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GOTHIC SURVIVALS IN THE VISIGOTHIC KINGDOMS OF TOULOUSE AND TOLEDO

A classic problem during the times of the great invasions and subsequent formation of the so-called Romano-Germanic Kingdoms of the fifth to seventh centuries are the mechanisms for and means of accommodation between the two societies, invaders and invaded. In the ancient Mediterranean Provinces of the Roman Empire the accommodation problem particularly affected both elite leading groups, due to the large difference in their respective sizes. In this respect it is enough to remember the contrast between the maximum possible number of Visigothic warriors of between 15 000 and 20 000¹, when they established themselves in Aquitania in 418 AD, and the strong »Gothic« stamp in the Kingdoms of Toulouse and Toledo².

Our growing understanding of the mechanisms for ethnogenesis and sociopolitical structuring among the popular Germanic groups that protagonised the great invasions began to solve these apparent contradictions. This improved knowledge has essentially³ been due to the contribution of the so-called *neue Lehre* in the German investigators' studies of »Germanic Antiquities« after the forties. Doubtlessly the use of these new analytic tools in the last two decades has much advanced our knowledge of the origins and formation of the Visigothic Kingdoms of Toulouse and Toledo. So, attention has been addressed to the political habits and mental attitudes of the leading groups at the time of the invasions and during their later evolution.

1 See Herwig WOLFRAM, *Histoire des Goths* [French translation with important changes], Paris 1990, 241 ff. with a very reliable argumentation. So, the size of the Visigothic people would have totaled a maximum of 100 000 souls. This figure – which is far from being the traditionally given 250 000 people – accords better with the only real figure for a German nation in these years (cf. C. COURTOIS, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique*, Paris 1955): the 80 000 people who went to Africa in 429 with the new Hasding-Alan *Heerkönigtum* of Genseric. The war strength of a people such as the Visigoths is unquestionable; only the Visigoths were able to maintain such a long-term aggressiveness against the Roman Empire. Additionally, 100 000 travelling people create a lot of logistic difficulties for food and housing, and it would not have been easy to supply them given the agricultural and administrative limitations of those times.

2 So see D. CLAUDE, *Gentile und territoriale Staatsideen im Westgotenreich*, in: *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 6 (1976) 1–38, and S. TEILLET, *Des Goths à la Nation gothique*, Paris 1984.

3 With the basic contributions of R. WENSKUS, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung. Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen gentes*, Köln–Wien 1977 (2nd ed.), and other collected papers by W. SCHLESINGER in *Id.*, *Beiträge zur deutschen Verfassungsgeschichte des Mittelalters*, I, Göttingen 1963 (the critical summary by P. W. A. IMMINK is very useful: *Gouvernés et Gouvernants dans la Société Germanique* [Recueils de la Société Jean Bodin, XXIII, 2], Bruxelles 1968, 331–393).

Reinhard Wenskus' observations have been essential in this sense⁴. He affirmed the capital importance of the continuity and evolution of what he called *Stammestradi-tonen* for the survival of the »nations« that arose during the times of the invasions and the fact that these so-called »national« traditions were conserved, propagated, manipulated and used by the leading political group of each people (*Stamm*)⁵.

Evidently, royal lineages and families occupied a predominant role in these *politisch führende Schichten*. These, although they may have emerged from either a »military royalty« at the time of the great invasions, or from a powerful noble family whose blood was more or less mixed with Roman provincial families later, doubtlessly always tried to link with certain features typical of the atavistic Germanic *sakrales Königtum* after a successful *Landnahme* or other kind of originally military and later political victory, with the objective of tying the sceptre to their family and of reinforcing its power in the face of the ever more autonomous nobles' attacks. To attain these later objectives the kings certainly made use of the traditions of the Roman Imperial Monarchy or even of biblical royalty – the latter particularly at later dates⁶ –, that shielded the monarch and his family with a *Gottesgnadentum*. They also undoubtedly made use of a whole series of genealogical traditions to tie them to the more or less divine mythical founders, assimilating themselves with the *Ases* and even with Odin himself, the founding patron of all the military royalties, of the warrior retinues (*Gefolge*) or family lines (*Sippe*), that thus became an agglutinating element in a triumphant ethnogenetic process.

This recourse to such pre-Christian Germanic traditions is well-documented, mostly in the more purely barbarian and Germanic environments, but also in others that were already contaminated with Roman customs, with a Christian tradition of more than a century's standing that reflected the »Imperialising« facets of the royal function. Doubtlessly the best example is the fictitious Amal genealogy the Roman Senator Cassiodorus created to underpin the Ostrogothic royalty of Theodoric the Great's family and its supremacy over the reigning families of the Romano-Germanic universe⁷. Similar processes can also be detected in other Romano-Germanic political formations and royal dynasties with as varied a Germanic origin and context as the Lombards or the Merovingian and Carolingian Franks⁸. To strengthen the position of their dynasty, the monarchs and their propagandists, now Christianized and Latinized, exploited the oral traditions that had been preserved within these noble family groups, generally as epic narrations or Sagas referring to

4 This must be remembered here: D. CLAUDE, *Adel, Kirche und Königtum im Westgotenreich*, Sigmaringen 1971; H. WOLFRAM, *Histoire des Goths*; and L. A. GARCÍA MORENO, *España visigoda (Historia de España fundada por R. Menéndez Pidal III, 1)*, Madrid 1991.

5 R. WENSKUS, *Stammesbildung*, 54–82. H. WOLFRAM, *Methodische Fragen zur Kritik am »sakralen« Königtum germanischer Stämme*, in: *Fs. für Otto Höfler* (ed. H. BIRKHAN, O. GSCHWANTLER), Wien 1968, 473–490 is a plea for this doctrine against the very ideological and a priori Marxist critics.

6 I especially refer to the royal unction ceremony: cf. Janet NELSON, *Inauguration Rituals*, in: P. H. SAWYER, I. N. WOOD, *Early Medieval Kingship*, Leeds 1977, 50–71, and A. BARBERO, *El pensamiento político visigodo y las primeras unciones regias en la Europa medieval*, in: *Hispania* 30 (1970) 271 ff.

7 On this, see the basic H. WOLFRAM, *Theogonia, Ethnogenese und ein kompromittierter Großvater im Stammbaum Theodorichs des Großen*, in: *Fs. für Helmut Beumann*, Sigmaringen 1977, 80–97.

