s and especially recently, has shown that the Sueves did not disrupt life in the city. In the years before Orosius left for Hippo, Braga continued to be a dynamic center for administrative, religious, economic and cultural activity.

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54 The Suevic Kingdom lasted until it was conquered by the Visigoths in the later sixth century. For an excellent recent assessment of the Suevic Kingdom, see Pablo C. Martínez Díaz El Reino Suevo (411-585) (Tres Cantos: Akal, 2011), 6-10, 33.

55 Of course, it is difficult to determine who lived and worked in any of these spaces. However, it is clear that whoever occupied them did not make drastic changes and continued to utilize them in the same way as before. For the scarcity of specifically “Suevic” archaeological evidence in Gallaecia and the problems associated with reading artifacts for ethnicity, see Michael Kulikowski, “Suevi in Gallaecia, an introduction,” in Culture and Society in Medieval Galicia, a Cultural Crossroads at the Edge of Europe, ed. and trans. James D’Emilio (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 132-133; Guy Halsall, Cemeteries and Society in Merovingian Gaul: Selected Studies in History and Archaeology, 1992-2009 (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

56 Santa Marta das Cortiças or Falperra. The archaeological evidence shows this was an important site from the Bronze Age to the Middle Ages. There are indications that the area was used by Romans, such as ovens, before the ‘re-occupation’ by the Sueves. Isabel Silva, coord., D. Diogo D Sousa, Museu Regional De arqueologia Guide (Lisbon: Instituto Português de Museus, 2005), 132; Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império e na Antiguidade Tardia, 119.

57 This area was converted to a Suevic palace and later a Christian temple. The exact dates for this transformation are difficult to assess, but the process began in the fifth century. It is not likely that it was complete by the time Orosius left for Hippo, and so it will not be discussed here and instead will be covered in Chapter 6. Fontes, Martins, Ribeiro, Carvalho, 92, 95; Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império e na Antiguidade Tardia, 116, 119-120.


Members of the community continued to take on new construction projects and although some places, such as the theater and baths were abandoned, these changes were not related to the arrival of the Sueves. Elite families continued to live in elaborate urban and rural homes and local artisans still produced ceramics and glass objects in their workshops. Merchants also successfully persisted in their efforts to bring ceramics and other imports to Braga from around Hispania, North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean Basin. In summary, Braga continued to be a vibrant city connected to the rest of Roman world, with a dynamic population that included artisans, servants, merchants and wealthy families who wanted to import luxury items. Although there were undoubtedly interactions with the Sueves, their settlement at Falperra did not interrupt life in Braga in any profound way by the time Orosius left to study with Augustine. Moreover, having the Suevic capital so close to Braga, may have augmented the economy of the latter, especially for the elite families living there, by creating another market for locally produced and imported goods.

Orosius was likely among the group of educated elite living in the domus within Braga’s city walls or the nearby rural estates. Although the Sueves had chosen the provincial capital as

60 Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñín, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” 2; Fontes, Martins, Ribeiro, Carvalho, 91; Martins, Bracara Augusta Cidade Romana, 8.


62 Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñín, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” 2-3; Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império e na Antiguidade Tardia, 112.

63 Orosius painted a picture of relative peace in his home province. Although it should not be taken too literally, since it part of his Seven Books of History, the thesis of which is that life had improved greatly since the birth of Christ, Orosius famously wrote that after a brief period of devastation and slaughter, “the barbarians foreswore their swords and turned to the plough, and cherished the remaining Romans as allies of a kind and friends, with the result that some Romans who prefer freedom in poverty to trouble and taxation under Rome can be found among them.” Orosius, Seven Books of History against the Pagans, 7.41.7 (Fear, 407).

64 Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império e na Antiguidade Tardia, 110-111; 113.
their center of power, their presence does not seem to have altered daily life significantly for those residing in and around Braga. Participation in larger social networks and commercial networks still offered the elite means with which to establish and maintain their status and livelihoods relative to other residents of Braga. The members of Braga’s community did, however, begin to change aspects of their social and cultural expression. As will be discussed next, many of these shifts likely correlated with the increased presence of episcopal authority in Braga and the concomitant flourishing of the clerical community and increased lay Christian participation in affairs of the church.

**Orosius and the Clerical Community of Braga**

Unlike the years before the Council of Toledo in 400, a period for which there is little evidence of presbyters and bishops in Braga, Orosius was part of vibrant clerical community in the early fifth century. As mentioned above, Orosius made his decision to dedicate himself to the “sacred militia” of the church around the time Paternus was ordained as bishop of Braga.65 This was a moment of change and increased activity for the clergy within the provincial capital. As discussed in Chapter 4, Paternus was part of a clerical alliance within Gallaecia that had the support of the bishops of Hispania. To a certain degree he had asserted his authority within the province at or just before the First Council of Toledo, when he removed himself from Symphosius’ patronage. From this point on Braga seems to have functioned as the Metropolitan see. Orosius’ own commitment to service within the church was part of this shift toward a more visibly active clerical community.

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65 Even if his parents had dedicated Orosius to the church when he was an infant, Orosius’ duties would have begun to change around this time and he would have begun the process of moving through the ranks from reader to an acolyte and subdeacon.
Paternus was bishop when Orosius was a young man, but by the year 415, Balconius held the top episcopal office in Braga. We know that he was bishop of Braga at that time because the presbyter Avitus wrote to him in 415 and called him the father of the city.\textsuperscript{66} In addition, Balconius is mentioned in the records of the First Council of Toledo as the bishop of Gallaecia.\textsuperscript{67} However, he was not likely in attendance or bishop at the turn of the fifth century when that meeting was held. According to a canon from the council, Leo of Rome wrote a letter to Balconius specifying the rules of the catholic faith and against heresies, including Priscillianism. The council record then included a list of creeds pertaining to the Trinity and Christology and denounced several beliefs and practices, such as astrology, vegetarianism and loyalty to the teachings of Priscillian.\textsuperscript{68} Leo was bishop of Rome in the mid-fifth century (440-461 CE), and for this reason this section of the council record is undoubtedly an interpolation from a later date.\textsuperscript{69} The discussion of Balconius and the additional creeds are introduced in the council record as later additions, so there is no reason to assume that Balconius was bishop in 400 CE.\textsuperscript{70} Determining if he was bishop in the mid-fifth century is more difficult, and not relevant to the


\textsuperscript{67} “…Balconium episcopum Galliciae...” Tol I, XXI. Vives, 25.

\textsuperscript{68} Tol I, XXI; post council canons I-XVIII. Vives, 25-28.

\textsuperscript{69} See Chadwick, 177-178.

current case study. However, if he were the bishop to whom Leo wrote, it would be reasonable to assume that he was only recently appointed to the office in 415.

Even without knowing Paternus’ exact tenure as bishop or the date at which Balconius took office as his successor, it is clear that the clerical community and presence of church leadership expanded in Braga during the early fifth century. Some of this expansion may have been related to the elevation of the bishopric to the level of Metropolitan for the province. We have seen that choosing a clerical vocation already had been appealing to members of the local and imperial elite in the later fourth century and this tendency continued. Even those who did not make service in the church their career found others ways to show their support. As mentioned above, the elite of Braga no longer relied on the traditional acts of public munificence to display their status and support their community. For example, they funded no repairs to the baths or theater, and sometime during the reigns of Paternus and Balconius, these once important cultural centers were abandoned. Within the same period of the early fifth century, the market located on the northern edge of the city, near the wall, was converted into a Christian basilica. The area, which is located under the chapel and central quadrant of the transept of the current cathedral, had been a commercial zone for centuries and continued in this capacity through the

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71 Scholars such as Henry Chadwick suggest that since the entire entry in the council record is anachronistic, Balconius was not bishop during Leo’s reign. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. However, as will be explained, Balconius was bishop from at least 415, so if he still held the office during Leo’s episcopate, he would have been bishop of Braga for several decades. See Chadwick, 208-209, 217-218.

72 Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñin, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” 2, 4; Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, 48; Martins, As Termas Romanas do Alto da Cidade, XXI, 87; Martins, Silva, “As termas públicas de Bracara Augusta,” 73; Pereira da Silva, As termas romanas de Bracara Augusta, 63; Martins, Bracara Augusta Cidade Romana, 58.

time of the First Council of Toledo. It was even remodeled during the fourth century. Although it is impossible to know exactly when, sometime after the later fourth century and in the early fifth, resources were used to remodel the market. Patrons employed builders and provided supplies to transform the space into a rectangular-shaped basilica oriented on an East-West axis with what appear to have been three naves. The model is similar to examples of Christian temples found elsewhere in the Roman Empire since the third century.

The building of the new basilica may have been related to a shift in elite investment strategies, wherein resources were no longer provided for the construction and maintenance of traditional public spaces and instead were given to the church leadership. Scholars have noted this change in euergetic focus elsewhere in the late Roman world. Orosius’ own attitude toward theaters suggests that there was at least a perceived correlation between the decline of these spaces and the activities in them and the increased presence of a clerical community in Braga. In his universal history, Orosius interjected references to plays and public games several times. He utilized such asides often to address contemporary circumstances and attitudes about present and past events. They helped him build his argument against those pagans who blamed setbacks in the empire—such as the sack of Rome by Alaric—on the fact that Romans had stopped showing


75 Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 60; Fontes, Saúde Lemos, Cruz, 145.

76 Two marble sarcophagi considered to be of an “early Christian” type and which may have been made in shops in the southern Iberian Peninsula or southern Gaul, also were found. The material finds, such as tesselae of glass, resemble those associated with mosaics in Christian temples in Ravenna and Milan in the fifth and sixth centuries. See Fontes, Saúde Lemos, Cruz, 141, 145.

proper respect to the gods through sacrifices. For example, Orosius broke from his narrative on Scipio Nasica’s wars in *Hispania* during the Roman Republic to condemn theaters and theatergoers in his own time. Orosius rebuked the licentious and lazy behavior and consequent weakness of his pagan peers. He alleged that their lack of virtue and strength to fight their enemies were the result of their insistence on blaspheming God by attending the performances. For the presbyter from Braga, the purpose of these events—the appeasement of the pagan gods—made them incompatible with Christianity and therefore they threatened the well-being of all those living in the imperial cities and provinces. Orosius may have developed this perspective among his colleagues in the clerical community of the provincial capital.

Some scholars have noted a seeming contradiction in Orosius’ attitude towards these traditional public events because in his discussion of the Lacedaemonians he appeared to have rendered a positive assessment of plays and games. In this example, Orosius concluded a description of ongoing warfare by calling attention to how bad things were in the past because so many died in wars whereas “now all the people in these towns and provinces grow old watching games and at the theatre...” Although Orosius did draw attention to the negative historical period in which so many men continuously died in battle, he actually was equally critical of the contemporary conditions which allowed people to become “fickle” and driven by their interests in “novelties.” To Orosius, his pagan audience’s obsession with games and going to the theater made them incapable of properly assessing history and seeing that times had improved since the birth of Christ. Of course, Orosius was not alone in his negative attitude toward the plays

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78 Orosius, *Seven Books of History*, 4.21.4-10 (Fear, 201-202).

79 Orosius, *Seven Books of History*, 4.21.4-7 (Fear, 201-202).

80 Orosius, *Seven Books of History*, 3.2.12 (Fear, 115).

81 Orosius, *Seven Books of History*, 3.2.12 (Fear, 115).
performed to “placate” the gods. 82 In fact, in Book Three, Orosius mentioned his mentor Augustine’s writings about the events and rituals carried out in the theaters. 83 Here, Orosius was describing a moment in history when the people put on plays in hopes of invoking the gods to drive out a plague that had afflicted them. Orosius’ strong personal stance is clear from the way in which he insisted that in doing so they had sullied their souls and lamented that such practices continued to cause him sorrow. 84 This attitude is consistent with what we might expect from someone who lived in a city in which a Christian basilica had replaced the old theater and baths as the primary public venue, 85 and who was frustrated when he travelled elsewhere and did not see the same changes implemented.

The residents of Braga may have begun building the Christian basilica in order to house relics. 86 Remains of and objects related to martyrs and other people deemed holy held great significance for many Christians and the construction of a basilica or shrine typically

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82 Orosius, Seven Books of History, 3.4.4 (Fear, 117).

83 Orosius, Seven Books of History, 3.4.5-6 (Fear, 117-118). According to Éric Rebillard, Augustine understood that Christians had multiple affiliations to accommodate their various “identities.” The bishop of Hippo asked Christians to separate so-called pagan activities and events related to civic duties from religious ones and then not attend the latter. Éric Rebillard, The Care of the Dead in Late Antiquity, trans. by Elizabeth Trapnell Rawlings, Jeanine Routier-Pucci (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 74-79. For Augustine’s changing attitude toward the theatre and other “pagan” activities, see Robert Markus, The End of Ancient Christianity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), Chapter 8.

84 Orosius, Seven Books of History, 3.4.5-6 (Fear, 117-118).

85 The evidence suggests that the basilica was integrated into a probable episcopal complex and that the new Christian buildings came to replace the forum, theater and bath area as the centralizing pole of the city. See, for example, Fontes, Martins, Ribeiro, Carvalho, 92, 94.

86 When available, relics often were incorporated into pre-existing Christian spaces or motivated the construction of new spaces to house them. The practice of enclosing them in altars as part of the rites of consecration became increasingly common during late antiquity and in 787 the bishops at the Second Council of Nicaea ruled that relics were required for a valid consecration of a Christian basilica. II Nicaea, VII, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils: Trent to Vatican II, Vol. 2, ed. Norman P. Tanner (London: Sheed & Ward, 1990), accessed May 31, 20016, http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Councils/ecum07.htm.
accompanied their discovery. While Orosius was in Palestine, there was some excitement in Jerusalem over the discovery of the relics of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr. The elder presbyter Avitus of Braga had been in the region for some time and apparently had established a relationship with the local priest, Lucianus, who had discovered the holy remains and decided to donate a portion to the clerical community in Braga. Avitus wrote a letter to Balconius to inform the bishop of the good news that Braga would be blessed with “the dust of the body and nervous system” of St. Stephen, and that Orosius would translate them there on his upcoming return trip. Avitus was convinced that Balconius and the community in Braga would happily receive these relics and that “the faithful certainly believe that the bones are solid and manifest the holiness of his new perfumes.”

It is of course possible that the basilica of Braga had been standing before Balconius received the letter from Avitus. Nevertheless, the anticipation of such holy objects certainly would have offered a strong impetus to build or expand a basilica. Moreover, the scenario shows that Avitus and Orosius were respected among their peers in the Holy Land and the clerical community in Braga was robust enough to inspire the decision to send remains of the first

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87 Ambrose represents a famous example from roughly this period because he quickly had a basilica built after the discovery of relics of Sts. Gervasius and Prostasius. For a discussion of this example and the importance of relics in Late Antiquity, Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), especially Chapter 2.


90 *Epistola Aviti ad Palchonium*, PL 41.805-808; Gennadius, *De Scriptorius Ecclesiasticis*, Chapters 39, 47, *PL* 42.1080-1081,1085. The relics never made it to Braga. In fact, after the completion of his universal history, we have no information about what happened to Orosius. Gennadius wrote that he lived to the end of Honorius’ reign or 423 CE. For speculation on how long he lived and why he did not return to Braga, see Torres Rodríguez, *Paulo Orosio, Su Vida Y Sus Obras*, 18-19, 37-43.

91 *Epistola Aviti ad Palchonium*, PL 41.804-805.
Christian martyr there. In his letter to the “father of the church of Braga,” Avitus expressed a
certain familiarity with Balconius. Avitus had been away from his hometown for a number of
years, so he may have known Balconius before he took the episcopal office in Braga. Avitus
explained that he spoke about the bishop often while in the Holy Land. In fact, the presbyter
painted a picture of a thriving clerical community in Braga, which he missed and to which
longed to return. He expressed his gratitude that Orosius had met him in Jerusalem, since his
co-presbyter reminded him of his own brethren back home.

The clerical community to which Orosius and Avitus belonged and Paternus then
Balconius led was deeply involved in theological study and debate. In what essentially
constituted a form of advanced education for those in service to the church, scholarship included
carefully reading Christian texts, sharing ideas about complex and sometimes controversial
doctrines, and participating in debates. In fact, during Orosius’ lifetime, this type of training
came to define status not only within the clerical community, but also among the elite. Paternus
established a foundation for theological study shortly after he became bishop. His engagement
with the texts of Ambrose ultimately caused him to break his alliance with Symphosius of
Astorga and those associated with the teachings of Priscillian. In fact, the controversy
surrounding the so-called Priscillianists might better be classified as a community engaging with
and contemplating various theological perspectives than as examples of heretical or schismatic
intentions. Paternus’ process is reflective of a commitment to intellectual rigor not unusual

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92 Epistola Aviti ad Palchonium, PL 41.805-808. As discussed above, it is not known for how long Balconius had been bishop of Braga by the time Avitus wrote to him in 415.

93 Avitus may have been in the Holy Land since before 409 CE. Altaner, 107-108; 118-120.

94 Epistola Aviti ad Palchonium, PL 41.805-808. For Avitus’ view of Orosius and the ecclesiastical community to which they both belonged, See Corsini, 17.

95 Epistola Aviti ad Palchonium, PL 41.805-808.

96 I Tol, Exemplar definitivae sententiae translatae de gestis. Vives, 31. See Chapter 4 of this dissertation.
among the late Roman educated elite. He learned one school of thought, associated with Priscillian, and then studied another, the ideas of Ambrose, and made a personal decision about which to follow. Within the context of the blurred lines between sacred and secular customs and practices, it is not surprising that Paternus and other members of his clerical community would follow a pattern similar to those in the Roman world who pursued philosophical study after working with a rhetorician, with in-depth scholarship related to church doctrine and theology serving as the substitute for more traditional topics.\footnote{For a different view on the role of deliberations in Late Antiquity, see Richard Lim, \textit{Public Disputation, Power, and Social Order in Late Antiquity} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). For a discussion of the tradition of elites continuing the educations with philosophers, the continuity of education in the Christian world of Late Antiquity and a comparison of eastern and western traditions see, Edward J. Watts, \textit{City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), especially 1-23. Augustine’s autobiographical account of his conversion process, \textit{Confessions}, shows how he studied within various philosophical schools before making a commitment to Christianity.} In the case of Paternus, this connection is especially apparent since Priscillian’s teachings in many ways represented a crossover between and mixture of philosophy and Christian theology.

The pattern of encouraging theological study and debate among the clerical community in Braga continued during Paternus’ tenure as bishop and after Balconius took the office. Since he was born right around the time of the Council of Zaragoza in 380, Orosius grew up in the context of the Priscillianist debates. As discussed in Chapter 2, this meeting of bishops was at least partially dedicated to hearing various perspectives related to Priscillian and his teachings. It certainly was part of the ongoing conflict between Priscillian and his supporters and their opposition within \textit{Hispania}. Priscillian was killed while Orosius was still a young boy, but as is clear from the First Council of Toledo, Priscillian’s teachings continued to be discussed after his death. We know that Paternus eventually changed his views and Orosius also condemned Priscillian’s doctrines, but the young presbyter remembered when the religious men of Braga
contemplated them. In the memorandum he wrote to Augustine, Orosius explicated various Priscillian principles on Wisdom, the origin and nature of souls and the Trinity. In doing so, he displayed a high degree of familiarity with the teachings and texts associated with Priscillian, one of which he quoted, which undoubtedly came from listening to his peers and elders talk about them. It is not unreasonable to assume that he also received formal instruction related to the complicated theological concepts he wrote about in his communication with Augustine. Orosius’ decision to join the clerical community of Braga after this traditional training was complete would have coincided with Paternus’ newly established adherence to non-Priscillian doctrines. It may have stemmed from an interest in additional instruction. The bishop undoubtedly provided formal teaching related to this school of thinking for members of his clerical community.

A correlation between participation in theological study and debates and important social and religious alliances existed among the members of the clerical community of Braga in the early fifth century, and education was a foundational component of this relationship. For Orosius, his membership within the educated circles of the early fifth century was an important marker of his status and connection to larger networks of the Roman world. This suggestion builds on Peter Van Nuffelen’s recent assessment of Orosius’ writing. Van Nuffelen demonstrates that Orosius’ language and references very self-consciously announced his rhetorical training in order to establish his standing as an author within the educated world of the

98 Orosius, Memo, 1-2.
99 Orosius, Memo, 2. Here, Orosius also demonstrated his understanding of Platonic principles, another indicator of his education and perhaps an attempt to demonstrate to Augustine that he was worthy of the bishop’s attention since they shared a cultural context and the requisite training of the elite.
100 Orosius, Memo, 2. He claimed to quote from a letter of Priscillian. For the authenticity of this claim, see Teske, 101, no. 15 and Chadwick, 192-193.
fifth century and offer a revised view of the Roman past. Orosius’ manifold allusions to Virgil alone show that he had the basic education of the Roman elite. At the time he was writing, they served as a way for him to demonstrate that he shared the intellectual cultural and background of his pagan peers and gain respect for what he was writing. For example, he expressly referred to the games and exercises of students in classrooms throughout the empire, which according to Orosius had burned the stories of Aeneas into “our memory.” Through this reference and the use of “our” when describing it, Orosius included himself in the common experience of reading and memorizing the *Aeneid* that most of the intended audience for his *Seven Books of History* would have recalled from childhood.

The importance Orosius placed on education also can be seen in the way he explained the demise of the usurper proclaimed by the troops in Illyricum during the reign of Constantius. According to Orosius, the elderly Vetranio had not received any education and was only unwillingly trying to learn the alphabet after being named emperor. Orosius made a direct link

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103 It is interesting to note that a similar impulse to demonstrate shared language and knowledge derived from a classical education and therefore participation in important interregional networks motivated members of the elite to employ artisans to install mosaics featuring mythological characters. Although there are no known examples in Gallaecia, scenes from the *Aeneid* were a popular way to show that a patron was among the late-antique cultural elite. See Birte Poulsen, “Patrons and Viewers: Reading Mosaics in Late Antiquity,” in *Patrons and Viewers in Late Antiquity*, eds. Stine Birk and Birte Poulsen (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2012), 177-184 and in the same volume, Sarah Scott, “Fourth-Century Villas in the Coln Valley, Gloucestershire. Identifying Patrons and Viewers;” 191, 209-210.

104 In the year 350 CE. See Fear, 374, no. 315.

between Vetranio being stripped of the purple and his lack of classroom training. The unwilling student stopped his studies and happily returned to a quiet, private life. As A. T. Fear points out, other ancient sources do not attribute Vetranio’s downfall to his lack of a proper education.\textsuperscript{106} For Orosius, literacy and advanced academic work qualified someone as a leader and in his own case as a theologian and historian. The priest of Braga took pride in his own intellectual capacities and the benefits and alliances that this background had provided him. In fact, rhetorical training was not considered sufficient for full participation in the elite echelons of the clerical community. Instead emphasis also was place on the ability to engage in theological study and debate.

