ST. MARTIN OF BRAGA: SOURCES FOR HIS TOLERANCE TOWARD THE
RUSTICI IN SIXTH CENTURY GALICIA

by

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ABSTRACT

A short time after the II Council of Braga in A.D. 572, Bishop Martin of Braga wrote a letter to his fellow bishop, Polemius of Astorga. The letter addressed a concern which Polemius had raised in their correspondence regarding the first canon of the recent council, which instructed the bishops to call the people of the Church together, and "teach them, so that they will flee the errors of idols..." In response, Martin composed a sermon designed to serve Polemius as a model for his instruction of those rural peasants who still maintained strong ties with their traditional pagan religion. During the middle ages, the sermon, commonly known as De Correctione Rusticorum, caught on as a guide for bishops and missionaries facing the same task as Polemius.

Martin's sermon is of value to scholars because of its detailed catalogue of pagan practices. However, the sermon stands out from others in the same genre because of its tolerant approach to the pagani. While J.N. Hillgarth and Peter Brown, among others, are surprised by Martin's tolerance, few have considered why this bishop from Northwestern Iberia was so gentle with his wayward charges.

Alberto Ferreiro, in an article which appeared in the American Benedictine Review, December 1983, attributes Martin's tolerance to his classical education and training. In advancing this thesis, Ferreiro refers to Martin's heavy indebtedness to Seneca in several other writings, and references to his knowledge of classical authors, notably Plato, by Fortunatus. While Martin's knowledge of

1 "...convocata plebe ipsius ecclesiae, doceant illos, ut errores fugiant idolorum...
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the classics may be a contributing factor, it is only one element in the makeup of a complex man who labored in a unique situation.

In this study, Martin emerges as an adventuresome man whose thirst for knowledge put him at odds with the anti intellectual policies of Emperor Justinian. He entered monastic life in the east just as the Academies were closing in Greece. Prior to the crushing of Origenism in A.D. 553, Martin stayed a step beyond the repressive emperor by retreating to the kingdom of the autonomous Sueves in Galicia. When migrating west, Martin brought with him the literary and intellectual heritage of eastern monasticism. This material included the *Sayings of the Desert Fathers* and a collection of canons from various eastern Councils. Claude W. Barlow edited this literature along with the extant writings of Martin in *Martini Episcopi Opera Omnia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950).

In Galicia he found a people beyond the control of Justinian, and the Church hierarchy as well. Located at the fringes of the Roman Empire, Galicia was marginally influenced by the Catholicism which dominated southern Iberia. Indeed, a dispirited Church was overpowered by both a vital indigenous paganism, a persistent Priscillianism, and the Arianism of the independent Sueves.

Lacking the support at the disposal of bishops in southern Spain and Gaul, Martin of Braga never attempted to enforce Catholicism on the populace. Instead, in his sermon, commonly known as *De Correctione Rusticorum*, Martin adapts his eastern monastic experience to the cultural and religious situation in Galicia in order to persuade his semi-pagan converts to give up their traditional pagan practices. His message of salvation rests theologically on the principles of Origenism and is characterized by the pastoral tone of the Desert Fathers. The easternness of Martin's sermon is discerable when compared with the *Sayings of the Desert Fathers* and Origen's *De Principiis* and contrasted with the sermons of Caesarius of Arles and Augustine's *De Catechizandis Rudibus*. While Ferreiro
points the search for the source of Martin's tolerance in the right direction, he fails to recognize the influence of Martin's eastern monastic experience as a whole on his pastoral endeavours.
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INTRODUCTION

A short time after the II Council of Braga in A.D. 572, Bishop Martin of Braga wrote a letter to his fellow bishop, Polemius of Astorga. The letter addressed a concern which Polemius had raised in their correspondence regarding the first canon of the recent council, which instructed the bishops to call the people of the Church together, and "teach them, so that they will flee the errors of idols..."\(^1\) In response, Martin composed a sermon designed to serve Polemius as a model for his instruction of those rural peasants who still maintained strong ties with their traditional pagan religion. During the middle ages, the sermon, commonly known as De Correctione Rusticorum, caught on as a guide for bishops and missionaries facing the same task as Polemius.

Martin's sermon is of value to scholars because of its detailed catalogue of pagan practices. However, the sermon stands out from others in the same genre because of its tolerant approach to the pagani. While J.N. Hillgarth and Peter Brown, among others, are surprised by Martin's tolerance, few have considered

\(^1\) "...convocata plebe ipsius ecclesiae, doceant illos, ut errores fugiant idolorum..." Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio, vol. 9, 838. Note: All translations are mine unless otherwise stated.
why this bishop from Northwestern Iberia was so gentle with his wayward charges.2

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In this study, Martin emerges as an adventuresome man whose thirst for knowledge put him at odds with the anti intellectual policies of Emperor Justinian. He entered monastic life in the east just as the Academies were closing in Greece. Prior to the crushing of Origenism in A.D. 553, Martin stayed a step beyond the repressive emperor by retreating to the kingdom of the autonomous Sueves in Galicia. When migrating west, Martin brought with him the literary and intellectual heritage of eastern monasticism.

In Galicia he found a people beyond the control of Justinian, and the Church hierarchy as well. Located at the fringes of the Roman Empire, Galicia was marginally influenced by the Catholicism which dominated southern Iberia. Indeed, a dispirited Church was overpowered by both a vital indigenous paganism, a persistent Priscillianism, and the Arianism of the independent Sueves.

Lacking the support at the disposal of bishops in southern Spain and Gaul, Martin of Braga never attempted to enforce Catholicism on the populace. Instead, in De Correctione Rusticorum, Martin adapts his eastern monastic experience to the cultural and religious situation in Galicia in order to persuade his semi-pagan

2 Evidence from Augustine, Caesarius of Arles and the Council of Elvira reveals that the normal western approach to pagan survivals was confrontational in nature.
converts to give up their traditional pagan practices. His message of salvation rests theologically on the principles of Origenism and is characterized by the pastoral tone of the Desert Fathers. Through the labor of Martin of Braga and his remarkable sermon, the spirit and message of eastern monasticism shaped missionary efforts in Galicia and beyond.
Chapter 1
FROM PANNONIA TO GALICIA

A. THE JOURNEY EAST

Martin's life began in A.D. 520 somewhere in Pannonia. As a young man, he left his native land on a journey which would eventually end in the northwestern corner of the Iberian Peninsula. Our knowledge of his life prior to his arrival in Spain in A.D. 550 is sketchy. In a short poem, entitled "Epitaphium Eiusdem", written to honor Martin of Tours, the author refers to himself both as "famulus Martin eodem Nomine", and as "pannoniis Genitus".¹ Martin of Braga was well aware that both he and Martin of Tours shared Pannonia, located in modern Hungary as their birthplace. These two phrases constitute Martin's autobiographical references. Our remaining source of information about Martin is found in Gregory of Tours' History of the Franks, written between A.D. 580 and 584. While Martin only speaks in his poem about "crossing vast waters to Gallicia", Gregory fills in some significant detail.

¹ The extant works of Martin of Braga are: Pro repellenda iactantia, Item de superbia, Exhortatio humilitatis, Canons of the Second council of Braga, De ira, De Correctione Rusticorum, Formula Vitae honestae, De trina mersione, De Pascha, and a few poems. The complete collection of these works and all sources that make mention of Martin can be found in Claude W. Barlow, ed., Martini Episcopi Opera Omnia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950). Hereafter it will be cited as Barlow, MEB. The poem appears on page 283.
"...he set forth for the east to visit holy places, and became so well versed in letters that he was second to none among the men of his day". This brief statement contains two pieces of information around which a general biography can be created. Martin went to the holy land, although where specifically is not mentioned. However, during his sojourn there, he received an excellent education which Venantius Fortunatus describes and praises in a letter to Martin. The quality of Martin's education leads Alberto Ferreiro to surmise that he lived among anchoritic monks where he had access to extensive libraries.

While the description of Martin's activity in the east is marginal, it is probable that he spent a significant period of time in a monastic community that possessed a substantial library, where he absorbed both the classics and the lore of desert monasticism. In order to understand this formative period in Martin's life, it is helpful to construct a profile of the desert monasticism Martin experienced in the early sixth century.

B. EGYPTIAN MONASTICISM IN THE SIXTH CENTURY

Our sources offer no direct clues from which to determine the nature of Martin's monastic experience. However, certain inferences can be drawn both from our knowledge of sixth century Egyptian monasticism in general. Since historical sources for the period are scant, this knowledge is gleaned mainly from the Sayings of the Fathers and the Questions and Answers of the Greek Fathers. Inferences can also be drawn from our profile of the mature Martin. Martin's

3 Barlow, MEB., 294-298.
journey east seems to fit with a general immigration of monks to Egypt, and Alexandria in particular.

Alexandrie fut de tous temps un séjour recherché par les moines étrangers; la résistance dogmatique des uns, l'instinct voyageur des autres, en faisaient arriver un grand nombre dans ses murs. Including Martin in the stream of "moines étrangers" who poured into Alexandria would explain his access to classical education. The monasteries surrounding Alexandria possessed excellent libraries. Regrettably, these manuscripts as well as works of art were all destroyed along with the monasteries at the beginning of the seventh century. While much of Martin's time would have been given to study, he was part of a monastic tradition which maintained a direct involvement with the general populace. The monks worked to lift the people out of their semi-paganism. They were not only concerned with idol cults, but also the pagan morality which accompanied the ancient religions.

Historically the monks had opposed the indigenous paganism which controlled life in the neighbouring villages. In her description of monastic life in the fourth century, based on the Sayings of the Desert Fathers Benedicta Ward remarks:

The paganism of the Egyptian villages lay all around the monks; part of their rejection of the villages was their rejection of the paganism interwoven into life on the land; and the conversion of the pagans was, if not a major concern, at least something they would do if they could.

While the monks attempted to halt pagan practices, they opted to use prayer rather than coercion, characteristic of the western sources. Abba Apollo is reported to

6 Ibid., 78.
have stopped a pagan procession by his prayers. Macarius converted a pagan priest by seeing him as a man to be treated with consideration rather than as an enemy to be attacked. As the populace developed respect and admiration for their monastic neighbours, the monks were asked to bless the waters of the Nile in the place of the pagan priests. The monks of Martin's era continued this non-coercive policy toward paganism, although they sought its eradication.

The monks also ministered to the social needs of the populace. On certain days, the doors of the monasteries were opened so that the people could find assistance; none were refused. Like the approach to paganism, the monks' social policy also had strong historical roots.

In his study of Monophysite sources, K.H. Kuhn found that in the fifth century, when economic conditions in Egypt were disastrous, most of the entrants into the monasteries came from the poverty stricken peasantry. Whole families, including wives and children, often joined the community together. While the urban setting of Alexandria made contact between the monks and the populace inevitable, even in the Nile Valley the matters of everyday life brought the two groups together. The monks practiced various crafts, like weaving, and traveled the Nile in order to sell their wares.

Martin's monastic experience, which centered around study, would have also brought him into contact with the Alexandrian population. Historically the monks had lived close to the people: religiously, socially and economically. The monks sought to live at peace with their neighbours, even though they opposed the

8 Ibid.
indigenous paganism. They remained close to the needs of the people and responded whenever possible. This pattern continued into Martin's own time.

C. JUSTINIAN'S INFLUENCE ON MONASTIC LIFE

Why did Martin find Alexandria attractive? Was his interest largely academic, or were there other motivations? Paul van Cauwenbergh in his general description of the "moines etrangers" suggests that the majority were either escaping theological controversy or searching for adventure. Martin's journey, and indeed the great peregrination to Alexandria is more explicable when placed within the context of the political events of his time.

Martin lived during the reign of Emperor Justinian (A.D. 527-565). Justinian sought a return to the heady days of a united and orthodox empire. His ambitions were therefore both political and theological, with little distinction between the two. Justinian considered himself the heir of Constantine and equal to the twelve apostles. He considered it his duty to restore the whole of the God-ordained Roman Empire to Trinitarian Christianity. In the west he attempted to reclaim the Roman provinces which had fallen into the hands of the Arian German tribes. According to John W. Barker, an authority on Byzantine history:

Thus, for reasons of religion and geography, Justinian's reconquest program was limited in practical terms to the three major Arian Christian barbarian kingdoms of the Western Mediterranean: Vandalic North Africa, Ostrogothic Italy, and Visigothic Spain.

Like his predecessors, Justinian saw political and religious unity as mutually reinforcing. He took a direct role in the theological controversies in the

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13 Ibid., 97.
east and sent out missionaries to evangelize heretics and pagans. Justinian's policy
toward the Monophysites, Manichaean, and pagans eventually involved coercion.
In A.D. 529 he closed the academies, a move which crippled classical studies.

Procopius, a contemporary historian, describes Justinian's actions against heresy:

> Agents were sent everywhere to force whomever they chanced upon to renounce the faith of their fathers... Thus many perished at the hands of the persecuting faction... and thenceforth the whole Roman Empire was a scene of massacre and flight.14

Martin's formation took place under a repressive regime which at times resorted to brutality to enforce religious uniformity. While our scant sources give no hint that Martin was unorthodox in his theology, his interest in classical education was politically incorrect. Is it coincidental that Martin's sojourn in Egypt occurred during Justinian's ascendancy, or was Martin seeking intellectual freedom? While Martin's motivation for heading east is uncertain, Justinian's policies toward both the monastic communities and classical education must have played contributing roles.

When Martin arrived in Alexandria, he found a monastic community torn apart by theological conflict. The heavy-handed Justinian directly intervened in the affairs of the monks to bring them under his control. The task of subduing the monastic community proved difficult, even for the stubborn Justinian. The fiercely independent nature of the monastic communities and the variety of their doctrinal understandings complicated his task. Theologically, monasticism encompassed a broad spectrum of expression, ranging from a rural illiterate Monophysitism to an urban, literate Origenism. Both these extremes, although mutually exclusive, disturbed the uniformity which Justinian coveted. Also, during the theological controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries, the monks

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had taken an active and often disruptive role. Therefore, in the interests of orthodoxy and harmony, he intervened.

The Monophysite communities presented both a theological and a political problem for Justinian. Not only was he endeavoring to rally the Empire around Catholicism, but around Constantinople as well. The Monophysites, who were concentrated in Egypt opposed the authority of Constantinople in keeping with the historical rivalry between the latter and Alexandria. Therefore, Monophysitism was not only unacceptable theologically but politically as well.

The influence which the Monophysite monks exercised in Egypt made them an important target for the Emperor. In A.D. 554 many monks from Syria and Egypt were brought to Constantinople to discuss theological questions. In A.D. 563, four hundred monks, including the Archimandrite Abraham of Peboau assembled at Constantinople "on the order of the emperor" to have discussions with the Chalcedonians. When Abraham refused to comply with Justinian's order to accept the Chalcedonian Definition, the rebel monks were chased into the desert and back to their monasteries.

The schisms under Justinian brought about the establishment of new monasteries. In the great cosmopolitan city of Alexandria, a variety of forms of the monastic life were present, with each cenobium existing independently. The ancient convents were given to the orthodox, due to severe measures on the part of the imperial government. Since these older houses would have possessed the libraries, orthodox monks like Martin had access to the manuscript collections.

15 At the end of the fourth century, the Origenist monks of Nitria, led by the Tall Brothers, sought the help of the embattled John Chrysostom. The Patriarch of Constantinople was condemned in A.D. 400 on the charge of Origenism, and the monks fled back to the desert. Following the Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451, the Monophysite monks rioted along with the rabble.

16 van Cauwenbergh, Étude sur les moines d'Egypte, 154-55.

17 Ibid., 171-72.
It appears that Martin left Pannonia for Alexandria in part because of the suppression of classical learning. His desire to study the classics immediately put him at variance with the intolerant Emperor. Joining the monastic movement was not a politically wise move. Although Martin was not a Monophysite, and therefore escaped the persecution which those monks endured, literate orthodox monks were not exempt from Justinian's interference. Justinian repressed education because he believed it encouraged independent thinking.

In his examination of intellectual spirituality at this time, Jon Dechow points out that from the Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451 until Martin's time, the Byzantines sought to eliminate Origenism in Egypt.18 Origenism, with its speculative character, was a threat to uniformity.