8 H. MOISL, *Kingship and orally transmitted Stammestradi-tonen among the Lombards and Franks*, in: H. WOLFRAM/A. SCHWARZ (ed.), *Die Bayern und ihre Nachbarn (Österreichische Akademie der Wiss., Phil.-hist. Kl. 179)*, Wien 1985, 111–119.

the origin and migration of a *Sippe*, by now confused with the later *Volk* or *Stamm*, and identified with their dynasty and a particular heroic king. This was not essentially different from the way in which other dynasties like the Saxons of Great Britain⁹, who were much more barbarian and had preserved the use of their vernacular language, had done it.

However, what has been proved for the Amals and the Ostrogoths, has not been undertaken or analysed for their Visigothic relatives. Doubtlessly, a certain *communis opinio* on the extremely high degree of Romanization reached by the Visigoths, revealed by their early acceptance of Christianity, as early as their settling in Dacia – and abandonment of their Germanic language and laws have contributed to this. But what may have been a healthy Romanist reaction to certain Germanist excesses of the first half of this century¹⁰ has certainly become excessive in its own turn, particularly for not having distinguished clearly between the 6th and 7th centuries and among the social levels with reference to the persistence, productivity and disappearance of the Visigothic *Stammestraktionen*. There are certainly various testimonies on the persistence of certain family traditions that were linked with the *Vesic* ethnogenesis itself that had emerged at the end of the 4th century among the different Goth groups that had taken refuge within the Empire, and that were current in the bosom of the Gothic nobility of the Court of Toulouse in the second half of the 5th century. Certain onomastic traditions that were proper to the Kingdom of Toulouse in the 5th century also testify to the maintenance by the same noble groups of their own ethnic or family lineage or *Sippe*, something that may well be especially valuable and meaningful, given the profound »polyethnicity«¹¹ at the roots of the foundation of the Visigothic Kingdom of Toulouse. Analysis of the placenames reflecting a Germanic tradition in this region has also demonstrated two things. One is the continuity of certain ethnic identities, even much later than the catastrophe of Vouillé in 507, and second, the productive maintenance of the spoken Gothic language during the decades immediately after the Visigothic settlement in Aquitania¹².

The onomastic testimony may even be corroborated by another more incontestable one that has been transmitted by narrative sources of that time. The persistence in the use of Gothic among the Visigothic nobility at the middle of the 5th century is not only proved by the more or less rhetorical testimony of Sidonius Apollinaris on King Theodoric II's bilingualism¹³, but also by an anecdote retold by Jordanes. According to this author, the king Thurismund had been assassinated in 453 by one of his *clientes* called *Ascalc*¹⁴. The Gothic root of this name (*Skalk*) meaning slave or serf¹⁵, would indicate that the word was still completely understood at the time it

9 See D. N. DUMVILLE, Kingship, Genealogies and Regnal Lists, in: P. H. SAWYER, I. N. WOOD (see n. 6) 72–104.

10 Of course, read A. GARCÍA GALLO, El carácter germánico de la épica y del derecho en la Edad Media española, in: Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español 25 (1955) 583–680.

11 On these questions the latest is P. J. HEATHER, Goths and Romans 332–489, Oxford 1991, 12–18.

12 See WOLFRAM, Histoire des Goths 242ff. and 250ff. for these testimonies.

13 Sidonius Apollinaris, Carmina VII, 495ff.

14 Jordanes, Getica 228.

15 See J. M. PIEL, D. KREMER, Hispano-gotisches Namenbuch, Heidelberg 1976, 318. It is necessary to notice that the names with this element are rare in the Visigothic onomastic uses of those times, and

was used to designate a person at the Toulouse Court who fulfilled that legal condition¹⁶. Certainly this survival of the Gothic language among the noble groups who had left the Danubian *Gothia* and had been living among an immense Latin-speaking majority for at least two generations would have been aided by the periodic contributions from the small noble Gothic groups that came from beyond the Roman Empire, and which were particularly associated with the Ostrogothic world, which had always been more distanced from contact with Romans. Among these contributions we are well acquainted with that of Ataulph and the Pannonian Goths in 408 and the arrival of Amal groups lead by Witteric around 427¹⁷ and Vidimer around 473¹⁸, both recruited from the Pannonian Goths who were then subject to the Huns.

The same Jordanes has left other testimony of how noble »Visigothic« families jealously kept genealogical data that allowed them to proclaim their pedigree proudly. He also referred to Theoderic II's failed attempt to control the Spanish Suevian military monarchy by placing a member of his entourage, Agrivulfus, at their head. Jordanes writes that this Agrivulfus belonged to the *Varn Sippe*¹⁹. The historian's Gothic pride tied Agrivulfus' not belonging to a Gothic family to his subsequent felony; but it is also true that only a noble origin among the Varns would have capacitated him to be named a subordinate *Rex suevorum*²⁰ and later aspire to

only those of a presbyter and a bishop of Oxma in the second half of 7th Century are remembered (L. A. GARCÍA MORENO, *Prosopografía del Reino visigodo de Toledo*, Salamanca 1974, n° 327); this name looks like a Gothic translation of *Servus-Dei*; a latin name commonly used by clerks. The denigratory sense of the Gothic word might be the cause of the rareness of this name, and its use might then be evidence of the understanding of the sense of this Gothic word in those late days.

16 Evidence of the oral character of Gothic names in early 5th Century is found in the anonymous author of a »Commentary on Matthew« (MIGNE PG 56, 626: *sicut solent et barbarae gentes nomina filii imponere ad devastationem respicientia bestiarum ferarum vel rapacium volucrum, gloriosum putantes filios tales habere ad bellum idoneos, et insanientes in sanguinem*).