For Orosius and his fellow clerics and lay Christian elites from Braga, piety and status were interconnected, and both could be established through participation in theological deliberations. Not only did Orosius consider himself to be pious, but this also was how others described him. Augustine explained that he came to North Africa because he was prompted by a “burning zeal in regard to the Holy Scriptures.”\textsuperscript{107} Elsewhere the bishop of Hippo said Orosius was a religious young man who came to him with a “burning zeal… to be in the Lord's house a vessel rendering useful service in refuting those false and pernicious doctrines through which the souls of men in Spain have suffered...”\textsuperscript{108} This assessment of Orosius implies more than the young priest’s enthusiastic Christian devotion. When analyzed within the larger context of Braga, Augustine’s words and Orosius’ own writing suggest that education and advanced theological study and debate were a critical component of clerical life in Braga. In his letter to Augustine, Orosius described the intense religious debates and instruction that were taking place

\begin{footnotes}
\item\textsuperscript{106} Fear, 374, no. 316.
\item\textsuperscript{107} Augustine, \textit{Ep.} 169.4.13.
\item\textsuperscript{108} Augustine, \textit{Ep.} 166.1.2
\end{footnotes}
in Braga before he left for Hippo.\textsuperscript{109} These events were not limited to those who were officially part of the church hierarchy; lay Christians also had the opportunity to participate.\textsuperscript{110} Christian patrons likely hosted these types of gatherings in their homes scattered throughout the city, which were designed to be public gathering places.

Participation in theological study and debate became a means for the educated elite to participate in a shared culture and demonstrate their status. They also constituted a form of theological education, in which young men, after having completed their rhetorical training, could study with a theologian, much like the long tradition of studying with a philosopher.

Orosius was not the only one who had worked with Jerome, at least two other priests from Braga communicated with him regularly or had gone to study with him in Bethlehem.\textsuperscript{111} The custom seems to have been for a young man,\textsuperscript{112} often a priest, to go and work with a theologian and then bring back the ideas learned to the clerical community in Braga. In fact, the product of one of these trips was what prompted Orosius to go and seek instruction with Augustine. Apparently, two citizens of Braga had travelled to Jerusalem and Rome and brought back various ideas that

\textsuperscript{109} Orosius, \textit{Memo}, 3.

\textsuperscript{110} Two “citizens” of Braga—both named Avitus, but not the same Avitus who wrote to Balconius about the relics of St. Stephen—taught and engaged in debate about the writing and teachings of the early Christian theologian Origen, whose ideas had recently come under attack, and a man from Rome named Victorinus (it is not clear who he was, see Teske, 101-102, no. 22). Orosius does not refer to these men with a clerical title. He also mentioned a former notable named Domnus who participated with him at the synod held for Pelagius in Jerusalem. In this case it cannot be proven that Domnus was from Braga, but Orosius did consider him to be sufficiently trained to be his ally. Orosius, \textit{Memo}, 3; \textit{Book in Defense against the Pelagians}, 6. For a discussion about empire-wide debates about Origen’s teachings, see Elizabeth Clark \textit{The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).


\textsuperscript{112} The practice does not seem to have been limited to young men, since the Avitus who wrote to Balconius about the relics of St. Stephen was likely older by time he went to Palestine. Altaner, 107-108.
caused intense dispute in Braga, since they were associated with Manichean and Origenists doctrines. Orosius sought to receive training from Augustine and proof of his alignment with the respected bishop of Hippo to more successfully debate these clerics and establish himself when he returned to Braga. Augustine was so impressed with Orosius, that he sent him to continue his studies with Jerome. His work with Jerome was interrupted, however, when Orosius was called away to attend the meeting in which Pelagius’ ideas on sin were discussed. With all the experience he had already acquired, Orosius felt qualified to participate in such a theological deliberation and embraced the challenge zealously.

Orosius was eager to prove his theological knowledge by participating in the deliberations in Jerusalem. He had been prepared through his work with Augustine and Jerome, which constituted a type of theological education that had become critical for establishing one’s piety and status in Braga. Equally critical for Orosius and other members of the growing clerical community and lay elites in the Metropolitan see, were the religious alliances that facilitated their advanced learning. Having associations with important Christian thinkers of the time, such as Augustine and Jerome, bolstered the validity of any doctrinal claims a member of the community might make and therefore elevated his position. As will be discussed next, connections within long-distance social commercial and religious networks allowed some individuals to travel between Braga and locations deemed holy or centers of Christian learning in the Mediterranean Basin. The ability to use alliances and resources to

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113 Orosius, Memo, 3. See also Chadwick, 191.
114 Augustine, Ep. 166.1.2; Orosius, Book in Defense against the Pelagians, 3.
115 Orosius, In Defense against the Pelagians, 3; Jerome, Ep. 134.1; Hanson, 102
116 This synod and Orosius’ role in it will be discussed below.
arrange for religiously motivated trips became a way in which clerics and lay elites demonstrated their piety and standing within the community.

**Connections, Commerce and Christian Travellers from Braga**

Orosius and other clerics or members of the laity seeking to arrange travel to locations beyond the confines of Braga would have had many options available to them. Chapter four established that the commercial, political and administrative importance of Braga in the later Roman period meant that the provincial capital was well connected to rest of empire. Of particular interest was the important trade carried on between the city and locations in North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean. In the early fifth century, the inhabitants of Braga still participated in commercial activity associated with these long-distance markets and local ones.117 The roads that made possible the movement of goods and people to inland locations such as Braga were still open.118 In fact, in the years leading up to Orosius’ departure for North Africa, Braga continued to be a vital hub within the region at the intersection of five major roads. Residents in Braga with the necessary connections, such as Orosius, might also be able to gain passage on ships that carried products along the rivers and on the Atlantic routes between the northern Iberian coast and North Africa.119

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119 African sigillata and other products from Tunisia were frequently brought to Braga in the early fifth century. Raquel Martínez Peñín, Manuela Martins, “Characterization Of Late Antique And Early Medieval Pottery Production Of The City Of Braga And Its Territory” (working paper, Unidade de Arqueología da Universidade do Minho, July 2015), 5-7; Sande Lemos, *Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império e na Antiguidade Tardia*, 109; Lopes de Sousa Morais, “As ânforas da zona das Carvalheiras,” 91, 122.
Orosius certainly was not the only person to travel from northwestern Hispania to the Mediterranean Basin for pious reasons. In fact, by the time the presbyter set off for North Africa, religiously motivated trips from the region were fairly common. Egeria, who was possibly a nun, took a three-year tour to visit holy sites, relics, churches and monasteries. Her journey included stops in Jerusalem, Asia Minor and Egypt. She likely made the trip around the time Orosius was born or when he was a small boy. Although her exact hometown is not known, references she made in her diary about the pilgrimage reveal that she was from a place distant from Edessa, or as the local bishop there put it, from the other side of the earth. Scholars also note that she described the Red Sea’s color by comparing it to the Ocean, which likely was a reference to the Atlantic. The seventh-century monk, Valerius of Bierzo praised Egeria in a letter he wrote to his brethren in the monastic community near Astorga. He summarized her journey to encourage his fellow monks to emulate her zealousness and willingness to exert

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120 Her status as laywoman or nun will be discussed below.


herself and endure great difficulties in order to pray and give praise in far-away holy places.\textsuperscript{125} He also emphasized that she had pious motivations for leaving “this place” in a remote region in the West.\textsuperscript{126} In this way, he indicated that Egeria was part of the same community as the monks to whom he was writing, both because of her inspiring sacrifices and piety, as well as her origins in northwestern \textit{Hispania}. In fact, he labeled her a native of the Ocean’s western shore,\textsuperscript{127} which is an apt geographic description of Gallaecia. Based on this information, scholars have generally concluded that Egeria, like Valerius, was from \textit{Hispania} and, more specifically, the province of Gallaecia.\textsuperscript{128}

The Gallaecian tradition of making voyages to see holy destinations and people in Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean continued decades after Egeria wrote her diary.\textsuperscript{129} Hydatius, the fifth-century chronicler and bishop of Aquae Flaviae,\textsuperscript{130} was taken on such a trip when he was a


\textsuperscript{126} Valerius of Bierzo, 394, Wilkinson, 174.

\textsuperscript{127} Valerius of Bierzo, 394, 398, Wilkinson, 174, 177. See also Thiébaux, 28.

\textsuperscript{128} For an explanation of why Egeria is considered to be the nun Valerius wrote about, see Dietz, 45; Until recently it was largely accepted that Egeria came from Northwestern \textit{Hispania}, See Jasper, 50; Thiébaux, 23; Hunt, 35-36; Moriarty, 56; Dietz, \textit{Wondering Monks, Virgins, and Pilgrims}, 46-47; For the western provinces more generally, see Wilkinson, 3. More recently scholars such as Hagith Sivan have begun to argue against the consensus that Egeria was from the northwestern Iberian Peninsula. Sivan has suggested she hailed from southern Gaul, although her analysis is based on somewhat outdated assumptions about the region’s isolation and religious distinctiveness. Hagith Sivan, “Who Was Egeria? Piety and Pilgrimage in the Age of Gratian,” \textit{The Harvard Theological Review} 81, no. 1 (Jan., 1988): 61-65.

\textsuperscript{129} Of course such “pilgrimages” were not unique to Gallaecians. For the role of Helena, Constantine’s mother, in these pilgrimages and examples of journeys made from other regions of Spain and the Roman Empire see, Frend, \textit{The Archaeology of Early Christianity}, 1-12; Dietz, \textit{Wondering Monks, Virgins, and Pilgrims}.

\textsuperscript{130} Hydatius will be discussed more fully in Chapter 6. He became bishop in 427 or 428 CE and wrote his chronicle sometime after 468 CE. Hydatius tells us he became bishop in the third year of Valentinian III’s reign as Augustus (who was appointed in 425). Scholars typically assert he means 427, but Richard Burgess makes a strong case for 428 CE. Hydatius was born in the \textit{civitas Limicorum} and his eventual see Aquae Flaviae is modern Chaves, which is located less than 70 miles east of Braga. See Hydatius, \textit{Chron}. Preface, 1, 6, Burgess 72-75; Richard W. Burgess, “Hydatius a Late Roman Chronicler in Post-Roman Spain; an Historiographical Study and new Critical Edition of the Chronicle,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Oxford, 1988), 8, 12,14-15, 33-34.
young boy. Like Egeria, Hydatius’ chaperones seemed to have relied on connections within the church to arrange their holy tour. Writing about his trip decades later, Hydatius did not discuss any specific sites that he visited while in Egypt and Palestine, but instead drew attention to the individuals he visited while in Alexandria and Palestine. These included “famous” bishops he personally had seen in Jerusalem, Caesarea and Alexandria. The young Hydatius also witnessed Jerome at work while his group was in Jerusalem, a fact that he mentioned more than once in his chronicle. Likewise, Egeria mapped out the countless members of the clerical community who made her trip possible. The impression is that Gallaecians from the later fourth through the early fifth were linked to the network that had emerged around religious sites in the Mediterranean Basin. Through these connections, the locations of which corresponded closely with those involved in the mercantile ventures that emerged and began to flourish in this period, individuals and groups were able to make extensive trips to places far from their homeland in northwestern Hispania.

It is difficult to say whether the connections that made trips like those Egeria and Hydatius took possible were available to all citizens with the necessary financial means or only...
those within clerical and monastic communities. The exact nature of the religious associations of both Egeria and Hydatius at the time of their trips to the Mediterranean sites is debated among scholars. Egeria may have been a nun—she did address her diary to her “sisters” who were perhaps members of a consecrated community, and Valerius referred to her as one and told his monks that she became an abbess when she returned from her trip. Her education, particularly her knowledge of the Bible, use of Latin connected to the Church, apparent access to a monastic library and interest in details of the liturgy in the various places she visited beyond what would be common for most laypersons all also point to an affiliation with a group of religious women. Hydatius also could have been part of a religious community when he traveled to Alexandria and Palestine. He labeled himself, \textit{infantulus et pupillus},” young and fatherless or an orphan. The nature and expense of the trip and his future vocation within the Church could indicate that he was an oblate dedicated to a religious community.

Of course, these trips and others like them could have been made by laypersons as an act of religious devotion. Egeria, for example, may have been part of the late-fourth-century pattern in which lay religious lifestyles overlapped with monasticism. A part of this religious

\begin{itemize}
\item[137] Dietz, 49-50, 54. Dietz adds that the length of her trip, three years, also suggests she had freedom from other non-religious responsibilities. See also Thiébaut, 28-29.
\item[138] Dietz, 52-53; Wilkinson, 5-6.
\item[139] Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 33, Burgess, 80-81.
\item[141] Moriarty, 60-61. Some historians have argued that Egeria was a member of the imperial family of Theodosius. See Dietz, 47-48.
\end{itemize}
expression, especially among the affluent, coincided with travel to holy sites.\footnote{Dietz, 2005, 43; For a discussion of the importance of religiously motivated trips as acts of piety, especially starting in the later fourth century, see, Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, “Reviving the Memory of the Apostles: Apocryphal Tradition and Travel Literature in Late Antiquity,” \textit{Studies in Church History} 44 (2008): 1-26.} Regardless of Egeria’s status within the church, she was clearly part of a shared network interested in Christian observance.\footnote{Moriarty, 61.} Moreover, she was able to travel to many locations relying on contacts, which Hagith Sivan has compared to those associated with commercial networks, particularly those established through living in an urban setting, such as Braga.\footnote{Sivan has suggested this meant that Egeria was from southern Gaul and likely Arles. However, this interpretation is based on an outdated assumption that Galicia was a backward, rural region typical of scholarship prior to the discovery of recent archaeological evidence that demonstrates that Braga and northwestern \textit{Hispania’s} connectedness to the Mediterranean Basin through trade. Sivan, “Who Was Egeria?,” 65, 72.}

By the time Orosius decided to leave Braga to consult Augustine, religiously motivated journeys to the Mediterranean viewed as acts of piety and the connections needed to make them had long been established. Orosius undoubtedly had knowledge of these types of trips and the various networks that facilitated them before he set out for Hippo. According to Hydatius, his own journey took place less than a decade before Orosius left to study with Augustine.\footnote{Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 31-33, Burgess 80-81. The exact dates of Hydatius’ trip are not entirely clear. He wrote about the bishops he saw and that fact that he saw in his entries for the years 406-408 CE.} Orosius was probably around 20 years old, maybe 15 years older than Hydatius, at the time. Hydatius was born in the \textit{civitas Limicorum} and his eventual see, Aquae Flaviae or modern Chaves, was located less than 70 miles east of Braga and connected to the provincial capital by a major Roman road.\footnote{Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} Preface, 1, Burgess 72-73.} If Hydatius went to Alexandria and Palestine as part of a religious community, Orosius and the other clerics in Braga may have heard about the trip. Both Orosius and the adults who took Hydatius to the Mediterranean Basin certainly were familiar with Egeria’s. Her account of the journey seems to have circulated among the clerics in northwestern

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143 Moriarty, 61.

144 Sivan has suggested this meant that Egeria was from southern Gaul and likely Arles. However, this interpretation is based on an outdated assumption that Galicia was a backward, rural region typical of scholarship prior to the discovery of recent archaeological evidence that demonstrates that Braga and northwestern \textit{Hispania’s} connectedness to the Mediterranean Basin through trade. Sivan, “Who Was Egeria?,” 65, 72.

145 Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 31-33, Burgess 80-81. The exact dates of Hydatius’ trip are not entirely clear. He wrote about the bishops he saw and that fact that he saw in his entries for the years 406-408 CE.

146 Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} Preface, 1, Burgess 72-73.
Hispania. Valerius may have used her as an example because the monks already knew her story. The similarities to some details in Orosius’ descriptions of specific places, such as of the chariot tracks visible in Egypt, indicate that he had read her diary, or at least was familiar with parts of it, as well.\textsuperscript{147}

While the trips members of the clergy, such as Orosius and the elder Avitus, and lay Christians made from Braga to the Mediterranean Basin in the early fifth century were acts of piety, they were more than holy tours. Orosius and others travelling from Braga may have been inspired by those who had previously gone to the Holy Land to visit important sites, but they also sought to use and build alliances with other religious figures in these important places. Part of Orosius’ education as a young cleric included instruction from men who had travelled to Rome and Jerusalem and learned from other men they viewed as leading Christians.\textsuperscript{148} Theological inquiry had motivated them to endeavor to these distant lands and the fruits of their journeys allowed them to hold a prominent place among the educated in Braga as they taught and debated complicated doctrines. Their status in Braga was confirmed by their pious efforts, knowledge of advanced theological concepts and the connections that allowed them to make their trips.

Others from Braga were in Jerusalem for similar reasons. The elder presbyter Avitus seems to have come to the region from Braga in order to have access to the resources and thinkers necessary for advanced theological study. Prior to leaving his hometown, he

\textsuperscript{147} Hunt, 39, 46.

communicated with Jerome and sought information from him about Origen and his writing.\textsuperscript{149} After spending several years in Jerusalem, he had made strong enough connections that the local priest Lucianus chose to turn over a portion of St. Stephen’s remains for the community in Braga. Lucianus also asked Avitus to translate his \textit{revelatio}, or written account of his discovery of the relics, into Latin.\textsuperscript{150} Several other men, whom Orosius knew and who may have been from Braga, also were part of the synod in Jerusalem. One was a layman named Domnus and two were presbyters, Passerius and Avitus.\textsuperscript{151} It is not clear if this is the same Avitus who wrote to Jerome and Balconius.\textsuperscript{152} It is improbable, since it does not seem likely that the Avitus at the synod in Jerusalem knew Greek because the lack of a reliable translator at the conference was a source of great frustration for Orosius.\textsuperscript{153} Avitus, of course, was a popular Roman name\textsuperscript{154} and Christians in Gallaecia continued to bestow it upon their children perhaps as late as the seventh century.\textsuperscript{155} Therefore it is not unreasonable to assume that this was another Avitus who was in

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[149] Although the letters are not extant, Avitus apparently wrote to Jerome several times asking him to communicate with Salvina, a recent widow. We have Jerome’s letter to Salvina who was connected to Theodosius I because her husband Nebridius had been the nephew of the empress, who raised him. Jerome offered consolation to Salvina and encouraged her to remain chaste. This same Avitus also wrote to Jerome in order to get a more reliable edition of Origen’s \textit{First Principles}. Jerome, \textit{Ep.} 79.1-2; Jerome, \textit{Ep.} 124.1-2. For why it is believed that these are all the same presbyter of Braga who arranged for Orosius to transport the relics of St. Stephen to Balconius, see Chadwick 178; Altaner, 119-120; Teske, 101 no. 21.
\item[150] \textit{Epistola Aviti ad Palchonium}, PL 41.805-808. Apparently then, Avitus knew Greek, while Orosius did not. Orosius’ ignorance of Greek played a significant role in the synod in Jerusalem in 415 and will be discussed more thoroughly below. This difference suggests that the standards of education, views about the value of knowing Greek, and the availability of Greek-speaking teachers had changed in Braga within the generation from Avitus to Orosius. For Avitus’ knowledge of Greek see Altaner, 119-120
\item[151] Orosius, \textit{Book in Defense against the Pelagians}, 6.
\item[152] Scholars generally agree that it is not one of the two Aviti who traveled to Rome and Jerusalem and participated in theological debates about Origen. See Hanson 172, no. 27; Chadwick 178; Altaner, 107-108; 118-120.
\item[153] Orosius, \textit{Book in defense against the Pelagians}, 6. Others disagree with this assessment. See Altaner, 119-120.
\item[154] This is supported by the epigraphic evidence as well. See Felipe Arias Vilas, P. Le Roux, Alain Tranoy, \textit{Inscriptions Romanes De La Province De Lugo} (Paris: Diffusion De Boccard, 1979), 98.
\item[155] For example, a young man named Avitus died when he was 27 or 28 years old and was buried north of Ourense in Peroxa. The inscription on his sarcophagus seems to include a cross. There is some disagreement about the exact date, which ranges from the fifth to the seventh century. Antonio Rodriguez Colmenero A, \textit{Aquae Flaviae} (Chaves:}
the Holy Land. Orosius called him and the others who attended the conference “devout” and
their participation in a discussion of doctrine called by a bishop does point to familiarity with
theological study and deliberations, which could have been their motivation for being in
Jerusalem.

Orosius had come of age among the theological debates and instruction in Braga and it
was his desire to participate in this process that motivated him to travel to the Mediterranean
Basin. Both Orosius and Augustine wrote that the presbyter came to North Africa in order to
engage in theological study with the bishop of Hippo and bring back his findings to his clerical
community in Braga.\(^{156}\) Orosius explained that God compelled him to leave his homeland in
order that he might learn from Augustine and undo the harm that the teachers he disagreed with
were causing among the community of Christians engaged in advanced religious study in
Braga.\(^{157}\) According to Orosius, these men were more detrimental than “the bloodiest of
enemies.”\(^{158}\) The presbyter’s characterization of his reason for leaving Braga as a divine calling
served to elevate his journey to a pious and religious journey. Orosius hoped to bring back

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\(^{156}\) Orosius, \textit{Memo}, 1; Augustine, \textit{Ep}. 166.1.2.

\(^{157}\) Orosius, \textit{Memo}, 1.

\(^{158}\) Orosius, \textit{Memo}, 1, Teske, 97. This often has been interpreted as a reference to the presence of Sueves in Braga
and Gallaecia. As discussed above, the archaeological record and Orosius’ characterization of the period do not
indicate that it was a period of absolute upheaval in Braga. Although it has been argued that Orosius left Braga due
to fighting among the locals and the Sueves, he described his motivations in theological terms. In his \textit{Seven Books of
History}, Orosius did break from his narrative on Alexander the Great to provide an autobiographical account of his
first experiences with “barbarians” in his homeland. He explained that he had to outrun, outwit and flatter them to
survive and finally escape them by sea. Some have seen this as a reference to his flight from Braga to Hippo and
proof of the devastation caused by the Sueves. However, if read within the larger context of the \textit{Seven Books of
History} and Orosius’ thesis, it becomes clear that the reference was an attempt to gain the trust of the readers.
Directly before relaying his own experiences, Orosius addressed his audience and claimed that he could write about
calamities because he had lived them. In other words, he sought to validate his assessment of the present as being
better than the past by showing that he knew from his own experience what distress was and the harm that the
“barbarians” had and could cause. However, even with this knowledge and first-hand perspective, he viewed the
present circumstances, after the birth of Christ, as better than those of the past. Orosius, \textit{Seven Books of History},
3.20.5-7. For other interpretations of this passage, see Trompf, 292.
wisdom\textsuperscript{159} to correct the teachings he disagreed with and his choice to come to the well-respected Augustine would have allowed him to return to the debates in Braga with increased authority. Augustine supported his goal first by providing him with instruction in Hippo and access to texts, and then by arranging for Orosius to continue his studies with another well-known Christian thinker of the time, Jerome.\textsuperscript{160} As will be shown below, Orosius knew the value of these alliances and did his best to use them to his advantage. Such connections were important, but equally critical were the networks used to travel to Hippo and Jerusalem in the first place.

