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A Book for the King. Some Reflections on the Situation of the Roman Population and the Preservation of the Heritage of Ancient Civilization in Gallaecia and Lusitania in the 5th and 6th Centuries

In the early 570s, the city of Braga (*Bracara Augusta*), the capital of the kingdom of the Suebi (Suevi), saw a historically significant event. The metropolitan bishop, St. Martin of Braga (c. 510/520-c. 580), presented the Germanic “barbarian” ruler, king Miro (?-583), with a philosophical treatise entitled *Formula vitae honestae*². It was entirely dedicated to deliberations on the cardinal virtues: prudence, magnanimity, temperance (moderation), and justice³. According to the information stated in the prologue, the erudite bishop had written the dissertation at the king’s explicit request. Miro often informed St. Martin that he was eagerly looking forward to receiving his writings. In fulfillment of the king’s request, the bishop offered his “little work” to Miro “[...] to be read out for [...] the receptive ears [...]”, commenting that in the absence of the smoothness of sophistry, it was characterized by simplicity. With a dexterity of an experienced court-

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² Martinus Bracarenensis, *Formula vitae honestae*, Praefatio, in: C.W. Barlow (ed), *Martini episcopi Bracarenensis Opera omnia*, London 1950, p. 236: “Gloriosissimo ac tranquilissimo et insigni catholicae fidei praedito pietate Mironi regi Martinus humilis Episcopus”.

³ Martinus Bracarenensis, *Formula vitae honestae* 1a, 1-4, Barlow, p. 237: “Quattuor virtutum species multorum sapientium sententiis definitiae sunt quibus humanus animus comptus ad honestatem vitae possit accedere: harum prima est prudentia, secunda magnanimitas, tertia continentia, quarta iustitia”.

ier, the bishop also noted that he did not compose it for the king alone, as the ruler had his innate wisdom, but primarily for the royal servants and aides to help them understand the meaning and the true essence of the cardinal virtues as well as to make them follow such values in their service to the king⁴. Finally, he added that living in accordance with the cardinal virtues was not possible exclusively to the very few scholars and saints, but also to the simple people who followed the natural laws originating from the reason⁵. Therefore, such a life is available for everyone who is guided by the reason.

Descriptions of how to cultivate each cardinal virtue in question and indications of the benefits coming from the practice of the virtues can be found successively in chapters 2-5 of the work presented to King Miro. As it is necessary to outline the things only very briefly here, let us have a look at the most important points of the moral instruction offered there. Those guided by prudence will always be true to themselves; refraining from passing judgements in uncertain matters, they will avoid making mistakes arising from a superficial assessment of events and remain safe from any unexpected twist of fate⁶. The magnanimous king will be calm and joyful, and will be awaiting the final days of his earthly life without fear. He will not take revenge on the enemies already defeated as the very possibility of taking revenge and his forgiveness are honourable ways of seeking retribution. He will not have recourse to treachery and deceit as such dishonourable conduct befits only those who are weak⁷. Temperance in food

⁴ Martinus Bracarensis, *Formula vitae honestae* 1, 10-16, Barlow, p. 237: "Quem non vestrae specialiter institutioni, cui naturalis sapientiae sagacitas praesto est, sed generaliter his conscripsi quos ministeriis tuis adstantes haec convenit legere, intellegere et tenere".

⁵ Martinus Bracarensis, *Formula vitae honestae* 1a, 16-22, Barlow, p. 237: "[...] sed a magis commonet quae et sine divinarum scripturarum praeceptis naturali tantum humanae intellegentiae lege etiam a laicis recte honesteque viventibus valent adimpleri".

⁶ Martinus Bracarensis, *Formula vitae honestae* 2, 1-2, 13-16, 20-24, Barlow, p. 238-239: "Si prudentiam amplecters, ubique idem eris [...]. De dubiis non definias sed suspensam tene sententiam. Nihil affirmes, quia non omne quod verisimile est static et verum est, siut et saepius quod primum incredibile videtur non continuo falsum est. [...]. Si pudens esse cupis, in futura prospectum intende et quae possunt contingere, animo tuo cuncta propone. Nihil tibi subitum sit sed totum ante prospectes. Nam qui prydens est non dicit: «Non putavi hoc fieri», quia non dubitat sed expectat, nec suspicatur sed cavet".

⁷ Martinus Bracarensis, *Formula vitae honestae* 3, 1-4, 13-16, 20-24, Barlow, p. 241: "Magnanimitas vero, quae et fortitudo dicitur, si insit animo tuo, cum magna fiducia vives liber, interpidus, alecer. Magnum humani animi bonum est non tremere, sed constare sibi et finem huius vitae intrepidus exspectare [...] et cum illum in potestate tua

and drink as well as humble dwellings befit great men, who adorn their homes with the virtues they embody, instead of allowing the splendour of their residence to adorn them. The moderate king shall accept admonitions with gratitude, treating them as lessons to learn from and opportunities to take advantage of the assistance offered by other people⁸. The just ruler acts in accordance with the inherent divine law and, following his love of God, attempts to imitate God, offering help to his fellow men and stopping the deeds of the unjust⁹. The manifestations of the four cardinal virtues, as described, make up a certain picture of the ideal ruler, thus becoming part of the vision of the sovereign ruler as a looking-glass of justice and virtue, which can be found in many historical periods. The words of caution contained in chapters 6-9 are points of interest as well. The bishop of Braga warns the king against exaggeration or overzealous attitude, both of which may turn any virtue into a vice. Thus, the prudence may become deviousness, the magnanimity – boastfulness and impulsiveness, the moderation – meanness, and the justice – cruel and excessive severity¹⁰.

A noteworthy fact is the absence of the strictly Christian point of view in the *Formula vitae honestae* as only a reference to the love of God in the characteristics of justice is certainly an expression of Christian convictions. On the other hand, the title of the treatise bears much resemblance to the thoughts and ideas represented by Stoics, in particular those present in the writings of Lucius Annaeus Seneca (c. 4 BC-65 AD). The attitude of the eminent Church Fathers to the pagan Stoic philosophy was not overwhelmingly negative. The conception of the life regulated by a set of simple morals as propagated by Stoics was not alien to Christian philosophers. Although some of them, such as Jerome, perceived some Stoic teachings as a source

videris, vindictam putabis vindicare potuisse: scito enim honestum et magnum vindicare esse genus ignoscere. Neminem susurro apetas, neminem suffodias: palam egredere. Non geres conflictum nisi indixeris: nam fraudes et doli imbecillum decent”.

⁸ Martinus Bracaraensis, *Formula vitae honestae* 4, 6-7, 14-15, Barlow, p. 242: “Ede citra cruditatem, bibe citra eberitatem [...]. Si cosistentiae studes, habita non amoene sed salubiter, nec dominum notum velis esse a domo, sed domum a domino”.

⁹ Martinus Bracaraensis, *Formula vitae honestae* 5, 5-11, Barlow, p. 246: “Quisquis ergo hanc sectari desiseras, time prius deum et ama deum, ut ameris a deo. Amabis enim deum, si illum in hoc imitaberis, et velis omnibus prodesse, nulli nocere et tunc te iustum virum appellabunt omnes, sequentur, venerabuntur et diligent. Iustus enim ut sis, non solum non nocebis, sed etiam nocentem prohiberis. Nam nihil nocere non est iustitia, sed abstinencia alieni est”.

