
Francia. Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte
Herausgegeben vom Deutschen Historischen Institut Paris
(Institut historique allemand)
Band 23/1 (1996)

DOI: 10.11588/fr.1996.1.59728

Rechtshinweis

Bitte beachten Sie, dass das Digitalisat urheberrechtlich geschützt ist. Erlaubt ist aber das Lesen, das Ausdrucken des Textes, das Herunterladen, das Speichern der Daten auf einem eigenen Datenträger soweit die vorgenannten Handlungen ausschließlich zu privaten und nicht-kommerziellen Zwecken erfolgen. Eine darüber hinausgehende unerlaubte Verwendung, Reproduktion oder Weitergabe einzelner Inhalte oder Bilder können sowohl zivil- als auch strafrechtlich verfolgt werden.

connurent des variantes. La lutte contre les démons privilégiée en Orient s'atténue considérablement en Occident. La symbolique animalière ne peut se réduire à un rapprochement poétique avec saint François, la mythologie païenne se doit d'être sollicitée. Il en est de même pour l'analyse des ruines qui échappent à la seule vision romanesque du XIX^e siècle ou à la trace d'une occupation antérieure. Le signifiant spirituel ne peut être ignoré, pas plus pour l'eau que les activités manuelles. L'essence même de l'ascèse ne se limite pas à un descriptif de la vie ascétique.

La préoccupation essentielle de Mme Brunert que l'on suit comme un fil d'Ariane tout au long de l'ouvrage est l'idée de désert à travers le sens de *eremus*, *solitudo* et *desertum*. Elle est en ce sens influencée par K. Rübél qui pose la problématique pour l'époque carolingienne outre Rhin. Autre temps autre contexte. L'auteur perçoit que très vite les auteurs latins ont utilisé ces termes à partir du sens biblique et de façon synonyme sans que l'on puisse en déduire une quelconque signification précise sur l'espace géographique occupé. Ce n'est cependant pas une raison pour identifier le désert gaulois à la montagne – les Alpes en l'occurrence – comme si nous étions sur le point de voir naître la Chartreuse ou à l'image romantique des sombres forêts. Il a été montré que pour la Gaule le désert s'inscrit dans un rayon de 25 à 30 kms autour de la *caput-civitas*, en lisière de forêt pour la moitié des implantations de cellules (il n'y eût jamais de pénétration profonde à l'intérieur) et pour l'autre dans des vallées marécageuses, dans tous les cas à proximité de voies romaines. Il eut été intéressant de se demander ce que signifiait pour un aristocrate lettré et citadin la vie »rustique« dans un désert alors que la plupart se retirèrent soit sur l'un de leur domaine ou en compagnie d'un esclave pour gérer le quotidien.

Jean HEUCLIN, Lille

Pierre CAZIER, *Isidore de Séville et la naissance de l'Espagne catholique*, Paris (Beauchesne) 1994, VI-329 p. (Théologie Historique, 96).

This new French book on Visigothic Spain is the work of a member of the brilliant and fecund Visigoth School founded by Professor Jacques Fontaine. The author, Pierre Cazier, Professor of Late Latin at the University of Artois, studied Hispanovisigothic literature under Fontaine, who directed his 1984 thesis. The nucleus of the thesis was a new critical edition of Isidore's *Sententiae*, accompanied by a synthesis of the main problems posed by this work: its genre and purpose, its date, the sources of Isidore's thought and cultural circumstances, and especially, the politics that would explain such a text. This new book re-elaborates the synthesis for a public wider than that of specialists: the references to the modern bibliography have, to my taste, been excessively minimized.