Orosius’ own journey indicates that clerics from Braga in the early fifth century had access to modes of long-distance transportation and knew how to utilize them. Orosius clearly was a competent traveler. He successfully made the arrangements necessary for the long journey from northwestern Hispania to North Africa in 414.\textsuperscript{161} Merchants were already making this trip regularly, so he may have negotiated passage with them. His relationship with these commercial agents could have been newly developed in the context of his decision to study with Augustine in Hippo. However, the correlation between the origins of the commercial products and other religiously motivated journeys from Braga and Gallaecia in the period suggest Orosius at least partially relied on already established connections to broker his transport.\textsuperscript{162}

Orosius did hint in his historical writing to the fact that knowledge of the routes and expertise using them was available to the youth of his day. In one of his numerous references to

\textsuperscript{159} He wrote that he wanted to return as the merchant who had found the “the lost pearl.” Orosius, \textit{Memo}, 1, Teske, 97.

\textsuperscript{160} Augustine, \textit{Ep}, 166.1.2; Orosius, \textit{In Defense against the Pelagians}, 3.

\textsuperscript{161} Hanson, 99.

\textsuperscript{162} This will be explained more fully below.
contemporary events and situations in his *Seven Books of History*, Orosius mentioned that young men were sent abroad in order to make their hometowns rich. He specifically referred to urban locations, which suggests that cities like Braga relied on the younger population to conduct the travel necessary for lucrative mercantile ventures. Although he was making a general reference and not necessarily pointing to Braga’s youth in particular, Orosius’ first-hand experience and familiarity with the circumstances in his hometown would have informed his anecdotal description. Commerce certainly was an important component of Braga’s economy, which involved people of different vocations and backgrounds and from all levels of society. Within this context, it is reasonable to assume that among his peers, Orosius knew numerous young men who had already had made the journey to North Africa and who had connections with established merchants. It is possible that he may have participated in some form of travel himself prior to leaving for Hippo in 414.

Augustine’s characterization of Orosius confirms that the presbyter from Braga was well-traveled and likely had established connections to make the journey to North Africa. In a letter to Jerome, the bishop introduced Orosius as someone who was familiar with the intricacies associated with making long-distance voyages. In fact, Augustine saw Orosius’ travel experience as an answer to prayer. He explained to Jerome that he had desired a messenger to carry questions to him, but had had difficulty finding someone sufficiently qualified both in terms of intellect and travel competence. Although by this time Orosius already had made the long journey from Braga, a point Augustine emphasized in his letter to Jerome and in another one


164 Augustine, *Ep*. 166.1.2
addressed to his friend Evodius, the bishop of Uzalis, it would surprising if the young presbyter’s qualifications came from this single journey. Augustine’s expectations for Orosius after he left Hippo show that he knew the priest from Braga was capable of making multiple trips among various regions in a short period of time. Augustine sent Orosius to work with Jerome, but he assumed that the priest also would come back to work with him in Hippo before returning to his home in northwestern Spain.

Orosius’ use of a mercantile reference in his memorandum to Augustine also is suggestive of his personal familiarity with and connection to travel related to commercial activities. In this memo, while making a plea to the bishop of Hippo to compose a written response to specific questions the two had previously discussed, Orosius compared himself to a merchant. He requested that Augustine allow him to return home as a good merchant who gathered pearls rather than a mere servant who ran away and squandered all his money. Of course, it would be risky to overemphasize the significance of this statement, since it is an allusion to a parable found in Matthew in which a merchant finds a pearl and sells all of his belongings to buy it because it really was the Kingdom of Heaven. However, it is suggestive that Orosius used this comparison when describing his own reasons for coming to Hippo. He told the bishop that he desired to be like a merchant rather than a servant because as a merchant he could find success and be capable of bringing heavenly things back to his homeland. In Orosius’ estimation, merchants were guided by positive motivations and reaped beneficial results. He

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166 Augustine, Ep. 166.1.2; Orosius, Book in Defense against the Pelagians, 3.

167 The nature of Orosius’ theological inquiry will be discussed more fully below.

168 Orosius, Memo, 1.
wrote this memo shortly after his trip when his journey and travel companions were still fresh in his mind. His choice to associate himself with merchants very well could have been based on some reflection of his recent reality.

In fact, Orosius and the clerical community in Braga may have had direct connections to commercial activities since the Christian basilica was built over a market that had been utilized since the early imperial period. The residents of Braga had continued to buy and sell goods in this commercial zone on the northern edge of the city until unknown patrons transformed at least part of the area into a Christian space. It is difficult to determine with certainty when or if the area ceased to be a market at this time. It seems most likely that it was at least a gradual transition and the space served a dual function for a period during which even after the construction of the basilica people continued to be use some areas for commercial purposes. This theory is supported by the fact that ceramics were either being stored or dumped in another building located directly on the other side of the Roman wall from the basilica.

Of course, Orosius’ travels did not end in Hippo. After working with Augustine, the priest from Braga secured transport to Bethlehem to study with Jerome. Later, he had no

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169 Material finds date the market to the Flavian dynasty. Manuela Martins, “Urbanização do Noroeste peninsular: o caso de Bracara Augusta,” in Emergencia e desenvolvimento das cidades Romanas no Norte da Península Ibérica, eds. Lino T Dias, Jorge S. Araújo, and Roux P. Le (Porto: Escola profissional de arqueologia, 1999), 59; Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Braga, “Urbanismo e arquitetura de Bracara Augusta,” 51; Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império e na Antiguidade Tardia, 104; Martins, “The Roman City of Bracara Augusta (Braga, Portugal),” 77-78; Rodriguez Resino, Del Imperio Romano, 152.

170 There is some evidence that goods were exchanged here until perhaps as late as the turn of the fifth century. Gaspar, 93-94.


172 Augustine, Ep. 166.1.2; Orosius, Book in Defense against the Pelagians, 3. Orosius also likely stopped in Egypt either on his way to Palestine or during his return trip to Augustine’s see in Hippo. This would not have been much of a detour especially since Egypt was a common destination in late antiquity for those who wanted to visit Christian shrines, other religious and historical sites and, in Orosius’ case, the famous library in Alexandria. In his summary of the well-known Jewish exodus from Egypt, Orosius included what scholars interpret as a first-hand description of visible chariot tracks on the shore and bed of the Red Sea. While this detail may have come from another written or
difficulty making his way to Jerusalem when the Bishop John called the synod to discuss Pelagius in July of 415.\textsuperscript{173} Again, these trips were along established trade routes that connected Braga to the Eastern Mediterranean and Palestine in particular. Members of the clerical community in Braga could have gained access to them due to their interactions with merchants and brokers either in their capacity as leaders within Braga’s church or within political and commercial networks. Of course, it was while Orosius was in Jerusalem that Avitus’ chose to entrust the relics of St. Stephen to him. The elder presbyter was delighted that a fellow member of the clerical community from Braga was on hand to make this trip.\textsuperscript{174} His confidence in Orosius’ capacity to carry out this important mission reflects an assumption that passage on ships that carried people and goods, such as relics, to Braga from the Mediterranean Basin could be easily arranged by members of the clerical community.

In summary, religiously motivated travel, whether for holy tours or theological inquiry, was an integral part of clerical and lay Christian life for those within the community of Braga. Successfully embarking on an arduous journey and learning complicated doctrines and theological ideas demonstrated piety and served as a marker of status. To make these trips, Braga’s clerics and lay elites relied on connections within various religious, commercial and imperial networks. The similarity between the destinations and routes used by the pilgrims and those associated with the movement of goods suggest a possible correlation and overlap of interests. The fact that the networks were used to translate relics between the Mediterranean

\textsuperscript{173} Orosius, \textit{In Defense against the Pelagians}, 3; Hanson, 102.

\textsuperscript{174} \textit{Epistola Aviti ad Palmonium}, PL 41.805-808.
Basin and Braga reinforces this potential link. This intersection of secular and sacred interests reflects continuity of the situation experienced by Paternus and Symphosius, for whom traditional patronage networks were crucial and influential in their episcopal actions.\(^{175}\) Indeed, establishing and maintaining long-distance religious alliances continued to be important for Orosius and members of the clerical community of Braga in the early fifth century, not only for their position within the Church, but within elite society. In fact, as will be discussed next, Orosius’ reaction to John of Jerusalem’s accusations that the presbyter had committed blasphemy demonstrates that due to the overlap among religious, social, imperial and commercial networks maintaining one's standing within religious circles was critical. An accusation of unorthodox belief or blasphemy was more than an assault on an individual cleric’s religiosity; it also was a threat to his status and its associated benefits.

**The Synod in Jerusalem: Proving Piety and Protecting Alliances**

If we believe Orosius’ narrative, our only extant source, the synod held in Jerusalem in 415 was a raucous event. The clerics present shouted their disapproval throughout and even mocked the presiding bishop John and accused him of trickery.\(^{176}\) Of course, Orosius had good reason to depict the meeting in chaotic terms and use the reactions of those at the assembly to call John’s authority and allegiances within the Catholic Church into question. When the bishop of Jerusalem had rebuffed Orosius publicly weeks after the synod and called him a blasphemer for supposedly denying the power of God’s Grace,\(^{177}\) John had threatened Orosius’ reputation for piety and his membership within his theological circle and its associated networks. Orosius repeatedly told the bishops and priests he addressed in his treatise against the Pelagians that he

\(^{175}\) See Chapters 2-4 in this dissertation.

\(^{176}\) Orosius, *Book in Defense against the Pelagians*, 6.

\(^{177}\) Orosius, *Book in Defense against the Pelagians*, 7.
was compelled to write because of the injustice that had been done to him. He was afraid that they would hear a rumor about it and believe that he no longer shared their views. Thus, in order to protect his reputation and position within his circle, he had to thoroughly explain exactly what had happened at the synod, what he had said and why, and what his theological stance was regarding sin and grace. With this apology, Orosius attempted to define his own alliance and demonstrate that his accusers John and Pelagius were not part of this group. Perhaps because the stakes were so high, Orosius often attacked his opponents in rather personal terms.

According to Orosius’ account, his fellow clergymen and John forced him to play a pivotal role in the proceedings, the purpose of which was to assess Pelagius and his teachings. By the time the synod was held in Jerusalem in 415, a council of bishops had already condemned Pelagius’ companion Caelestius in Carthage and Augustine had written a response to their ideas and was in the process of completing another. Orosius tells us that the clerics at the synod asked him to inform them about these events, presumably because he had just spent time studying with Augustine in North Africa. Orosius complied and made it clear that he was not only familiar with Augustine’s views, but also carried with him a letter from the bishop of Hippo, which he read at the synod. However, when Pelagius was brought before the assembly, he acted as though he had never heard of the bishop of Hippo, which upset Orosius and his colleagues greatly. According to Orosius, John did not improve the situation when he called

178 Orosius, *Book in Defense against the Pelagians*, 1, 12.
180 Orosius, *Book in Defense against the Pelagians*, 3, 19; Hanson, 102.
himself Augustine, but did not speak in Latin or share his sentiments.\textsuperscript{183} By thoroughly and carefully conveying these details, Orosius was able to demonstrate his participation within Augustine’s network and by emphasizing that Pelagius denied the bishop of Hippo’s authority and that John misrepresented his theology and doctrines, Orosius placed them both outside of it. Orosius also drew attention to his association with Jerome. He aligned himself with the priest in Bethlehem when he told the assembly that Jerome condemned the doctrines of Pelagius in his letter to Ctesiphon and still further when he revealed his knowledge of the dialogue Jerome was working on to refute them again.\textsuperscript{184}

Although he occasionally employed rhetoric to appear appropriately respectful to a bishop, Orosius attacked John in rather harsh terms. He accused the bishop of manipulating the conference so everyone would be forced to be more lenient toward Pelagius.\textsuperscript{185} According to Orosius, John repeatedly attempted to get the assembly to admit they were accusing Pelagius of heresy, so the bishop could act as the judge. When that failed, John tried to entice them into a circular debate with what seemed like words of instruction, but were really quotes from Origen that had been condemned.\textsuperscript{186} Orosius also complained that they were forced to speak through an interpreter who continuously left out words or altered their meanings.\textsuperscript{187} However, Orosius even used the bad interpreter as a way to demonstrate his own alliance and to attack their opponent, John. First, he associated himself with a group of clerics by explaining that they had testified that

\textsuperscript{183} Orosius, \textit{Book in Defense against the Pelagians}, 4.

\textsuperscript{184} Orosius, \textit{Book in Defense against the Pelagians}, 3-4. Jerome had accused Pelagius of Origenist thinking several years before, but when the heretic began preaching in Jerusalem, Jerome specifically denounced his doctrines concerning the possibility of living without sin. He wrote a letter in opposition to Pelagius and informed Orosius of his heretical doctrines. See Rees, 7.

\textsuperscript{185} Orosius, \textit{Book in Defense against the Pelagians}, 4.

\textsuperscript{186} Orosius, \textit{Book in Defense against the Pelagians}, 5.

\textsuperscript{187} Orosius, \textit{Book in Defense against the Pelagians}, 6.
the interpreter used was known to give incorrect translations.\(^{188}\) He was careful to list their names and that they were devout and leading, notable citizens. Then Orosius suggested that perhaps it was due to the interpreter that John mistakenly thought Orosius had committed blasphemy. Yet, this was merely a rhetorical ploy, which provided a vehicle for him to accuse the bishop of seeking false witnesses to support heretics.\(^{189}\) Within a litany of complaints about the accusation and John’s negligence—if he was a good father, he would have sought to correct Orosius sooner and in a more proper setting—the priest from Braga feigned deference and criticized the interpreter since surely a bishop would not lie.\(^{190}\) Orosius’ intention to call John a liar and attack him for siding with Pelagius was clear when he asserted that, of course, there were false witnesses in Jerusalem\(^{191}\) and monetary and political temptations.\(^{192}\)

Orosius also issued personal attacks against Pelagius to establish his own position within a larger educated and pious social circle and to show that the British layman was outside of it.\(^{193}\) Unsurprisingly, Orosius employed the typical language used to describe heretics: Pelagius and his associates were evil, emitted a putrid odor, were harbingers of the Antichrist and hissed and snuck around the Church like poisonous serpents.\(^{194}\) Yet the priest from Braga also drew

\(^{188}\) Orosius, *Book in Defense against the Pelagians*, 6. Avitus, Vitalis, Passeirus and the former notable Domnus. See above for discussion of the identity of these men.

\(^{189}\) Orosius, *Book in Defense against the Pelagians*, 8.

\(^{190}\) Orosius, *Book in Defense against the Pelagians*, 7.

\(^{191}\) Orosius, *Book in Defense against the Pelagians*, 8.


\(^{193}\) Orosius calls Pelagius, a man from Britain. Orosius, *Book in Defense against the Pelagians*, 12. Orosius’ use of invective and the specific attacks he employed closely resemble those issued by Jerome. This reveals the training Orosius had received from Jerome and his interest in emulating and associating with a respected member of the clergy. For Jerome’s attacks against Pelagius, see J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome: his Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London: Duckworth, 1975), 309-320.

\(^{194}\) Orosius, *Book in Defense against the Pelagians*, 1, 2, 16.
attention to Pelagius’ lack of decorum and modesty, unfavorable appearance, inferior intellect and lack of educational background. For example, Orosius described Pelagius’ letter to the young virgin Demetrias as inappropriate and obscene. Orosius also insinuated that Pelagius’ claims to live an austere life were false because he really was a portly man with broad shoulders and a fat neck, which he gained from spending too much time at sumptuous feasts and baths that not only gave him an unsightly appearance, but also made him overly self-confident. Finally, Orosius attacked Pelagius’ ability as a writer, saying that he lacked common sense and the enlightenment that came from honorable studies and his words as transmitted through scribes were so pitiful, that people could not help but laugh at them. Orosius’ critique of Pelagius’ intellect and lack of proper training highlighted his own membership within the group that was laughing while placing Pelagius outside of it.

Orosius’ willingness to take on a leadership role at the synod and his reaction to John of Jerusalem’s accusations about him demonstrate that for the presbyter from Braga, participation in theological study and deliberation played a significant role in establishing his piety and overall status. Asserting and maintaining his religious alliances and standing among his teachers and fellow students were equally important to him. For Orosius and other clerics and lay elites from Braga, the ability to travel to North Africa and the Holy Land to visit religious sites and learn from Christian thinkers such as Augustine and Jerome served as proof of their “burning zeal” and desire “to be in the Lord's house a vessel rendering useful service in refuting those false and pernicious doctrines.”

195 Orosius, Book in Defense against the Pelagians, 29.
196 Orosius, Book in Defense against the Pelagians, 31.
197 Orosius, Book in Defense against the Pelagians, 29.
198 Augustine, Ep. 166.1.2
he had done just that. Of course, these were not strictly religious concerns. The ability to engage in debates required a proper elite education and one could not make the long journey to the Mediterranean Basin or devote themselves to theological contemplation without connections and sufficient means and free time. Secular and ecclesiastical motives and resources were interwoven, which meant that losing one’s pious reputation or the alliances that made it possible threatened one’s standing in the community. The bishop John’s denunciation jeopardized Orosius’ position within not just his religious circles but in the larger alliances that had facilitated his journey and at home in Braga. Therefore, Orosius did not just explain his own innocence in theological terms, but clarified the connections he had and the people who had helped him acquire his ideas. Within this context Orosius’ use of invective was a reasonable strategy to discredit his opposition, protect his status and confirm his own membership within an educated, elite and pious community.

**Conclusion**

Although not a focus of this chapter, the clear correspondence in the theological content of Orosius’ three extant writings provide evidence for the importance that developing and conveying such arguments had for the presbyter. In all three he emphasized that God requires atonement for sins committed against Him, which can be exacted through earthly punishments, but He also demands further satisfaction to be paid in the eternal fires after death. When he wrote to Augustine shortly after leaving Braga, he had hoped to prove to his opponents in his hometown that his view that God is responsible for all the good in the world and that the fires of

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199 1) His memorandum to Augustine concerning the Priscillianists, Manicheans and Origenists; 2) his defense against the Pelagians and 3) and his *Seven Histories*.

200 For a detailed analysis of Orosius’ theology of atonement in his extant works, see Rebecca A. Devlin, “Orosius’ History: A Theology of Atonement,” (Presented paper, History Students Association Symposium, San Francisco State University, March 12, 2008). For Orosius’ notions of retribution and divine punishments within their historical context, see Trompf, 292-309.
damnation are both real and eternal was correct.  

Similarly, in his response to the synod of Jerusalem, he sought to disprove Pelagius’ claim to be able to live without sin and show that such a belief rendered God impotent and denied the necessity for proper atonement.  

Finally, Orosius continued both of these arguments in his *Seven Histories* and also suggested that recent events such as the sack of Rome offered Christians and pagans the opportunity to be chastised, repent and be saved.  

The thematic consistency within Orosius’ writings suggests that the presbyter saw each as a part of a larger theological argument. He had developed his perspective through careful study with other Christian thinkers both in Braga and throughout the Mediterranean Basin. When he left Braga he did not have the support of Augustine and Jerome and his position among those engaged in theological deliberations was weak. However, by the time he faced Pelagius and the Bishop John, Orosius was confident that his view and the hard work and extensive travel that it took to cultivate it demonstrated his piety and position within religious and social circles. At the synod in Jerusalem, Orosius boldly represented his stance and that of the powerful figures of his day: Augustine and Jerome. He was happy to live up to his duty as a member of the clerical community of Braga to participate in theological debates in order to discover and eliminate false doctrines. Of course, his piety and therefore his standing were called into question when the bishop of Jerusalem accused him of blasphemy. Orosius’ rebuttal to John of Jerusalem was written in the Holy Land, thousands of miles from his hometown. Nevertheless, his approach and purpose for writing reflect the specific circumstances of Braga and the presbyter’s desire to assert his position within the elite of the provincial capital. Since Paternus’ ordination before the

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203 Orosius, *Seven Histories*, 7.36.13; 7.37. 4-12.
First Council of Toledo, Braga had continued to flourish as an important political, commercial and social center. After becoming a Metropolitan see and under Paternus’ guidance, theological pursuits gained value among the elite. By the time Orosius left for Hippo, he was a part of a circle of clerics and lay Christians for whom involvement in theological study and debate became a way not only to demonstrate one’s piety but also defined religious alliances that overlapped with larger social and economic networks, which connected Gallaecia to the Mediterranean Basin.

The line between the sacred and secular spheres had been unclear for Paternus and the two realms continued to be interwoven in Orosius’ time. Chapter 6 will show that over the course of fifth century, the overlap of earthly and ecclesiastical concerns and duties persisted and due to changing political and social circumstances in Braga and the rest of Gallaecia, the intersection progressed, so that bishops such as Hydatius would begin to act as political ambassadors for their communities.

Figure 5-1. View from Suevic settlement at Falperra. Photograph courtesy of author.
CHAPTER 6
HYDATIUS AND THE CLERICAL COMMUNITY OF GALLAECIA: CONFLICT, CHAOS
AND THE CULMINATION OF EPISCOPAL AUTHORITY IN SOCIETY

Introduction

In 431, only three years after he was consecrated bishop, Hydatius of Aquae Flaviae traveled as a legate to meet with the general, Aetius, who was on a campaign in Gaul (Figure 6-1). According to Hydatius, this journey was made in an effort to get help from the famous Roman military commander after the Sueves broke a peace treaty they had reached with the Gallaecians and began pillaging the region.\(^1\) Hydatius seems to have been a good choice to send as the representative of his province. He was able to successfully convince Aetius to send Censurius, another Roman official, back to Gallaecia with him.\(^2\) Although Censurius ultimately did not offer much long-term help to the Gallaecians, Hydatius and other bishops were able to negotiate a new treaty with the Suevic king, Hermericus.\(^3\) Yet, the bishops of Gallaecia did not always work so well together. Shortly after the successful episcopal mediation to secure peace with the Sueves, Bishop Agrestius of Lugo objected to two ordinations performed without his permission in Lucensis.\(^4\)

These examples demonstrate several things about the clerical communities in Gallaecia during Hydatius’ time. In many ways, Hydatius and the other bishops in the region represented continuity with their predecessors in the age of the First Council of Toledo, and Orosius and the clerical community in Braga in the early fifth century. As this chapter argues, sacred and secular duties continued to be intertwined for Hydatius and his episcopal colleagues. Moreover,


\(^2\) Hydatius, *Chron.* 88, Burgess, 90-91.