¹⁰ Martinus Bracaraensis, *Formula vitae honestae* 6, 4-6, 7, 1-3, 8, 1-3, 9, 1-5, Barlow, p. 247-249.

of heresy, they would accept the moral norms espoused by the Stoics¹¹. The most significant evidence in confirmation of the fact that St. Martin of Braga had known the works of Seneca very well is his treatise *De ira*, which is dedicated to Wittimer (?-?), bishop of Aquae Urentes (Ourense). Except for the introduction and the epilogue, St. Martin of Braga composed the entire text of the treatise by skilfully collating extensive fragments meticulously transferred from Seneca's treatise with the same title¹². In the case of the *Formula vitae honestae*, it is difficult to indicate any specific work by Seneca which the bishop of Braga may have taken as a model to be followed, but this treatise continued to be copied profusely for centuries during the medieval period (after its preface had already been lost before) as Seneca's original composition, often published with the title *De quattuor virtutibus cardinalibus*. It was only in the 16th century that scholars and editors re-identified St. Martin of Braga as the author and the first text of the work

¹¹ Similar thoughts can be found in Tertullian and (as mentioned not without reservations) in St. Jerome. This was described, among others, by: M. Starowieyski, *Wstęp. Marcin z Bragi i jego dzieło*, w: Marcin z Bragi, *Dzieła*, Kęty 2008, p. 34-35; A. Capone, *Stoici, qui nostro dogmati in plerisque concordant: Gerolamo e lo stoicismo*, "Adamantius. Annuario di Letteratura Cristiana Antica e di Studi Giudeoellenistici" 24 (2018) p. 442-450; S. Tavares, *O Senecismo de S. Martinho de Dume*, "Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia" 6/4 (1950) p. 383-384; Claude W. Barlow puts together in contrast the three moral treatises of Saint Martin of Braga (*Pro repellent iactantia, Item de superb, Exhortation humilitatis*) to *Formula vitae honestae* and *De ira* and writes: "The philosophy of these three works of Martinis Essentially Christian in character, as opposed to the *De ira* and *Formula vitae honestae* which are purely Stoic" C.W. Barlow (ed), *Martini episcopi bracarenensis opera omnia*, London 1950, p. 55.

¹² C.W. Barlow (ed), *Martini episcopi bracarenensis opera omnia*, London 1950, p. 145-146; C.W. Barlow, *Introduction*, in: *Iberian Fathers*, v. 1, Martin of Braga, *Paschasius of Dumium. Leander of Seville*, Washington 1969, p. 9-10; G. Sabbah, *Introduction*, in: Martin de Braga. *Œuvres morales et pastorales*, Paris 2018, p. 27; Starowieyski, *Wstęp. Marcin z Bragi i jego dzieło*, p. 34-35, 39-42; P.F. Alberto, *Séneca e Martinho de Braga: Alguns fantasmas de um recepção*, "Euphrosyne" 21 (1993) p. 119-121, 137-138; P.F. Alberto, "Dentes strident". *Uma reflexão sobre um passo do "De ira" de Martinho de Braga*, "Euphrosyne" 17 (1989) p. 281-286; G. Lopetegui, *Prosa métrica versus prosa rítmica: el "De ira" de Séneca en un resumen de Martin de Braga*, "Cuadernos de Filología Clásica" 3 (1992) p. 137-144; Tavares, *O Senecismo de S. Martinho de Dume*, p. 385-387. A comparative statement of *De ira* by Seneca and Marcin was presented by M. Ferreira de Sousa, *De Ira S. Martini Dumiensis et La. Senecae*, "Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia" 6/4 (1950) p. 388-397; A. Ferreira, *St. Martins of Braga policy toward heretics and pagan practices*, "The American Benedictine Review" 3/4 (1983) p. 390-391.

based upon the earliest manuscript was published in the 18th century¹³. The philosophical as well as philological research into the texts by St. Martin of Braga performed in the 20th-21st centuries confirm not only the bishop's great erudition, but also his solid reliance on the intellectual heritage of Seneca. His good knowledge of Christian authors allowed him to draw on their writings as well. For his short moral treatises *Pro repellenda iactantia* and *De superbia*, he adapted some of John Cassian's views expressed in the books XI and XII of the *De institutis coenobitorum et de octo principalium vitionum remediis*¹⁴. There is no doubt that he had also drawn on the works of Jerome and Augustine¹⁵. He had a great merit in introducing the spirit of the Eastern monasticism (*Sententiae Patrum Aegyptiorum*) and the principles of the activity and organization of the Church determined at the synods of the East (*Capitula ex Orientalium Patrum Synodis*) to the inhabitants of the westernmost fringes of the former Imperium Romanum. His knowledge of Greek allowed him to make translations from that language, with some assistance of Paschasius, who was one of the monks from Dume (a congregation founded by St. Martin of Braga)¹⁶.

Contemporary sources emphasize St. Martin's great erudition¹⁷ as well as his pastoral and organizational services (to be discussed in more detail

¹³ Until the beginning of the 16th century, the treatise was considered a work of Seneca and even part of the correspondence between Seneca and Paul. Erasmus of Rotterdam described the work in 1529 as "falso Senecae tributa". They wrote about the medieval editions of the work as Seneca text and the reassignment of the work to St. Martin of Braga in the 16th century: C.W. Barlow (ed), *Martini episcopi bracarenensis opera omnia*, p. 209-210, 224-232; Starowieyski, *Wstęp. Marcin z Bragi i jego dzieło*, p. 41-42; P.F. Alberto, *Sêneca e Martinho de Braga: Alguns fantasmas de um recepção*, p. 123-125; Sabbah, *Introduction*, p. 35-38; E. Bickel, *Die Schrift des Martins von Bracara "Formula vitae honestae"*, "Rheinisches Museum" 60 (1905) p. 505-510; Ferreira, *St. Martin of Braga's policy toward heretics and pagan practices*, p. 390.

¹⁴ C.W. Barlow (ed), *Martini episcopi bracarenensis opera omnia*, p. 53-55. At the end of the 20th century, Amaldo Monteiro de Espírito Santo doubted the influence of Cassian's writings on the work of Saint Martin of Braga, as Marek Starowieyski pointed out. A. Monteiro do Espírito Santo, *A recepção de Cassiano e das Vitae Patrum. Um estudo literário de Braga no séc. VI*, Universidade de Lisboa 1993, p. 173, 176 (Tese de doutorado); Starowieyski, *Wstęp. Marcin z Bragi i jego dzieło*, p. 57.

¹⁵ C.W. Barlow (ed), *Martini episcopi bracarenensis opera omnia*, p. 163-165; G. Sabbah, *Introduction*, p. 38-39; Starowieyski, *Wstęp. Marcin z Bragi i jego dzieło*, p. 47.

¹⁶ C.W. Barlow (ed), *Martini episcopi bracarenensis opera omnia*, p. 12 - 13; Barlow, *Introduction*, p. 113-115, 117.

¹⁷ Gregorius Turoniensis, *Historia Francorum* V 37, 10-13, ed. B. Krusch, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum* 1/1, Hannoverae 1951, p. 243: "Hoc tempore et beatus

hereafter). He should be certainly credited with bringing back and working to restore the Roman culture in a degree of a peculiar “local renaissance” in Gallaecia, most probably with King Miro’s support and assistance in ensuring to maintain it. The Suebian king is praised in the preface to the *Formula vitae honestae* as a wise ruler, shown in anticipation of receiving more works of wisdom. Although there are examples of some other similar “local revivals” in the course of the 5th-6th centuries¹⁸, the achievements of St. Martin of Braga are by no means diminished in this regard.

The relations between the Roman and Suebian populations would not always turn out so well as under the rule of the Suebian king Miro. The situation of the Romans in Gallaecia and Lusitania was going through many changes from the beginning of the barbarian invasion up until the final years of the Suebian kingdom. However, changes were also taking place in the conditions of the existence and functioning of the local Roman elites, urban populations, and the clergy, i.e., those social groups that preserved the heritage of ancient civilization to the greatest extent. Over time, they would also begin to share it with the Suebian tribal elites, as discussed further on.

In 409, more than a century and a half before the events at the court of Braga described above, king Hermeric (?-441), one of Miro’s predecessors, crossed the Pyrenees with his warriors, *en route* from Gaul to the south. His army was not large as the number of Suebian soldiers is estimated at 5,000-8,000 at the time¹⁹. Concurrently, Vandals and Alans invaded the Roman

Martinus Gallicensis episcopus obiit, Magnum populo illi faciens planctum. [...] in tantum se litteris inuit, ut nulli secundus suis temporibus haberetur”.

¹⁸ An example of this is the architectural and intellectual heyday of Carthage during the reign of the vandal king Thrasamund, which Florentinus announced in: “In laudem regis – victrix Carthago triumphat, Cartago Asdingis genetrix [...]. Cartago excellens Libycas [...] Carthago studiis, Carthago ornata magistris [...] Carthago florens, Thrasamundi nomine regnans! Cuius imperium maneat per secula felix” (Anthologia Latina 376, 29-37, ed. F. Buechelen – A. Riese, Lipsiae 1894, p. 289. On this and other “local renaissance” see Y. Hen, *Roman Barbarians. The Royal Court and Culture in the Early Medieval West*, New York 2007, p. 74-83 (Thrasamund), 27-58 (Theodoric the Great), 141-152 (Sisebut and St. Isidore of Seville).