17 Jordanes, *Getica* 174. Cf. WOLFRAM, *Theogonia* (see n. 7) 85 and note 36.

18 Jordanes, *Getica* 284.

19 Jordanes, *Getica* 233.

20 This subordinate rank was afterwards held by the Suevic King Remismund, although he was probably a member of the royal Suevic lineage of Rechila and Rechiarius (Jordanes, *Getica* 234); his belonging to the noble core of the Suevic *Heerkönigtum* explains how he and his consort could go to Toulouse, doubtlessly as valued hostages, after the subjection of the Suevic Kingdom by Theoderic II (cf. Hydatius 220). Otherwise the normal alliteration and variation of the names of the Suevic kings: Rechila, Rechiarius, Rechimund and Remismund must be noted; the first and the second name a father and son, who were legitimate members of the royal Suevic *Sippe*. Remismund could be thought to be a son of Rechiarius and a Gothic princess, a daughter of Theoderid–Theoderic, because the -mundus ending is used by Thurismund, another son of this Visigothic king. Remismund's belonging to the royal Visigothic family through his mother saved his life, and it helps to explain Remismund's presence in the Gothic court of Toulouse in 461 and that his wedding with a noble royal princess-Gothic maiden was celebrated late, in 465 (cf. Hydatius 226); because such a son of king Rechiarius and grandson of the Visigoth Theoderid could not have been born before 449 (cf. Hydatius 140). Rechimund might also be a son of Rechiarius, but by another earlier marriage; so Rechimund would not have been a member of the royal Gothic family, and that explains the hostility of the court of Toulouse towards him. Naturally Rechimund cannot be thought a son of Maldras, as Isidore of Seville said (*Historia Sueborum* §89), because Rechimund is called King by a contrary Suevic faction; Isidore's error is explained by his ideal of a hereditary monarchy. The subordinate rank of Remismund was legitimated through a *Waffensohnschaft* (Hydatius 226); about this proceeding see WENSKUS (see n. 3) 28 and note 77, and especially D. CLAUDE, *Zur Begründung familiärer Beziehungen zwischen*

create his own »military royalty« or could explain the maintenance of the same consciousness of the Varn identity as a lineage distinct from that of the Visigothic royalty of Toulouse.

The history of Suevian/Gothic relations in the 5 century also shows the importance of other institutions with a Germanic root that were related with their noble lines. After the failure of a subordinate Suevian monarchy through Agrivulfus in 464, Theoderic II pursued a similar objective by supporting the restoration of a Suevian »military royalty« in the person of Remismund²¹, who apparently belonged to the nuclear *Heerkönigtum* of the Suevian nobility, the actual line defeated by the Goths in 456²². In this respect one can note the traditional alliteration and *variatio* seen in the names of several Suevian kings in the 5th century: Rechila, Rechiarius, Rechimund and Remismund. The first two were father and son, certainly members of the royal Suevian *Sippe*. This origin would also have explained the arrival of Remismund and his wife in Toulouse, doubtlessly as appreciated hostages or captives when the Suevian Kingdom was conquered by Theoderic II²³. Remismund might even have been a son of Rechiarius himself by the daughter of Theoderic I, since the suffix *mundus* was also carried by another son of this Visigothic king, Thurismund. His blood tie to the royal Visigothic family would have saved this Remismund's life and better explains his residence in 461 at the Court of Toulouse and the fact that he had to wait until 465 to consummate his marriage to a noble Visigothic lady – perhaps a princess²⁴. As son of the Suevian Rechiarius and grandson of the Visigoth Theoderic I, Remismund could not have been born before the end of 449²⁵. To judge by his name and his leadership among the Suevians of those years (459–461) Rechimund may also have been a son of Rechiarius, but doubtlessly from a different marriage than the one to one of Theoderic's daughters, which would explain the hostility towards him on the part of the Toulouse Court²⁶. Remismund's position of subordination to the Visigothic king would also have been institutionalized through a Germanic institution related with the typical retinues of young noble warriors or *Gefolge*: relation through arms or *Waffensohnschaft*²⁷.

One of the Germanic institutions most closely tied to the feeling of blood line identity and solidarity was »blood vengeance«. This family obligation and right to avenge an affront to one of their own by some member of another family could be hereditarily transmitted. This demonstrates the strong genealogical memory that

dem Kaiser und barbarischen Herrschern, in: E. K. CHRYSOS, A. SCHWARCZ (ed.), *Das Reich und die Barbaren*, Wien-Köln 1990, 36 ff.

21 Jordanes, *Getica* 234.

22 See D. CLAUDE, *Prosopographie des spanischen Suebenreiches*, in: *Francia* 6 (1978) 667 ff., and P. C. DÍAZ MARTÍNEZ, *La monarquía sueva en el s. V. Aspectos políticos y prosopográficos*, in: *Studia Historica* 4–5 (1986–1987) 220 ff., although I have great doubts on the identification of Remismund with Rechimund (cf. GARCÍA MORENO, *Historia* [see n. 4] 119).

23 This is inferred from Hydatius 220, if we wanted to identify King Remismund with a Suevic ambassador of the same name in Toulouse (but: CLAUDE, *Prosopographie* 668; however in this case it is necessary to explain the loss of this person in the *Chronicle of Hydatius*, and the following existence of another Remismund as a Suevic king).

24 Hydatius 226 (cf. CLAUDE, *Prosopographie* 673 n° 97).

25 This was the year of Rechiarius' wedding to his Gothic princess (Hydatius 140).

26 Hydatius 193, 202–203, 219.

27 Hydatius 226.

existed in the noble families and could convert an originally simple incident into one that was decisive for the later history of an entire *Stamm*. A paradigmatic example among the Visigoths of the first decades of the 5th century would be the relations between the Rosomoni and Balthi families.

Jordanes preserved the memory of a tragic vendetta between the line of the Rosomoni and that of the great king Ermanaric. According to his source this Amal king would have barbarously quartered Sunnild the Rosomon for the treason committed by her husband; avenging their sister the Rosomoni Ammius and Sarus would have caused the legendary Gothic king a serious wound that would have been the immediate cause of the victorious Hun attack and subsequent destruction of the powerful Gothic kingdom in Scythia²⁸. This dramatic incident must have been well known, doubtless by having been transmitted through the famous epic poem of Gothic origin »On the Death of Ermanaric«, from which it would have also passed into the Scandinavian Sagas²⁹.

A quarter of a century afterwards, contemporary historical testimonies still conserved the rivalry and inextinguishable hatred between the Balth Alaric I and the noble Sarus, also called *rex gothorum*³⁰. Based on his military qualities and on the loyalty of a powerful entourage of several hundred Goth warriors, Sarus had a brilliant military career in the Imperial army, serving Aetius and Honorius or their rival Jovinus, depending on whether the attitude of the Imperial Government toward his hated compatriot Alaric or his successor and brother-in-law, Ataulph³¹, who is said to have had an old dispute with Sarus³², was favourable or not. It was finally Ataulph who managed to capture and cruelly kill Sarus³³. This crime would only harden the ancient enmity between the two Gothic lineages. Three years later Ataulph would be assassinated by a member of his entourage, called Everwulf³⁴, who had quite possibly been a member of Sarus' retinue and who thus avenged the death of his old chief³⁵. The consummation of this vengeance would have come at a

28 Jordanes, *Getica* 129.

29 See H. WOLFRAM, *Geschichte der Goten* [German edition], München 1978, 29; C. BRADY, *The Legends of Ermanaric*, Berkeley 1948. On the use of Gothic oral traditions by Cassiodorus-Jordanes see N. WAGNER, *Getica* (Quellen und Forschungen zur Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte der germanischen Völker, N.F., 22), 1967, 64-70.