\(^3\) Hydatius, *Chron.* 91, Burgess, 92-93.

\(^4\) Hydatius, *Chron.* 93, Burgess, 92-93.
since authority and status still derived from alliances and networks within and outside the church, the bishops of Gallaecia continued to be embroiled in conflicts among themselves. Accusations of Priscillianism and heresy had become tools to advance one’s cause and alienate opponents.

While there was a fair degree of continuity within the region, the political circumstances had shifted since Orosius’ left for North Africa in 414. Hydatius and his episcopal colleagues led congregations of men, women and children who were more clearly affected by the presence of the Sueves, as well as the Visigoths who the Roman authorities had sent to alleviate the damage. This dissertation opened with an account of Hydatius’ captivity in 460 and the Sueves hope that they could use this valuable hostage to broker a favorable peace agreement.\(^5\) In fact, leading up to his capture, hostilities had escalated in Gallaecia. Communities attempted to find protection with their bishops and in their churches, with varying degrees of success. However, as this chapter argues, this was not due to the breakdown of the Roman political system or its withdrawal from the region. Instead, the people chose to turn to the bishops because they had been able to use their clerical conflicts to develop reputations as capable diplomats and leaders with influential extra-regional connections.

The chapter begins with an examination of the clerical communities of Gallaecia in the 430s and their conflicts in order to establish that there was a high degree of continuity in the region within society and the church. There was a slight increase in episcopal presence, but the congregations and communities they represented were largely the same with regard to their social and political composition. Bishops served as ambassadors not because they were the only men available to do so, but because they were educated, trusted and capable, and the clerical

conflicts in which they participated helped to shape the perception. In this and the next section, several episodes involving accusations of heresy and conflict among bishops and the laity are analyzed to show that multiple and competing clerical networks existed in Gallaecia, which were vying to be part of larger alliances—ecclesiastical and secular—in *Hispania* and the rest of the Roman Empire. The final section of the chapter focuses on the social and political circumstances after the mid-fifth century. This examination shows that while the role of the church and bishops increased in the later fifth century and after, this was part of a long progression that had its roots in the later fourth century, and the internal dynamics and conflicts within the clerical community of Gallaecia, rather than being a simple consequence of the political upheaval caused by the Sueves and the Visigoths in the region.

**Ambassadors for the People, Alliances and Conflicts: Gallaecia’s Bishops and their Communities in the 430s**

**Hydatius of Aquae Flaviae**

In Chapter 5, we saw that even after the Sueves and Vandals had settled in Gallaecia, life for the inhabitants of Braga had remained relatively unchanged. Of course there were disturbances, but as will be discussed below, overall continuity is the most apt description for the other areas of Gallaecia as well. Even so, by the time the bishop Hydatius was sent to Gaul as an envoy in 431, the political circumstances had changed somewhat, which did have consequences for the people of his congregation in Aquae Flaviae and others living in Gallaecia. By 420, the

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6 Although it is generally accepted that he was the bishop of Aquae Flaviae, Hydatius technically never explicitly named the location of his bishopric. However, he made several references in his chronicle to the see of Aquae Flaviae and his presence in it making it easy to infer that it was the location of his episcopate. For objections to the assumption, see E.A. Thompson, *Romans and Barbarians. The Decline of the Western Roman Empire* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), 139-140. For reasons to accept it, see Richard W. Burgess, “Hydatius a Late Roman Chronicler in Post-Roman Spain; an Historiographical Study and new Critical Edition of the Chronicle,” (Doctoral diss., University of Oxford, 1988), 14-18.
Vandals had departed Gallaecia and they moved on to Africa in 430. After they left, as Hydatius described it, the typical pattern of relations between the Sueves and the Gallaecians was for the former to intermittently raid Gallaecian settlements and then for both sides to agree to terms of peace. In 431, the Sueves broke one of these agreements and began pillaging again, which compelled Hydatius to undertake an embassy to Aetius, the Roman commander who was fighting the Franks in Gaul.

Hydatius successfully reached Gaul before Aetius finished his campaign. After the commander defeated the Franks and negotiated terms with them, he received the bishop from Aquae Flaviae. Such a meeting likely took place in a formal audience hall of the commander’s palace and Hydatius would have needed to be familiar with the proper protocol for presenting a case to an imperial official. We do not have a record of the exchange between Aetius and Hydatius, but the bishop must have been persuasive when he told the commander that his community needed imperial intervention to halt the Sueves. Aetius decided to send the comes Censurius to travel back with Hydatius to Gallaecia. Shortly after Hydatius returned home with Censurius, the Sueves and the Gallaecians did reach a peace agreement. However, Censurius does not seem to have played a significant role in its negotiation since he rather quickly was called back to Gaul where Aetius’ position was threatened. Instead it was the bishops who were

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7 Hydatius, Chron. 80, Burgess, 90-91.
8 Hydatius, Chron. 81, 86, Burgess, 90-91. See also Kulikowski, “The Suevi in Gallaecia, an introduction,” 135-136.
9 Hydatius, Chron. 86, Burgess, 90-91
10 Hydatius, Chron. 88, Burgess 90-91.
11 Hydatius consistently referred to the “palatio” in reference to Aetius and Censurius and the official locale of power in Gaul. The word seems to be a specific reference to the place he visited while on his embassy as opposed the more general reference, “ad comitatum” or to the court. See Hydatius, Chron. 88, 91-92, Burgess, 92-93.
12 Hydatius wrote that shortly after Censurius’ arrival in Gallaecia, Boniface returned from Africa and deposed Aetius. Censurius was forced to return to the palace in Gaul in order to assist Aetius in his struggles against
able to intervene and facilitate terms acceptable to both the Gallaecians and King Hermericus of
the Sueves. The king then sent another bishop, Symphosius, to the court in Gaul.

We know that Bishop Hydatius of Aquae Flaviae was an ambassador for the people of his
congregation and the larger community surrounding his see because he wrote about his mission
in his chronicle. At some point after he became bishop in 427 or 428, Hydatius decided to copy
the chronicles started by Eusebius and continued by Jerome, and add entries from his own time
through the year 468. According to Hydatius, he chose to undertake this project because his
predecessor’s chronicle had ended with the emperor Valens’ reign in 378, and no one else had
maintained the tradition. It is not possible to know whether Hydatius began the chronicle when
he became bishop and then continued it throughout his life or if he compiled it around 468. He
referred to himself as an old man several times in the preface and claimed to be writing at the
end of his life, but this could be hyperbole or a reference to his age at the time when he wrote the
introduction. In any case, examining the details Hydatius chose to include in his chronicle—a
genre that by design required brevity—provides some insight into the values of the fifth-century
bishop.

Recording the missions of envoys such as his own to Aetius was a central part of
Hydatius’ chronicle. The details and exchanges of such embassies were not typically included in
chronicles. Other authors may have occasionally recorded a politically important or rhetorically

Sebastian, who had replaced Boniface after his death from a wound inflicted by Aetius. Hydatius, Chron. 89, 91,
Burgess 92-93.

13 The agreement included giving hostages, but it not clear who they were or who received them. Hydatius, Chron. 91, Burgess 92-93.

14 As will be discussed below, this was not likely Symphosius of Astorga discussed in Chapters 2-4. Hydatius, Chron. 92, Burgess 92-93

15 Hydatius, Chron. Preface, 1-5, Burgess, 70-75.

16 Hydatius, Chron. Preface, 1, 5, Burgess, 70-75.
useful embassy, but Hydatius included forty-one of them. In fact, embassies received equal
treatment as military campaigns and other types of conflicts in his chronicle. Part of this can be
explained by the fact that Hydatius witnessed a lot of embassies in Gallaecia; there were imperial
missions, as well as those between the Gallaecians and the Sueves. As the Visigoths became
increasingly involved in the political and military operations of the peninsula, sometimes as
allies of the Romans and sometimes as aggressors against them, Hydatius also had knowledge of
embassies between the inhabitants of Hispania and the Visigoths, as well as those sent between
the Sueves and Visigoths. Yet, the number of diplomatic missions in Gallaecia was not unique;
these types of contacts between provincial elites, imperial authorities and non-Roman rulers
happened just as frequently in other western kingdoms. It follows then, that Hydatius chose to
emphasize envoys for other reasons.

Hydatius’ choice to highlight the missions of envoys serves as evidence for the
continuing importance of the Roman values associated with paideia and the bishop’s interest in
highlighting his own status as a participant. The bishop of Aquae Flaviae decided to bring
attention to diplomatic relations, which required particular skills and training, in the legacy he

17 Andrew Gillett, Envoys and Political Communication in the Late Antique West, 411-533, Cambridge studies in
medieval life and thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 38-41.

18 Gillett, 42-43.

19 The relationship between the Visigoths and the Sueves in this period is difficult to unravel. Fernando López
Sánchez argues that the Sueves originally had an alliance with the Vandals, but abandoned this association for a
more lucrative one with Visigoths. This alliance became more strained as the Sueves won more victories against the
Hispano-Romans, which threatened the Visigothic goal of controlling Baetica and Gallaecia. For the alliance and its
tensions see, Fernando López Sánchez, “The Suevic Kingdom. Why Gallaecia?,” in Culture and Society in Medieval
Galicia, a Cultural Crossroads at the Edge of Europe, ed. and trans. James D’Emilio (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 179,
190-195. In the same volume, Kulikowski points to numismatic evidence from 430-455, to suggest that the Sueves
were subordinate to the Visigoths, in an Augustus-Caesar type of relationship, with the Suevic kings acting as
delegates or proxies to the imperial government. See also Kulikowski, “The Suevi in Gallaecia, an introduction,”
137.

20 Gillett, 42-43.

21 For a description of paideia, see Chapter 2.
left for future generations to read. Successful ambassadors typically had connections to and were educated about the rituals and appropriate discourse to employ at court. Moreover, they knew how to present cases persuasively and generally were eloquent speakers. In fact, eloquence was one of the few personal qualities Hydatius chose to praise in his chronicle. For example, for the year 443, Hydatius recorded Merobaudes’ brief service as the military commander in *Hispania*. Hydatius praised Merobaudes’ noble birth, and compared the quality of his eloquence and poetic skill to the ancients. Descriptions like these stand out, especially since Hydatius rarely offered praise of any sort. Hydatius seems to have wanted to be associated with this type of eloquence. Significantly, the two episcopal missions described above, by Hydatius and Symphosius, are the first that the bishop of Aquae Flaviae included in his chronicle. Although as will be discussed below, he did not praise Symphosius or his embassy, Hydatius was able to emphasize his own success as an envoy and membership in the elite group capable of carrying out such missions.

Hydatius’ discussion of episcopal embassies also suggests that for him the responsibilities of a bishop extended beyond sacred duties, such as performing the liturgy. Like the bishops involved in the First Council of Toledo (ca. 400) and the members of Orosius’ clerical community in Braga in the early fifth century, Hydatius understood the episcopate’s role as a representative of the community, which included intervening in secular matters. Hydatius did not provide a lot of details about the decision to send him to speak with Aetius. The bishop only wrote that because of the Sueves’ plundering, he undertook the delegation. In this case, it

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23 Merobaudes replaced Asturius as *magister utriusque militiae*. He did not remain in *Hispania* long before he was recalled to Rome. Hydatius, *Chron*. 120, Burgess, 96-97.

24 Technically, he did record one account of a prior embassy, but this occurred before his lifetime and pertained to matters outside of Gallaecia. He wrote that in 384, Persian envoys came to Theodosius in Constantinople. Hydatius, *Chron*. 11, Burgess, 76-77.
seems rather unlikely that the Sueves would have requested the embassy as they did with Symphosius. They had just broken a treaty with the Gallaecians and were reaping the benefits through raids with seeming impunity. It is more probable that Hydatius chose to take on the mission or that members of the community solicited him to intervene on their behalf. To better understand what may have motivated the choice to send Hydatius, it will be helpful to examine Hydatius’ life and his see of Aquae Flaviae in a more detail.

Hydatius was born around the time of the First Council of Toledo (ca. 400). He wrote that his hometown was the *civitas Lemica*, which was located about 32 miles north of Aquae Flaviae. We have little direct information about his family. Although the name Hydatius was rare in the period, it is improbable that our bishop of Aquae Flaviae was related to the anti-Priscillian bishop, Hydatius of Mérida, discussed in Chapter 2. As Richard Burgess has pointed out, the chronicler lived in Gallaecia his entire life, while the elder Hydatius was in Mérida. Hydatius of Aquae Flaviae likely dedicated himself to a clerical vocation in about 416 and was ordained bishop in 427 or 428.

Hydatius probably was raised in a Christian home with substantial resources and connections. As discussed in Chapter 5, Hydatius was among the Gallaecians who travelled to

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25 His exact date of birth is not known. Estimates range from 390-403. My assumption that he was likely born around 400 is based on the fact that he wrote that he was an “infantulus” when he visited Jerusalem in ca. 407. For different interpretations see, Candelas Colodrón, “O Bispo da Limia,” 30; Burgess, “Hydatius a Late Roman Chronicler,” 6, 10-11; Angel Custodio Vega, “Un Poema Inedito Titulado “de fide” de Agrestio, Obispo de Lugo, Siglo V,” *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* 159 (1966): 179.


27 Burgess, “Hydatius a Late Roman Chronicler,” 7-8.

28 Hydatius, *Chron.* Preface, 1, Burgess 72-75. Most scholars accept the validity of a notation in the Spanish epitome of Hydatius’ chronicle that indicates he entered the clergy in 416. Richard Burgess, however, discounts this as an interpolation. As for his ordination as bishop, Hydatius wrote that he was appointed to the office in the third year of Valentinian III’s reign as Augustus (who was appointed in 425). Scholars typically assert he means 427, but Richard Burgess makes a strong case for 428 CE. See Candelas Colodrón, “O Bispo da Limia,” 29; Burgess, “Hydatius a Late Roman Chronicler,” 14-15, 33-34; Thompson, 139; Custodio Vega, “179.
visit holy sites and individuals in the early fifth century. He wrote about this trip in his chronicle, where he labeled himself, “*infantulus et pupillus*.”29 His use of *infantulus* indicates that he had been a young boy when he made the trip in about 407. Some scholars also have assumed that he had been an orphan at the time, but he could have used *pupillus* to indicate that he had travelled as a minor either with his parents or a relative or even as a ward of a teacher or cleric.30 Hydatius and his travel companions were in North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean and made stops in Alexandria, Jerusalem and Caesarea.31 His inclusion of this trip and the bishops and men he visited, indicates that it had been a significant event in his life. His only entries for 406-408 were statements about the “famous” men he knew of from the trip: John of Jerusalem, Theophilus of Alexandria, Eulogius of Caesarea and Jerome.32 The journey seems to have formed a portion of his religious education and so a Christian family with sufficient wealth and connections likely arranged it.

Hydatius and other contemporary members of the clerical community in Gallaecia continued to benefit from a traditional Roman education. Some scholars suggest that the political circumstances would have made such training impossible for Hydatius and his colleagues.33 However, as was shown in Chapter 5, through at least the first quarter of the fifth century, education and theological study and debate continued to be an important feature of clerical life in Braga. Like Orosius and other members of the clergy born in the context of the First Council of

29 Hydatius, *Chron.* Preface 4; 33, Burgess, 72-73, 80-81.

30 For a discussion of the term and the way it has been interpreted by various scholars, see Burgess, “Hydatius a Late Roman Chronicler,” 9-13.

31 Hydatius, *Chron.* 33, Burgess, 80-81.

32 Hydatius, *Chron.* 31-33, Burgess, 80-81.

33 Richard Burgess, for example, argues that since the “barbarians” entered Gallaecia when Hydatius was likely around 12, which is when his parents would have sent him away for his secondary education, he only would have had access to the “backward” education available in Gallaecia. Burgess, “Hydatius a Late Roman Chronicler,” 13.
Toledo, Hydatius would have had access to teachers in Gallaecia and his pilgrimage as a child suggests he had the means to take advantage of these resources.\textsuperscript{34} We know that Hydatius had received enough training to research and write his chronicle. While some scholars criticize Hydatius’ Latin and point out that it is inferior to that used by Augustine and Jerome, such comparisons are not very useful for evaluating the bishop of Aquae Flaviae’s level of education or whether or not he valued the customs and traditions associated with paideia.\textsuperscript{35} Augustine and Jerome represented the epitome not only of training at this time, but also talent; few people would measure up to them. Recent assessments of Hydatius’ writing highlight that the lexicon, descriptions, phrases and quotes that the bishop used all point to his familiarity with the conventions of rhetoric and discourse.\textsuperscript{36} As will be discussed below, several of Hydatius’ fellow Gallaecian bishops in the 430s and 440s also had received the training associated with the traditional Roman education.

Regardless of modern evaluations of his skill as a writer, Hydatius identified as a scholar and historian and valued these qualities in others. Hydatius praised Eusebius and Jerome, calling them “the most esteemed of men.”\textsuperscript{37} His respect was based on their orthodox faith, but also on the learning and “the grace of words” they possessed. According to Hydatius, their skill with language earned them honor and, in combination with their faith and moral actions, it allowed them to communicate divine truth. Hydatius described Jerome as a scholar who was aware of all acts and words. He emphasized the fact that Jerome authored many different kinds of works and

\textsuperscript{34} See Chapter 5 for a discussion of Orosius and the clerical community of Braga and their access to education and training.

\textsuperscript{35} Burgess, “Hydatius a Late Roman Chronicler,” 12-13.


\textsuperscript{37} Hydatius, \textit{Chron}. Preface 1, Burgess, 70-73.
that, as long as he was healthy, he never stopped writing. Hydatius also mentioned Jerome’s scholarship in the body of the Chronicle. In a seeming non sequitur, Hydatius devoted several lines to describing Jerome’s many volumes of work, his skill with Hebrew and his constant meditation on the law of the Lord. This was Hydatius’ only “event” for the year 416. The reverence Hydatius showed for his predecessors demonstrates the importance that Hydatius placed on scholarship and literary skills.

Hydatius considered himself to be sufficiently intelligent and capable to emulate men like Jerome and Eusebius. The bishop of Aquae Flaviae lamented his own ignorance and unworthiness to continue the work of Jerome and Eusebius twice in the preface to his chronicle. This was, of course, a common topos of humility and does not imply that he actually saw himself as lacking the necessary aptitude to compose a chronicle. Eusebius started both the Life of Constantine and the Church History by claiming that he did not have adequate “power” to take on these tasks. When Hydatius pointed out his own inadequacies he showed deference to Jerome and Eusebius, but also by using this rhetorical formula he placed himself within a larger literary framework. This topos was a symbol of a certain kind of intellectual training that would signal to other educated individuals that such scholarship was important to Hydatius. Moreover, each line in which Hydatius mentioned his own ineptitude was followed directly by an explanation of his diligence and careful consideration of sources. In the preface, for example, he

38 Hydatius, Chron. Preface 3-4, Burgess, 72-73.

39 In the previous line Hydatius discusses the bishop, John, and the discovery of the relics of Saint Stephen. The connection might be that he saw both John and Jerome when he went to Jerusalem as a young boy. See Hydatius, Chron. 33 and 50-51, Burgess, 80-81, 84-85.

40 Hydatius, Chron. Preface 5, Burgess, 72-75.

explained that as “the ignorant, most unworthy of all God’s servants” he added to their chronicles after his own discoveries allowed him to transcribe them.\textsuperscript{42} This indicates that he actively researched the events he wrote about. Hydatius described this in more detail later. Again, after calling himself ignorant, he wrote that he was inspired to continue the chronicle after careful consideration and study of both written and oral sources and of his own experiences.\textsuperscript{43} His statements of humility allowed him to introduce his own scholarship, intelligence and capacity to learn and present the history of his times.

Hydatius’ capacity to travel to Gaul an ambassador for his community should not be surprising. His see, Aquae Flaviae, modern Chaves, Portugal, was located about 70 miles east of Braga and 125 miles west of Astorga. In fact, its position between the two major military and administrative centers, along with the rich springs, likely led to its establishment as a \textit{mansio} on the Roman road XVII and then its elevation to a municipium in the early imperial period.\textsuperscript{44} Hydatius and his community would have been able to remain connected to Astorga, Braga and Lugo, as well as other towns and rural locations in Gallaecia, \textit{Hispania} and Gaul, since Aquae Flaviae not only was located on the XVII but also was connected to another other major Roman road, the XVIII, and several secondary roads and rivers. For example, Hydatius could have used

\textsuperscript{42} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} Preface, Burgess, 70-71.

\textsuperscript{43} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} Preface 5, Burgess, 72-73.

\textsuperscript{44} João Manuel Gonçalves Ribeiro and Patrícia Isabel Almeida Machado, “\textit{Aquae Flaviae} a Chaves Medieval. Evolução do tecido urbano flaviense,” in \textit{Evolución de los Espacios urbanos y sus territorio en el Noroeste de la Península Ibérica}, eds. Raquel Martínez Peñín and Gregoria Caverro Domínguez (León: Ediciones El Forastero S.L., 2015), 489, 491; A. Rodríguez, Colmenero \textit{Aquae Flaviae: 2. O tecido urbanístico da cidade romana} (Chaves: Camara Municipal de Chaves, 1997), 75, 138-139. The Romans also may have chosen to take over an ancient castro, but the archaeological evidence for this is inconclusive. There were many castra in the area, which made it a strategic position for controlling the indigenous populations. See Jorge López Quiroga, \textit{El Final de la Antigüedad en la Gallaecia: la Transformación de las Estructuras de Poblamiento entre Miño y Duero, Siglos V al X} (La Coruña, Spain: Fundación Pedro Barrié de la Maza, 2004), 78-80.
two different major roads to reach Astorga and from there he could have continued travelling eastward toward Gaul (Figure 6-1).\textsuperscript{45}

We have very little information about the community Hydatius represented when he travelled to Gaul to plead for assistance from Aetius. Through the third century, Aquae Flaviae had many of the features of a Roman town. The streets were arranged in the typical pattern with \textit{insulae} organized in an orthogonal plan around the \textit{Cardo} and \textit{Decumanus Maximus}.\textsuperscript{46} Like other cities and towns in Gallaecia, Aquae Flaviae may have been fortified with a wall in the later third or early fourth century.\textsuperscript{47} The city boasted an elaborate bath complex and likely an amphitheater, but these monumental public spaces had closed long before Hydatius became the bishop.\textsuperscript{48} In the early Roman period, the center of Aquae Flaviae had been the forum and, based on ceramic evidence, the inhabitants continued to use the space during Hydatius’ tenure as bishop.\textsuperscript{49} In general, however, there seems to have been a reduction in building activities and area of occupation in the city during the third and fourth centuries.\textsuperscript{50} Yet, local and imperial

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\textsuperscript{46} Gonçalves Ribeiro, Almeida Machado, \textit{“Aquae Flaviae a Chaves Medieval,”} 492-494.