This lack of bibliographical references results in a non specialized reader not being able to distinguish exactly between what is the author's personal opinion or contribution and what is no more than a compendium of the results of well known investigations by other authors. The reviewer feels this kind of indefiniteness is ever more frequent in history books, and in fact, erudite references do not always supply much to the hurried reader. But clearly noting what we owe our predecessors can be quite humbling in the Humanities as well as an excellent pedagogical lesson for future investigators. Our comment specifically refers to one of the basic elements of Cazier's thesis: the *Sententiae* are, to put it briefly, Isidore's true spiritual and sociopolitical last will and testament; in them he shows himself particularly pessimistic regarding the social order and political powers of his times, which is a different view from the common one of a prelate and great feudal lord. The truth is that this view of the *Sententiae* and of their usefulness in reconstructing the historical structure and circumstances of the VIIth century in Spain has already been clearly affirmed and demonstrated in the extremely dense book by Hans Joachim Diesner (*Isidor von Sevilla und das westgotische Spanien* [Ab-

handlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Phil.his. Kl., 67.3] Berlin 1977, particularly chapter I, which treats Isidore's »theology of poverty«). Of course, this work is quite respectful of other researchers, in the best tradition of German erudition. However, it would fault the truth if were not noted that Cazier brings a very solid philological base to the study by the former professor in Halle. Using the linguistic arguments which would only be available by a new editor, Cazier dates the *Sententiae* in the last years of Isidore, specifically at the time of the fourth Council of Toledo (633), an event P. Sejourne had already called Isidore's greatest achievement.

The contemporaneity and complementarity between the fourth Council of Toledo and the *Sententiae* was already developed by Cazier himself in an important paper read in the 1985 Madrid Visigoth Colloquium (Les sentences d'Isidore de Seville et le IV^e concile de Toledo, in: Los Visigodos. Historia y civilización, ed. A. González, Murcia 1986, 373–386). Cazier's other great philological contribution to an improved understanding of the *Sententiae* is his demonstration that they contain an internal coherence that is reflected in the very succession of *Sententiae*, the traditional paragraphs of only one meaning. This is why the author proposes that Isidore's final opinions on Catholic Theology and Ethics, society and political power, can be explained in a consecutive commentary of each *Sententia*, respecting the original order of the books and chapters.

Doubtlessly these real commentaries on the different *Sententiae* – centered on identifying the sources and their coherence with the opinion Isidore expressed in other texts – make up the basic part of the book (p. 77–285). And in this light Cazier's title for the monograph: »The Birth of Catholic Spain« seems slightly excessive, if not misleading. Other testimonies, beyond Isidore's, are necessary; and the investigation should not be exclusively centered in the *Sententiae*. Doubtlessly, if this had been his purpose, more attention would have been given to John of Biclara, to the literature of Sisebut or of his chancellery, to Leander of Seville, and to the »Lives of the Fathers of Merida« as well as what remains of Reccared's and Sisebut's laws. And this aside from the more or less anachronistic sensations that »Catholic« and »Spain« may inspire in the readers.

These shortcomings are not completely excusable. The first part, titled »Isidore's historical background« (p. 13–74) does not relieve the shortcomings. Among other reasons, this historical introduction seems excessively centered on Isidore personally, and on his family surroundings. Cazier's original references to Visigoth history until the end of the sixth century follow the steps marked by Isidore's *Historia Gothorum*. Thus the text is actually an exposition of Isidore's own historical consciousness, but there is no comparison between this view and the situation as reflected by other authors, be they hispanic (John of Biclara, the »Lives of the Fathers of Meridia«, etc.) or extrahispanic (Jordanes, and particularly, Gregory of Tours). Therefore, as well as the important, although controversial, book by Teillet (*Des Goths à la nation Gothique*, Paris 1984), use of H. Messmer's suggestive monograph (*Hispania-Idee und Gothenmythos*, Zürich 1960) would have been of great value. It would also have been very interesting to extend the dialectic debate to the actual development of the historical process that eventually established a Visigothic Monarchy on the Iberian Peninsula and its conversion to Catholicism. A positive and important contribution of this book is Cazier's explanation of why Isidore adopted the Hispanic Era and of his definition of the concept of royal legitimacy. The first would be due to the supposed coincidence between the Hispanic Era and the Census of Augustus, which Isidore had dated as the beginning of the sixth Age of the World. The second would have been centered on reinforcing the legal formalities surrounding the ascent to the throne and not on the equable even-tempered character and benefits of reigning. This conclusion also revalidates what J. Orlandis noted over 30 years ago (see: *El poder real y la sucesion al trono en la monarquia visigoda*, Roma-Madrid 1962).