¹⁹ The following researchers commented on the number of warriors of the tribe during the invasion of Spain: W. Reinhart, *O reino hispânico dos Suevos*, Coimbra 1944, p. 18; W. Reinhart, *Los Suevos em tiempo de su invasion em Hispania*, Madrid 1946, p. 311; J.-P. Leguay, *O “Portugal” Germânico*, in: *Nova História de Portugal*, v. 2: *Portugal das Invasões Germanicas à “Reconquista”*, ed. A.H. de Oliveira Marques – J. Serrão, Lisboa 1993, p. 27; J. Pampliega, *Los germanos en España*, Pamplona 1998, p. 277.

Spain through the passes in the Pyrenees²⁰. There are reasons to believe that the province of *Gallaecia* was a place of their permanent settlement from the beginning. Following the division of the provinces of the dioceses of Hispania among the barbarian domains in 411, they shared it with the *Hasting* Vandals, but after their victory over the Vandal rivals and the departure of the latter for *Baetica*²¹, the Suebi continued to settle Gallaecia as the only barbarian people. The accounts on the beginnings of their taking control of the province do not foreshadow their future assimilation with the Roman population in the time of Miro and St. Martin of Braga. The initial wave of the onslaught, marked by acts of violence, plunder, and devastation, continued through the years 409-411. The sources on the events of this period convey the picture of the terrible misery suffered by the inhabitants of the province, while Hydatius (c. 400-c. 469), the author closest to those events, writes about the mass murder, the ensuing plague, people (both living and dead) devoured by wild animals, and the horrendous famine leading to acts of cannibalism. He compares the misfortunes suffered by the Roman Spain to the Biblical plagues known from the prophecies of Ezekiel (14:21) or the visions of the Apocalypse (6:8)²².

For nearly 20 years of Hermeric's reign, Gallaecia had been the main area of the confrontation between the Suebi and the local Roman population. An exceptional occurrence was the military leader Hermigar's (?-429)

²⁰ Hydatius, *Chronica* 42, in: *Chronik des Hydatius, Fortführung der spanischen Epitome*, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, Paderborn 2019, p. 98; Paulus Orosius, *Historiarum adversus paganos libri VII* VII 40, 9, in: *Histoires (Contre les Païens)*, ed. M.P.A. Lindet, 3/7, Paris 1991, p. 120; Olympiodorus, *Historiarum librorum XII fragmenta*, Fr. 29; R.C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire. Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus. (II) Text, Translation and Historiographical Notes*, Liverpool 1983, p. 192; Prosper Tiro, *Chronica* 1237, *Chronik*, ed. M. Becker – J.-M. Kötter, Paderborn 2016, p. 82; Gregorius Turonensis, *Historia Francorum* II 2, 1-3, ed. B. Krusch, "MGH Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum" 1/1 (1951) p. 39; Isidorus Hispalensis, *Historia de regibus Gothorum, Wandalorum et Suevorum* 71, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH Auctores Antiquissimi 11, Berolini 1894, p. 295; *Chronica Gallica* 63-64, in: *Gallische Chroniken*, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, Paderborn 2017, p. 58; Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Romana* XII 17, ed. H. Droysen, MGH Auctores Antiquissimi 2, Berolini 1879, p. 195.

²¹ Hydatius, *Chronica* 71, 74, 77, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, p. 108-110.

²² Hydatius, *Chronica* 48, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, p. 100. Olympiodorus also wrote about cannibalism in Spain under the same circumstances and at the same time – see Olympiodorus, *Historiarum librorum XII fragmenta*, Fr. 29, 2, ed. Blockley, Liverpool 1983, p. 192.

failed attempt to invade Mérida in 429, when he was swiftly defeated by Geiseric (?-477), king of the Vandals²³. Apart from that one episodic event, Hermeric directed his raids at the Roman population of Gallaecia, while the Latin word *depraedationes* is the term which Hydatius uses most frequently to describe the economic and political activity of the Suebian ruler. Like inhabitants in the other parts of the empire affected by the barbarian incursions, the population of Gallaecia put up resistance by forming local self-defence units, most likely under the leadership of the local *possessores* who had private armed detachments at their command or had some resources for organizing local militias. Their resistance compelled Hermeric, whose warriors were often killed or taken captive, to undertake negotiations and call a truce in 430, followed by a permanent peace agreement in 438²⁴. The pagan ruler had already previously realized that the cooperation with the episcopate of Gallaecia could aid him in a peaceful arrangement of the relations with the local Romans and the distant centre of Imperial authority, so necessary for a proper growth of his realm. It was already in 433 that he entrusted bishop Symphosius (?-?) with a diplomatic mission to the Imperial court²⁵. Those events signalled a shift in the relations between the Romans and the Suebi.

²³ Hydatius, *Chronica* 90, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, p. 114. More on the term of Hermigar, perhaps the father of Flavius Rycimer: W. Reinhart, *Historia geral del reino hispánico de los Suevos*, Madrid 1952, p. 39; S. Hamann, *Vorgeschichte und Geschichte der Sueben in Spanien*, München 1971, p. 95; C. Torres Rodríguez, *El reino de los Suevos*, Santiago de Compostella 1977, p. 68; Leguay, *O "Portugal" Germânico*, p. 44; T. Stickler, *Aëtius. Gestaltungsspielräume eines Herrmeisters im ausgehenden Weströmischen Reich*, München 2002, p. 232; X. Vilar Bernárdez, *O comezo da nossa Idade Media. A Gallaecia que se emancipou de Roma*, Noia 2003, p. 147-148; M. Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and its Cities*, Baltimore – London 2004, p. 178.

²⁴ Hydatius, *Chronica* 91, 113, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, p. 120-122.

²⁵ Hydatius, *Chronica* 101, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, p. 118. On the role of *defensores civitatis* or bishops as representatives of the Roman population in territories controlled by barbarians see S. Baumgart, *Die Bischofsherrschaft im Gallien des 5. Jahrhunderts*, München 1995; G. Maier, *Amtsträger und Herrscher in der Romania Gothica. Vergleichende Untersuchungen zu den Institutionen der ostgermanischen Völkerwanderungsgeschichte*, Stuttgart 2005, p. 279-287; S. Schmidt-Hofner, *Der defensor civitatis und die Entstehung des Notabelregiments in den spätrömischen Städten*, in: *Chlodwigs Welt. Organisation und Herrschaft um 500*, ed. M. Meier – S. Patzold, Stuttgart 2014, p. 487-522; S. Patzold, *Bischöfe, soziale Herkunft und die Organisation lokaler Herrschaft um 500*, in: *Chlodwigs Welt. Organisation und Herrschaft um 500*, ed. M. Meier – S. Patzold, Stuttgart 2014, p. 523-544. For the diplomatic mission of Symphosius, see also: F.J. Sanz Huesma, *Hidacio y Censorio. El foedus de 438 entre*

King Rechila (?-448), Hermeric's successor, was the first one to treat the territory of Gallaecia as his own property, not as an object of depredation. He also had ambitious plans for taking advantage of the temporary political vacuum, after the Vandals' migration to Africa, and taking control of the whole territory of Spain (except for the province of *Tarraconensis*, still under the Roman Empire's control). The Suebian ruler conquered *Lusitania*, *Baetica*, and *Carthaginiensis*²⁶, establishing his residence at Mérida (*Emerita Augusta*)²⁷. As the administrative centre of the diocese of Hispania, Mérida was a place where the elements of the ancient civilization continued to exist as well as an important centre of the worship of St Eulalia, notable for its role in the Christianization of Gallaecia²⁸. In Braga, duke Rechiar (?-456) was in power on behalf of his father. It may be assumed that he maintained relations with the Roman circles, based in the city and the environs, who preserved the elements of ancient culture²⁹ and remained faithful to Christianity under the rule of the pagan Suebian kings. There is no doubt that the milieu of the metropolitan bishop formed a strong centre of the persistence of the Roman civilisation in Braga. The intensity of the relations with bishop Balconius paved the way for Rechiar's baptism and

Roma y los suevos, "Polis. Revista de ideas y formas políticas de la Antiquedad Clásica" 21 (2009) p. 59-75.

²⁶ Hydatius, *Chronica* 123, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, p. 124: "Rex Rechila Hispali obtenta, Baeticam et Carthaginiensem provincias in suam redigit potestatem".