Origenism had shaped the spirituality of the Greek speaking monks of Upper and Lower Egypt. At Alexandria a continuous Origenist school persisted. In Egypt the tradition was perpetuated by Didymus the Blind (A.D. 313-398) and Evagrius (A.D. 346-399). Evagrius settled in Nitria, south of Alexandria where he adapted Origen's speculative and contemplative thought to the needs of the monastic movement.19 Origenism provided an ideal philosophical framework for monasticism. According to Dechow, "Origenists offered a more coherent theology

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According to Trigg, Evagrius' disciple, John Cassian (A.D. 360-435), who took desert monasticism and Origenism to the west, was more selective than his teacher. "Thus Cassian, whose understanding of contemplation and the relation of the human will to God's grace was genuinely Origen, had little interest in Origen's speculative concerns. As a result, Origen's understanding of contemplation became less intellectual and more affective as it entered the contemplative tradition in the west."
and a tighter rationale with universalist tendencies that had taken easy root in monastic soil".20

The successful speculative framework which Origenism provided proved to be its undoing. The broad range of theological possibilities which it offered made political and ecclesiastical leaders nervous. Their interests were best served by a carefully monitored and well defined orthodoxy. In A.D. 399, Theophilus of Alexandria demanded that the Coptic monks give up anthropomorphic conceptions of God. The monks refused and Theophilus, who faced alienating his allies, reversed his view. He immediately began attacking the literate monks in Nitria.21 Led by the Tall Brothers, these monks pleaded their case to the embattled John Chrysostom. He took up their cause, but was himself deposed in A.D. 400 on charges of Origenism.22

Under Justinian, the official battle against Origenism which began with the condemnation of Origen during the trial of Chrysostom in 400, culminated in the anathema against Origen at the Fifth Council of Constantinople in A.D. 553.

The nature of Martin's education was certainly not typical of the norms desired by Justinian. While the Monophysites were singled out, the literate orthodox monks were also suspect because their education threatened the religious uniformity which Justinian coveted. Martin's intellectual monasticism put him in conflict with his emperor.

20 Dechow, Dogma and Mysticism, 463.

21 Nitria was an important monastic center with connections to the catechetical school at Alexandria. At the end of the 4th century Nitria had a population of approximately 3,000 monks. Trigg, Origen, 148.

22 Ibid., p. 253.
D. THE JOURNEY WEST

In A.D. 550, Martin left Egypt and set sail for the Spanish coast. The reasons Martin chose Spain are unclear, since the source material offers no explicit explanation. The lack of sources led some scholars to consider Martin's motives undeterminable. But A. Ferreiro, in "The Westward Journey of Martin of Braga" suggests that several possibilities can be inferred from the context of Martin's time.

Ferreiro considers Martin's sense of a divine call as significant, especially given the respect for divine intervention of his day. Martin describes his own motive as "divinus nutibus actus". The weight given to this divine call depends on the validity one attributes to such calls in general.

Ferreiro then cites C.P. Caspari's 1883 study of Martin of Braga's De Correctione Rusticorum to set forth a possible factor.

Probably Roman Catholic pilgrims out of Galicia whom he encountered in Palestine or somewhere in the Orient told him about the affliction of the Church, above all in their homeland.

Caspari finds this explanation likely because the east was a popular destination for Westerners anxious to visit the holy sites.

The Iberian Peninsula saw many of its populace join this eastern peregrination. Barlow notes that Idacius, Hosius of Cordoba, Paulus Orosius, Turibius [and Ageria] were among earlier travelers who went east seeking

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24 "Il est impossible de savoir quelles raisons l'avaient determiné a ce voyage...," in Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique, 1928 ed., s.v. "Martin de Braga."
26 Barlow, MEB, 109.
27 Ibid., 245.
educational opportunities. The sixth century saw Leander of Seville and John Biclaro venture east to Constantinople. Leander became aquainted with Gregory the Great while John spent seventeen years (A.D. 559-576) studying Latin and Greek in the east. Therefore, it is possible that Martin learned of the west through contact with western travelers.28

The missionary opportunities in the west had attracted easterners since St. Paul. St. Martin of Tours (A.D. 311-397), who became a formative influence in Martin of Braga's life, was a native of Pannonia.29 A generation later, John Cassian (A.D. 360-435) came west bringing with him the monastic lore of the desert.30 The fifth century migrations of the Germanic tribes, and the corresponding spread of Arianism, made the west a target for missions.

As Ferreiro argues, the close east/west contact and the missionary attraction of the west probably played a role in Martin's decision to migrate to Spain. But, why did he chose Galicia and its Suevic overlords? Since the Sueves had originated from Martin's native Pannonia, he may have shared a similarity of race. Reports of the sorry state of the Church in Galicia may have played on Martin's distant relationship with its occupiers. Ferreiro is convinced that "the kinship that Martin felt for the Sueves was a deciding factor in choosing Galicia specifically".31

While Martin's affinity for the Sueves may have helped him settle on Galicia as the location of his missionary endeavours, the political climate of the times probably made this remote corner of Iberia desirable as well. Ferreiro tries

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28 Ibid., 246.
to argue that Martin went to Iberia because he supported Justinian's efforts to bring the peninsula under Byzantine control. He points out that Martin's arrival in southern Spain coincided with the major Byzantine thrust into the region in A.D. 550, and therefore alleges that Martin's presence in Spain is an example of the eastern "social consciousness" toward the west. On the other hand, Ferreiro also indicates that Martin was opposed both to the Emperor's methods of conversion to orthodoxy and his sanctions against classical education. While Ferreiro recognizes Martin's antipathy for the methods of Justinian, he alleges that Martin was still in step with Byzantine policies vis-a-vis missionary activity.

It seems more likely that Martin's migration to Galicia may have had a more urgent motivation. It is possible that Martin sought Galicia in order to be free from the ruthless Justinian. His reason for leaving Egypt may have been the same as his reason for choosing Alexandria in the first place: intellectual freedom. The scope of Martin's learning which spanned both pagan authors and the Church Fathers, led Portuguese scholar Mario Martins to describe him as "a humanist monk who anticipated Renaissance humanism by close to a thousand years". If Martins' enthusiastic assessment of St. Martin is even partly accurate, his existence under Justinian would have been precarious. In Galicia, Martin found a haven beyond the emperor's reach.

During the years leading up to the Fifth Council of Constantinople, life for the literate monastic communities must have been oppressive. Ferreiro seems to underestimate the pressure to conform which Justinian placed on the monks. Ferreiro only notes that, "Although St. Martin of Braga was a monk, he was in

32 Ibid., 249.

touch with the social and political movements of the East." Monastic life was hardly the detached exercise which Ferreiro's statement implies. Martin was part of a community directly threatened by Justinian's policies.

As Justinian escalated his campaign against the monks, the community began to fear for its existence. It was during the period leading up to the Fifth Council of Constantinople that the Sayings of the Fathers were collected and recorded. The texts which Martin brought west and eventually translated into Latin was copied during this period of ferment. Until the sixth century, the Sayings were a living, oral tradition. With the threat to monasticism came the desire to preserve the tradition. Did Martin participate directly in the compilation of the text? The possibility is worth considering. Certainly, it is probable that Martin brought his text from Egypt to Galicia. According to Barlow:

It has long been a plausible theory that the manuscript which Pasachius [a monk at Dumium] used had been brought from the East by St. Martin. At any rate, this is our earliest evidence that this material had found its way to Spain, although the Spanish monks were undoubtedly interested in Eastern forms of monasticism and were already becoming acquainted with Cassian.

Martin's possession of a copy indicates that he had access to the text. Also, our knowledge of his literary ability argues circumstantially for his involvement in the compilation process.

The events of that decade convinced many monks to leave Alexandria. The timing of Martin's departure from the East is significant. He left in about A.D. 550, just three years before the decisive Fifth Council of Constantinople, and four years prior to Justinian's confrontation with the Monophysite monks. Ferreiro may be correct in considering interaction with travellers and Martin's ethnicity as

34 Ferreiro, "Westward Journey," 249.
35 Barlow, MEB, 12.
36 van Cauwenbergh, Etude sur Les Moines D'Egypte, 78.
factors which contributed to his decision. However, his suggestion that Martin went to Galicia in support of Justinian's policies seems to underestimate the political implications of Martin's educational pursuits. It appears likely that the monk was attracted to Galicia because it was beyond the emperor's control.

E. ST. MARTIN'S MONASTIC CULTURE

Despite the best efforts of Justinian, St. Martin left Egypt with a high level of education. During his time in the East, Martin studied both Greek and Latin. Venantius Fortunatus (A.D. 530-600) historian, poet, and Bishop of Potiers recalls conversing with Martin about Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Chryssipius, Pittacus, as well as Latin Fathers Hilary of Potiers, Gregory the Great, Ambrose of Milan, and Augustine of Hippo. While Fortunatus' list is helpful, it does not reveal which of these sources Martin studied while in the east. It is probable that the Greek classical sources would have been readily available there. Once in Spain, Martin developed a strong appreciation for Seneca. His work, the *Formula Vitae Honestae* was based on a lost work of Seneca and was commonly attributed to the former during the Middle Ages.

Not surprisingly, it is the heritage of the Eastern Church which Martin brought west to Spain. Once in Galicia, Martin translated the *Sententiae Patrum Aegyptiorum* from Greek into Latin, and his monk Paschasius likewise translated the *Interrogationes et responsiones Graecorum patrum*. Also, at the second Council of Braga in A.D. 572, Martin used a collection of canons from the eastern councils to support his policies. Although Martin was likely exposed to western theology during his time in Spain, the literary heritage of the east was the formative influence on his thinking.

37 Barlow, MEB, 295-296.
38 Ibid., 204.
SUMMARY

When young Martin left Pannonia he embarked on a formative experience which would shape every facet of his personality. Given the quality of his education and his monastic training, it appears that he spent time in the great schools around Alexandria. There he was immersed in both the monastic lifestyle and the academic education which he sought. These pursuits put him at odds with Justinian who feared the disruptive effects of intellectual freedom. Shortly before Origen was anathematized and the monks were scattered, Martin left the east for a remote corner of the world which happened to be beyond the reach of Justinian. Although Martin left the east, he brought his monastic and intellectual heritage with him. This heritage would have a profound impact on his adopted land.
Chapter 2

HISTORY OF GALICIA

A. HUMAN SETTLEMENT TO ROMAN OCCUPATION

Part of the Iberian Peninsula, the region of the northwest known as Galicia, is geographically isolated from the rest of the land mass. Spain's geography is dominated by a series of mountain ranges which divide the peninsula into distinct regions. Historically, these natural barriers effectively stifled communication and interaction between Galicia and other regions. In the days of the early Empire, the Romans increased this isolation by constructing a string of forts across central Spain. This action restricted the impact of Roman civilization on the northern regions, which retained some features of Iron Age culture until the eighth century.¹

The geography of the peninsula influenced the movement of people into the region. In the first millennium B.C., European Celts migrated into the north, while African Iberians moved into the south. Later the Carthaginians occupied the southeastern coasts and the Greeks, followed by the Romans, the northeastern coasts. While the Romans subjugated Spain by A.D. 14, their hold on the north was tenuous. Few Roman towns were founded there, and pre-Roman tribal organizations continued to survive. These two factors combined to limit the

cultural assimilation of the indigenous population. The Roman presence was largely confined to military occupation and mining. However, the Galicians and the Asturians defied the Romans and raided their occupiers. Therefore, the Romans developed a military frontier to keep them out.\textsuperscript{2} Galicia's geographic isolation enabled its inhabitants to maintain cultural independence from Rome in contrast to the south which was more easily absorbed into Roman culture.

B. THE PERIOD OF SUEVIC DOMINATION: A.D. 409-587

The period between A.D. 409 and 587 is bracketed by two events which had important consequences for all Spain, and for Galicia in particular. The period opened with the invasion of the peninsula by the Germanic tribes and ended with the conversion of Reccared to Catholicism which united the region politically. The intervening years witnessed the occupation by the Germanic tribes which changed the character of the whole peninsula.

In A.D. 409 the Germanic tribes crossed the Pyrenees, and thus completed their westward expansion. The Sueves, the Alans, and two tribes of the Vandals subjected Spain to their control. The name "Sueves" was originally a collective term encompassing a number of tribes: the Semnones, Marcomanni, Quadi, Hermunduri, Vangiones and others, united in a common cult of the god "Ziu".\textsuperscript{3} Historically the Sueves had continually threatened the northern frontier of the Roman Empire. In B.C. 58 Caesar drove them back across the Rhine in order to secure Gaul. In A.D. 17 they became \textit{foederati} of the Romans, but for the next three centuries regularly broke the peace.

\textsuperscript{2} Ibid., 9.

\textsuperscript{3} William A. Hinnebusch, "St. Martin of Braga," 1.
In the winter of A.D. 406 the Asdingian and Silingian Vandals and the Alans were joined by the Quadi in a crossing of the Rhine. During the winter of A.D. 409 the invaders took advantage of relaxed Roman defenses and crossed the Pyrenees. For two years they terrorized the peninsula until disease and famine forced them to sue for peace with the Romans. A treaty with the Empire in A.D. 411 recognized the four tribes as foederati and assigned them the task of defending Spain from attack. The territory was distributed by lot: the Alans received both Lusitania and Carthegeniensis, and the Silingians received Baetica. The less numerous Asdings and Sueves shared Galicia.4

For the Empire, the treaty of A.D. 411 was only a short term solution which it broke at the earliest convenience. In A.D. 416, the Visigoths made peace with Rome and were commissioned to drive out the four tribes. Led by King Wallia, the Visigoths defeated the Alans and completely destroyed the Siligian Vandals. The Sueves and Asdings escaped a similar fate when the Empire withdrew the Visigoths from Spain. The Asdings moved south to Baetica to replace the Silings, leaving the Sueves in sole occupation of Galicia.5 The Sueves exercised autonomous control over Galicia from A.D. 411 until A.D. 585.

The Sueves seem to have existed beyond the control and concern of the Empire. E.A. Thompson finds the isolation and independence of the Sueves quite remarkable. Historians of the day said little or nothing about them. Thompson characterizes Galicia during the late fifth and early sixth centuries as "a forgotten realm, a ghost kingdom".6

4 Ibid., 4.


6 Ibid., 25.
Under the Sueves, the province was subject to a continuous cycle of plunder and devastation. Numbering only between 20,000-25,000, the Sueves concentrated around Braga, the old imperial capital. While some lived in the city, most lived in the surrounding rural areas. From their bases, the Sueves launched raids into the countryside, terrorizing the populace and devastating the region's economy. The small Roman population lived in fear of the Sueves. During the Easter of A.D. 460, the barbarians caught the city of Lugo off guard and killed many Romans. The ravaging of their own territory caused food shortages which forced the Sueves to conduct raids outside Galicia. The Sueves persisted in their nomadic ways to the detriment of themselves as well as their subjects.

In A.D. 429, the Vandals left en masse for Africa, leaving the Sueves behind as a remnant of the A.D. 409 invasion. The Sueves exploited this vacancy by ranging further south, although they avoided Tarraconensis which remained under imperial control. In the 440's the Romans took advantage of stability in Gaul and entered a treaty with the Visigoths to regain complete control of Spain. Acting initially in the interests of Rome, the Visigoths invaded the peninsula in A.D. 456 and defeated the Suevic king, Rechiarius near Astorga. The loss was quickly followed by the sacking of Braga and the death of Rechiarius himself. These events destroyed the strength and unity of the Suevic kingdom and confined it to Galicia.

Significantly, the dynasty which had ruled the Sueves since their entry into Spain, disappeared with the death of Rechiarius. The tribe was subsequently led by a succession of rival war-leaders. These emerging leaders stepped up the internal destruction of Galicia in order to support themselves with booty. Thompson notes that from A.D. 469 when Hydatius ended his historical work,
until about A.D. 560, the names of Galician leaders are unknown. Isidore, in his History of the Sueves refers only to many Sueveic kings, all of whom were Arian heretics. These overlords managed to maintain independence until A.D. 585, but under the watchful eye of the Visigoths whom they never challenged.

Life within Galicia under the Sueves was brutal and unstable. The events of A.D. 456 only exacerbated the situation by disrupting any political unity which previously existed. Bullied by their Arian masters, the small Roman population was so demoralized, that according to Salvian, "a great number of Romans including the nobles had become barbarians". The indigenous people, mostly Celts, who had been little affected by the Roman occupation, were unlikely to have been elevated by the Sueves.

The picture which can be assembled of the state of affairs within the Suevic kingdom is vague and confused. E.A. Thompson observes that the Suevian kings themselves are shadowy figures whose policies are indecipherable.

... we do not know even that they had policies. Perhaps they just lashed out blindly from year to year at any place they suspected would supply them with food, valuables or money. They were marauders and so far as Hydatius knew, they were nothing else.