30 Marcellinus comes a. a. 406; Jordanes, *Romana* 321 in 406.

31 See O. SEECK, in *RE* IIA,3, 1921, 54; and J. R. MARTINDALE, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, II, Cambridge 1980, 978ff. with all the written testimonies, principally by Olympiodorus and his followers.

32 Zosimus VI,13,2.

33 Olympiodorus, frag. 17.

34 M. MAYER names the killer in: *El asesino de Ataúlfo*, in: *Humanitas in honorem A. Fontán*, Madrid 1992, 297-302.

35 Olympiodorus, frag. 26 says that Ataulph was killed in revenge of an »old offense«, the death of the killer's first master, »a king of a part of the nation of the Goths«. The identification of this last king as Sarus was suggested by L. SCHMIDT, *Geschichte der deutschen Stämme bis zum Ausgang der Völkerwanderung. Die Ostgermanen*, München 1934 (2nd ed.), 459; but CLAUDE (see n. 4) 32 n. 59, disagreed because Sarus was not mentioned explicitly, although he was cited by Olympiodorus in other places (T. HODGKIN shares the same opinion in: *Italy and Her Invaders*, I, 2, Oxford 1892, 834 n. 1). Also WOLFRAM, *Geschichte der Goten* (see n. 29), denies this identification as Sarus, since he thinks it difficult that an event which only happened two years earlier could be called »old«; but, in the French version of his book (see n. 1, 179) he is favourable.

particularly beneficial moment for the interests of the Rosomoni line, since by virtue of the rapid blow and the importance of his retinue (*dynasteia*), Sarus' brother, Sigeric, was able to accede to the royal Visigothic Kingship³⁶. The first acts of the new monarch would also be dictated by the same inexorable family vendetta, even against the minimum prudence due to his political interests. If the impious assassination of the small children Ataulph had had by a first partner could have strengthened his seat on the throne, no advantage could have been expected from the humiliating treatment given his antecessor's widow, the Imperial Princess Galla Placidia, particularly when Sigeric was trying to come to an agreement at almost any cost with the government of her brother, Honorius³⁷. This bloody history of vengeance between the two lines does not end here. Sigeric would only be able to keep the throne for a week, after which he was assassinated and succeeded by Wallia, very probably a member of the Balth line³⁸, to whose account one would logically have to note up the assassination of Sarus' hateful brother³⁹.

The observable tendency in the Gothic noble families' names for repeating certain names, or their genealogical alliteration with the names⁴⁰, has suggested the possibility that the Sarus who was enemy to Alaric and Ataulph belonged to the same Rosomoni *Sippe* as the Sarus of the times of Ermanaric⁴¹. Doubtlessly, the difficulty with this identification would be that Ermanaric belonged to the Amal *Sippe* while Alaric and his brother-in-law belonged to the Balthi *Sippe*. Thus, this would be the supposed Rosomoni *faida* that had shadowed the most prestigious Gothic noble lines of the 5th and early 6th centuries. However, in our opinion this difficulty would disappear if one supposed some sort of family relation between the Amali and the Balthi before the famous marriage between the Balthi Alaric II (484–507) and Thiudigotho, daughter of the Amal Theoderic.

There is no room to doubt that the Amal genealogical tree as transmitted by Cassiodorus and Jordanes was, to a certain extent, an invention to justify the legitimacy of Theoderic the Great's family over the Ostrogoths after the middle of the 5th century at the earliest⁴². It also seems clear that in the reconstructed genealogy the integration of Theoderic the Great's line into that of the prestigious Greuthung

36 Olympiodorus, frag. 26.

37 Olympiodorus, frag. 26 and Orosius, *Historiarum* VII,43,9. See S. I. OOST, *Galla Placidia Augusta*, Chicago 1968, 136 ss., although it is doubtful that it was Sigeric's desire for peace with Rome refrained him from killing Galla Placidia.

38 Wallia was at least married to a Balth princess, even if he was not a real Balth: See WOLFRAM, *Histoire des Goths* 46; CLAUDE (see n. 4) 26 ff., and GARCÍA MORENO, *Genealogías y linajes góticos* (in print).

39 Olympiodorus, frag. 26; Orosius, *Historiarum* VII, 3, 9 and Jordanes, *Getica* 163.

40 See H. CASTRITIUS, *Namenkundliche Argumentation am Beispiel der Amalersippe*, in: *Beiträge zu Namenforschungen* 20 (1985) 259 ff., who reviews the extreme automatism of K. A. ECKHARDT, *Die Nachbenennung in den Königshäusern der Goten*, in: *Südostforschung* 14 (1955) 34–55, followed by N. WAGNER, *Germanische Namengebung und kirchliches Recht in der Amaler-Stammtafel*, in: *Zs. für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 99 (1970) 6–10.

41 WOLFRAM, *Geschichte der Goten* 29 ss.; O. GSCHWANTLER, *Zum Namen der Rosomonen und an. Jónakr.*, in: *Die Sprache* 17 (1971) 164–176.

42 WOLFRAM, *Theogonia* (see n. 7) 80–97; H. CASTRITIUS, *Namenkundliche Argumentation* (see n. 40) 259 ff.

King Ermanaric was so difficult⁴³ that some have said that Greuthung Ermanaric's prestigious line did not belong to the Amal *Sippe*⁴⁴. Whatever the solution given to this problem, what does seem fairly certain are the ties of blood and alliance that existed within the Balthi line to which Alaric I and Ermanaric both belonged, within both the 4th and 5th centuries. On another occasion we have remembered and analysed the strong probability that Ataulph's father was the Greuthung chief Alatheus⁴⁵. And even if Alatheus is not mentioned in Ermanaric's retouched family tree, one cannot doubt its Greuthung character and prestige among these Goths and his close relation with Ermanaric's line, because he is cited by Ammianus Marcellinus as one of the *Duces* who were to protect the inheritance of young Videric, a descendent of the last Greuthung king⁴⁶. Several authors have suggested that Witteric, who had arrived at the Visigothic Toulouse Court in 427⁴⁷ and was a descendent of Ermanaric according to Jordanes, eventually married a daughter of the Balthi Visigothic king Thurismund (451–453)⁴⁸. This is not to mention the possibility that the Visigoth king Wallia (415–453), married to a Balthi princess⁴⁹, may have belonged to some branch of the Amali *Sippe*⁵⁰.