\textsuperscript{47} The archaeological evidence for the wall is not definitive. López Quiroga, \textit{El Final de la Antigüedad en la Gallaecia}, 81.

\textsuperscript{48} The bath complex ceased to be used in the third century. The evidence for the amphitheater is not as clear, but if there was such a building, it likely closed around the same time as the baths. Gonçalves Ribeiro, Almeida Machado, \textit{“Aquae Flaviae a Chaves Medieval,”} 494; Rodríguez, Colmenero \textit{Aquae Flaviae: 2}, 64-66, 73-75, 142.

\textsuperscript{49} López Quiroga, \textit{El Final de la Antigüedad en la Gallaecia}, 82.

\textsuperscript{50} Gonçalves Ribeiro, Almeida Machado, \textit{“Aquae Flaviae a Chaves Medieval,”} 495, 498.
interest in the city continued to a certain degree even in the later fourth century. At this time, patrons sponsored the construction of a dike and aqueduct just outside of the city.\textsuperscript{51}

Hydatius credited the peace treaty negotiated in 433 to episcopal mediation.\textsuperscript{52} He had been bishop of Aquae Flaviae only for a few years when he was chosen to seek assistance from Aetius.\textsuperscript{53} Upon his return with Censurius, it was bishops, and not the \textit{comes}, who were able to communicate the needs of their communities with the Sueves and arrive at a settlement that was pleasing to all involved. His role in this affair suggests that in a short time, Hydatius had gained a reputation for mediation. It is possible that he had already been acting in such a capacity within his see before he left for Gaul in 431. It would be reasonable to assume that Hydatius had a public space or basilica in which to conduct his duties as bishop, including as a mediator in local and imperial affairs. Although the evidence is not definitive, his church may have been located within the forum.\textsuperscript{54} In the medieval period a chapel dedicated to Santa Catarina at the site of the current cathedral of Chaves had to be moved when the authorities decided to build a fortification. Archaeologists think that remains of what may have been a baptistery and basilica were under the chapel of Santa Catarina and thus could have been from Hydatius’ tenure as bishop.\textsuperscript{55}

Unfortunately, it is impossible to confirm this assumption or clarify the details of what may have been Hydatius’ church. However, even without physical evidence, Hydatius role as a mediator is clear based on his actions and the trust he had gained from his community.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{51} López Quiroga, \textit{El Final de la Antigüedad en la Gallaecia}, 83, 127-128.
\item \textsuperscript{52} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 91, Burgess, 92-93.
\item \textsuperscript{53} This follows Richard Burgess’ argument that Hydatius became bishop in 428 and not 427 as many scholars assert. See Burgess, “Hydatius a Late Roman Chronicler,” 14-15, 33-34.
\item \textsuperscript{54} López Quiroga, \textit{El Final de la Antigüedad en la Gallaecia}, 127-128.
\item \textsuperscript{55} Gonçalves Ribeiro, Almeida Machado, \textit{“Aquae Flaviae a Chaves Medieval,”} 495-496.
\end{itemize}
In summary, Hydatius likely came from a well-connected family with substantial financial resources. His elevated status, education and training in rhetoric would have prepared him to serve as an envoy representing the region. Although there were other members of the elite living in Gallaecia who could have travelled to Gaul, the choice was made to send Hydatius.\textsuperscript{56} The fact that Aquae Flaviae was well situated in the region may have been a motivating factor behind the decision to send Hydatius.\textsuperscript{57} However, the bishop of Aquae Flaviae’s emphasis on embassies, eloquence and scholarship in his chronicle suggest that Hydatius sought to highlight his own successful mission to Gaul and participation in the negotiations that secured peace with the Sueves and that he possessed the qualities and connections to carry them out. As will be discussed next, his presentation of his contemporary episcopal envoy, Symphosius, indicates that not all bishops met Hydatius’ standards and there were competing alliances within the clerical community of Gallaecia. In fact, clerical factions may have motivated Hydatius’ efforts to project the image of himself as a successful mediator while also contributing to the development this perception of the bishop among lay and ecclesiastical communities.

\textbf{Symphosius of Braga}

After Hydatius returned from his successful mission to Aetius and the bishops were able to work out terms for peace, the Suevic king sent Bishop Symphosius to Gaul to confirm the treaty.\textsuperscript{58} Hydatius did not record Symphosius’ see in his chronicle, but he likely was the bishop

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{56} Hydatius mentioned local elites in his chronicle. Moreover, as will be discussed below, the archaeological evidence suggests that in the 430s, individuals of elevated status continued to live in the villas and urban \textit{domus} of the region.
\item \textsuperscript{57} For a discussion of some of the potential reasons Hydatius was chosen for this embassy, see Purificación Ubric Rabaneda, \textit{La Iglesia En La Hispania Del Siglo V} (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2004), 65-67.
\item \textsuperscript{58} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 92, Burgess, 92-93
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
of Braga. The Sueves were still based at Falperra outside of Braga and someone from the area would be a familiar and perhaps trustworthy choice for them. Generally, when Hydatius wrote about the activities of a bishop in his chronicle, he included the city or region the man represented. If Symphosius was from Braga, Hydatius undoubtedly knew of him since the city was only 70 miles from Aquae Flaviae and had civic and religious jurisdiction over the district. Nevertheless, Hydatius never explicitly named a bishop or member of the clergy from Braga in his chronicle.

Hydatius’ omission of bishops and presbyters from Braga in his chronicle likely was intentional, which may indicate that the bishop of Aquae Flaviae was in conflict with this clerical community. Other scholars have noted that Hydatius had an aversion for the Metropolitan see of Braga. Some have suggested the tension stemmed from a more lax attitude toward heresy and Priscillianists in Braga as compared to Hydatius’ rigorist stance against heterodoxy. However, although Hydatius was involved in accusations of heresy, there is no evidence that the bishops of Braga were particularly lenient or that there were Priscillianists in Braga during Hydatius’ tenure as bishop. Other scholars attribute the conflict to the political situation in Gallaecia and the close relationship the bishops in Braga had with the Sueves. While it is not unreasonable to

59 While most often it is assumed that Symphosius was the bishop of Braga in 433, some scholars think that the envoy to Gaul was Symphosius of Astorga who was tried after the First Council of Toledo. This, however, is not likely since he was already an old man in 400. See López Sánchez, “The Suevic Kingdom. Why Gallaecia?,” 190; Ubric Rabaneda, La Iglesia En La Hispania, 68; Ralph Mathisen, “Agrestius of Lugo, Eparchius Avitus, and a Curious Fifth-Century Statement of Faith,” Journal of Early Christian Studies 2 no. 1 (1994): 93; Burgess, “Hydatius a Late Roman Chronicler,” 219; Casimiro Torres Rodriguez, El Reino De Los Suevos (La Coruña: Fundación Pedro Barrie de la Maza, 1977), 74-75.

60 Mathisen, 93-94.


62 Ubric Rabaneda, La Iglesia En La Hispania, 125-126.

63 Hydatius involvement in accusations of heresy will be discussed below.

64 Ubric Rabaneda, La Iglesia En La Hispania, 126; Torres Rodriguez, El Reino de los Suevos, 75.
assume that Hydatius would be upset if Symphosius and other clerics in Braga favored the Sueves over Roman citizens, there are no data to substantiate this theory. The only evidence for this relationship is the Suevic king’s choice to send Symphosius on an embassy to Gaul and since Hydatius had served on a similar mission two years before and credited the peace achieved to episcopal mediation, it does not seem likely that Hydatius protested ecclesiastical intervention in acts of diplomacy.

Finally, some scholars argue that Hydatius was part of a faction that challenged the authority of the bishop of Braga.65 We saw that Symphosius of Astorga had established the Metropolitan see of Braga when he ordained Paternus just before the turn of the fifth century. Chapter four argued that Paternus broke ties with Symphosius of Astorga, which resulted in two competing clerical alliances within Gallaecia. It is impossible to know if Hydatius represented the continuation of the previous faction associated with Symphosius of Astorga, but as will be discussed below, Hydatius clearly was aligned with Bishop Thoribius of Astorga in the decade subsequent to his embassy to Gaul. Clerical alliances shaped by local power dynamics certainly existed within Gallaecia during Hydatius’ lifetime, yet, efforts to maintain status within Roman and ecclesiastical networks outside of Gallaecia also were critical. As will be argued next, the bishop of Aquae Flaviae sought to assert his own superiority as an educated Roman with connections throughout the empire and downplay the status of his competitors in Braga.

Although Hydatius wrote very little about Symphosius’ embassy, his negative description of the bishop of Braga’s efforts suggests that the two men were part of clerical alliances in Gallaecia competing for status within larger networks. A contributing component of this prestige

was the ability to represent the traditional values of the Roman elite. In reference to the bishop of Braga’s embassy, Hydatius simply wrote that the king sent Symphosius to court, but the trip was made in vain because it achieved nothing. The fact that the bishop of Aquae Flaviae decided to include a mission that had failed in his chronicle indicates that he wanted to highlight Symphosius’ shortcomings. Only a few lines before, Hydatius had described his own success in bringing peace to the Gallaecians in the region. For Hydatius, his own accomplishments in Gaul and in the meetings afterward were a reflection of his skills as a negotiator derived from his education, training and knowledge of rituals at court. Moreover, his ability to secure assistance from Aetius confirmed his connections to influential people outside of Gallaecia and specifically within the imperial court in Gaul. By contrast, in writing that Symphosius failed at his mission, Hydatius implied that the bishop of Braga lacked the rhetorical skills, knowledge and associations to carry act as a successful envoy.

Hydatius’ presentation in his chronicle of the events that transpired while Orosius was in Jerusalem also suggest that the bishop of Aquae Flaviae wanted to assert his own knowledge of and connections to influential men within larger networks, while downplaying the role of the clerical community of Braga. For example, Hydatius described the discovery of the relics of the first martyr, Stephen, in the year 414. As discussed in Chapter 5, Orosius was supposed to carry a portion of Saint Stephen’s remains to Bishop Balconius of Braga. Hydatius does not mention Orosius’ role or the fact that the elder presbyter Avitus of Braga had secured the relics through his relationship with the local priest who had discovered them. Balconius certainly had anticipated the arrival of the remains, but Hydatius does not include the bishop or the city of

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66 Hydatius, *Chron.* 92, Burgess, 92-93


68 See Chapter 5.
Braga in the chronicle entry. While Orosius never succeeded in delivering the relics, it would be surprising if Hydatius did not know about the plan to bring them to Braga. He does, however, note that John was the bishop of Jerusalem when the relics were discovered. Moreover, Hydatius also referred back to his previous descriptions of John. He wrote about John of Jerusalem in entries for three other years. For 406, he listed John of Jerusalem among “famous” bishops from the East and, for 407, he wrote that he had seen this “holy” bishop when he had travelled to Jerusalem as a child.\textsuperscript{69} Finally, for the year 435, Hydatius bragged that he had gotten some information about who was bishop of Jerusalem that year and other information about Palestine, the East and Constantinople from some Greeks and a presbyter from Arabia who was passing through Gallaecia. Hydatius lamented that he was unable to learn when John of Jerusalem or Jerome died.\textsuperscript{70} Hydatius apparently was proud enough of his associations with John and Jerome, however minor and brief they may have been, to mention them several times. At the same time, he chose not to describe any of the more meaningful interactions Orosius and Avitus had with these and other important figures in Jerusalem.

It will be recalled that in 415 Orosius played a key role in the synod held in Jerusalem to assess the teachings of Pelagius. Rather than describe this event and his fellow Gallaecian’s participation in it, Hydatius devoted several lines to praising Jerome’s skills in Hebrew, writing and meditation, adding that the presbyter fought against heretics like Pelagius until the end.\textsuperscript{71} Of course, Orosius had a contentious relationship with Bishop John of Jerusalem as a direct result of his actions at the Pelagian synod. Perhaps Orosius’ efforts to explain his side of the story and

\textsuperscript{69} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 31, 33, Burgess, 80-81.

\textsuperscript{70} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 97, Burgess, 92-93.

\textsuperscript{71} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 51, Burgess, 84-85.
restore his reputation after John accused him of blasphemy were not successful.\textsuperscript{72} Under such circumstances, it would be sensible for Hydatius to separate himself from any association with the priest of Braga in order to maintain his own standing as someone with knowledge of and connections to esteemed ecclesiastical figures in Palestine. Emphasizing Jerome and leaving out Orosius would have served this purpose. Hydatius’ choice to leave out Orosius also could indicate a continuation of the alliances the presbyter of Braga had participated in before and after he studied with Jerome. Orosius had travelled to North Africa and Palestine in hopes of returning to Braga to participate in theological debates and assert his own authority based on his education and associations with important figures such as Augustine and Jerome. By leaving out Orosius and all of his activities in Jerusalem, Hydatius eliminated a rival faction from his historical record while drawing attention to his own, albeit limited, connections to the “famous” and “holy” men there.

Symphosius of Braga may have posed a threat to Hydatius’ standing in ecclesiastical and imperial networks due to his position as bishop of the principal city in the region. Although we have little information about Symphosius, at the time of his embassy in the early 430s, the clerical and lay community in Braga still benefited from the connections and opportunities that had been available to previous generations. Of course, Symphosius would have carried out his liturgical duties in the Christian basilica that patrons had built several decades before.\textsuperscript{73} He also could have used this space to act as a mediator in local disputes and communications between the Sueves and the Roman inhabitants of Braga.

\textsuperscript{72} For a discussion of Orosius’ efforts to restore his reputation after the synod, see Chapter 5 of this dissertation. It is interesting to note that Jerome also had a contentious relationship with Bishop John of Jerusalem. See J.N.D. Kelly, \textit{Jerome: his Life, Writings, and Controversies} (London: Duckworth, 1975), 195-209.

\textsuperscript{73} See Chapter 5 for a discussion of this basilica.
Many other aspects of life for the inhabitants of Braga continued much as it had when Orosius had been a young priest in the city before he left for Africa in 414. People still buried their dead in the four cemeteries located outside the city walls along the Roman roads. The basic plan of the Roman city was maintained and the people could traverse the streets much as they had for centuries. High-status individuals were able to obtain products and fine tableware from locations such as Palestine and Antioch in significant quantities. And, while they still used tableware from North Africa, the reduced number of these pieces suggests that the residents of Braga either preferred or were able to access more readily the items from the Eastern Mediterranean. In fact, the evidence suggests that the inhabitants of Braga, including Symphosius, continued to maintain valuable contacts outside of Gallaecia, especially with people in the Eastern Mediterranean. While Hydatius could boast about having met Jerome and John of Jerusalem when he was a child, the clerical community in Braga likely communicated more readily with people living in the Holy Land at the time of Symphosius’ embassy to Gaul and after.

Symphosius was not the only qualified person the Sueves could have chosen to act as an ambassador to the imperial court. Other men of high standing who likely had the training and connections to serve as an envoy lived in Braga in the 430s. Many of the grand houses were still

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76 Francisco Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império e na Antiguidade Tardia, uma Primeira Interpretação (Braga: Universidade do Minho, Unidade de Arqueologia, 2003), 109; 113.

77 Sande Lemos, Bracara Augusta no Baixo Império e na Antiguidade Tardia, 109; A. Rodríguez Resino, Del Imperio Romano a La Alta Edad Media: Arqueología De La Tardoantigüedad En Galicia (siglos V-VIII) (Noia, A Coruña: Toxosoutos, 2006), 152.
occupied without significant changes to indicate that the elite residents had been replaced. For example, throughout the fifth century a family of elite status likely lived in the *Domus da Escola Velha da Sé*, located north of where the forum had been. This urban home had private baths and elaborate mosaics, which seem to have been maintained even after the middle of the fifth century. While circumstances would shift, especially in subsequent years as will be discussed below, at the time of Symphosius’ embassy, numerous elite families lived in Braga. The Sueves chose to send the bishop of Braga, which indicates that they were confident in his ability to act as a negotiator in an imperial court. Symphosius’ reputation among the Sueves as a local leader with connections within extra-regional networks and the training that came with an elite education may have made him an ideal choice to send as an ambassador, but for the same reasons he would have represented competition for Hydatius. While they likely were part of separate factions within the clerical community of Gallaecia, both Hydatius and Symphosius represented continuity with previous generations of ecclesiastical and civic leaders. Efforts to present themselves in these terms to each other also would have helped to cultivate this image among the communities they served.

**Agrestius of Lugo**

The potential rivalry between Hydatius and the bishop of Braga was not the only contentious dynamic affecting the clerical community of Gallaecia in the 430s. As previously mentioned, in the same year as Symphosius’ failed episcopal embassy in 433,

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Bishop Agrestius of Lugo protested the ordination of two bishops in his conventus of Lucensis.\textsuperscript{81} Hydatius is our only source for this conflict and, unfortunately, he provided very few details. Apparently, Agrestius for unspecified reasons did not want the two men, Pastor and Syagrius, to be consecrated. According to Hydatius, they were assigned to bishoprics anyway, which suggests that another bishop or bishops carried out the appointments. Although scholars generally argue that the conflict arose because either Agrestius or Pastor and Syagrius were Priscillianists, there is limited evidence to support such claims.\textsuperscript{82} That Agrestius protested outside interference is a more tenable assumption.\textsuperscript{83} Lugo may not have been an episcopal see for very long by 433, but the city had been an important imperial and regional center, and its officials, including the bishop, may have resented a challenge to their authority, such as appointing bishops within the conventus without consent.\textsuperscript{84} As will be argued next, the limited evidence used to contend that heretical beliefs caused Agrestius to disapprove of the ordinations actually indicates that like Hydatius and Symphosius the bishops in Lucensis were well-educated men competing for status and position within larger networks. Within this circle, accusations of heresy served as effective forms of invective to limit the authority of others while bolstering one’s own.

Unlike the late fourth century when there was no bishop in Lugo to protest Ortigius’ replacement as the leader of the congregation in Aquis Celenis, by 433 there undoubtedly was an episcopal leader in Lugo. While his protestations against Pastor and Syagrius make it clear that

\textsuperscript{81} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 93, Burgess 92-93.


\textsuperscript{83} Ubric Rabaneda, \textit{La Iglesia En La Hispania}, 101-102; Mathisen, 96-97; Custodio Vega, 185.

\textsuperscript{84} As argued in Chapter 3, Lugo was not likely and episcopal see in the later fourth century, but it was the thriving capital of the conventus. It is not clear when the first bishop was appointed in the city. Agrestius is the first named bishop for Lugo. Novo Güisán, 71.
Agrestius saw himself as the head of the churches in his conventus, we have little information about the Christian community he represented in Lugo or how he carried out his role as their leader. There is no indication that the various isolated finds around and under the area of the current Cathedral de Santa María can be used confirm the existence a baptistery or Christian basilica in the southwestern edge of the city. Nevertheless, it is the only part of the city with identifiable building projects for this period. Marble columns dated to the fifth or possibly sixth century were installed in the precinct. While this may not be proof that there was a church in which Agrestius performed the liturgy and his other episcopal duties, it does show that the space was considered valuable and that patrons invested in expensive construction. Similarly, the former nymphaeum located fourteen miles west of Lugo at present-day Saint Eulalia de Bóveda was not more definitively a baptistery and basilica during Agrestius’ tenure as bishop than it was in the later fourth century, but the local community continued to utilize the building.

Hydatius did not name the location of the bishoprics to which Pastor or Syagrius were appointed. Scholars have suggested various possibilities, including Palencia and Aquis Celenis. Palencia does not seem likely, since Hydatius recorded that the ordinations occurred in the

85 For a discussion of the finds that have been used by some scholars to argue that an episcopal complex may have been located in this precinct as early as the later fourth century, see Chapter 3. There is no data to indicate that this evidence is more convincing for the fifth century.


87 The local community continued to utilize the temple and patrons made additional changes to the space, perhaps as early as the later fifth century. At this point, they used many of constructive and decorative features from the previous building, but the new space was laid out according a rectangular plan with an apse. The evidence suggests that it may have been used as a church by the sixth century and maybe before, but is even stronger from the seventh century onward, since it was the location of various activities during the Visigothic period and after. Colmenero Rodríguez, Lvcvs Avgvst, 206; Anastasio Santos Iglesias, III Premio De Investigación Manuel Vazquez Seijas (Lugo: Deputación Provincial, 2006), 57-59, 82-96; Vidal Caeiro, “Posibilidades de la Aplicación de la Arqueología,” 278-281; Francisco Singul “La pintura de Santa Eulalia de Bóveda (Lugo), ortodoxia y clasicismo en la pintura paleocristiana del Noroeste Hispánico,” Boletín Avriense XVII (1997): 176-177; “El mausoleo de Santa Eulalia de Bóveda” El Progreso (December 17, 1989), 9.

88 Novo Güisán, 72-73; Custodio Vega, 172-176, 178.
conventus of Lucensis not Asturicensis where Palencia was located. The only known possible church within the regional see of Aquis Celenis for this period was located just over eight miles northeast of the small *mansio* of Aquis Celenis, near modern Valgas.\(^{89}\) A building already was located on the site and seems to have been a center of industrial production in the fourth century.\(^{90}\) Craftsmen used a furnace was to make glass or metal objects.\(^{91}\) Sometime before the fifth century, people began to break the structure’s masonry walls in order to make simple graves.\(^{92}\) In the fifth century, perhaps in the years after the First Council of Toledo, patrons built a small rectangular basilica with a rectangular apse that has been interpreted as a church.\(^{93}\) People continued to bury their dead in the space using stones and bricks to make tombs.\(^{94}\) This small church and cemetery continued to be used throughout the fifth century.\(^{95}\)

It is not clear if people still manufactured construction materials in the factory on the southern edge of the *mansio* of Aquis Celenis in the 430s.\(^{96}\) It is possible that production slowed and the artisans, managers and other workers who had been employed at the factory in the years around the First Council of Toledo lost their livelihoods if the wealthy patrons left the area.

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\(^{91}\) “Igrexa Vella,” *Catalogouno*.

\(^{92}\) “Igrexa Vella,” *Catalogouno*.