As a kingdom, independent from Rome, Galicia did not use the Roman legal system nor seemed concerned with precedent or protocol nor did it develop relations with the outside world. The outside world in turn cared little about the Sueves. The Romans wrote much about the kings of Gaul, who interacted with

9 Collins, Early Medieval Spain, 23.
their Roman subjects and employed them in their courts. About the aloof Sueves however, little was recorded. As Thompson so colorfully states:

... no one cared about the personality or the activities of a mountain brigand in Galicia at the world's edge. What went on in those remote and rain-swept uplands interested nobody, except the unfortunates who lived there."12

Through Hydatius we discover that the isolation of Galicia was accentuated by the reclusive Sueves. Not only did they withdraw from other kingdoms, but also from their Roman subjects whom they exploited. Otherwise, they left the Romans alone and attempted no integration with the previous masters of the area.13

SUMMARY

The movement of peoples into Galicia was affected by the geography of the region. The isolated nature of the area presented difficulties for the Romans, who managed only a slim military and commercial presence. The entry of the Sueves only accentuated the isolation of Galicia. The Sueves attempted little contact with those outside their kingdom, and were content to pursue a barbarian lifestyle. Life in Galicia under the Sueves was a bleak and isolated existence compared to southern Spain and Gaul.

12 Ibid., 2.
13 Ibid., 4.
Chapter 3

RELIGION IN GALICIA PRIOR TO ST. MARTIN'S ARRIVAL

The political situation facing Martin was unstable and confused, and the condition of religion in Galicia did not assist his efforts to convert the populace to Catholicism. Several factors combined to make Galicia difficult to penetrate: referred to as the pagani, the mostly rural indigenous population eclipsed the rest of the population of the Peninsula in their practice of paganism, a shallow Christian presence, the fallout of Priscillianism and the modest receptivity on the part of the formerly Arian Sueves toward Catholicism. In addition, the population was dispersed throughout the mountainous region, thus contrasting with the urbanized people with whom Caesarius and Augustine dealt. Just as the political situation in Galicia was unique to the rest of the peninsula, so was the state of religion in this "lost realm".

A. THE PAGANI

Little is known about the religious beliefs and practices of the early inhabitants of Spain in general and Galicia in particular. However, the existence of inscriptions and shrines indicate that cults centering around a variety of local deities thrived. Significantly, the highest level of this cultic activity centered in
the northwest. The deity, Endovellicus had his cultic centre near the city of Ebor,
which is in modern Portugal. He was invoked on the tops of mountains as a
protector over the region. Other gods were also invoked on mountain tops. On a
mountain near Braga, an inscription was found to the god Dercetius. Jupiter
Ladicus seems to have been worshipped on a mountain near Lugo. Jupiter
Candamius presided over the mountain near Astorga.¹

In addition to mountain gods, worship of rivers is evident, especially in the
northwest. Inscriptions located near Braga are dedicated to Tomeobrigus and
Durbeicus, who probably presided over the present day Tamaio and Avo rivers.

Fountain divinities also abounded in Spain. An inscription on a fountain
near Braga is dedicated to the god Tongoenäbaciµs. A picture accompanying the
inscription indicates that he was supposed to bring fertility to the countryside.²
The worship of the Lar and Genius are considered a native cult. Stones were also
considered sacred, including one fascinating example located near Braga. The
inscription reads:

Diis Deabusque Aeternum Lacum Omnibus Numinis Lapitearum
cum hoc templo sacravit...in quo hostiae voto cremantur.³

Stephen McKenna asserts that the stone was a place where sacrificial victims were
offered.

These descriptions of cultic practices provide an understanding of religious
life in pre-Christian Spain. However, when these mountain, river, fountain and
stone worship places are considered in terms of their geographic locations, an
interesting pattern emerges.

¹ Stephen McKenna, Paganism and Pagan Survivals in Spain Up To The Fall Of The
Visgothic Kingdom, The Catholic University of America Studies in Mediaeval History n.s., vol. 1
(Washington: Catholic University of America, 1938), 7.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid., 9.


Lisbon--*Aracus, Bandiarbariaicus, *Carneus, Coniumbricenses.


The symbol * denotes that the name of the deity is uncertain.

From the above list it can be inferred that northwestern Spain was the dominant center of native religion. McKenna attributes this concentration to the fact that "the aborigines from southern and eastern Spain had adopted not merely the civilization, but also the religion of the Romans".4

On top of the native religions were layered the religious practices of Spain's successive invaders. The worship of Baal was introduced by the Phonecians and Carthaginians. In the northeast, the Greeks established the worship of Artemis, who was also revered by the locals. The Romans surpassed their predecessors in their influence on the religion of the peninsula. The emperor cult appears to have dominated in Baetica, Lusitania and the Terraconensis. A popular form of the imperial cult practiced only in Spain, was the worship of all the divi. The Capitoline deities were also popular especially among civil officials and freed men. The soldiers fostered the cult of Jupiter. Most of the inscriptions to him are

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4 Ibid., 10.
found near Braga and Lugo where the *Legio VII Gemina* was stationed. The oriental mystery cults made inroads in the maritime and military cities. Popular among eastern merchants and Roman soldiers, these cults did not take hold among the natives.

It appears that syncretism between religions occurred in Spain and most notably in the northwest. Near Braga an altar was dedicated to more than twenty Greco-Roman deities. More syncretistic inscriptions have been discovered in northwestern Spain than any other part. This higher level of syncretism may be due to the strong Roman military presence, and the subsequent introduction of the mystery and Jupiter cults, combined with the high level of religious observance among the natives. Whatever the reasons, the garrison towns of Braga and Lugo continued to thrive as cultic centers throughout the period of Roman occupation.5

B. THE ARRIVAL OF CHRISTIANITY

The evidence for the introduction of Christianity is limited. It appears that by the A.D. 250's churches had been established in Leon-Astorga, Merida, probably Saragossa and Tarragona. The evidence suggests that the faith was spread by Roman soldiers and merchants, probably coming from Africa.6 In northwestern Spain, colonization was marginal in comparison with the south and southeastern regions. Hillgarth cites a study which indicates that little urbanization occurred in Galicia. The opposition between the urban Hispano-Romans and the rural indigenous populace limited Christianity to the towns.

5 Ibid., 12-23.

Therefore, the small pockets of Christians in Leon and Astorga did not penetrate the countryside with their faith. In the assessment of Hillgarth:

The task of the Christian Church in the peninsula has to be seen against these sharp contrasts: between Romanized Baetica and the largely un-Romanized north.7

Due to the limited Roman presence in the northwest, Christianity failed to make a deep impression in that region.8 By A.D. 300, Arnobius is able to write in his Adversus nationes that there were "innumerable Christians" living in Spain.9 Arnobius' statement may have held some general accuracy, but it is probably not reflective of the northwest. The development of Christianity in northwestern Spain has a unique history which must be isolated from the context of Spanish Christianity in general.

While church leaders broke the hold of paganism in the southern and eastern provinces, the old ways seem to have died harder in Galicia. Palol's map of early Christian funerary inscriptions, which lists 158 places, reveals virtually no evidence before the sixth century from the whole Meseta, northern Portugal, Galicia, or Leon. Only six of the fifty places where Palol indicates early Christian monuments, are to be found in the center or the northwest.10

An accurate picture of the distribution of Christians in Spain is difficult to obtain. However, the distribution of bishops and priests who attended the Council of Elvira held in A.D. 305 provides some clues. Of the nineteen bishops in attendance, nine, including Ossius of Cordoba, were from Baetica, five, including the presiding bishop Felix of Acci, were from Carthaginiesis, and three represented Lusitania. The northern provinces of Terraconiensis and Galicia each

7 Ibid., 7.
8 Ibid., 12.
9 McKenna, Pagan Survivals, 27.
10 Ibid., 12-13.
sent only one bishop. Of the 24 priests in attendance, 20 came from Baetica and the remainder from Carthageniensis. It is not surprising, given the demographic breakdown of the participants that the council was held at a location in Baetica.

Council participation indicates that while the Spanish Church's influence was strong in the southern provinces, in the north, its authority was greatly diffused. The representation from Galicia and Terraconiensis shows that the pax romana, which facilitated the spread of Christianity elsewhere, produced little fruit in more isolated regions.

The canons of Elvira, particularly those directed against paganism, should be considered in light of the distribution of the participants. The proceedings were undoubtedly dominated by the southern bishops due to their numerical superiority and the inclusion of Felix and Ossius within their ranks. Therefore, the canons of Elvira represent solutions advanced by the southern bishops to deal with their problems. The council dealt rigorously with paganism, passing eight-one canons against heathen immorality. The Lapsed were denied holy communion, even articulo mortis. These canons, more severe than those enacted at Nicaea, would have required strong authority to enforce. While the southern bishops, backed by a considerable Christian presence, were able to consider such measures, it is doubtful whether their lone colleague from Braga had the same clout. Therefore, while Elvira represents a triumphal moment in Spanish Christianity, its impact was largely restricted to the south.

The Council of Elvira was closely followed by the Edict of Toleration enacted in A.D. 313 by Constantine, which gave Christianity a new advantage in its competition with paganism. Throughout the fourth century, Christianity strengthened its official position, culminating with the proscriptions against

paganism by Theodosius in A.D. 392. These official events create the impression that the Spanish Church was thriving. Indeed, McKenna concludes that:

The epoch-making events that opened the fourth century were to witness the gradual decline of paganism and the predominance of Christianity throughout the greater part of the Peninsula.12

However, J.N. Hillgarth perceives that these official pronouncements may not indicate a positive state of affairs. "From the Council of Elvira one gains the impression of a Church whose members are hardly emerging from paganism."13 He interprets the canon forbidding the lending of dresses to pagan processions as an attempt to prevent Christians from sacrificing at the city temples. Other canons forbid banquets in cemeteries. Surviving monuments suggest a Church of the affluent. Hillgarth interprets the lack of references to the dedication of churches and the deposition of relics before the mid-sixth century as further evidence of weakness.14

It appears that paganism was alive and well in Spain. Although the Theodosian code contained harsh proscriptions against idolatry, important exceptions were made for Spain. In A.D. 399, Arcadius and Honorius ordered a Pretorian official to destroy the temples of the pagans where this could be done "sine turba ac tumultu". There appears to have been a large enough number of pagans to call for discretion on the part of those charged with the destruction of shrines.15 The movement against paganism still continued to meet significant resistance in certain localities at the end of the fourth century.

Whatever gains were achieved by the Spanish Church in the fourth century were crippled in the next by two problems: the rise of Priscillianism and the

12 McKenna, Pagan Survivals, 38.
14 Ibid., 13-14.
15 McKenna, Pagan Survivals, 43.
adoption of Arianism by the barbarian invaders. Both these events had a stronger effect in Galicia where the Church had made little headway against paganism in the first place.

C. THE PRISCILLIAN FACTOR

Toward the end of the fourth century, a divisive movement sprang up within Spanish Christianity which both side-tracked its assault against paganism and became a new threat. Priscillianism, a lay-aescetic movement, questioned the power of the Church hierarchy. At the center of the movement stood the charismatic Priscillian. In A.D. 370, while still a layman, he traveled through Merida, Cordova and the surrounding regions promising perfection to those willing to follow his ascetical practices. He emphasized the study of the Bible, the abolition of sexual discrimination, a high set of behavioral standards and elevated the position of the laity, especially teachers. Lay people, rich, poor and clergy alike were attracted by his powers of persuasion. Bishops Instantius and Salvianus fueled his ascent by conferring Holy Orders on Priscillian and eventually consecrating him Bishop of Avila. The new sect soon infiltrated Portugal, Andalusia, Galicia and Southern France.

The Catholics responded swiftly and ruthlessly to the movement. Inflamed by Hydatius, Bishop of Merida and Ithacius, Bishop of Ossonuba, the issue soon involved civil as well as ecclesiastical authorities. Important figures like Pope Damasus, Ambrose of Milan, Martin of Tours, and the Emperor Maximus were drawn into the fray. By A.D. 378, the movement was brought to the attention of Pope Damasus by Hyginus of Cordova and Hydatius of Merida, who were

concerned by the growing strength of the movement in their sees. Although sanctioned by the Church, Priscillian's doctrines continued to gain adherents, including Symposius, Bishop of Astorga. In A.D. 383, the civil authorities, who were anxious to restore order, charged Priscillian and his ally Evodius with practicing magic and immorality. Once charged, they were sentenced to the strongest punishment allowed for such offenses under Roman law, and executed at Treves in A.D. 385. The sentence was protested by Martin of Tours and disapproved by Pope Siricius and Ambrose.

Dispite the death of its founder, Priscillianism maintained popularity, particularly in Galicia, where Priscillian was venerated as a martyr. An examination of the doctrines of the movement reveal that it naturally suited the religious climate of the Spanish northwest. The Priscillians taught a dualism between mind and body. The soul on its journey encounters evil spirits, who cast it into a body. Christ frees the soul by means of magic. The saints must recognize the struggle between body and soul and overcome the body. This dualism included a lively interest in the demonic world. The emphasis on magic and the demonic may have made the belief system attractive to the Galician populace.

At the ecclesiastical level, the controversy seemed to divide the Peninsula into north and south. The strongholds of Priscillianism were Cordova in Andalusia, Merida and later Avila, and Astorga in Galicia. But the eye of the storm was Galicia, which included Braga, Cauca, Segovia, Avila and Palencia.

Madoz bases this observation on the word of contemporary witnesses. Prosper of Aquitaine refers to Priscillian as "episcopus de Gallaecia." Hydatius,

18 McKenna, Pagan Survivals, 66.
19 Ibid., 62.
in his *Chronicle*, claims that "After the death of Priscillian, the heresy overran Galicia." Bachiarius, a native of the region was tarred with the heresy when he traveled abroad:

\[\textit{suspectos nos, quantum video, facit non sermo sed regio; et qui de fide non erubescimus, de provincia confutamur.}\]

The attempt to stamp out Priscillianism by executing the leaders proved to be a hasty miscalculation. In Galicia where the reaction was most violent, Priscillian's death was almost considered martyrdom. His shortcomings were overlooked in light of his suffering. His remains were reclaimed and were buried amidst great ceremony. His name was entered in some martyrologies, along with the names of some of his disciples.

In A.D. 400, the Council of Toledo in Carthaginiensis, drew up twelve anathemas against the Priscillianists and then examined the ten Priscillianist bishops of Galicia. The six who repented of their fault retained their sees, much to the anger of the bishops of Baetica and Carthaginiensis. The debate at the council could only have served to accentuate the isolation of the Galician church. In the A.D. 440's, the Galician church charted its own course on the Priscillian issue. Balconius of Braga did not discourage a renewed interest in Priscillianism.

At the civil level, the Roman authorities issued an edict in A.D. 407 which placed great penalties on the Priscillianists. However, the barbarian invasions limited Roman authority to the Teraconensis, thus curtailing the campaign of the emperor against the heresy. Hillgarth suggests that, like Donatism in Africa, Priscillianism survived, once coercion had ceased, in almost "complete fusion" with Catholicism.

\[\text{21 Ibid., 13.}\]
\[\text{22 Chadwick, Priscillian, 208.}\]
\[\text{23 Hillgarth, "Popular Religion," 15.}\]
Priscillianism survived longest in Galicia, and prevented the ecclesiastical authorities there from giving the people a thorough training in the teachings of Christianity. The result was that pagan survivals were found in Galicia even during the closing years of the sixth centuries.  

Whatever the official attitude of the Church, Priscillianism remained a factor in Galicia.

The Priscillianist controversy underscores the long-standing cultural, religious and political differences which existed between the Romanized south and the independent north. In Madoz's opinion, Priscillianism exploited these differences in the following ways: The Gnostic and Manichean character appealed to the superstitious nature of the native population in the northwest. Also, Maximus who represented the authority that executed Priscillian had replaced Emperor Theodosius the Spaniard, who also had roots in Galicia.

In the person of Maximus were combined both the usurper of the glories that rightly belonged to Galicia, and the executioner who put Priscillian and his followers to death.

Thus loyalty to Priscillian became a patriotic reaction against Maximus.

When Galicia fell into the hands of the autonomous Sueves, it was a land with raw religious and political wounds. The "injury" of Priscillian's execution was only deepened by the heavy-handed actions by the southern bishops at the Council of Toledo in A.D. 400. The dispute helped to inhibit any influence the Roman-controlled Catholics may have been able to exercise within Galicia.