With such a genealogical reconstruction it seems even more unlikely that Sarus and his brother Sigeric belonged to the Rosomoni. Thus the enmity between them and members of the Balthi *Sippe*, like Alaric I and Ataulph, would be the result of a chain of successive blood feuds between the two Goth lines that went back as far as the time of Ermanaric, and was, at the least, doubtlessly an ancient offense as Olympiodorus noted when describing the reason for Ataulph's assassination. It is possible that the *faida* did not end with Sigeric's death in 415. It may very well have continued in the epic confrontation between Odoacer and Theoderic the Great, an Amal⁵¹. This would explain how Cassiodorus and Jordanes, spokesmen for this Theoderic, could, in the 6th century, have written »*Rosomonorum, gens infida*« referring to events over a century and a half earlier⁵². Since a quarrel that had

43 These doubts are related with the problem of the historicity of Thurismund, Ermanaric's grandson (cf. WOLFRAM, *Theogonia* 84; CASTRITIUS, *Namenkundliche Argumentation* 262–264). Of course, by doing so Theoderic intended to show the real Amal lineage of Eutharic, his son-in-law and desired successor.

44 HEATHER (see n. 11) 19–28.

45 GARCÍA MORENO, *Genealogías y linajes* (see n. 38); F. LOTTER, *Die germanischen Stammesverbände im Umkreis des Ostalpen-Mitteldonau-Raumes nach der literarischen Überlieferung zum Zeitalter Severins*, in: WOLFRAM, SCHWARCZ (see n. 8) 33.

46 Ammianus 31,3,3; cf. WOLFRAM, *Histoire des Goths* 129 ss.

47 Jordanes, *Getica* 174. Cf. WOLFRAM, *Theogonia* 85 and note 36.

48 CASTRITIUS, *Namenkundliche Argumentation* 265–270; GARCÍA MORENO, *Genealogías y linajes* (see n. 38) note 98.

49 So CLAUDE (see n. 4) 29 ff.; WOLFRAM, *Geschichte der Goten* 28. Another reason would be that a son of King Theoderic I (Jordanes, *Getica* 42) had the same name as one of King Wallia's grandsons, the famous Patricius Ricimer.

50 So CASTRITIUS, *Namenkundliche Argumentation* 260 and 270.

51 This story became the core of the famous medieval German *Lieder: Dietrich von Bern*. Some sources say that Odoacer had a Gothic origin (Marcellinus comes, a. a. 476; Theophanes, AM 5965); and note just how unmercifully Theoderic treated Odoacer's widow, Sunigilda (Johannes of Antiochia, frag. 214 a); this woman has the same name as the well-known adulteress, cause of the *faida* between the Rosomons and Ermenaric.

52 Jordanes, *Getica* 129.

conditioned the behaviour between the epigones of these noble Gothic lineages was quite current, the families had guarded it among their most venerated »family traditions«, and continuously fed it blood.

Evidently, the continuity of institutions with ancient Germanic roots like the *faida* among the 5th century Visigothic nobles of the Kingdom of Toulouse is explainable, given its close relation with their »family traditions«. Until the Vouillé defeat in 507 or even the death of Amalric in 531, all the testimonies point to the maintenance of the Balthi line related with Alaric I as group from which the Visigothic Kings were named⁵³, suggesting that as well as the Balthi, other aristocratic lines had persisted. The polyethnic character of Visigothic ethnogenesis would also favour and explain the maintenance of ancient, pre-Visigothic ethnic identities linked with the traditions of noble lines. If we suggested the maintenance of the Varn identity in Agiulf, a noble *cliens* of Theoderic II at the middle of the 5th century, earlier onomastic testimonies allow us to suppose the existence of others⁵⁴.

The dominant opinion doubtlessly is that things could have changed after the events of 507 and 531, which were mentioned earlier. With Amalric, the noble Balth line, which had been the main depository of the typically Germanic »family traditions«, also disappeared. However, I believe that in an earlier study I managed to demonstrate that the Balth line continued to play an essential role in Visigothic history until the end of the 6th, if not beginning of the 7th century, especially through members of the family like King Athanagild (551–568), Goswintha († 586), his widow and wife to Leovigild (569–586), and their descendants, particularly the Merovingian princess Brunhild († 613). And if, through the epigones of the founding *Sippe* of the Visigothic Monarchy we can reach the very doors of the 7th century, one could also mention the political protagonism of some members of the great line of the Amals until the beginnings of the 7th century, possibly represented by the kings Theodisclus (548–549) and Witteric (603–610)⁵⁵.

Having proved the persistence and influence of these great Gothic lines in the Visigothic kingdom of the 6th century it seems logical that they would have continued playing a leading political and social role, and that some of the institutions and traditions with Germanic roots and linked to these great Gothic lines, like the *faida* and the *Versippung*, would also have persisted.

Theudis' assassination in 548 could have been a *faida*. According to Isidore of Seville, his death had been carefully prepared beforehand by his executioner, and Isidore also affirmed that the dying Theudis made the members of his *Gefolge* swear not to avenge him since his death was in just revenge for having assassinated his own chief (*ducem*) in other times⁵⁶. Identifying this leader with the Amalric who suffered a violent death in the face of not just the passivity but the collaboration of his own

53 The latest on this subject is GARCÍA MORENO, *Genealogías y linajes* (see n. 38).

54 I know names such as Bulgar, Sarmata or Suabila, used by Visigothic noblemen in the 7th Century (GARCÍA MORENO [see n. 15] n° 30, 319 y 373); of course the most remarkable case would be that of the Galindi (cf. WOLFRAM, *Histoire des Goths* 45).

55 GARCÍA MORENO, *Genealogías y linajes*. Most recently, WOLFRAM, *Histoire des Goths* 472 n. 621 has expressed doubts as to whether King Theodisclus was a real Amal, supporting a different reading of O. FIEBIGER, L. SCHMIDT, *Inschriftensammlung zur Geschichte der Ostgermanen*, 1918, 1939, 1944, n° 204.

56 Isidorus, *Historia Gothorum* 43.

army, commanded by Theudis⁵⁷, is not unreasonable. Curiously, the result of the *faida* over Theudis would have been Theodisclus' elevation to the Visigothic throne, and, if Theodisclus had in fact been an Amal, he would have belonged to the same line as the avenged Amalric⁵⁸.