²⁷ Hydatius, *Chronica* 119, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, p. 122: "Rechila rex Suevorum Emeritam ingreditur"; Isidorus Hispalensis, *Historia de regibus Gothorum, Wandalorum et Suevorum*, ed. T. Mommsen, p. 300: "Inde Emeritam obsessam ingreditu, atque obtentiam propria regno associat". On Rechila's political plans and the Romans' attempts to stop them, see Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and its Cities*, p. 181-184; M. Wilczyński, *Królestwo Swebów – regnum in extremitate mundi*, Kraków 2011, p. 122-133; P. Díaz, *El reino suevo (411-585)*, Madrid 2011, p. 75-78; D. Gazotti Medeiros, *Em busca de uma identidade romano – barbara: a emulação das instituições romanas pelas monarquias goda e sueva na primeira metade do século V*, "Romanitas. Revista de Estudos Grecolatinos" 7 (2016) p. 240-241.

²⁸ X.-L. Pita Armada, *El Culto a Santa Eulalia y la cristianización de Gallaecia: algunos testimonios arqueológicos*, „HABIS" 34 (2003) p. 365-388.

²⁹ The term "culture" can have different meanings. In the case of this article, it is not limited to the literary, spiritual and philosophical field, but is broader. By "Roman culture" I mean a wider spectrum of Roman (or ancient) heritage, which includes the preservation of the language, customs, way of life and urban institutions that are typical of the Roman world. Of course, the organizational and missionary activity of the Church also falls under the term. Compare with: Hen, *Roman Barbarians. The Royal Court and Culture in the Early Mediaval West*, p. 3-26.

conversion to the Nicene creed immediately after his father's death in 448, which was a clear move towards the rapprochement between the king (and his court) and the Roman population in the province³⁰. It is possible that such a step may have also facilitated the emergence through the process of assimilation, of the ethnically mixed landed aristocracy of the old and new (Suebian) estate owners³¹. This conciliatory policy was apparently not harmed by the formation of a circle of the arian (homoian) influence at the court in connection with Rechiar's marriage to the daughter of Theodoric I (?-455), king of the Visigoths, especially as the Suebian alliance with the Visigoths was a short-lived one. Unfortunately for the Suebi Kingdom, the crisis in the Suebi-Visigothic relations ended up in a military intervention by Rechiar's brother-in-law, king of the Visigoths Theodoric II (?-466), in alliance with the Burgundian rulers Gundioc (?-c. 473/474) and Chilperic I (?-c.482). On 5 October 456, the Suebi were defeated at Páramo, after which Rechiar was captured and executed³². In spite of the fact that Theodoric II acted on behalf of the empire as an ally and friend of the emperor Eparchius Avitus (c. 390-457), the violence and pillage which the clergy, local inhabitants, and the temples of Braga and Astorga suffered upon the incursion of the Visigoths and Burgundians were nothing but a cause for immense distress for the Roman population "liberated" with the use of such

³⁰ Hydatius, *Chronica* 137, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, p. 128; Isidorus Hispalensis, *Historia de regibus Gothorum, Wandalorum et Suevorum* 87, ed. T. Mommsen, p. 301. See also Hamman, *Vorgeschichte und Geschichte der Sueben in Spanien*, p. 107-108; Torres Rodríguez, *El reino de los Suevos*, p. 115; Vilar Bernárdez, *O comezo da nossa Idade Media. A Gallecia que se emancipou de Roma*, p. 94; Stickler Aëtius. *Gestaltungsspielräume eines Herrmeisters im ausgehenden Weströmischen Reich*, p. 229; Díaz *El reino suevo*, p. 78-79; Wilczyński, *Królestwo Swebów – regnum in extremitate mundi*, p. 133-141. On the importance of Rechiara's baptism and its influence on the tribal elite: D. Gazotti Medeiros, *Que todos os Suevos regressem a sua autoridade régia: a construção de uma identidade monárquica sueva durante o século V*, Curitiba 2018, p. 158. On the influence of the Roman elite on the tribal in Gallaecia: A. Ferreiro, *Saint Martin of Braga and Germanic Languages an Addendum to Recent Research*, "Peritia" 6-7 (1987) p. 158

³¹ Torres Rodríguez, *El reino de los Suevos*, p. 115.

³² *Chronicorum CaesarAugustanum Reliquie*, a. 458, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH Auctores Antiquissimi 11, Berolini 1894, p. 222; Hydatius, *Chronica* 173, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, p. 142; Iordanes, *Getica – de origine actibusque Getarum* 232, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH Auctores Antiquissimi 5/1, Berolini 1882, p. 117; *Auctarium Prosperi Havniense* a. 457, 1, in: *Consularia Italica*, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH Auctores Antiquissimi 11, Berolini 1892, p. 305; Isidorus Hispalensis, *Historia de regibus Gothorum, Wandalorum et Suevorum* 86, ed. T. Mommsen, p. 300-301.

a peculiar method³³. The disparity in the descriptions of the events between the accounts of Hydatius and Jordanes (?-after 552) can be explained by the fact that the transmission of Jordanes refers to the Suebi, while Hydatius recounts the misery of the Roman population in the cities captured by Theodoric II.

The initial attempts at a peaceful coexistence of the Suebi and the Roman population made it certainly easier for the latter to preserve the legacy of ancient civilization. In the course of time, *cultura Romana* and *cultura christiana* evolved towards one common identity in Spain, while the leading role of the Gallaecian clergy as an intermediary between the barbarians and the Romans is unquestionable. However, the military and political disaster of the Suebian kingdom in the year 456 resulted in the weakening of the assimilation processes and the ensuing partition of the royal authority among Maldras (?-460), Framta(?-?), Frumari (?-464), and Rechimund (?-469) was a period of the regress to depredations and hostility. An additional threat, as Hydatius points out³⁴, was the emergence of a Visigothic arian (homoian?)³⁵ mission, resulting in the religious reorientation of the court and some elements of the Suebian people towards the heretical confession.

In the context of our discussion on the preservation of the elements of ancient culture, it is worth taking a closer look at the literary work of Hydatius, bishop of Aquae Flaviae, our main source of information on the situation in Gallaecia up to the year 468. There are reasons to believe that he was an educated man (although perhaps not as well-educated as St. Martin of Braga), one of those inhabitants of Gallaecia who may have viewed the preservation of the Roman culture, even in its Late-Antique form, as a chance for the perpetuation of the cultural identity under the rule of barbarian kingdoms. In addition to his very good knowledge of the Bible and Christian writings, he also displayed – at least in a major part of his chronicle – a rational approach to supernatural phenomena and omens. In many instances, he reckons those as natural phenomena

³³ Taking control of the capital was bloodless, but there was violence and robbery in the city. On the behavior of the Visigoths in the conquered cities see the contradictory accounts of Hydatius and Jordanes – Hydatius, *Chronica* 174, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, p. 142-144; Iordanes, *Getica – de origine actibusque Getarum* 233-234, ed. T. Mommsen, p. 117-118. On Hydatius' repeated references to biblical prophecies, see C. Hartmann de Cardelle, *Philologische Studien zur Chronik des Hydatius von Chaves*, Stuttgart 1994, p. 156-158.

³⁴ Hydatius, *Chronica* 232, ed. J.-M. Kötter – C. Scardino, p. 160.

³⁵ The ancient sources consistently use only the terms "Arianism", "Arian".

with no context allowing for revealing the future, in accordance with the Christian aversion to the pagan “prodigies”. Over time, however, he would more and more often show his tendency to return to the older, so characteristically ancient Classical, way of associating the supernatural signs with the related consequences, usually of a catastrophic and pessimistic character. He was consistent in avoiding any form of divination intentionally caused by fortune-tellers, e.g., auspices, but he would more often tend to embrace the ancient ways of interpreting the signs beyond the range of human activity (e.g., solar eclipses, earthquakes, weather anomalies, unusual signs), as if modelling his interpretations on those typical of the ancient Roman culture³⁶.

The sources offer no traces of a reception of the Roman civilisation by the Suebi or indications of any more intense barbarian-Roman assimilation during the time of Rechimund’s sole reign, and it would be all the more difficult to find such evidence in the historiographically obscure “dark period” between after the ending of Hydatius’ chronicle (468) and the conversion of the Suebi into the Catholic faith under Chararic (?-c. 558/9)³⁷. Nevertheless, there are no mentions of any aggravation of the persecution or hostility between the inhabitants of Gallaecia representing the two ethnic groups in this particular period.