24 McKenna, Pagan Survivals, 74.
26 Chadwick, Priscillian, 209.
D. THE RELIGION OF THE SUEVES

When the Sueves entered the Iberian peninsula in A.D. 409, they did not share the heterodox Christianity of the Visigoths and Vandals. The majority of the invading tribes had been evangelized by Arian missionaries with the support of Valens and other Arian Emperors. The Sueves took only two years to travel from Pannonia to Galicia. Therefore, they were not "Romanized" like other Germanic tribes. Under king Hermeric, A.D. 409-440/41 and king Rechila A.D. 440-448, the Sueves remained for the most part pagan. However, Rechila's son, Rechiarius, inexplicably converted to Catholicism. His conversion is something of an anomaly since he was the earliest of all known Germanic kings to have embraced the Nicaean Faith. William Hinnebusch assumes that the Sueves followed their king into his faith. However, Hydatius only refers to Rechiarius' personal conversion and gives no indication of a mass conversion. Indeed, it appears that, given his aggressive behavior, Rechiarius failed to follow his own faith. According to Thompson:

... no Suevic king was more viciously opposed to the Romans or was a more malignant marauder of their persons and property than the first Catholic to reach the throne of Galicia.

The conversion of Rechiarius to Catholicism represents only a brief footnote in the religious history of the Sueves, and is significant because it happened at all.

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28 E.A. Thompson, "Roman Spain: II." 8.
30 Hinnebusch, "St. Martin of Braga," p. 6. "This is apparent from the fact that Idatius and Isidore style the lapse of the Sueves into Arianism under Remismund in 464, as apostacy."
31 Thompson, "Conversion", 80.
Recharius and one of his immediate successors, Remismund, set the stage for the conversion to Arianism when they married Arian princesses sent from the Visigothic court at Toulouse. In A.D. 465, the year following the marriage of Remismund, the Arian missionary, Ajax arrived in Galicia. Described by Hydatius as a "natione Galata", he probably came from Asia Minor. Ajax was an apostate from Catholicism who had become a priest or bishop in Gaul. His work in Galicia was supported by the Gothic King, Theodoric II, who may have seen a political advantage in converting the Sueves to his faith. According to Hydatius, Ajax proceeded to introduce the Sueves to the "poison" of Arianism, and in a few years the majority of the tribe converted. Since Hydatius' concludes his chronicle in A.D. 469, nothing is known about the history of Galicia in general and the religion of the Sueves in particular until A.D. 560. St. Isidore only remarks that the Suevic kings who followed continued in the Arian heresy.  

Though the Suevic kings before the arrival of Martin of Braga in A.D. 550 were pagan, and later Arian, there is no record that they persecuted their Roman-Christian subjects. Although they plundered the Romans as a source of livelihood, they never persecuted them as Christians. In A.D. 440 Salvian laments that "a great number of the Romans, including the nobles became barbarians". This lapse was probably due more to the demoralization of the Romans than to coercion. Hydatius records that in A.D. 441, Bishop Sabinus was removed from his see of Seville and replaced with Epiphanius by King Rechila. Hydatius expresses disapproval with the new bishop, which indicates that he was probably a Priscillianist. However, according to Thompson, no connection can be drawn between Epiphanius' faith and his appointment.


33 Thompson, "Roman Spain: II," 25.
Any sporadic outrages by the Sueves against churches and the clergy that may have been perpetrated--and very few are specified--were concerned with property, politics and plunder, not with religion.\textsuperscript{34}

Since the reign of the Arian kings in Galicia is largely undocumented, their relationship with their Catholic subjects cannot be determined. However, since sources after A.D. 560 make no reference to past persecution, it can be assumed that these kings were indifferent to the religion of the Hispano-Romans.

**SUMMARY**

The religious history of Galicia prior to A.D. 550 was shaped by three factors: a strong syncretistic paganism, a shallow Christian presence which was weakened by Priscillianism, and by the independent Sueves who belatedly gave up paganism only to embrace Arianism. While the entire Peninsula faced the factors of paganism, Priscillianism and Arianism, it appears that the isolated Catholic Christians in Galicia experienced them more intensely than did their southern neighbors. In the assessment of J. Madoz, "Galician Arianism was superimposed upon the idolatry of the Suevi; then Priscillianism came to leaven the mixture."\textsuperscript{35} In Madoz's opinion, this exotic religious heritage presented a difficult obstacle to the missionary efforts of the sixth century.

To evaluate the missionary work of the Church in Galicia under Martin of Braga it is necessary to understand the nature of the heresies which infested the masses. The work of the Church among the Suevi in Galicia must be seen against the background of a Priscillianism that had merged with the current Arianism.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{34} Thompson, "Conversion," 78.

\textsuperscript{35} Madoz, "Arianism and Priscillianism in Galicia," p. 6.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
Chapter 4
FROM MONK TO BISHOP

Without question, Martin of Braga was the most significant literary and organizational force in Galicia Church during his era. Indeed, Martin's work influenced Spain and the rest of Medieval Europe as well. However, Martin is also hailed by Hinnebusch as the "Apostle of the Sueves". He is convinced that once the conversion of the Sueves was begun in 550 under Chararic, "St. Martin of Braga arrived from the Orient and took an active part in the conversion". The evidence which directly links Martin to the evangelization of the barbarian tribe is not conclusive. It appears that while Martin provided leadership for the Hispano-Roman populace, political factors may have limited his work among the Sueves. Indifference on the part of the Suevic authorities may have even affected Martin's efforts among the Hispano-Romans. The nature of Martin's activities in Galicia as bishop is an important backdrop for his literary activity; and more particularly for his pastoral activity as reflected in De Correctione Rusticorum.

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1 Hinnebusch, "St. Martin of Braga," 38. Hinnebusch accepts Gregory of Tours' account of the coinciding arrivals of the relics of Martin of Tours and Martin of Braga. He argues that Chararic preceded Theodomir as king of the Sueves and that the conversion to Catholicism began during the reign of the former. "St. Martin of Braga," pp. 34-36. The chronology of the Suevic kings during the time of Martin will be unravelled later in this chapter.
A. THE POLITICS OF GALICIA: 550-572

In A.D. 550, St. Martin completed his journey from the east and landed on the Iberian Peninsula. The date of his arrival can be deduced from the History of the Franks of Gregory of Tours. Gregory gives the date of Martin's death as "at this time (the fifth year of king Childebert II, the year 580) died the blessed Martin, bishop of Galicia, greatly lamented by his people...", and later says that he "...was consecrated bishop, in which dignity he passed some thirty years, and departed to the Lord full of good works".2

Isidore offers additional information on Martin's activities in Spain.

Martin, most holy pontiff of the Dumien Monastery, having sailed from Oriental parts, came to Galaecia, where he established the conversion of the Suevi people from Arian impiety to the catholic faith and holiness of religion, he confirmed bishops, built monasteries and put down copies and precepts of institutions.3

According to Gregory of Tours, the young monk's arrival in port coincided with the shipment containing the relics of St. Martin of Tours.

I believe this to have occurred by Divine Providence, that on the very day on which the blessed relics were taken up, he (Martin) should have left his fatherland, and thus to have entered the port of Galicia together with the relics.4

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"Hoc tempore et beatus Martinus Galliciensis episcopus obiit, magnum populo illi faciens planctum...episcopus ordinatur...In quo sacerdotio impletus plus minus triginta annis, plenus virtutibus migravit ad Dominum."

3 Isidore of Seville, caput XXXV, Pl. LXXXIX, col. 1041.


"Sed nec hoc credo sine divina fuisset providentia, quod ea die se commoveret de patria, quae beatae reliquiae de loco levatae sunt, et sic simul cum ipsis pignoribus in Galliciae portum ingressus sit."
According to Gregory, the relics were sent at the request of king Chararic, who hoped they would work a cure on his leprose son. When his son was healed, the Arian king and his household converted to Catholicism. However, E. A. Thompson questions the veracity of Gregory's claim. He disputes both the chronology of the events and the historicity of Chararic based on evidence from the councils of Braga and other historical documents. It is more likely that the young Martin entered Galicia with little fanfare.

Since the historicity of Chararic is questionable, then it is probable that the Sueves remained Arian until the rise of their first Catholic king. The preamble to the canons of the First Council of Braga states that in 561, Ariamir permitted the convocation of the Council in the third year of his reign. Therefore it can be inferred that the conversion to Catholicism began sometime between May 558 and May 561. How can Isidore's reference to king Theodomir, whom he dates 551-565 be reconciled with the dating of Ariamir? John of Biclarum, a contemporary of these events, records in his Chronicle that in 570 Miro succeeded Theodemir as king of the Sueves. Thompson infers from the conflicting evidence that Isidore was mistaken in his dating of Theodemir, and that the latter followed Ariamir and survived until 570. Miro ruled Galicia during Braga II.

Thompson offers an explanation which satisfies Isidore's claim that Theodemir was the first Catholic king of the Sueves. In the Parochiale of Suevic Galicia, it is recorded that on 1 January 569, King Theodemir summoned a council to meet in Lugo "to confirm the Catholic Faith". If the Parochiale is correct, then the official condemnation of Arianism occurred in 569. Thompson is

6 Barlow, MEB, 105.
puzzled that this condemnation did not occur earlier at Braga I under Arianism. The condemnation in 569 would also explain why there is no reference to Arianism at Braga II.\textsuperscript{8}

It appears that when Martin arrived in 550, Galicia was controlled by unknown Arian kings. The conversion to Catholicism occurred between Martin's consecration as bishop of Dumium in 556 and Braga I in 561.\textsuperscript{9} This period of Catholicism continued up through the reign of Miro and particularly, the writing of \textit{De Correctione Rusticorum} in 572. Martin's tenure in Galicia spanned the conversion from Arianism to Catholicism.

B. LIFE AT DUMIUM

When Martin arrived in Galicia, he immediately established a monastery at Dumium, about a mile's distance from Braga.\textsuperscript{10} Here he labored as abbot until about A.D. 556, and then as bishop. At Dumium, Martin appears to have found an openness to his eastern style of monasticism. Indeed, northern Spain had probably already experienced the influences of the eastern desert. The north contrasted sharply with the south where the approach to monastic organization was much more western in orientation. Rather than write a rule in the tradition of Benedict, Martin drew directly from the literature of eastern monasticism for the training of his monks.

Prior to Martin's arrival, divisions existed between the monasticism practiced in northern and southern Spain. In the north, eastern approaches seem to have taken root while the south was more western and Benedictine.

\textsuperscript{8} Thompson, "The Conversion of the Spanish Suevi," 90.
\textsuperscript{9} Barlow bases the chronology of Martin's consecration on a breviary at Braga. MEB, 3.
\textsuperscript{10} Hinnebusch, St. Martin of Braga, 50.
Hillgarth rejects the notion of a uniform Spanish church, and a uniform Spanish monasticism.

The task of the Christian Church in the peninsula has to be seen against the sharp contrasts between Romanized Baetica and the largely un-Romanized north.\(^{11}\) He characterizes the monasticism which developed around Seville, Toledo and Saragossa as "urban and more strictly suburban" as opposed to "a more rigorous native tradition" which emerged in the north.\(^{12}\) In the two regions, the Church offered different alternatives. In the south, ecclesiastical leaders chose to spread religion through an alliance with the wealthy rather than the rustici. The monasteries were part of the institutional structure of the Church. Monks were cut off from their fellows and formed a professional elite which tended to look down on the average person.\(^{13}\) Since northern Spain had been little influenced by Roman society and Christianity before A.D. 500, traditional structures were not established. Therefore, Christianity took a more popular form.

Instead of the example of the apostles, stressed by Isidore, in the north we have that of the Desert Fathers, and instead of the great monasteries such as Agali near Toledo, to which leading courtiers retired (to re-emerge later as bishops), in Galicia we have a monastic population consisting largely of slaves, who could even become abbots. The entry of whole families into the religious life, dependence on a pastoral economy, the harshness of the discipline observed and the constant menace of armed attack are other features which distinguish the Galician monasteries -contractual, egalitarian, unstable and potentially short-lived from those of the south.\(^{14}\)

The monasticism of Martin's experience was not aloof, but directly involved in the lives of the populace.\(^{15}\) It appears that Galicia offered Martin the opportunity to develop an eastern-style monasticism of the people rather than the upper class.

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12 Ibid., 37.
15 Peter Brown, The Making of Late Antiquity, 109.
Martin probably had contact with local monks once he arrived in Galicia since there is evidence of monasticism prior to his arrival. Egeria, the literate nun who chronicled her journey to Palestine at the end of the fourth century may have come from Galicia.\textsuperscript{16} The canons of the first council of Braga (561) show evidence of an established monasticism. One canon orders that monastic customs should not be confused with ecclesiastical regulations.\textsuperscript{17} Another canon decrees:

\textit{... so that whatever cleric, monk, or lay person may be detected still holding or defending such errors (Priscillianism) may be cut off immediately from the body of the Catholic church as a truly corrupt member.}\textsuperscript{18}

Hinnebusch concludes from these canons that:

\textit{... there still existed in Galicia a monasticism which had been influenced by and was still inclined toward Priscillianism. This monasticism must have been made up of the Roman inhabitants of Galicia, the Priscillian element of the population.}\textsuperscript{19}

Hinnebusch's assessment of the texts of Martin leads him to believe that it "seems probable" that this monasticism was eastern in orientation. However, he notes the possibility that the rule of St. Caesarius of Arles, which was prevalent in northern Spain, may have been used. The councils of Tarragona, A.D. 516, (canon 11) (7) and Lerida, A.D. 524, (canon 3) (8) refer to the decrees of the Gallican bishops on matters pertaining to monasteries and abbots.\textsuperscript{20} Among the Gallican clergy, only Caesarius had written a rule to that point in time. A Gallican influence might explain Martin's access to the sermons of Caesarius from which he borrows.


\textsuperscript{17} Mansi, IX, col. 777, cited in Hinnebusch, "St. Martin of Braga", 48.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., col. 774.

\textsuperscript{19} Hinnebusch, "St. Martin of Braga", 49.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 50.
There is no direct evidence of the rule which was instituted at Dumium by Martin. Barlow finds no evidence that any of the earlier rules were used there. Hinnebusch claims that Martin was probably unfamiliar with the rule of Benedict, since it was only written in 530 and was little known in the east. He surmises that even had Martin learned of either the rule of St. Benedict or St. Caesarius, he would not have adopted an unfamiliar rule.21

The scholarly consensus is that Martin used the eastern traditions of the Desert as his rule. Barlow points to the Sayings of the Desert Fathers as the guide for the community.22 Ferreiro is convinced that "these were undoubtedly used as rules of faith by the monks of Dumium".23 Hinnebusch also claims that the Pachomian rule was utilized by Martin.

During his time as abbot, Martin translated the Sayings of the Egyptian Fathers, and his monk Paschasius translated the Questions and Answers of the Greek Fathers from Greek into Latin for the edification and guidance of the community.24 The translation project was a time consuming task, so Martin employed the assistance of Paschasius who was trained in Greek. Since Martin became bishop in A.D. 556, and he only arrived in A.D. 550, Barlow estimates that the collection was probably translated in A.D. 555.25

Paschasius' knowledge of Greek raises two possible explanations: either he was a local recruit who was trained by Martin or he accompanied Martin from Egypt. Hinnebusch suggests that the latter case is true.

21 Hinnebusch, "St. Martin of Braga", 51.
22 Barlow, MEB, 3.
24 Since these monastic texts are referred to by a variety of names, when referring to the corpus as a whole, I will use the term Sayings in deference to its usage by Benedicta Ward.
It seems probable that Paschasius learned Greek in the East and that he and other monks came with Martin to Galicia. It does not seem likely that Martin would endeavour to impart a knowledge of Greek to a native of Galicia. Furthermore, Martin would hardly have had time for such a task, occupied as he was with the conversion of the Sueves.26

No direct evidence exists to prove or disprove Hinnebusch's claim. Paschasius, himself, makes no mention of the length of his relationship with his abbot. In the preface to the Interrogationes et responsiones Graecorum patrum, Paschasius complains to Martin that "I would have refused this unaccustomed task, if I had been allowed... being prohibited by my lack of ability and self-conviction".27 This statement sounds like the words of a discouraged novice; especially when he calls translating an "unaccustomed task". However, it is possible that Paschasius was unfamiliar with Latin, not Greek.

Since I must accede to your request, I shall not mention my ability, but rather shall display even in an assigned work the confidence which I owe to you. But since there are many books of these eloquent men written in the Latin language, with the reading of which I have been admittedly acquainted under your instructions, if you happen to find anything inserted here from those sources or anything not eloquently expressed, please do not consider it my fault, because I have translated those writings exactly as they were in the manuscript that was given to me, although I admit that I am not able to do even that correctly.28

From this passage it is possible to surmise that Martin instructed Paschasius in Latin, and that the monk was already versed in Greek. The translator's frustration with his efforts would then be understandable. This scenario would fit Hinnebusch's assertion. If Paschasius was an easterner himself, he would have been much more able to instruct the monks at Dumium in the traditions of the Desert Fathers. It appears that Paschasius helped Martin provide a source of

26 Hinnebusch, "St. Martin of Braga", 54.
28 Ibid.
Desert Fathers. It appears that Paschasius helped Martin provide a source of spiritual direction for the community at Dumium.