One of the most important periods and episodes in the history of the Visigothic Kingdom of Toledo is constituted by the rebellion by Hermenegild (579–585) and the years of Reccared I's reign before his solemn conversion to Catholicism (586–589). Many of the most important events of that time would be explained by institutions like the *faida* and *Versippung* that are so related with the very existence of the great Gothic families. In an earlier paper I tried to demonstrate that one of the principal causes of Hermenegild's rebellion⁵⁹ against his father Leovigild had been the political intrigues of his stepmother, Queen Goswintha; this woman enjoyed great political power and autonomy because she had inherited the retinues (*Gefolge*)⁶⁰ and wealth of her first husband, King Athanagild, doubtlessly one of the representatives of the extremely powerful Balthi family⁶¹. Precisely to strengthen and legitimize his position, the rebel Hermenegild would have counted on the exterior and interior influences that his wife, the Merovingian princess Ingundis, daughter of Brunhild and grand-daughter of Athanagild and Goswintha, enjoyed in the Kingdom of Toledo. For this purpose, the son of king Leovigild did not hesitate to enter the Balthi line of his wife and stepmother by *Versippung*, an example of which would be the name given to Ingundis' firstborn: Athanagild. Reccared I can also be shown to be directly responsible for the treasonable execution of his older brother, of which he was the main beneficiary. Thus, on assuming his father's throne Reccared I had to face the hate of the groups within and without the Kingdom of Toledo that were tied to the powerful Balthi line⁶². To overcome this hatred and opposition, the new king had used expedients of purely Gothic origin. On one hand he undertook a true *Versippung* of the powerful and legendary Balthi line of his stepmother, Goswintha,

57 Nothing is against considering Theudis a member of Amalric's *Gefolge*, who would thus have been his *dux*, as he was the *dux* of his killer. Theudis was an Ostrogothic noble (Procopius, *Bellum Gothicum* II,30,15–17); named by Theoderic the Great as his military commander in the Visigothic kingdom, it looks very much like Theudis belonged to Theoderic's *Gefolge*, mostly inherited by Amalric.

58 So, R. COLLINS, *Early Medieval Spain*, London 1983, 38; GARCÍA MORENO, *Historia* (see n. 4) 152; and WOLFRAM, *Histoire des Goths* 472 n. 621. But CLAUDE (see n. 4) 49, is against this identification.

59 L. A. GARCÍA MORENO, *La coyuntura política del III Concilio de Toledo. Una historia larga y tortuosa*, in: *Concilio III de Toledo. XIV Centenario 589–1989*, Toledo 1991, 279ff.

60 It is also known that a husband enjoyed his Visigothic wife's retinue in the 5th Century. The Roman Count Bonifatius had a powerful Gothic *Gefolge*, which without doubt belonged to his wife Pelagia, a Balth-Amal princess and granddaughter of the Visigothic King Thurismund and of the Amal Verimund (cf. H.-J. DIESNER, *Kirche und Staat im spätrömischen Reich*, Berlin 1964, 102, 112ff. and 114; and CASTRITIUS, *Namenkundliche Argumentation* 265–270).

61 GARCÍA MORENO, *Genealogías y linajes* (see n. 38), and M. ROUCHE, *Brunehaut, wisigothe ou romaine?*, in: A. GONZÁLEZ (ed.), *Los Visigodos. Historia y civilización (Antigüedad y Cristianismo, III)*, Murcia 1986, 108ff. This proceeding was actually the inverse of what Goswintha had done when she married her second husband, Leovigild. According to German customs, a widow needed a man to keep her *mundus*, and, through marriage a woman entered her husband's family (cf. M. ROUCHE, *Des mariages païens au mariage chrétien, sacré et sacrement*, in: *Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo*, XXXIII, Spoleto 1987, 835–873).

62 GARCÍA MORENO, *La coyuntura* (see n. 59) 278ff.

whom he adopted as his own »mother«⁶³. To appease the Frankish relatives of the disgraced Hermenegild and Ingundis, Reccared undertook a solemn oath of non-involvement in Ingundis' death, for which her relatives would otherwise have been obliged to undertake a *faida*. This oath was accompanied, according to the exclusively Gothic judicial traditions, by the payment of a *Wergeld* to Brunchildis, mother of the dead princess⁶⁴. The solidity of the links that were forged between Brunhild's Merovingian line and Reccared's Visigothic line would be revealed years later. According to Fredegar, Brunhild induced her grandson, Theuderic II of Neustria, to commit a terrible affront against the then Visigoth King Witteric in 607: Theuderic refused to consummate his marriage with the latter's daughter, the Visigothic princess Ermenberga, whose hand he had skillfully solicited from her suspicious father⁶⁵. Certainly the Gothic king Witteric feared that a *faida* rooted in his dethroning and killing of the young Liuva II, son and successor to the Reccared who had entered Brunhild's Balthi line by *Versippung*, could fall on his young daughter.

The noble Germanic tradition of second-ranked marriages with the so-called *Friedelehen* that the ecclesiastics and legislators of the Germano-Roman kingdoms treated poorly and attempted to assimilate to the concubines of Roman Law⁶⁶, is well known. However the differences were obvious and very difficult to hide. Even if, like Roman concubines, the *Friedelehen* of German tradition were frequently of humble origin, or even slaves, they were better considered socially and their children had legal rights on their father's patrimony. It was not strange for these Germanic concubines to usurp the representative functions of the legal wife under Roman Law, even going so far as to take the role of queen as happened with the Frank Fredegunda. It was also not strange for their sons, in the case of royal *Friedelehen*, to succeed their fathers on the throne, and even be better accepted among the Germanic element of the subjects than their halfbrothers, sons of the legitimate wife; something that perplexed the contemporary historians, all of whom were of Roman culture and nearly always clerics. This kind of succession is illustrated among the royal Visigothic families by the succession of Alaric II, at the beginning of the 6th century and by that of Reccared II, at the beginning of the 7th.

After Alaric II's death in the Battle of Vouillé, most of the Visigothic army chose to elect Gesaleic king, although, according to Isidore of Seville, he was illegitimately born to a concubine⁶⁷. The preference on the part of many Gothic warriors and nobles in the dead Balth monarch's retinue is even more outstanding in the measure in that it supposed the pretermission of young Amalric, son of the king by an Amal princess, as is shown by his name, a sample of *Versippung* into the Amal line in

63 Gregorius Turon., *Historiarum* IX,1. Cf. GARCÍA MORENO, *La coyuntura* 281.

64 Gregorius Turon., *Historiarum* IX,1 and 16; *Epistulae Wisigothorum* 12 (ed. J. GIL, *Miscellanea wisigothica*, Sevilla 1972, 36). Cf. ROUCHE, *Brunehaut* (see n. 61) 107; GARCÍA MORENO, *La coyuntura* 281 ff.