Some scholars had previously made efforts to find the evidence for the alleged persecutions, but with no satisfactory results. The account on the martyrdom of the abbot Vincencius of León is a case in point. It is mentioned there that the pious abbot was killed as a result of the persecution ordered by the cruel “Arian” (homoian) king of the Suebi Rechila. It is rather unlikely that the figure in question was Rechila, the son of Hermeric, because as a pagan ruler, he would be aligned with neither orthodoxy nor heresy. For this reason, Spanish scholars came up with the theory of the hypothetical ruler Rechila II (el Verdugo, i.e., the executioner), a completely imaginary figure. It is notable that the martyrdom of Vincencius is dated to 11th March 630, and no Suebian or even, generally speaking, “Arian” king could have been responsible for his death, because there were no such rulers in Spain after the conversion of the Visigothic king Reccared

³⁶ On the classical and Christian intellectual formation of Hydatius, on his drawing from biblical motives, as well as on his approach to omens see Hartmann de Cardelle, *Philologische Studien zur Chronik des Hydatius von Chaves*, p. 124-160.

³⁷ R. Furtado, *Existiram suevos entre os reis Remismundo e Teodomiro?*, in: *Vir bonus peritissimus aequae. Estudos de homenagem a Arnaldo do Espírito Santo*, ed. M.C. Pimentel – A.P. Farmhouse, Lisboa 2013, p. 491-506.

(c. 559-601)³⁸. The only certain source from the “dark period” is Pope Vigilius’ (c. 500-555) letter to the bishop of Braga Profuturus (?-?)³⁹. The pope replied to the questions from the bishop’s letter, the contents of which can be reconstructed on the basis of the very well-ordered answers provided in the papal return letter. In the third and fourth parts of the letter, Vigilius responded to questions concerning the re-admittance (to the Nicene Church) of those who renounced the faith and accepted the Arian creed, and also addressed the question of the restitution of the rebuilt temples for worship. Both issues attest to the possible, but certainly bloodless, “offensive” of the Arian church, yet they also clearly confirm the effective counteraction by the Nicene Church, consolidating the position of the Roman population in the effort of preserving the heritage of the Roman and Christian culture.

In the mid-6th century, the process of the integration between the Suebi and the Roman population accelerated and took on a new dimension. Despite the religious and cultural differences, various groups of influence must have arisen at the courts of the Suebian kings, with the aim of representing the Roman urban elites and the wealthy *possessores*. It was exactly in those circles that the attachment to the legacy of the Roman culture and the Nicene orthodoxy must have been the strongest. A testimony to the influence of the Roman milieu is Gregory of Tours’ account on the miraculous healing of king Chararic’s son and many of his barbarian subjects from leprosy (550 or 556). In his narrative, leprosy is only a synonym for the Arian heresy among the Suebi. For the research on the influence of the Romans upholding the ancient cultural traditions, it is important to determine the identity of the enigmatic *fideles amici* of the king, who advised the ruler to bring the relics of St. Martin of Tours (c. 316/7-397) to Braga. They must have been the people familiar with the arcane knowledge of the worship of the saints representing the Nicene tradition and aware of its significance to the Late-Roman civilisation. Those figures could not have

³⁸ *Passio Sancti et Beatissimi Vincentii Martyris atque Abbatis*, ed. M. Risco, *España sagrada*, v. 34: *Iglesia antigua de León: contiene el Estado Antiguo de la santa Iglesia de León: con varios Documentos y Escrituras concernientes a los puntos que en él se tratan: sacadas en la Mayor Parte de su Archivo*, Oviedo 1989, p. 147-150. The story of Vincentius’ martyrdom was a misunderstanding resulting from a misreading of the tomb inscription of Vincentius in León. The story of the martyrdom of Abbot Ranimir was similarly unbelievable – see K. Schäferdiek, *Die Kirche in den Reichen der Westgoten und Sueven bis zur Errichtung der westgotischen katholischen Staatkirche*, Berlin 1967, p. 116, n. 41.

³⁹ J.O. Bragança, *A carta do papa Vigilio ao Arcebispo Profuturo de Braga*, “Bracara Augusta” 21 (1967) p. 66-69.

been Arian clergymen from the king's inner circle or his Suebian courtiers and aides who would have no monopoly on the service at the court. The authority of Chararic had already acquired, after all, a more territorial and multi-ethnic character, transcending the limits of the tribal policy. Chararic is addressed in the source as the "king of Gallaecia", not "of the Suebi"⁴⁰. "Friends" of the king was a category of courtiers present at various courts of barbarian rulers. In most cases, they were the kings' trusted counsellors (advisers)⁴¹. The *fideles amici* of Chararic directed the king's attention to the possibility of taking advantage of the healing powers of St. Martin of Tours. Following the initial unsuccessful attempt at "buying" the saint's favour with lavish gifts, they instructed Chararic that the healing power of St. Martin's tomb flowed from the true faith surrounding it, and the faith in question was the Nicene orthodoxy, not the one professed by the king. They also tried to persuade the king into renouncing the Arian confession and converting to the faith of his Roman subjects. In addition, they persuaded him to send his request for the relics of St. Martin of Tours and take a vow of founding a cathedral church, where they would be solemnly placed for veneration⁴². All of those circumstances would point to a group of well-educated courtiers who were familiar with at least the provinces nearest to Gallaecia, most likely representatives of the local Roman elites. Although Chararic had no possibility of becoming familiar with the *Formula vitae honeste*, he displayed at least two of the cardinal virtues on the advice of his educated Roman "friends". Prudence allowed him to recognize the essence of the problem and aroused the trust and faith in him, while justice made him keep his pledge, adopt the faith of his Roman subjects, and commence the construction of the cathedral church, from which the preserved *cultura Romana* and the growing *cultura christiana*, fervently propagated by the erudite bishop and integrally connected with her older sister, could then emanate thanks to St. Martin of Braga.

⁴⁰ Gregorius Turoniensis, *De virtutibus sancti Martini episcopi* I 11, ed. B. Krusch, MGH Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum 1/2, Hannoverae 1885, p. 144 (p. 594), p. 145 (p. 595): "Chararici cuiusdam regis Galliciae filius graviter aegrotabat, qui tale taedium incurreat, ut solo spiritu palpitaret. Pater autem eius faetidae se illis Arriane sectae una cum incolis loci subdiderat".

⁴¹ V. von Epp, *Amicitia. Zur Geschichte personaler, sozialer und geistlichen Beziehungen in frühen Mittelalter*, Stuttgart 1999, p. 140; G. Maier, *Amtsträger und Herrscher in der Romania Gothica. Vergleichende Untersuchungen zu den Institutionen der ostgermanischen Völkerwanderungsgeschichte*, Stuttgart 2005, p. 121-130.

⁴² Gregorius Turonensis, *De virtutibus sancti Martini episcopi* I 11, ed. B. Krusch, p. 145 (p. 595), p. 146 (p. 596).

Martin, a saint and the future bishop of Braga, was born in Pannonia and arrived in Braga reportedly at the time of Chararic's reign. Gregory of Tours (538-594) takes notice of a symbolic chronological coincidence of his appearance in Braga with the arrival of the relics of St. Martin of Tours (also a native of Pannonia)⁴³. Martin of Braga refers to his episcopal activity being inseparably linked with the cathedral and the worship of St. Martin of Tours' relics in his poetical epitaph, humbly stressing his subordinate role in comparison with the famous namesake⁴⁴. The long-lasting activity of the "apostle of the Suebi", as St. Martin of Braga came to be rightly called, not only led to the Christianization of the tribe and the considerable weakening of the pagan customs among the people of Gallaecia, but also contributed to the propagation of the legacy of ancient culture, never seen since the time of the initial barbarian invasion. It would be incorrect to claim that St. Martin of Braga was responsible for the re-Romanization of the population of Gallaecia. Under the circumstances of the advancing assimilation of the Germanic and Roman populations, such a profound socio-cultural *reconquista* would not have been very likely. The bishop's activity could be compared to a strong and invigorating wind, coming to rekindle fire from the embers buried deep in the ashes. He was prepared to meet the challenge of all the difficult tasks to be performed in the land at the westernmost periphery of the Roman *oikoumene*, "where the land ends, and the sea begins"⁴⁵, thanks to his very good education (for the contemporary standards) received in his youth. Opinions vary on the possible places of his education. He may have likely left Pannonia (so afflicted by the instability of the 6th centu-

⁴³ Gregorius Turonensis, *De virtutibus sancti Martini episcopi* I 11, ed. B. Krusch, p. 146 (p. 596): "Tunc commonitus a Deo beatus Martinus de regione longiqua, qui ibidem nunc sacerdos habetur, advenit". Gregorius Turoniensis, *Historia Francorum* V 37, 11-15, ed. B. Krusch, p. 243: "Nam hic Pannoniae ortus fuit, et exinde ad visitanda loca santa in Oriente properans, in tantum se litteris inbuit, ut nulli secundus suis temporibus haberetur. Exinde Gallitiam venit, ubi, cum beati Martini reliquiae portarentur, episcopus ordinatur. In quo sacerdotio impletis plus minus triginta annis, plenus virtutibus migravit ad Dominum".