\(^{93}\) “Igrexa Vella,” *Catalogouno*.

\(^{94}\) Emilio Ramil, 3; “Igrexa Vella,” *Catalogouno*.

\(^{95}\) This church remained on the site until it was burned down in the eighth or ninth century, after which a new Christian temple was built. Emilio Ramil, 3-4; “Igrexa Vella,” *Catalogouno*.

\(^{96}\) For a discussion of the factory in Aquis Celenis in the later fourth century, see Chapter 3.
While there still may have been other high-status individuals in Aquis Celenis, the elite residence located in its northern half was slowly abandoned over the course of the fifth century.97

While we have little information about the families and backgrounds of Agrestius, Pastor and Syagrius, they likely all were members of the local or imperial elite. Like Hydatius, the three bishops involved in the contested ordinations undoubtedly had received the advanced education associated with Romans of elevated status. Each bishop authored works known within Hispania and Gaul. Agrestius of Lugo wrote a poem addressed to Avitus, an aristocrat who served as the praetorian prefect of Gaul in 439 and emperor in 455-456.98 Only 49 of the hexameter verses Agrestius composed are extant. Yet, it is still possible to discern that although the poem was technically a De Fide, or statement of faith, the tone was not especially apologetic or focused on theology. Instead Agrestius seemed to be writing to demonstrate his connections to the influential Avitus and knowledge of the official’s ancestry.99 Moreover, his inclusion of biblical history in the poem proved Agrestius’ participation in contemporary Gallic literary circles.100

The poem, which the bishop of Lugo likely composed sometime before he attended the council of Orange in 441, seems to have been meant as a form of entertainment for fellow educated Christian leaders in Gaul.101 Pastor and Syagrius each wrote theological works, which were well known enough to be included in Gennadius of Marseilles’ late fifth-century De Scriptorius Ecclesiasticis. Pastor composed a treatise in which he described the majority of the tenets of the

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98 For why this poem can be attributed to Agrestius and the identity of Avitus is considered to be the future emperor, See Mathisen, especially 71-77. For alternative interpretations, see Novo Güisán, 73-74.

99 Using standard conventions, Agrestius described Avitus as his teacher and made allusions to the official’s ancestry which showed both his knowledge and finesse as a writer. See Mathisen, 87-89.

100 For biblical history as a trend in Gallic literary circles, see Mathisen, 89-90.

101 Mathisen, 71-74, 76, 91.
church at the time and condemned dissenting ideas.\footnote{Gennadius of Marseilles, \textit{De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis}, Chapter 76, in \textit{PL}, edited by Jacques-Paul Migne. Paris: Apud Garnier Fratres, 1844-1891, 42, col. 1103, accessed April 9, 2016, http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/02m/0450-0550_Gennadius_Massiliensis_Liber_De_Scriptoribus_Ecclesiasticis_MLT.pdf.} Syagrius authored several texts, including one on the Trinity and a “Rule” defining heresies.\footnote{Gennadius, \textit{De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis}, Chapter 65, \textit{PL} 42.1098; Novo Güisán, 72.} The name Syagrius also suggests that the bishop came from an elite family, since it was one that many illustrious men in both southern Gaul and Hispania shared.\footnote{For example, there were Syagrii among Emperor Theodosius’ family, who were also from Hispana. For more examples, see Novo Güisán, 73. See also, Ubric Rabaneda, \textit{La Iglesia En La Hispania}, 54.}

The typical assumption among scholars is that the Agrestius disapproved of the ordinations because he was a Priscillianist.\footnote{Novo Güisán, 73-74. Mathisen, 79, Torres Rodríguez, \textit{El Reino de los Suevos}, 76-77, 97; Custodio Vega, 187-202.} The primary evidence for this is that fact that all three authors wrote works that can be interpreted as statements of faith and Gennadius recorded that the only unorthodox author Pastor condemned by name in his treatise was Priscillian.\footnote{Gennadius, \textit{De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis}, Chapter 65, \textit{PL} 42.1098.} Yet, nothing in Agrestius’ poem suggests he adhered to Priscillianist teachings. Moreover, his choice to write in verse and about general biblical topics demonstrates that he was more concerned with proving his skills as a writer than his orthodoxy.\footnote{Novo Güisán, 73; Mathisen, 87-91.} If he had been worried about his audience’s perception of his theological stance, he likely would have placed greater emphasis on it from the start of his \textit{De Fide}.\footnote{Custodio Vega, 200-202.} In fact, Pastor’s inclusion of Priscillian in a list of heretical thinkers might be an indication that he was compelled to specifically deny the validity of the executed bishop’s teachings. As we have seen in other cases, statements of faith often were issued by those accused of heresy. For example, Symphosius of Astorga and his colleagues had to make statements of
faith at or before the First Council of Toledo (ca. 400) because they had been accused of being Priscillian’s followers.109

The fact that each bishop involved in the contested ordinations of 433 was obliged to write a De Fide suggests that all were accused of heresy at some point. Nevertheless, the extant evidence indicates that Agrestius, Syagrius and Pastor all were considered to be orthodox by their contemporaries. Gennadius praised the works of Pastor and Syagrius because their theology and doctrines were aligned with the church. That Avitus and the bishops of Gaul were aware of Agrestius’ orthodoxy even before he wrote his De Fide is clear both by his jovial tone in the poem and that fact that they allowed him to attend the Council of Orange in 441.110 Their literary activities show that all three bishops involved in the contested ordinations of 433 were members of the educated elite who were connected to larger circles that extended to include Gaul. As we have seen with Hydatius, maintaining one’s position within ecclesiastical and secular networks was beneficial for bishops attempting to preserve their status and serve the needs of the laity. Hydatius was able to act as an envoy to Aetius because he had sufficient training and contacts to successfully communicate at court. Yet, orthodoxy within the church also was a critical factor contributing to an individual’s status. For example, Agrestius’ De Fide was written not only to the clerics of Gaul, but also the secular leader Avitus. In this context, accusations of heresy would be an effective means to eliminate or at least impede a competitor’s access to authority, power and standing.111

109 See Chapters 2 and 4.

110 Mathisen, 86.

111 Michael Kulikowski has argued that in the fifth century, accusations of Priscillianism became a general invective to attack all religious opponents. See Michael Kulikowski, “Fronto, the bishops, and the crowd: Episcopal justice and communal violence in fifth-century Tarraconensis,” Early Medieval Europe 11, no. 4 (2002): 295-320. See also, Ubric Rabaneda, La Iglesia En La Hispania, 193.
Episcopal appointments and the ability to make them were a source of authority that certainly would have warranted accusations of heresy to protect. We know that by the time of the First Council of Toledo in 400, there likely was no bishop in Lugo. Agrestius probably had been ordained as early as the 420s, but his status within the clerical community of Gallaecia would have been limited by bishops of older episcopal sees, such as in Astorga. Symphosius of Braga also may have posed a threat to Agrestius’ status due to the civic importance of Braga and the fact that it likely was the Metropolitan see. Finally, Agrestius may have been pressed to assert his authority due to the shrinking role the city and its inhabitants had in larger networks. Lugo was not as socially and economically vibrant as it had been in the later fourth century. The individuals living and working in the city changed over the course of the fifth century as did their lifestyles.

When Agrestius first became bishop of Lugo, many of the services that had made it a thriving Roman capital in the late fourth century were still available to the city’s residents. For example, in the early part of the fifth century, people continued to enjoy the baths on the north side of the Roman bridge that crossed the Minho River, even though the complex itself had been abandoned in the third century. The city’s inhabitants also could still obtain common ceramic

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112 Mathisen, 74.

113 Other scholars have hypothesized that the bishops of Lugo and Braga competed for authority, perhaps because they both sought metropolitan status. Torres Rodríguez claims that the bishop of Braga appointed Syagrius and Pastor, which is why Agrestius did not approve of their ordinations. There is not evidence to confirm this theory. Torres Rodríguez, El Reino de los Suevos, 96-97; Ubric Rabaneda, La Iglesia En La Hispania, 128-129; Custodio Vega, 185.


115 This bath complex was located near the Roman road XIX, which led to Braga. Gonzalo Meijide Cameselle and Francisco Herves Raigoso, “Un nuevo espacio en las termas de Lugo,” in II Coloquio Internacional de Arqueología en Gijón Termas Romanas en el Occidente del Imperio, ed. C. Fernández Ochoa and V. García Entero (Gijón: Ayuntamiento de Gijón, 2000), 215-220.
wares from the artisans who had workshops in the northeastern part of the city. Those with sufficient means could choose to purchase fine ceramics imported from other parts of Spain. The locals also continued to bury their dead in the San Roque cemetery, just outside the city wall on the Roman road that led to Astorga.

In Chapter 3, it was suggested that Lugo and the coastal settlements on the northern coast may have played a role in distributing the anona to the military camp of Cidadela located 50 miles West of Lugo. This duty was no longer necessary in the fifth century, since no one occupied Cidadela. Whoever was using the settlement in the later fourth century, whether it was soldiers or civilians, had left by the time Agrestius was bishop of Lugo. People did, however, live and work within the Castro at Viladonga, fifteen miles northeast of Lugo, which likely had been a center for tax collection in the later fourth century. High-status individuals continued to use fine ceramics imported from North Africa and Gaul throughout the fifth century.


122 Someone also had a horse, a symbol of prestige, in the fourth or fifth century. Felipe Arias Vilas, "Materiales del Mediterráneo oriental en el castro de Viladonga (Lugo)," in *Congreso Internacional La Hispania De Teodosio*, eds.
While many aspects of urban life had persisted unchanged from his childhood, Agrestius and the people he represented in Lugo, would have noticed some indications that the social composition of the city was changing. For example, the owners of the grand home, Domus Oceani, located on the western edge of the forum either let their home go into disrepair or no longer lived in the space themselves. Although it may not have been the house of a high-status family, it was still occupied during Agrestius’ tenure as bishop through when he traveled to Gaul to attend the Council of Orange in 441. In fact, sometime before the bishop and his deacon departed, the people living in Domus Oceani had installed a wall on one of the mosaics and closed off some of the entrances to the main rooms. These changes to the layout home indicate that it had a different function than it had in the fourth century when the dominus likely served as a public space for a high-status official to conduct business, as well as a home for his family. It is not clear how the space was being used while Agrestius was bishop, but whoever inhabited it did not have the same needs as the former local or imperial leader in the later fourth century. Even if the shifts within the Domus Oceani and the seeming degradation of the urban home suggest that not as many elites lived and served in Lugo, we know that as late as 460 at least one distinguished individual remained in the city.

Lugo’s changing social composition and decreased role in imperial networks would have meant the inhabitants of the city needed an active leader working to secure economic

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124 González Fernández, Domus Oceani, 127.

125 According to Hydatius, the city’s governor, a man with distinguished background, was killed in 460. The circumstances of his death will be discussed below. Hydatius, Chron. 194, Burgess, 112-113.
opportunities and connections. Agrestius may have opposed any ordination made without his approval as an affront to his authority, which could potentially cause further damage to the status and vitality of Lugo. As will be discussed below, the port of Vigo continued to be a vibrant center of long-distance exchange. If one of the contested sees was Aquis Celenis or another nearby location, Agrestius could have protested the ordination of someone outside his own alliance who would not help to broker access to the goods being imported from North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean for the inhabitants of Lugo.

In summary, in the early 430s, the bishops of Gallaecia were involved in competing alliances. Like Hydatius and Symphosius of Braga, all three bishops involved in the contested ordinations of 433 represented continuity with past generations in that they relied on their advanced education and participation in extra-regional networks to preserve and augment their status, which could then be used to the benefit of the people in their congregations. Moreover, as the religious leaders of lay and clerical communities, their reputation for orthodoxy was integral for maintaining their authority. In this context, accusations of heresy and Priscillianism could serve as a way to prevent someone from gaining more prominence and power. As will be discussed next, this tendency persisted and perhaps intensified through the middle of the fifth century. When challenges to authority came from outside the hierarchy of the church, bishops aligned to make more public and damaging claims of heresy against those that threatened them and secure their own standing.
Conflict, Continuity and Chaos: Episcopal Leadership in the Middle of the Fifth Century

Thoribius of Astorga

This section will analyze Bishop Thoribius of Astorga and his alliance with the bishops Hydatius of Aquae Flaviae and Ceponius. Although the start of his tenure is not known, Thoribius was bishop of Astorga by at least 445. It was in that year that he enlisted the help of Hydatius and Ceponius to conduct a trial of a group of lay Christians in his see because he suspected them of secretly reading apocryphal books. The accused represented a rival faction that challenged Thoribius’ standing as the head of his congregation in Astorga. As a member of the educated elite, Thoribius knew the value of having associations with respected and high status individuals. However, the Christians who threatened Thoribius’ authority as bishop operated within the same educated culture. Therefore, Thoribius used accusations of heresy to build powerful connections with bishops throughout Hispania and the western church and secure his own status a leader of the Christian community in Gallaecia. As such, he provides evidence for the persistence of clerical alliances within the province and the use of traditional Roman values to establish authority in the middle of the fifth century.

Thoribius began by using claims of heresy to build alliances within the clerical community in Gallaecia. In a letter he wrote to Hydatius and Ceponius, Thoribius sought assistance in his effort to combat the individuals in his see who he said were holding clandestine meetings to study and discuss non-canonical scriptures. Thoribius did not describe the specific beliefs or doctrines of these men, but mentioned that they read many of the same books as the

126 Ceponius’ see is not specified. For theories of where his bishopric was located, see Torres Rodriguez, El Reino de los Suevos, 98, 109.


Manicheans, such as the *Gospel of St. Thomas*. Perhaps to describe the problem in terms familiar to his audience, Thoribius added that Priscillianists consulted the same texts. To gain the support of the two bishops, Thoribius employed language of friendship and shared knowledge. He explained to Hydatius and Ceponius that that matters he discussed with them required a certain level of learning to discern. Moreover, according to Thoribius, friendship and love of his own countrymen drove him to appeal to them for help, since he knew it was never appropriate for sinners to endeavor to correct others. Finally, Thoribius knew that the issue he wrote to them about might create a divide in the clerical community, but he trusted Hydatius and Ceponius would be on the correct side. The bishop of Astorga made it clear that he would take action against dissenters, even those outside of Astorga, and Hydatius and Ceponius would be wise to join him. He wrote that he intended to spread his message widely, by reaching out to other bishops in *Hispania*. Yet, he wrote to Hydatius and Ceponius first. The bishop of Astorga told them he made this choice due to their reputation for piety and zeal. Deftly, Thoribius gained Hydatius and Ceponius as allies in his efforts to censor the reading habits of the laity, by stating that he knew they already agreed with him. If they chose to deny him their support, they would be admitting their own culpability and he would be forced to place them outside his alliance.

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Ultimately, Thoribius was successful in adding Hydatius and Ceponius as allies. Hydatius travelled to Astorga in 445 to participate in a trial of those accused of reading apocryphal books. The trial may have been held in Thoribius’ episcopal basilica in Astorga. Sometime in the fifth century patrons transformed a building that had been used since the early imperial period into a small Christian basilica.  

The structure was located in the northeastern zone of the city, just inside the late Roman wall and near where the guard station had been dismantled in the later fourth. The exact nature of the building prior to the fifth-century use as a public Christian space is not clear. The remains of an apparent peristyle point to a possible domestic occupation, but other finds in the vicinity indicate that the space may have been part of a pagan temple complex prior to the fifth century.

The episcopal tribunal of led by Thoribius, Hydatius and Ceponius in 445 determined that the accused were Manicheans who had been hiding in Astorga for numerous years. Apparently

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136 This basilica was located near the current cathedral in Astorga and was discovered during a rescue excavation. The literature on the excavation and the church suggests that the basilica was built in the sixth century. However, María Ángeles Sevillano Fuertes, one of the participating archaeologists, disagrees with this assessment, which was based primarily on stylistic considerations, and offers a revised chronology. According to Sevillano Fuertes, they were able to establish the stratigraphic levels in one area of the excavation site, which allowed them to see that the church was built directly over the Roman levels in the fifth or maybe even fourth century. Subsequent changes were likely made to the church in the sixth and seventh century, when it began to be used for burial, which explains the later “Visigothic” style. María Ángeles Sevillano Fuertes, personal conversation with head archaeologist at Museo Romano, July 9, 2015. For the sixth century dating, see María Ángeles Sevillano Fuertes, “Arqueología del entorno de la Catedral de Astorga: La primitiva iglesia de Santa Marta como testimonio de la configuración de un área sacra,” in La Cathedral de Astorga (Actas del Simposio sobre la Catedral) (Astorga: Centro Estudios Astorganos Marcelo Macías, 2001), 32-40. See also Sevillano Fuertes, “Excavaciones Arqueológicas en la Cuidad de Astorga (1999-2000),” Lancia 4 (2000-2001): 211-220, especially 213; Victorino García Marcos, “La Romanización Urbana: Asturica Augusta y la implantación Romana en León,” in Arqueoleón: Historia De León a Través de la Arqueología: Ciclo de Conferencias, León, 1993-1994 (Leon: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1996), 69-81.


139 Hydatius, Chron. 122, Burgess, 96-97.
people came to Astorga to be part of a community of lay Christians engaged in theological discussions. For example, a man named Passentius had come to Astorga from Rome, but Hydatius and Thoribius forced him to flee the city.\textsuperscript{140} There is no evidence to suggest that the trial had been mandated or approved by a higher authority than the bishops involved. However, Thoribius was able to use the trial to build connections with the bishop of the influential see in Mérida (Figure 1-1). After the trial, he and Hydatius wrote official reports of their charges and findings, which they sent to Bishop Antoninus of Mérida.\textsuperscript{141} Several years later, Passentius came to Mérida. Antoninus tried and expelled him in 448.\textsuperscript{142}

Making accusations of heresy also helped Thoribius garner the support of the bishop of Rome. In the same year that the bishop of Astorga and Hydatius put Passentius and his colleagues on trial, Bishop Leo of Rome issued a proclamation against all Manicheans, which was circulated throughout \textit{Hispania}.\textsuperscript{143} Prior to distributing the decree, Leo had conducted trials in Rome and many were accused of being Manicheans and banished from the city.\textsuperscript{144} Subsequently, Thoribius wrote to Leo on behalf of his alliance in Gallaecia, which included Hydatius and Bishop Ceponius.\textsuperscript{145} Although Thoribius’ letter is not extant, Leo’s response is. From Leo’s letter, it is clear that Thoribius wrote to the bishop of Rome because he hoped to prove that his see and province were threatened by the presence of Priscillianists. In the letter,

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{140}] Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 130, Burgess, 98-99.
\item[\textsuperscript{141}] Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 122, Burgess, 96-97.
\item[\textsuperscript{142}] Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 130, Burgess, 98-99.
\item[\textsuperscript{143}] Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 125, Burgess, 96-97.
\item[\textsuperscript{145}] Leo, \textit{Ep.} 15. XVIII, \textit{PL} 54,692.
\end{itemize}
Thoribius used his knowledge of Manicheans and Leo’s efforts to eradicate them to establish common ground with the bishop of Rome. To do this, the bishop of Astorga described the practices and beliefs of Priscillianists in such a way that the bishop of Rome equated them with Manicheans.\textsuperscript{146} In fact, Thoribius seems to have ascribed every known heretical doctrine at the time to the Priscillianists in an effort to get the attention and support of the bishop of Rome.\textsuperscript{147} Such a tactic also would be useful for creating a concrete identity for a group of people who challenged Thoribius’ authority, but did not adhere to clear set of heretical beliefs, such as lay elite Christians living in or near Astorga.

In the end, Thoribius successfully associated himself with the bishop of Rome. In 447, Leo wrote back to the bishop of Astorga and condemned the Priscillianist doctrines that Thoribius had outlined and elaborated a comprehensive statement of orthodox faith and blasphemies of heresy.\textsuperscript{148} The bishop of Rome also rewarded Thoribius for his efforts to eradicate heresy by giving him some authority over the process in Hispania. Leo instructed Thoribius to convene a council with bishops from neighboring provinces, so they could help determine who was guilty of Priscillianism. If such a meeting was impossible to hold, Leo told Thoribius to rely on his allies Hydatius and Ceponius to combat Priscillianism.\textsuperscript{149} The bishop of Rome also sent a letter containing the comprehensive overview of orthodox and heretical beliefs to bishops in the other provinces of Hispania.\textsuperscript{150} While there is no record that a council was ever held, with Leo’s help Thoribius had become the head of an alliance that was backed by bishop of

\textsuperscript{146} Leo, \textit{Ep. 15. XVI, PL, 54.688-690.}

\textsuperscript{147} Leo wrote that from Thoribius’ description, the Priscillianists seemed to have drawn on the motley dregs of all past heretics. Leo, \textit{Ep. 15. I in PL, col. 678.}

\textsuperscript{148} Leo, \textit{Ep. 15. I-XVIII, PL 54.678-692.}

\textsuperscript{149} Leo, \textit{Ep. 15. XVIII, PL 64.692.}

\textsuperscript{150} Leo, \textit{Ep. 15. XVIII, PL 54.692; Hydatius, Chron. 127, Burgess, 98-99.}
Rome. He was not, however, able to eliminate all of his opponents. According to Hydatius, some Gallaecians approved Leo’s statement of faith, but they did so fraudulently.\textsuperscript{151} Their willingness to accept the tenets of orthodoxy Leo put forth suggests these Christians were interested in being within the catholic fold and did not seek to argue over theological points. Yet, Hydatius denied the authenticity of their pledges, which indicates that rival factions persisted in Gallaecia as late as the middle of the fifth century.

Like Hydatius and the bishops in Lucensis, Thoribius participated in the shared culture that emphasized cultivating relationships among the learned. The bishop of Astorga undoubtedly had received a traditional Roman education. He had sufficient training to write letters and reports about the people he suspected of secretly reading non-canonical texts and adhering to unorthodox doctrines.\textsuperscript{152} His writing skills impressed Bishop Leo of Rome so much that when he who wrote back to Thoribius he specifically mentioned that the language and detailed statements very clearly communicated the threat the Priscillianists posed.\textsuperscript{153} While it is difficult to determine when Thoribius was born, it is reasonable to assume he was a rough contemporary of his ally, Hydatius. He would have grown up in the years after the First Council of Toledo, and had access to the same teachers as Hydatius and Orosius. In fact, like Orosius and other clerics from Braga, Thoribius travelled outside of Hispania for many years before he became bishop of Astorga.\textsuperscript{154} These trips may have served as part of his advanced education. Like Orosius and his

\textsuperscript{151} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 127, Burgess, 98-99.

\textsuperscript{152} He wrote a letter to Hydatius and Ceponius in which he discussed reaching out to others as well. He also helped compose the episcopal reports sent to Antoninus of Mérida.