Eastern influences in the life and Rule of St. Fructuosus lead Hinnebusch to speculate that Martin also brought an older rule with him from the east, which was passed on to succeeding generations. Fructuosus was bishop of Dumium and then Metropolitan of Braga seventy years after the death of Martin. Valerius of Bierzo, author of the Vita Fructuosi, records that "Fructuosus, after embracing the cenobitic life, in which he was fortunate enough to found many and varied monasteries, retires to the desert in order to advance in holiness and develop his spiritual life." Manuel Diaz y Diaz finds that Spanish anchorites like Fructuosus and his biographer, Valerius of Bierzo, were "more or less influenced by the monastic tradition, especially the Oriental" in their interest in the desert. Diaz reflects that: "The allusion to the monastic life in the Thebaid, appears, almost as an obsession in the account of Bierzo". In the preface of the Vita Fructuosi, one reads:

postquam ex Aegyto orientali prouincia excellentissima sacrae religiosis praemicarent exempla ... hic uero (Fructuosus) ita ... emicuit ut ad patrum se facile quoaequaret antiquorum meritis Thebaeorum; in the epistola Egeriae de laude Valerii this allusion is found: partem orientalis ingressa (Egeria) sanctorum summo eum desiderio Thebaeorum visitant ... cainobia similiter et sancta anachoretarum ergastula; in the "de caeleste reuelatione": dum olim ... beatissimus Fructuosus ... heremiticam duceret vitam ad instarque orientalium monachorum ... ita gloriosus emicuit ut antiquis Thebaeis patribus se facile quoaequaret.

Given his respect for desert monasticism, it is no surprise that Fructuosus, drew up an "eastern rule" for his monastery at Compludo, near Dumium.

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31 Bierzo, Vita Fructuosi, preface.
Hinnebusch concludes that if the rule of Benedict was observed in Galicia during the time of Martin, Fructuosus would not have written his own. Also, Hinnebusch considers Fructuosus' knowledge of Jerome's translation of Pachomius' Rule as "some indication that the Rule of Pachomius was known and used at the monastery of Dumium".32

Hinnebusch argues indirectly that Martin used the Rule of Pachomius at Dumium by pointing out the eastern influences in the life of his seventh century successor. References to Ageria in the Vita Fructuosi imply that eastern monasticism had influence in Galicia prior to Martin's arrival. It could well be that the Rule of Pachomius, along with the work of Jerome was propagated by that itinerant nun. It is possible that Martin knew of the acceptance of eastern monasticism in Galicia before his migration. The existence of an eastern ethos in Galicia makes it probable that Martin used the rule of Pachomius which he augmented with the sayings of the Desert Fathers.

Hinnebusch claims that the nature of life at Dumium is gleaned solely from the translations of the Sayings of the Fathers by Paschasius and Martin. Otherwise, "Its rule, spirit, and mode of life are shrouded in darkness".33 However, one poem which Martin composed for the refectory of the monastery, does offer some insight into the quality of life which the monks experienced. Through these two sources, we can gain a second hand understanding of the kind of monasticism which developed at Dumium.

Given the priority which Martin placed on translating The Sayings, the text was undoubtedly an important resource for the community. According to Hillgarth, text functioned as exempla for the people.34 Martin's use of the Sayings

32 Ibid., 53.
33 Hinnebusch, "St. Martin of Braga". 57.
of the Fathers was consistent with the role of the material in the east. The material was aimed at a monastic audience, but the underlying ideas were of interest to others as well.

The purpose of the text was to edify rather than promote monastic organization. Benedicta Ward describes the sayings and stories as "vivid, colorful pictures". Groups of monks preserved the sayings of their founder or spiritual father. These nuclei of material were compiled, rearranged and enlarged. The ad hoc development of the text contributed to its chaotic nature as scribes added material to existing collections. The Sayings are a collected wisdom which assists those seeking spiritual development.

The tone of the Sayings is best categorized as pastoral and exhortative rather than legislative. The material seems to be based on the psychological premise that individuals in need of correction respond better to instruction than harsh discipline. To Benedicta Ward, the sayings reflect a humble self-appraisal which produced a compassionate response.

The monks did not of course claim to be the only Christians, nor the best Christians. They were simply men following out the Christian vocation in a particular way. The monks saw themselves not as better than others but as more needy, more sinful, and therefore more ready to receive the mercy of God; if they could be saved, they thought, that there was then hope for anyone.

Abbot Silvanus captures the humble tone of the sayings:

...do not measure yourself with the great, but believe yourself inferior to every creature... Have discernment, criticize yourself, but do not judge your neighbor nor look down upon the sins of other


36 Ibid.


38 Ward, Wisdom of the Fathers, introduction.
people, nor bewail your own sins, nor be anxious for the deeds of any man.\textsuperscript{39}

The pastoral attitude of the monks extended beyond their own ranks to the populace. One father warned his disciple to "...consider that you sin more than he (a sinner) does, even if he is a layman, unless he blasphemes God, which is a sign of heretics."\textsuperscript{40} In a remarkable incident, a harlot asked her brother, a monk, if she could have salvation. He replied: "If you wish it, there is salvation." Because she died before receiving the rites of the Church, the brothers disagreed about her salvation. However, God revealed to them the penitent nature of her heart and that He had received her repentance because of her sincerity.\textsuperscript{41} The models provided by God and His holy fathers are not that of harsh enforcers but of gentle pastors, both toward monks and lay-persons alike. The pastoral approach of the Sayings of the Desert Fathers guided the discipline and relationships at Dumium.

Martin's relationship with those under his charge at Dumium can in some measure be discerned in a poem of his own composition which was inscribed on the wall of the refectory.

\textit{Item Eiusdem In Refectorio}

Not here are the meals embellished with golden ....
Nor will Assyrian purple give to you ....
Nor will many-coursed banquets be placed on a sideboard gleaming with the art of polished wood,
Nor will a goblet be given here whose side, adorned perchance with burnished metal, a twisted handle binds.
I do not have wines from Gaza, Chios, and Falernum, and Whatever you may drink sent from Saraptenan vine,
But whatever the slight fare of my table does not offer This let a full grace supply for you.\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{39} Sententiae Patrum Aegyptiorum, 109, Barlow, MEB, 49.
\textsuperscript{40} Interrogationes et responsiones Graecorum patrum 17.2, Barlow, Iberian Fathers, 140.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., 17.2, 140.
\textsuperscript{42} Barlow, MEB, 282. Two-thirds of the poem is borrowed from Sidonius Apollinaris' Carmen 17. My thanks to Dr. Elizabeth Bongie for revising my attempted translation.
The poem implies a rapport and intimacy between Martin and the community which offsets the austerity of their circumstances. While the entire life of the monastery cannot be inferred from this inscription, it does provide an indirect glimpse. Significantly, its tone fits with the intimate spirit of eastern monasticism evident in the *Sayings of the Desert Fathers.*

A remarkable similarity exists between the monasticism of the desert and the descriptions of monastic life at Dumium. Martin established his monastery on the eastern model of his own experience, in contrast with the westernized monasticism of southern Spain. Given his intellectual ability, Martin undoubtedly could have found a home in the monastic world of the urban, Christian south, yet he chose the rural, largely pagan north. Once in Galicia, Martin established a monastery at Dumium based on the pattern of his monastic experience in the east.

Dumium contrasted with the elitist institutions of southern Spain which were dominated by the aristocracy. Martin did not attempt to establish a western-style institution, but instead chose a pastoral, egalitarian model. The fact that Galicia was likely already familiar with eastern forms of monasticism made it an ideal home for the independent Martin to exercise his vocation.

C. FROM DUMIUM TO II BRAGA A.D. 572

In A.D. 556 Martin became bishop of Dumium. This change in role increased his influence within the structure of the Galician Church. During his tenure at Dumium he took part in the First Council of Braga in 561. The high point of his career occurred after his nomination as the Bishop of Braga and the Metropolitan of Galicia, when in 572 he presided over the Second Council of Braga. As the most influential bishop among the Galician Church hierarchy, he
led his fellow bishops in their attempt to establish orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Martin charted a tolerant and educational approach to correcting aberrations in faith and behaviour. Suprisingly, he dealt exclusively with the Hispano-Roman problems of Priscillianism and paganism, while ignoring the Arianism which the Sueves had only recently abandoned.

Martin was the dominant intellectual figure among his fellow bishops. He is considered to be the author of the acts and canons of both Braga I and Braga II. He also added a translation of a collection of eastern canons to proceedings of the Second Council.43 *De Correctione Rusticorum* and *De Ira* were written in response to two bishops who sought Martin's advice at the Second Council. Three other moral treatises, *Pro repellenda iactantia*, *De superbia* and *Exhortatio humilitatis* were written by Martin with strong dependence on Cassian's *Conferences* and *Institutes*.44 Sometime after the accession of Miro, king of the Sueves, in 570, Martin wrote him an essay on the four cardinal virtues, entitled *Formula vitae honestae*. Written in a classical style, the work borrows heavily from Seneca.45 Martin also turned his pen to doctrinal disputes. In a short treatise, *De trina mersione*, he defends the local baptismal formula against a critic from Visigothic Spain.46 Martin also added his wisdom to the dating of Easter
question in *De pascha*. As in the baptismal issue Martin diverged from the practice of the Spanish Visigoths. Of course, Martin is most famous for his *De Correctione Rusticorum*, which was written for the benefit of one of his fellow bishops following Braga II. A collection of three poems complete Martin's extant work. The longer poems contain material taken from the works of Dracontius and Sidonius Apollinaris. Isidore refers to a volume of letters and a rule composed for converted Arians. He is also given credit for features of the Mozarabic ritual and the ritual unique to Braga itself.

Martin's literary output and the dependence of others upon his intellectual ability attest to his influence upon the thinking of the Galician Church. A clear evidence of his rising influence can be seen in the two Councils of Braga, held during Martin's tenure in Galicia. At the First Council, Martin was the third of nine bishops to sign the acts and canons. This council was preoccupied with the survival of the Priscillianism, which is proof of the continuation of that heresy in the region.

"... in some parts of Spain a single immersion was onserved for the purpose of avoiding the taint of Arianism. But the triple immersion is not one of the points in which the Arians are heretical, and Martin reminds Boniface that the Sabellians practice simple immersion."

"This is, then, another important Church matter in which the Galicians did not agree with the Visigoths. Although this treatise had no later effect on the rest of Spain, it did pass directly into the larger collections of paschal computations and was transmitted from Spain to Ireland."

48 The poems of Martin of Braga are found on page 282, in Barlow, MEB.

"A completely separate manuscript tradition has preserved three poems by Martin of Braga. One is an inscription for a basilica, another for a refecrory; these were perhaps written for the dedication of a church in honor of St. Martin of Tours at Dumium in 558. The third is an epitaph of six lines, which informs us that Martin of Braga was born in Pannonia, came to the West by sea, and followed in the steps of his patron, Martin of Tours. The longer poems contain material taken from the works of Dracontius and Sidonius Apollinaris."

50 Barlow, MEB, 81.
The Second Council of Braga, held on June 1, 572 was dominated by Martin, the host bishop, both conceptually and ecclesiastically. Between the two councils, the number of bishoprics had been expanded to twelve, and divided equally under the Metropolitan Sees of Braga and Lugo. Whereas the First Council attacked Priscillianism, the Second focused upon paganism. Significantly, neither council refers to Arianism which had so recently been the faith of the Sueves. Even if we accept Thompson's proposal that Theodemir condemned Arianism in 569, it is hard to believe that traces of the heresy did not still exist in at least the same measure as Priscillianism. Why was no attention paid to Arianism even as great concern was being expressed over Priscillianism and paganism?

Ferreiro makes an important distinction in the status of Arianism and that of Priscillianism and paganism. When Ariamir converted to Catholicism he immediately changed the official religion of his kingdom. The Suevic ruler was attempting to sever his kingdom from any link with the Visigoths who threatened the independence of Galicia, including their Arian faith. Therefore, in the Suevic kingdom, a "political stigma" was attached to Arianism.

In contrast to Arianism, Priscillianism and paganism were of lesser concern to the secular authority.

51 A. Ferreiro notes that: "Whereas in the First Council of Braga, seventeen canons (Braga I, Canons 1-17) are devoted to heresy, in the Second council of Braga only four canons (Braga II, Canons 36, 58, 67, 70) address the issue: Vivis, Concilios, pp. 67-69 and 96 -103. In the Second Council the canons that address pagan customs are 67, 68, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, pp. 102-104. The First council contains not a single reference to pagan customs."

Even though the Sueves were officially Catholic, traces of Priscillianism remained among them and the Hispano-Romans, as well as Catholics who practiced pagan customs. None were politically stigmatized, as the Arians had been, thus explaining the absence of attacks against them from the monarchy. The struggle against pagan customs and Priscillianism lay exclusively in the hands of the Church.\textsuperscript{53}

It is possible that Ariamir, Theodemir and Miro were largely occupied with the political rather than the theological implications of religion. Perhaps the Suevic population were little concerned about the particulars of their religious affiliation when faced with the pressing matter of survival.\textsuperscript{54} It seems that both Councils were mainly of interest to the Hispano-Romans, who used their new political freedom to address long-standing causes of concern. Even though now united by religion, the Sueves and Hispano-Romans may have continued to exist as "two solitudes".

What then do we make of the declarations of Hinnebusch and Ferreiro that Martin of Braga actively evangelized the Sueves? On the one hand, Isidore claims that Martin played an important role in the conversion of the Sueves. However, Isidore does not make him responsible for converting the king. Thompson finds the career of Martin among the Sueves to be shrouded in ambiguity.

There is something of a mystery about this eminent man. When the bishops spoke about him at the Tenth Council of Toledo in 656 they refer to him as the 'Bishop of Braga of glorious memory' and as the founder of the monastery at Dumium. They said not a word of his having destroyed Arianism in Galicia or of his having converted the barbarians there to the faith of Nicaea. And the voluminous minutes of the Third Council of Toledo, which met in May 589, although they include more than one reference to the conversion of the Sueves, pass over Martin in complete silence. But what is little short of amazing is that the excellent John of Biclarum, whose chronicle covers the years 567-90, never breathes his name, says nothing at all about him, fails to mention his death in 579, and might even seem never to have heard of him. I do not know how to account for this extraordinary omission.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{54} In 585 the Visigoths under Leoveguilus invaded and destroyed the Suevic kingdom.

\textsuperscript{55} Thompson, "The Conversion of the Spanish Suevi," 89.
Not only are the above mentioned sources silent, but Martin himself makes no mention of his own activity among the Sueves. Whatever interaction there was between Martin of Braga and the Sueves, its nature remains uncertain.

What is known about Martin is his activity among the Hispano-Roman populace. At the Second Council of Braga, the bishops took aim at the pagan rites and observances which continued to be practiced by the Hispano-Roman Catholics. As the presiding bishop and author of the canons of the Council, Martin takes a tolerant approach to offenders.\(^{56}\) In no instance does he strengthen his canons with threats of punishment. The selection of canons from various eastern Councils, which he incorporates into the proceedings, are also non-coercive in tone.\(^ {57}\) The strongest sanction against pagan practice is five years penance.\(^ {58}\) Usually the canon is simply a gentle admonition to exchange the pagan way for the Christian alternative.\(^ {59}\)

Martin, along with the other bishops saw education as the best means of eradicating paganism and instilling Christian patterns of behavior. The first canon

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"Martin of Braga—who wrote in the Suevic kingdom but under a Catholic ruler—was exceptional in not threatening pagans with physical punishments. Gregory the Great and the Spanish fathers were less patient. Isidore declared: 'where the bishop cannot prevail by preaching the (secular) power should act by fear.' In 686 Julian of Toledo admitted that there may still be increduli, but they cannot escape 'the dominion of Christ—since they are hard pressed by rulers in whose hearts Christ already dwells.'

57 Among the manuscripts which Martin brought with him from the east was a collection of canons from the eastern Councils. He added eighty-four in order to augment those agreed upon by the Galician Bishops. Again, Martin's eastern background influences his approach to ministry.