⁴⁴ Martinus Bracarensis, *Epitaphium eiusdem*, in: *Martini episcopi Bracarensis, Opera omnia*, ed. C.W. Barlow, London 1950, p. 283: "Pannoniis genitus, transcendentis aequora vasta / Galliciae in gremium divinis nutibus actus / confessor Martine, tua hac dicatus in aula / antistes cultum instituti ritumque sacrorum / teque, patrone, sequens famulus Martinus eodem / nomine, non m  rito, hic in Christi pace quiesco".

⁴⁵ *Onde terra acaba e o mar come  a* – Lu  s Vaz Cam  es, *Os Lus  adas* Canto III est  ncia 20, Lisboa 2000, p. 104.

ry) and travelled to the East⁴⁶ or (and?), Italy. His intellectual formation may have been influenced by the philosophical thought of the Eastern monasticism, which he may have got to know during his stay in Palestine. His knowledge of Greek was sufficient to allow him to translate the apophthegmata of the Desert Fathers with much precision, but he was also fluent in the elegant Latin (considering the contemporary standards), while his profound familiarity with the works of Seneca and St. Augustine (353-430) would point to the education received at one of the intellectual centres in Italy. However, this does not preclude a pilgrimage to the holy sites of the East. The future bishop's possible journey to the East was not an exceptionally rare occurrence in Late Antiquity. Such voyages, accompanied by many opportunities of becoming acquainted with the intellectual legacy of the Eastern Christianity, had been previously undertaken by John Cassian, Paul Orosius, and the bishop Hydatius of Aquae Sextiae⁴⁷. We should also mention his ability to communicate with the Suebi in their native language, which he might have acquired, as Marek Starowieyski suggests, as a result of his contact with the Danubian Suebi in his native Pannonia⁴⁸. A. Ferreiro argues that he may have known the barbarians' native language before he arrived in Gallaecia, which was the reason for his interest in working among the Suebi, but in his opinion, St. Martin communicated with the upper classes of the Suebian community in Latin, while he used the Suebian language to speak to simple warriors and the ordinary people⁴⁹. This could be just another argument in support

⁴⁶ Isidorus Hispalensis, *De viris illustribus*.XXXV, PL 83, 1100: "Martinus, Dumisensis monasterii sanctissimus pontifex, ex Orientem partibus navigans, in Gallaeciam venit ibique conversis ab Ariana impetate ad fidem catholicam Suevorum populis regulam fidei et sanctae religionis constituit, ecclesias confirmavit, monasteria condidit, copiosaque praecepta pia institutionis composuit".

⁴⁷ M. Dietz, *Wandering Monks, Virgins and Pilgrims*, University Park 2005, p. 54-64 (Orosius), 77-88 (John Cassian), 160-161 (Hydatius).

⁴⁸ Starowieyski, *Wstęp. Marcin z Bragi i jego dzieło*, p. 19.

⁴⁹ A. Ferreiro (*Saint Martin of Braga and Germanic Languages an Addendum to Recent Research*, p. 229) notes the progress of the Romanization of the barbarian elites (under the influence of the Roman elite) from the invasion of 409 to the second half of the 6th century. In the conclusion of the article on page 306, Ferreiro wrote: "In regard to Martin of Braga, even if he knew any Germanic tongue, it seems that it would not have been required at all in his missionary work at the Suevic court, where the conversion was initially effected. Even in the countryside, Latin had made such deep inroads into the native populations that the church could readily carry out its missionary work virtually unimpeded by language barriers. [...] In view of Martin's language abilities (his knowledge

of the hypothesis that the upper classes of Gallaecia made efforts to cultivate ancient culture and the proper Latin even for as long as a century and a half after the barbarian invasion, while the Suebian elite would, in turn, tend to embrace the customs and the language of the Roman high society.

Among many works by St. Martin of Braga that influenced the upholding (or even the reconstruction) of elements of the ancient Classical heritage in the kingdom of the Suebi, his noteworthy achievement was the thorough reform of the Church of Gallaecia and the inclusion of the representatives of the Suebian elites in the ranks of the clergy and, consequently, in the circle of the Christian Roman culture, as exemplified by the signatures of the bishops attending the councils of Braga (first and second; in 561 and 572, respectively). The acts of the first council are signed by eight bishops, including one with a Germanic name (Hilderic), while the documents of the second one bear the signatures of twelve bishops, three of whom (25% of the Gallaecian episcopate in attendance) have clearly Germanic names (Adoric, Wittimer, Anila)⁵⁰. In his apostolic activity, the bishop of Braga concentrated his efforts on the following three goals: liquidation or conversion of the Priscillian communities, striving to convert the Suebi (followers of Arianism), and eliminating the vestiges of the pagan religion that were still strong among the Suebes as well as the Roman population. The first task appeared to be difficult as the Priscillian heresy continued to draw many followers since the 4th century and it was not suppressed despite some anti-Priscillian imperial edicts. It should be observed that the pagan kings of the Suebi were indifferent towards controversies among the Christians. King Rechiar's reign was too short, while the turmoil connected with the partition of the kingdom and the subsequent Arian influence at the court made sorting out the issues of the Church more difficult. The hope that the *brachium seculare* would support the Church in the anti-Priscillian efforts came only with king Chararic's conversion and the successive reigns of the Catholic rulers Ariamir, Teudemir, and Miro. Such an opportunity was used with eagerness and we know exactly which errors and forms of conduct were condemned thanks to the acts of the first synod of Braga as written up by St. Martin. A detailed account with a castigation of the heterodox practices constituted one of the significant parts of the synod's decrees. 11 years later, the issue of Priscillianism appeared to be practically non-existent in

of Greek), he probably would have learned Suevic or any other language, or employed interpreters, had the situation otherwise demanded".

⁵⁰ Martinus Bracaraensis, *Concilium Bracaraense Primum octo episcopum* 8, 24; Martinus Bracaraensis, *Concilium Bracaraense Secundum duodecim episcopum* 4, 11.18-19.

the documents of the second synod of Braga. The silence over this subject is a meaningful testimony to the efficiency of the actions undertaken by the episcopate (under St. Martin's direction since 569), combined – as we may presume – with a strong support from the Suebian rulers⁵¹. The anathemas of the first synod of Braga were directed at the Arians as well. In view of the conversion by the king and the court, the Arian hierarchy in Gallaecia (completely unattested in the sources) lost any support and prospects for further activity.

The efficient secular and church administrations facilitated the consolidating integration of the two main ethnic groups of the Suebian kingdom. The division into the episcopal dioceses is clearly indicative of the sensible policy implemented by the metropolitan of Braga, who also presided over the entire Church in Gallaecia. To make the administration more efficient, the structure consisted of the northern part (under the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Lugo), with the bishoprics of Iria, Tuy, Orense, Astorga, and Britania, and the southern one (subordinate to the metropolitan of Braga), with Braga, and the bishoprics of Porto, Lamego, Viseu, Coimbra, Idanha⁵². Apart from the division related to the church administration, the synod of Lugo (most probably on 1 June 569, even though the authenticity and the dating of the document that was reputedly issued at the time is still a topic of scholarly controversy today) also marked out the limits of 11 units of the military and civil administration under the authority of *comites* appointed by the king. It was a fact of great significance to the Romanization of the kingdom that those offices, traditionally reserved for barbarian military commanders, were held by the Romans as well (at least two of such Roman *comites* were Paulus and Vitalis)⁵³.