\textsuperscript{153} Leo, \textit{Ep.} 15. I, \textit{PL} 54.678.

\textsuperscript{154} Because Thoribius is a Spanish saint, many legends and traditions exist about him. According to these, he was born to a prominent family in 402, but sold all of his belongings to go to Jerusalem where he remained for many years. On his way back to Gallaecia, he stopped in Rome at which time he met Leo. Such traditions, of course, cannot be taken as historical fact. However, in his letter to Hydatius and Ceponius, Thoribius wrote from the perspective of someone who had finally returned to his homeland after a long trip. He mentioned the hardships and
colleagues, Thoribius would have studied various theological approaches, which prepared him to write about heretical ideas in a manner that was convincing to the bishop of Rome. His letter to Leo reflected a nuanced understanding of various unorthodox theologies, and especially Manichaeism. Thoribius’ knowledge allowed him to influence the bishop of Rome’s view of the so-called Priscillianists in Gallaecia and led to Leo’s condemnation of them.

The rivals targeted by Thoribius were lay Christians who likely posed a threat to his authority because they also were members of the educated elite, with connections that extended beyond Gallaecia. The fact that they read apocryphal books and perhaps adhered to tenets resembling Manicheans suggests that like Thoribius, his opponents were highly educated. They also had connections that reached beyond Astorga. For example, Pascentius, the man who was eventually expelled from the city, had apparently studied in Rome. The community of lay Christians engaged in theological study may have formed around him, but he likely maintained associations in Rome. For some reason he had decided to come to Astorga, which suggests that the other inhabitants of the city or its vicinity had connections that would have compelled him to leave Rome to join them.

For the most part, the social composition of the Thoribius’ congregation and the larger community of Astorga, which likely extended beyond the confines of the city’s wall, had not changed dramatically after the First Council of Toledo. While most of the urban houses and public spaces had lost their original function well before Thoribius became the bishop of Astorga, the city itself was not abandoned. For the most part the local elite had long since abandoned the great urban homes built during the heyday of the mining in the early imperial period and Astorga’s visitors and inhabitants continued to dump unwanted ceramics and other benefits of making extensive journeys and his reaction to the practices he witnessed upon his return. See Thoribius, Ep. I-II, PL 54.693.
waste materials in them as they had done in the later fourth century. Some people seem to have lived within these spaces after constructing smaller structures out of mud and other low-quality materials on them.\textsuperscript{155} A high-status family may have continued to reside in their home known as the Casa del Pavimento de Opus Signinum. As discussed in Chapter 2, they remodeled the house in the fourth century and hired artisans to install a mosaic. While the house still was significant enough for them to want to repair this mosaic and other tiles in the early fifth century, it is not clear if they continued to occupy the space when Thoribius was bishop of the city.\textsuperscript{156} Similarly, the one public bath complex that patrons could still enjoy in the later fourth century continued to be open in the fifth, but is not clear for how long, and it likely had lost it meaning as a communal space by the time Thoribius and Hydatius held their tribunal.\textsuperscript{157}

The challenge to Thoribius’ authority may have come from the high status individuals living in nearby rural estates. An elite family continued to live in the villa Olmeda through the time that Thoribius and Hydatius conducted their investigation of the Manicheans in Astorga.\textsuperscript{158} As discussed in Chapter 2, a dominus built this elaborate rural home in the mid-fourth century.\textsuperscript{159}


\textsuperscript{158} Olmeda was located about 50 miles east of León, which likely still was considered part of the see of Astorga under Thoribius jurisdiction.

\textsuperscript{159} Alexandra Chavarría, El Final De Las "Villae" En Hispania" (Siglos IV-VIII) (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2007), 218-219. The new building was constructed sometime after mid-century and changes, repairs and additions were made in the last quarter of the century. See Miguel Nozal, Javier Cortés, José Antonio Abásolo, “Intervenciones arqueológicas en los baños de la villa de la Olmeda (Pedrosa de la Vega, Palencia),” in Termas
After the arrival of the Sueves in Gallaecia, the high-status patrons at Olmeda continued to use the reception halls and baths as they had in the years leading up to the First Council of Toledo.160

The individuals of elite status who had remodeled their villa at Navatejera, about two miles north of León, also continued to live in the rural estate in the years before and after Thoribius challenged the lay elite in his see.161 The *dominus* had demolished and rebuilt the entire eastern section of the house around the time of the First Council of Toledo. Carpenters and artisans continued to add to the grand halls and mosaics into the early part of the fifth century.162 Servants and other dependents still worked in the storage and service area in the northwestern sector of the villa in the fifth century.163 This activity included manufacturing bricks and tiles in the on-site kiln to be used for construction projects.164 In fact, sometime after the remodel of the eastern wing was completed in the early fifth century, an entirely new building was constructed directly south of it. Connected to the previously built monumental structures by a narrow

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162 Hernández, Benéitez González, “Relectura arqueológica de la villa Romana de Navatejera (León),” 107, 110-116, 123.


corridor and several small rooms, the new building had a cruciform plan with three apses located on the north end that gave it an overall rectangular shape.  

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The fifth-century structure has traditionally been interpreted to have a religious function and possibly may have been a church.  

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This assessment is based on the cruciform design, which became a typical plan for Christian basilicas in the early medieval period, and three inhumation burials located just outside the building and others nearby it.  

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No concrete evidence, such as liturgical furnishing, has been found to confirm the specifically Christian function of the building.  

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Moreover, if it had been constructed and used for Christian purposes, it is impossible to determine if those responsible for its construction operated within the formal church hierarchy or if it was a private chapel for the landowner and his dependents.  

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Until recently, archaeologists thought that this building had been built with the rest of the halls and mosaic-covered rooms in the later fourth and early very fifth centuries. However, new analysis of the building materials and stratigraphic relationships indicates that there were technical differences in the fabrication process and materials and that the basilica with the cruciform plan was built later, in the fifth century.  

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If it was built for Christian use, this new chronology

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168 Chavarría, El Final De Las "Villae", 220-221.

169 For a discussion of chapels associated with villas, and estate-based clergy, see Kimberly Bowes, Private Worship, Public Values, and Religious Change in Late Antiquity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), Chapter 3.

indicates that it may have been commissioned just before or during the time that Thoribius was bishop of Astorga. A member of the lay elite with a private chapel on this scale certainly would have posed a challenge to his episcopal authority.

As discussed in Chapter 2, there also was a possible cultic center at Marialba, about four miles southeast of León. This free-standing hall built near a villa in the fourth century may have been used for Christian purposes during the fifth century.\(^{171}\) While it is difficult to confirm the Christian function of this basilica when the First Council of Toledo was held in 400, it does seem to have been slowly transformed into a church in the years after this meeting.\(^{172}\) If so, this may have represented another locale in which Christians met under the authority of a lay patron.

In summary, in the mid-fifth century, Thoribius faced a challenge to his episcopal authority from a group of lay Christian elites that participated in similar circles as the bishop and for whom education and alliances secured status and power. These high-status Christians may have met in private chapels built on their rural estates. That members of this sub-group of Christians engaged in theological study is evident, but the exact nature of their beliefs is obscured by Thoribius’ efforts to describe them in more generic unorthodox terms. Like they had been in the context of Agrestius, Pastor and Syagrius, accusations of heresy made effective invective. Through this strategy Thoribius gained the support of a local clerical alliance and valuable backing from the bishops of Mérida and Rome.\(^{173}\) Thoribius’ tribunal, which likely was

\(^{171}\) At is believed that at this early stage it was a martyrium rather than a church. As discussed in Chapter 2, three individuals were buried in the apse. Artemio Martínez Tejera “Marialba de la Ribera (Villaturiel, León),” in El Tiempo De Los Bárbaros: Pervivencia Y Transformación en Galia e Hispania (ss. V-VI), eds. Jorge Morín de Pablos, Jorge López Quiroga, Artemio Manuel Martínez Tejera (Alcalá de Henares: Museo Arqueológico Regional, 2010), 574. For details on the interpretation of Marialba as a Christian basilica and a discussion why such an assessment is problematic for the later fourth and early fifth century, see Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

\(^{172}\) The baptistery on the site was not added until the later sixth century and the first burials around the church are dated to the same period. Gutiérrez González, Campomanes Alvaredo, Miguel Hernández, Benéitez González, Martín del Otero, Muñoz Villarejo, San Román Fernández, “Legio (León) en época Visigoda,” 94-95.

\(^{173}\) For the significance of such alliances, see Ubric Rabaneda, La Iglesia En La Hispania, 189.
held in the episcopal basilica in Astorga, undoubtedly attracted the attention of the local community and would have been known to the people living in Hydatius and Ceponius’ sees as well. Thoribius and his alliance bolstered their image as capable, orthodox leaders with important connections outside of Astorga. In defeating members of the lay elite and being granted the authority to oversee the elimination of heterodox practices from Leo of Rome, they established their prominence to their congregations and all who were living within their sees.

As will be discussed next, as the century progressed the people of Gallaecia were affected by many social and political changes. However, the activities and success of Thoribius, Hydatius and Ceponius demonstrate that the importance of many traditional Roman values, such as education and alliances, persisted through the middle of the fifth century, and the bishops had gained a reputation for upholding them.

**Bishops as Protectors of the People after the mid-Fifth Century**

According to Hydatius’ description of events, the hostilities among the Sueves, Visigoths and Romans throughout *Hispania* escalated after the middle of the fifth century. From 452, peace agreements were constantly being negotiated and broken. The number of envoys Hydatius reported for this period increased dramatically; three-quarters of all the embassies in his chronicle happened between 452 and 468. In 456, Emperor Avitus and King Theodoric II of the Visigoths acted as allies in an attempt to end the damage caused by Suevic pillaging campaigns throughout the provinces of the Iberian Peninsula. That year, Avitus and Theodoric II each sent envoys to the Sueves to negotiate peace. The Sueves, however, were not interested in a truce and began raiding the province to the east of Gallaecia, Tarraconensis (Figure 1-1).

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175 Hydatius wrote that they were united by a single treaty. Hydatius, *Chron.* 163, Burgess, 104-105

This pattern continued, prompting Avitus to send Theodoric and his army to stop the Sueves.\footnote{Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 166, Burgess, 106-107.} Although the Visigoths often were successful—for example, they defeated a contingent of Sueves in a battle outside of Astorga in October of 456—Theodoric’s men frequently wreaked havoc on the Romans they were sent to protect.\footnote{Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 166-167, 179, Burgess, 106-111.} Between 456 and 460 each of the major episcopal sees in Gallaecia—Braga, Astorga and Lugo—were attacked by either the Sueves or the Visigoths. Considering the connections, alliances and reputations as high status Romans the clerical community of Gallaecia had cultivated for decades, it should not be surprising that the inhabitants of these cities and the invaders expected the bishops and their churches to play pivotal roles as protectors during these assaults. Within the turmoil, the bishops and their churches represented continuity.

During the chaotic years between 456 and 460, the inhabitants of the episcopal sees often sought refuge with the bishops and within the churches. For example, at the end of October in 456, Theodoric II and his army entered Braga on behalf of Emperor Avitus only weeks after they had defeated the Suevic king Rechiarius near Astorga, forcing him and a large number of his men to flee.\footnote{Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 166, Burgess, 106-107.} When they arrived in Braga, Theodoric and the Visigoths were able to take the city rather easily and without much bloodshed.\footnote{Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 167, Burgess, 106-107.} Presumably, they came to Braga since the Sueves held court at Falperra, the hilltop site located less than four miles from the city. Over the course of the fifth century, the Sueves built an elaborate palace complex with multiple buildings, including a basilica.\footnote{The archaeologists of the site think one of the buildings was a Christian sanctuary, but it is difficult to give its precise chronology. It may have been constructed in the fifth or seventh century, after the Visigoths conquered the} Falperra and the Sueves may have been the original target, yet, according
to Hydatius, the Visigoths sacked the city of Braga and captured many Romans.\textsuperscript{182} While the city was under attack, numerous people sought sanctuary in the church and shrines built to honor the saints.\textsuperscript{183} The bishop seems to have been able to negotiate on behalf of the congregation because although Theodoric and his army forced the men, women and children hiding in the church to leave the building, they did not harm them. Likewise, the soldiers destroyed the altars, forced the clergy to strip and abducted the consecrated virgins, but none were killed or violated.\textsuperscript{184}

The bishop of Braga who secured the safety of the people in his church oversaw a different community than his predecessors in the early fifth century, which may have contributed to the people’s choice to seek protection with him. While we do not know who this bishop was, the circumstances, social composition and needs of his congregation had been gradually changing before Theodoric attacked the city, and would continue to shift after the Visigoths left. When Symphosius of Braga acted as ambassador in 431, he represented a community that was fairly similar to the one in which Orosius had grown up and been educated. High status individuals still lived in many of the elaborate urban houses where they could carry out their roles as patrons and public officials for the rest of the population. Through merchants, they maintained connections with other parts of Hispania and the Mediterranean Basin, especially in the East. However, as the century progressed, many elite homes underwent changes that suggest

\textsuperscript{182} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 167, Burgess, 106-107.

\textsuperscript{183} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 167, Burgess, 106-107.

\textsuperscript{184} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 167, Burgess, 106-107.
different people lived in them or if they were the same high-status individuals as in previous decades, their lifestyles and needs had shifted.  

The changes within the domestic sphere suggest that fewer secular patrons were available to provide safety for servants, artisans and other people living and working in Braga at the time of the attack in 456. In some cases, walls of poorer quality were built over the pavements and mosaics in the older houses. For example, an elite family had lived in the domus known as *Casa das Carvalheiras*, located close to the wall in the northwestern area of the city, in the early part of the fifth century. The baths had functioned as a public facility with a nearby market since the fourth century. As the fifth century progressed, it was increasingly used as a place to dump ceramics and other debris. Then, likely in the second half of the fifth century, a wall of poorer quality was built within the space. Unfortunately, it is not possible to know who was responsible for this construction or how the structure was used. What is clear is that it was not a permanent habitation; the entire block was abandoned in the next century.

The changing social and cultural dynamics of Braga are especially evident in the way that people began to live and artisans began to work in the former monumental center of the city, comprised of the forum, theater and public baths. Parts of the theater were converted into

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185 The details about these changes are not clear at this time, but archaeologists in Braga hope that future excavations will shed some light on who these inhabitants were. Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Raquel Peñin, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” in *Braga and its territory*, 12-13.


domestic spaces.\textsuperscript{190} For example, as early as the first part of the fifth century, individuals began a building project to make a residence on the north side of what had once been the stage area.\textsuperscript{191} They utilized some of the existing structure and its walls, but also constructed new walls. In order to create a sizeable but enclosed living space, they closed off some spaces of the theatre, including an old staircase, and dismantled a row of columns.\textsuperscript{192} During construction, the builders recycled various materials recovered from the theater, such as the stones from a former archway and column bases. The inhabitants of the house had two living areas with a porch covered with a roof made of perishable materials.\textsuperscript{193} They used hand millstones for preparing grains and stored their foodstuffs in earthenware containers or dolia.\textsuperscript{194} Until the middle of the fifth century, they utilized some ceramics imported from North Africa and some imitations of them.\textsuperscript{195} However, by the later fifth century, they ate and served their meals largely on locally produced bowls and plates that were imitations of Gallic and African pieces.\textsuperscript{196}

The residents of this home may have acquired these imitation ceramics from the artisans who had set up workshops on along the northern façade of the theater. For example, individuals


\textsuperscript{191}The earliest date is likely around 420 CE or just after. Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñín, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” in Braga and its territory, 24-25.

\textsuperscript{192}Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñín, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” in Braga and its territory, 18.

\textsuperscript{193}Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñín, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” in Braga and its territory, 18-19.

\textsuperscript{194}Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñín, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” in Braga and its territory, 18.

\textsuperscript{195}For example, imitations of the red slip ceramic Hayes 61B have been found. Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñín, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” in Braga and its territory, 24.

\textsuperscript{196}For example, imitations of the various forms have been found: Hayes 8, Hayes 61B, Hayes 73 and Hayes 76. The use of imitations of Gallic and North African wares is now known to have been common throughout the Iberian Peninsula starting in the fifth century. Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñín, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” in Braga and its territory, 23-24.
constructed a trapezoidal shaped structure using a section of the partially dismantled theater façade as one of its foundational walls.\textsuperscript{197} They built other low walls out of irregular blocks of schist and clay mortar, which had a weaker foundation since they were placed directly on top of the ground.\textsuperscript{198} The building’s roof was made of perishable materials held up by wooden shafts.\textsuperscript{199} One would have entered the space through an eight-food wide area of circulation with a granite wall that ran along its eastern side (Figure 6-2).\textsuperscript{200} A square kiln in the southern corner of the building likely was used for artisanal purposes (Figure 6-3). While this kiln seems to have been used for melting down iron objects for later applications, the high quantity of ceramics that imitated wares made in Gaul and North Africa found in the vicinity, suggests that there also were potters in the area.\textsuperscript{201} Another similar potential domestic and artisanal space that adapted the former Roman aqueduct for one of its walls was located nearby. However, the exact details of this structure are not clear yet, since it is still being excavated (Figures 6-4 to 6-6).\textsuperscript{202}

The public bath complex had not been used as a public space since at least the early fifth century.\textsuperscript{203} In fact, it seems someone converted at least part of the building into a private residence.\textsuperscript{204} After the inhabitants of Braga ceased to use the baths, unknown individuals built

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\textsuperscript{201} Remains of iron slag recently have been found in the kiln. Manuela Martins, conversations with archaeologist, July 20-31, 2015. The ceramic remains include a high number of imitations of Gallic ceramics (DSP), known as "cinzenta tardía." Martins, Ribeiro, Magalhães, Peñin, “Urban changes in Braga in Late Antiquity,” in \textit{Braga and its territory}, 23-25.


some walls of rather poor quality on top of the pavements in what had once been the large room with the cold-water pool. While it is not clear exactly when they initiated this change, it happened sometime in the second half of the fifth century. Archaeologists suggest that this was a domestic space, and that whoever lived in the new house, still used parts of the baths.

The new residence continued to be occupied throughout the fifth century, but the walls in the unused areas of the former bath complex were progressively dismantled, a process which continued even after the period of this study.

In 431, Symphosius of Braga was chosen to represent his community in Gaul from among many educated men living in the city. The changing social composition of the city meant that the bishop who negotiated for the safety of his congregation in 456 likely had less competition for authority from secular elites in the city. However, the people did not choose the bishop and the church simply because there was nowhere else to turn. While the former monumental center was used for new industrial and domestic purposes, in 456, the church complex on the northern edge of the city and several buildings in its vicinity still were used as they had been in the early part of the fifth century. From this base of operations, the bishop

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206 Rodríguez Resino, *Del Imperio Romano a La Alta Edad Media*, 151.


209 The bishop of Braga also likely oversaw numerous small chapels just outside the city walls that were built near some cemeteries over the course of the fifth century. For example, at the site of the current parochial church, San Vitor, which may have been a martyrium as early as the fourth century. Similar chapels appeared at San Vicente and San Fructuosus, but the chronology for these locations is less precise and they may have been used for Christian purposes subsequent to the fifth century. Rodríguez Resino, *Del Imperio Romano a La Alta Edad Media*, 152-153; López Quiroga, *El Final de la Antigüedad en la Gallaecia*, 129; Luis Fontes, Francisco Saúde Lemos, Mário Cruz, “Mais velho” que a Sé de Braga. Intervencão arqueológica na cathedral bracarense: notícia preliminar,” *Cadernos de Arqueologia*, Série, II, 14-15, (1997-1998), 139; Francisco Sande Lemos, Manuela Delgado, Manuela Martins, “Sondagens arqueológicas no Largo do Paço, Braga,” *Cadernos de Arqueologia* 5 (1988): 67-70.
and his church represented continuity for the people living and working in Braga. The clerical community in Braga and elsewhere in Gallaecia had proven to the laity that they were effective patrons long before Theodoric II and his men approached the city walls. Moreover, the bishops, presbyters and deacons were present throughout the changes to the grand houses, the forum, theater and baths. In this context, the bishop would have been a logical choice for a leader to turn to in times of distress.

Of course, it was not a novel development for religious buildings to serve as places of sanctuary. Moreover, the people of Gallaecia may have fled to the churches in order to find refuge through the saint’s relics. In fact, the manner in which Hydatius presented the saints as protectors during times of distress in his chronicle, suggests that he also propagated this message to his congregation. Like Orosius had done in his Seven Histories, Hydatius asserted that during his sack of Rome in 409, Alaric had spared all who sought sanctuary inside churches and with the martyrs.210 In a contemporary example, Hydatius wrote that Theodoric II retreated from an attack against Mérida in 457 when he received a warning from Eulalia, the martyr whose relics were housed in a shrine in the city.211 Hydatius also included a tribute to Eulalia’s power in an earlier account of a battle between the Vandals and the Sueves led by King Heremigarius. According to Hydatius, in 429 Heremigarius insulted Eulalia when he scorned the martyr while in Mérida. Consequently, the king not only lost dramatically to the Vandals, with his soldiers being slaughtered, but also was thrown into a river “by the hand of the divine” when he tried to

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escape. 212 The bishop of Aquae Flaviae presented the events in his chronicle in such a way that suggests he had told the story many times before, and likely had included it in his sermons. The attacks on the episcopal sees of Gallaecia occurred decades later. By the time they did, Hydatius and his clerical colleagues had developed an image of the saint’s and their relics as protectors of their people, their shrines as sanctuaries, and the bishops as the custodians of both.

The Roman residents of Lugo also expected that their association with the church and its leadership would provide protection during times of political distress. The Sueves surprised the inhabitants of Lugo by assaulting many of them during Easter in 460, including the city governor, whom Hydatius described as being of distinguished birth. 213 According to Hydatius, by the middle of the fifth century, the Sueves increasingly targeted the elite of Gallaecia. Relations between the Sueves and these high-status individuals became particularly hostile after several Roman nobles were murdered in 459. 214 Nevertheless, Hydatius, the clerical community of Gallaecia, and their congregations, including the elite, expected that churches would be safe from attack, especially on important holidays. That is why the Suevic attack on Lugo during Easter came as a complete shock to everyone. A faction of Sueves had set up headquarters in Lugo and because they knew the bishops and the people would have their guards down due to the holiday, they were able to kill many of the city’s inhabitants.