65 Fredegarius, *Chronicarum* IV, 30.

66 Cf. R. KÖSTLER, *Raub-, Kauf- und Friedelehe bei den Germanen*, in: *Zs. für Rechtsgeschichte*, GA 63 (1943) 92-136; and ROUCHE, *Des mariages païens* (see n. 61). About marriage in the just romanized Visigothic Law see P. D. KING, *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom of Toledo*, Cambridge 1972, 224 ff.

67 Isidorus, *Historia Gothorum* 37.

recognition of its extreme nobility and prestige⁶⁸. Gesaleic's final defeat would not have happened except for the repeated intervention of a powerful Ostrogoth army. Curiously, Theoderic the Great did not attempt at that time to impose his grandson Amalric's hereditary right, instead he directly assumed the Visigoth crown on the basis of his own enormous prestige and power, and with an eye to the unification of both parts of the Gothic people, the Visigoths and the Ostrogoths. This was a clear pretermission of Amalric, who was only rescued after the attempt failed as the result of Eutharic's premature death⁶⁹.

However, it would be wrong to think that customs and institutions of Germanic roots thus tied to the »family traditions« and the Gothic noble lines would remain unaltered, among other reasons because the Goths had been open to matrimonial alliances with the Roman senatorial or military nobility from very early days. Certainly, Ataulph's supposed political ambitions, if we are to credit Orosius' story as true⁷⁰, are an indication of the effect Roman marriage to an extremely noble Roman could have on such institutions and traditions, even to the point that the name of the unlucky offspring of Ataulph and Galla, Theodosius, indicated a hoped-for *Versippung* by Ataulph into the Imperial line. Little more than a century later another marriage between a Visigothic noble and king, Theudis, and another Hispano-Roman noble lady would be another consummated proof of the same. In the words of the Historian Procopius, Theudis became king thanks to the power of a *Gefolge*, perhaps no longer completely of the Germanic type⁷¹, consisting of 2000 lancers recruited with the income from his wife's large land-holding⁷². This anecdote shows the mixture of Gothic and Roman traditions and institutions among the Gothic noble lines that were ever more mixed with the Roman ones. It seems more difficult to suppose that these differentiated *Stammestraktionen*, and Germanizing institutions and customs among the nobility of the Visigothic Kingdom would have been maintained after the catastrophe of Vouillé and what has been considered the second Visigothic ethnic foundation with the emergence of the Kingdom of Toledo, in the 6th century.

The fate of the Gothic language after this date may be an indication of these changes. Toponymic indications proving the productive survival of the Gothic

68 Cf. WOLFRAM, *Histoire des Goths* 45 and 218.

69 See GARCÍA MORENO, *Historia* (see n. 4) 145 ff.

70 Orosius, *Historiarum* VII,43,2-8.

71 Procopius writes *doryphoroi*, and this is the Greek word normally used in the sources of this time to translate both the Latin *buccellarius* and the German noble *Gefolge* (cf. H. KUHN, *Die Grenzen der germanischen Gefolgschaft*, *Zs. für Rechtsgeschichte*, GA 73 [1956] 62).

72 Procopius, *Bellum Gothicum*, I, 12, 50-51. In my opinion, J. DURLIAT (*Le salaire de la paix sociale dans les royaumes barbares, V^e-VI^e siècles*, in: H. WOLFRAM, A. SCHWARCZ, ed., *Anerkennung und Integration. Zu den wirtschaftlichen Grundlagen der Völkerwanderungszeit 400-600*, Wien 1988, 35 note 70) mistakes the exegesis of this text to support his thesis on the fiscal payments to the Visigothic soldiers. Firstly it must be noted that the Visigothic *buccellarii* have many attributes from the non-noble German *Gefolge* (*vid. supra*), so, it is not logical to compare them with those of Byzantine Egypt. Last, but not least, it is not possible to understand *chremata* as »landgood«, saying that *chora* is »a territory from which springs the fiscal payment given to those *buccellarii* in concept of salary«. The sense of the text, and the opposition between the two words, shows their meaning: »cash« (*chremata*) and »land« (*chora*).

language on the Iberian Peninsula are certainly lacking⁷³. On the contrary there is no doubt that some noble Gothic families were able to keep their identity alive after their settlement in Hispanic lands and after they had certainly lost their ancient language. I feel that the testimonies I studied on the Balthi and some Amals during the 6th century, or the vigour among these families of the Gothic traditions and institutions that we have analysed earlier through the 6th century surely prove this. However, we lack 7th century testimony on the maintenance of the identity of these lines and of the Gothic institutions and customs tied to them. Doubtlessly the customs and genealogical traditions linked with the Gothic nobility survived in some epigones at that time, but their appearance and meaning would have become very different.

A well-known funeral inscription belonging to a certain Sinticius proudly proclaiming that he belonged to a Gothic line on his father's side⁷⁴ seems very interesting. This Sinticius died in 632, a time long after the Gothic noble implantation in Spain, which would have occurred at least three generations earlier⁷⁵. Under these conditions, remembering his father's Gothic origin testifies to the noble Visigothic families' particular interest in remembering their genealogy, doubtlessly by some oral transmission, although they were by now a mixed nobility, Hispano-Visigothic to the fullest sense of the word. And, even more significant in this respect is the evidence offered by a famous notarial formula from Cordoba dated 612. Written in verse and displaying rhetorical conventions, the formula establishes the dowry to be handed over on the marriage between unknown, but doubtlessly prominent, members of the local nobility. The bride is proud to belong to a Gothic line, and demands the ancient tradition of the *Morgengabe* as faithfully conserved among her family traditions and whose content coincides exactly with what we know as proper to the ancient Scythian Greuthung princesses as told in the remains of a Gothic epic that was from before the time of the great invasions⁷⁶. With these antecedents it is

73 On this see SACHS, *Die germanischen Ortsnamen in Spanien und Portugal*, Jena-Leipzig 1932; the only land-names known to him – Lovingos and Revenga – cannot be considered because they are not from original German names with the »ing« ending. Most interesting is modern Tafalla (in Navarre), descended from *Taifalia* (in the 5th Century we know the same name for the old *Laeti* settlement of Taifales in Pitou: *Notitia Dignitatum Occ.* 42, 65, and *Gregorius Turon., Vitae Patrum XV*, 1) in a place with the archaeological remains of a 5th Century German settlement; otherwise, this place-name was constructed according to Latin, not German, grammar. Of course it is difficult to date when a Gothic language stopped being spoken by Visigothic people (D. KREMER, *La survivance du wisigothique dans la péninsule Ibérique*, in: A. ROUSSEAU, ed., *Sur les traces de Busbecq et du gotique*, Lille 1991, 221–230).