One of the places where the education of *cultura Romana et christiana* flourished was the monastic community at Dumio. The idea of the existence of such communities was not new in the territories of Spain and St. Martin of Braga created a new way of how to act rather than a brand-new tradition. Except for the monk Paschasius (?-?), a translator of Greek texts, no names of members of this particular community are known. The location of their

⁵¹ On the alliance of the altar and the throne in Gallaecia in the 6th century see, inter alia: L. Rodriquez da Silva – N. Agostinho Xavier, *Aspectos da ortoxia no reino suevos: Considerações sobre o "De correctione rusticorum"*, "Brathair" 13/2 (2013) p. 118-119.

⁵² Martinus Bracaraensis, *Concilium Bracaraense Secundum duodecim episcopum* 4, 7-21, Barlow, p. 122-123.

⁵³ *Divisio Teudemiri, Liber fidei sanctae Bracaraensis ecclesiae* 11, v. 1, ed. J. da Costa de Avelino, Braga 1965, p. 23.

activity was a Roman *villa*, the remains of which have been unearthed next to a Suebi-Visigothic basilica underneath the present Church of St. Martin of Braga at Dume⁵⁴. The remains of the Suebi basilica bear testimony to the high craftsmanship of the local builders and the continuation of the level known from the architecture of Late Antiquity. The community active in adapting the best patterns of the Eastern monasticism, with Greek writings at their disposal (subsequently translated and propagated)⁵⁵, was a significant factor in preserving ancient culture and cultivating the long-distance connections with the main centres of the Eastern Roman Empire⁵⁶. The chronologically later community of St. Frutuoso was a continuation of this idea, although it represented elements of the preservation of the ancient Classical heritage to a lesser extent⁵⁷.

⁵⁴ L. Fontes, *A basílica sueva de Dume e o túmulo dito de São Martinho*, Braga e Dume 2006. The state of the latest archaeological research on a Roman villa, convent and basilica in Dume has recently been reported by L. Fontes, *São Martinho de Dume: arqueologia, arquiteturas e paisagens*, “Urbs Regia” 3 (2018) p. 17-18, 19-21. On the foundation and organization of the monastery see J.B. Fiorot, *A atuação do bispo Martinho de Braga na organização da igreja Galega (segunda metade do século VI)*, “Espaco Plural” 30 (2014) p. 67.

⁵⁵ Martinus Bracarensis, *Capitula ex orientalium patrum synodis a Martino Episcopo ordinata atque collecta*, in: *Martini episcopi Bracarensis, Opera omnia*, ed. C.W. Barlow, London 1950, p. 123-144; Martinus Bracarensis, *Sententiae Patrum Aegyptiorum*, in: *Martini episcopi Bracarensis, Opera omnia*, ed. C.W. Barlow, London 1950, p. 30-51. These writings by Saint Martin of Braga also raise moral problems very similar to those discussed in treatises on cardinal virtues. One of many examples is the passage from *Sententiae Patrum Aegyptiorum* (109, 31-36, Barlow, p. 50): “Esto mansueti spiritus, et non iracundi. Nihil in corde tuo contra aliquem cogites mali, nec habeas inimicitiam in corde tuo eaque odium contra inimicantem tibi sine causa, neque irascaris inimicitiae eius, neque despicias eum in necessitate et tribulatione eius, nec reddas malum pro malo, sed esto pacificus cum omnibus: haec est enim pax Dei”. On the similarity of the Christian moral teachings in the “eastern” writings of Saint Martin of Braga, with those described by him in *Formula vitae honestae* see Fiorot, *A atuação do bispo Martinho de Braga na organização da igreja Galega*, p. 78-82.

⁵⁶ These contacts, also in the field of trade and goods exchange, are confirmed by archaeological research in the cities of Gallaetia, see L. Fontes – M. Martins – M. Ribeiro do Camo – H.P. Carvalho, *A cidade da Braga e o seu território nos séculos V-VII*, in: *Espacios urbanos em el occidente mediterráneo (s. VI-VIII)*, ed. A. García, Toledo 2010, p. 257; A. Fernández, *As relacións externas da Gallaecia durante os séculos IV-VII D.C. A travesso do material importado localizado em Vigo (Galiza)*, in: *Hidacio da Limia e o seu tempo: A Gallaecia sueva. A Limia na época medieval*, ed. F.E. Losada Pérez, Xinzo de Limia 2014, p. 134-135, 144.

⁵⁷ See J. Cardoso, *S. Valério (623-695). Vida de S. Frutuoso arcebispo de Braga*, Braga 1996.

The fact that the ancient Roman traditions continued to exist in Gallaecia in the second half of the 6th century was certainly a cause for concern in St. Martin's eyes as they were not a part of the *cultura christiana*, but – as the bishop of Braga observed – an element of the dangerous *cultura diaboli*. The ancient Roman religion survived in the provincial society rather in the forms of customs and celebrations, but also in the memory of the old beliefs and mythology. St. Martin of Braga describes the problem in his *De correctione rusticorum*⁵⁸, a short tract presented in the form of a sermon (*sermo*), written at the request of Bishop Polemius of Astorga (?-?), addressing the inhabitants of Gallaecia tainted with the practising of pagan customs. It would be difficult to regard the popular pagan practices described there as the legacy of the sophisticated culture of ancient Rome, especially as the Romanization and the subsequent Christianization affected only the upper classes of the Gallaecian society, while the people (in particular, those dwelling in the rural areas) lived in the amalgamated milieu of Punic, Ibero-Celtic, and Roman traditions. St. Martin mentions the primary deities of the ancient pantheon, referring to their immoral and devilish nature. He denounces the practice of naming the days of the week after the ancient gods' names, the popular custom of entering into marriage on Friday (the day of the goddess Venus), prodigia, offering sacrifices at the crossroads, cemeteries, and by burning fires, as well as celebrating the *Vulcanalia*. He warns of the lamiae and other female demons hiding in the woods⁵⁹. As he recounts, the tradition of invoking Minerva for assistance at weaving is still alive and the "Christianized" form of the custom continues to this day in the culture of Gallaecia⁶⁰. Such elements of the heritage of ancient culture were vigorously opposed by St. Martin of Braga, but the fact that he had to confront them would attest to the persistence of the old religious traditions and the popular Roman superstitions also among the simple folk.

Formula vitae honeste has been mentioned at the beginning of the present text. At least some part of the treatise on the cardinal virtues, instilled with the philosophical teaching of Seneca and addressing the court

⁵⁸ Martinus Bracarenis, *De correctione rusticorum*, in: *Martini episcopi Bracarenis, Opera omnia*, ed. C.W. Barlow, London 1950, p. 159-203.

⁵⁹ F. Castro Pires de Lima, *São Martinho de Braga e as Mulheres Demónios*, "Bracara Augusta" 9-10 (1958/1959) p. 106-114; Rodriquez da Silva – Agostinho Xavier, *Aspectos da ortoxia no reino suevos: Considerações sobre o "De correctione rusticorum"*, p. 125-126; Fiorot, *A atuação do bispo Martinho de Braga na organização da igreja Galega*, p. 71-74.

⁶⁰ J.L. Vasconcelos, *Religiões da Lusitânia III*, Lisboa 1913, p. 572, n. 3.

elite of the Suebian kingdom in Gallaecia, did not fall on an uncultivated ground. The place where Roman culture and the Roman elite survived were cities that did not change their importance, structure and dynamics of development during the 5th and 6th centuries. They were also certainly a place of assimilation of the Roman and “barbarian” elites. Lately, the importance of the research on the Late-Antique cities and the diverse states of their development, transformation, and decline has been emphasized once again by Mark Humphries. The current state of the research on the cities of Galicia in the 5th and 6th centuries contradicts the views of the decline in the significance of the urban life and the economic role of the cities. The volumes of the imported goods from Africa and the East continued unabated, while the trade routes and the structure of the Late-Antique city (apart from the “Christianization” of the public space) did not change to a significant extent⁶¹. Like the *fideles amici* of king Chararic, the *ministres* of king Miro descended, at least in part, from the Roman provincial elites who might not have been acquainted with Seneca’s works but their ancient Classical spiritual formation, proper to their social class, was preserved well enough to be ready for a recollection of the Latin author’s philosophical legacy. Although St. Martin of Braga imparted the Christian character to the cardinal virtues as envisioned in the ancient Classical (pagan) Roman philosophy, he believed that they formed a sort of the natural law, primarily inherent in the human reason and the knowledge of the holy books was essentially not necessary to be able to embrace and practise those virtues⁶².