Life changed for those living in Lugo after the Sueves attacked the city. Many elite families may have left their homes prior to the attack on the city, but in the second half of the fifth century, these spaces were completely abandoned. In fact, there is evidence that these houses were targets during the Suevic siege. One domus and its portico in the northwestern part

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212 Hydatius, Chron. 80, Burgess, 90-91.
213 Hydatius, Chron. 194, Burgess 112-113.
of the city were destroyed around the middle of the fifth century.\textsuperscript{215} The \textit{Domus Oceani} also was completely abandoned and destroyed around the same time.\textsuperscript{216} There are no signs of occupation after the mid-fifth century.\textsuperscript{217} After this point, the flow of fine ceramics from other parts of Spain ceased.\textsuperscript{218} It is not clear when, but sometime in the fifth century they closed their shops and stopped producing the common pottery for Lugo’s residence and other customers in the region.\textsuperscript{219}

The attacks of 456-460 and the political shifts that accompanied them affected the lives of the clerical communities and the laity they represented and contributed to the development of new social dynamics in the region. While it was not always a successful strategy, many inhabitants of the cities attacked relied on the bishops and their churches for protection. The choice to turn to the bishops for refuge was not simply due to a social and political vacuum caused by this turmoil. Instead, for decades the people had witnessed the bishops, such as Symphosius of Braga and Agrestius of Lugo, as members of powerful alliances, with the associations and skills necessary to preserve orthodoxy and connections to leaders throughout the empire. The social composition and cultural and economic foci in the cities had changed before the attacks. The presence of local elites was gradually declining while the reputation the bishops had as ambassadors and heads of well-connected ecclesiastical alliances was rising. In the mid-fifth century, the church and its leadership represented continuity. As will be discussed next, the


\textsuperscript{216} González Fernández, \textit{Lugo Arqueolóxico: Casa Dos Mosaicos Batitales}, 18; González Fernández, \textit{Domus Oceani}, 126.

\textsuperscript{217} González Fernández, \textit{Domus Oceani}, 59.

\textsuperscript{218} González Fernández, \textit{Domus Oceani}, 60; Rodríguez Colmenero, \textit{Lucus Augusti, Urbs Romana}, 89.

significant role bishops played in their local communities also prompted the Sueves and Visigoths to use them as hostages in order to achieve their economic and political goals in the region.

Bishops as Tools of Negotiation after the mid-Fifth Century

Kidnapping members of the Gallaecian clergy and holding them hostage became a useful strategy and negotiating tool for the Sueves and Visigoths after the mid-fifth century. They undoubtedly chose clerical captives due to their connections that extended beyond Gallaecia and value they represented to the laity. For example, in 457 a band of Theodoric II’s army entered Astorga under the pretense that they were sent to deal with some Sueves, but instead they killed inhabitants of the city.²²⁰ They also broke into the churches and destroyed all of the altars.²²¹ They took the “weaker” men and women into captivity, but also kidnapped two bishops and all members of the clergy who had been in the church.²²² We do not know how long these men were held, but several years later, in 460, Hydatius was held captive for three months by the Sueves.²²³ Apparently a group of informants connected to Theodoric II’s army, Dictynius, Spinio and Ascanius, convinced the Suevic king to kidnap the bishop and hold him hostage in his church in Aquae Flaviae.²²⁴ The purpose of Hydatius’ captivity seems to have been to make it easier to pillage his see. After he was taken prisoner, the area was overwhelmed and, according to Hydatius, the Sueves caused massive destruction.

²²¹ Hydatius, Chron. 179, Burgess, 108-111.
²²² Hydatius, Chron. 179, Burgess, 110-111.
²²³ Hydatius, Chron. 196, 202, Burgess 112-115.
²²⁴ Hydatius, Chron. 196, Burgess 112-113.
The informants responsible for his captivity knew that the bishop of Aquae Flaviae played an integral role as protector of the people in the region, which is why they told the Sueves to hold him hostage. According to Hydatius, the Sueves also took advantage of his captivity to plunder the coastal areas of Lucensis.\textsuperscript{225} While the bishop of Aquae Flaviae did not specify the locations they targeted, the coast would have offered many lucrative sites to raid, since many settlements continued to thrive due to long distance commercial exchange. Even as the elite slowly neglected and then abandoned their homes in Lugo after the attacks in 460, the high-status individuals who had villas on the northern coast continued to maintain and occupy them throughout the fifth century. For example, the family that in the fourth century had built or significantly remodeled their \textit{villa del mare} at Noville near Brigantium continued to live in the rural home with its private baths and grand halls in the fifth century.\textsuperscript{226} The port of Brigantium had been transformed in the fourth century into a single domestic habitation, possibly a villa, and the residents continued to live in the space in the fifth.\textsuperscript{227} The \textit{domini} at Noville and other coastal villas, such as at Bares, also maintained their relationship with the merchants responsible for long-distance commerce, since the villa owners used fine ceramics and other items imported from North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean in this period.\textsuperscript{228} It is not possible to determine

\begin{thebibliography}{9}

\bibitem{225} Hydatius, \textit{Chron.} 196-197, Burgess 112-113.

\bibitem{226} Archaeologists suggest that the \textit{villa del mare} at Noville was occupied until the early sixth century, at which time the site was abandoned with no signs of outside destruction. Similarly the ceramics finds suggest that the villa at Bares was occupied through the sixth century. After a period of abandonment, Bares was used as a cemetery in the seventh century and eventually a church was built on the site. Fermin Pérez Losada, “Escavación arqueológica, prospección xeográfica e consolidación da vila Romana de Noville (Murgardos, A Coruña),” \textit{Arqueología Informes} 3, Campaña 1989 (1989): 56; Ma. Catalina López Pérez, \textit{El comercio de Terra Sigillata en la provincial de A Coruña}, \textit{Brigantium} 16 (2004): 78; Emilio Ramil González, “I campaña de excavación arqueológica na Eirexa Vella-Bares (Mañon),” \textit{Brigantium} 12 (2000): 215-216; Rodríguez Resino, \textit{Del Imperio Romano a La Alta Edad Media}, 57.


\bibitem{228} Rodríguez Resino, \textit{Del Imperio Romano a La Alta Edad Media}, 57; Ramil González, “I campaña de excavación arqueológica,” 218; Ma. Catalina López Pérez, \textit{El comercio de Terra Sigillata en la provincial de A Coruña},

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who lived in these villas, but it is not unreasonable to suggest that some of the elite of Lugo, who had undoubtedly had connections to them prior to the fifth century, made these coastal estates their permanent homes upon leaving the city.

The coastal sites the Sueves raided while Hydatius was their captive may have been in the southern Rías Baixas region. In the late fourth century the port of Vigo had been transformed into a center for the importation and distribution of products imported from North Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean, Gaul and Britain.\textsuperscript{229} It did not lose this role in the fifth century.\textsuperscript{230} In fact, the merchants and workers associated with the docks and warehouses likely kept very busy, since the level of imports from these faraway destinations increased in the fifth century.\textsuperscript{231} It was in this period that materials from eastern locations, such as Antioch, became more popular than those from Africa.\textsuperscript{232} In particular, higher quantities of fine ceramics from Phocaea, or Foça in modern Turkey, began to pass through the port of Vigo.\textsuperscript{233} Although the details are not clear, it seems that people still occupied the domestic spaces near the port and on the outskirts of the settlement area in the fifth century.\textsuperscript{234}


\textsuperscript{229} See Chapter 3 of this dissertation.


\textsuperscript{231} Fernández Fernández, Soto Arias, “Cerámicas finas tardorromanas orixinarias de África,” 31-47.

\textsuperscript{232} Fernández Fernández, Soto Arias, “Cerámicas finas tardorromanas orixinarias de África,” 47.

\textsuperscript{233} Traditionally called TS Focense in Spain, but also known as Phocaean Red Slip Ware and Terra Sigillata from Asia Minor or Constantinople. Encarnación Serrano Ramos, "Hallazgos de tierra sigillata focense tardía en territorio malacitano," \textit{Mainake} 19 (1997): 171.

\textsuperscript{234} At least one of the high-status homes in the area was occupied in the fifth century, but this occupation can only be definitively dated to the early part of century. The inhabitants of Vigo also continued to bury their dead in the cemetery located over what was once salt pans. Peréz Losada, \textit{Brigantium} 13, 251-252; Soledad Prieto Robles, Juan

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The Sueves also may have raided the coastal estate at Toralla during Hydatius’ captivity. The high-status family that had built the monumental villa in fourth century still lived in their home through the first part of fifth.\textsuperscript{235} They used commodities imported from various places, but especially fine ceramics from North Africa.\textsuperscript{236} However, they seem to have left the villa after the middle of the fifth century.\textsuperscript{237} Unlike other villas in Gallaecia, there are no signs that anyone used Toralla for burial or other purposes after the owners left it. After it was abandoned, sand dunes completely covered the villa.\textsuperscript{238}

Hydatius’ presentation of the events suggests the bishop sought to highlight the value of his presence for maintaining peace in his see and beyond. The informants seem to have been interested in using Hydatius to establish a favorable truce. In fact, while Hydatius was being held captive, a tentative peace agreement was created.\textsuperscript{239} Several sets of envoys were sent between Theodoric II and the Sueves before and after he was released.\textsuperscript{240}

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\textsuperscript{238} Pérez Losada, Fernández Fernández, Vieito Covela, “Toralla y las villas marítimas,” 503.

\textsuperscript{239} Hydatius, Chron. 199, Burgess 112-113.

\textsuperscript{240} Hydatius, Chron. 199-204, Burgess 112-115.
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responsible for his captivity recognized the significant role Hydatius played in these negotiations because they advised the Sueves to keep him as a prisoner longer than they did. According to Hydatius, they had plans that were never came to fruition because he was released.\textsuperscript{241} While they had plundered Aquae Flaviae and the coast of Lucensis, his release prevented additional raids.

Hydatius’ status and experience garnered him a reputation as a valuable leader in the region. He was by this time an older man and had been a bishop for several decades. He had established his authority through his alliances, work as an ambassador and participation in efforts to eliminate unorthodox practices. Only a decade before his captivity, Hydatius helped Bishop Thoribius successfully challenge lay, elite Christians in Asturicensis. The tribunal undoubtedly was a major event, which drew bishops from multiple sees, and people in Gallaecia would have heard about it. Thoribius, Hydatius and Ceponius not only successfully convicted and expelled high-status, educated members of the laity as heretics, but they also gained support from the bishop of Rome. Moreover, Leo granted them authority to oversee the implementation of measures to ensure orthodoxy in Gallaecia and the rest of Hispania. Through their actions they also were able to secure a powerful ally in the bishop of Mérida.

Although circumstances were changing before the attacks of 456-460 and continued after them, Hydatius projected an image of himself a representative of traditional Roman values, a skilled diplomat and a champion of orthodox Christianity. While we do not know when he penned his chronicle, the last entry is for 468. His presentation of himself as an old man at the end of his life in the preface suggests he wrote at least some of it after the mid-fifth century.\textsuperscript{242} The fact that he chose to cast himself and the bishops in his alliance as capable scholars,

\textsuperscript{241} Hydatius, \textit{Chron}. 202, Burgess 114-115.
\textsuperscript{242} Hydatius, \textit{Chron}. Preface 6, Burgess 74-75.
negotiators and protectors to his readers, indicates that this is how he viewed the episcopal office at this late date and presented it to the lay and clerical communities of Gallaecia. According to Hydatius, he and other bishops had played these roles since the 430s and they continued to act in these capacities to the end of his life. During this time, the people that Hydatius and his colleagues represented had come to depend on episcopal leadership to act on their behalf, protect them and keep them connected to larger ecclesiastical, imperial, and perhaps commercial, networks. Their role as local leaders certainly increased as more elites were driven from Gallaecia, but it did not emerge out of nowhere. To the inhabitants and attackers of the cities and rural sites, the bishops represented continuity during a period of change.

Conclusion

Over the course of Bishop Hydatius of Aquae Flaviae’s life the political circumstances in Gallaecia intensified as incidents of Visigothic and Suevic attacks increased. Frequently, the people and kings turned to the bishops to intervene as ambassadors and negotiators. Yet, they were not given these roles simply because there were no other alternatives. Instead, Hydatius and the other bishops in Gallaecia had cultivated reputations for themselves as capable communicators with useful extra-regional connections. Conflicts with members of the clerical and lay Christian communities of Gallaecia gave bishops such as Hydatius, Agrestius and Thoribius opportunities to shape the perceptions people would have of them as leaders. When they disparaged other episcopal ambassadors, accused each other of heresy and held tribunals to censure the theological study of the lay elite, the bishops promoted themselves not only as orthodox, but also as influential, well-educated and skilled Romans, who could be relied on to protect and mediate for their communities. As the century progressed, the social, economic and political configurations of the various episcopal sees were altered in Gallaecia, which meant that the needs of the people living in them shifted as well. Like Symphosius of Astorga, Hydatius and
his colleagues understood their function as bishops to include both sacred and secular duties. Throughout all of the big and small changes the inhabitants encountered, the bishops and clerical communities represented continuity, which helps to explain why the people sought their assistance to navigate the new realities they faced and the Suevic and Visigothic leaders turned to them to help create them.

Figure 6-1. Map of Gallaecia, showing roads from Aquae Flaviae. Map courtesy of author.
Figure 6-2. Fifth-century domestic/artisanal space of Braga’s Roman theater. Photograph courtesy of author.

Figure 6-3. Fifth-century kiln in the façade of Braga’s Roman theater. Photographs courtesy of author.
Figure 6-4. Fifth-century domestic/artisanal space of Braga’s Roman theater. Photograph courtesy of author.

Figure 6-5. Fifth-century domestic/artisanal space in Braga’s Roman theater. Photograph courtesy of author.
Figure 6-6. Fifth-century domestic/artisanal space in Braga’s Roman theater. Photograph courtesy of author.
CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION: FROM SYMPHOSIUS OF ASTORGA TO HYDATIUS OF AQUAE FLAVIAE

Hydatius began his chronicle by saying he was writing from the ends of the earth and at the end of his life. While he may have been advanced in years, and indeed at the end of his life, his description of his home in northwestern Hispania must not be taken at face value. As this dissertation has shown, Gallaecia, even in Hydatius’ time in the later fifth century, was well integrated and connected to the rest of the Roman world. His knowledge of the East may have been sparse, but this was due to his own alliances and networks. Others in Gallaecia, especially people living and working on the coast and anyone who was incorporated into these circles, were tied to the Eastern Mediterranean and other locations, such as North Africa, through trade.

At the end of Hydatius’ life things had changed within Gallaecia. The political situation had been transformed and the visibility of episcopal leadership had increased since the time of the First Council of Toledo in 400. Yet, these two things were not a direct consequence of each other. The social landscape had begun to change in the mid-fifth century, but it was a gradual transition, and although there were similarities among the various communities studied here, the process was not uniform. In some places, such as the city of Lugo, the elite began to leave their homes. In places like Lugo, the retailers and artisans lost their livelihoods and we might presume their independence and capacity to fend for themselves and their families. In other places, such as Braga, new workshops were opened and homes built.

The role the bishops and the church would play in these situations developed over the course of at least a century. Bishops, such as Symphosius of Astorga, were deeply concerned that the needs of the laity were met. For him, there was little if any separation between his

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responsibilities within the secular and sacred realms. Symphosius and other bishops and clerics in the later fourth century interacted with each other and the lay members of their communities as patrons and attempted to build alliances for the benefit of all. These efforts did not always work, as we saw with Paternus and Symphosius. Since the stakes were so high, it was imperative to protect one’s alliances and positions within them. Moreover, since these developments occurred when many theological, doctrinal and organizational aspects of the church were still being defined, disagreements could be labeled heresy. Accusations of heresy came to be a powerful tool that could be used to protect alliances and forge new ones.

The roles Symphosius of Astorga and the other bishops involved in the trial of Toledo played within their communities in the late fourth century cannot be explained by the singular explanation of decline: of the decurial class or the Roman city. Each urban center in Gallaecia followed different trajectories in the later fourth century. Braga was a thriving imperial capital with important commercial connections, while Symphosius’ see of Astorga was in relative decline. In order to understand how bishops were able to increase their roles in Gallaecian society it is imperative to examine each in their own specific contexts. The archaeological evidence has been tremendously useful for revealing the lay communities these bishops served. Of course, many questions remain unanswered, such as who the dependents of the rural elite landowners were. Increased attention by archaeologists to the productive components and surrounding landscapes of villas rather than just the monumental buildings may help to clarify not only the identity of those living and working near the villas, but also what functions the rural estates served, whether it be supplying food to the local community or in-kind tax payments to imperial authorities. In addition, attention during excavations to the subtle changes to Roman urban houses and public buildings after the fifth century will tell us more about the people who
lived and worked in these spaces. The work currently being done in Braga in the area of the Roman theater demonstrates the importance of new methodologies that focus on more than the monumental structures and look for details in each stratigraphic level.

Weaved throughout all of these vignettes were merchants. In the later fourth century they began to carry luxury items from North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean to Vigo and points on the north coast, including Gijón. Of course, other ports along the Atlantic Coast also received these goods, but this commercial activity shows that Gallaecia was not remote. In the past it may have seemed strange to scholars that the Vandals and the Sueves were asked to split Gallaecia, while the rest of the peninsula was divided among the other invading groups. However, it should now be clear that Gallaecia was valuable. It not only was connected to important commercial centers, its elite continued to collect taxes and may have helped to supply the annona to the military. Many noble, well-connected families had lived there for a long time. In the past, inconsistencies or oddities in the works of Orosius and Hydatius could be blamed on their upbringing, or lack thereof, in the provincial backwaters of the northwest. However, it is now apparent that they were not only educated, but also to varying degrees connected to the rest of the Roman world. This knowledge should compel future historians who want to use their histories as sources, to read them for what they say and what the writers intended rather than through lenses created by modern judgments of the works and the persons who wrote them.

In 468, when Hydatius ended his chronicle, the progression by which the church and its clergy eventually would become the center of rural and urban communities in Gallaecia was not complete. Evidence for episcopal buildings within the cities increases starting in the sixth century. In the later fifth century, many of the rural estates studied here were abandoned and local communities began using the grounds for burial and transforming the spaces into sacred
places. Eventually many of them would become churches with cemeteries, but this happened after the people had inhabited them and given them meaning. The process by which these changes occurred, however, will have to be the subject of a future study.

For example, the original owners of the villa Veranes left sometime around the middle of the fifth century and inhabitants in the area began dismantling the villa and using many of its spaces for burial. Although it is not clear when the transformation occurred, the function of the triclinium changed from being an elite dining room to a center of Christian cultic activities; it definitely became a church with a surrounding cemetery by the eighth century. At this point there was no need to rebuild any of the walls for the church, since the ones constructed for the grand dining hall in the late third or early fourth century remained. The rest of the villa was used as a cemetery, and most of the building itself was no longer visible. Carmen Fernández Ochoa, Fernando Gil Sendino, “El yacimiento Romano y Medieval de Veranes, Cenero (Gijón). Campañas 2003-2006,” Excavaciones arqueológicas en Asturias (2003-2006): 290, 296; Carmen Fernández Ochoa, Fernando Gil Sendino, “La etapa final de Roma en Hispania: la Villa de Veranes (Gijón, Asturias),” in Astures Y Romanos: Nuevas Perspectivas, ed. Juan Fernández-Tresguerre and Carmen Fernández Ochoa (Oviedo, Asturias: Real Instituto de Estudios Asturianos, 2007), 145-146; Carmen Fernández Ochoa, Fernando Gil Sendino, Javier Salido Domínguez, “Nuevas evidencias del cristianismo en Asturias: los crismones de la villa román de Veranes (Gijón),” Gerión 31 (2013): 405-406; Carmen Fernández Ochoa, Fernando Gil Sendino, Almudena Orejas Saco del Valle, “La villa romana de Veranes el complejo rural Tardorromana y propuesta de estudio del territorio,” AEspa 77 (2004): 202, 205, 208. While it is not prudent to assume the early Christian use of the space based on its function in a later period, it is suggestive that the triclinium had not been depreciated after the abandonment of the rest of the villa. While people rather quickly plundered the majority of the rest of the villa in the fifth and sixth centuries they respected the integrity of the triclinium and left it completely intact, which the archaeologists of the site suggest indicates that Christians had already begun to use it for ritual purposes at this earlier time. Personal conversation with Fernando Gil Sendino, archaeologist of site on July 13, 2015. The earliest mention of Veranes as a church is in a twelfth-century document which records King Ordoño I’s ninth-century donation of San Pedro y Santa María de Riera to the Church of San Salvador of Oviedo. This indicates that it was recognized as a religious sanctuary by the ninth century. Santos Agustín García Larragueta, Coleccion de Documentos de la Catedral de Oviedo (Oviedo: Instituto de Estudios Asturianos, 1962), 61-69.
APPENDIX A
TIMELINE OF DATES IN TEXT

380  Council of Zaragoza
385  Priscillian is charged with sorcery and executed
400 (circa)  First Council of Toledo
407 (circa)  Hydatius travels as a child to Jerusalem
409  Sueves, Vandals and Alans enter Hispania
411  Sueves, Vandals and Alans draw lots to divide Hispania amongst themselves
Gallaecia is divided between the Sueves and Hasdingi Vandals
414  Orosius travels to Hippo to study with Augustine
415  Orosius attends the Synod of Jerusalem
The body of St. Stephen is discovered near Jerusalem and Orosius is tasked with
holding relics to Braga
417-418  Orosius writes Seven Books of History against the Pagans
420  Vandals leave Gallaecia
427-428  Hydatius becomes bishop of Aquae Flaviae
431  Hydatius serves as an ambassador to Gaul
433  Symphosius (of Braga) sent as an envoy to the court of Hermericus
Pastor and Syagrius are ordained as bishops against the wishes of Bishop
Agrestius of Lugo
441  Bishop Agrestius of Lugo attends the Council of Orange
445  Trial of Manicheans in Astorga led by Hydatius and Thoribius
447  Bishop Leo of Rome writes a letter against Priscillianists to Bishop Thoribius of
Astorga
448  Pascentius, an accused Manichean, flees from Astorga
456-457  Braga is sacked by the Visigoths
457  Astorga is attacked by a band from Theodoric II’s army
460  Hydatius is held captive by Sueves for three months
460  Lugo is attacked by Sueves during Easter
468 (circa)  Hydatius writes his chronicle
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Rebecca was born in southern New Jersey and did her undergraduate studies at Syracuse University where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Advertising from the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. After teaching and producing independent films for several years in San Francisco, Rebecca began studying history, first at City College of San Francisco and, then San Francisco State University, where she earned a Master of Arts in History. During her tenure at the University of Florida, where she received her Ph.D. in History in the summer of 2016, Rebecca participated in archaeological excavations in Portugal under the direction of Catarina Tente of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa and Fernanda Puga de Magalhães of the Unidade de Arqueologia da Universidade do Minho.