58 Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova Et Amplissima Collectio*, vol. 9, columns 835-860.
"LXXXI
If anyone following the customs of pagans, introduces diviners, and soothsayers into his home, in order to send bad spirits out of the doors or procure mischief, or carry out the purifications of the pagans; they must do five years penance."

59 "LXXV
It is not lawful for Christian women to observe some unreality in their wool working, but let them call on God's help, who gives the wisdom of weaving."
charged the clergy to instruct the laity in matters of faith. This first canon prompted Polemius of Astorga to write his Metropolitan for some advice on the method and content of this instruction. Martin answered with De Correctione Rusticorum.

**SUMMARY**

When Martin entered Galicia, he labored for at least the first eight years under an Arian king. During this time he established a monastery at Dumium based on an eastern model. His approach was well accepted by the Hispano-Romans, who were already inclined toward eastern ways.

Since the relationship between the Sueves and their Hispano-Roman subjects was strained, he probably had little interaction with his overlords. Between 558 and 561, after Martin was consecrated bishop, Ariamir turned to Catholicism, thus sweeping his people within the fold of orthodoxy. However, no evidence links Martin directly to his conversion, nor with the conversion of the Suevic people. The First and Second Councils of Braga deal exclusively with matters of importance to the Hispano-Romans. There are no references to Arianism, which the Sueves had so recently abandoned. Either Arianism, unlike Priscillianism, had been completely eradicated, or the Sueves were too preoccupied with matters of survival to care. If the Sueves were so casual about their own faith, it’s hard to believe that they would support the Hispano-Romans in their attempts to suppress Priscillianism and paganism. As Metropolitan of Braga, Martin’s approach to strengthening the faith of the Hispano-Romans was tolerant and educational. While this methodology seems to flow naturally out of his eastern monastic background, in Suevic Galicia, he probably had few other options.
CHAPTER 5

De Correctione Rusticorum AND ITS GENRE

De Correctione Rusticorum is part of a genre of instructional literature intended to help the rural peasant class break free from pagan practices. Scholars have long remarked about the distinctively tolerant nature of the De Correctione Rusticorum in contrast with other material on the same issue. In order to explain the tolerance of De Correctione Rusticorum, the sermon must first be understood in terms of its motives and the patterns it establishes for the future of the genre.¹ Therefore the purpose, style and structure of the sermon will be analyzed. Martin's sermon parallels Augustine's De Catechizandis Rudibus in structure and shows a familiarity with the sermons of Caesarius of Arles.

A. PURPOSE

In the months following the Second Council of Braga in A.D. 572, Martin wrote a letter to one of the participants, Bishop Polemius of Astorga. In the opening sentence, Martin refers to some correspondence recently received from Polemius asking for advice "pro castigatione rusticorum". Since Martin wrote the document as a letter, he probably did not give it a title. However, as the sermon

¹ Mark Vessey was particularly helpful in pointing out the uniqueness of Martin's sermon compared to Augustine and Caesarius on the same issue.
which the letter contains, became widely circulated, it received a distinguishing
title. Martin's reply to Polemius has been variously entitled Epistula ad Polemium,
Pro Castigatione Rusticorum, and most commonly De Correctione Rusticorum.²

Polemius' request for assistance was likely made in response to the first
canon of the aforesaid council which instructed, that the bishops, during the
twenty days prior to Easter, should:

Convocata plebe ipsius ecclesiae doceant illos ut errores fugiant idolorum vel diversa crimina, id est homicidium, adulterium, perjurium, falsum testimonium, et reliqua pecata mortifera, aut quod nolunt sibi fieri, non faciant alteri, et ut creant resurrectionem omnium hominum et diem recepturus est.”³

Martin provides his colleague with a sermon that he could preach to the rustici,
[rural as opposed to urban lower class] in order to fulfill his obligation as bishop.

B. STYLE

Martin immediately declares that his style of writing will be tailored to suit
the ears of his audience. "necesse me fuit...cibum rusticis rustico sermone condire." In his critical edition of the works of Martin, Barlow argues against Caspari and Harold Farmer, both of whom contend that while Martin uses the popular language of the educated, his sermon is neither ungrammatical nor uncouth.⁴ Barlow, using manuscript evidence, demonstrates that Martin "deliberately uses vulgarisms" in order to appeal to his hearers. Barlow cites several grammatical patterns which occur in the manuscripts. The patterns are not consistent, which indicates that corrections were subsequently made by copyists. However, the persistence of the odd form convinces Barlow that the unusual was

² Barlow, MEB, 159.
³ Barlow, MEB, 119.
⁴ Barlow, MEB, 160.
the original. In his edition of the text, Barlow examines the three examples of *mare* in the ablative singular. The eight manuscripts are divided, with some using *mare* and some *mari*. However, two manuscripts consistently use the unusual form in all three instances, convincing Barlow that *mare* was used by Martin himself. Barlow catalogues the frequency of other uncommon forms. These include nine cases of the accusative for the ablative of place, six occurrences of the ablative for the accusative with verbs of motion. He uncovers nine other such unusual grammatical usages, and believes that all were the choice of Martin and in some cases can be attributed to his Greek background.5

Barlow, therefore retains the vulgarisms which other editors have corrected. He supports his decision by pointing to fragments of Arian sermons, the homily of Pirminius, the contemporary inscriptions, and the Itala versions of the Bible, which all share "rustic" traits. The difference between these and Martin's sermon is that the former were written by the uneducated and the latter purposely written for the uneducated.6 Barlow takes seriously Martin's intention to offer "cibum rusticis rustico sermone". Since Barlow's edition was published in 1950, it has remained a standard among scholars. Barlow brings us more closely in touch with Martin's audience and also reveals the relationship which existed between Bishop Martin and his people.

C. STRUCTURE

*De Correctione Rusticorum* closely resembles Augustine's *De catechizandis Rudibus* in form. Like Martin, Augustine wrote his instruction in answer to a request from a fellow bishop. Augustine begins: "Petisti me, frater Deogratias, ut

5 Barlow, MEB, 161-162.
6 Barlow, MEB, 163.
aliquid ad te de catechizandis rudibus, quod tibi usui esset scriberem." He also encourages Deogratias to tailor instruction to suit the educational background and vocation of his listeners.

I can testify to you from my own experience that I am differently stirred according as he whom I see before me waiting for instruction is cultivated or a dullard, a fellow citizen or a stranger, a rich man or a poor man...And since the same medicine is not to be applied to all..."7

Augustine proceeds to supply Deogratias with a model catechetical address, suitable for "one of the uneducated class, yet not a man from the country but a townsman such as you come across in great numbers in Carthage..."8

Both Augustine and Martin structure their instructions with a similarity which Barlow finds striking. Chapter three of De Catechizandis states that the beginner "is first instructed from the text: 'in the beginning God created heaven and earth', down to the present period of Church history...in a general and comprehensive summary". Augustine follows up in chapters seventeen and nineteen with a summary of world history from the creation to the flood. Martin covers the same period in his own chapters three, four, five, and six. In chapter seven, Augustine turns his attention to instruction in the resurrection, the last judgment, and eternal rewards and punishments. Martin follows the same program in his chapters thirteen and fourteen.

Barlow also observes certain verbal parallels which indicate Martin's dependence on Augustine. He compares Augustine 26.8: "misit unigenitum filium suum, hoc est verbum suum"; with Martin 13.3: "misit filium suum, id est sapientiam et verbum suum". Parallels between Augustine and Martin in purpose,

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8 Augustine, De Catechizandis Rudibus, 52.
structure and language make it probable that Martin depended on De catechizandis Rudibus when writing his own sermon.

In addition to Augustine, it appears that Martin was influenced by the sermons of Caesarius of Arles, which were widely circulated in the west. While Barlow admits that direct parallels are hard to establish, the same themes receive similar treatment. Of particular significance is Caesarius' sermones XII,3-4 on renunciation at the time of baptism in which the formula is "Abrenuntias diabolo, pompis, et operibus eius?"; XIII,1 on using the sign of the cross to ward off demons; XIV, Homilia ubi populus admonetur on avoiding pagan sacrifices: LII,2 on women's superstitions; LIV,1 on the loss of the effects of baptism by those who continue to observe pagan practices; LIV,5 on various superstitions probably common to both Gaul and Spain; CXCIII,4 on the origin of the Greek gods Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn.

Martin and Caesarius share a common catalogue of pagan practices which indicates that Martin probably had access to Caesarius' sermons.

SUMMARY

Martin's letter to Polemius is part of a genre of instructional literature intended for uneducated and quasi pagan converts. Martin borrows from the contributions of Augustine and Caesarius and in turn becomes a resource for succeeding generations of missionaries. In the sermons of Eligius of Noyon (A.D. 588-659), portions of De Correctione Rusticorum are adapted to fit a new

9 Barlow, MEB, 164.
context.\textsuperscript{11} Pirminius of Reichenau (d. A.D. 753) extended Martin's influence into the eighth century. While the material was reworded in certain instances, Pirminius preserved most of the text unchanged.\textsuperscript{12} The continuous recycling of these instructions proves that Martin and Polemius shared in an ongoing struggle to instruct pagan converts in the way of faith.

\textsuperscript{11} Barlow, MEB, 165.
\textsuperscript{12} Barlow, MEB, 166.
Chapter 6

*De Correctione Rusticorum: AN "EASTERN" RESPONSE TO PAGAN SURVIVALS IN GALICIA*

INTRODUCTION

Scholars, like J.N. Hillgarth and Peter Brown, have long remarked about the distinctively tolerant nature of the *De Correctione Rusticorum* in contrast with other material on the same issue. While Martin borrows elements of style and structure from the work of western bishops like Caesarius of Arles and Augustine of Hippo, his sermon has a singularly gentle quality. Why is Martin's response so different from that of others who faced similar circumstances? It will be argued that the tolerant quality of DCR reflects the eastern monastic heritage of the author.

The thesis will be tested in four ways: firstly, the sermon will be compared to the collection of *Sayings of the Fathers* which he brought to Galicia and Augustine's *De Catechizandis Rudibus* in order to accentuate its eastern quality. Secondly, parallels between the theology of the DCR and Origenism which influenced the thought of the Alexandrian monastic communities will be considered. Thirdly, Martin and his response to paganism will be compared to Caesarius of Arles and his approach to the same issue. By comparing Martin with a typical western bishop, the "oriental" character of the bishop of Braga can be demonstrated. Finally, the thesis that Martin's tolerance is a product of his
monastic experience will be tested against Alberto Ferreiro's thesis that Martin's classical background is the source of his tolerance.

A.  *DE CORRECTIONE RUSTICORUM AND THE SAYINGS OF THE FATHERS*

When Martin stepped onto the shores of Galicia, he carried with him the collected experience of the monastic communities of the east in the form of the *Sententiae Patrum Aegytiorum* and the *Interrogationes et responsiones Graecorum patrum*. He founded his monastery upon this corpus and used it as a source for the spiritual development of his monks. Once elected Bishop of Braga, it seems logical that Martin would have utilized those same resources in his effort to bring his charges into an orthodox confession and life style. When DCR is analyzed in comparison with these collections of sayings of the Fathers, parallels emerge both in the sympathy extended to the hearer and in the theology.\(^1\) These common themes are accentuated when the DCR is compared to Augustine's *De Catechizandis Rudibus* which although it was Martin's source for structure, did not shape the theology of his sermon.

1. **TOLERANT APPROACH**

The tone of DCR is pastoral rather than legislative. The opening and closing words set the spirit of the sermon. In chapter two he greets his hearers as "filii karissimi" and concludes in chapter seventeen with "dilictissimi filii". Indeed,

\(^1\) References to *De Correctione Rusticorum* will now be noted as DCR. The numbers will correspond to the chapters of DCR as found in Barlow's edition of the sermon in *his Martini Episcopi Bracarensis Opera Omnia*. The text appears on pages 183-203.
DCR is written in the spirit of the Sayings, which emphasize the benevolence of God and the monks. The following story illustrates the dominant theme of forgiveness. A bishop asked an angel why, when two known adulterers appeared at communion, one was bright and the other dark. The angel replied that the former had sought forgiveness while the latter had not. As the bishop marveled, the angel explained the character of God.

This you should know, that no sins of men overcome the goodness of God, if only through repentance each one destroys the sins which he has previously committed. For God is merciful and knows the weakness of the human race and the strength of their passions and the ability and malice of the devil, and when men fall into sin, He is indulgent as if to sons and awaits their conversion; upon the penitent, as if upon those who languish, He has compassion and mercy: He soon dissolves their sins and even allows them the rewards of the just." IRGP 23.1

Abbot Moses asked Abbot Silvanus: "Can a man make a new start from day to day?" Silvanus replied: "If he is a workman, he can take up and start from day to day". SPA 109.14

Throughout the Sayings, the Divine attitude toward man is marked by a constant willingness to forgive. The Fathers encourage this attitude among the monks who tend to sit in judgement on others. Silvanus reminds the monks:

...do not measure yourself with the great, but believe yourself inferior to every creature, that is, viler than every man, however great a sinner he may be. Have discernment, criticize yourself, but do not judge your neighbor nor look down upon the sins of other people, nor bewail your own sins, nor be anxious for the deeds of any man. Be of gentle spirit, not inclined to anger... if you hear of anyone that he is acting unjustly, reply in these words: Am I a judge of these things? I am but a man and a sinner... SPA 109.

When the sin of another is discerned, its disclosure must be done with great care.
A Brother asked an old man: "If I see some sin among the brothers, do you bid me make it known?" He answered: "If they are elders or of your own age, warn them humbly without criticism, so that even in this you may be found humble." SPA 106

The tolerance advocated in the above Sayings is characteristic of the whole corpus. The monk must strive for self discernment rather than focus on the sin of others. In examining his own sin, the monk should not despair, but take comfort in the benevolence of God.

In the same fashion, Martin encourages the rustici with the benevolence of God. He reminds the rustici that:

If anyone realizes that after receiving baptism he has done these things and broken the faith of Christ, let him not despair of himself, nor say in his heart: "Because I have done such evils after baptism, perhaps God will not forgive my sins". Do not doubt the mercy of God. Only perform in your heart your pact with God. DCR,17.

He then reinforces his message by quoting from Ezekiel 18.21-22: "On whatever day the wicked man turns away from his sins and does what is just, I too will not remember his crimes". Martin's words are reminiscent of Silvanus who exhorts the monks that "each day as you rise in the morning begin in every virtuous deed..." SPA 109. Martin offers the rustici a God who is ever ready to forgive.

Nowhere in the sermon does Martin appeal to his own position and authority in order to enforce compliance. In the final chapter he refers to himself as "nos humilimos exiguos", and his hearers as "fratres et filii karissimi". DCR 18. Martin uses the superlative both to express his affection for his hearers and his low estimate of himself. Absent is any reference to the bishop's power and authority over his people; instead a more familial relationship is expressed. Martin offers truth in the context of spiritual equality before God. The admonition of Silvanus to "believe yourself inferior to every creature" seems to underly Martin's response to the rustici. Like Silvanus, Martin invites a reflection on truth, but does not override free choice. Martin's final words to the rustici reflect this same hesitancy to judge.
Behold, with the testimony of God and His holy angels who are listening to us as we speak, we have fulfilled what was due to your goodness, and have lent you the money of the Lord, as we were commanded. It is for you now to think and work, so that each one of you may return as much as he receives with interest when the Lord comes on the day of judgment. DCR 19.

Rather than threatening the fallen with punishment or excommunication, Martin leaves the issue at the discretion of the rustici to reflect upon his words and then to act accordingly. At no time does the bishop threaten to forcibly change the practices of the people.

2. PARALLELS IN THEOLOGY

In the DCR, Martin develops an understanding of man which is closely akin to the one contained in the Sayings of the Fathers. Both assert that ignorance of God is at the root of man's dilemma. Ignorance causes man to be easily distracted, and the devil and demons take advantage of this condition. Man must be awakened to his plight and recall the symbols and ordinances of the Church to escape this entrapment. Emphasis is placed on the restoration of the lapsed rather than on their punishment. When the Sayings and the sermon are compared, a common anthropology becomes evident.

Out of the Sayings there emerges a consistent understanding of the human condition. Man is in relationship with a benevolent God and attempts to improve that relationship in the face of his own passions and ignorance. His struggle is complicated by the devil and demons who contend against him.

A recurring theme is man's struggle with his passions which distract him from contemplation of God. The soul falls easy prey to its passions. According to the Fathers: the soul "inclines to what is transitory and unclean". SPA 29 ..."the soul loves the passions". SPA 30
Since man's passions cloud his thinking, he combats them through self-examination and contemplation of God.