It would be interesting to know to what extent King Miro followed the teachings expressed in the *Formula vitae honestae*. Unfortunately, we have only very few details on his life, but there are two instances where the observance of the cardinal virtues could be seen, even though

⁶¹ M. Humphries, *Cities and the Meanings of Late Antiquity*, Leiden 2019. About the cities of Gallaecia, especially about the capital city of Braga see M. Ribeiro do Camo, *Braga entre a época romana e a Idade Moderna. Uma metodologia de análise para leitura da evolução da paisagem urbana*, Braga 2008, p. 310; Fontes et al., *A cidade da Braga e o seu território nos séculos V-VII*, p. 255; M. Martins – M. Ribeiro do Camo, *Em torno da Rua Verde. A evolução urbana de Braga na longa duração*, in: *Evolução da paisagem urbana. Transformação morfológica dos tecidos históricos*, ed. M. do Como Ribeiro – A. Sousa Melo, Braga 2013, p. 25. About the religious buildings in Gallaecia in the 5th-6th century see L. Quiroga – A.M. Tejera Martinez, *In tempore Sueborum. El tempo de los suevos em la Gallaecia (411-585). El primer reino medieval de occidente*, La Coruña 2017, p. 123-132, especially the map on the p. 128.

⁶² Martinus Bracaraensis, *Formula vitae honestae* 1, 19-22, Barlow, p. 237.

not always to (his) advantage. The first episode concerns an innocent prank performed by the king's jester, who picked one grape from the vine entwined around the portal at the moment when Miro was entering the basilica of St. Martin of Tours at Braga. The king saw it as an act of sacrilege and immediately ordered that the poor jester's hand be cut off, but the courtiers stopped him by pointing out that the excessive severity might come from *hybris* and a false misjudgement of God's decrees. The contrite ruler not only pardoned the jester, but he also pleaded with God in a long prayer to forgive him his rashness⁶³. The king's humility, moderation, willingness to listen to the reasonable arguments, sense of justice, and the containment of anger must have pleased Martin of Braga, and would have very likely pleased Seneca himself. In the other case, it is certain that in his haste to assist the Catholic duke Hermenegild (?-585), who revolted against his father Leovigild (?-586), the Arian king of the Visigoths, Miro displayed his magnanimity and courage, but the consequences of his actions were deplorable and led not only to the king's death⁶⁴, but also to the swift incorporation of the Kingdom of the Suebi into the Kingdom of the Visigoths, which happened six years after the death of St. Martin of Braga in 585⁶⁵.

⁶³ Gregorius Turonensis, *De virtutibus sancti Martini episcopi* IV 7, 19-25, Krusch, p. 201 (p. 641): "Egressus quoque rex, cum rem quae acta fuerat didicisset, tanto furore contra puerum est accensus, ut ei manus velit abscidere, si a suis prohibitus non fuisset. Dicentibus tum praetera famulis: «Noli, o rex iudicio Dei tuam adiungere ultionem, ne forte iniuriam, quam minaris puero, in te retorqueas». Tunc ille compunctus corde, ingressus basilicam, prostratus coram altare santo, cum lacrimis precem fudit ad Dominum, nec ante a pavimento surrexit, quam flumen oculorum huius paginam delecti deleret". Of course, the author wanted to emphasize the influence and power of Saint Martin of Tours, but the King's conduct was in keeping with the principles of the *Formula vitae hoestae*.

⁶⁴ Iohannes Biclaensis, *Chronica*, a. 583, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH Auctores Antiquissimi 11, Berolini 1894, p. 216: "Leovegildus rex civitatem Hispalensem congregato exercitu obsidet et rebelem filium gravi obsidione concludit, in cuius solacium Miro Suevorum rex ad expugnandam Hispalim advenit ibique diem clausit extremum". According to Gregory of Tours, King Miro died only after returning from an expedition against King Leovigild (Gregorius Turonensis *Historia Francorum* VI 43, Krusch, p. 315: "Sed Miro postquam in patria rediit, non multos post dies conversus ad lectulum, obiit. Infirmatus enim ab a quo Hispaniae fuerat malis aeribusque incommodis").

⁶⁵ Isidorus Hispalensis, *Historia de regibus Gothorum, Wandalorum et Suevorum* 92, Mommsen, p. 303; Iohannes Biclaensis, *Chronica*, a. 585, Mommsen, p. 217.

Conclusions

(1) At the court of the King of Suebi Miro, Saint Martin of Braga promoted and recalled the cardinal virtues and ethical norms in the Scriptures, which were strongly linked to the ideas of Lucius Annaeus Seneca. The interest of the King and the Roman and tribal elites in this subject suggests that the ancient culture of Gallaecia was relatively well preserved in the 6th century.

(2) In spite of the traumatic experiences during the barbaric invasion of 409-411, Gallaecia preserved centers of Roman culture.

(3) The milieu in which the ancient civilization was preserved was the elite of the Roman *possessores*, urban and ecclesiastical elites.

(4) The functioning of the cities of Gallaecia in accordance with the civilisation patterns of late antiquity and their development and trade relations have not changed significantly in the 5th and 6th centuries.

(5) In the course of time, a Romanized tribal elite was formed, using Latin and accepting and exploiting the preserved elements of Roman civilization. Their assimilation with the Roman elite is also reflected in the ecclesiastical and administrative organization of the Kingdom.

Cultura romana and *cultura christiana* benefited from the patronage of the Church (e.g. the milieu of Bishop Balconius in Braga or the monastery of St. Martin of Braga in Dume) and from the kings of the Sueves (e.g. Ariamir, Teudemir, Miro).

A Book for the King. Some Reflections on the Situation of the Roman Population and the Preservation of the Heritage of Ancient Civilization in Gallaecia and Lusitania in the 5th and 6th Centuries

(summary)

Saint Martin of Braga, active in Gallaecia in the second half of the 6th century, referred to cardinal virtues in several of his writings, in accordance with the teachings of Seneca that he knew well. One of these works was *Formula vitae honestae*, given to Miro, king of Suebi and Gallaecia. The existence of Roman and “barbarian” elites in the kingdom of Suebi, capable of understanding the moral teachings of St. Martin of Braga in the 6th century, prompts reflection on the continuity of Roman culture and heritage of ancient civilisation in 160 years after the invasion of Hispania by Germanic tribes. The article contains some remarks on the preservation of Roman civilisation among the Roman elites in the times of the existence and development of the kingdom of Suebi, and on the processes of romanization of the tribal elites. The problem of the assimilation of the local population and Germanic newcomers, which was very interesting and specific to Gallaecia under the reign of Suebi, was also discussed.

Keywords: cardinal virtues; kingdom of Suebi; Saint Martin of Braga; ancient Roman civilisation; cultura romana; cultura christiana

Książka dla króla. Kilka refleksji na temat sytuacji ludności rzymskiej i zachowaniu dziedzictwa cywilizacji antycznej w Gallaecji i Luzytanii w V i VI wieku

(streszczenie)

Święty Marcin z Bragi, działający w Gallaecji w drugiej połowie VI wieku, w kilku swoich pismach odnosił się do cnót kardynalnych zgodnie z naukami Seneki, które dobrze znał. Jednym z nich była *Formula vitae honestae* podarowana Mironowi, królowi Swebów i Gallaecji. Istnienie w Królestwie Swebów elit rzymskich i „barbarzyńskich”, które w VI wieku potrafiły zrozumieć nauki moralne św. Marcina z Bragi, skłania do refleksji nad ciągłością kultury rzymskiej i dziedzictwa antycznej cywilizacji 160 lat po inwazji plemion germańskich na Hiszpanię. Artykuł zawiera kilka uwag na temat zachowania cywilizacji rzymskiej wśród elit rzymskich w okresie istnienia i rozwoju imperium suebskiego oraz procesów romanizacji elit plemiennych. Omówiono również problem asymilacji ludności tubylczej i przybyszów germańskich, który to proces był bardzo interesujący i specyficzny dla Gallaecji pod panowaniem Swebów.

Słowa kluczowe: cnoty kardynalne; Królestwo Swebów; św. Marcin z Bragi; *cultura romana*; *cultura christiana*

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