However, on the contrary, we are still unconvinced by Cazier's reasons for supposing that Isidore's family were exiled from the land of their birth (*terra natalis*) to Baetic Andalusia, as

the result of Agila's Aryan policy and Severianus, Isidore's father, and his family's pro-Byzantine attitude. On my part I have already argued (Actas del II congreso de Historia de Andalucía. Historia Antigua, Córdoba 1994, 556 ff.) against such a hypothesis, which was defended in 1983 by Cazier and his teacher Fontaine. At any rate, what it is certain is that Isidore's brother Leander (*De institutione virginum*, 31) considered his ancient family home as occupied by foreign troops and subject to a tyrannical government. This does not mean that Realpolitik kept him from successive and contradictory approaches to the Constantinople government. The strong loyalty that Severianus' family felt for Athanagild's family, above any difference of religious creed, is also unquestionable. In this context we must question the picture Cazier draws of the causes for and development of Hermenegild's rebellion (pp. 39–48). If he had read my paper on this subject (IV Centenario del Concilio III de Toledo 589–1989, Toledo 1991, 272–296), perhaps Cazier would have abandoned the traditional interpretation of the misleading text by John of Biclara (a.a.579.3), which says that the rebellion was originated by *factione Gosvintae*, whom we believe to be more supporter than mortal enemy of Hermenegild. However, Cazier's supposition of a more aggressive role for Reccared in the fatal outcome of the crisis is quite right, since Reccared was the main beneficiary of his brother's tragic and traitorous death; I have defended and attempted to prove this with several arguments in the article cited above. Cazier also is right in considering the information of Gregory the Great, and his »Dialogues« referring to Hermenegild and the possible final reconciliation between the dying Leovigild and Leander, as meriting consideration.

As I already noted, the chapters that make up the second to fifth parts of the book (pp. 83–285) constitute a brief and fairly complete commentary on the *Sententiae* in the order in which Isidore wrote them: doctrinal teaching (Theology, Anthropology, Ecclesiology, Ecclesiastic Discipline); individual conversion (Christian Aretology, the vices and virtues of Visigothic society), social morals (clergy, bishops, royal and rulers' power, Church-State relations), and last, life on earth and the after life.

Of course such a rich variety of subjects give Cazier multiple opportunities to display his profound knowledge of the Isidorian sources and of Latin Patristic Literature in general. If there is something in particular that merits praise it is that this commentary also treats the relation between Isidore's ideas and the general socio-cultural structure of the times and the very specific political situation in which Isidore's diocese developed during the first third of the seventh century. Obviously, with so many pages, there are opinions and conclusions that this reviewer cannot completely accept. For example, the idea that Isidore gave substantially less importance to the cult of saints and martyrs in comparison with the views of his immediate predecessors Gregory of Tours and Gregory the Great in his »Dialogues« (p. 125–136), seems excessively radical. Possibly this may be due more than anything else to the nature of the *Sententiae* themselves, but do remember that Isidore emphasized Saint Acisclus in explaining the course of Hispanovisigothic history during the middle of the sixth century in his *Historia Gothorum* (§ 45). At any rate it does not seem right to take this as the cause of the lesser wealth of Visigothic hagiographic literature when compared with Merovingian literature. Perhaps this affirmation ignores the respective size of both literatures, and, particularly, does not credit Visigoth hagiography with the composition at the middle of the seventh century of the rich and extremely important »Hispanic Martyrs-stories book« (cf. A. Fabrega, *Pasionario Hispanico*, Madrid, Barcelona 1952, apparently was not consulted), or a of liturgy that was much centered on the saints, as is reflected by various existing Visigoth-Mozarab Calendars that have reached us. On the contrary, the critical nuance given to the view of Isidorian royalty by Cazier's predecessor Reydellet (*La royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*, Rome 1982) seems better focused with a more negative and pessimistic sense that seems to approach Diesner's view. It also seems quite right to relate the importance Isidore gave to *clementia* among the royal virtues with his requirement through the episcopate, particularly in Baetica, that Sisenand exercise it towards the defeated followers of Suintila.