A certain brother said to an old man: "My thoughts say to me; 'I am good.'" The old man answered: "He who does not see his sins always thinks he is good; but he who see his sins can never be persuaded by his thoughts that he is good, for he knows what he sees. Therefore, one needs to work hard to reflect upon himself, for negligence, sloth, and idleness cause the eyes of the mind to be blind." Interrogationes et responsiones Graecorum patrum 15.4

The true danger for the monk is not the sin which he sees, but that which is hidden from his view.

A certain brother said to Abbot Pimenius: "My thoughts do not allow me to have regard for my sins, but fathers compel me to think of my sins." Abbot Pimenius replied with a story about Abbot Isidore, saying: "While Abbot Isidore was weeping in his cell and his disciple was sitting in another cell, it happened that the disciple went to him during the very hour that he was weeping and asked: 'Why are you weeping, father?' He replied: 'I am weeping for my sins, son.' Again, he said: 'You have no sins, father.' The old man replied: 'My son, if God were to manifest my sins to men, He would need not three nor four men, but many, many more.'" IRGP 15.5

Once passions are recognized through self-examination, a monk will remain free only if he contemplates God. A brother asked an old man: "What shall I do, father, about lustful thoughts?" He replied: "Pray God that the eyes of your soul may see the help which comes from God, which surrounds man and saves him". SPA 4. Those able to control their thought lives were models for the community.

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2 References to Interrogationes et responsiones Graecorum patrum will now be noted as IRGP. The numbers will correspond to the chapters of IRGP as found in Barlow's English edition of the text in "The Iberian Fathers", The Fathers of the Church, vol. 62, pp. 117-171. The text of Interrogationes et responsiones is not included in Barlow's Latin edition because the text was translated by the monk Paschasius of Dumium whom Martin taught Greek. Martin assigned his student the task of translating the text for the benefit of the monastery at Dumium. Martin's desire to have the text translated shows the value he places on the collection as a means for edifying the community.
"It was said of Abbot John that he never permitted an idle thought to enter his heart nor spoke of the things of this world." SPA 51 The monk aims to make God the focus of his thoughts. "...if God is before your eyes, the enemy will in no wise be able to frighten you." SPA 24

In the DCR, Martin's anthropology parallels that developed in the Sayings in several ways. In his understanding of the human condition, Martin sees ignorance as man's central problem and the chief result of the Fall. "genus hominum... obliti creatorem suum deum multa scelera facientes." DCR 5. After the flood, as man increased, "obliviscentes iterum homines creatorem mundi deum" began to worship nature. DCR 6. In paragraph seven, Martin describes men as ignaros homines. He specifically refers to the ignorantes rustici in reference to his own audience. DCR 8,10.

In both the Sayings and DCR, the human perdicament is ignorance of God. In the Fall men chose to forget God, and consequently they now lack the knowledge needed to extricate themselves from their plight. While man is responsible for not reflecting on God, the devil and the demons consort to keep man distracted.

The monk's struggle with his passions and pursuit of humility is complicated by the activities of the devil and his demons who attempt to thwart his progress. SPA 42. These enemies operate in two ways: They take advantage of man's thoughts and passions, and they deceive man through trickery.

The demons attack man internally through his desires. IRGP 25.3, 25.4. They also act through thoughts which are not focused on God. IRGP 2.1. In addition to internal attacks, the devil and demons also attack externally by means of their powers of deception. It is against these powers that a monk must guard. These attacks come in a variety of forms. In one instance it comes in the form of blasphemy. IRGP 1.5. At other times the demons disguise themselves as monks.
IRGP 1.8. Idle thoughts and human passions are internal tools which the demons use against the monks. As well, they attack externally through disguise and deception to lead the monks astray.

In the collected sayings, a defense against the devil and demons is prescribed for the monastic community. Several elements of the Christian life have the power to defeat evil forces. Abbot Macarius advises Theoctistus to:

Fast until evening, and ever and increasingly meditate on something from the Gospel or from other sacred Scriptures: and when some thought comes to you, never let the eyes of your heart look down, but raise them up, and soon the Lord will aid you." IRGP 1.8.

These spiritual exercises develop the monks "inner eyes" which make him aware of the devil's work. IRGP 44.8.

Therefore, fasting, meditation on scripture and reflection on the Lord, help repel attacks.

At another time, the same Macarius rendered the devil helpless through his humility. The devil boasted to Macarius that he surpassed the abbot in fasting and watchfulness, but admitted that "...in one thing you conquer me, ...your humility alone overcomes me." IRGP 13.6. The exercise of good works thwarts the devil by permitting him "no room" to enter. IRGP 26.3.

In addition to these measures, the monk receives divine assistance in his struggle against the devil. The sign of the cross is used by Abbot Pimenius to cast out a demon. IRGP 14.1. Elsewhere, the power of the demons is broken during worship within a church. Abbot Paul the Simple once wept while watching a man under the control of demons enter a church. During worship the man heard the word of the Lord, repented and left with a clear conscience accompanied by his holy angel. IRGP 23.2. The monk is able to combat the devil by calling "the Lord God to my aid against him". IRGP 44.8.
A monk can battle against the deceptions of the devil through his own work of fasting, meditation, good works, and the exercise of virtue and divine assistance provided by the sign of the cross, church worship and calling upon God.

The monk is not only led astray by his own passions, but may fall victim to the deceptions of the devil. The demonic forces attempt to block perception of the divine. The monk seeks to develop inner eyes in order to perceive these demonic schemes and maintain contemplation of God.

In DCR the devil and demons also take advantage of human ignorance by tricking man into worshiping them.

Thus the devil and his ministers, the demons, who were cast down from the sky, seeing ignorant men who had dismissed God their creator, and were mistaking the creatures... they began to show themselves in diverse forms and to speak with them and demanded of them that they offer sacrifices to them and worship them as God...

DCR 7.

The sin of the rustici is not deliberate, but caused by deception. After listing a number of their pagan practices in paragraph eleven, Martin asks in twelve, "Don't you clearly understand that the demons are lying to you in these superstitious practices...?". Man's dilemma is that he is being victimized on account of his ignorance by the devil and demons.

3. EASTERN VERSUS WESTERN THEOLOGY

Since Martin sees ignorance as man's basic problem he offers the rustici a soteriology which is fundamentally cognitive. At this stage in his theology, Martin diverges from Augustine who has a different understanding of both what man needs and what God offers. Augustine considers carnality to be the root of the human perdicament, and therefore requires that man undergo a physical
salvation. This difference in soteriology is significant because it indicates the "non-western" nature of Martin's thinking.

Martin's soteriology, which he explains in thirteen, solves the anthropological problem. What God offers corresponds directly to what man needs.

Pro qua etiam causa, dum vidisset deus miserent homines ita a diablo it angelis eius malis inludi ut, obliviscendes creatorem suum, pro deo daimones adovent, misit filium suum, id est sapientiam et verbum suum, ut illos ad cultum veri dei de diaboli errore reducet.

Because man's problem is one of ignorance and deception, Martin characterizes the Son as sapientia and verbum. The activity of the Incarnate son corresponds to His nature. According to Martin, the Son praedicavit hominibus.

He taught them (docuit illos) to leave their idols and their wicked works, to desert the power of the devil, and to return to the worship of their creator. DCR 13.

Neither in his anthropology nor soteriology does Martin refer to the physical corruption of man or to Christ's incarnation, death and resurrection as providing a physical redemption. The emphasis is strictly on renewal through instruction in the truth. This instruction is two-fold: firstly, to recall men to worship of God and secondly, to reveal the deceptive ways of the devil. For Martin, salvation is a cognitive enterprise. The divine teaching mission of the Son provides a model for Martin's own endeavors. Martin expands the mandate of the great commission to include teaching "those who have been baptized to depart from their evil ways..." DCR 13. Built into Martin's theology is the concept that man requires saving knowledge to escape his situation.

Although Martin draws his method and structure from Augustine, he does not reflect the former's anthropology and soteriology. In his shorter form of instruction, Augustine states that man's problem is not ignorance or forgetfulness,
but that man has chosen to abandon God and thus "deserto creatore suo".3 This action led to the "humilitate nostrae mortalitatis".4 Indeed, Augustine is careful to safeguard the incarnate Son from the taint of human flesh. "A carne quippe contaminari non poterat, ipse carnem potius mundaturus."5 If flesh possess the threat of contamination to Christ, and itself requires purifying, then man's problem is his contaminated flesh.

It is precisely this contaminated flesh which Christ came to purify. Man's problem is more physical than cognitive. Christ achieved man's redemption through his "hominis assumptione".6 Redemption is accomplished through the physical fact of the incarnation. Augustine emphasizes that Christ lived a humble, sinless life in the body. It is through Christ's physical crucifixion that man's torments are ended.7 The triumph over human flesh is emphasized at the expense of Christ's teaching. Salvation is understood as a movement from carnality to spirituality brought about by the grace of God. The damned are those "qui in eum credere omnino noluerunt", and those who wittingly remain in carnality in full view of God's grace.8 Augustine and Martin differ on the fundamental question of the nature of the human perdicament. For Augustine the problem is carnality while for Martin ignorance is the enemy.

In addition to the differences in soteriology, Martin's understanding of demons differs from that of Augustine. Unlike Augustine, he believes that it is at the point of ignorance that the devil attacks men. According to Augustine:

3 St. Augustine, De Catechizandis Rudibus, xviii.
4 Ibid., xvii.
5 Ibid., xvii.
6 Ibid., xxii.
7 Ibid., xxii.
8 Ibid., xxii.
"The devil and his spirits rejoice that they are adored and worshiped in such sculptured images while they feed their own errors upon the errors of men."9 Like Martin, Augustine believes that the demons are worshiped in idols. The devil speaks seductive words and Christians are warned to "beware lest that enemy steal upon you from some other quarter."10 Augustine does emphasize the deceptive aims and abilities of the devil. However, he does not depict him as one who preys upon the ignorance of men but as their accomplice who merely acts upon their carnal nature.

Martin overlooks Augustine's physical emphasis in soteriology in favor of a cognitive model. While Augustine describes the Son as "Word", Martin describes Him as "Wisdom and Word". This difference is significant because Augustine wrote for the same purpose as Martin. Given Martin's habit of borrowing from his sources, it is interesting that he used the structure of De Catechizandis Rudibus but not the theology.

Martin's willingness to diverge from Augustine in his soteriology indicates a fundamental difference in their theologies. It appears that Martin depends upon another philosophical system for his understanding of salvation.

B. *DE CORRECTIONE RUSTICORUM* AND ORIGENISM

In the theology of the DCR, Martin shows the influence of Origenism which persisted in the east until A.D. 553. These Origenist themes can be discerned in Martin's cognitive understanding of the fall and salvation.

Martin presents the creation of both angels and men in a non-Origenist manner. Origen's idea of the pre-existence of intelligences is no where present.

9 Ibid., xviii.
10 Ibid., xxv.
Angels were created first, during the creation of heaven and earth (DCR 3), while Adam was created in a subsequent act. DCR 5. Barlow suggests that Martin's understanding of the nature of angels may have been drawn from Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, xii.1. Martin's view of creation is orthodox, which is not surprising given the furore which surrounded Origen's controversial understanding of creation.

Like Augustine, Martin attributes the fall of the devil and his followers to pride. DCR 3. However, the fall of man, and his salvation are described in rational terms, reminiscent of Origen and Evagrius. The participation of the demons in man's fall also has Origenist overtones.

When Martin's concepts of the Fall and Salvation are compared with those of Origen and Evagrius, a striking similarity emerges. In his *De Principiis*, Origen presents a rationalistic understanding of Salvation. To Man progresses toward God by virtue of his rational nature. (Bk.I,3.8). This rational nature becomes capable of receiving Christ through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Through participation in the Holy Spirit, a man "advances and comes to higher degrees of perfection" until he becomes "more worthy to receive the grace of wisdom and knowledge, in order that all stains of pollution and ignorance may be purged and removed..." Since salvation is advancement in knowledge and removal of ignorance, in the Fall, the opposite occurs. In Bk.I,4 Origen remarks that "all rational creatures if they become negligent gradually sink to a lower level". If negligence is quickly addressed, recovery is possible.

Origen attributes the Fall to human "negligence" (Bk.I,5), "sloth" (Bk.I.5), and "weariness" (Bk.II,9). By succumbing to these failings, man is drawn from the...

opposite of good which must be evil. Bk.II,9. As the *nous* falls and cools to become a soul, it is embodied with *pneuma* and *sarx*. While the *pneuma* attempts to guide the soul back to God, the *sarx* is "subject to deceptive imaginations and passions." Origen presents the person as a dicotomy of soul and body, with the *pneuma* opposing the body. Plato offers a similar understanding of anthropology in his Phaedrus.

Evagrius understands man as a trichotomy. As the *nous* falls it expands to include a soul. The soul has three parts: the rational, the irascible and the concupiscible. In the latter two parts, passions, delusions, and vice can take control. The *nous* can be "distracted from God by the forces at play in the soul".13

Once a man becomes negligent and begins to fall away from the good, he is aided in his descent by "apostate and exiled powers" Bk.III,3-4. Origen cites several Old Testament examples of such assistance, most notably in I Kings, where a spirit "by its own will and choice elected to entice and practice deceit". Bk. III,2.1. These apostate and exiled powers which have departed from God composed these errors and deceits of false doctrine either from the pure wickedness of their minds and wills, or else from envy of those for whom, once they have learned the truth, that there is prepared a way of ascent to that station from which the powers have fallen, and from a desire to prevent any such progress. Bk.III,3-4.

These spirits, therefore use duplicity to prevent man from returning to his former state. Origen advises that:

a mind that is watchful and casts asided from itself whatever is evil calls to its side the assistance of the good; whereas on the contrary one that is negligent and slothful, being less cautious, gives a place to those spirits which, like robbers lying in ambush, contrive to rush


13 Ibid., p. 365-66.
into the minds of men whenever they see a place offered to them through slackness... Bk.III,3.4

Advance and fall are both rational processes which depend upon human will. If the mind is distracted it begins a fall, which if unchecked becomes a descent into sin. This fall is assisted by powers, motivated by envy and wickedness, who seek to deceive fallen minds to prevent a return to blessedness.

It is not surprising that Origen, who understands the Fall as a rational process describes salvation in rational terms. In explaining the incarnation, he considers the Son's principle qualities to be Wisdom and Word. Wisdom is logically prior, since Proverbs 8.22 states that she is the "beginning" in which, according to John 1.1, the Logos is found: "in the beginning was the Logos". The Son is Logos in both the rational, philosophical sense, and the biblical sense.

Martin's rational understanding of Fall and Salvation is remarkably akin to that of Origen. Origen attributes the Fall to "negligence" and "sloth". For Martin the Fall commenced when the devil, being "invidia ductus" persuaded man to disobey God. DCR 4  Adam and Eve, "obliti creatorem suum deum", succumbed to the devil and "multa scelera facientes, irritaverunt deum ad iracundiam". DCR 4  After the purge of the flood, and the restoration of the race through Noah, "obliviscentes iterum homines creatorem mundi deum, coeperunt, dimisso creatore, colere creaturas". DCR 6

The devil and the demons were quick to take advantage of human folly, and adopted forms which the "ignaros homines" began worshiping. DCR 7 Furthermore, Martin despairs that men become unwitting accomplices in their own destruction. DCR 12 While Martin sees the fall as a cognitive problem, he also understands salvation as a cognitive process. It is when God saw that man had "obliviscentes creatorem suum" that he sent his son "id est sapientiam et verbum suum". DCR 13  In order to save men, the son "praedicavit hominibus: docuit illos" DCR 13  The process of salvation for Martin is intellectual. Remarkably, he
describes it in Origenist terms, calling the Son "Wisdom and Word". Although it cannot be affirmed that Martin was influenced by Origenism, the facts that he studied in the hotbed of Origenism and describes salvation in Origenist terms makes it seem highly possible.

C. MARTIN OF BRAGA AND CAESARIUS OF ARLES: OPPOSING APPROACHES TO PAGAN SURVIVALS

Martin's tolerance toward his wayward rustici requires a context. This context is provided by placing Martin's sermon alongside other literature on the same subject. In his work, The Conversion of Western Europe, J.N. Hillgarth compares De Correctione Rusticorum to other texts of the same genre. Maximus of Turin, writing after A.D. 405, pleaded with landholders in northern Italy to remove idols from their private estates. Caesarius of Arles never hesitated to use force. Gregory the Great 590-604, also advocated its use. In his Registrum IV of 594 Gregory repeats the arguments of Maximus of Turin. Once the entire Iberian Peninsula was united under the Visigoths, the Church Councils of Toledo attempted without success to enforce compliance. In 693 canon 2 of Toledo XVI "acknowledged the wide spread existence of pagan practices, for which it prescribes very severe penalties". Hillgarth declares that Martin is "exceptional in not recommending the use of force against the recalcitrant pagan or his shrine."  