74 J. VIVES, *Inscriptiones cristianas de la España romana y visigoda*, Barcelona 1969, n° 86: *Sinticius famulus Dei cognomento Deidomum, paterno traens linæa Getarum*. I would correct *Deidomum* to *Deidonom*, and read *Sinticius* as a German name (cf. PIEL, KREMER, *Namenbuch* [see n. 15] 243).

75 This inscription was found in Alcacer do Sal (Portugal). Certainly, I would like to date the settlement of noble Visigothic families in this country 460–469, when Theoderic II and Euric took the strongholds of Santarem and Lisbon against Suevic expansive efforts (cf. L. A. GARCÍA MORENO, *Mérida y el Reino visigodo de Tolosa*, in: *Homenaje a Sáenz de Buruaga*, Badajoz 1982, 232ff.; ID., *La Arqueología y la historia militar visigoda en la Península ibérica*, in: *Arqueología Medieval Española*, II Congreso, Madrid 1987, 334).

76 *Formulae Visigothicae* 20 (ed. GIL [see n. 64]). Against the viewpoint of C. SÁNCHEZ ALBORNOZ (*Orígenes de la Nación española*, I, Oviedo 1972, 236) *Geticae* is connected with the bride and not the *senatus*, and so it is not possible to talk of »a senate of Gothic origin«. The contents of the customary

possible to understand the interest of an anonymous cleric of the Mérida basilica of Santa Eulalia in the middle of the 7th century in remembering the nobility and Gothic root of the line to which Renovatus, the abbot of the important Caucian monastery and Metropolitan of Mérida in the second and third decade of the same century, belonged⁷⁷. He had had the same interest a few pages before in recalling the Gothic and noble origin, perhaps slightly less illustrious, of the great Metropolitan Massona in the last quarter of the 6th century. This is the same nobility and Gothic line that the anonymous author attributes to some counts of the area who had attempted to rebel against Reccared I in 587, among whom he names the Witteric who would later attain the throne in 603⁷⁸.

If these testimonies are observed without any prejudice whatsoever, it certainly does not seem strange that noble Visigothic families of the first third of the 7th century could have been proudly aware that their families' ethnic origin predated the Visigothic penetration of the Roman Empire and of Spain. In this respect it is worth remembering that Jordanes, who did not belong to the high Ostrogothic nobility but to a lesser family that was tied to a large noble house by its notarial expertise, was able, at the beginning of the 6th century, to trace his Gothic roots back more than a century to the turbulent time, for his people, of Attila's death⁷⁹. But the continuism should not be exaggerated either. The two testimonies cited above referring to the Cordoban notarial formula and to Sinticius' epitaph demonstrate that many descendants of the ancient Gothic nobility could not remember their line in the 7th century by much more than their proud awareness of belonging to the conquering race of the »Goths«. By this these descendants of the ancient Gothic nobility accepted the founding and existence of the Visigoth ethnic, and their belonging to a specific *Sippe* or line was no longer important. Even this Gothic identity had already been contaminated by basic Roman elements that had been well elaborated by the Hispano-Roman ecclesiastic elite. In both of the documents we cited earlier it is sufficient proof that the term »Goth/Gothic« has been replaced by »Geta/Getic«. This reflects the Gothic nobility's acceptance of the viewpoints of the ecclesiastic author of an ideology for the Visigothic Kingdom of Toledo that allowed them to prove their superiority with respect to the other Romano-Germanic nations, even to the Empire of Constantinople itself, by identifying the Visigoths with the ancient Getas of Pontus, the inheritors of the abundant and encomiastic Greco-Roman paradoxographic ethnography on the Scythians, the prototype of the »noble savage«⁸⁰.

But this had already occurred by the 7th century. After Reccared's conversion to Catholicism and that of most of the Gothic nobility in 589 had constituted a last and

Morgengabe is only testified to in the famous epic poem »The Hun's Defeat«, in part descended from the Goths' times in Scythia (vid. KUHN [see n. 71] 61 ff.).

77 *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeritensium* XXI, 50.

78 *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeritensium* XVII, 38, cf. GARCÍA MORENO, *Prosopografía* (see n. 15) n° 172. On Witteric's hypothetical Amal lineage, *vid. supra*. The non-mention of his lineage means the loss of the old German *Sippe* type traditions, and its replacement by other family relations and structures of Christian and noble Roman type.

79 Jordanes, *Getica* 265 ff.

80 Vid. Isidorus, *Etymologiae* IX,2,89. Cf. H.-J. DIESNER, *Isidor von Sevilla und das westgotische Spanien*, Leipzig 1977, 61 ff.

decisive step for the ultimate Visigothic ethnogenesis, thus facilitating the constitution of a Hispano-Visigothic nobility with many blood ties between the ancient Gothic lines and the prominent Hispano-Roman families⁸¹. This is one of the documents written precisely to justify and favor the constitution of this new Hispano-Visigothic nobility⁸². In these documents the Gothic nobility is related with the prestigious classic literary tradition that had already been used by the Hispano-Roman nobility as a sign of distinction and ethnic superiority⁸³. These documents were written for and by the new Hispano-Visigothic nobility to whom the difference between belonging to one Gothic line or another was not as important as their interest in indicating their generic belonging to the prestigious Gothic *nomen*; although they were also interested in relating themselves with the prestigious and fabulous races of Classic literary tradition. These could certainly have been the new *Stammestraktionen* and genealogical consciousness that interested most of the families of this new Hispano-Visigothic nobility, among whom only the customs and institutions tied to the new type of family like the *Morgengabe*, could survive, but not those that were linked to the ancient lines or *Sippen*.

81 These mixed marriages took place earlier, the best known is that of Theudis with a very rich hispanic woman. But the spread of this practice required the loss of religious and cultural prejudices, and was the work of a law by Leovigild (*Liber Iudicum* = LV III, 1,1), cf. GARCÍA MORENO, *Historia* (see n. 4) 189.

82 Curiously, one of the main leitmotives in the *Vitas S. Patrum Emeritensium* was the demonstration of the union among Gothic and Roman noble and clergy (remember the famous duke Claudius, GARCÍA MORENO, *Prosopografía* 35) of Catholic faith against the Arian Goths after Reccared's conversion.

83 Cf. M. C. DÍAZ Y DÍAZ, *De Isidoro al siglo XI*, Barcelona 1976, 13 ff.