The last pages (386–308) are dedicated to his conclusions. These offer a portrait of Isidore in the last ten years of his life that coincides with the one drawn some time ago by Diesner. It shows Isidore as more pessimistic than in 625 when Suinthila had had a victory against the Empire, as a prelate who distrusts political power and is very preoccupied with social justice. This Isidore, in Cazier's fine final sentence »Sans faire de lui un révolutionnaire, on peut sans doute faire de lui le contestataire le plus grand de l'époque«.

The book ends with some extremely useful indices of references in ancient texts, particularly patristic ones, of subjects and ancient names. Cazier has written an obligatory reference book for the reading of Isidore's *Sententiae*, the book that is beginning to become the key to understanding Isidore's thought. Undoubtedly it will be usefully and pleasurably read by specialists as well as the wider public that is interested in the centuries once called the Dark Ages. However, a global understanding of the birth of the Catholic Visigoth Monarchy requires including other contemporary views, not only those of Isidore at the end of his life, and comparing his ideals with his social and political praxis. This comparison would offer marked paradoxes and incoherencies, that would reflect more meanders and greater hypocrisy than those noted in Cazier's book: the history of the relations between Isidore himself and the kings Sisebut, Suinthila and Sisenand, if one were to read between the lines in the testimonies of those times, would offer magnificent proofs of these contradictions.

Luis A. GARCÍA MORENO, Alcalá de Henares

Joachim JAHN, *Ducatus Baiuvariorum. Das bairische Herzogtum der Agilolfinger*, Stuttgart (Hiersemann) 1991, 686 p. (Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters, 35).

Si on connaît depuis longtemps la spécificité du duché des Bavaois qui a suscité de nombreuses recherches, on ne disposait pas jusqu'alors d'une monographie récente qui prenne le duché des Agilolfingiens dans son ensemble comme point central de l'étude. J. Jahn a inscrit sa recherche dans la tradition de la *Verfassungsgeschichte* et il nous en livre, dans un volume très complet et très utilisable, les principaux résultats. L'étude tourne autour de deux points centraux: d'une part la politique extérieure des ducs et en particulier leurs relations avec le royaume des Francs, le royaume des Lombards et la Papauté, d'autre part, la structure politique interne du duché des Bavaois, c'est-à-dire les moyens utilisés par le duc pour établir et faire rayonner sa puissance, l'attitude politique de l'aristocratie envers le duc et l'intégration des églises – épiscopales ou abbatiales – dans l'Etat agilolfingien. L'auteur s'est appuyé presque exclusivement sur les sources scripturaires, ne faisant qu'exceptionnellement appel à l'archéologie et privilégiant particulièrement les sources provenant de l'église épiscopale de Freising. La difficulté réside en effet dans le poids considérable des sources provenant de la cour franque qui véhiculent, dès le début du VIII^e siècle, une véritable propagande anti-agilolfingienne et qui perçoivent mal la spécificité des structures sociales et de l'ordre politique mis en place par les ducs. C'est pourquoi J. Jahn a privilégié les sources normatives, et notamment l'ensemble des actes conservés à Freising dont la richesse est loin d'avoir été épuisée, par rapport aux sources annalistiques qu'on utilise habituellement pour écrire l'histoire politique du duché. Ces mêmes sources lui ont également permis de se livrer à une étude prosopographique de l'aristocratie bavaoise et de mieux cerner les différents groupes qui occupent le devant de la scène politique.

L'ouvrage est construit selon un plan chronologique qui le rend d'un maniement très aisé, et qui laisse aussi apparaître la grande disparité du volume des informations: les 123 premières pages couvrent l'histoire du duché de ses débuts jusqu'en 735, le duché d'Odilon occupe les 154 pages suivantes, et l'époque de Tassilon les 268 pages restantes. Chaque chapitre procure de précieuses informations, toujours remarquablement étayées, quant aux différents groupes