Martin's tolerance is brought into sharper focus by comparing him with Caesarius of Arles 503-543. Caesarius is typical of bishops in southern Spain and Gaul, who adopted a more proscriptive stand against paganism than did Martin.

14 Hillgarth, Conversion of Western Europe, 53.
15 Ibid.
The roots of this difference reach into the backgrounds of Caesarius and Martin. Caesarius was a Gallo-Roman aristocrat who was educated in western monasticism. His experience was fundamentally different than the eastern-trained Martin. The situations in which they worked were as opposite as their personal backgrounds. Caesarius had the support of stable political and ecclesiastical establishment which Martin did not. The comparison with Caesarius provides a perspective which underscores the uniqueness of Martin's approach to pagan survivals.

Caesarius of Arles followed a path which was common for young Gallo-Roman aristocrats of his time. Born in 470 to a leading family in Burgundy, Caesarius expressed a desire for holy orders at age 18. After serving the local bishop for two years, he joined the monastery at Lerins. His zeal for self denial drained his strength and Caesarius was sent to Arles to recover. There, he impressed Eonius of Arles who made him a deacon and then a presbyter. Though away from the monastic life, he continued to live by the regulations of Lerins. Soon Caesarius was drawn back to monastic life and spent three years as abbot of an island monastery until he was nominated as successor in Arles.

Caesarius entered his new office at Arles as a product of his monastic training. According to Adalbert de Vogue, the Regula Orientalis was probably the rule in effect at Lerins during Caesarius' tenure. In his commentary on the rules of Lerins, de Vogue remarks that:

In its original sections which most likely come from Lerins, the Oriental Rule accords no attention whatsoever to the spiritual life of individuals. The entire interest of the legislator is concerned with community organization and precisely with the hierarchy. All officers receive their share of directives in a style both ample and precise. When all of them have passed in review from top to bottom,

one arrives at the simple brothers who are invited, above all, to be obedient to them. The Oriental Rule finishes with the correction of faults which is regulated with an extraordinary wealth of gradations.

It appears that Caesarius was trained in a system which stressed hierarchy and correction. Given the nature of his monastic experience, it is not remarkable that Caesarius was heavy handed as a bishop.

Caesarius stepped into a role which was as much political as it was pastoral. As bishop he represented the interests of the Gallo-Romans before the barbarians and fulfilled important civil functions. He is credited with saving Bordeaux from fire in 506, during a period in exile. When control of Arles shifted from the Visigoths to the Ostrogoths in 508, Caesarius was instrumental in preventing the plunder of the city. In 513 he received the endorsement of the Arian Theodoric as well as the Pallium from Pope Symmachus. From 536 to the end of his life he enjoyed the support of the Frankish Christian, King Childebert.17

The political nature of his office required that Caesarius have control over his people. Since Religious unity among the populace directly effected the power of the bishop, aberrations could not be tolerated. Bishops like Caesarius sought to protect their status.

Peter Brown in Society and the Holy in Late Latin Antiquity claims that the bishops in the west maintained power by setting themselves apart as the possessors of the Holy. The cult of the martyrs and their relics was directly controled by the bishops who drew authority from the cult.

According to Brown:

The rise to power in Western Europe of the Catholic Church was intimately connected with this localization of the holy. Bishops gained their unique position in society by orchestrating and controlling the religious life of the great urban shrines of the western Mediterranean.18

17 Caesarius of Arles, Sermons vol.1, Fathers of the Church, vol.31, introduction.
18 Peter Brown, Society and the Holy in Late Latin Antiquity (Berkley: University Press, 1982), 8.
Through their association with the relics, the bishops gained a permanent special status which gave them authority both pastorally and politically. This special status was threatened by pagan centers of worship because they rivaled the power of the bishop. Caesarius had important political reasons for quashing pagan practices.

When the factors of Caesarius' religious training and the political realities of his office are understood, the reasons behind his policy toward pagan survivals become evident. Trained in an environment which demanded strict obedience to authority, Caesarius sought the same response of loyalty to his office. Since paganism was a disloyal act, it required stiff punishment.

Hillgarth describes Caesarius as one who "provided different medicine for different wounds". In his pastoral efforts:

...he attracted some with soft speech and frightened others with sharper words, correcting some with threats, some with charm, he drew some back from vices by love, others by severity, warning some in general terms by proverbs, reproving others more roughly ... 19

Caesarius resorted to coercion to strengthen his position. He often ordered the Church doors to be closed after the gospel to ensure that everyone heard the sermon. 20 Not only did Caesarius flex his ecclesiastical muscle in the friendly confines of the Church, but in the centers of paganism as well. In sermon xiii he exhorts his people to "destroy all the temples which you find". 21 Temples include vows to trees, prayers to fountains, diabolical phylacteries, magic letters, amber charms, and herbs.

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19 Hillgarth, Conversion of Western Europe, 17-18.
20 Ibid. 27.
21 Caesarius of Arles, Sermons vol. 1
Caesarius of Arles provides a measure against which to compare Martin of Braga because he responds to similar pagan survivals to those encountered by Martin. As Jeffrey Richards reflects:

Opinions on how to deal with the recalcitrant peasants varied. St. Caesarius of Arles wanted to beat it out of them...St. Martin of Braga believed in the use of persuasion and reasoned argument to win them over.22

The opposite nature of their responses is noteworthy because of Martin's apparent borrowing of Caesarius' sermons. Why the marked difference in response? The differences in their training and the circumstances of their offices may provide important clues. Martin was trained and educated in an egalitarian environment which stressed identification with the common people. Caesarius entered Lerins as an aristocrat, and this background was reinforced by the monastery's emphasis on hierarchy and obedience. As a bishop in Galicia, Martin's position lacked political clout because of the weak state of both Catholicism and the small Roman populace. Also the shifting state of affairs in the kingdom of the Sueves made political influence difficult.

D. THE TOLERANT BISHOP: "A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS"

Scholars, including J.N. Hillgarth, Peter Brown and Jeffrey Richards find the tolerance of Martin of Braga remarkable in light of the methods normally used to bring the rustici into line. However, few have attempted to explain his divergence from the norm. In 1983, Alberto Ferreiro, then a graduate student at the University of Santa Barbara attributed Martin's tolerance to his classical

background. It will be argued that while Ferreiro points the discussion in the right
direction, he emphasizes one facet of Martin's background at the expense of the
broader context of his monasticism. Also, Ferreiro does not take into account
Martin's situation in Galicia. His tolerance must be seen as the application of the
totality of his eastern monastic experience to the religious climate in northwestern
Iberia in the sixth century.

Alberto Ferreiro, advances his thesis concerning the sources of Martin's
tolerance in an article entitled "St. Martin of Braga's Policy Toward Heretics and
Pagan Practices", which appeared in the American Benedictine Review of
December, 1983.23 The article was extremely useful in the preparation of this
thesis and provided a point of entry into De Correctione Rusticorum. The article
provides a comprehensive overview of Martin's life and the circumstances
surrounding the writing of his sermon. However, two gaps in the argument lead
Ferreiro to attribute Martin's tolerance to his classical training alone. Firstly, he
limits his discussion of Martin's monastic background to only four sentences.24
Secondly, although he offers an excellent summary of life in Galicia under the
Sueves, he fails to draw a connection between these conditions and the tone of
Martin's sermon.

Ferreiro's only interest in Martin's monasticism is the possibility that it was
the source of his education in Greek and Latin. He does not consider the quality of
that experience nor the formative influence of eastern monasticism on the young

23 Alberto Ferreiro advances his explanation of Martin's tolerance toward pagan
practices in an article entitled "St. Martin of Braga's Policy Toward Heretics and Pagan

24 "Born in Pannonia, present-day Hungary, he ventured east to the Holy Land where he
lived the monastic life. Martin was well versed in Greek and Latin, evidence that he
attended good schools, possibly during his visit to the East. Gregory tells us that Martin
"was so imbued with learning that he was held second to none in his time." It was during
his eastern itinerary that he made his decision to go to western Europe."
Barlow, MEB, p. 300.
Ferreiro therefore misses the possibility that the years of monastic training were not merely a good educational opportunity, but immersion in a culture and lifestyle. The fact that Martin founded the monastery at Dumium on the collected *Sayings of the Fathers* and possibly the *Pachomian Rule* is evidence of his respect for his monastic heritage. He deliberately founds an eastern monastery in a western locale.

When the sermon is read in the context of the eastern monastic literature and milieu, parallels in tone and theology emerge which indicate the influence of his monastic experience. Tolerance marked the lifestyle and teaching of the Desert Fathers. The contrasting example of Caesarius of Arles reveals the influence of this monastic heritage. Caesarius' heavy-handed approach to paganism reflects his strict training at Lerins.

The cognitive understanding of sin and salvation which characterize the sermon is fundamental to Origenism. It may not be coincidence that Martin migrated west only just ahead of the eradication of Origenism from Egypt by Justinian. His brief attention to the formative years of Martin's life seems to have caused Ferreiro to see the educational aspect alone as important rather than the entirety of the episode.

Although Ferreiro summarizes the situation in Galicia, he does not explore its implications for Martin and his mission. Ferreiro recognizes that the make-up of the populace made Martin's sermon necessary. "... Martin encountered a people that possessed minimal Roman influences, and were steeped in pagan practices, Arianism, and Priscillianism." He also underscores that practicing

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25 Ferreiro, "St. Martin of Braga's Policy". Ferreiro raises the issue at the beginning of the article:
"In order to understand Martin's views, one must first consider his audience, namely, the Sueves, a Germanic tribe, and the indigenous Hispano-Romans."

26 Ibid., 375.
pagan customs drew no political stigma and he notes the absence of "attacks against them from the monarchy". Ferreiro declares: "The struggle against pagan customs and Priscillianism lay exclusively in the hands of the Church". However, he fails to consider that these severe conditions may have forced Martin to compromise his approach to combatting pagan survivals.

In comparison to Martin, Caesarius of Arles who possessed tremendous political power, was able to pronounce and enforce harsh measures against paganism. Could not Martin's tolerance be in part a response to the limited imperial influence in Galicia?

Having passed over Martin's monastic heritage and the circumstances in Galicia, Ferreiro points to Martin's study of the classics as the root of his tolerance. "One basic difference between Martin and those who espoused violence is that he included the study of the classics whereas others shunned them altogether." On this subject Ferreiro compares Martin to Caesarius of Aries as an example of one who did not study the classics. Ferreiro refers to the Vita S. Caesarii which explains that Caesarius was warned in a dream to give up pagan studies. He responded and "contemsit haec protinus" Ferreiro asserts that because Martin "held a tolerant attitude toward pagan authors...it could be that this tolerance found expression with regard to unbelievers."

By his own admission, Ferreiro's thesis causes him to make several assumptions. He sees some parallels between Martin's concept of evil and that of Plato. However, since we do not have a list of the works of Plato which Martin read, "firm borrowings by Martin cannot be established with certainty." Ferreiro

27 Ibid., 377.
28 Ibid., 381.
can only surmise based on Martin's knowledge of Greek and his admission to Fortunatus that he had read Plato.

Ferreiro draws a parallel between Martin's connection of sin and ignorance and the same connection which Plato's makes in his *Laws*. Surprisingly, he fails to perceive the same connection in the collected *Sayings of the Fathers*; a source which Martin did study. Also, he does not consider the possibility that Martin may have gained his platonic understanding of sin from Origenist sources.

Ferreiro turns from the classics as a possible source for tolerance to the Scriptures and the Church Fathers. "The bishop's non-violent attitude originated naturally from the apostolic example and the Fathers."31 This argument begs the obvious question; if the Scriptures and the Fathers produce a non-violent approach in Martin, why do they not have the same effect on Caesarius, Augustine and others who did not share his opinion?

Finally Ferreiro suggests that Martin may have followed in the footsteps of Martin of Tours who opposed the execution of Priscillian. It is possible that Martin of Braga chose Martin of Tours as the patron saint of Galicia because of this episode. However, we cannot over look the fact that Martin of Tours pulled down shrines, built churches on their remains and instructed his monks to guard the sites to ensure that the pagans did not return.32 Martin of Tours fails to measure up to the tolerant example which might explain the behavior of the bishop of Braga.

In the end Ferreiro admits the tenuous nature of his thesis. Although he is able to confirm Martin's dependence on Seneca, nowhere does Martin declare his

31 Ibid., 384.
views on any classical authors. Although nothing in Martin's writings refutes Ferreiro's claim, there is no clear support.

SUMMARY

Ferreiro is helpful in opening up the discussion on the sources for Martin's tolerance. However, it appears that a more comprehensive study of Martin's background and the uniqueness of the situation in Galicia sheds new light on our understanding of this complex individual and *De Correctione Rusticorum*. 
The tolerance which Martin of Braga displayed toward the wayward *rustici* under his care contrasts with the heavy-handed approach favoured by other bishops, like Caesarius of Arles. Discerning the factors which shaped his pastoral style is not easy. The sources for his life prior to arrival in Spain in A.D. 550 are sketchy. Biographical information covering Martin's career in Galicia is brief and only of a general nature. However, when the biographical material is placed in the context of Martin's circumstances, an explanation for his tolerance can be discerned.

Martin's development as a young man took place among literate monks in the east. Given the quality of his education, it can be assumed that he lived in or near the intellectual hotbed of Alexandria. The young monk's decision to pursue life in such an environment demonstrates something of his character. Martin's thirst for knowledge ran against the policies of Justinian who suppressed institutions of learning. In addition to his classical education, Martin was immersed in the milieu of eastern monasticism which was intimately connected with the needs of the surrounding people. Martin's departure from the east coincided with the escalation of Justinian's anti intellectual policies which culminated in the anathema against Origen. Martin's respect for the tradition he
left behind is evident in the collection of monastic and canonical literature he brought to Galicia.

In Galicia, Martin found a remote haven beyond the reach of Justinian, and indeed of the Roman world as well. Due to its geographic isolation, this mountainous corner of the Iberian peninsula had largely resisted Roman influences and retained much of its Celtic culture. The small Roman presence meant that the Church had made only slim inroads into the religion of the populace. The Arian Sueves who had bullied the region since the early fifth century, treated the Catholics with callous indifference. These Catholics, still tainted by their historic support for Priscillian, had little contact with the powerful ecclesiastical institutions in the south.

Martin developed a mission to the people based upon his eastern monastic heritage. He established a monastery at Dumium which was modeled after the egalitarian communities of his eastern experience. The literature of the Desert Fathers and possibly the Rule of Pachomius furnished his rule.

Martin was elevated to Bishop of Dumium and then Metropolitan of Braga during the conversion of the Sueves to Catholicism. The role of Martin in this conversion is difficult to ascertain. While Isidore connects him with the event, other contemporary sources are less clear. It appears likely that the Suevic king, Ariamir embraced Catholicism more for political than religious reasons. Certainly, the First and Second Councils of Braga were strictly concerned with Priscillianism and pagan practices which were problems of the Hispano-Romans, and ignored Arianism, only recently abandoned by the Sueves.

In A.D. 572, following II Braga, Martin wrote De Correctione Rusticorum which stands out from other examples of its genre because of its tolerant nature. The reasons for this distinctive quality can be attributed to two sources: the author's background in eastern monasticism and the circumstances within Galicia.
The sermon reflects the egalitarian attitude found within the monastic literature which Martin brought from the east. Also, theologically it shows the influence of Origenism and the literature of the desert. Martin's Origenist view of the Fall and Salvation, which sees the human problem more in cognitive than physical terms is remarkable since Martin did draw some of his material from Caesarius and Augustine. Ferreiro emphasizes the influence of Martin's classical background when explaining his tolerance. While his classical education did help shape his world view, the exact nature of that education is difficult to determine. It is probably better to see Martin's classical training as part of his overall monastic experience. It was the sum of that experience which produced his tolerant approach.

The sermon was also shaped by the political and religious realities of sixth century Galicia. While the Church had recently gained new official freedoms, it does not appear to have enjoyed the direct support of the Sueves in its efforts to eradicate paganism. Lacking official sanctions, the Church was left to battle the entrenched paganism of the local populace which had hitherto run largely unchecked. These circumstances may have limited the use of more forceful means had Martin wished to employ them. In the De Correctione Rusticorum, Martin of Braga, lacking political support, draws on his monastic heritage in order to curb the paganism of his rural charges.
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